



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



# DCPS Parent Handbook

# We Are DCPS and We Can Do This!



## A Capital Commitment

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OUR PURPOSE is to ensure that every school in District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) provides a world-class education that prepares all of our students, regardless of background or circumstance, for success in college, career and life.

We have five ambitious goals:

1. **Improve Achievement Rates**

At least 70 percent of our students will be proficient in reading and math, and we will double the number of advanced students in the district.

2. **Invest in Struggling Schools**

Our 40 lowest-performing schools will increase proficiency rates by 40 percentage points.

3. **Increase Graduation Rate**

At least 75 percent of entering ninth graders will graduate from high school in four years.

4. **Improve Satisfaction**

90 percent of students will say they like their school.

5. **Increase Enrollment**

DCPS will increase its enrollment over the years.

*The DCPS Parent Handbook includes information about policies, regulations and practices parents and families will find critical to navigate the school system. It is not intended to include a comprehensive set of all DCPS policies and practices and is subject to change. This is the 3rd edition of the Handbook, and the content provided in this document is current as of the 2015-2016 School Year.*

*Cover photo is of a dedicated grandparent, Debra Brown, and PK-3 student, Amari Little, at Browne Education Campus on the first day of school, August 29th, 2014.*

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## DCPS Notice of Non-Discrimination

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is committed to ensuring that all of its employees act in conformity with federal and District of Columbia non-discrimination laws, including Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, and the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act of 2008.

Accordingly, DCPS does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against employees, applicants for employment or students on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense or place of residence or business.

DCPS also prohibits harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected traits and retaliation against a person because he or she has complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination or participated in a discrimination investigation or lawsuit.

Employees found to have engaged in prohibited discrimination, harassment or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students, parents and guardians with concerns regarding disability discrimination should contact:

Colin Bishop  
Section 504 Coordinator  
Office of Specialized Instruction  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
1200 First St, NE, 9th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
202.442.5485

Or

D.C. Office of Human Rights  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 570N  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
202.727.4559

Students, parents and guardians with concerns regarding sex discrimination should contact:

Heather Holaday  
Title IX Coordinator  
Office of Teaching and Learning  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
1200 First St, NE, 8th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002  
202.645.6073

Or

Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100  
Telephone: 1.800.421.3481  
TDD: 877.521.2172  
FAX: 202.245.6840  
Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Students, parents and guardians, and others with concerns regarding discrimination may also utilize the DCPS grievance procedure. Copies of the parents, guardians and visitors procedures are available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/dcps-notice-non-discrimination>. Students, parents and guardians and others with discrimination concerns should contact:

Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100  
Telephone: 1.800.421.3481  
TDD: 877.521.2172  
FAX: 202.245.6840  
Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Or

D.C. Office of Human Rights  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 570N  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
202.727.4559

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# Message from the Chancellor



*Kaya Henderson  
Chancellor  
DC Public Schools*

## Dear Parents and Families,

DCPS is on the rise! From enrollment rates to graduation rates, from student academic performance to student satisfaction, DCPS is rising. While there is much more to do, I'm really proud of the work we are doing in partnership with you to improve our schools.

This school year marks my fifth year as Chancellor of DCPS and I'm excited to share a third edition of the DCPS Parent Handbook with you. I encourage you to use this handbook as a tool to learn about and navigate day-to-day DCPS policies and procedures. You'll find information here on topics such as attendance, enrollment, and academic offerings.

This Handbook is also a guide to new programs that enhance our students' educational experiences. As parents, we know that our children rise to meet the expectations we set for them, so we should continue to set the bar even higher to build on students' success and give them more opportunities to achieve. We

are committed to new initiatives to improve groups of students who have struggled the most such as our males of color, and are working to ensure that every school has rigorous programs that will help prepare our young people to compete in a global economy.

We cannot achieve our goals without you and I am honored to partner with you to prepare your children for success in DCPS and beyond. We welcome your feedback to help shape a school system that we can all be proud of for generations.

For questions about this handbook, please contact the Office of Family and Public Engagement at 202.719.6613 or [ofpe.info@dc.gov](mailto:ofpe.info@dc.gov).

Sincerely,

Kaya Henderson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaya Henderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chancellor

# Why Parents and Families Like You Matter



# Why Parents and Families Like You Matter

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Parents are their children’s first and most important teachers. When parents are engaged in learning, students are more likely to reach their full potential—that’s why it is so important to have strong partnerships and communication between home and school.

Schools benefit from family engagement, too. From better reading scores to enhanced school safety, engaged families help schools get and stay on a positive path to improvement so all students can succeed. When families and schools work together, we see:

- Increased student achievement;
- Better student persistence and attitudes toward learning;
- Better student social skills and fewer conduct problems;
- Reduced drop-out rates; and
- Higher graduation rates.

It’s important to make sure that all families have access to their children’s academic information, so DCPS offers a free Language Line with over-the-phone interpretation services in the family’s native language. The Language Line can be contacted by calling 202.727.4559. “I Speak” Cards can be downloaded from <http://ohr.dc.gov/ispeakcards> in multiple languages.

For an in-person interpreter, school personnel must submit an Interpreter Request Form at least three days in advance to the Office of Language Acquisition and Development. Parents needing translation or interpretation services should contact the school immediately.

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## Support Learning at Home

- Make sure your child attends school every day, arrives on time and is well-rested.
- Make sure your child knows that you believe in them and that you have high expectations for their achievements. Show your child that you care: ask about what they are learning, go on a field trip with them, attend their performances and sports events, etc.
- Ask your child what subjects are most interesting. Encourage and further develop these interests by making real-life connections to your child’s aspirations and the things that they are learning in school.
- Monitor your child’s academic progress. For example, ask your child to see examples of their homework or projects; make sure that they’re completing and submitting their homework on time; ask your child what subjects they like and/or struggle with. Touch base with your child’s teacher to share your observations and your child’s feedback.
- Emphasize the importance of reading. Read to your child, visit the library, and talk about what they are reading.
- Provide a quiet and well-lit place for your child to do their homework.
- Help with time management. Balance schoolwork with family and play time, sports and other extracurricular activities.
- Monitor and limit your child’s screen time (i.e., television, cellphones, Internet).

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## Support Learning at Schools

- Whenever possible, be present and engaged in school-based activities. Attend field trips, curriculum nights, math or literacy nights, community service events, and special performances. Also, consider the many ways you can support not only your child, but other children, by volunteering to assist teachers with organizing these special events.
- Advocate for your child. Let teachers know the goals you have for your child and that you intend to be a partner in your child's education.
- Attend Parent-Teacher conferences and communicate regularly with your child's teachers. Ask questions about what skills your child needs to master this year, how they are doing in school and how you can help. Share information and solidify the family-school partnership

### PARENT TIP

*Regardless of their age, your child needs your involvement. Pre-Kindergarten children will enjoy reading on your lap and having you in the classroom. Elementary school children will enjoy sharing school work with you and will be happy to have you come to school for an assembly or performance. Middle and high school students may not need you at the school as much or need as much guidance with homework if good habits are already established. Instead, middle school and high school students will need you to help make sure that they are on track for graduation. They may also want time to talk with you about their future.*

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## How to Get Involved at School

- Attend programs at the school to get to know other families. No matter the ages of your children, parents can support each other.
- Start a parent mentor program to welcome new families and help them navigate the school.
- Join a parent group (i.e., PTA, PTO) or start a group if the school doesn't already have one. Focus the energy of the parent group toward activities and events that align with the school goals to improve student achievement.
- Check with the school about volunteer opportunities in the classroom.
- Serve on the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) to advise the principal on matters that promote high expectations and high achievement for all students.
- Review the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) School Report (available at [www.learnDC.org](http://www.learnDC.org)), and discuss it with your principal and other parents.
- Attend a DC State Board of Education meeting. Call 202.741.0888 to find out about meeting times.

# Enrolling in DCPS



# Enrolling in DCPS

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Enrolling in a school can sometimes seem overwhelming, with numerous dates and forms to remember. Here is some information to make it easier.

- Your In-Boundary School
- Making an Informed Enrollment Decision
- My School DC Lottery
- Pre-Kindergarten (PK3) and Pre-Kindergarten 4 (PK4) Lottery
- Out-of-Boundary Lottery (Grades K-12)
- Specialized High Schools
- Key Enrollment Dates

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## Your In-Boundary School

Every child has an assigned in-boundary school for all compulsory grades (K-12) based on their home address. A child has the right to attend his or her in-boundary schools starting in Kindergarten. To find your child's in-boundary school visit <http://dcatlas.dcgis.dc.gov/schools>.

To attend your in-boundary school, beginning in Kindergarten, you do not have to apply through the My School DC lottery. To enroll in your in-boundary school, you need to submit an enrollment packet. Here's the timeline:

- Spring: Enrollment packets arrive.
- Last day of current school year: You must submit an enrollment packet to your in-boundary school.

DCPS students, including out-of-boundary students, in transition grades (typically 5th and 8th) have a right to attend the "destination school," the next school in the student's school's feeder pattern. To enroll in the destination school, you need to submit an enrollment packet. To find your destination school, please visit your current school's profile available on the DCPS website at <http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov>.

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## Making an Informed Enrollment Decision

You may want your child to attend your in-boundary or destination school, or you may want to explore other options. To explore school options, use the following resources:

- **School Profiles:** School profiles are designed to help families understand the various academic options and resources available at each school. Each profile contains an overview of the school that includes the academic program, sports and extracurricular activities as well as a scorecard measuring the school's academic performance and progress, safety and family engagement. School profiles are available online at <http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov>.
- **Open Houses:** Open Houses provide opportunities for families to visit schools and interact with school staff. Some schools offer tours and question and answer sessions. Contact the school or visit the school's website (available on their school profile page) for more information. A list of open houses can also be found on the DCPS website at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/open-house>.
- **School-based Events:** Schools may also host community events for current and prospective families. These events may range from concerts and festivals to promotion ceremonies. Attending these events is a way to learn more about school culture and gives prospective families a chance to meet current families. Contact the school directly if you would like to learn about upcoming events.

- **DC Education Festival:** The DC Education Festival is an event hosted by My School DC to provide current and prospective families an opportunity to learn about all of the school-choice options within D.C. Representatives from DCPS schools attend the Education Festival to provide families more information about their schools and to answer questions.
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## My School Dc Lottery

Families interested in applying to a DCPS school to which they do not have in-boundary or feeder right to attend, must apply to that school through the My School DC lottery.

Lottery applications to DCPS schools fall into three categories:

- Pre-Kindergarten 3 (PK3) and Pre-Kindergarten 4 (PK4)
- Out-of-Boundary Lottery (Grades K-12)
- Specialized high schools.

The My School DC lottery is an online-only application process. For more information about the My School DC lottery application or process, visit [MyschoolDC.org](https://myschooldc.org). If you need support completing the application, you can contact the Enrollment Team by telephone at 202.478.5738 or by email at [enroll@dc.gov](mailto:enroll@dc.gov).

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## Pre-Kindergarten 3 (PK3) and Pre-Kindergarten 4 (PK4) Lottery

DCPS offers seats for children ages 3 and 4. Although children are not required by law to attend PK3 or PK4, DCPS places a strong value on early childhood education. We strive to make seats in these grades available to as many children as possible in a fair and equitable way. All families that wish to [secure a PK3 or PK4 seat for their child must apply through the My School DC lottery](#). Applications for PK3 and PK4 are only available online at [MyschoolDC.org](https://myschooldc.org).

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## Out-of-Boundary Lottery (Grades K-12)

The Out-of-Boundary lottery is a school-choice service offered by DCPS that gives families the opportunity to apply for available seats in Grades K-12 at a school other than their child's in-boundary school. To attend a school that is not your child's in-boundary school, you must submit an online application through the My School DC lottery. Applications for the out-of-boundary lottery are only available online at [MyschoolDC.org](https://myschooldc.org).

Students who secure a seat at an out-of-boundary school can continue to attend that school until the last grade of that school ("terminal grade") and can then attend the destination school without reapplying through the lottery. It is important to remember that students enrolled in an out-of-boundary school must complete an enrollment packet annually.

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## Specialized High Schools

DCPS specialized high schools select students through an admissions process that is specific to each school. Unlike the PK3/PK4 and out-of-boundary lotteries, admission into a DCPS specialized high school is not based on a random lottery. Instead, students must meet specific requirements and/or complete additional tasks to gain admission. For more information about the admissions process for a DCPS specialized high school, visit the school's website (available on the school's [profiles.dcps.dc.gov](https://profiles.dcps.dc.gov)) or [MyschoolDC.org](https://myschooldc.org).

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To apply to a DCPS specialized high school, you must first complete an application online at [MyschoolDC.org](https://myschooldc.org). After completion of the My School DC application, students may be asked to complete an admissions test, interview or audition. Students in Grades 9-12 may apply, though available space in upper grades may be limited.

The DCPS specialized high schools are:

- Benjamin Banneker Academic High School
- Columbia Heights Education Campus
- Duke Ellington School of the Arts
- McKinley Technology High School
- Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School
- School Without Walls Senior High School.

Note: This selective application process is not required to attend any of the comprehensive (non-specialized) high schools.

