

**Miner Elementary School
Back to School Night SY16/17**

Dear Miner Family,

We are very excited that your family will be a part of our school and school community. We are looking forward to seeing all our parents and students in grades PK-5 gather for the school year 2016/17 Back to School Night, tomorrow Thursday, September 1, 2016 from 6:00-8:00pm.

In preparation for Back to School Night, please:

- 1) Review the list of activities
- 2) Select 3 activities for your family to attend for the three sessions scheduled for:

Session 1: 630-700

Session 2: 700-730

Session 3: 730-800

- 3) Bring this flier and planning sheet with you to the event.

Parent University Descriptions

Introduction to Early Childhood: A DCPS early childhood specialist will provide a general overview of the early childhood program and available opportunities to participate in parent committees, parent workshops and volunteering.

Move This World: SY16/17 Miner has contracted Move This World to provide on-going training to staff and students about sustainable social and emotional practices. By tapping into individuals' creative potential, Move This World helps adults and students understand, engage, express and manage their emotions in healthy ways. Representatives from Move This World will host three (3) sessions aimed at providing an overview of their program and tools.

School Improvement with Principal Mial- In this session parents will learn about how the school is organizing for continued school improvement and how they can become a part of this very important work.

Again, we look forward to having you join us and certainly hope that you can attend.

Agenda		
600	Welcome and Staff Introduction	Gym
610	Mini General PTO Meeting	Gym
625	Miner's Glee Club Performance	Gym
630	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1</p> Classroom Visits (Grade, Large Group and Support Specialists) <p>Parent University: DCPS Introduction to Early Childhood Move This World Presentation School Improvement with Principal Mial</p> <p>Informational Booths</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Various</p> <p>Library Large Group Instructional Room Room 249</p> <p>1st Floor Main Hallway</p>
700	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 2</p> Classroom Visits (Grade, Large Group and Support Specialists) <p>Parent University: DCPS Introduction to Early Childhood Move This World Presentation School Improvement with Principal Mial</p> <p>Informational Booths</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Various</p> <p>Library Large Group Instructional Room Room 249</p> <p>1st Floor Main Hallway</p>
730	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3</p> Classroom Visits (Grade, Large Group and Support Specialists) <p>Parent University: DCPS Introduction to Early Childhood Move This World Presentation School Improvement with Principal Mial</p> <p>Informational Booths</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Various</p> <p>Library Large Group Instructional Room Room 249</p> <p>1st Floor Main Hallway</p>
800	Closing	Intercom Announcement



Miner Elementary School
601 15th Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Phone 202.397.3960

August 31, 2016

Dear Miner Families,

The first two weeks of school have had us running at full speed – working tirelessly to build a solid foundation for our children and the future of Miner Elementary. Of our three administrative leaders –myself, Assistant Principal Torrence, and Ms. Flores, our Manager of Strategy and Logistics – Ms. Flores and I are brand new to DCPS and to Miner Elementary.

Since July, we have been digging through budgets, testing data, student files, teacher evaluations, and maintenance issues and re-evaluating all of Miner’s programs, policies and procedures. We know that you are seeing a lot of changes happen very quickly and that families have questions about why the changes are being made with concerns about losing some of the programs and procedures important to your family. We apologize for not communicating more clearly about the status of some of these programs earlier and pledge to do better going forward. We have felt an urgent need to focus on core academics and teaching these first weeks, so we ask you to please be patient with us as we work out the details on volunteer and extracurricular programs.

Volunteer Programs

Regarding the volunteer programs at Miner, such as classroom volunteers and foster grandparents, we want to assure you that we absolutely want parent and grandparent volunteers in the classroom. We put a ‘pause’ on those programs because we were working hard to make other changes in the school – to strengthen academic programs, teaching support, and make the school day schedule more effective.

