

# Teacher NOTES

## Chancellor's Message

Dear Teachers,

As the school year comes to an end, I want to thank you for your dedication to student progress, and share the progress we made as a team this year on our bold [Equity and Excellence initiatives](#).



These initiatives are designed to start learning earlier, support you and your colleagues in implementing rigorous instruction methods, and engage our parents and families to ensure we meet the needs of each school community. Together we will continue to work to raise achievement in all New York City public schools and ensure that all of our students have bright futures.

- **Universal 2nd Grade Literacy:** In the fall, [reading coaches](#) will be assigned to more than 100 elementary schools in four high-needs Districts: 9, 10, 17, and 32. Coaches will initially focus on supporting and collaborating with 2nd grade teachers to close the literacy gap. [We recently spoke to a teacher](#) who is looking forward to building a relationship with her new reading coach. Expansion plans will ensure that all elementary schools will have access to the support of reading coaches for K-2 teachers by September 2016.

[Read More](#)

## Contents

### Celebrating Teaching Excellence

Big Apple Award Recipients  
[Read More](#)

### Collaborate with Reading Coaches

Hear how a colleague plans to collaborate this fall. [Read More](#)

### Teachers Recruit Great Teachers

Do you know someone who would make a strong teacher? [Read More](#)

### Year-End Opportunities

#Celebrate16 and NYC Men Teach on June 29  
[Read More](#)

### Book of the Season

*The Thank You Book*  
[Read More](#)

## Celebrating Teaching Excellence: Big Apple Award Recipients

This month, we celebrated our fourth annual [Big Apple Awards](#). This award is the culmination of a yearlong process that shines a spotlight on thousands of teachers across the City who are doing inspiring work in their classrooms every day. Great work needs to be recognized. Every year I am thrilled by the ever-increasing number of teacher nominations by parents, students, and school community members. These inspiring stories bring me joy, and I hope one day to hear yours. Thank you for being an inspiration to your students and school community.



This year, we have a diverse group of recipients representing all subject areas and different backgrounds, including career changers, second generation educators, immigrants, and lifelong New Yorkers. This year's seventeen award recipients will serve as [2016-17 Big Apple Fellows](#) and the Chancellor's Teacher Advisory Group:

- Anna Bennett, P.S. 059 Beekman Hill International, Midtown East
- Michele Fienga, James Madison High School, Madison
- Carmine Guirland, Pathways to Graduation @ Bronx NeON, Concourse
- Jonelle Hinchcliffe, Westchester Square Academy, Schuylerville
- Nila Johnson, 1199 Future of America Learning Center, Fordham Manor
- Jamie Lefkowitz, P.S. 028 Wright Brothers, Washington Heights
- Bushra Makiya, I.S. X303 Leadership & Community Service, Morris Heights
- Angela Manekas, P.S. 232 The Walter Ward School, Lindenwood
- MaryBeth Meenan, P.S. 102 Bayview, Elmhurst
- Dana Monteiro, Frederick Douglass Academy, Harlem
- Dominique Nute, One World Middle School at Edenwald, Edenwald
- Angela Saccaro, P.S. 55 Henry M. Boehm, Staten Island
- Aleksey Shats, P.S. 024 Andrew Jackson, Flushing
- Helen Sink, P.S. 007 Samuel Stern, East Harlem
- Zaharoula Skulikidis, Long Island City High School, Astoria
- Chelsey Tubbs, KIPP STAR College Preparatory School, Manhattanville
- Sara Yerry, Brooklyn Arbor Elementary School, Williamsburg

## Chancellor's Message

Dear Teachers,

As the school year comes to an end, I want to thank you for your dedication to student progress, and share the progress we made as a team this year on our bold [Equity and Excellence initiatives](#) to improve the education and the futures of our students.

These initiatives are designed to start learning earlier, support you and your colleagues in implementing rigorous instruction methods, and engage our parents and families to ensure we meet the needs of each school community. Together we will continue to work to raise achievement in all New York City public schools.



