



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Chancellor

August 2011

Dear Parents and Families,

As we turn the calendar to the month of August, we move closer to the first day of a new school year. This will be my first school opening as Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools, and, like thousands of students and teachers, I am eager to get the new school year underway and off to a strong start.

We have much to celebrate, and even much more work to do. The first day of school sets the tone for the year, and I hope you will join me in setting high expectations for our children, their teachers, and each adult across our school system charged with supporting the work of teaching and learning. With a focus on a new rigorous curriculum, we hope to engage our children, improve classroom instruction, and build on the successes of the past school year.

This year, we will begin to transition to the Common Core State Standards, a new set of more rigorous standards that will have a major impact on the quality of education we provide our students. Under the umbrella of the Common Core Standards, we also are launching a renewed focus on providing a rich, engaging curriculum with a focus on engaging all students.

For our teachers, DCPS will offer more high-quality professional development options to ensure educators have the support they need for students to achieve at high levels. DCPS educators will receive targeted coaching and support in the classroom from instructional coaches, so that teachers learn by doing. DCPS also will rollout an online professional development video library of more than 120 video clips that show our educators what highly effective teaching looks like.

As parents, I encourage you to be active partners in your children's education. Meet with teachers early and regularly throughout the year. Take time to learn their expectations for you and your children. Reinforce those expectations at home. Together, we can ensure that our students succeed at the highest levels.

Sincerely,

Kaya Henderson,  
Chancellor