

News Release: New, Expanded Programs Welcome More Than 126,000 Students To Prince George's County Public Schools

August 22, 2014

For Immediate Release

CONTACT:

Office of Communications

301-952-6001

communications@pgcps.org (<mailto:communications@pgcps.org>)

With the opening of the 2014-15 school year just days away, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is finalizing preparations to welcome over 126,000 students to its 208 schools.

More than 800 new teachers and 30 new principals will join their colleagues as Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell enters his second year as Chief Executive Officer. This year marks the first International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme at Melwood Elementary School and John Hanson French Immersion, a new Spanish Immersion program at three elementary schools, an innovative Aerospace Engineering and Aviation Technology Career Academy at DuVal High School, and the opening of Edward M. Felegy Elementary, a creative and performing arts themed, state-of-the-art school in Hyattsville.

"We are excited to welcome our students to the new school year," said Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, Chief Executive Officer for PGCPS.

"From building preparations to staff training and development, we have been working all summer to make sure we have a successful year focused on the goal of high academic achievement for all our students."

New Buildings, New Locations

The new Edward M. Felegy Elementary School opens the first day of school to welcome students from Hyattsville. The school was named after former superintendent Edward M. Felegy, who served PGCPS for more than 37 years. Its comprehensive program features a creative and performing arts theme with vocal and general Music, and the school is built to achieve LEED Gold certification for energy efficiency.

Robert Goddard French Immersion moves into its own building at the newly-renovated, historic Greenbelt Middle School. As part of the school district's continued progress in improving facilities, Glenarden Woods Elementary School moves into the Robert Goddard Montessori School site and Tulip Grove Elementary School moves into the former Meadowbrook Elementary School. Students will be temporarily housed at these locations while their buildings are being renovated this year.

New Programs and Expansions

New and expanded programs will be in place at several schools. The highly-anticipated Spanish Immersion program begins with kindergarten students at Cesar Chavez, Phyllis E. Williams and Overlook Elementary Schools. To meet growing demand for specialty programs, additional capacity was added in the French Immersion, Montessori, and Talented and Gifted programs.

For the first time, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme will be offered at John Hanson French Immersion and Melwood Elementary. Additionally, an IB Middle Years Programme opens at Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School, and an IB Diploma Programme begins at Frederick Douglass High School. A number of elementary schools have also expanded their language offerings and a select group of middle schools have added Italian to the slate of language options for students to learn.

In the county's "Transforming Neighborhood Initiative" (TNI) areas, all-day prekindergarten expands with additional classrooms at Allenwood, Doswell Brooks, and Indian Queen Elementary Schools. The number of Community Outreach Assistants, many of whom are bilingual, grows to 60 schools, up from 30 last year.

Students at Oxon Hill and Thomas Johnson Middle Schools will have the opportunity to experience new STEM programs where teachers will engage students in various levels of thinking and articulation of the conceptual understanding of science concepts, reasoned with evidence.

High School Enhancements

Supported by partnerships with the College Park Aviation Museum, NASA, local colleges and universities, and private industry, the new Aerospace Engineering and Aviation Technology Career Academy Program opens at DuVal High School to prepare students for college and high-demand careers. Existing **Career Academies** (http://www1.pgcps.org/new_career_academies.htm) will expand at 11 high schools. (http://www1.pgcps.org/new_career_academies.htm)

As part of a system-wide initiative to boost graduation rates, online credit recovery will now be available at all high schools.

SchoolMax Parent Portal Now a Mobile App

Parents who use the **SchoolMax Parent Portal** (<https://family.sis.pgcps.org/schoolmax/family.jsp>) on a desktop computer will now have the option of using it on their smartphone. Parents who use the mobile app will be able to view grades, attendance, and assignments.

Transition and Orientation Days

On Thursday, August 21, prekindergarten and kindergarten students attended an orientation program at their schools.

