



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

MScott Berkowitz
Principal

Ebon McPherson
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 with you for a strong start and fulfilling school year.

Peabody Playdate – August 11, 4pm. All Peabody students and families are welcome to gather on the playground with me, AP James and other staff. We will take a quick tour of the building, but mostly spend time connecting!

Watkins Panther Academy – August 13, 4pm. New to Watkins students and families (including at 1st graders) are welcome to join the leadership and culture teams for a fun-filled orientation.

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 21 at 2:30pm-3:30pm. Peabody: August 22 at 9am-10am. **Come with your child's classroom supplies to drop in the classroom.** Supply lists can be found on our website: <https://www.capitolhillclusterschool.org/sy25-26>

All K-5 students will start on August 25.

All PreK students will start on August 28.

- Peabody: doors open at 8:20am, class starts at 8:45. Dismissal is between 3:10pm-3:20pm.
 - 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 8:20am, class starts at 8:45am. Dismissal begins 3:15pm and ends at 3:30.
 - 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. Please also notify your child's teacher. 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.





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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. Lunches sent via delivery services will not be accepted.

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. Shields at Peabody. 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/before-after-care> to sign up now. Aftercare will start on the first day of school. Before care will start September 2nd at both campuses.

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, go to the website above and follow the steps.

This spring, [DCPS enacted restrictions on personal devices](#). Personal devices may not be used during the school day by students without approval. At Watkins, all cellphones and personal electronic communication devices (i.e. smart watches) will be collected at the door. At Peabody, student devices will need to be turned off and stored in their backpacks.

Families will receive a welcome email from their teacher with important and class-specific information during the week of August 18th. Until then, teacher assignments will not be shared. We also do not honor teacher requests.

For more information about the upcoming school year, please [visit our website](#) (linked above.)

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 25! 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.

We will have a fantastic school year together!

In service,





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