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## Key Enrollment Dates

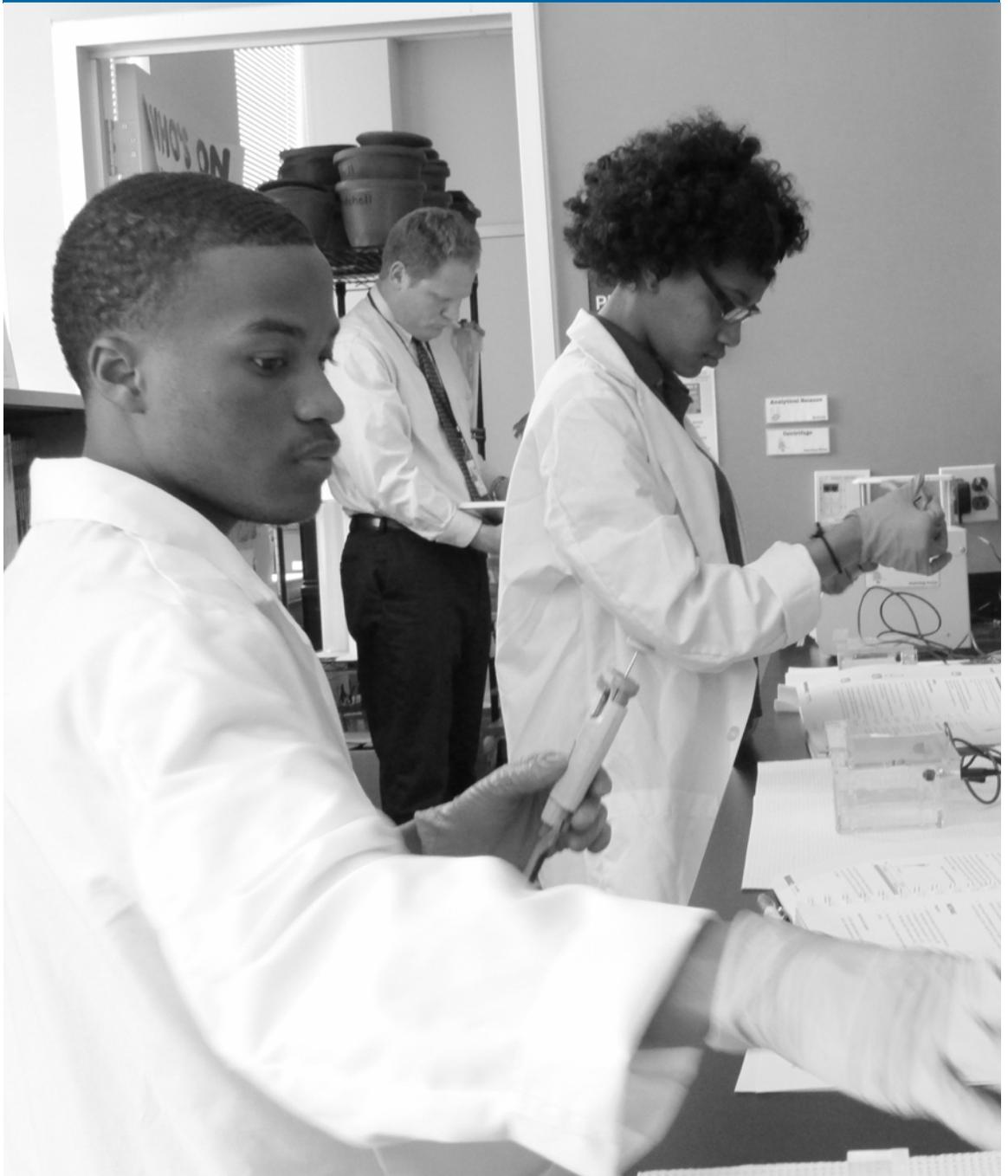
Families should keep in mind several important dates during the school year that relate to enrollment. Visit the DCPS web site at [dcps.dc.gov/enroll](https://dcps.dc.gov/enroll) or contact your school to confirm specific dates so you do not miss an enrollment deadline.

- [My School DC Application \(Grades PK3-12\)](#) Opens - December of the current year
- [My School DC Application \(Grades 9-12\)](#) Closes – February of the current year
- [My School DC Application \(Grades PK3-8\)](#) Closes – March of the current year
- [Enrollment packet for upcoming school year available](#) - April of the current year
- [Enrollment packet due for students who received a seat through the My School DC lottery](#)- May of the current year

Note: To enroll your child in a DCPS school, you will need to prove D.C. residency each school year. For a complete enrollment packet and list of accepted residency verification documents, visit the DCPS website at [dcps.dc.gov/enroll](https://dcps.dc.gov/enroll).



# What to Expect in DCPS



# What to Expect in DCPS

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Whether you are a returning or new family, here are some “basics” you need to know about DCPS.

- Attendance
  - Secondary Grading and Reporting Policy
  - Dress Code
  - School Schedule
  - Before and Afterschool Programs
  - Extended Day
  - Athletics
  - Food Service
  - Health and Wellness
  - Bullying
  - Disciplinary Policies
  - Transportation
  - School Emergencies, Delays or Closures
  - School Visitor Policy
- 

## Attendance

Regular school attendance is required by D.C. law for children ages 5 to 18. Although not required by law, it is just as important for children ages 3 and 4 to have regular attendance as well. Attending school every day and on-time is critically important and has a huge impact on learning from kindergarten through high school. Even as children grow older and become more independent, families play a key role in making sure regular attendance is a priority.

Some absences are unavoidable, but when a student misses too much school—excused or unexcused—they can fall behind academically. Students are much less likely to succeed when they are chronically absent and/or miss 18 or more days in a school year.

Students who miss more than 20% of their scheduled periods in a school day will, by law, be considered absent for the entire day.

If your child received a seat through the out-of-boundary lottery and has 10 unexcused absences or 20 unexcused tardies, they may be asked to return to their neighborhood school at the end of the school year.

### DID YOU KNOW...

- Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
- By sixth grade, chronic absence is a warning sign that students are at-risk for dropping out of school.
- By ninth grade, good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than eighth grade test scores.

Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid/legal excuse and parental approval.

Lawful reasons for absence are articulated in DCMR Chapter 21 (<http://dcregs.dc.gov/>) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Illness of the student or medical cause (a doctor’s note is required for a student absent five or more days);
- Medical or dental appointment for the student;
- Death in the student’s immediate family;
- Exclusion due to quarantine, contagious disease, etc.;
- Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding as a plaintiff, defendant, witness or juror;

- Observance of a religious holiday;
- Lawful exclusion or expulsion by school authorities;
- Temporary facility closings due to weather, unsafe conditions or other emergencies;
- Failure of D.C. to provide transportation where legally responsible;
- To visit their parent/legal guardian, who is in the military immediately before, during or after deployment; and
- Emergency or circumstances approved by the school district.

When your child returns to school after an absence, you must submit a note to the front office or designated attendance staff within five days. The note must include your child's name, date(s) of the absence, reason for absence and a parent/guardian's signature. A doctor's note is required after the fifth consecutive day due to illness. Absences without notes or those deemed not valid will be marked "unexcused."

If absences are due to chronic health issues, such as asthma, families should contact the school nurse to ensure the appropriate health plan is developed.

If you have additional questions about attendance, go to <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/student-attendance-and-support>, or contact your child's school.

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## Secondary Grading Policy & Reporting Policy

DCPS's new Secondary Grading and Reporting policy applies to all students in grades 6-12 and is meant to ensure accurate and equitable standards in secondary schools. DCPS has created this uniform grading system for all secondary courses to ensure that standards for earning a grade across all content areas are the same.

The policy will allow parents to receive more feedback on their student's progress as teachers must now grade, post, and return graded student work to students within ten working school days of the students' submission of the assignment.

Each school will also now use the same electronic gradebook to provide weekly progress to parents. Parents will only have to log into one system for each school to review their child's progress. If a student or parent disputes a grade received on a report card, they can appeal the grade with their school. All grade appeals and grade change requests start at the school level.

For more information, please contact your child's school.

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## Dress Code

DCPS provides discretion to principals for establishing and implementing mandatory uniform policies. Where principals choose not to mandate a school uniform, your child is still held to a high standard of neatness, cleanliness and appropriateness as dictated by the school dress code. Students violating either the school dress code or mandatory uniform policies are subject to progressive disciplinary actions.

To learn whether your child's school has a mandatory school uniform, contact the school. For additional information about student rights and responsibilities related to the dress code, contact the school or go to <http://1.usa.gov/1LgWQ5g>.

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## School Schedule

Scheduling varies according to grade or academic level.

- In Grades PK3-5, your child will generally stay with the same teacher in the same classroom for the entire day. As they get older, students likely transition to another teacher for electives (e.g., physical education) and interventions (e.g., reading).
- In Grades 6-12, your child will transition through the school's bell schedule to teachers in respective subject areas. Classes are typically between 45 and 90 minutes and are either 9, 18 or 36 weeks long. Students may have between four and seven periods a day depending on the school's schedule.

Contact your child's school for more information about the school schedule.

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## Before- and Afterschool Programs

Before-school programs are organized by individual schools. Please contact your child's school for more information.

Your child can participate in an afterschool program that provides a combination of academic, enrichment and wellness activities. Research is clear that participation in high-quality afterschool programs helps improve school attendance, academic achievement, graduation rates and attitudes toward learning. They also improve children's personal, socio-emotional skills.

The DCPS Office of Out of School Time Programs (OSTP), in concert with community based organizations and DCPS teachers and aides, provides a variety of afterschool opportunities. Programs generally operate between 3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday (except on half school days, holidays and school breaks). However, hours vary at some schools and not all schools have afterschool programs managed by OSTP. Transportation is not provided for students who participate in these programs. This includes students with disabilities who usually ride the bus to and from school. Free snack/supper is provided.

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## Extended Day

Extended Day is an extension of the traditional school day that usually takes place from 8:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. It currently ranges between 1-2 hours of additional hours of instruction and ends between 4:15 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. Students have the opportunity to engage in more instructional time, and teachers are able to extend learning time, both of which have been shown to improve academic achievement. The purpose of Extended Day is to enhance student learning and increase academic achievement of students by implementing extended learning time at targeted DCPS schools. This instruction is delivered by the same content teachers that students are with during the day and there is no transition, thus maintaining the integrity of the natural extension. Attendance is mandatory as it is a part of the traditional school day. For more information about Extended Day, contact your child's school.

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## Athletics

Athletics are an important part of the school experience. As such, students in Grades 4-12 are able to participate in a variety of interscholastic and club sports.

### DID YOU KNOW...

Athletics can help to:

- Promote growth and development;
- Teach social, recreational and leadership skills;
- Develop qualities of good citizenship and sportsmanship; and
- Support students' ability to prosper in a strong educational environment.



If a student would like to participate in a sport that is not offered at their school, they may be permitted to participate in that sport at another DCPS school. The student needs to contact the coach of the team they would like to join, and the principals of both schools must agree to the arrangement. The Athletic Director will then complete the necessary paperwork.

Some athletics programs are considered club and not interscholastic sports. Club sports do not offer the same benefits in medical or insurance coverage and are not eligible for league championships. To learn if your child's athletic program is an interscholastic or club sport, contact your child's school.

Prior to participating in any athletic program, the following forms are required:

- Consent to Participate in Athletics Form
- Physical Exam Form
- Signed Emergency Information Sheet

Links to all forms are available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/athletics>.

Your child must have a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or better using advisory grades to participate in interscholastic athletics. Progress reports may not be used to determine eligibility.

The Department of Athletics is responsible for verifying eligibility and scheduling events. Transportation is provided for league games only. More information is available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/athletics> or [thedciaa.com](http://thedciaa.com).

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## Food Service

Nutrition is essential to your child's academic success and DCPS strives to provide nutritious meals and snacks to our students before, during and after school. School menus change daily and include a variety of hot and cold entrees. School menus are available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/food>.

- Breakfast is free to all students in every DC Public School.
- Lunch:
  - Is provided free to students in 84 schools that have a high rate of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Meals (FARM). A complete list of these schools is available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/nutrition-and-meals>.
  - In all other schools, students must submit a FARM application to be considered for the free lunch program.
  - Students who do not qualify for FARM must purchase their lunch daily. Options for adding money to a student lunch account vary. More information about paying for lunch is available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/nutrition-and-meals>.
- After school snack or supper is free for all students in more than 90 schools.

If your child has a food allergy, you should complete a Dietary Accommodations form (available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/nutrition-and-meals>) and have it signed by a medical provider. No peanuts or tree nuts are served in DCPS schools, but parents are still encouraged to complete the Dietary Accommodations form so that it is on file with the school nurse.

To learn more about food service, to view your school's menus, or to learn about applying for free lunch, visit the DCPS website at, <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/nutrition-and-meals> or contact your school directly.

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## Health and Wellness

DCPS schools are vital places where staff, families and the community come together to keep students healthy and where our students can learn how to make healthy choices for themselves and others.

### Health Requirements and Forms

Health exams and oral health assessments are required annually. Students also must be current with their immunizations to attend school. As outlined below, a series of medical forms should be turned in to the school as part of the enrollment process and any updated forms throughout the school year should be submitted to the school nurse.

- A current (within the last 365 days) and complete Universal Health Certificate (required annually for all grades, documenting immunizations, tuberculosis assessment, lead screening and a physical exam). If you have questions about DC's immunization requirements, please discuss them with your child's physician. You can also contact the D.C. Department of Health Immunization Division at 202.576.9325.
- Oral Health Assessment (required annually for all grades)
- Medication and Treatment Authorization Form (as needed)
- Asthma Action Plan (as needed)
- Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (as needed)

If you need to file an exemption for vaccines, please contact your school nurse. Links to all health forms are available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/school-based-health-centers-dcps>

### Medications

Whenever possible, families are encouraged to administer medications at home. If medications are needed during school hours, please have your medical provider complete the appropriate forms listed above and return them to the school nurse. More details are available at [dcps.dc.gov/health](http://dcps.dc.gov/health).

## School Nurse Program

The school nurse can promote a healthy school environment and provide for the physical and emotional safety of the school community. Each school has a minimum of part-time nursing coverage during the school year. If the school has a summer program, a nurse is available on-site during the summer as well.

## Health Services

DCPS partners with the D.C. Department of Health (DOH) to offer free, voluntary chlamydia and gonorrhea screenings once a year at each high school. HIV testing is also offered at select high schools. Before each screening event, schools will send home specific information about the services being offered to students. Please look for this information and be prepared to discuss this screening with your child in advance of the screening.

DCPS also has adopted DOH's Wrap M.C. program in all high schools, through which trained school staff provide condoms to students in Grades 9-12 as part of a comprehensive health education program. In some schools, students have been trained to provide condoms, as well. Condoms are also available through the school nurse. More information is available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/school-based-health-centers-dcps>.

## Free Medical Care

It is important that students have a regular medical provider. If you need health or dental insurance, you may qualify for Medicaid or subsidized health insurance. Visit <http://dchealthlink.com> for more information. Also, if you have Medicaid, but need help finding a dental provider or making an appointment, you can call 1.866.758.6807 or visit the Insure Kids Now website [http://insurekidsnow.gov/state/dc/district\\_oral.html](http://insurekidsnow.gov/state/dc/district_oral.html).

For copies of medical forms and for more information regarding any health questions or concerns, please visit [dcps.dc.gov/health](http://dcps.dc.gov/health) or speak with the nurse at your school.

## Mental Health Support

To support the emotional well-being of students, each school has a mental health team comprised of a school social worker, psychologist and/or counselor, who are able to help with a range of issues including, but not limited to, school culture and climate, substance use and self-confidence. More information about provided services is available on page 44 of the Handbook and available by speaking with the school's mental health team.

