

September 18, 2020

#ReopenStrong: Redesign in a Virtual Setting

From the Chancellor

This post is an email sent by Chancellor Ferebee to the DCPS community on September 11, 2020.

Dear DCPS Community,

Across the district, students, families, and educators are adjusting to learning at home. Our schools continue to set a high bar of excellence for students by adapting programs, initiatives, and strategies to fit what students and families need in this moment. One of those strategies, Redesign, continues its efforts at Anacostia and Ballou High Schools, even in a virtual setting.

Last December, I joined Mayor Bowser and members of the Anacostia and Ballou school communities to [announce the Redesign “big bets”](https://dcps.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-announces-transformation-anacostia-and-ballou-high-school-programming-students) (<https://dcps.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-announces-transformation-anacostia-and-ballou-high-school-programming-students>). Through Redesign, Anacostia and Ballou are embarking on a remarkable, community-driven journey to [transform the experience](https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/status/1303378049476460548) (<https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/status/1303378049476460548>) we provide to our high school students, rethinking how we address inequities and how we prepare young people for success, not just in school, but in life.

Each school’s “big bets” are strategies grounded in feedback from students, staff, families, and community members that we believe will have a transformative impact on the student experience when implemented. We engaged with more than 1,700 stakeholders from across the school community — students, families, alumni, staff, and others — to arrive at three big bets they believe will transform the educational experience for students at each high school.

Anacostia’s “big bets”:

- **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** – Put simply, PBL is learning by doing. Through Redesign and a partnership with New Tech Network, students will investigate and tackle personal and real-world challenges in their communities, exploring themes of environmental and social justice.
- **NAF Career Academies** – In addition to the existing Public Leadership pathway, Anacostia High School will introduce a new Civil and Environmental Engineering pathway that prepares students for high-demand careers. The school is partnering with the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) to provide educational programming and other resources to support Anacostia’s environmental focus and career academies.
- **Dream Team** – Students have a designated group of consistent and committed adults trained in brain science and adolescent development who support students in and out of school to ensure they remain on track to graduate with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary for post-secondary success.

Ballou’s “big bets”:

- **Case Study Methodology** – During their high school experience, Ballou students will engage in a total of 16 real-world case studies, presented by local and national business partners, supported by an exclusive partnership with 3DE by Junior Achievement.
- **NAF Career Academies** – Through Redesign, Ballou will build on strong career pathways currently offered at the school, including Culinary Arts, Automotive Technology, and Hospitality. Students will have access to a new, innovative Computer Engineering and Information Technology

pathway that prepares them for high-demand careers.

- **Healing-Centered Practices** – The Ballou Knights community will see an intentional investment in healing-centered practices for students' and adults' social-emotional development, supporting and developing the entire school community. Now, both schools are hard at work delivering on these commitments, even while adapting to the context of virtual learning. From online Dream Team mentoring check-ins at Anacostia, to a virtual 3DE case challenge with Deloitte at Ballou, both schools are creating meaningful and responsive learning experiences for their students.

I encourage you to continue to track the Redesign journey by following the #WhyAna and #ChooseBallou hashtags on our [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dcpublicschools/) (<https://www.facebook.com/dcpublicschools/>), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/) (<https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/>), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/dcpublicschools/) (<https://www.instagram.com/dcpublicschools/>) accounts.

Stevens Early Learning Center

This school year, we are also reopening the historic Thaddeus Stevens School as the first citywide, standalone Early Learning Center with three PK3 classes, two PK4 classes, and three self-contained special education classes. Through a partnership with CentroNia, Stevens will also serve as a childcare center for infants and toddlers aged 0 to 3.

Early childhood educators from across DCPS now call the Stevens Early Learning Center home, and earlier this year, we welcomed [Principal Amelia Hunt](https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/status/1290396523310665728) (<https://twitter.com/dcpublicschools/status/1290396523310665728>) to the DCPS family. You can get to know the school's Pre-K teachers and Principal Hunt on [their website](https://sites.google.com/dc.gov/stevenselc/home) (<https://sites.google.com/dc.gov/stevenselc/home>). You can also read more about their approach to virtual instruction for our youngest learners and receive recommendations for their favorite children's books.

Priority seats are still available for Pre-K students, and families can call (202) 698-0667 or email StevensELCenroll@k12.dc.gov (<mailto:StevensELCenroll@k12.dc.gov>) to learn more about how to enroll. You can also contact us to join a meet and greet on September 17 at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. for families interested in CentroNia's childcare for infants and toddlers aged 0 to 3 at Stevens Early Learning Center, or apply online at [centronia.org/wait-list-application/](https://www.centronia.org/wait-list-application/) (<https://www.centronia.org/wait-list-application/>). (Childcare programming is expected to begin in November.)