Fun Friday, PBIS

We are currently reevaluating whether to continue Fun Friday and the PBIS (positive behavioral intervention strategies) store, in light of other programs and procedures we are bringing to the school, such as Move This World (learn more about MTW at back-to-school night!). If you would like to serve on a committee reviewing these and other such practices, please call the school office.

Security / Drop-off

Many parents have raised concerns about being unable to come into the school at certain times. We made changes to morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up procedures to address student safety concerns and also crowding and confusion for children at these times, especially in the main lobby. DCPS has also added requirements to teachers’ schedules which necessitated changes to morning drop-off in particular. During these first weeks, we know that the new policies aren’t familiar, but please “bear” with us as we work out the kinks and get into an established routine. Moving forward we will be looking continually at ways to make all of our procedures more streamlined – welcoming parental input and ideas – but always keeping our children’s safety first.

Communications

One of the challenges we are facing is effectively getting information out to you – our families – in an efficient and timely manner. We will be starting a weekly newsletter very soon. Some parents have raised concerns that, because of morning security procedures, you have less access to the school building during drop off, and we recognize how that interferes with

receiving information. We are working closely with teachers to find effective ways to communicate with families and exchange information. In the meantime, we encourage you to call or email teachers to schedule time to talk.

Other Program Changes

Based on many factors, from budget to staffing to funding, all of our activities, clubs and partnerships must be evaluated one at a time through our School Improvement Committees. These committees, of which parents are invited to provide input and ideas, are designed to determine how we can offer a robust, valuable set of enrichment activities that meet the needs of our students' learning objectives.

Our other volunteer, athletic, science and programs as well as other clubs and groups at Miner are part of a large network of volunteers, teachers and staff time, partnerships, grants, and DCPS funding. Moving forward, we are focusing on providing these activities in a sustainable way. Our DCPS/PAL After Care, Bridge Before and After Care programs and Extended Day Remedial and Enrichment services have all begun. Boy Scouts, and Move This World are all on track to kick off in the next few weeks. We will roll out programs gradually as we put together a bigger plan for the future of Miner, again with your help and input.

Get Involved

We are working hard to shape Miner Elementary into becoming a model Community School in Ward 6 for our children. That takes change. That takes time. And that takes parental involvement.

I have been honored to work at different types of schools in several countries, and have successfully led school communities through this difficult and rewarding process of improvement. But it takes everyone to step up and get involved. We want everyone's voice to be heard as we have this important conversation in our community.

- We are forming School Improvement Committees specializing in different areas of focus, with the goal of analyzing current trends and historical data to develop our 5-year plan.
- A parent volunteer form will be available for parents up to sign-up and become active participants in the School Improvement Committees and/or regular school volunteers.
- We have a new Parent Volunteer Center, (Room 143), by the East doors, where parent volunteers can have a home within the school.
- Teachers are working on ways to schedule time for face-to-face conversations with parents at each grade level as they build relationships with individual families.
- Parents are always welcome in the school, but please take care to avoid the busiest times during drop off and dismissal.
- I will be hosting my first Monday Morning Mocha with Mial at Miner (M5) coffee morning on Monday, September 12 at 9:00 in the Large Group Instruction Room (above the library). Come in and talk with me about your concerns.

I look forward to seeing you at Back to School Night, at M5, at our PTO meetings, and please reach out to the school's administration with questions and concerns.

Andrea Mial

Principal

Tiffany Torrence

Assistant Principal

Yovetza (Yovi) Flores

Manager of Strategy and Logistics

Miner Elementary School ~ Home of the Bears



Miner Elementary School

Back to School Picnic and PK 3/4 Play Date

Saturday, September 10, 2016

11:00am-2:00pm

Bring the family to Miner for some fun activities!

We'll have balloons, bouncy-house, face painting and scavenger hunt for the kids.

This is a great opportunity for parents come out and network.

We will be offering tours of Miner's Peace Garden (aka veggie garden).

Hotdogs and ice will be served.

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter

