



June 16, 2011

Dear Families,

We are writing jointly to let you know that students will begin the 2011-12 school year on Thursday, September 8, one day later than previously announced. In partnership with the teachers' union and the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, the Department of Education is making this change to give teachers more time to plan their instruction. Using new curriculum resources we'll be sharing this summer, teachers will align their instruction with a set of higher expectations for student learning that will be put in place over the next few years.

One of our top priorities is raising the bar for our students. To do this we will need principals, teachers, and parents to partner together to make sure students at every grade level, including students with disabilities and English language learners, are on track to succeed in college and careers. In the coming school year, we have asked teachers to give all New York City students the opportunity to try this more challenging work.

While in many classrooms this work is already underway, next year teachers will challenge all of our students to think critically, to read and understand more difficult texts, to do more writing, and to apply the math they are learning in the real world. We have heard again and again from principals and teachers that they need more time to plan for this important new instructional work.

We wish you a great end to this school year and remind you to mark your calendar: school starts on **Thursday, September 8, 2011!**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dennis M. Walcott'.

Dennis M. Walcott  
Chancellor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Mulgrew'.

Michael Mulgrew  
President, United Federation of Teachers

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ernest A. Logan'.

Ernest Logan  
President, Council of School Supervisors and Administrators