



## Welcome Back to School!

Dear Families,

Welcome back! I'm thrilled to be starting the 2025-26 school year, and I hope you are as well. As both an educator and a parent, I've experienced many first days of school—but this one has special meaning for me, because it's my first "first day of school" as Chancellor. Our community has so much to accomplish together this year, and I can't wait to get started.

First, we're going to continue to expand upon our key initiatives: NYC Reads, NYC Solves, Student Pathways, and NYCPS Cares. NYC Reads and NYC Solves, which reimagine literacy and math instruction, are coming to 186 additional schools, and our FutureReadyNYC program, which offers high-demand career pathways for our high schoolers, will grow to 50 more schools. NYCPS Cares, our newest initiative, is all about creating a culture of care in our communities; as part of this work, we've launched student-led anti-bullying and anti-vaping campaigns, along with a program called Family Connectors, in which family members and community volunteers help other families access city resources.

These initiatives are already having an impact—just look at our 2025 state exam results, which show promising gains in both reading and math. The percentage of students scoring "proficient" in grades 3-8 grew 7.2 points in literacy and 3.5 points in math, leading to our highest proficiency rates in these subjects since 2012. I'm immensely proud of our students, staff, and families, whose hard work and commitment are directly reflected in these results. We certainly have more to do, but these improvements show we're on the right track.

This year, we'll build on this progress by emphasizing intellectual curiosity and academic rigor, filling our classrooms with rich discussion, deep thinking, and lots of "Aha!" moments. We are also implementing the new state law prohibiting student use of personal internet-enabled devices during the school day, which will help minimize distractions so students can fully engage. Sparking our students' love of learning is a key ingredient in fulfilling our mission: to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in their careers and communities.

I'm so excited to begin this journey with you as my partners. Thank you to our staff, our families and parent leaders, and our entire New York City Public Schools community for your dedication to our students. Happy first day of school, and here's to an incredible year ahead!

In partnership,

Melissa Aviles-Ramos  
Chancellor