Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force
April 24, 2018, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Savoy Elementary School

Attendees:
- Karen Williams | Ward 7 Representative, State Board of Education (SBOE)
- Shanita Burney | Deputy Chief, Community Engagement, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Shantelle Wright | Founder & CEO, Achievement Prep PCS; Chair, DC Association of Public Charter Schools
- Erika Harrell | DC Prep PCS parent; Member, My School DC Parent Advisory Council; member, DC School Reform Now; member, PCSB Parent & Alumni Leadership Council (PALC)
- Irene Holtzman | Executive Director, Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS)
- Mary Levy | Independent education analyst, Former DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Former Washington Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
- Claudia Luján | Deputy Chief, Strategic School Planning, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Alejandra Vallejo | Bancroft ES parent; Chair, Bancroft ES Local School Advisory Team (LSAT)
- Emily Lawson | Founder & CEO, DC Prep PCS
- Melissa Kim | Chief Academic Officer, Secondary Schools, KIPP DC; former principal, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Scott Pearson | Executive Director, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
- Faith Gibson Hubbard | Chief Student Advocate, State Board of Education (SBOE); former member, Student Assignment Committee

Co-Chairs:
- Ahnna Smith | Interim Deputy Mayor for Education
- Mayor Anthony Williams | CEO & Executive Director, Federal City Council; former Mayor

Members not in attendance:
- Amanda Alexander | Deputy Chief of Elementary Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Darren Woodruff | EL Haynes PCS, Benjamin Banneker HS parent ; Chair, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
- Jim Sandman | President, Legal Services Corporation; former General Counsel, DCPS; former Managing Partner, Arnold & Porter
- Bethany Little | Murch ES, BASIS PCS parent; Education policy expert
- Kemba Hendrix | Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS parent; former public and public charter school teacher
- Hanseul Kang | State Superintendent of Education
- Carlie Fisherow | Executive Director, DC Scholars Community Schools
- Angela Copeland | Stuart-Hobson MS parent; public affairs specialist

- Charlene Drew-Jarvis | Graduate, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS); Senior Advisor, KIPP DC PCS; former Ward 4 City Councilwoman
- Ariana Quinones | Duke Ellington HS, Next Step PCS parent; education and human services policy consultant, Otero Strategies Group; former member, Student Assignment Committee
- Caryn Ernst | Watkins ES, Stuart-Hobson MS parent; former PTA president, Capitol Hill Cluster School; member, Capitol Hill Public School Parent Organization (CHPSPO)

Staff:
- Jennifer Comey | Director of Planning, Data, and Analysis, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Ramin Taheri | Director of Cross-Sector Collaboration Initiatives, Office of the Deputy Mayor of Education (DME)
- Richelle Russell | Data Analyst, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Katrina Ballard | Leadership for Education Equity Public Policy Fellow, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)

Meeting Summary:
- Interim Deputy Mayor gave welcoming remarks.
- Facilitator reviewed the agenda and goals for the meeting.
- Cross-Sector Spotlight included Every Day Counts! COP and Trauma-Informed Practices COP, which is launching cross-sector leader experience in September.
  - Applications are opening next week for 20-35 spots. The program is targeted toward leaders who are already prioritizing Trauma-Informed Practices to help them have an even greater impact.
- Facilitator reviewed citywide meetings purpose, structure, and participants (Slides 7-12).
- Facilitator reviewed feedback on draft recommendations from citywide meetings and process for finalizing recommendations (Slides 14-20).
- Task Force Member: We're fairly small tonight; can we go through all the recommendations together? There might be contributions I want to give to other objectives.
- Facilitator: The breakout piece is not just for tonight but for the rest of the work as well. We could try as a whole group. There's a lot to get through.
- Task Force Member: Can we start with a couple, then at the next meeting break out into larger groups?
- Task Force Member: I like the idea of owning the objectives. I'd like to dig into and own the objective. My concern is there's so many voices per subject we won't get through too much.
- Task Force Member: If people are looking at one objective, think about how to prioritize and layer feedback on. Then we can share. That might let us engage in all of them in a meaningful way.
- Facilitator: The group is small but large enough where some won't be heard. We could split into groups of five and start on a couple of objectives. We won't go through all tonight, but we want to get a better sense of how long it's going to take.
- The Task Force discussed the feedback in small groups.

