



“For there is always light. If only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.” - Amanda Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*

Dear EVCS Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! We are so excited to welcome all of our students back to school - in person - in just a few weeks. Our excellent faculty and staff have been preparing for a safe, engaging, and nurturing experience for every student at EVCS. We look to this new year with optimism, determination, and an unwavering belief that EVCS will be stronger and better than ever.

We continue to commit to our organization’s operating values as we kick off this school year:

**We put students first.
We act with urgency.
We strive to be better.
We work as a team.**

Our priorities for this school year are twofold: **maintain the highest levels of health and safety, and keep all students in school, learning at high levels.**

Health and Safety: EVCS will follow the recommendations of the CDC and New York State Education Department, which emphasizes that a return to school for all students is the top priority. We will implement a layered approach to ensure the safest possible environment for all. Our safety practices will include:

- **Universal masking** - all students and staff will be masked at all times while indoors (with the exception of meals and snacks), regardless of vaccination status. This is recommended by the CDC due to the circulating Delta variant. Our students were very comfortable with this measure last year, and it was implemented without incident.
- **Physical distancing** - we will continue to follow the guidance to maintain 3 feet of distancing between students indoors. Students will maintain 6 feet of physical distancing during aerobic or wind-producing classes (physical education, dance, and music). Our Operations and Facilities Teams have been hard at work since spring, preparing our schools to accommodate all students and staff safely.
- **Cohorting** - students will remain in homeroom groups for all indoor classes, specials, and lunch.
- **Ventilation** - our ventilation systems were updated last year for the highest level of filtration. We will continue to be vigilant about ensuring high levels of ventilation.
- **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette** - these practices will continue to remain in place.
- **Cleaning and disinfection** - all areas of our schools will be cleaned and disinfected daily.



- **Limited Visitors** - Our visitor policy will remain mostly in place, given the high number of unvaccinated students in our schools. We will invite families and visitors into our schools on a very limited basis for specific events or volunteer opportunities.
- **Sick student/staff protocols** - Students should not come to school if they have any signs of infectious illness. We will continue to follow protocols recommended by the CDC. Students or staff who present any symptoms of COVID-19 will be required to have a negative COVID test before returning to school. (if your child has allergies or other health concerns, make sure our school nurse has documentation from the doctor.)
- **Contact tracing** - According to CDC guidance, students are not automatically excluded from school as close or proximal contacts to a positive individual if correct and consistent masking has been followed. Therefore, quarantines for exposures that take place in school will be determined by the local Department of Health.

Academic and Social-Emotional Learning: We are fortifying the support we offer our students, with enhancements to the curriculum and instructional program, including:

- **Instructional Time** - We will return to a full 80 minutes of instruction in ELA and Math, as well as an additional small group reading block daily.
- **Really Great Reading** - This “Science of Reading” program will be implemented in Grades K-3 as a component of core instruction and in Grades 4-8 as an intervention. This program teaches essential foundational reading skills and allows teachers to pinpoint exactly which skills have been mastered and which have not, along with resources to address identified gaps in learning.
- **Social Studies, Science, and Health** - Additional blocks of time for social studies, science, and health have been scheduled to ensure students receive this important knowledge building instruction every week.
- **Fly Five Curriculum** - All students will receive explicit social-emotional instruction weekly with the Fly Five curriculum published by Responsive Classroom (the foundational approach that underscores everything we do at EVCS).
- **In-Person Specials** - All specials classes (art, dance, music, physical education, and Spanish) will be conducted in person.
- **Additional Supports for Students, Families and Staff** - Each school will have a Learning Specialist to provide direct support to students in ELA and Math. A Social Worker will work across both campuses to support students and families. Instructional Coaches and Special Education Mentors will support teachers to promote excellent instruction in every classroom.

Below please find some initial information to help you prepare for the upcoming year:

Save the Dates!

- **Monday, August 23 at 6PM - Family Meeting on Zoom**
We will hold a Family Meeting on Zoom to share updates and answer your questions about the upcoming school year. Please submit your questions in advance. We will



review your questions in advance and compile responses by category for the meeting on 8/23.

We will offer common and campus-specific information at this event. We hope to see you there!

- Family Meeting: [Zoom Registration Link](#)
- Questions: [Family Meeting Question Submission Form](#)

- **Monday, August 30 - Open House**

We will open our doors to all students and families to visit classrooms, meet teachers, and drop off school supplies prior to the first day of school. Families may also visit the School Nurse to drop off health forms and/or medication. We will follow the schedule below to ensure proper distancing and a safe environment for everyone.

- Last Names A-M: 9:30-11:30
- Last Names N-Z: 1:00-3:00

- **Wednesday, September 1 - First Day of School**

- School hours are 8:00-3:30.
- Families who drive to school may drop off no earlier than 7:30 AM.
- Families who pick up from school will have a scheduled pick up time between 3:05-3:30 PM.
- Breakfast and lunch are available at no charge for all students.
- Specific information about class placements, arrival and dismissal procedures, School Dismissal Manager, and other important items will be sent to families in a separate Welcome Packet.

Other Information

- **School Dismissal Manager (SDM)**

If you have used School Dismissal Manager in the past, and have the mobile app downloaded to your phone, please take a moment to uninstall that app. SDM has a new and improved mobile app, but it is not an upgrade - it is completely new. You'll receive information about the new app, including login instructions, next week.

- **Frontline Health Portal**

Also new this year is our Frontline Health Portal. You'll receive separate instructions on how to use this portal to keep your health records and communication with our Health Offices up to date.

- **After School Programs**

Families - we know you are patiently waiting for the link to register for afterschool programs at EVCS (the Boys and Girls Club at Days Park and BestSelf Behavioral Health at Hertel). We are in regular communication with these providers and they are working hard to get registration information to you. We thank you for your patience.



- **School Supplies**

School Supply Lists can be found here on our website: [School Supply Lists by Grade Level](#)

We thank our EVCS families for your ongoing support. We continue to be grateful for your dedication to our mission and your partnership in your child's education. Let's continue to work together to be

#soEVCS!

Warmly,

The EVCS Leadership Team

Mrs. Danielle Bruno, Days Park Campus Principal

Mrs. Liz Evans, Director of Operations

Mrs. Liz Fisher, Hertel Campus Principal

Mrs. Anne Wechsler, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

***Please visit evcsbuffalo.org/welcome for resources.**

***Items requiring your attention by 9/8/21:**

> Read the [EVCS Student Code of Conduct](#); sign the last page and return to school.

> The [Income Eligibility Form](#) must be signed and returned to school on or before September 8th. ([Encuesta de Hogares de Información de Ingresos en español](#)).