



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Christopher Thompson, Principal | christophe2.thompson@pgcps.org
13725 Briarwood Drive | Laurel, MD 20708 | 301-497-3620 | www.pgcps.org/dwightdeisenhower

August 21, 2026

Dear Eisenhower Students, Families, and Community Partners:

It is my distinct honor to introduce myself as the new Principal of Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School. My name is Chris Thompson, and I write to you today with a heart full of gratitude and a deep sense of responsibility. I did not arrive at Eisenhower by accident. I came here because I believe in what this community is and what it can become, and because I have spent my career — as a classroom teacher, department chair, assistant principal, and principal — learning that a school reaches its highest potential only when the people inside it and the families and partners around it move in the same direction, together. That is the kind of school I intend for Eisenhower to be, and that is the invitation I am extending to you today.

I want to speak plainly, because I believe you deserve that. I am new to this building, and I know that change at the top of any school brings questions. Will the new principal understand what makes this place special? Will they listen? Will they stay long enough to matter? I hear those questions, and I would ask them too. So let me tell you what I can promise from the very first day: I will be present and visible — in the hallways, at the car-rider line, at your events, and at the door each morning. I will listen before I act, and I will tell you the truth even when it is not the easiest thing to hear. I will protect what is working, and I will have the courage to change what is not. And I will treat your children the way I would want my own children treated — with dignity, with high expectations, and with the unwavering belief that every single one of them is capable of more than they yet know.

What drew me here.

Eisenhower is not an ordinary middle school. You are a Title I school, a Community School, and an AVID school, which means this building was built to wrap support around students and families rather than to sort them. Your young people have access to creative arts and rigorous coursework, which will allow them to accelerate into higher level-courses in high school. You carry the Maryland Green School designation, a recognition that speaks to a culture of stewardship and care for the world our students will inherit. You partner with Junior Achievement Finance Park to give students real financial literacy, and with Hazel Health to bring mental health support directly into the school day. These are not bullet points on a brochure. They are proof that this community already believes its children deserve something more than the minimum, and I came here to help that belief reach every classroom, every day.

I also know that more than half of our students come from families whose first language is not English. To those families, I want to say directly: you belong here, you are welcome here, and you will never be an afterthought in how this school communicates. I am committed to bilingual communication, to translation and interpretation at our events, and to making sure that nothing important we share ever stops at a language barrier. Your voice matters in this school, and I intend to make sure you can use it.



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Christopher Thompson, Principal | christophe2.thompson@pgcps.org
13725 Briarwood Drive | Laurel, MD 20708 | 301-497-3620 | www.pgcps.org/dwightdeisenhower

To our students — this is your school.

If you are reading this, whether you are a returning Eagle or a sixth grader walking through our doors for the first time, I want you to know one thing above all else: we are glad you are here. Middle school is a season of big feelings, big changes, and big questions about who you are and who you want to become. That is not a weakness; it is the most important work of these years, and we are going to take it seriously. I am going to expect a lot of you — because I believe in you — and I am also going to make sure you have the adults, the tools, and the support to meet those expectations. You will hear me say it all year: soar higher, achieve more, raise the bar. That is not just for the adults. That is for you. I cannot wait to meet you.

To our families — this is a partnership.

As a parent myself, I understand that sending your child to school each day is an act of trust. You are trusting us with the people you love most in the world, and I do not take that lightly. I want you to know that you are not dropping your children at a door and hoping for the best; you are entering a partnership, and I need you in it. The research is clear and my experience confirms it: students whose families are connected to their school do better — academically, socially, and emotionally. So I am asking you, not as a formality but as a genuine request, to stay close this year.

Read the communications we send. Check ParentVUE. Come to Back to School Night on **Sept. 8th**. Pick up the phone or send the email when something does not feel right, and trust that we will pick up on our end. You know your child better than anyone in this building, and that knowledge is a resource we need. You will hear from me regularly. I plan to send a weekly message, in both English and Spanish, so that you always know what is happening, what is coming, and how you can be part of it. You will also see me outside the front office at arrival and dismissal, and at the games, concerts, and family events that make a middle school feel like a community rather than a building. Please introduce yourself. I want to put names to faces, and I want to learn this community one conversation at a time.

To our community partners — thank you, and let's go further.

To the organizations, faith communities, local businesses, and agencies that already give so much to Eisenhower: thank you. The wraparound supports you provide — from our Community School coordinator's work to Hazel Health, Junior Achievement, and the many others who show up for our students — are part of what makes this school different. I want to know you, to understand what you do well, and to find the places where our shared work can go deeper. If you have partnered with Eisenhower before, I want to continue that relationship. If you have considered it, I want to start the conversation. Our students are worth the investment, and I believe this community has the generosity to match their potential.



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Christopher Thompson, Principal | christophe2.thompson@pgcps.org
13725 Briarwood Drive | Laurel, MD 20708 | 301-497-3620 | www.pgcps.org/dwightdeisenhower

What comes next.

Our doors open to students on Tuesday, August 25, following a Student and Family Orientation on Monday, August 24. I encourage every family to attend orientation if you are able — it is the best way to walk the building, meet your child's teachers, pick up schedules, practice opening lockers, and get your questions answered before the first bell. Details will follow in a separate communication. In the meantime, please know that our front office is open and ready to help with anything you need to get ready for the year.

In these first weeks, my focus is simple: to learn this school and this community deeply before I begin to change anything. I will be listening — to students, to families, to staff, and to partners — because the best decisions are made by people who have taken the time to understand the place they serve. You will see me out and about. Please say hello.

I came to Eisenhower because I believe a school can be the kind of place that changes a young person's trajectory, and I believe this one is ready to do exactly that. Not alone, and not overnight, but together and with intention. I am honored to be your principal, and I am excited to begin. Thank you, in advance, for the trust and the partnership I know you will bring. Let us make this a year our students will remember as the year something changed for the better.

With gratitude and high expectations,

Chris Thompson

Principal, Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle School
Prince George's County Public Schools · Laurel, Maryland
Soaring Higher · Achieving More · Raising the Bar