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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Superintendent of Schools Emphasizes Adherence to
CDC and NYS COVID-19 Guidelines for All Staff in School**

School 17 Begins Online Remote Instruction Wednesday, September 9, 2020

YONKERS, NY – Superintendent of Schools Dr. Edwin M. Quezada emphasizes adherence to CDC and New York State COVID-19 guidelines for all staff and contractors while working in school district buildings. With teachers, 10-month clerical and school-based staff returning to schools as of September 1, all staff is required to complete a daily COVID-19 Questionnaire attestation form as well as wear a face covering and follow social distancing requirements while in schools. Schools have appropriate barriers, hand sanitizing and cleaning protocols follow New York State Education Department and Department of Health guidance.

On Saturday, September 5, 2020, the District was notified by a staff member from School 17 that the individual tested positive for COVID-19. The District followed with fidelity all appropriate guidelines from the CDC and is working directly with the Westchester County Health Department regarding the protocols for contact tracing. All known close contacts as identified by the staff member were notified by the staff member as well as by the District's medical staff. In this case, exposure could have occurred September 1. On Sunday, September 6, all School 17 staff members were notified by the District via phone call and email. In the correspondence, staff was instructed if they had any COVID symptoms to immediately contact their physician, email the District's Chief Physician over the weekend or contact District's Health Services on Tuesday. Although, no students have been in school and will not be returning for Hybrid Instruction until October 5, the principal notified the parents.

Out of an abundance of caution, Dr. Quezada delayed the start of Online Remote Instruction for School 17 students until Wednesday, September 9 and closed the school to staff on Tuesday. The COVID-19 period of exposure will be beyond eight days by Wednesday. The one-day closure will allow additional time for the District to continue contact tracing and conduct supplementary cleaning of the building. No staff except for the custodial team and approved contractors will be in the school on Tuesday.

The message to School 17 staff noted, *"It is important to note that when all staff returns to school on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, everyone must strictly adhere to all CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Follow the CDC 3 Ws – wear a face covering, wash your hands and watch out for large crowds. It is everyone's responsibility to respect and do our best to protect each other's health."*

On Sunday, September 6, Dr. Quezada emailed all school administrators reminding them to follow CDC and New York State workplace guidelines. These included face covering to be worn at all times, large meetings are strictly prohibited and at all in-person meetings face covering and social distancing are required; ensure sanitizers are in the classrooms and offices and bathrooms are appropriately stocked, as well as instructing staff to address those who are not observing COVID-19 protocols. **The Superintendent's correspondence closed with, "Vigilance is essential. We are in a fight for public education and all of us must work collaboratively to ensure that we are safe as well as those whom we supervise."**

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