

Making the first day of school work for you



Philissa Cramer  Chalkbeat

The first day of school is ...

GETTING STARTED

Live-blogging the first day of school, the first under Mayor de Blasio

By Sarah Darville [@sarahdarv](#) [sdarville@chalkbeat.org](#)
PUBLISHED: September 4, 2014 - 6:49 a.m. EDT



A proposed amendment to a state law would let pre-K parents run for spots on Community Education Councils. (Photo by Jessica Glazer)

Chalkbeat is traversing the city to share scenes from the first day of school, the first under Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose ambitious pre-kindergarten expansion kicks off today. What's going on at your school? Let us know through [#backtoschoolNYC](#) and, as always, [ny.tips@chalkbeat.org](#).

4:30 p.m.: School visits are over, pre-K students have been picked up, and some teachers are heading home. At the end of his Amber visit, Geoff says Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña took up two issues looming over the school year: co-location policy and



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Mulgrew, who has effusively praised the de Blasio administration in the wake of the union's new contract accompanied Fariña on the visit. It was his first first day of school as union president when Michael Bloomberg wasn't mayor, and a change he seemed happy to point out.

"It's a new beginning for our school system," he said, "and we are very, very excited about doing the work that we love to do, which is helping our children."

11:38 a.m.: Ernest Logan, head of the principal's union, will be at Brooklyn's P.S. 11 and then P.S. 184 today for back-to-school visits. CSA spokeswoman Chiara Coletti said he wasn't appearing with the mayor because he didn't want to send a "confusing" message during contract negotiations. The city and the union are [stuck](#) on the issue of retroactive pay for teachers who were promoted to principals or assistant principals since 2009.

11:25 a.m.: Patrick's been hanging out at The Highbridge Green School in the Bronx, a middle school [started by local parents](#). The school is going to feel the effects of a few de Blasio priorities this year—a growing after school program, and some changes because of the UFT contract—but the first thing on Principal Kyle Brillante's agenda was orienting his new sixth graders. His report:



PHOTO: Patrick Wall

A few minutes after 8 a.m., Brillante strode into the cafeteria of the Highbridge Green School and found a field of green-shirted sixth-grade

... a great time to recap the last year.

Here are seven things to know about Memphis schools as a new school year kicks off



By [Laura Faith Kebede](#) lkebede@chalkbeat.org
PUBLISHED: August 8, 2016 - 6:00 a.m. EDT



Principal Laquita Tate helps a student at Ford Road Elementary School. (Photo by Laura Faith Kebede)

As students start classes Monday at Shelby County Schools, here are seven things to know:

1. Shelby County Schools is Tennessee's largest public school district and projects an enrollment of about 107,000 students in 2016-17, down 2 percent from 109,489 in the 2015-16 school year.
2. The school board and Shelby County Commission [approved](#) a \$959 million budget for this year, including a 3 percent raise for most teachers.
3. This year's new school board will be the same as the old one when [it](#) elected

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NEW DAY

Cold Spring takes the plunge to manage school differently, but it's still got lizards

By Dylan Peers McCoy [dmccoy@chalkbeat.org](mailto:dmc coy@chalkbeat.org)
PUBLISHED: August 1, 2016 - 7:08 p.m. EDT



Second graders at Cold Spring School play with Gotee, a bearded dragon. (Photo by Dylan Peers McCoy)

It might not seem like there's been a big change at Cold Spring School to the students who returned today for the first day of classes, but they actually will be part of a new and growing world of retooled schools.

This much stayed the same: Tucked into the hills on the northwest side of downtown Indianapolis, the school is surrounded by the same lush greenery as when students left in June. Many of the same teachers and kids are still there.

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Even classroom lizards are back.



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... a news peg as much as a news event.

Shelby County teachers are given \$100 for classroom supplies. But that's not nearly enough.

By Caroline Bauman cbauman@chalkbeat.org
 PUBLISHED: August 5, 2016 - 1:25 p.m. EDT



Shelby County teacher Lisa Butler volunteers at the Tennessee Education Association's school supplies store for new teachers in Memphis. Butler says she remembers the financial burden of starting as a new teacher. (Photo by Caroline Bauman)

For Crescent Bynum, a culinary arts instructor at Hamilton High School, the \$100 she receives from Shelby County Schools at the start of the year buys some pencils and paper.

It doesn't buy cleaning supplies for her kitchen classroom. It doesn't buy extra food to prepare when her class runs out. It doesn't buy chef coats for students who can't afford to pay for them. Bynum pays for all of that out of her own pocket.

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"It's just the way it is that inner-city school

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... a chance to (re)connect with sometimes elusive audiences.

The first day of high school, with one of Orange County's best teachers



Teacher Kathleen Switzer welcomes her students to a new school year at El Dorado High School in Placentia. Among her first-day-back activities: "get-to-know-you bingo." (Mark Boster / Los Angeles Times)



By **Sonali Kohli** • Contact Reporter

SEPTEMBER 4, 2015, 3:00 AM

For teachers, going back to school means getting restless students just back from summer vacation into learning mode. When it comes to building a positive classroom dynamic, the first few days back are key.

We wanted to know, how do teachers set the tone for the year? How do they welcome their students?

To answer this question, we visited Kathleen Switzer. She is an English and theater teacher at El Dorado High School in Placentia, where school started on Tuesday. She's also one of the state's finalists for Teacher of the Year.

So we visited her classes on the first day of school to find out how she welcomes her students and establishes the tone for her new class. We'll check up on her progress



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Chalkbeat Indiana

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We'd love to see your first day photos or new classroom snapshots and hear stories about what went well and what still needs work. Check out the post for more ways to share.



Tell us: How's the first week of school going?

Indianapolis Public Schools heads back today.

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👤 Meghan Mangrum, Kelly Kennedy Bentley and 2 others

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Leanne Lamb Gwen 3rd grade and Vaughan 5th grade for their first day of school at Irvington Community Schools.



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The first day of school - in Snapchats

Los Angeles Times
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Education Matters reporter [Sonali Kohli](#) Snapchats the first day of school.



... and a great day to try something new.