## Local Wellness Policy

DCPS' Local Wellness Policy (LWP) was developed in collaboration with local and national experts in nutrition and physical activity, school staff and parents. Student feedback was also incorporated into the policy.

The LWP articulates DCPS' goals to implement nutrition and physical activity programming. The goals are to: promote health education and healthy behaviors; provide healthy food options to students; increase physical activity of students before, during and after the school day; provide universal supports to families and school staff to meet student health requirements; increase the environmental sustainability of schools, measure LWP impact; and solicit community feedback for enhanced programming. The LWP can be found at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/health-and-wellness>.

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## Bullying

DCPS is committed to making every school a safe and welcoming space for your child, and families are critical partners in these efforts. One of the most proactive measures families can take to shield their children from bullying is to talk to them early and openly about what it means to be bullied or to bully. Doing so not only ensures that you and your child maintain open lines of communication, but also reinforces the importance of speaking up about problems at school.

DCPS has a Bullying Prevention Policy that is as proactive and comprehensive as possible when dealing with any and all reports of bullying.

- If you suspect your child may be bullied at school, don't be afraid to ask them about it.
- Make sure to tell them that you are there to help and you believe what he or she has to say.
- Please report, or have your child report, bullying to the school's Bullying Prevention Point of Contact or the principal.
- If you think your child is bullying others, discuss the behavior and make it clear that bullying is taken very seriously at school. At the same time, you may want to work with your child to understand some of the reasons behind the bullying.
- If you witness or become aware of cyber-bullying (use of the Internet and related technologies to bully) that includes threats of violence, child pornography or sexually explicit materials, stalking or hate crimes, please consider reporting the incident to law enforcement. Cyber-bullying can also create classroom disruptions and lead to in-person bullying.

More information about the DCPS Bullying Prevention Policy is available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/bullying>.

#### PARENT TIP

*Helping your child be responsible with technology will go a long way to keeping them safe. Here are some things you can do:*

- *Make sure you have passwords for all of your child's online accounts.*
- *Monitor screen time (i.e., television, internet, Facebook/Twitter).*
- *Keep technology in common areas of your home so you can monitor usage.*
- *Turn off technology at night and put it in a safe space.*
- *Set an example by modeling responsible use of technology.*

## Disciplinary Policies

Our goal is to help your child interact with the learning environment and school community in a positive, responsible and productive way. All DCPS disciplinary policies are subject to the DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR Chapter 25) regarding Student Discipline and Student's Rights and Responsibilities and are written to align with the tiered system of disciplinary responses. In order to comply with the intent of DCMR and also to support healthy child development, early childhood students may not be suspended for any length of time. This includes in-school and out-of-school suspensions. To access these documents, please visit <http://dcps.dc.gov/node/1014212>.

## Transportation

### DC Kids Ride Free Program

DCPS does not provide yellow bus transportation for students. However, through the DC Kids Ride Free Program, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) now offers students a free Metrobus pass and Metrorail pass. Every student age 5-21 who attends a DC public school is eligible. If you do not have a DC One Card, ask your school, call 202.673.1740, or visit [dconecard.dc.gov](http://dconecard.dc.gov) to get yours. You'll need to register your card online, and the transit benefits will be loaded directly onto your child's DC One Card. For more information, visit [dconecard.dc.gov](http://dconecard.dc.gov).

## Transportation Services

Transportation is a related service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and your child's eligibility is determined by the IEP team based on criteria provided by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Transportation is provided by the OSSE Division of Transportation (DOT).

If you have questions about your child's eligibility for transportation, please contact your child's school. If your child is eligible for transportation and you have questions about the bus, routing or scheduling, please call the OSSE DOT Parent Resource Center at 202-576-5000.

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## School Emergencies, Delays or Closures

The School Emergency Response Plan and Management Guide ([bit.ly/EMGuide](https://bit.ly/EMGuide)) prepares schools to respond to emergencies including weather, natural disasters and threats involving weapons. The guide was developed in partnership with DCPS, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, and other government agencies.

When inclement weather is predicted or occurs, DCPS works hard to ensure students and staff remain safe. The goal is to keep DCPS schools open whenever possible to ensure students have access to all they need, including academic instruction, nutritious meals and healthy extracurricular activity programming. The decision to delay or close schools is made with careful consideration of road safety, sidewalk safety and meal availability. You can always decide whether your child should attend school that day or leave early.

There are several options for staying informed about school emergencies, delays or closures:

1. Listen to the local news on the TV and radio
2. Check the DCPS homepage ([dcps.dc.gov](https://dcps.dc.gov))
3. Sign up to receive email alerts ([dcps.dc.gov/signup](https://dcps.dc.gov/signup))
4. Follow DCPS on Twitter ([twitter.com/dcpublicschools](https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools))
5. Follow DCPS on Facebook ([facebook.com/dcpublicschools](https://facebook.com/dcpublicschools))
6. Sign up to receive text messages by texting NEWS to 91990

If an emergency occurs during the school day, know that the staff has been trained to evacuate the school and will allow you to connect with your child as soon as it is safely possible.

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## School Visitor Policy

Schools are public institutions and they should be open to visits from parents and other interested parties to the extent that visits do not disrupt the education process, a school's operation nor compromise student or staff safety. As such, DCPS facilities will continue to be open to the public as long as visitors do not disrupt school instruction, operation or activities, or threaten the safety and security of students and staff. All visitors must adhere to the posted visitor's policy, which includes showing identification and then reporting to the main office.

# Academic Offerings and Requirements



# Academic Offerings and Requirements

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DCPS understands that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life. DCPS offers program choices and school options that facilitate and nurture this learning process. From early childhood to specialized learning programs in elementary, middle and high school, families are able to select programs for learning that best match their child's interests.

All programs are designed to provide your child with the core knowledge that they need for achievement at high levels:

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary School Academic Offerings
- Middle School Academic Offerings
- High School Academic Offerings
- Promotion and Retention
- Graduation Requirements
- Naviance/Family Connections
- Credit Recovery
- Assessments
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization Waiver ("No Child Left Behind")
- Title I Schools

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## Early Childhood Education (Ages 3 and 4)

DCPS offers Pre-Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (PK4) in every DCPS elementary school in the city. Pre-Kindergarten for 3-year-olds (PK3) is offered in most DCPS elementary schools. Because students are not required to attend PK3 or PK4, and because some schools are unable to accommodate all applicants, these seats are allocated through a fair and equitable lottery system through [MyschoolDC.org](https://www.myschooldc.org).

The early childhood programs have small class sizes with aides and rich indoor and outdoor learning environments to support child development and play-based learning

### Reggio Emilia Approach

Reggio Emilia is an innovative approach to early childhood education that values the child as strong, resilient and capable of constructing their own learning. A list of schools using the Reggio Emilia Approach is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece).

### Montessori

Montessori is designed to capture a child's intrinsic desire to learn. Components necessary for a program to be considered authentically Montessori include multi-age groupings that foster peer learning, uninterrupted blocks of work time, and guided choice of work activity. A list of schools with Montessori Programs is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece).

### Tools of the Mind

Tools of the Mind (Tools) is a research-based program that builds strong foundations for students by building skills in literacy and math while promoting self-regulation. A list of schools with Tools of the Mind is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece).

### Creative Curriculum for Preschool

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that helps teachers be effective, while still honoring their creativity and respecting their critical role in making learning exciting and relevant for every child. Classrooms using the curriculum rely on exploration and discovery as a way of learning and helping children develop confidence, creativity and lifelong critical thinking skills. A list of schools with the Creative Curriculum is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/ece).

## School Created Curriculum

These early childhood instructional approaches have been formulated by the teachers and instructional staff at the school. Please contact the school directly to learn more about their approach to instructing early childhood students.

## Elementary School (Grades K-5)

### Core Elementary School Academics

At each DCPS elementary school and education campus, students in Grades K-5 receive instruction in the following subjects each day:

#### Core Subjects

At the core of the elementary education program are “literacy blocks” and “math blocks” which give students varied instruction and experiences to grow and apply their reading and math skills. Students also experience social studies and science and have the opportunity to participate in art, music, world language and physical education.

#### Special Programs and Instructional Offerings

**Advanced and Enriched Instruction:** DCPS believes that all students have innate talents. Any student that demonstrates above-average academic ability, exceptional creativity and/or a high level of task commitment is eligible to participate in advanced academics.

**DCPS Advanced Readers Extension (DARE) Units:** The DCPS Advanced Readers Extension (DARE) Units is a program for students in grades 2-5, DARE enables advanced readers to read above-grade level books in their classes. This curriculum is offered in more than 25 DCPS schools. For more information, contact your school’s teacher.

**Junior Great Books:** Through this program, offered in grade K-8, students read and discuss complex, thematically-rich literacy texts. The Junior Great Books Curriculum is in nearly 60 schools. A list of schools using this program is available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/advanced-and-enriched-instruction>.



## Cornerstones

Cornerstones are impactful “lesson experiences” taught within the DCPS core curriculum units of study. They are provided to every student in every grade level -- from kindergarten to 12th grade -- across English Language Arts, Math, Science, Art, Music, Physical Education, Health and World Language subjects. Cornerstones reinforce learning with interesting and meaningful real-world connections. With engaging and rigorous content, easy-to-access instructional models developed by teachers for teachers, and organized support from family and community, Cornerstones serve as vehicles to reinforce learning of core concepts and drive success for every educator and every student. Elementary students will participate in four Cornerstone experiences. For more information, visit the website at [dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones](https://dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones) or contact your school’s teacher.

## Global Education

DCPS’ Global Education programs work to ensure that all students have access to the resources and opportunities necessary to become engaged, informed global citizens. Whether greeting heads of state through the Embassy Adoption Program, learning world languages, debating international issues at the Mini United Nations, or participating in International Food Days, DCPS offers students a truly global education, one that prepares them for success both in our international city and our increasingly interconnected world. Select fifth and sixth grade classrooms across DCPS participate in this program. For more information, contact your child’s teacher.

## International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (Grades PK3-5)

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and a global focus, while offering students the chance to do independent research. In the PYP, students are encouraged to develop independence and ask questions about what they are learning. A list of schools offering PYPs is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/IB](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/IB).

## World Languages

At the elementary school level, there are three models for world language learning: Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES), Foreign Language Exploratory in Elementary School (FLEX) and Dual Language Immersion (DLI). FLES programs provide longer regular sessions during the school year in which students develop language proficiency through concepts taught in the subject areas at the respective grade levels. FLEX programs provide students shorter, regular sessions over an extended time in which all students experience language and culture through stories, games, activities, and music. Languages offered in elementary schools include French, Latin, Mandarin and Spanish. Call your school to find out which language(s) it offers.

In DLI programs, beginning in kindergarten, all students are provided instruction in core subjects in two languages, Spanish and English, with instructional time divided evenly between the two languages. A list of schools offering Dual Language Programs is available in the Appendix and online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/global-education>.

## Turnaround Arts

The Turnaround Arts Initiative aims to turn around low-performing schools, narrow the achievement gap and increase student engagement through the arts. Through the Turnaround Arts initiative, schools receive arts education training and resources, such as arts supplies, music instruments and funding for partnerships with community arts education and cultural organizations. As part of the program, high-profile artists “adopt” Turnaround Arts schools and work with students, schools and communities to highlight their success. A list of Turnaround Arts schools is available in the Appendix and online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/academics>.

## Whole School Blended Learning

Whole school blended learning uses a combination of face-to-face instruction and high quality digital content and technology to personalize learning for students. The advantage is that software allows students to learn at their own time, pace, path or place. A list of schools using Whole School Blended Learning is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/blendedlearning](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/blendedlearning).

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

A rich and engaging STEM experience is provided to students through initiatives centering on increasing STEM Literacy (student achievement in math and science), meaningful use of technology, exposure to engineering, and alignment with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Elementary and secondary STEM Fairs are held annually and enable students to apply their STEM knowledge and skills in a real-world context.

## Middle School (Grades 6-8)

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The middle school years are critical bridges between elementary school and high school and to young adult intellectual engagement and civic responsibility. Providing every sixth, seventh and eighth grade student with rigorous and stimulating course offerings is fundamental. Supporting them through their physical and social growth is equally important.

The middle school focus ensures a firm programmatic base and equity in scheduling across the district for all middle grades students. The course schedule summarized below supports this goal.

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### Core Middle Grades Academics

#### All Students in sixth Grade Receive:

- English (full year)
- Math (full year)
- Social Studies, Science and World Language (semester minimum each)
- Art and Music (one term minimum each)
- Health and PE (one semester PE and one term Health)
- Instructional time of 45 minutes/day minimum
  - For all course offering requirements, the length of the class (full year, semester or term) can be attained through an A/B schedule or other formats such that the equivalent of 45 minutes minimum per day is provided to students. *\*There are multiple schedule types implemented across middle schools and high schools, including a 4X4, traditional, hybrid schedule or an A/B schedule. An A/B schedule is distinguished by year-long credit courses, 4 courses per day with alternating days, and 80-90 minutes block classes.*

#### Sixth Grade Intervention Block Options and Electives

- A double intervention block is used for English and Math, along with other differentiated interventions. This time is used for enrichment for students that do not require academic intervention.
- Electives are classes that align with the school theme or student interests.

#### All Students in seventh Grade Receive:

The seventh grade schedule is very similar to the sixth grade schedule, except that either Art or Music is required, instead of both. If Art is a seventh grade class, then Music is an eighth grade class and vice-versa. This allows a second elective to be placed into the schedule.

- English and Math (full year)
- Social Studies and Science (semester minimum each)

- World Language (semester minimum)
- Art or Music (one advisory per year for visual art or music)
- Health and PE (one semester PE and one term Health)
- Instructional time of 45 minutes/day minimum
  - For all course offering requirements, the length of the class (full year, semester or term) can be attained through an A/B schedule or other formats such that the equivalent of 45 minutes minimum per day is provided to students.

## Seventh Grade Intervention Block Options and Electives

- A double block is used for English and math, along with other differentiated interventions. This time is used for enrichment for students that do not require academic intervention.
- Electives are classes that align with the school theme or student interests.

## All Students in eighth Grade Receive:

- English, Math, Social Studies and Science (full year)
  - Algebra must be scheduled for at least one semester
- World Language (semester minimum)
  - For high school preparation, a high school credit bearing semester World Language class should be on an A/B schedule in the eighth grade so that students take the class year-round.
- Art or Music (whichever is not offered in seventh grade, one term minimum)
- Health and PE (one semester PE and one term Health)
- Instructional time of 45 minutes/day minimum
  - For all course offering requirements, the length of the class (full year, semester or term) can be attained through an A/B schedule or other formats so that the equivalent of 45 minutes minimum per day is provided to students.
  - The eighth grade schedule has full year classes for the four core subjects-the best preparation for HS.