- Universal 2nd Grade Literacy:** In the fall, [reading coaches](#) will be assigned to more than 100 elementary schools in four high-needs Districts: 9, 10, 17, and 32. Coaches will initially focus on supporting and collaborating with 2nd grade teachers to close the literacy gap. [We spoke to a teacher](#) who is looking forward to building a relationship with her new reading coach. Expansion plans will ensure that all elementary schools will have access to the support of reading coaches for K-2 teachers by September 2016. If you are interested in becoming a teaching coach, or know someone who would be, apply [here](#) today (select: "Teacher Assigned Vacancy Circular No. 1 (Reading Coach) 2016-2017 Repost").
- Algebra for All:** Following the training for 5th grade teachers this spring, middle and high school teachers will begin their training over the summer. In September, teachers in grades 5-10 in [over 150 schools](#) will return to their classrooms with [expanded expertise](#) in math instruction and strategies.
- AP for All:** This fall, [63 high schools](#) will offer new Advanced Placement (AP) courses to their students, of which more than half will be able to provide AP courses for the first time. All schools, including those already offering AP courses, will receive [rigorous, subject-specific training](#). And this fall, targeted high schools will begin pre-AP support to strengthen student and teacher readiness
- Computer Science for All:** This fall, [207 schools](#) have committed to offer new computer science programming through Computer Science for All. [The four programs](#) under this umbrella are AP Computer Science Principles, the Software Engineering Program (SEP), SEP Jr. and the STEM Institute. This auspicious start ensures we are on track to bring computer science to every elementary, middle, and high school by 2025.
- College Access for All Middle School:** During the 2016-17 school year, College Access for All will be implemented in [approximately 150 middle schools](#) in 10 Districts: 5, 6, 8, 11, 14, 18, 19, 27, 29, and 31. Schools will organize college visits and college workshops for students, parents, and families.
- College Access for All High School:** Starting this summer, [100 schools](#) will receive training and resources that will enable them to serve more students with high-quality [college access](#) guidance. In addition to school-based programs, we will continue to expand citywide support for building college awareness and readiness through programs like College Application Week (October), Financial Aid Awareness Month (January/February) and the new SAT School Day at all high schools (March).
- Single Shepherd:** Over the summer, [more than 100 "shepherds"](#) will receive rigorous training. In the fall, all middle and high school students in Districts 7 and 23—16,000 students across 52 schools—will receive support from these "shepherds," dedicated guidance counselors or social workers who will support them through graduation and college enrollment.
- District-Charter Learning Partnerships:** Throughout spring and summer of 2016, the first partnerships will be created in [20 schools](#). Opportunities for collaborative learning teams at co-located campuses, and collaboration among superintendents and charter management organizations have begun and aim to be fully implemented at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

Thank you for your continued support of these initiatives and for your hard work and dedication every day in the classroom. Your participation and involvement in your school community is what makes it an effective world of student learning and growth. I look forward to continuing to build on our progress with you, your colleagues, school leaders, parents and families, and our students.

If you have questions, I encourage you to visit the [Equity and Excellence website](#), speak with your colleagues who are involved in these initiatives, discuss the initiatives your school community is involved in with your school leaders, and, as always, please reach out to [me](#).

Congratulations on a productive, successful, and memorable school year! I hope you take time for rest and rejuvenation with family and friends over the summer so that you return to your classrooms ready for a new, dynamic, and exciting school year.

Warmly,

Carmen

[Back to Top](#)

---

## Collaborate with Reading Coaches

Collaboration among teachers is a central element of [The Framework for Great Schools](#). Teacher Notes has talked a lot about collaboration - through the [Showcase Schools](#) program and through working with formalized [teacher leaders](#) in your school communities.



This fall many 2nd grade teachers in schools in Districts 9, 10, 17, and 32 will have the opportunity to collaborate with our new Reading Coaches. I'm sure some of you are wondering how those relationships might look and feel.

We talked with one of your colleagues, Caitlin Carroll, a teacher at P.S. 109 in the Bronx. During the interview, Caitlin shared her plans for the upcoming school year and how working with a Reading Coach will support her goals.

---

**Teacher Notes:** When you think about the 2016-17 school year, what are you most excited for?

**Caitlin:** I'm always most excited to meet my new students. Every year is so different - it starts with the students and the various personalities that walk into my classroom. I'm excited to learn about them as children but also what they can do as students so I can start planning what and how to teach them!

**Teacher Notes:** What are your goals for your professional growth for the 2016-17 school year?

**Caitlin:** I want to grow as a leader in my school by opening up my classroom even more; to share practices that have been successful for me and to learn new techniques from my colleagues.

**Teacher Notes:** When you think about this past year, can you share a story about a student in your class who struggled with learning to read? How did you support this student? How did this experience change your practice?

