

November 29, 2020

With gratitude from DCPS

From the Chancellor

This post is an email sent by Chancellor Ferebee to the DCPS community on November 27, 2020.

Dear DCPS Community,

As we take a break from the school routine this week and safely connect with loved ones, we extend our sincerest gratitude to our educators and school staff who work tirelessly on behalf of students and families. This year has been unlike any other. Your dedication, resourcefulness, creativity, and joy remain steadfast. Thank you for your service to DC Public Schools; we appreciate all that you do.

Over the coming weeks, we will use these email updates to spotlight the many individuals who are part of the DCPS community. In our first installment, we asked a few principals to share how the opening of CARE Classrooms went, and you can read more below.

Thanksgiving marks the beginning of a season of intentional appreciation—for what we have and for the many gifts we are given by connections with loved ones, as well as our broader community. We also recognize Native American Heritage Month this November. Our region is home to several Native American tribes, including the Nacotchtank, also known as the Anacostians. To learn more about how your family can honor and pay tribute to the rich ancestry and history of Native Americans, visit the [DC Public Library \(https://www.dclibrary.org/nahm\)](https://www.dclibrary.org/nahm) or see resources for educators and students from the [Center for Racial Justice in Education \(https://centerracialjustice.org/resources/lorem-ipsum-dolor-sit-amet/\)](https://centerracialjustice.org/resources/lorem-ipsum-dolor-sit-amet/).

With thanks,

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.
Chancellor

#REOPENSTRONG SPOTLIGHT: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CARE CLASSROOMS



LaSalle-Backus Education Campus (LBEC) has a CARE Classroom open for Kindergarten students facilitated by school staff. **Principal Shelly Gray** reflected on the first week of this new model. [You can read her full essay and see more photos on DCPSReopenStrong.com.](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-lasalle-backus-education-campus/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-lasalle-backus-education-campus/>)

"Our Leopards are happy to see each other. They are enjoying spending time in the garden and on the blacktop. The two options for outdoor spaces have enabled us to teach our small group of students how to play outside and maintain a healthy and safe space between each other. Our Leopards continue to receive online instruction from their teachers and Literacy Lab tutors. They are receiving a healthy balance of learning and play during their day at school. LaSalle is committed to creating an environment that is safe, warm, and welcoming to all members of the school community. In doing so, the community is embracing the changes and the expectations to keep each other safe."

Principal Gray, LaSalle-Backus Education Campus



Payne Elementary School has a CARE Classroom open for 3rd grade students facilitated by school staff. **Principal Stephanie Byrd** reflected on the first week of having students back at school. [You can read her full essay and see more photos on DCPSReopenStrong.com.](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-payne-elementary-school/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-payne-elementary-school/>)

"Recess has returned to the grounds at Payne Elementary School. Joyful screams and laughter fill the air. Ashton chases Nicholas, Lauryn slides, and Theo pushes Suraya on the swing. On a warm day in November, coats are strewn across the number three, which was painted on the black top as an indication of where third graders should brighten their spirits."

Principal Byrd, Payne Elementary School



Stanton Elementary School has CARE Classrooms open for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students facilitated by staff at their partner organization, AlphaBest. **Principal Harold McCray** reflected on the first week of this program. [You can read his full essay and see more photos on DCPSReopenStrong.com.](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-stanton-elementary/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/updates/reopenstrong-spotlight-stanton-elementary/>)

"As we have recently opened three CARE classes for Term 2, our students, staff, and community partner (AlphaBest) maintain a safe and supportive learning environment. The same expectations for virtual learning still apply in person, except there is real-time support and feedback to help students navigate and be successful. This year we have adopted the school theme 'Rise Above the Circumstances.' Everything we do this school year has been centered around improving academic scholar achievement and focusing on the social and emotional growth of our students and ourselves."

Principal McCray, Stanton Elementary School

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