## Eighth Grade Electives

- Electives are classes that align with the school theme or student interests. Electives can also be used for interventions or advisory when needed.

A variety of initiatives enhance the middle grades experience. They may include, but are not limited to:

- **Extended Day Program:** School days are extended one hour to 4:15 p.m. daily at schools with staff buy-in as per union contracts. Planning and implementation is staff supported.
- **Socio-Emotional Personnel:** A guidance counselor is allocated for each middle grades school during the year. Guidance counselors will focus on meeting students' greatest socio-emotional needs.
- **Exposure and Excursions:** Students use the city and the region as classroom resources. Trips may include regional and international travel as well as college/university visits. Additionally, for all middle school students a multi-week program, DC Meets Washington, will be available every summer. This program introduces students to role models in high-wage and high-demand career industries in Washington, by taking them on guided work site visits to learn first-hand about careers in construction, engineering, IT and hospitality. And finally, students visit DCPS high schools and DC colleges which have educational opportunities in these high-wage and high-growth career paths.
- **Enrichment Opportunities:** Middle school students need to sample a variety of experiences and disciplines. Many of these varying needs and interests are met through clubs, enrichment activities and interventions scheduled throughout the day. DCPS' goal is to support a band, choir and/or other music class at each school in which students can participate during all three years of their

middle grades experience. Two full-time specialists in schools provide this additional curricular and instructional support around music and health. Multiple athletic opportunities are identified and offered to middle grades students based on the results of student interest surveys administered by the DCPS Department of Athletics. The Department of Athletics has a full-time Athletic Trainer and an Athletic Compliance Coordinator to support these athletic opportunities.



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## Special Programs and Instructional Offerings

### Advanced and Enriched Instruction

DCPS believes that all students have innate talents. Any student that demonstrates above-average academic ability, exceptional creativity and/or a high level of task commitment is eligible to participate in advanced academics. The School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM) and Junior Great Books are two examples of this instruction implemented by DCPS teachers. Advanced and Enriched Instruction also offers DARE units and Project M2/M3 Math Curriculum, while also overseeing the International Baccalaureate Program.

### Junior Great Books

Through this program, offered in Grades K-8, students read and discuss complex, thematically-rich literary texts. The Junior Great Books Curriculum is in 45 schools. A list of schools using this program is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/academics](https://dcps.dc.gov/academics).

### School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM)

SEM is a non-traditional approach to gifted and talented education that uses an enrichment-focused model to provide particularly challenging instructional experiences. Students explore their interests in special topics courses related to STEM and the Humanities and work on independently-designed projects that serve to address issues in their school or local communities. A list of SEM schools is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/academics](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/academics).

### Blended Learning

Blended learning uses a combination of face-to-face instruction and high-quality digital content and technology to personalize learning for students. The advantage is that software allows the students to learn at their own time, pace, path or place. A list of schools using this program is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/academics](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/academics).

## Cornerstones

Cornerstones are high-quality, in-depth core curricular experiences that students will engage in through the DCPS units of study across grade levels and content areas, including ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Health and PE, Social Studies and World Languages. Anchored by top-tier content-specific instructional models, Cornerstones will provide access to rigorous content for every student, improved professional development for teachers that is focused on student work, and continuity and consistency across every grade and every subject. The number of Cornerstones experiences middle school students will participate in will vary. For more information, visit the website at [dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones](https://dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones) or contact your student's teacher.

## International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (Grades 6-8)

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) is a curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and a global focus, while offering students the chance to do independent research. The MYP offers an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based approach engaging students in research, including completing a research-based project on a subject of personal interest; studying a second language; and applying critical thinking skills as they develop as learners. Completing the three-year MYP, students are better prepared for challenging coursework in high school. A list of schools with this program is available in the Appendix and online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/IB](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/IB).

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

A rich and engaging STEM experience is provided to students through initiatives centering on increasing STEM Literacy (student achievement in math and science), meaningful use of technology, exposure to engineering, and alignment with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Elementary and secondary STEM Fairs are held annually and enable students to apply their STEM knowledge and skills in a real-world context.

## World Language Offerings

DCPS provides two program models: traditional and immersion transition language programs. The traditional programs offer language instruction in Arabic, French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin and Spanish. This program is for students new to language learning and from the Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) and Foreign Language Exploratory in Elementary School (FLEX) programs. The immersion transition program, or Spanish Humanities (SH), is offered in Spanish only. This program is for students who successfully complete DCPS' Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs or who are placed based on their advanced language proficiency.

## High School (Grades 9-12)

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The mission of DCPS is to prepare our students for success beyond high school—in college, career and life. We aim to help them achieve at the highest levels, pursue their passions and ultimately become positive contributors to the world around them. DCPS high schools are critical to that mission. Each student has a unique set of needs and interests, and we provide a complement of high school options that allows each student the opportunity to thrive. DCPS operates nine comprehensive high schools, six specialized high schools and a variety of career programs at every high school. (The appendix provides additional detail about the academic programming available in every high school).

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## Comprehensive (Neighborhood) High Schools

DCPS has nine comprehensive, matter-of-right high schools that provide a wide range of academic offerings, including advanced courses, opportunities for learning outside the classroom and career programming. This provides all students options for success in college and career. For more information about each school, view the school's profile on [profiles.dcps.dc.gov](https://profiles.dcps.dc.gov). The comprehensive high schools are:

- Anacostia HS
- Ballou HS
- Cardozo Education Campus
- Coolidge HS
- Dunbar HS
- Eastern HS
- H.D. Woodson HS
- Roosevelt HS
- Wilson HS

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## Specialized High Schools

A specialized high school is a citywide high school with no boundary and has specific admissions requirements and selection criteria. Some specialized high schools provide a broad set of course offerings while others focus on a particular area, from the arts to science and technology. DCPS has six specialized high schools. More details about each school and its application process are available online at [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/specializedhs](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/specializedhs). The specialized high schools are:

- Benjamin Banneker HS
- Columbia Heights EC
- Duke Ellington School of the Arts
- McKinley Technology HS
- Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering HS
- School Without Walls HS

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## Career Education

DCPS offers academically rigorous Career Education programs to further prepare students in college, other forms of postsecondary training, and ultimately a rewarding career. DCPS' goal is to ensure that all of our Career Education programs are rigorous, engaging, lead to college, and include the following components:



- Aligns with the District’s high-wage, high-demand careers
- Offers rigorous curricula that culminates in industry-recognized certification(s)
- Offers work-based learning opportunities (internships, job shadows, guest speakers)

A list of schools with Career Education programs is available in the Appendix and online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/college-and-career-planning>.

## Core High School Academics (All High Schools)

DCPS’ standards have been recognized as among the most rigorous and college-aligned of all the states. Each high school offers a core academic program designed to support students in their preparation for success in college and in careers. The core program is aligned to the D.C. high school graduation requirements and to the Common Core State Standards. The core program includes course offerings in the following areas:

- English Language Arts (minimum 4 credits)
- Mathematics (minimum 4 credits)
- Social Studies (minimum 4 credits)
- Sciences (minimum 4 credits)
- World Languages (minimum 2 credits)
- Art (minimum 0.5 credit)
- Music (minimum 0.5 credit)
- Health & Physical Education (minimum 1.5 credits)
- Electives (minimum 3.5 credits).

Additionally, all students must earn at least two credits in courses that are either college-level or career-preparatory. This requirement helps ensure readiness for postsecondary success.

## Special Programs and Academic Offerings

### Ninth Grade Academies

Each comprehensive (neighborhood) high school has a 9th Grade Academy which supports first-year ninth grade students to transition successfully to high school and promote to the tenth grade in one year. This program model is designed around four strategies: data-driven decision-making; teaming of instructional staff; course programming to meet student needs; and student engagement.

### College Level Courses

**Advanced Placement (AP):** DCPS offers AP courses at every high school. AP courses can help students acquire the skills and habits they need to be successful in college. Students improve writing skills, sharpen their problem-solving abilities, and develop time-management skills, discipline, and study habits. Students have the opportunity to earn college credit and earn exemption from entry-level college courses by taking the AP exam at the end of the school year. Participation in AP course work also indicates to colleges and universities that students have sought a rigorous academic course load to prepare for college success. AP courses are listed by high school in the Appendix and for more information, contact your child’s school counselor.

**Dual Enrollment:** Our high school students may concurrently pursue credit-bearing courses at a local college or university. Students enrolled in the GW Early College Program at Schools Without Walls HS and at the Banneker/McKinley HS Howard University Early College Program will receive both high school and college credit (dual credit) for successfully completing approved courses. Additionally, dual credit is available for eligible students in 13 courses at UDC-CC, with the approval of the school counselor and principal. We are working to expand our college partnerships to offer dual credit programs at all DCPS High Schools. Visit the website at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/dual-enrollment-program> or contact your school counselor for more information on dual enrollment opportunities

**International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (Grades 11-12):** The Diploma Programme (DP) is a curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and a global focus, while offering students the chance to do independent research. The DP is a rigorous and demanding two-year, pre-university program that meets the needs of highly motivated students. DCPS offers the DP at Banneker and Eastern High Schools.

## Cornerstones

Cornerstones are high-quality, in-depth core curricular experiences that students will engage in through the DCPS units of study across grade levels and content areas, including ELA, math, science, social studies, art, health and PE, social studies and world languages. Anchored by top-tier, content-specific instructional models, Cornerstones will provide access to rigorous content for every student, improved professional development for teachers that is focused on student work, and continuity and consistency across every grade and every subject. The number of Cornerstones experiences high school students will participate in will vary. For more information, visit the website at [dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones](https://dcps.dc.gov/page/cornerstones) or contact your student's teacher.

## International Academy at Cardozo EC

The International Academy at Cardozo Education Campus is a program designed to support English language learners who have immigrated to the United States within three years of enrolling in high school. DCPS is partnering with the Internationals Network for Public Schools (INPS), a national non-profit school development organization based in New York City whose mission is to provide quality education for students who have recently immigrated to the United States.

## Twilight/Envision Programs

Twilight programs are designed for over-age and under credited students who wish to get back on track for promotion or graduation. Twilight classes are offered in the afternoon and evening at three comprehensive high schools: Dunbar, Anacostia and Eastern. Eastern refers to the program as the "Envision" program.

Students are generally 16-19 years old and one to two years behind their cohort but no more than two years behind. This is a voluntary program.

## Work-Based Internships

Many high school students taking Career and Technical Education Classes, including the National Academy Foundation (NAF) programs, will have the opportunity of participating in paid internships in their respective fields of study during the school year and summer.

### PARENT TIP: HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH HOMEWORK

*Homework is a way for your child to practice what they are learning in school. When students spend time on meaningful homework exercises, they are more likely to achieve academic success.*

*As a rule of thumb, children benefit from the following:*

- Grades K-2: 10-20 minutes of homework daily;
- Grades 3-6: 30-60 minutes of homework daily; and
- Grades 7-12: more than an hour of homework daily and time will vary from night to night.

*Here are some things you can do to help your child with homework.*

1. *Talk with your child's teacher about homework expectations. How much time should be spent on homework? What role should you play?*
2. *Provide a quiet, well-lit, regular place and time for homework. Providing a healthy snack is helpful too.*
3. *Make sure your child has the tools needed (i.e., paper, pencils and books).*
4. *Be positive about homework.*
5. *Check in while your child works by offering encouragement, not just answers.*
6. *Let the teacher know if your child is struggling with homework.*

# Academic Requirements

## Promotion and Retention

Legislation passed by the D.C. City Council in 2013 (Focused Student Achievement Act of 2013) has changed requirements for promotion and retention of DCPS students.

For Grades PK4-8, the principal will make the final determination for promotion and retention based on teacher recommendation and passing grades.

- For Grades 9-12, promotion depends on whether your child meets the credit requirements for each grade:
- For promotion to Grade 10, students in Grade 9 must pass English I, Algebra I and have earned a minimum of 6 credits.
- For promotion to Grade 11, students in Grade 10 must pass English II and have earned a minimum of 12 credits.
- For promotion to Grade 12, students in Grade 11 must pass English III and have earned a minimum of 18 credits.

For more information about promotion and retention, contact your child's school counselor.

### PARENT TIP:

*Do not wait until your child's senior year to think about what will happen after high school. From kindergarten on, regularly communicate with your child and their teachers to make sure your child is on track academically. Help your child set goals. Celebrate and offer help when challenges arise.*



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## Graduation Requirements (High School)

To receive a DCPS Diploma, students must earn a *minimum* of 24 credits as described below:

Subject	Credits
Art	0.5
Electives	3.5
English	4.0
Health and Physical Education	1.5
Mathematics, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Algebra I</li><li>• Geometry</li><li>• Algebra II</li><li>• Upper Level Math</li></ul>	4.0
Music	0.5
Social Studies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biology</li><li>• 2 lab sciences</li><li>• 1 other science</li></ul>	4.0
Social Studies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World History I and II</li><li>• DC History</li><li>• US Government</li><li>• US History</li></ul>	4.0
World Languages	2.0
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24.0</b>

Your child also must meet the following requirements:

- At least two of the 24 required credits must be earned through courses that are College Level or Career Prep, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or Career and Technical Education courses
- 100 hours of Community Service

If your child attends a specialty high school, he or she may be subject to additional academic or community service requirements

For additional questions about graduation requirements, go to <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/graduation-requirements>.

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## Naviance/Family Connections (Middle & High School)

Naviance/Family Connections is a college and career readiness online program that provides DCPS middle and high school students and parents resources to explore college and career opportunities, develop a road map for future academic success, and track college applications. Staying on course empowers students to set goals and helps them graduate high school prepared for success in college, career and life. Parents can access their children's Naviance account through Family Connections. For more information, go to <http://dcps.dc.gov/node/1013072> or contact the counselor at your child's school.

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## Credit Recovery (High School)

Whether through traditional or blended learning models, DCPS offers students who are off-track academically numerous opportunities to recover credits and get back on track to graduation. High schools offer evening credit recovery. For more information, contact your child's guidance counselor.

