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## **Fenty Administration Highlights FY '09 DCPS School Budget and New Pre-K Plan**

**Washington, DC**— Today Mayor Adrian M. Fenty joined by District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) Chancellor Michelle Rhee and Deputy Mayor for Education Victor Reinoso, announced details of the DCPS FY '09 school budget and unveiled the administration's plan to expand the city's pre-kindergarten initiative.

Since appointing Rhee as Chancellor more than nine months ago, Fenty has made significant structural, operational and financial changes that will bring about educational benefits to children across the District. The DCPS FY '09 school budget reflects these much needed changes and will be included in the Mayor's budget, which will be released Thursday, March 20.

"The DCPS '09 budget reflects the addition of many of the new and exciting initiatives this administration has in store for the DC Public School System," said Mayor Fenty. "This is just the tip of the iceberg. As we continue to direct more resources to classrooms and to the schools, District parents, students and residents can expect positive changes in our system."

"Increasing classroom resources is our number one priority," said Chancellor Rhee. "Going forward, we will continue to provide schools with additional teachers and support staff needed to raise the achievement levels of our children."

### **DCPS Budget Highlights**

The FY '09 total budget includes \$773 million for the school system. With 23 schools slated to close starting next school year, monies allocated for schools increased to \$537 million from \$493 million in FY '08. This increase signals the Chancellor and the Mayor's commitment to ensuring classrooms across the school district realize financial benefits for new programs and additional staffing such as:

- **Comprehensive Staffing**  
Receiving schools will gain additional staffing of art, music and physical education teachers as well as social workers, psychologists and literacy coaches to support teachers and students both in and out of the classroom.

- **Extracurricular Programs**  
The FY '09 budget allows for increased funding for athletics and other program activities like debate teams, chess clubs and yearbook.
- **Enhanced Programs**  
DCPS will expand partnerships with external organizations that provide important extracurricular, after-school, educational and other services for students.
- **Extended Learning**  
Schools will also benefit from the expansion of extended-day initiatives. For example, the Saturday Scholars program will now be available to middle and high school students. DCPS will offer more summer school slots for student who need or want to take classes this summer, and will increase the number of after-school programs.
- **Pre-k Expansion**  
The school system will make room for an additional 220 pre-k students across the District.

#### **FY '09 Classroom Preview**

Comprehensive staffing is a significant FY '09 highlight, and illustrates the administration's investment in classroom resources and student support, including both general and special education teachers, literacy and math coaches, social workers and psychologists. Schools can expect the following increases:

- 89 percent increase in art teachers
- 72 percent increase in full-time music teachers
- 18 percent increase in physical education teachers
- 98 percent increase in pre-k and Head Start teachers
- Introduction of 188 literacy and math coaches; none were included in the FY '08
- 419 percent increase in social workers; only 26 were budgeted for in FY '08 compared to 135 in '09
- 180 percent increase in school psychologists; only 10 were budgeted for in FY '08 compared to 28 in '09

#### **FY '09 School Preview**

In addition to increasing school staffing, DCPS will begin implementing academic programs under the Chancellor's Renew, Revitalize and Reorganize plan to enhance the teaching and learning experience in the city's public schools. These include:

- Implementing enriched school programs such as, High Tech, STEM, Fine Arts, Gifted and Talented and Reggio Emilia

- Increasing investments in academic programs such as the International Baccalaureate, dual language immersion, Twilight, credit recovery and alternative programs for students who face particular challenges in traditional environments.
- Investing in parent advocacy and training
- Investing in the improvement of DCPS data systems
- Improving the quality and financial stability of food service through outsourcing
- Continuing to provide award incentives for school staff through the TEAM Award Initiative

### **Universal Pre-K Plan**

Providing access to universal pre-k for 3- and 4-year-olds is a critical component of improving educational outcomes in the District of Columbia. The Fenty Administration has a bold vision for creating a system of high quality pre-k programs. Beginning this school year, the school system will focus on four primary goals to:

1. Increase the number of quality pre-k classrooms
2. Create, replicate, and increase the number of high quality early childhood programs
3. Ensure young children are ready to learn
4. Attract families to DC Public Schools.

DCPS will lead the way in increasing the number of quality programs in classrooms over the next five years, by ensuring every DCPS elementary has a quality early childhood program. Chancellor Rhee will develop a rigorous professional development and an assessment and intervention model in order to support teachers and schools in reaching a higher quality level.

OSSE will provide oversight and accountability for improving and maintaining quality pre-kindergarten programs. State Superintendent Gist will be responsible for establishing state standards for pre-k, including standards for 3-year olds, policy development, administration of funds, selection of assessments, and monitoring of programs among DCPS, public charter schools, and community-based organizations. In addition, the office will provide training for teachers to identify learning types in an effort to recognize the need for early student intervention.

The OSSE standards-based assessment will be launched in 100 classrooms this May to measure each child's readiness for school in an effort to identify their academic needs as early as possible.