For the first time, on Monday, August 25, students entering middle school in 6th or 7th grade and high school in 9th grade will attend an all-day program at their schools. The **Transition Day** (<http://www1.pgcps.org/communications/press.aspx?id=196749>) allows students to participate in their regular school schedule and attend an information session designed to provide them with the academic and social resources they need for a successful school year.

New Principals

Thirty schools will welcome new principals.

Adelphi Elementary School - Chelsea Hill, Acting
Avalon Elementary School - Veda McCoy
Baden Elementary School - Antron Huff, Acting
Barack Obama Elementary School - Megan Ashworth
Benjamin Stoddert Middle School - Michael Gilchrist, Acting
Bradbury Heights Elementary School - Yvette Faison, Acting
Capitol Heights Elementary School - Nina Lattimore
Carrollton Elementary School - Nancy Schnicker
Central High School - Daryl Kennedy, Acting
CMIT North K - 5 - Treesa Elam-Repass, Acting
CMIT South 6 -7 - Ali Gurbaz
Drew-Freeman Middle School - LaTrecia Gloster, Acting
Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School - Dwight Jefferson, Acting
Edward M. Felegy Elementary School - Walter Reap
Frederick Douglass High School - Eddie Scott, Acting
G. James Gholson Middle School - Jacqueline Marshall-Hall, Acting
Glenn Dale Elementary School - David Dove, Acting
Greenbelt Middle School - George Covington, Acting
Heather Hills Elementary School - Nema Manuel, Acting
Imagine Andrews Public Charter - Doug Rice, Acting
Imagine Foundations at Leeland Public Charter - Lance Pace, Acting

Northwestern High School - Elaine Murray, Acting
Seat Pleasant Elementary School - LaChonta Richardson, Acting
Tanglewood Regional - Debra Pearce
Thurgood Marshall Middle School - DeMarco Clark, Acting
University Park Elementary School - Toi Davis, Acting
Valley View Elementary School - Kimberly Pettway
Whitehall Elementary School - Prentice Christian
William Wirt Middle School - Roger Prince

New Charter Schools

Chesapeake Math & IT Academy (<http://www.cmitacademy.org/index.php?lang=en>), a public charter school in Laurel, will expand opportunities for students to take part in its rigorous, STEM-centered academic program by opening two new schools. A second site in Laurel will add grades K-5 to the program, and the new CMIT South school in District Heights will bring the program to 6th and 7th graders in southern Prince George's communities.

New Electronic Payment Portal

PGCPS has a **new, secure online payment service** (<http://www1.pgcps.org/communications/press.aspx?id=195368>) for families. MySchoolBucks will enable families to pay for school meals, monitor their child's cafeteria purchases, make tuition payments for Before and After School Extended Learning programs, and receive email notifications for low account balances.

Updated State Immunization Requirements

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has made two changes to the **state-required immunizations** (<http://phpa.dhmmh.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/SitePages/back-to-school-immunization-requirements.aspx>) for students for the 2014-2015 school year. In addition to the existing school immunization requirements, all students entering kindergarten must have had two varicella (chicken pox) vaccinations, and all students entering 7th grade must have had one Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) vaccination and one meningococcal (meningitis) vaccination. This change will primarily impact students coming from a country outside of the United States. A child has up to 20 days from the start of school to show proof of vaccinations or that they have started a plan to get the missing immunizations.

Added Security for Students and Staff

Visitors to our school buildings will notice several additional security features. Schools are equipped with doors accessible by electronic entry. Staff and emergency responders will be able to access buildings with a scan card; the public may press a button to request entry from the school's office. Panic buttons have been installed at all school and office facilities and may be used in the event of an emergency. All schools now have an electronic visitor management system installed that requires visitors to present a state-issued identification card. The card will be scanned and cross-checked against the national sex offender registry and existing court-ordered protective orders.

All schools and offices have closed circuit television systems installed and are monitored by security and administrative staff. The cameras provide coverage of the interior and exterior of buildings. For additional security in elementary schools and K-8 academies, security fencing has been installed around all temporary classrooms.