### PARENT TIP

*Make sure your child is on track to graduate:*

- 1. Join your child in a meeting with the school counselor early on during the freshman year. Talk about goals, what courses should be taken, and what extracurricular activities should be pursued.*
- 2. Schedule regular follow-up meetings with the school counselor so that you have ongoing communication and ample time to strategize and plan for your child's success.*
- 3. Monitor your child's progress. Is homework completed and handed in on time? Is extra support or tutoring in any of the core academic areas needed? Is emotional support or an additional advisory needed?*
- 4. If your child has failed a course, be sure to discuss options with your child and school counselor about evening credit recovery courses, online credit recovery and summer school opportunities to get back on track.*
- 5. Create a Naviance Parent Portfolio at <http://dcps.dc.gov/service/college-planning>. This provides you even more information about your child that will help you best support him or her.*
- 6. Talk to your child about their long-term goals. What courses match your child's interests? What colleges should your child be considering, and what requirements must your child meet for college admissions? Where can your child complete an internship to gain exposure to a field of interest?*

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## Assessments

We believe that all students can achieve at the highest levels. DCPS measures student achievement in multiple ways, including student participation, coursework and portfolios. Standardized assessments provide common information across classes and schools to help us ensure that all students have equitable access to enriching instruction. Assessments are chances for students to show what they know, not a final demonstration of everything they know.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) requires that all D.C. students in DCPS and charter schools take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) assessments. Students in grades 3-8 or taking algebra, geometry, and high school English I and II will take the PARCC test. OSSE also requires that all D.C. students take the D.C. science test in grades 5 and 8 and again in biology. Both of these assessments are offered online at all DCPS schools. Finally, federal law requires that English Language Learners take the ACCESS test annually to monitor their progress learning in English.

Alternative assessments are available for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities. More information is available through the IEP process.

DCPS offers free, in-school administrations of several important assessments to prepare all students for college applications. High school students take the SAT and PSAT free of charge during a school day (rather than on the weekend), and students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses may take the AP tests free of charge.

DCPS also offers a number of less formal assessments to all schools, so that teachers promptly see a child's progress and can adjust instruction to meet each student's individual needs. We regularly review these assessments to ensure they are a good use of student and teacher time and provide valuable information about student learning. More information about assessments is available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/student-assessment> or you can contact your child's teacher to learn more.

## PARENT TIP

*Here are some things you can do to make test-taking easier for your child:*

- 1. Make sure your child is well-rested and has a healthy breakfast on test days.*
- 2. Make sure that your child has been keeping up on homework and assignments. If you are concerned, talk with your child and the teacher(s) about extra help.*
- 3. Help your child study for the test. Work with your child's teacher to get spelling and vocabulary lists, math fact sheets and unit study guides.*
- 4. Review the test results with your child. Celebrate progress. Talk about incorrect answers to help your child understand and learn from mistakes.*
- 5. Talk with your child about "growth" being most important. No one has to be perfect from the start. It's the growth that we make over time as a result of hard work that is important..*

## Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization (ESEA) Waiver

The 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly known as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB), brought important changes to how schools operate. NCLB remains in effect and is managed by D.C.'s Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

In July 2012, OSSE applied for and received a waiver from the US Department of Education to allow D.C. more flexibility to respond to low school performance and spending federal funds while still providing the instructional services to low-income students with the greatest needs. Under the waiver:

- The accountability system has already been modified. The new approach holds schools accountable for both student performance and growth on standardized assessments.
- Beginning this school year, students in grades 3 to 8 and students enrolled in identified courses will be tested on the Partnership for Assessments of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). The PARCC assessments will replace DC CAS in Literacy and Math.
- Schools are held accountable based on the proportion of their students who are proficient and the proportion who make growth. Schools are then categorized based on these metrics into the following five groups:
  - *Priority* (schools needing intensive support to address low performance);
  - *Focus* (schools needing targeted support to address large achievement gaps);
  - *Developing* (moderate performing schools needing support to continue growth);
  - *Rising* (higher performing schools needing support to continue growth); and
  - *Reward* (schools with the highest levels of student performance and growth).
- Schools now have more flexibility in how they service all students, including those who require intervention and remediation.

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## Title I Schools

A school that receives federal funding based on the number of students receiving free or reduced priced meals is identified as a Title I school. Title I funds are used solely to help schools make necessary improvements and ensure that children, regardless of family income, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and become academically proficient.

To find out if your school is a Title I school visit [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/TitleI](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/TitleI).

Parents in Title I schools have the right to:

- Expect a Parent-School Compact
- Request information regarding the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct their child. Parents have the right to request verification of highly qualified staff requirements. This information can be requested by calling the Highly Qualified Teacher Unit at 202.442.4090
- Be notified if their child's records are released publicly
- Be notified of the rights of homeless children
- Be notified of the rights for English Language Learners
- Be informed of Title I programs provided by the school
- Be informed of The Unsafe Choice Option if your child is the victim of a violent crime at school
- Be informed of the complaint resolution process
- Be informed of the Parent Involvement Policy

For more information about Title I contact Office of Federal Programs and Grants at 202.442.6025.

# Student Support Programs



# Student Support Programs

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DCPS is committed to seeing every student reach his or her full potential. Our goal is to provide a safe, respectful learning environment that is accessible and challenging for all students. DCPS tries to meet this goal with a host of support programs.

- 500 for 500: Mentoring Through Literacy Program
  - Summer School
  - Student Placement
  - Alternative High Schools
  - Bilingual Education/English Language Learners
  - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Student Support
  - Expectant and Parenting Students
  - Neediest Kids Fund/Bridge to Success
  - Homeless Youth
  - Special Education Programs and Resources
- 

## 500 for 500: Mentoring Through Literacy

The 500 for 500 Mentoring Program, a key component of the district’s Empowering Males of Color Initiative (EMOC), connects dedicated adults with students in an effort to provide them with mentorship and ongoing academic support. The primary goal is to improve reading levels among Black and Latino male students while also building the confidence to set a foundation for academic and life success. While this research-based approach will allow committed community members to serve as mentors with a specific focus on early literacy, the program supports mentoring opportunities for students across all grades (K-12). Programming is offered at select schools. To learn more or to sign up to become a mentor, please visit [www.emocdc.org](http://www.emocdc.org).

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## Summer School

DCPS offers several types of school-based summer learning opportunities.

- Summer school is provided for high school students who need credit recovery in key academic areas such as English, Mathematics and Science. Depending on funding availability, seats are opened for students in Grades 9-11 who are also in need of credit recovery.
- Some schools require rising ninth graders to participate in a summer academic program to prepare them for the high school curriculum.
- Limited summer programming is also available for students in Grades K-8.

More information about summer school options is typically available in March of each school year.

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## Student Placement

The Student Placement Office provides school placement assistance and information that will guide students’ choices and decision-making regarding their educational and personal goals. Services are provided to students ages 14-22 who are:

- New residents of the District of Columbia;
- Returning to school from an extended absence due to a life circumstance;
- At risk of dropping out or have dropped out of school;
- Struggling with chronic absenteeism or truancy;
- Transitioning from an incarceration or detention program;
- Behind in credits to graduate;

- Teen parents; or
- Not experiencing success in their current school.

The Student Placement Office services include:

- Assisting students with enrollment in District of Columbia secondary schools as well as gaining access to other educational programs such as public charter schools and credit recovery;
- Connecting students to resources and support services which support academic achievement and success; and
- Monitoring student success in school weekly during the first three months of placement and then monthly for the remainder of the academic year.

Referrals for school placement assistance may come from a central office employee, school staff, student, parent or representative (social worker, probation or parole officer, advocate, court-appointed official, relative) or community-based or District of Columbia agencies. For an appointment, please call 202.939.2004 or by email [student.placement@dc.gov](mailto:student.placement@dc.gov).

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## Alternative High Schools

Our seven alternative high schools are designed to help even our most challenged students complete their education. Offerings include: traditional high school courses, certificated diplomas and career technical programs. The Alternative High Schools are:

- Ballou STAY Senior HS
- Choosing Higher Options for Individually Centered Education (CHOICE)
- Incarcerated Youth Program (IYP)
- Luke C. Moore Academy
- Roosevelt STAY HS
- Twilight Program
- Washington Metropolitan HS
- Youth Services Center.

More information about alternative schools is available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/alternativehs>.

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## Bilingual Education/English Language Learners

Students who communicate in a language other than English and/or if a language other than English is spoken in the home may qualify to receive English as a Second Language services at their school. To determine eligibility, students must take an English proficiency screener (IPT/WAPT) at the Language Acquisition Division (LAD).

A student who presents a valid and official transcript or report card showing subjects studied from the country of origin and grades earned in Grade 9 and above will have their academic records evaluated for the purpose of awarding high school credits.

To schedule an appointment for an initial English proficiency assessment or for a Foreign Transcript Evaluation, call 202.671.0750.

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## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Student Support

DCPS is working to make schools safe and inclusive for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) students, staff and families. Research shows that the way schools and families respond to LGBTQ youth can affect their physical health, mental health outcomes, academic outcomes and their decision-making later in life.

As part of a plan to create an inclusive community, DCPS has:

- Developed anti-bullying and discrimination policies that address bullying and discrimination based upon actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression;
- Trained school liaisons on how to build an inclusive and welcoming school community by implementing programming to support LGBTQ students, staff and families (e.g., support groups such as Gay-Straight Alliances); and
- Increased the presence of LGBTQ role models in school curricula and other resources.

Our Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Policy Guidance is intended to be a tool for schools, parents and students to effectively navigate existing laws, regulations and policies that support transgender or gender-nonconforming DCPS students. It provides guidance to ensure that all students are treated equitably and with dignity at school. Resources include the following: direction to schools on meeting our federal/district obligations to ensure equitable treatment of transgender/gender-nonconforming students; insight for families, students, and school staff who may have questions; and templates, tools, and resources for administrators, school staff, families, and students. To learn more, visit our website at <http://dcps.dc.gov/health>.



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## Expectant and Parenting Students

The New Heights Program for Expectant and Parenting Students (New Heights) provides expectant and parenting DCPS students (male or female) with the assistance, support and guidance they need to handle the responsibilities of raising a child and graduating from high school. The program seeks to keep students engaged in school, improve their graduation rates, prepare them for college or career, and prevent subsequent pregnancies.

New Heights offers:

- Supportive, on-site case management and assistance with securing services such as a child care voucher, WIC, housing, TANF, employment, job training opportunities and college/university admission;

- Educational workshops on topics including, but not limited to, prenatal care, parenting, life skills, financial literacy, career planning and healthy relationships;
- An incentive program that allows participants to earn free items for their children such as diapers, clothing, toys, equipment, accessories; and
- If eligible, program participants receive tokens for transportation.

To learn more about supports offered for expectant and parenting students, visit the DCPS website at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/health-and-wellness>.

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## **Neediest Kids Fund/Bridge to Success**

Neediest Kids is a charitable organization, now associated with the National Center for Children and Families that provides emergency resources to help students whose basic needs might otherwise go unmet. The organization's mission is to help meet immediate needs of students so they can stay in school and reach their full potential. At present, DCPS school staff can request uniforms, shoes, groceries, personal items and medication to support student needs. To learn more about supports offered by this program, contact your child's school counselor or teacher.

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## **Homeless Youth**

Consistent with the federal McKinney-Vento guidelines, DCPS provides immediate enrollment to homeless children and youth who lack a fixed, regular and/or adequate night-time residence.

Homeless children are enrolled in school even when they do not have the typical enrollment forms such as a birth certificate, school or health records, or proof of residency. Students are guaranteed the right to stay in the original school they attended at the time they were displaced or the boundary school for their current, temporary residence.

Students also may be enrolled in another school if it is determined to be in the best interest of the student. Students and parents of younger students are also eligible for additional educational supports from their school including transportation assistance (Metro passes or tokens), uniforms and school supplies.

To learn more about supports offered for homeless youth, contact your school-based homeless liaison or counselor.

# Special Education Programs and Resources

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The Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) serves students requiring additional supports by providing high-quality instruction and services as close to home as possible and in the timely and consistent manner they deserve. Services are designed to promote student achievement, inclusion and independence.

Procedural safeguards are required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and are intended to protect families and children receiving special education services. A copy of the District of Columbia's procedural safeguards is available at <http://osse.dc.gov/service/specialized-education>.

If you suspect your child may have a disability, you should contact your local school for further assistance.

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## Full-Time Programs

DCPS' full-time, districtwide classrooms provide specialized supports to students with 20 or more hours of specialized instruction outside of general education in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). These classrooms are designed to give more support to students with disabilities who have a high level of need.

### Behavior & Education Support (BES) Program

The Behavior & Education Support (BES) program classrooms are full-time classrooms for students who have been identified with an emotional disability or who have challenging behaviors that interfere with learning. Each classroom provides a safe and structured learning environment supported by trained staff focused on individual student goals.

For questions about the Behavior & Education Support Program, please contact [osi.behavior@dc.gov](mailto:osi.behavior@dc.gov).

### Communication & Education Support (CES) Program

#### Formerly known as the Autism Support Program

The Communication & Education Support (CES) program classrooms are full-time classrooms for students who have been identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other learning needs. Teachers and staff in these full-time classrooms support the academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students to help their students develop independent life skills. For questions about the Communication and Education Support Program, please contact [osi.autism@dc.gov](mailto:osi.autism@dc.gov).

### Early Learning Support (ELS) Program

The Early Learning Support (ELS) program offers full-time, early intervention for students in Grades PK3-2. Each classroom uses evidence based interventions and structured lessons to address student goals. For questions about the Early Learning Support Program, please contact [osi.els@dc.gov](mailto:osi.els@dc.gov).

### Independence & Learning Support (ILS) Program

#### Formerly known as the Intellectual Disability Program

The Independence & Learning Support (ILS) programs are full-time classrooms for students who have been identified as having a cognitive or intellectual disability. Each program teaches literacy and life skills to prepare students for employment and long-term independence. For questions about the Independence & Learning Support Program, please contact [osi.lowincidence@dc.gov](mailto:osi.lowincidence@dc.gov).

## Medical & Education Support (MES) Programs

Medical & Education Support (MES) programs are full-time classrooms for students who have been identified with complex medical needs and intellectual or cognitive delays. Each classroom provides a safe and structured learning environment with an emphasis on sensory experiences and related service integration. For questions about the Medical & Education Support Program, please contact [osi.sls@dc.gov](mailto:osi.sls@dc.gov).

