

September 2023

Dear Families,

I'm thrilled to welcome you to the 2023-24 school year! Thank you for choosing New York City Public Schools. I hope you all are returning from the summer break refreshed and ready to jump into an exciting new year of learning.

For me, nothing compares to September and the first exhilarating week of classes—when I get to visit schools throughout the five boroughs, meet parents, and welcome students and teachers back. When I get to see the hope and promise in children's faces and feel that familiar nervous energy that charges the air with electricity. When I get to watch students tap into their curiosity and creativity, and experience awesome “aha” moments as they challenge themselves academically. When I get to see children’s brilliance and unique abilities, knowing that their families and teachers will inspire them to reach even greater heights with each passing day.

To ensure we set up our students for success, this September I am doubling down on our mission: to offer every child a bright start...and a clear pathway to a bold future. This means a year full of strong academics, enriching sports and arts programs, healthy and delicious school meals, safe, inclusive classrooms, and so much more.

NYC Reads, our groundbreaking initiative to ensure that all students are proficient readers, continues to lead the charge. This initiative features new, evidence-based curricula rooted in the “science of reading” and supplemented with phonics—the proven method for teaching children to be confident readers. Literacy truly is the foundation for all learning and is essential to clearing a path to our students’ bold futures.

Whether that future includes college, technical training, or an apprenticeship, we will make sure that all students graduate with a plan to achieve long-term economic security—and equipped with the tools, resources, and support they need to unlock their full potential and open every door of opportunity.

You can find important information and updates about academic policies, health and safety protocols, and more at schools.nyc.gov/bts2023. To download a printable Back to School checklist, please visit schools.nyc.gov/btschecklist.

September is just the beginning of what I know will be a truly exceptional school year. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for entrusting your children’s education to us. I’m so excited about all the great things we’ll accomplish together this year!

Soaring high,



David C. Banks
 Chancellor

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