



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 307 | Washington, DC 20004

June 1, 2021

Dear District Families,

Without any doubt, this has been a year like no other for our schools. We have faced incredible challenges head on, navigated a new approach to learning, and built hundreds of virtual communities. I will forever be grateful to our dedicated teachers, and to you – our parents and families who have played an invaluable role in supporting our students' learning and emotional development over the last sixteen months.

Now, we can be grateful that it is time to look ahead to next school year, one in which all students will be back in school. Our children do best when they are in school surrounded by friends and caring teachers, and Mayor Bowser has set a clear expectation for all schools to be fully open, safely serving all students.

To achieve this, your school's staff and District agencies are working hard to create safe facilities and design dynamic programming. We are proud of the investments and planning we have already done that helped us bring more than 28,000 public school students back for in-person learning this school year. We have marveled at the dedication of our teachers and staffs, and we have reveled in the joy felt by kids as they return to school buildings.

I know many families have questions about returning to school and whether a virtual option will be offered. Due to the critical benefits of in-person learning, and the robust health and safety protocols to support the wellbeing of students, staff, and families, distance learning in School Year 2021-22 will only be available to a small number of students with a medical condition that requires distance learning due to COVID-19. Families will work with their child's physician or nurse practitioner to document that need. You can expect to receive more information about this process from your child's school.

We know everyone's circumstances are unique, and families have a range of concerns as well as comfort levels related to returning to full time in-person learning. We appreciate and value the diverse perspectives we have heard and want to assure you that your child's safety is our number priority. Please know we are listening and taking every precaution to ensure a safe and welcoming return to school.

We have been through a lot together, and this is a critical moment for us as a city to continue to pull together to provide our children the best learning experience possible. We cannot wait to have students back in schools this fall.

Sincerely,

Paul Kihn
Deputy Mayor for Education