## Sensory Support Programs

The Sensory Support programs serve students who are deaf/hard of hearing or who are blind/visually impaired. These programs aim to help students develop the skills they need to learn successfully alongside their non-disabled peers and to live independently. For questions about the Sensory Support Programs, please contact: [osi.sls@dc.gov](mailto:osi.sls@dc.gov).

## Specific Learning Support (SLS) Program

### Formerly the Specific Learning Disability Program

The Specific Learning Support program is for students in Grades 3-12 who have been identified with a specific learning disability or cognitive impairment. Each classroom provides a safe and structured learning environment with an emphasis on individualized instruction. For questions about the Specific Learning Support Program, please contact [osi.sls@dc.gov](mailto:osi.sls@dc.gov).

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## Inclusion Models

Inclusion is not a type of classroom or a place, but rather the philosophy of including students with disabilities in general education settings. The goal of inclusion is to provide students with high-quality instruction that is aligned to grade-level expectations and give them the opportunity to succeed in all areas. One important way inclusion happens is when a student's special education needs are met in the general education classroom.

## Co-Teaching

Co-teaching occurs when two or more adults share the responsibility for teaching some or all of the students in a classroom. This practice provides all students with an opportunity to learn from two educators in an integrated approach to the content.

## Learning Labs (formerly Resource Rooms)

A Learning Lab is a classroom that is separate from the general education classroom where students with disabilities are given direct, specialized instruction and academic assistance. Sometimes this form of support is also referred to as a "resource room" or "pull-out services." Students in this setting spend part of their time in the Learning Lab and part of their time in the general education classroom with modifications and/or accommodations. For questions about co-teaching and learning labs, please contact [osi.sit@dc.gov](mailto:osi.sit@dc.gov).

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## Additional Special Education Resources and Programs

### Section 504 Program

Unlike special education, Section 504 does not prescribe specialized instruction for eligible students. Instead, Section 504 ensures that eligible students with disabilities receive accommodations or services they need in order to access the general education curriculum and other learning opportunities at their DCPS Schools. For questions about the Section 504 Program, please email [504@dc.gov](mailto:504@dc.gov).

## Assistive Technology (AT)

Assistive Technology (AT) is a general term for all technologies determined by an IEP team that help a student with a disability access the school curriculum or setting. AT may range from low-tech solutions, like pencil grips and slant boards, to high-tech devices, like laptops and software. For questions about Assistive Technology, please contact [osi.at@dc.gov](mailto:osi.at@dc.gov).

## Extended School Year (ESY)

Extended School Year (ESY) refers to special education and/or related services provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year as prescribed in their IEP. DCPS offers a summer program to help students retain critical skills that are essential to their progress so they are ready to begin school in the fall. ESY summer sites are located at various schools each year. For questions about Extended School Year, please contact [osi.esy@dc.gov](mailto:osi.esy@dc.gov).

## Home and Hospital Instruction Program (HHIP)

The Home and Hospital Instruction Program (HHIP) provides support for students in grades PK3-12 who have medical or behavioral health conditions that prevent them from attending school. For questions about the Home and Hospital Instruction Program, please contact [hip.dcps@dc.gov](mailto:hip.dcps@dc.gov).

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## Transition Programs

Transition programs at DCPS are pathways and opportunities for students to prepare for post-secondary opportunities.

### Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a school-to-work transition program that takes place in an office setting where students ages 18-21, who are pursuing a certificate of IEP completion, learn real-life skills, receive job training and participate in employment readiness activities. The goal of the program is to help students with intellectual disabilities find employment in their field of interest. Project SEARCH is located at the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For questions about Project SEARCH please email [osi.transition@dc.gov](mailto:osi.transition@dc.gov).

### Competitive Employment Opportunities (CEO) Program

The CEO Program provides students ages 16-22 with disabilities who are pursuing a high school diploma the opportunity to connect with professional mentors who work in a range of occupations. CEO mentors help guide students through the career exploration process. Students work with mentors, attend paid weekly professional development classes, and complete career-focused projects. When students complete the program, mentors assist them in applying for paid summer internships at their organization.

For more information about the CEO program, please visit <http://dcpsceo.com/> or email [osi.transition@dc.gov](mailto:osi.transition@dc.gov).

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## Related Services

### Behavioral and Emotional Supports

Mental Health and Behavioral Support Services delivered by social workers, these services can include group or individual counseling; home visits; and social, emotional and behavioral assessments. School social workers work with teachers to analyze student behavior and functioning over time in order to develop strategies that help maximize learning in the classroom. These social workers also connect students and families with community resources to maximize the impact of in-school behavioral support services.

## Physical Supports: Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy

Occupational therapists (OTs) work to improve students' ability to perform day-to-day tasks, such as reaching and grasping, through developing self-help skills, adaptive behavior and play, and other sensory and motor skills. Physical therapists (PTs) help students with challenges related to movement, such as climbing stairs or transitioning from class to class. After diagnosing these challenges, PTs provide support and assistive technology, such as walkers, to help students travel around the school.

## Psychology

The Psychology team supports students and educators by giving psychological and developmental tests, analyzing information about a student's behavior and cognitive functioning, and interpreting these results with school staff and parents. School psychologists also help school staff and parents develop learning and behavior strategies.

## Speech-Language Pathology

The Speech-Language Pathology team identifies and supports students with specific disorders and delays related to language and communication. The team provides therapy to help students overcome the impact of these challenges on their academic success. For questions about Related Services, please contact [dcps.relatedservices@dc.gov](mailto:dcps.relatedservices@dc.gov).

## Early Stages

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) a school district must identify, locate and evaluate all children ages 3-5 in the school district who may have a disability through a process known as Child Find. Early Stages works with children in DCPS; children in dependent charters, private or religious schools or child-care centers; and children who are not yet enrolled in school. Early Stages also manages Part C Transition. This is the process that determines whether children receiving early intervention services are also eligible for special education services in school.

Early Stages has two evaluation sites:

- Walker-Jones Education Campus, 1125 New Jersey Avenue, NW
- Department of Employment Services, 4058 Minnesota Avenue, NE.

For more information, email [referral@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:referral@earlystagesdc.org) or [info@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:info@earlystagesdc.org).

# Frequently Asked Questions



# Frequently Asked Questions

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This section addresses some of the most commonly asked questions received through our primary public engagement communication portals (i.e., telephone, website, email, and public meetings). These questions are not comprehensive, so if you have additional questions not answered in this handbook, contact DCPS by telephone at 202.442.5885 or by email at [OFPE.info@dc.gov](mailto:OFPE.info@dc.gov).

- Enrollment
- Out-of-Boundary Lottery
- Attendance
- Special Education
- Assessments
- Before and After School Programs

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## Enrollment

**Q:** What's a good way for me to find out more information about DCPS schools?

**A:** There are several ways to learn about DCPS schools: 1) Visit the DCPS school profile webpage at [profiles.dcps.dc.gov](http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov); 2) Look at school websites located on their school profile page; or 3) Visit schools.

**Q:** How do I find my child's in-boundary school?

**A:** You can find your child's in-boundary school by going to <http://1.usa.gov/1thQJAN>. Enter your primary residence in the box on the left-hand side of the page and click "OK". Note: The primary residence is verified during the enrollment process.

**Q:** How do I prove my residency in the District of Columbia in order to enroll my child?

**A:** Proving where you live, also called "verifying residency," is a critical part of the enrollment process. Only residents of D.C. are eligible to receive a free public education in the District. In fairness to that policy, all parents are required to verify residency prior to their child attending school. For most cases, parents will provide documents to the school to prove DC residency as part of the enrollment process.

For more information on providing proof of residency, review the enrollment packet available online at [dcps.dc.gov/enroll](http://dcps.dc.gov/enroll).

**Q:** I didn't enroll my child in a school before the end of the school year. Can he or she still attend a DCPS school?

**A:** Every child has the right to attend their in-boundary school. You can find your child's in-boundary school by going to <http://1.usa.gov/1thQJAN>. You must go to the school to register your child. At that time you will need to provide proof of residency. For more information about enrolling your child, please refer to the "Enrolling in DCPS" section of the Handbook or get more information online at [dcps.dc.gov/enroll](http://dcps.dc.gov/enroll).

**Q:** What is the process for transferring my child to another school?

**A:** Mid-year transfers can be disruptive to your child's learning and development. As such, DCPS does not encourage families to transfer their children out of a school once the school year has begun. All efforts should be made to resolve conflicts and concerns at the school level before a student transfer is facilitated.

In the event a transfer is necessary, you must first complete paperwork to withdraw your child from the current school before enrolling in the new school. Once the transfer process is complete, school staff will transfer your child's records directly from the sending school to the receiving school. For more information, please contact the DCPS Placement Office by telephone at 202.939.2004 or by email at [student.placement@dc.gov](mailto:student.placement@dc.gov).

## The Out-of-Boundary Lottery

### Q: What is the Lottery?

**A:** The My School DC lottery is a school-choice service offered through collaboration between DCPS and the Public Charter School Board that gives families the opportunity to apply for available seats in early childhood programs (Grades PK3 and PK4), out-of-boundary DCPS or charter schools (Grades K-12) and DCPS selective high schools (Grades 9-12). The lottery application is completed entirely online at [MySchoolDC.org](https://www.myschooldc.org). There are no paper applications.

### Q: What resources are available to help families understand the lottery and enrollment process?

**A:** The DCPS Enrollment Team is ready to assist families on a one-on-one basis when it comes to understanding the lottery process. We want to personalize enrollment so parents can be assured that their child is being placed in the right setting. This personalized help session includes assistance in navigating DCPS online resources, referrals to school administrators, and the chance to find out about new and emerging programs.

To receive personalized assistance with the lottery process, you can contact the Enrollment Team by telephone at 202.478.5738 or by email at [enroll@dc.gov](mailto:enroll@dc.gov).

### Q: At what age is my child eligible to enroll in PK3 or PK4?

**A:** Per DC Municipal Regulations, families may enroll a child in PK3 if the child is three years old by Sept. 30 and PK4 if the child is four years old by Sept. 30.

### Q: Is participating in the My School DC Lottery the best opportunity to get my child a seat in PK3 or PK4?

**A:** Unlike Grades K-12, families are not guaranteed a seat in PK3 or PK4, even at your in-boundary school. The only way a child can enroll in PK3 or PK4 is if an application is submitted online through the My School DC lottery. For more information about the PK3/PK4 lottery go to [MySchoolDC.org](https://www.myschooldc.org).

### Q: I plan to enroll my child in our in-boundary school. Do I have to submit a lottery application?

**A:** No. If the child is entering grades K-12 and will attend the in-boundary school, you do not need to submit a lottery application. For more information on enrolling in your in-boundary school, refer to the DCPS website at [dcps.dc.gov/enroll](https://dcps.dc.gov/enroll).

### Q: Are students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) eligible to participate in the lottery?

**A:** Yes. Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are eligible to participate in the lottery. For students with IEPs, an additional review may be performed to ensure that the destination school is fully able to meet the needs of the IEP.

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## Attendance

### Q: Is attending school mandatory?

**A:** Yes! Attending school is required by law for all students who reach at least five years of age on or before September 30th of the current school year. Students must attend school every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18th birthday.

### Q: What are excused absences?

**A:** Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid/legal excuse and parental approval. To see a list of excusable absences please see page 15. Excuse notes must be submitted with 5 school days after the absence occurs.

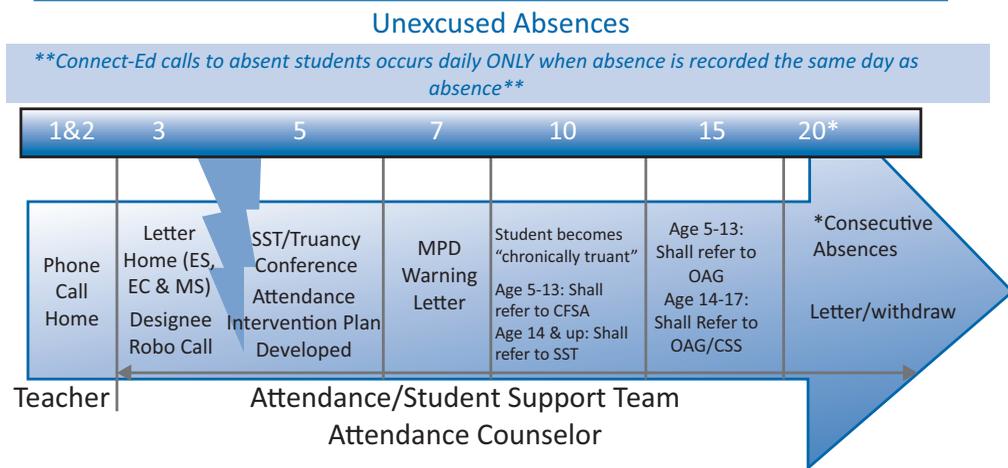
### Q: What is the 80% attendance rule?

**A:** Per D.C. Law, a student will be marked absent if he or she misses more than 20% of the school day.

### Q: How does DCPS address attendance and truancy?

**A:** DCPS provides attendance interventions and supports based on the below Attendance Protocol.

## SY 14-15 DCPS Attendance Protocol



## Special Education

### Q: What is Special Education?

**A:** According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), special education is the specially designed instruction and related services required to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Under this important federal law, DCPS must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to every student. IDEA also mandates that students learn in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means that children with disabilities are taught alongside their peers without disabilities to the greatest extent possible, and are only removed from these settings when the nature of their disability prevents them from learning with their peers without disabilities.

### Q: What is an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

**A:** The IEP is a document that outlines the educational needs of the student and the instruction and services required to meet those needs.

### P: What are the options for my child who has disabilities?

**R:** The special education process starts once a teacher, parent, psychologist, other school staff or a third party (such as a day care center or physician) submits a referral for a student. After the referral is reviewed, an IEP team, comprised of general education teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, other key members of the school, related service providers, the student (if appropriate), and the parent/guardian, meets to discuss the referral, collect (or recommend more) evaluations and determine whether the student is eligible for special education services.

Once a student is found eligible for special education services, the IEP team discusses a plan of action and creates an IEP for the student. The IEP outlines the educational needs of the student and the instruction and services required to meet those needs. Per the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), DCPS provides services in the Least Restrictive Environment to all students with IEPs.

DCPS makes every effort to provide special education services in each student's attending or neighborhood school if the appropriate services are available. When this is not possible, DCPS assigns a student to a district-wide classroom at another school that has space, is as close as possible to the student's home, and can provide the student's IEP services.