**Caitlin:** One particular student struggled to learn and retain Level A reading behaviors (e.g. pointing to each word while reading, remembering the patterns in books). I began to think "outside the box" and experiment with different teaching styles. I had the opportunity to create new ways to teach him these skills, such as using manipulatives (e.g. counters or blocks) to create patterns.

**Teacher Notes:** How could a Universal Literacy Reading Coach help you to achieve these goals and support your work with the student you mentioned?

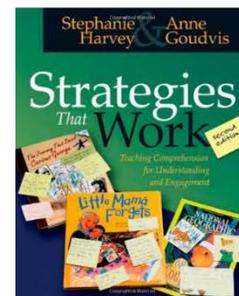
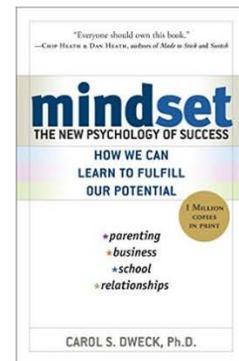
**Caitlin:** A reading coach could support the coordination of inter-visitations, matching teacher needs with teacher strengths, and modeling strong practices for myself and other teachers. He or she could help me be more strategic and targeted with my instruction and it would be great to have an experienced resource we could access to resolve particular challenges.

**Teacher Notes:** Is there a book you are looking forward to reading this summer, to support you and your teaching? Is there a book you'd suggest to a colleague looking for a recommendation?

**Caitlin:** A colleague recommended, **Strategies that Work**, by Stephanie Harvey. The book focuses on thinking strategies that students need to use while reading. I am hoping the approaches in this book will help me support my students with new and innovative strategies. As a school, we read, **Mindset**, by Carol Dweck. It not only helped us to consider whether our students have a growth or fixed mindsets, and the impact of that mindset on their learning, but it also helped us reflect on our own thinking and how we approach different situations in our personal and professional lives.

**Teacher Notes:** Thank you, Caitlin, for sharing your goals for the upcoming school year and your reflections on this past year. We appreciate you taking the time to talk to us during this busy time.

Interested in becoming a teaching coach, or know someone who would be? Apply [here](#) today. (Select: "Teacher Assigned Vacancy Circular No. 1 (Reading Coach) 2016-2017 Repost")



[Back to Top](#)

Teachers Recruit Great Teachers

Who sparked your interest in teaching? Were you inspired by one of your teachers as a student? A principal you met during your time as a student teacher? A NYC Teaching Fellows subway ad? Or a current teacher you aspired to work with? You are poised to influence the next generation of teachers.

We are looking for new teachers for the 2016–17 school year who are just as passionate about guiding New York City's future innovators, leaders, and citizens as you are.

Does someone in your personal or professional network come to mind? Do you know a prospective teacher who is ready to make a sincere impact as a new addition on a school community next fall? Encourage them to apply by our deadline, **Monday, July 11**. (Please consider currently certified teachers, as well as those on the pathway to certification by the end of August 2016.)

Visit [TeachNYC.net](http://TeachNYC.net) and [Refer a Friend](#). Our recruitment team will reach out to them with details on how to apply to teach in New York City public schools.



## Year-End Opportunities

**#CELEBRATE16**

Student Name: Maria Hernandez  
Age: 18  
School: The Kurt Hahn Expeditionary Learning School  
College: Borough of Manhattan Community College



**How did you achieve your goal of going to college?**

"To be frank, I really had to get my act together when I was junior. I did not perform well academically during my freshman and sophomore year. Luckily, I recognized that I was falling behind and dedicated all my energy to turning things around. I became laser-focused on becoming a forensic scientist. I developed a passion for criminology. Watching CSI and Law and Order motivated me even further. I can't wait to go to college since I will be the first in my family to do so. I hope this next step serves as an example to my two sisters who have always dreamed of going to college. It feels great to be a role model!"

**Who at your high school would you like to thank for helping you achieve your goal of attending college and how did they help you?**

"My guidance counselor Ms. Naraki was a superhero for me. Halfway through high school, I felt lost and needed a lot of support with thinking about my purpose. Mr. Naraki was incredibly supportive, nurturing and went out of her way to find resources for me. I will remember all the insights she shared forever."



## #Celebrate16

The end of the school year is fast approaching! I want us to take a moment to celebrate our collaborative efforts to support students along each stepping stone towards accessing college and careers. That's why I'm asking you to reflect on this question for a moment: What am I proud of this year? Then, share on social media using #Celebrate16.

