



Capitol Hill Cluster School
Where Every Child Achieves
Peabody | Watkins | Stuart-Hobson | A DC Public School

MScott Berkowitz
Principal

Natalie Edmonds
Assistant Principal

La-Tarsha James
Assistant Principal

Tanisha Montgomery
Director of Strategy & Logistics

Dear Peabody and Watkins Panthers!

I am so proud and excited for another year of rigorous and joyful learning experiences at Peabody and Watkins! Building on the success of last year, we will continue our focus on ensuring every student and family feels a sense of belonging through our staff-student relationships and instruction that is challenging for every student. I'm very excited to start our new year! We have a variety of ways to orient and connect you with us for a strong start and fulfilling school year. Please read more below!

Sneak a Peek of your classroom. Caregivers and students will be welcomed into the school building to preview their classroom, say hello (briefly) to their teachers, and talk with classmates- new and old. Watkins: August 22 at 2:30pm-3:30pm. Peabody: August 23 at 9am-10am. **Come with your child's classroom supplies to drop in the classroom.**

Need to know details for a successful first day and year:

All K-5 students will start on August 26.
All PreK students will start on August 29.

- Peabody: doors open at 8:30am, class starts at 9am. Dismissal between 3:05pm-3:15pm.
 - o Peabody families can continue to walk students to the classroom during the first days of school and throughout the year. However, caregivers are not permitted to enter the classroom and should say "good-bye" at the door.
- Watkins: doors open at 8:10am, class starts at 8:45am. Dismissal at 3:15pm.
 - o On the first day and every day, caregivers should plan to say goodbye to their child at the front door to the school. Caregivers are not permitted to walk their child to their classroom.

School meals: Watkins students will receive free meals (breakfast, lunch, and after-school snack). Peabody students will continue to receive free breakfast and afterschool snack; however, **lunch will cost \$3.00** for students who do not qualify for free and reduced meals. Applications for Free and Reduced Meals can be found here: <https://dcps.dc.gov/farm>. At Peabody only, students participating in school meals, who do not qualify for free lunch, must have a LINQ Connect account. Create an account at <https://linqconnect.com> and select register. Students' meal accounts function as debit accounts. The cost of the meal is deducted when they go through the lunch line. A LINQ Connect account is not required for Watkins students, as all students receive free meals.

If your child requires dietary accommodations, please complete and submit their form to dietary.forms@k12.dc.gov or to your school's cafeteria manager. DCPS Food and Nutrition Services does not require a new form each school year. Please visit <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/dietary-accommodations> for more information.

Caregivers should not send lunch to school via delivery services, nor should caregivers expect that school staff can heat up lunch. We do not have the capacity to honor those requests.





Capitol Hill Cluster School
Where Every Child Achieves
Peabody | Watkins | Stuart-Hobson | A DC Public School

MScott Berkowitz
Principal

Natalie Edmonds
Assistant Principal

La-Tarsha James
Assistant Principal

Tanisha Montgomery
Director of Strategy & Logistics

Whenever possible, administer medications at home. If your child needs **access to medications or medical treatment during school hours**, please complete the following steps:

1. Have your medical provider complete the appropriate forms – [Medication and Treatment Authorization Forms](#), the [Asthma Action Plan](#) and the [Action Plan for Anaphylaxis](#). These forms are available from your school's main office and online: <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1003562>.
2. **Drop off the medicine and required paperwork to the school nurse.** In the nurse's absence, they can be turned into Ms. Carraway at Watkins and Ms. McPherson at Peabody on Wednesday, August 21 from 8am-12pm. Medications will not be accepted without the appropriate paperwork.
3. **Communicate** your child's medical needs to their homeroom teacher. Please note that your child will not be able to receive medication during the school day (including on field trips) until steps 1 and 2 have been completed.

Before and aftercare sign-ups are now open at both schools. See <https://www.capitolhillclusterschool.org/24-25-before-after-care> to sign up now. Aftercare will start on the first day of school. Before care will start September 2nd.

New this school year, families who qualify for free and reduced meals (FARM) will receive a reduced rate of \$110 per month **for FLEX aftercare only**. **You must notify the school of your FARM status to receive this discounted rate. To do so:** **1)** complete the FARM application ([LINQ Connect - Making Schools Stronger](#)); **2)** Once completed, you will receive an automated email; **3)** After you receive the email, forward it to tanisha.montgomery@k12.dc.gov; and **4)** register at flexacademies.com and pay the \$30 registration fee. The school will communicate with FLEX regarding families who should receive the discounted rate.

Families will receive a welcome email from their teacher with important and class-specific information during the week of August 19th. Until then, teacher assignments will not be shared.

I hope all our Panthers have a fantastic last few weeks of summer! We are so excited to welcome you back to Peabody and Watkins on August 26! Please stay up to date on all our school events by reading our [weekly Principal's Message](#) on our school website. It is sent to families on Fridays once the school year begins.

This year we are mailing fewer documents home. Instead of paper, all the summer mailer information is posted on our website <https://www.capitolhillclusterschool.org/sy23-24>. Go there to find much more information!

We will have a fantastic school year together!

In service,
Principal Berkowitz