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## Assessments

**Q:** Why does DCPS give students tests?

**A:** DCPS is required by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to give the PARCC test in Math and English / Language Arts / Literacy in grades 3-8 and high school, as well as a science test once in elementary, middle and high school. In addition, the DC City Council requires that all high school students take the SAT test to prepare for college applications. ACCESS monitors how English Language Learners are progressing at learning English and NCSC replaces PARCC for approved students with the most severe cognitive disabilities. Any other assessments are used to help teachers and families understand how a student is performing and where instruction is working or needs to be adjusted. Ask your child's teacher for more information or e-mail [dcps.testing@dc.gov](mailto:dcps.testing@dc.gov).

**Q:** How will PARCC impact my child's grades?

**A:** As with the DC CAS, your child's grades will not be impacted by his/her PARCC test scores.

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## Before and Afterschool Programs

**Q:** What are the before- and afterschool options for my child?

**A:** Some schools offer before care services and many schools offer afterschool programming options for primary, elementary and middle grade students through a partnership with the DCPS Office of Out of School Time Programs, community-based organizations or school-led programs. For more information on your school's before- and afterschool options, please contact your school directly.

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## Food Services

**Q:** How do I know if my child is eligible for free or reduced lunch? If my child is not eligible how does he or she pay for lunch?

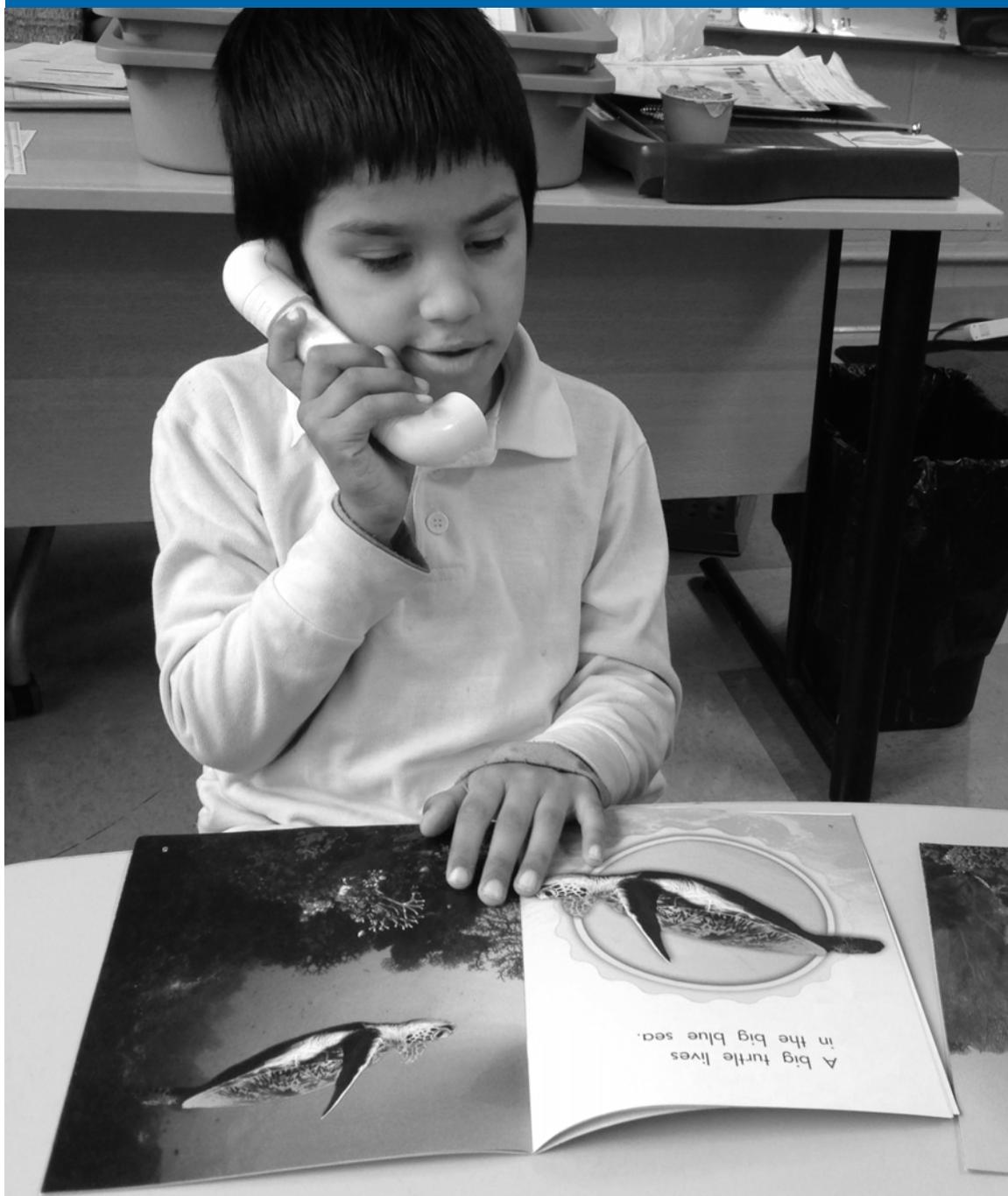
**A:** When you enroll your child, you are asked to complete a Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) form. This form is income-based and determines your child's eligibility. If your child is not eligible for free lunch they must purchase their lunch daily. Options for adding money to a student lunch account vary. More information about paying for lunch is available online at <http://dcps.dc.gov/page/nutrition-and-meals>.

Please note that breakfast is free for every student in every DC Public School.

**Have a question not listed?**

Feel free to contact DCPS by telephone at 202.442.5885 or by email at [OFPE.info@dc.gov](mailto:OFPE.info@dc.gov).

# Central Office Directory



## Directory of Services for Families and Students

DCPS Central Office	202.442.5885
Chancellor's Office	202.442.5885
Academic Services	202.673.4488
Afterschool Programs	202.442.5002
Assessments	202-727-7844
Athletics	202.729.3288
Attendance	202.442.5450
Bilingual Education	202.671.0750
Office of College and Career	202.442.9243
College Programs	202-625-7293
Career Programs	202-727-7904
Office of Teaching and Learning	202.673.4488
Communications	202.805.2885
Community Partnerships	202.719.6613
Data and Strategy	202-719-6637
DC One Card	202.671.2273
Digital Gradebook	202.719.6613
Early Childhood Education	202.698.1033
Early Stages	202.698.8037
Enrollment	202.478.5738
Family and Public Engagement	202.719.6613
Food Services	202.442.5112
Graduation Requirements	202-442-5047
Homeless Youth	202.576.9502
Human Resources	202.442.4090
Instructional Superintendents	202.442.5885
Language Testing	202.671.0750
LGBTQ Student Support	202-724-1505
Local School Advisory Team	202.719.6613
MySchool DC	202-888-6336

New Heights Teen Parent Program	202.645.4040,
Out-of-Boundary Lottery	202.478.5738
Out of School Time	202.442.5002
Residency Verification	202.442.5738
	Visit <a href="http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/">http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/</a> for full school directory
Schools	
Special Education	202.442.4800
Student Placement	202.939.2004
Summer School	202.442.5002
Transportation (Parent Call Center, OSSE Special Education Division of Transportation (DOT))	202.576.5000
Home and Hospital Instruction (formerly Visiting Instructional Services)	202.939.3506
Volunteers	202.442.5447

## Additional Services

### DC Government

Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE)	202.727.6436
DC State Board of Education	202.741.0888
Ombudsman	202.741.0886
Mayor's Call Center	311
City Council	202.724.8000
Emergency Response	911
DC Healthy Families (Free Health Insurance)	202.639.4030
Department of Health	202.442.5955
Department of Behavioral Health	202.673.7440
Child and Family Services Administration (CFSA)	202.442.6100
Report Abuse	202.671.SAFE (7223)

# DCPS Wants to Hear From You!

Parents, families, students:

Is the DCPS Parent Handbook helpful?

Is any information missing or confusing?

Do you have suggestions for future editions?

Please contact us:



[ofpe.info@dc.gov](mailto:ofpe.info@dc.gov)



202.719.6613

# Common Acronyms



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## Common Acronyms

*(This is not an exhaustive list)*

Acronym	Meaning
ANet	Achievement Network Assessment
ALT	Academic Leadership Team
AP	Advanced Placement
APL	Assistant Principal of Literacy
CAT	Community Action Team
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
DC CAS	District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System
DCMR	DC Municipal Regulations
DCPS	District of Columbia Public Schools
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
DLI	Dual Language Immersion
DME	Deputy Mayor for Education
EC	Education Campus
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELL	English Language Learner
ES	Elementary School
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESL	English as a Second Language
FARM	Free and Reduced Meal
FLES	Foreign Language in Elementary School
FLEX	Foreign Language Exploratory in Elementary School
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GED	General Educational Development
GPA	Grade Point Average
HHIP	Home/Hospital Instruction Program
HS	High School
IB	International Baccalaureate
IEP	Individual Education Program
IS	Instructional Superintendent

LCD	Linguistically and Culturally diverse
LEA	Local Education Agency
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning
LSAT	Local School Advisory Team
MS	Middle School
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OCOM	Office of Communications
OCOS	Office of the Chief of Schools
OCOO	Office of the Chief Operating Officer
OCC	Office of College and Career
ODS	Office of Data and Strategy
OFPE	Office of Family and Public Engagement
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
OHC	Office of Human Capital
OIR	Office of Innovative and Research
OOO	Office of the Chancellor
OOO	Out of Office
OSSE	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
OTL	Office of Teaching and Learning
PARCC	Partnership for Assessment or Readiness for College and Career
PK3, PK4	Pre-Kindergarten 3, Pre-Kindergarten 4
SST	Student Support Team
STARS	Student Tracking and Reporting System
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
TRC	Text Reading Comprehension
UHC	Universal Health Certificate

# Appendix: Academic Offerings by School



## PK3 and PK4 Programs

Reggio Emilia Approach	Brent ES Ludlow-Taylor ES Mann ES Maury ES	Miner ES School within a School ES Walker-Jones EC
Montessori	Burrville ES Capitol Hill Montessori ES	Langdon ES J.C. Nalle ES
Tools of the Mind	Amidon-Bowen ES Bancroft ES Barnard ES Beers ES Brightwood EC Brookland EC @ BH ES Browne EC Burroughs ES CW Harris ES Cleveland ES Drew ES SWW @ Francis-Stevens EC Garfield ES Garrison ES Houston ES JO Wilson ES Kimball ES ML King ES Marie Reed ES Noyes EC	Orr ES Patterson ES Payne ES Plummer ES Powell ES Randle-Highlands ES Raymond EC Savoy ES Seaton ES Simon ES Smothers ES Stanton ES Takoma EC Thomas ES Truesdell EC Tubman ES Turner ES @ Green Wheatley EC Whittier EC
Creative Curriculum	Aiton ES Bruce-Monroe ES @ Park View Burrville ES Cleveland ES HD Cooke ES Hendley ES Houston ES Hyde-Addison ES Janney ES Ketcham ES	Ludlow-Taylor ES Maury ES Miner ES Moten ES @ Wilkinson Nalle ES Peabody ES Thomson ES Tyler ES Walker-Jones EC West EC

## Elementary School Programs (Grades K-5)

International Baccalaureate – Primary Years Programme	Browne EC ( <i>Candidate</i> ) H.D. Cooke ES Shepherd ES	Thomson ES Turner ES
Dual Language	Bancroft ES Bruce Monroe @ Park View ES Cleveland ES Columbia Heights EC	Marie Reed ES Oyster-Adams Bilingual School Powell ES Tyler ES
Arts Focus and Integration	Filmore: Hyde-Addison ES Key ES Marie Reed ES Ross ES Stoddert ES	Turnaround Schools: Bunker Hill ES Moten ES Noyes ES Savoy ES Turner ES
Whole School Blended Learning	Browne EC Garfield ES Simon ES Amidon-Bowen ES Truesdell ES Wheatley EC Cleveland ES	Ketcham Randle-Highlands Patterson ES Beers ES Leckie ES Nalle ES Drew ES
Science Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Integration Schools	Beers ES Burroughs ES Langdon ES	Langley ES Malcolm X ES Whittier ES

## Middle School/Grades Programs (Grades 6-8)

School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM)	Hardy MS Kelly Miller MS Johnson MS	Sousa MS Stuart-Hobson MS West EC
Whole School Blended Learning	Browne EC Johnson MS Stuart-Hobson MS Truesdell EC	Kramer HS Hart MS Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC) Wheatley EC
Dual Language Instruction	Johnson MS	Oyster-Adams
School Enrichment Model (SEM)	Stuart-Hobson MS	Sousa Middle School Stuart-Hobson Middle School West Education Campus
International Baccalaureate – Middle Years Programme	Truesdell EC	Eliot-Hine MS ( <i>Candidate</i> )
Science Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Integration Schools	McKinley Middle School Burroughs Education Campus	Langley ES Whittier Education Campus

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## Roosevelt High School

Advanced course offerings	AP Calculus AB, AP Eng Lang & Composition, AP Eng Lit & Composition, AP Studio Art/Drawing, AP U.S. Government, AP U.S. History
World language offerings	French, Spanish
Other program highlights	JROTC

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## Wilson High School

Advanced course offerings	AP Biology, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Chemistry, AP Chinese Language & Culture, AP Comparative Government, AP Computer Science, AP Economics: Macro, AP Economics: Micro, AP Eng Lang & Composition, AP Eng Lit & Composition, AP Environmental Science, AP French Lang (V), AP Human Geography, AP Latin, AP Physics B, AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP Physics C: Mechanics, AP Psychology, AP Spanish Lang, AP Spanish Lit, AP Statistics, AP Studio Art/2-D Design, AP Studio Art/Drawing, AP U.S. Government, AP U.S. History, AP World History
World language offerings	American Sign Language, Chinese, French, Italian, Latin, Spanish
Other program highlights	Art: Digital Arts Lab; Georgetown University Street Law

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## Woodson High School

Advanced course offerings	AP Eng Lang & Composition, AP Eng Lit & Composition, AP Environmental Science, AP Statistics, AP U.S. Government, AP U.S. History, AP World History
World language offerings	French, Spanish
Other program highlights	PE: Archery; Georgetown University Street Law; 9th grade computer science

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## New Heights Program

Anacostia	202.645.4040
Ballou	202.645.3400
Ballou STAY	202.727.5344
Cardozo	202.671.1995
CHEC	202.939.7700 int. 5063
Coolidge	202.282.0081
Dunbar	202.698.3762
Luke C. Moore	202.678.7890
Roosevelt	202.576.8899
Roosevelt STAY	202.576.8399
Washington MET	202.727.4985
Wilson	202.282.0120
Woodson	202.939.2030

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## Specialized DCPS High Schools (Grades 9-12)

DCPS operates six specialized high schools that have admissions requirements. Students from across the city are invited to apply. Each specialized high school has a unique assortment of offerings, and several have a curricular focus for students with special interests. Descriptions of the offerings at each can be found below.