Stevens Early Learning Center enrollment information is also [available in Spanish](https://45biv636w8lm1agg3ozqtgg1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Spanish_Stevens-ELC-Resource-Packet_Aug.-2020.pdf) (https://45biv636w8lm1agg3ozqtgg1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Spanish_Stevens-ELC-Resource-Packet_Aug.-2020.pdf).

Enroll In DCPS

Enrollment is still underway across DCPS, and families can submit their forms electronically at enrolldcps.dc.gov/node/76 (<http://enrolldcps.dc.gov/node/76>). If you need help completing your enrollment, a list of phone numbers and email addresses for every school is [available on this PDF](https://enrolldcps.dc.gov/sites/dcpsenrollment/files/page_content/attachments/SY20-21%20School%20Enrollment%20Contact%20List_FINAL.pdf) (https://enrolldcps.dc.gov/sites/dcpsenrollment/files/page_content/attachments/SY20-21%20School%20Enrollment%20Contact%20List_FINAL.pdf), and schools are planning in-person enrollment events later this month.

Families are encouraged to call their school directly for enrollment support, but you may also contact the DCPS Enrollment Team at enroll@k12.dc.gov (<mailto:enroll@k12.dc.gov>) or call (202) 478-5738.

Additional updates for families this week continue below, including information about a new free internet service program for District residents.

Sincerely,
Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.
Chancellor

IMPORTANT UPDATES

Free Internet For DC Students

This week, Mayor Bowser launched the \$3.3 million Internet for All initiative to provide free high-speed internet access for up to 25,000 disconnected low-income students and families from DCPS and public charter schools. This program is being managed by the DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in partnership with the Deputy Mayor for Education and the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE).

Eligible households will receive a call, text message, or email from DC Government asking if they'd like to join the program and for consent to share their name, address, phone number, and email with the internet provider that will be providing their service, either Comcast or RCN. [Check out the schedule](https://45biv636w8lm1agg3ozqtgg1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FLYER-INTERNET-4-STUDENTS-ENG.png) (<https://45biv636w8lm1agg3ozqtgg1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FLYER-INTERNET-4-STUDENTS-ENG.png>) to learn when you may be contacted to receive this free service and learn more at www.techtogetherdc.com/internetforall (<https://www.techtogetherdc.com/internetforall>).

New Backgrounds For Virtual Meetings

Missing live concerts at the Howard Theater? A ride on the National Mall carousel? Or having a moment of reflection at the MLK Memorial? You can now download photos of famous D.C. landmarks for use during virtual meetings or as your computer background or screensaver. [Find your favorite spot here](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/new-backgrounds-for-virtual-meetings/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/new-backgrounds-for-virtual-meetings/>).

September 14: Virtual Budget Town Hall

For Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), which will take effect in School Year 2021-2022, we are taking a step back to holistically evaluate our budget model.

Please join our FY22 Budget Town Hall on Monday, September 14 at 5:30 p.m. to learn more about our budget priorities. You can [RSVP at this link](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dcps-fy22-budget-virtual-town-hall-foro-abierto-del-presupuesto-2022-tickets-119506498153?aff=ebcollection) (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dcps-fy22-budget-virtual-town-hall-foro-abierto-del-presupuesto-2022-tickets-119506498153?aff=ebcollection>) or join directly on Microsoft Teams at bit.ly/dcpsfy22budget914 (<http://bit.ly/dcpsfy22budget914>). (ASL and Spanish interpretation available.)

September 26: Empowering Males Of Color (EMOC) And Reign Virtual Conference For Students

On Saturday, September 26 at 10:00 a.m., EMOC and Reign will host Virtual Vibes: Surviving to Thriving. This virtual space is designed for DCPS students of color in grades 6 – 12 to connect, heal, and be empowered through an array of engagements and exciting workshop offerings. [Register here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dcps-emocreign-conference-virtual-vibes-surviving-to-thriving-tickets-118032078123) (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dcps-emocreign-conference-virtual-vibes-surviving-to-thriving-tickets-118032078123>) by September 21 to receive free conference swag.

Reminder: Complete The 2020 Census

DCPS families, it's not too late to complete the 2020 Census! It takes just a few minutes to ensure our schools receive their fair share of federal funding for the next 10 years. If your family has already been counted, thank you. If not, please complete the 2020 Census as soon as possible at 2020census.gov (<http://2020census.gov>) or call 1-844-330-2020.

Households that do not self-respond online, by mail, or on the phone will be visited in-person by a US Census taker before the end of September.

Please visit dcpsreopenstrong.com (<http://dcpsreopenstrong.com>) for back-to-school updates and follow @DCPublicSchools on social media.

Address: District of Columbia Public Schools
1200 First Street
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Phone: (202) 442-5885



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(<https://dcps.dc.gov/>)



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