Discussion on At-Risk Objective 1

- Objective 1 is getting kids to different schools, and Objective 2 is making schools better.
- Objective 1 isn't an intuitive place to start. Let's start with Objective 2.
- Where it says "create education navigators," that could go on the information slide.
- Objective 1 is political, and it feels weird. We didn't think about that.
- When I think of at-risk needs for kids, I don't think just about pre-school. I think it is difficult around older students, middle and high school. There are bigger educational gap because of harder life experiences. I am struck by how much early childhood education gets mentioned.
- I feel the 9th grade gap. We need to get students before that. We should address that gap, but if we look at what happens earlier to offer more support, there won't be as great a gap.
- True, but some parents asked what to do about their 9th grader now?
- Maybe we could make early learning its own objective.
- The way the system is set up now, we don't know where students are.
- There is 90 percent coverage in Raise DC for 8th to 9th transition. On early childhood, that's different because it depends on how families are accessing city services. Considering before preschool, ages 0-2 are not outside our purview, but are we well-positioned to solve this issue?
- This looks very favorable to pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, but there is nothing about middle or high schools.
- We need to look at where the language is pointing us.
- "Across grades" is focusing on middle and high school. I am thinking about the drop in reading comprehension after 4th grade.
- There is a spike in special education in third grade.
- We could name all school levels. Another recommendation is keeping Objective 2 purely program building.
- On 1.1, do we need the three sub-points? It doesn't get us anything, but the big point is to advantage at-risk kids. What do people object to about that idea? I am worried not every school is ready to serve at-risk kids.
- The public in engagement events were worried about labeling.
- That comment fits in Objective 5.
- I hear the feedback, but it's not like there's an amazing set of schools now that serving at risk kids well. We're trying to make it better.
- I'm for this Objective. I love it.
- Parents don't walk around saying I have an at-risk kid. It's a policy concept. Let's not use that term.
- That's what they were saying. At-risk is deficit-based. We could revisit the language.
- Let's just have 1.1. We don't need this much detail because the implementers will consider it all.
- Now, you don't know when someone is at-risk. Would a parent want to identify when applying for lottery?
- In cities that give lottery preference to families with FRPL, there is 95% coverage, so families are willing to disclose that. All of these mechanisms are on the back end. We don't know what portion of kids applying through My School DC are at-risk. They might

not even have to identify because we already know for the residency verification with TANF and SNAP. There's lot of ways to address that concern. This is more about asset-based language.

- At-Risk is defined, so is that what we're using or something else?
- Well, one of our recommendation is to redefine it. Can it be more inclusive?
- Any recommendations that come out of this, we will have to consider implementation. What can we codify to get that work started? So much thought has been done, I would hate for them to start over.
- Appendices could help.
- This will be under the heading At-Risk. When we talk about at-risk kids, we talk about policy. We can frame that at the beginning.
- Are you talking about taking out language for 1.1.3? The community-based organization part is really important for early childhood that goes up to Kindergarten.
- It's maybe just presentation. It's too much on the page.
- The 1.2 recommendation does not fit. It should go in the information objective.
- Objective 1 would just be the lottery preference then.
- Can we talk about how we frame the diversity part?
- Not everyone thought it was positive because of cultural sensitivity.
- There should be good programs that attract all students.
- I think magnet schools generally drive inequity.
- A school opening up may be highly sought-after, but parents have said I don't like that neighborhood.
- Also wards 7 and 8 are being gentrified.
- I want to re-word it and highlight facts. It's uncomfortable to say not all schools create achievement for all kids. We can't mandate integration, and we can't frame it poorly.
- In wards 7 and 8, we can make schools attractive to the audience and have diverse schools.
- I don't think magnet programs are the way to go. Adding another type of school with another process isn't good. We should look at policies to help make diversity possible.
- Schools with higher concentrations of at-risk kids have a hard time. We can have programs to attract more non-at risk kids to diverse schools.
- What 1.3 says and what you explained is different. What are we actually trying to say? Schools should not have over-enrollment of at-risk students?
- 1.1 and 1.2 would change to "consider or expand the breadth and attractiveness of program offerings."
- We're looking at demographics as they are today, not 3-4 years ago. There has been tremendous demographic change. We have children in communities that would benefit from programs in communities. What are we saying? How do we make schools attractive for people living there now and in the future?
- The hurdle has to be beyond really good teaching and learning. It would have to be bilingual, tailored for them, and what they want.
- Some of the programs in quickly-improving schools in ward 7 are programs that serve families with trainings on weekends and supplemental programming. How is the school meeting the needs of the community?