### McKinley Technology High School

McKinley Technology High School is a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) school with an application process for enrollment. The high school offers courses in engineering, biotechnology and information technology. Students who select Engineering or Informational Technology (IT) become part of our National Academy Foundation (NAF) Academies.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: Statistics, Calculus AB, World History, U.S. government, U.S. history, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Biology, Physics 1 – Algebra-Based, English Language, English Literature and Human Geography.

World language course offerings include Spanish and Mandarin.

### Benjamin Banneker High School

The Benjamin Banneker Academic High School is one of the District's International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program sites and offers Pre-IB, Advanced Placement (AP) and its own summer institute as additional rigorous academic options. The Teacher-Advisor and Community Laboratory programs offer one-on-one advising and encourage students to engage in relationships that will shape their futures. Students are admitted through an application process and supported by a variety of character- and skills-building extracurricular activities. The Banneker student experience affords students the opportunity to develop knowledge, talents and exceptional post-secondary experiences.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: Calculus - AB, U.S. History, U.S. Government (Politics and Comparative), World History, Human Geography, English Literature, Statistics, English Language, Biology, Art History, Music Theory, and Chemistry.

World language course offerings include Spanish, French and Latin.

### Columbia Heights Education Campus

Columbia Heights Educational Campus is a unique, globally themed bilingual campus that serves Grades 6 through 12 and prepares all of its students for success in college and careers. CHEC has been recognized as one of the top schools in the area and country on the Advanced Placement Challenge Index for offering Advanced Placement to all students. It also has the only Spanish language dual-immersion high school program in Washington, DC. Students can take a full bilingual program through the 12th grade. In 2013, CHEC was selected by Fight For Children as the winner of the Quality Schools Initiative Award for innovation in education. CHEC students come from over 20 countries, and we use this diversity to complement our globally themed curriculum. Every grade explores a global theme, which ties together students' learning and builds their global awareness.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: . Studio Art/2-D Design, Studio Art/3-D Design, English Literature, English Language, US History, US Government, French, Italian, Spanish Literature, Spanish Language, Calculus AB, Statistics, Computer Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics B, and Music Theory.

World language course offerings include Arabic, French, Italian, Mandarin Chinese and dual immersion Spanish.

## Duke Ellington School of the Arts

Duke Ellington School of the Arts is the only high school in the District of Columbia that combines a full college-preparatory curriculum with intensive pre-professional arts training. With the support of its partners, Ellington serves diverse and talented students from all wards of the city. Students are admitted through an audition and interview process into one of eight majors: Dance, Instrumental Music, Literary Media & Communications, Museum Studies, Technical Design & Production, Theater, Visual Arts and Vocal Music. Students perform and exhibit their work at the Kennedy Center, the White House and national and international events.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: Art History, Studio Art/Drawing, English Literature, English Language, US History, US Government, World History, French, Calculus AB, Biology, Chemistry, and Music Theory.

World language course offerings include French, Italian and Spanish.

## School Without Walls High School

School Without Walls (SWW) is a public magnet high school established in 1971 and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Over the years, the school has become one of the most outstanding schools in the District of Columbia Public School system. In 2010, Walls was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School, a program that honors schools whose students achieve at high levels. Newsweek's 2013 list of America's best high schools ranked School Without Walls as a top school. School Without Walls provides a quality student-centered environment that maximizes integrative, interactive and experiential learning within the framework of a humanities approach. This program is achieved by using the city and the world as a classroom for our students.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: Studio Art/Drawing, English Literature, English Language, U.S. History, World History, Human Geography, Psychology, US Government, French, Latin, Spanish Language, Chinese, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Statistics, Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics C: Mechanics, Physics 1: Algebra-Based, and Music Theory.

World language course offerings include French, Latin, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese.

## Phelps Architecture, Construction and Engineering High School

Phelps is a city-wide, application high school with a rigorous, innovative curricula. It is the first public high school in the country to offer both college preparatory and career and technical education exclusively dedicated to the design professions and construction trades and offers industry certification upon course sequence completion. The entire building is designed as a teaching tool, with walls serving as master lessons in bricklaying and exposed plumbing providing examples of best practices in construction. Phelps ACE offers a focus on a real world, project-based curriculum supported by core academic courses such as English, Mathematics, Physical, Social and Computer Sciences, History, Fine Arts and World Languages. Courses are taught using multiple intelligences, CTE and social preparation, integrated core academics, cooperative learning and team teaching in order to create a multi-dimensional, real-world academic environment focused on student achievement.

The following AP courses are offered at the school: Studio Art/Drawing, English Language, US History, Psychology, Environmental Science, Biology, and Music Theory.

World Language course offerings include Spanish and Mandarin.

# Career Education Programs in DCPS High Schools

The goal of DCPS' Career Education Office is to ensure that our schools are offering high-quality programs that align with the District's high-wage, high-demand careers. These programs are designed to prepare students for success in both college and career. In School Year 2014-15, over 6,000 students at 15 of our schools enrolled in CTE Programs. Below is a summary of DCPS' existing CTE Programs, including the industry-recognized certifications to which each program culminates.

School Name	Career Education Program	Industry Certification
Anacostia	Law Enforcement	None
	Emergency Medical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPR</li> <li>• National Registry EMT</li> </ul>
Ballou	Mass Media & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe CC: After Effects, Premier Pro</li> <li>• Final Cut Pro X</li> </ul>
	Automotive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASE Auto Maintenance and Light Repair Certification</li> </ul>
	Biotechnology	None
	Culinary Arts (Opening in School Year 2015-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ServSafe Food Handler Certification</li> <li>• ProStart National Certificate of Achievement (National Restaurant Association)</li> </ul>
	Hospitality Management (Career Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Guest Service Professional</li> <li>• Certified Front Desk Representative</li> <li>• Hospitality and Tourism Management Program Certificate of Completion (American Hotel &amp; Lodging Educational Institute)</li> </ul>
Ballou STAY	Culinary Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ServSafe Food Handler Certification</li> <li>• ProStart National Certificate of Achievement (National Restaurant Association)</li> </ul>
	Interactive Media (Opening in School Year 2015-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe CC: Photoshop, After Effects, Premier Pro, Dreamweaver</li> <li>• Maya</li> </ul>
	Cosmetology* Barbering*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District of Columbia Board of Barber and Cosmetology License</li> </ul>
Cardozo EC	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autodesk Certified User Certification</li> </ul>
	Electro-Mechanical Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISCET (International Society of Certified Electronics Technicians)</li> </ul>
	Interactive Media (Career Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe CC: Photoshop, After Effects, Premier Pro, Dreamweaver</li> <li>• Maya</li> </ul>

\*Program not funded by the Career Education office

School Name	Career Education Program	Industry Certification
Columbia Heights EC	Engineering	• Autodesk Certified User Certification
	Hospitality Management (Career Academy)	• Certified Guest Service Professional • Certified Front Desk Representative • Hospitality and Tourism Management Program Certificate of Completion (American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute)
	Computer Science	• CompTIA Security+
	Cosmetology*	• District of Columbia Board of Barber and Cosmetology License
Coolidge	Business Administration	• Microsoft Office Specialist Certification
	Mass Media & Communications (Opening in School Year 2015-16)	• Adobe CC: After Effects, Premier Pro • Final Cut Pro X
Dunbar	Finance	None
	Early Childhood Education	• Child Development Associate (CDA)
	Engineering (Career Academy)	• Autodesk Certified User Certification
	Shoe Repair*	None
Eastern	Emergency Medical Services	• CPR • National Registry EMT
	Biomedical Sciences	None
Luke C. Moore	Business Administration	• Microsoft Office Specialist Certification
	Interactive Media (Opening in School Year 2015-16)	• Adobe CC: Photoshop, After Effects, Premier Pro, Dreamweaver • Maya
McKinley Tech	Biotechnology	None
	Engineering (Career Academy)	• Autodesk Certified User Certification
	Networking/IT (Career Academy)	• CompTIA A+ & Security+ • Cisco CCENT
Phelps ACE	Carpentry	• NCCER Certification
	Electrical	• NCCER Certification
	HVAC	• NCCER Certification
	Welding & Sheet Metal	• NCCER Certification
	Plumbing	• NCCER Certification
	Networking/IT (Career Academy)	• CompTIA A+ & Security+ • Cisco CCENT
	Engineering	• Autodesk Certified User Certification
Architecture and Design	• NOCTI Architectural Drafting	
Roosevelt	Business Administration	• Microsoft Office Specialist Certification
	Culinary Arts (On Hold Until Building Renovation Complete)	• ServSafe Food Handler Certification • ProStart National Certificate of Achievement (National Restaurant Association)

\*Program not funded by the Career Education office

School Name	Career Education Program	Industry Certification
Roosevelt STAY	Interactive Media (Opening in School Year 2015-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe CC: Photoshop, After Effects, Premier Pro, Dreamweaver</li> <li>• Maya</li> </ul>
	Culinary Arts (On Hold Until Building Renovation Complete)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ServSafe Food Handler Certification</li> <li>• ProStart National Certificate of Achievement (National Restaurant Association)</li> </ul>
	Barbering*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District of Columbia Board of Barber and Cosmetology License</li> </ul>
	Cosmetology*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District of Columbia Board of Barber and Cosmetology License</li> </ul>
Wilson	Mass Media & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Cut Pro X</li> </ul>
	Finance	None
	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autodesk Certified User Certification</li> </ul>
	Biomedical Sciences	None
	Interactive Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe CC: Photoshop, After Effects, Premier Pro, Dreamweaver</li> <li>• Maya</li> </ul>
	Hospitality Management (Career Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Guest Service Professional</li> <li>• Certified Front Desk Representative</li> <li>• Hospitality and Tourism Management Program Certificate of Completion (American Hotel &amp; Lodging Educational Institute)</li> </ul>
	Computer Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CompTIA Security+</li> <li>• AP Computer Science</li> </ul>
Woodson	Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronics Technicians Association: PV Installer, SW Installer, &amp; Smart Grid</li> <li>• RESNET Certification: Energy Auditing</li> </ul>
	Computer Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CompTIA Security+</li> </ul>
	Business Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Office Specialist Certification</li> </ul>

\*Program not funded by the Career Education office

DCPS Contact: Dr. Erin Bibo, Deputy Chief of College and Career Education ([erin.bibo@dc.gov](mailto:erin.bibo@dc.gov))

# Career Academies in DCPS High Schools

The National Academy Foundation (NAF) Academies center around three themes: Engineering, Hospitality and Information Technology (IT), which align closely with high wage and high demand jobs in the District. Embedded within the Academy model are strong college and industry partnerships, internships and rigorous curricula that culminates in industry-recognized certification. All Academies are supported by Industry Advisory Boards whose members include local business leaders. It is our expectation that all Academy graduates continue on to college before pursuing a career.

#	School Name	Academy Type	Industry & College Partners	Industry Certification
1	Ballou HS	Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC Hospitality Industry Advisory Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certified Guest Service Professional &amp; Front Desk Representative Certifications (American Hotel &amp; Lodging Association Educational Inst.)</li> <li>Customer Service Certification (National Retail Federation)</li> </ul>
2	Cardozo EC	IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC IT Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>Developing College Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adobe ACA Printshop, Dreamweaver, Flash, &amp; Premier</li> <li>Maya</li> </ul>
3	Columbia Heights EC	Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC Hospitality Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>Dual Enrollment at Montgomery College (Proposed)</li> <li>Dual Enrollment at UDC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certified Guest Service Professional &amp; Front Desk Representative Certifications (American Hotel &amp; Lodging Association Educational Inst.)</li> <li>Customer Service Certification (National Retail Federation)</li> </ul>
4	Dunbar HS	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC Engineering Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>Project Lead the Way (PLTW) End of Course Exams Eligible for College Credit</li> <li>College Partnerships through PLTW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autodesk Certified User Certification</li> </ul>
5	McKinley Tech HS	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DC Engineering Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>Project Lead the Way (PLTW) End of Course Exams Eligible for College Credit</li> <li>College Partnerships through PLTW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autodesk Certified User Certification</li> </ul>

#	School Name	Academy Type	Industry & College Partners	Industry Certification
6	McKinley Tech HS	IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC IT Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>• Developing College Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adobe ACA Printshop, ADA Dreamweaver, Flash, &amp; Premier</li> <li>• Maya</li> <li>• CompTIA A+ &amp; Security+</li> <li>• Cisco CCENT</li> </ul>
7	Phelps ACE HS	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC Engineering Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>• Project Lead the Way (PLTW) End of Course Exams Eligible for College Credit</li> <li>• College Partnerships through PLTW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autodesk Certified User Certification</li> </ul>
8	Wilson HS	Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DC Hospitality Industry Advisory Board</li> <li>• Dual Enrollment at UDC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Guest Service Professional &amp; Front Desk Representative Certifications (American Hotel &amp; Lodging Association Educational Inst.)</li> <li>• Customer Service Certification (National Retail Federation)</li> </ul>

# Get Involved!

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Would you like to work more closely with your school this year? Here's how!

- Join your school's parent organization or Local School Advisory Team.
  - Support your child's learning at home by asking about school.
  - Read with students during or after school.
  - Share your wisdom and life experiences by mentoring a student.
  - Connect high schools with internships at your workplace.
  - Donate books to school libraries or classrooms (but ask first!).
  - Volunteer with a local organization that works with schools—all skills welcome!
  - Visit [dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/volunteer](https://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/volunteer) for more information.
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## Find Us Here

### At School

Staff are always ready to provide information, answer questions, give a school tour and address concerns.

### Online

Stop by [dcps.dc.gov](https://dcps.dc.gov) for important updates and student stories.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram for snapshots of DCPS school life: [@dcpublicschools](https://www.instagram.com/dcpublicschools).

Like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/dcpublicschools](https://facebook.com/dcpublicschools).

### On the Phone

Questions? We're ready to help: 202.442.5612.

Sign up for the latest updates by texting "DCPS" to 91990. Standard data and messaging rates may apply.

### In the Community

Keep an ear out for community meetings throughout the year to provide input on DCPS programs and initiatives.