

DCPS Community,

As we approach the last week of this school year, I am writing today with important information around how we are recognizing the **Class of 2020**, updates for our **summer learning** calendar, and how we are prioritizing health and safety as we **look to reopen schools**. You should hear more from your school about this news, and you can always follow us on social media — @DCPublicSchools on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) — for the latest.

Updates for today:

- Announcing 'DCPS Persists' and Graduation Dates
- Summer Enrichment Programs Go Online
- How to Reopen Strong this Fall

Our school community has gone above and beyond for students and families by providing creative virtual lessons, strong mental health supports, access to healthy meals, and so much more. Our families have also graced us with flexibility as learning shifted beyond the classroom and provided useful feedback around your child's education. I am incredibly proud of the dedication and commitment I see every day and simply want to say, thank you.

### **Announcing 'DCPS Persists' and Graduation Dates**

Today, Mayor Bowser provided an update on her efforts to safely reopen the District, including summer programming at DC Public Schools. She also announced an exciting new DCPS program, DCPS Persists.

Our schools educate the future leaders of our city and our nation. A core element of this work and preparing every student to meet the challenges of tomorrow is ensuring our students are prepared for college, career and life. As Mayor Bowser emphasized today, it is our responsibility to ensure that our students who go to college have the support and guidance they need to earn a degree on the path to a fulfilling career.

With the support of the Mayor, DCPS is excited to launch a brand-new program called [DCPS Persists](#) that will provide the Class of 2020 (and beyond) a guaranteed support network as they embark on the next chapter of their educational journey.

College will be full of new experiences, including some that will feel unexpected, especially freshman year. DCPS Persists is designed to help our graduates navigate these experiences and stay focused on their goals through individualized support and a community network. DCPS Persists is funded by the DC Public Education Fund through a generous investment from the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation.

We will notify 750 graduating seniors that they are eligible to be matched with a DCPS Persists Coach who will help them get the most out of their college experiences. This may include help with class registration, academic supports, financial aid, and navigating their college campus: all just a phone call or text away. Every college bound DCPS graduate will be able to join a Pre-College Orientation this summer, have access to the DCPS Alumni Network and receive online resources focused on success in college. These supports and opportunities will be available for DCPS graduates beginning with the Class of 2020.

[Learn more about this program](#) and how a support network through DCPS Persists can help you take the next step to college.

Planning is also underway to hold **virtual graduation ceremonies in June**. Traditional milestones for our seniors will look different this year, but we remain committed to holding joyful, student-centered graduation celebrations for the Class of 2020 that will be streamed online. High schools are finalizing details on how students will receive their cap and gown, senior yearbook, and other materials ahead of graduation and will share more information directly with families.

Visit our [graduation ceremony page](#) for the latest schedule of virtual events, and high schools will share more information directly with families.

### **Summer Enrichment Programs Go Online**

Health conditions continue to require that learning take place out of the classroom, so DCPS will offer a virtual summer school to provide students with opportunities for enrichment and keep them on the path to graduation. [Free grab-and-go meal service](#) will also continue at school locations citywide throughout the summer. Please note, however, student meals and grocery distribution will not take place this Monday on Memorial Day.

**From June 22 to July 24, DCPS will provide virtual summer programming for students in grades K-12.** Enrichment offerings for elementary and middle school students will focus on literacy, science, math, and social-emotional learning, while high school courses will focus on credit recovery, and there will also be English Learner programming. Extended School Year (ESY) services will be available to eligible students. ESY services will include special education and related services outlined in the ESY section of eligible students' IEPs. Additionally, Career Ready Internships will continue in a virtual environment.

For our K-5 summer learning, we are partnering with organizations that will help bring our curriculum to life in a virtual setting. Interactive videos, engaging texts, and culminating projects will bring the hands-on experience of our traditional summer enrichment program online. Since these enrichment programs are virtual, students who are using a DCPS technology device at home will be able to keep it throughout the summer.

**Information about how to sign up for virtual summer learning is available at [dcps.dc.gov/summer](https://dcps.dc.gov/summer).**

We also anticipate offering an in-person “summer bridge” program in August, should health conditions allow. This option would be hosted at every DCPS school and available to all students in grades 3, 6, and 9, with a focus on an enrichment curriculum.

### **How to Reopen Strong this Fall**

School will be different at the start of the 2020-2021 School Year. Our teachers and staff are already thinking about what it will take to safely reopen our buildings. We will hold two weeks of virtual professional development sessions to begin tackling how we support the transition from learning at home to learning in a new school environment. Today, Mayor Bowser also announced that that next school year will start on August 31 as planned.



Mayor Bowser will use the [recommendations from the ReOpen DC education committee](#) and DC Health to determine how we may welcome students and teachers back into our facilities in the fall in the safest way possible. DCPS remains committed to being transparent with our community as this work moves forward and will provide opportunities to engage with families around how to prepare for next school year.

More information is forthcoming around our 2020-2021 School Year calendar, but we encourage all families to complete their SY20-21 enrollment online at [enrolldcps.dc.gov](http://enrolldcps.dc.gov). At the link you can find enrollment forms and a FAQ for families to help with the electronic submission process. As a reminder, My School DC extended the deadline to claim your matched seat until Monday, June 15.

I hope you can take time this holiday weekend to connect with family, respect the Mayor's stay at home order, and wear a mask if you go outside or to an essential business. On Memorial Day, we honor the sacrifice our armed forces made for our country and ask that you keep the lives they helped save in your thoughts as we each do our part to protect the health and safety of our community.

With appreciation,

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.  
Chancellor  
DC Public Schools