- This is similar to the Opening, Closing, and Siting recommendations, how do you create community-based schools? When you have a school, you have a community you're working with. Can that live there?
- We need to make sure we're thinking about how this is framed.
- There are amazing exemplars of schools with all one population being great. But en masse, where are students flourishing? For all racial groups, it's diverse schools, and we don't have enough of those. It's a missed opportunity.
- I am understanding it's not just racial diversity. Part of the richness is my daughter goes to a school that's diverse in every sense of the word. Teaching diversity from the time the kids are little means a lot. I don't think it's fair to focus on just the racial part. I agree with the racial part but diversity is everything.
- Here, we're talking about socioeconomic diversity. Because we're talking about at-risk, and we're not finding great successes in any school when there's less socioeconomic diversity.
- Did diversity become a trigger word where it's automatically tied is to race? Should we re-phrase it as socioeconomic inclusivity?
- Let's remove 1.2. First we should focus on the lottery, then explore the development or enhancement of attractive programming in underserved neighborhoods that are not magnet programs in wards 7 and 8.
- There's concentrated poverty in other wards too.
- The reason we put it here is to try to get people in more affluent neighborhoods travel to schools that have high concentrated poverty.
- How do we create policies that put out social economic diversity?
- Should we say, "Consider a variety of strategies for increasing socioeconomic mixes of schools?"
- Programs could be part of that.
- Maybe just get rid of this objective and move those two big ideas, lottery and socioeconomic diversity, somewhere else.
- Creating the at-risk advantage and more favorable conditions is the heart of Objective 1.
- Can we move it into Objective 2? The concept of reducing concentrated poverty sounds cold and calculating.
- I want to see how comfortable DCPS is with moving that. We saw in data it's a critical issue for DCPS in a way that it is not to charters.
- Objective 1 sounded confusing to people in the public engagement events – they asked if we were trying to solve poverty?
- How about "Concentrations of students with high needs?"
- I disagree that at-risk students have higher needs, because affluent students might have other high needs. There's something about mentioning lower socioeconomic students.
- We could have another column about facts and realities. Something like, 50 DCPS schools serve student body that is 90% at risk or more to add logic to it.
- What's scattered around all of this is the need for at-risk students and families to have more information.
- One of the things here, like all information and resources, could move to Objective 4.
- In the meeting I went to, many families were asking what to do next? Who can help me? Everything falls apart because they have to work all day, and it's a cycle.

- I think we have to use at-risk to be clear about what we're talking about and explain what it means in the report. We don't have examples of schools in DC that are serving 90% plus at-risk students and doing a good job. We need to solve that problem. Data for each objective can be useful.
- "Socioeconomic mix" and lottery preference should stay in Objective 1.
- 1.2 is moving under objective 4.

At-Risk Objective 2
- This one reads better.
- The comment that we shouldn't track students before trying interventions means don't start 9th grade students with different tracks. That idea comes from a lack of understanding for what's happening.
- This all comes from fear of being labeled or making it stigmatizing.
- Did you hear that from people in at-risk families or people talking about at-risk families?
  - Both.
- Changing the definition, what about that point? Changing the name so it doesn't become stigmatizing?
- There are strong protections against sharing data about who receives free or reduced price lunch. We can make a strong statement about how we treat at-risk information. Students at-risk should not be identified in a way teachers would know.
- Objective 2, I would imagine would be more feel-good, because it's about sharing ideas and working together.
- We should start with this one because it's the most obvious.
- One thing I don't love about Objective 2 is we have focused on early intervention and learning. We've expanded our early learning programs in ways other districts haven't. We haven't figured out how to close gaps for special education students.
- Maybe we should start with early intervention, then not letting students get off-track.
- A couple of these are tactics, like engaging parents and families, which should happen on all these recommendations.
- Why don't we have a parent advisory council or at-risk advisory council? They can make sure the city is on track. They can provide input on any policies and function as a consistent focus group. Why not have a group of people this directly affects constantly weigh in?
- It could almost be a super-ceding recommendation of what we want the structure to look like to support implementation of these.
- My School DC has board but also an advisory board.
- Community-based organizations and support organizations are missing from here. Could have a clearinghouse to connect them to kids in schools. What are the citywide agencies and resources that exist? How do we evaluate them? How do we know it actually works?
  - For schools or families?
  - Both. Organizations want to partner with schools. We need to spend time understanding how well they do what they do.

Group discussing OCS recommendations:

- What do we mean by a "coordinated" planning cycle?
- We already do some of this coordination; some of this is communication with the charter sector.
- But we still aren't coordinated.
- This is about a commitment to sharing our plans and coming up with coordinated solutions.
- Doesn't sound like much without a formal commitment.
- We need to recognize that at some point, each sector must be willing to make concessions, sacrifices.
- What about the individual LEAs? How are their voices represented?
- Defining coordination is difficult. Will look different from each side.
- We need to have coordinated processes that respect the independence of each sector and each LEA.
- We say here that we'll respond to the needs of the community.
- That's through data – the data piece is powerful. Maybe a group like Denver's collaborative council would be useful.
- What enforcement power would that group have?
- We need a group so that we can have a broader discussion about issues that this Task Force hasn't addressed.
- We're not threatening to walk out, but we have zero interest in having a citywide body make decisions. Our autonomy has served the city well.
- We don't want an open body making decisions for DCPS either.
- A collaborative group can help parents and the community provide input.
- If Objective 2 is a foundation, it should be #1; community engagement important in every step, and 3 is the mechanics.
- There are two different places where we recommend groups, plus feedback that groups should be more public. Should we have one group?

Opening, Closing, and Siting Objectives Report Out
- We discussed all three Objectives together because separating them is difficult.
- We wrestled with what they mean and their levels of progress.
- We want to lead with the data piece (Objective 2). It is the most important and has the most consensus and excitement from the public. We can use it to inform discussions at community level and by leadership. We can merge objectives 1 and 2 or switch the order.
- We talked a lot about pulling together policymakers or leaders to discuss what coordination looks like, as well as broadening those groups to be more inclusive of community members and stakeholders. We don't need to specifically call out that the Education Leaders are meeting because it happens anyway, but how do we call out other groups that should be there?

At-Risk Objectives Report Out
- We spent most of our time on Objective 1, and we want to change the order because it's very political and not the best placement.

- We discussed meaning of at-risk and whether parents will acknowledge students are at-risk.
- We looked at improving schools East of the River vs. getting students to other schools in other parts of the city.
- Moved 1.2 to Objective 4.
- We probably need double the amount of time we had for discussing the rest.

Facilitator: We will need more time to go through it all. Depending on what we accomplish, we might schedule a call, but we want the bulk done at the meeting because that's when we get the most participation. We will update the slides to reflect the input and work toward final report. It is more than just a list of recommendations. It will provide context on the process, expert presentations, and explain how we got to where we are. Come ready with suggestions for next time, but the next meeting will be similar to now.

Task Force Member: A number of times when we were talking about showing data related to each objective so they're aligned. I would contribute more if I took an hour on my own and sent you thoughts about revisions.

Task Force Member: Phones are hard.

Facilitator: We are happy to do that.

Task Force Member: Also for formatting, we should add the context for each recommendation.

Task Force Member: Is there one more meeting to work through it? Then a last one to finalize?

Facilitator: We will be circulating drafts to get input. There is a limit to how much the group can do in one room together. There are two more meetings on the books.