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)
- Jim Sandman | President, Legal Services Corporation; former General Counsel, DCPS; former Managing Partner, Arnold & Porter
- Kemba Hendrix | Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS parent; former public and public charter school teacher
- 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
- Bethany Little | Murch ES, BASIS PCS parent; Education policy expert
- 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)
- Darren Woodruff | EL Haynes PCS, Benjamin Banneker HS parent ; Chair, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)

Co-Chairs:

- Jennifer Niles | 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)
- Emily Lawson | Founder & CEO, DC Prep PCS
- Hanseul Kang | State Superintendent of Education

- 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)
- Antwan Wilson | Chancellor, District of Columbia Public Schools
- 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)
- Faith Gibson Hubbard | Chief Student Advocate, State Board of Education (SBOE); former member, Student Assignment Committee

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)
- Rebecca Lee | Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for 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)
- Mila Yochum | Executive Director, Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes (DME)
- Debra Eichenbaum | Grants Management Specialist, Office of Out of School Time Grants and youth Outcomes (DME)
- Frank Tchoukeu | Project Assistant Institute for Youth Development, Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes (DME)

Meeting Summary:
- Facilitator Ramin Taheri started the meeting at 6:10 pm by reviewing the agenda.
- The Cross-Sector Spotlight highlighted the Every Day Counts! Community of Practice.
- Facilitator reviewed the goals of a learning trip to Denver in December and Task Force members who attended reflected on the trip.
    - Task Force Member: It was very interesting the way the Innovation Schools were set up. They have flexibility to meet the needs of each student; budgeting was different, and the administration has autonomy to make certain decisions about reaching kids. There were also transportation innovations, an issue we face as well.
    - Task Force Member: Denver's struggles are similar to ours. There was a lot to learn from, but there are benefits and drawbacks to any pathway.
    - Task Force Member: It was a good way to see sectors working together. Our situation is not similar to Denver because they are the district and the authorizer, so collaboration is

more intense. It was still good to see the mindset, but they were candid about growth areas.

- The Task Force adjourned for a short break.
- The Task Force turned to the Opening, Closing, and Siting (OCS) Draft Recommendations slides, and the Facilitator reviewed slides 3-6.
- A Task Force Member from the OCS Working Group reviewed draft recommendations (slide 7).
  - The box on slide 6 makes the recommendation that each sector should flesh out their process to identify areas where we can align decision-making and information. The process looks very different for both, but there are opportunities to collaborate or be informed by each other's process.
  - We want to make sure each process aligns to what comes from OSSE, such as the Star Rating and ESSA, which are not yet finalized.
  - We understand the difference stakeholders play in each process, so spelling that out is important.
  - A Common Application is on there for consideration, but the Task Force hasn't figured out the details yet. We can leverage the community engagement process to inform what we might do with that recommendation.
  - We also recommend establishing a formal agreement for cross-sector leaders to meet regularly – that happens informally, so should just make that more transparent.
- Facilitator: The structure we used shows a high-level objective, recommendations to get to that objective, and then policy and implementation considerations. Consideration 1.1.6 was mentioned a few times, but we didn't spend a ton of time on the details, so it's a policy and implementation consideration. We will gather feedback and see if it's feasible and worthwhile. In addition, the objectives directly relate to what the Task Force set out to do in its five original goals.
- Task Force Member: For 1.1.6, can you explain more about the in-boundary application? Is it an application affecting your right to attend?
- Facilitator: This would be an application through My School DC (MSDC), and the benefit of it is families would make an affirmative choice for the school they want to attend. It would also help gather information for why families choose which schools.
- Task Force Member: Regardless of whether parents want to place their child in their neighborhood school, they would apply through MSDC?
- Facilitator: That's one way to do it.
- Task Force Member: First, what are we trying to solve with this? This isn't taking away the right or guarantee, but it's just adding a step in the process. But it is a huge culture shift. Before going through what that would look like, we should consider what we're solving for. It could give us interesting data, but is that worth pushing that shift? There is still much to be answered.
- Task Force Member: Is this the opportunity to have that conversation? We're going to the community soon. Are there other cases for doing this? This feels like a lot for a focus group to wrestle with. It may be better to take it off if we aren't sure we want to make this recommendation yet. Providing more data would be good, but the cost would be high.
- Task Force Member: The return on investment is low.
- Task Force Member: The heavy lifting is going to fall on the parents.
- Task Force Member: MSDC will have a lift, but it would be a lot on schools and parents. We're seeing this a little bit with the mid-year application pilot this year. It's a huge shift for families and school staff. We are seeing some issues this year. There are nuances in the communication with the notion of entering a lottery but having a guaranteed seat can be confusing. I don't want anyone to be confused. There's a little risk on our end from the enrollment side. It goes back to what we're solving for – it isn't really a coordination thing because it only affects DCPS.

