



THE OFFICE OF  
MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**MARK LEVINE**

**Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine's  
September 14, 2022 Full Board Report to Manhattan Community Board 6**

**Start of School:**

Thursday, September 8th was the start of New York City public schools' 2022-2023 academic year. I welcomed students and their families at PS 145 on the Upper West Side. This year, many students and families at PS 145 - and other schools - are seeking asylum and were bused to Manhattan from Texas.

**Executive Orders:**

On August 24th, the Mayor issued Emergency Executive Order 180, which extends the Emergency Order in place for 30 days through September 23, 2022. Community boards are able to remain virtual through this time. The Governor did not extend the State's emergency order, but we are working with the Law Department and DOHMH to gain clarity on both Monkeypox and Polio emergency orders and whether they impact OML. Please feel free to reach out to Brian Lafferty, Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Boards 5 and 6, in my office if you have any questions. He may be reached at 929-510-6740 and [blafferty@manhattanbp.nyc.gov](mailto:blafferty@manhattanbp.nyc.gov).

**COVID:**

On Wednesday, September 7th, Governor Hochul removed the mask mandate on public transportation. COVID is still a concern we continue to address. Numbers are still fairly high, with Manhattan's 7 day average positivity rate of 5% as of September 13th. This does not include all positive home tests. There is a new vaccine being released that targets the omicron family.

As of September 13<sup>th</sup>, the general public can get the updated covid booster at these NYC public hospitals:

- \* Bellevue
- \* Elmhurst
- \* Jacobi
- \* Kings
- \* Lincoln
- \* Queens
- \* Vanderbilt

Walk-ins are welcome Monday through Friday between 7:30 am and 4:00 pm.

Not all pharmacies have a full stock of them yet, but we are hopeful that the city will start receiving larger shipments and folks will get this booster. Still, for those who have not been boosted, as health officials have said, the best booster is the one that you can get immediately. This is vitally important as schools are now back in session. New York Public Schools started classes last Thursday and only 2% of students under 5 years of age have received the vaccine. Moreover, only 8% of students 5 to 12 years of age have received their vaccination and booster and only 28% of students 12 to 17 years of age have received their vaccination and booster. You can search [vaccinefinder.nyc.gov](https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov) to find sites, including the new formula boosters for Pfizer and Moderna.

### **Monkeypox:**

My office will continue to alert the community to the availability of monkeypox vaccines as they come online. I have been steadfast in my demand that the vaccine be distributed equitably and be made more readily available in communities of color. I have been working alongside the CUNY School of Public Health and the Harlem Health Initiative to help their informational campaign on monkeypox.

On August 24th, the Mayor issued Emergency Executive Order 180, which extends the Emergency Order in place for 30 days through September 23, 2022. Our understanding is that this also means that community boards are able to remain virtual through this time. Please feel free to reach out to Brian Lafferty, Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Boards 5 and 6, in my office if you have any questions. He may be reached at 929-510-6740 and

[blafferty@manhattanbp.nyc.gov](mailto:blafferty@manhattanbp.nyc.gov). We will also be continuing to watch whether the Governor extends the State's Emergency Executive Order.

### **Bike Lane on 9A:**

I know that many have enjoyed the Hudson River Greenway this summer, which is both truly wonderful and incredibly overcrowded. Cyclists often must weave around people who are running with headphones in, while pedestrians have to steel themselves against two-way bike traffic, and e-bikes, which are not permitted on the greenway, are forced into the highway. For these reasons, I announced that we should take a lane of traffic on the West Side Highway and turn it into a four-mile protected lane for people who are on bicycles, e-bikes, and other forms of micromobility. This would help ease congestion and create a safe and legal space for folks on e-bikes, including deliveristas. This proposal also complements New York City's long-term resiliency goals and the eventual launch of congestion pricing in Manhattan by creating the infrastructure we will need to facilitate easy, convenient, and efficient travel without the use of a private car.

### **Asylum seekers:**

As many are aware, the City has seen an influx of asylum seekers arriving from Texas, due to the incredulous actions of Governor Greg Abbott. As New Yorkers, we have welcomed them with open arms, but we have lots of work to do to make sure folks have the support they need. Hundreds, including a number of families with children, are arriving daily with few possessions. My office is partnering with the New York Immigration Coalition to provide necessary items to these families, with both our downtown and Northern Manhattan office (431 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street) open for donations. The request for donations has specifically been new toiletries and hygiene items such as body washes, toothbrushes, and menstrual products, new and packaged clothing, and diapers.

### **Response to SCOTUS decision *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*:**

New York State and New York City are fighting back against SCOTUS's attack on our gun laws in its *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen* decision. As of September 1st, guns are prohibited in or on:

- \* Public transit
- \* Schools
- \* Entertainment venues
- \* Playgrounds, parks
- \* Medical facilities
- \* Houses of worship
- \* Court houses
- \* Rallies, demonstrations
- \* Times Square, which has been defined as two tracts
  1. the area between 6th Avenue and 8th Avenue that is bounded by 40th Street to the South and 53rd Street to the north
  2. the area between 8th Avenue and 9th Avenue that is bounded by 40th Street to the south and 48th Street to the north

Those who own or manage properties that are accessible to the public may post official signage available at [sensitivelocationsign.pdf \(ny.gov\)](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/sensitive-locations/signage/signage.pdf)

### **Congestion Pricing:**

On July 13th, I stood with advocates to call for New York City to prepare for the implementation of congestion pricing. Elements that are essential to the success of congestion pricing include

- Variable tolls, based on time of day and size of vehicle
- Immediate rebates for those who are eligible under the current proposal, individuals who earn under \$60,000 a year would qualify for a tax credit at the end of the year. However, it is important that qualified individuals not have to wait to get their money back.

The City should produce a 2023 streets masterplan that is focused on readying our streetscapes for congestion pricing - investments in bus lanes, bike lanes, and infrastructure should ensure that as we work to reduce traffic congestion in Manhattan that New Yorkers have a public transit system that is safe, efficient and reliable.

The MTA should implement all-door boarding on buses: we must speed up our buses, and using all the doors is a proven and effective way to achieve that.

As we ask New Yorkers to travel longer distances without the use of private vehicles, pedal-assist Citi Bikes will be an increasingly important part of our transit future. We must raise the cap on these bikes.

We must also reform e-commerce as there are too many deliveries being made using and blocking our bike lanes, bus lanes, and sidewalks.

The City must take steps to logically address e-commerce delivery before congestion pricing is implemented. We must move deliveries to smaller vehicles, increase the number of loading zones, and strengthen enforcement against the business practices of e-commerce companies that encourage parking and unloading in the public right-of-way.