

May 25, 2022

Dear Kelly Miller Middle School,

Writing this letter to you is bittersweet. For the past seven years I have immersed myself into this community of students, parents, teachers, families, and friends. We have shared the experience of growth, awaking, and managed to successfully maneuver through the challenge of a global pandemic. Serving as principal of Kelly Miller has been a great joy and privilege. However, I am sending this letter to inform you that I have accepted the principal position at the McKinley Middle School and McKinley Tech High School campus and will not be returning as principal of Kelly Miller for School Year 2022-2023.

These past seven years Kelly Miller have seen us transition from a traditional school year calendar to an extended school year calendar and back to a traditional school with a focus on the connected school model. The past three years as a connected school, we have doubled our school partnerships and are now able to offer all our students and families an array of resources. These include, uniforms, groceries, school supplies, food, tutoring services, various mental health resources and clubs to spark student interest and discovery.

The support from staff and families as we adjusted to the many changes in our school model has always been met with a supportive heart, open minds, and dedication to ensure Kelly Miller students get what they need to be successful scholars. Together we have made our schools motto of “one team, one dream, one Kelly Miller” come to life.

The Kelly Miller MS community welcomed me as your principal in 2015. The years that transpired since are filled with pride for our collaborative accomplishments. I would like to highlight just a few of those accomplishments:

- 60% or more of our students have met their growth goals in Reading every school year over the past 6 years.
- 85% of families have participated in academic partnering connections with staff through student led conferences.
- 80% of our students feel challenged by our academic expectations.
- 72% of families are satisfied because their scholars feel safe, welcomed, and like attending Kelly Miller.

In efforts to continue this wonderful work, you will have the opportunity to engage in the selection process for a new principal. In preparation for the transition, DC Public Schools coordinates the selection and appointment of principals with great care and consideration. An important part of the school’s contribution will be to form a Community Panel—a committee comprised of parents, teachers, and community members to provide a diverse perspective on the decision-making process.

We will start with a virtual informational meeting on Tuesday, May 31, to learn about the next steps for selecting a new school leader. The meeting will be led by representatives from the DCPS Office of School Improvement and the Office of Engagement and Partnerships, along with Instructional Superintendent



Andria Caruthers. More information on how to join that meeting can be found on the flyer attached to this message.

The past few years were unprecedented and trying times but seeing the joy, accomplishments, and tenacity of our students as we came together, even while being apart at times, was truly remarkable. I hope to have the chance to say farewell to as many of you as possible before I depart, and I look forward to supporting a smooth leadership transition for our community.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for trusting me to be a part of your child's educational journey. It has been one of my greatest joys as an educator.

With much appreciation,

Kortni Stafford
Principal, Kelly Miller Middle School