Use #Celebrate16 on your social media posts for events, including proms, graduation

## NYC Men Teach

As you prepare to close out the school year with your students, the NYC Men Teach initiative would like to invite you to participate in a special event next week in celebration of their inaugural group of NYC Men Teach teachers.

[NYC Men Teach](#) is an initiative designed to recruit and support men of color in our classrooms across the City. Of your 75,000 colleagues, 8.5% are male teachers of color. Meanwhile, male students of color comprise

ceremonies, class field trips, and professional awards for school staff.

Here's how to do it:

- Talk to your school leaders about your school's social media plan so that you are all aligned.
- Share a photo and caption from your school's or personal social media account (including Twitter, [Facebook](#), and Instagram) using #Celebrate16.
- Encourage the entire school community to contribute to the social media sharing.
- Celebrate students, celebrate your colleagues, and of course, celebrate your hard work!

43% of our 1.1 million students. By infusing New York City public schools with more teacher who reflect the vast diversity of our City, we can make a difference in the lives of young people who are not accustomed to seeing themselves represented in the front of the class.

- **Date:** Wednesday, June 29th
- **Time & Location:** 11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Baruch College
- **Registration:** [Complete your registration form.](#)

The event will feature remarks from an array of distinguished guests and speakers including: First Lady of New York City Chirlaine McCray, Deputy Mayor Richard Buery, and Michael Mulgrew, UFT president, and myself.

## Book of the Season

### The Thank You Book

By Mo Willems

Hyperion Books for Children, 2016

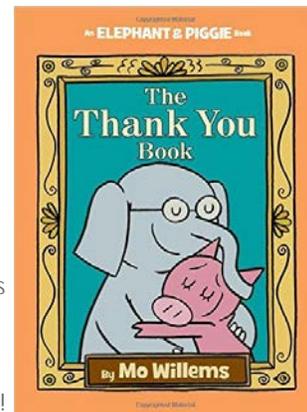
(Recommended for Grades 1-3)

In **The Thank You Book**, Piggie decides she is one lucky pig and sets out to thank everyone who is important to her. "Everyone?" asks best friend Gerald the Elephant. "No way! You will forget someone." Undeterred, Piggie embarks on a "thank-o-rama." She thanks Squirrels for their great ideas, Snake for playing ball, and Pigeon for never giving up. She also thanks Mouse, Birdies, Rhino, Hippo's Big Sister, Barky Dog, Pelican, and others for being great friends. Still, Gerald is concerned that Piggie has forgotten someone, and she almost does! In a sweet twist at the end, we are reminded that we wouldn't be who we are without the wonderful people who grace our lives.

I selected this as the book for the end of the school year because it is the perfect time to thank the people who have made a difference in our lives. "Thank you" is something we don't say often enough. We assume that our colleagues, friends, and family members know how much we appreciate them, and too often, don't think to tell them. But as this book illustrates, "thank you" create energy and engage people.

Research also shows that thanking people in the workplace makes them work harder and offer additional help. "Thank yous" make people feel valued. The thanker benefits as well; thanking someone actually triggers "feel good" hormones in the brain of both the person doing the thanking and the person receiving it.

I encourage you to take a page out of Elephant and Piggie's book and start a "thank-o-rama" in



your school. Work with school leaders and the parent coordinator to share sticky notes with all members of the school community including your colleagues, your principal, assistant principals, and secretarial, custodial, lunch room, and other staff. Personalize each thank you for maximum impact.

Students, parents, and families are important parts of our school communities we should include in this "thank-o-rama" effort. Let us make the two words, "thank you," a regular part of our vocabulary. Make it clear that everyone in your building should be both a giver and a receiver of thanks.

And a BIG thank you to you for ensuring that our students are on the path to success. As Elephant says, speaking on behalf of himself and Piggie, "We could not be 'us' without you."

Warmly,

Carmen

Adapted from the June 2016 edition of *Principal Notes* Book of the Month.

[Back to the Top](#)

---

Teacher Notes | [schools.nyc.gov](https://schools.nyc.gov)

Stay connected online with educators across the City and the NYC Department of Education:

Friend us on Facebook



and Follow us on Twitter



New York City Department of Education | [nycchancellor@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:nycchancellor@schools.nyc.gov) | Office of the Chancellor