



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! Last spring our students reported an all-time high on the Loved, Challenged, and Prepared Panorama survey. We expect to build on that success for even deeper connections and learning this year while continuing to prioritize the health, safety, and wellness of our students and staff.

We will follow all the health and safety policies of DCPS, which can be found at <https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/>. I expect some changes from last year, but those policies have not been finalized as of this writing. DCPS will update caregivers when they are finalized, and I will host a [Community Town Hall](#) on August 23 at 7pm to discuss our health and safety practices as well as tips for a successful school year.

Need to know details for a successful first day and year

All K-5 students will start on August 29.

All PreK students will start on September 1.

- Peabody: doors open at 8:30, class starts at 8:45. Dismissal- 3:00-3:15.
- Watkins: doors open at 8:10, class starts at 8:45. Dismissal- 3:15.
 - o On the first day and every day, caregivers should plan to say goodbye to their child at the front door. Caregivers will not be permitted to walk their child to their classroom.

While breakfast remains to be free and available to all students, **lunch will cost \$3.00**. Applications for Free or Reduced lunch are included in this packet. 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.

Before and aftercare sign-ups are now open at both schools. See our website (<https://www.capitolhillclusterschool.org/>) for information.

To ease the stress of the first day of school, both schools will offer **early drop-offs for supplies**. Instead of having your child lug heavy supplies on the first day of school, please come to your child's school on August 23 and 24 from 8-9am and 4-5pm. All supplies should be labelled with your child's name and teacher's name.

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New this year: **Classroom Sneak A Peek!** Prior to the first day of school, 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. Kindergarten: August 25 at 9-10am and Watkins: August 25 at 2:30-3:30pm. PreK visits will be arranged by classroom teachers.

Whenever possible, administer medications at home. If your child needs **access to medications or medical treatment during school hours**, please 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>. Caregivers can **drop off the medicine and required paperwork** with Ms. Carraway at Watkins and Ms. Brooks at Peabody on Wednesday, August 24 from 9am-2pm. Please note medications will not be accepted without the appropriate paperwork.

Unlike previous years, this mailer will not include your child’s teacher assignments. At Peabody there will be three new homeroom teachers and at Watkins there will be four. All the new teachers are fantastic and have been selected for hire. However, they are not through the lengthy onboarding process, and we cannot announce them yet. I also don’t want some students and families to learn their teachers’ names while others do not. I expect teachers to be fully hired before the first day of school. We will communicate all hired classroom assignments before August 23 and students and families will learn who their teacher will be at that time.

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 29! Please stay up to date on all of our school happenings by subscribing to our weekly Principal’s Message on our school website: <https://www.capitolhillclusterschool.org/principalmessag>. There is so much information in this packet, including your supply list, PTA information and much more on our website.

We will have a fantastic school year together!

In service,
Principal Berkowitz

