

# Philadelphia School District Moving Forward With Plans To Return Students To Classroom Before Thanksgiving

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PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — The School District of Philadelphia is moving forward with plans to return students to the classroom, and it could happen before Thanksgiving.

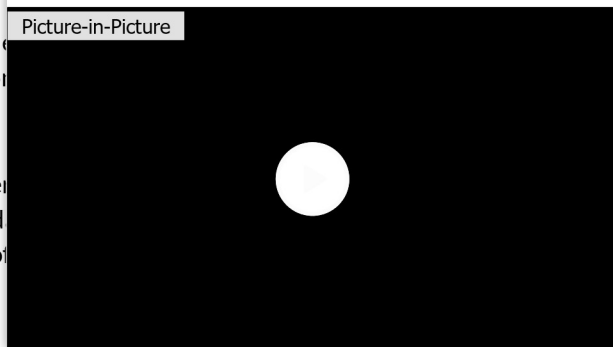
While students in the Philadelphia School District continue learning due to COVID-19, officials are plowing forward on bringing kids back into schools on Nov. 17.

"We're going to be assessing everybody to determine when children are," Superintendent Dr. William Hite said Thursday. "I think we're going through the process of assessing many of our youngest grades now."

District officials are closely monitoring school districts around the tri-state area and around the country as many make a return to in-person learning. The news of recent delays in classrooms at schools

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in New Jersey due to positive student cases isn't lost on one of the country's largest school districts.

"We will continue to be guided by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health," Hite said. "They make those determinations, not us as a school district. All of those reports go up to them and then they make the determinations of do we close down a class, do we close down a room or an area of the building? Do we close down the whole school?"

Millions of dollars in renovations are currently underway at city school buildings — removing asbestos and revamping antiquated infrastructure with necessary safety protocols.

"Their facilities are going to be deeply cleaned," Reginald McNeil, the school district's chief operating officer, said. "They're going to have signage throughout the spaces to make sure that they have guidance for safe practices. Hand-sanitizing stations will be placed in strategic locations across the facility. And then we'll have partitions around the high traffic area."

Philadelphia officials say they're also looking to other large city school districts who are implementing COVID-19 testing procedures for students and staff.

"We're also exploring some form of random testing or testing," Hite said.

This is the first of any kind of testing protocol that has been introduced with the Philadelphia School District. Hite did cite the New York school district, saying that's what they plan to do. He also touted the Los Angeles school district is already doing it and are seeing good results there.

Meantime, the School District of Philadelphia is just trying to make sure they can bring students back without any interruptions.



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