- DME Staff: One thing I heard from the DCPS perspective is affirmation that the school is your first choice. The mechanism doesn't have to be through lottery, but we heard the suggestion brought up multiple times at the Task Force meetings, as well as in community meetings.
- Task Force Member: We get the affirmation when families enroll, but do we want to know sooner? We should consider the lift against potential value.
- Task Force Member: Having facilitated open houses, there is panic for parents around entering the lottery, and to have parents apply for their right to attend, there will be a lot of pushback.
- Task Force Member: This isn't asking folks to apply for the right to go, but it would track through MSDC. We would have to figure out how this isn't an extra step. It would be a heavy lift on registrars at DCPS schools, but we don't want to put the lift on families.
- Task Force Member: We would want to make sure folks understand that.
- Task Force Member: I was a witness of this at a DCPS middle school; the school asked that in-boundary people fill out an application. It was the idea they would know who was coming in advance and prepare, and parents objected. That illustrates the difficulties of communicating it.
- Task Force Member: Does anyone want to make the benefit argument? It sounds like the cost outweighs the benefit, and there is uncertainty it would help us know who would attend each school.
- Task Force Member: The Chancellor was the one who brought it up during the OCS discussion. He suggested in a choice system, there is value to people thinking about where they want to go and making an affirmative choice.
- Facilitator: My question is – it's not an objective, it's an idea that was discussed. In my mind, it's worthwhile seeing what others think about it.
- Task Force Member: Not in mine. I value people's time in the focus groups, and we could go down a rabbit hole, and we have a lot of other things to discuss. We don't have unlimited time, and I don't see a huge value in asking folks about this. I'm not hearing people making the case for doing it.
- Task Force Member: I echo what everyone else has said. Considering limited time in focus groups, there aren't compelling reasons to keep this in. Once we go out, the recommendations will create buzz, so we need to be thoughtful about what we put out, especially if we don't support it as a committee.
- Task Force Member: This isn't what we need folks to focus on most, so we want to make sure we use their time well.
- Task Force Member: I'm really disappointed with this because I know what the situation is between advocates for the two sectors, and we haven't done much to solve that problem. All of this, despite the multitude of print, is all pretty vague. We don't actually recommend much in the way of specific policy. We say to define roles but not what those roles should be. We say there should be common data, but we don't talk about what that should be, other than there's a list. There's no discussion about what goes into common data for school quality and the other gaps that exist among schools. Who is going to do that work? Two other Task Force members are worried that schools will be judged on the ESSA Star System, which they objected at the time it was developed. They want to see more to go into judgements about schools. They don't see that DCPS may continue to be the provider of by-right neighborhood schools.
- Facilitator: The group has spent a lot of time on the data on the strategic analysis, which is on the next slide. But even setting up a mechanism for using this- we can change and refine it, but we want to set it up for both sectors to use the information. On the piece about protecting DCPS by-right schools, there's nothing in the recommendations that undermines DCPS schools. We don't have a specific recommendation about protecting schools because it hasn't been part of the conversation; this is really about coordinating planning in both sectors.
- Task Force Member: This underrepresents the data conversation we did have. We put a lot more data points on the table, and I don't see why that shouldn't be included here. The ones that got cut

were the ones that folks brought to the table so that we don't overly simplify judgement about schools. In regard to protecting by-right schools, what is the potential policy we didn't discuss?

- Task Force Member: It's not something we've been able to discuss because it's not part of the agenda. The schools have 21,000 seats of capacity beyond current student enrollment, and we keep opening new schools. There are places where we need them because neighborhoods change, but we've been closing DCPS schools for years because of the argument that we can't afford to keep under-enrolled schools. Some people argue we don't want to keep underperforming schools, so we keep creating new ones. The fiscal pressure and quality concerns lead to closing schools. Funding will continue to be a problem, especially under the federal administration. That's what DCPS advocates are afraid of. The more current trends continue, the more polarization grows.
- Task Force Member: Are you suggesting that if we talked about this, we'd arrive at a joint recommendation on this point?
- Task Force Member: At this point, it's too late. We're about to go out to the community. But I do think people would appreciate some reassurance that there will be some protection, and right now it's not in the vision. When the boundary commission did its work, people said we need a clearer picture of where this is going. We believe we need a core system of neighborhood schools. The absence is being taken as a suggestion we don't need that.
- Task Force Member: If you and others think there's a likely recommendation to come from that conversation, we should have it, but it doesn't seem like it would be productive.
- Facilitator: We did have some of that conversation when we made the Venn Diagram, and that fear was represented on one side, and the opposite view was on the other side. We agreed we wouldn't likely get to a joint recommendation on this issue.
- Task Force Member: That's what I'm getting at. If you think something has changed, and we'd be able to come to a joint recommendation, we should have that conversation. But I haven't seen that movement that makes it more likely the Task Force would come down on one side or another. Is there something that makes us think we could get somewhere with that discussion?
- Task Force Member: I would be interested in hearing what people would think about some reassurance. Other than that, this is the most difficult issue in DCPS-charter relations, and we need to wrestle with it. The idea of a core system of by-right schools answerable to elected officials, until recently, was taken for granted. That's partly why it didn't initially make its way into the discussion.
- Task Force Member: One brief response – we talked early on about charters of right and a walkability preference, and people were concerned about neighborhood, by-right schools and so we left that idea. I don't think that conversation would happen in a meaningful way in the time we have left. Is this the appropriate venue to consider it? It doesn't feel productive at this point.
- Task Force Member: I'm looking at the vision statement, and I thought we were clear in the goal of outstanding neighborhood schools and schools of choice. That's the core thing, so I didn't realize anyone might think we are not following that vision. We need to represent that in the objectives or find another way to do it, because that's squarely in vision statement.
- Task Force Member: The word "neighborhood" disappeared.
- Task Force Member: The vision statement does convey that, and there was a suggestion early on to make it clear DCPS was the by-right school, but I'm not sure that would answer the concerns they are raising.
- Facilitator: We never finalized that vision. It was designed as an exercise for this group to think about our common belief system about public education; it wasn't a foundation for how to view by-right schools. But if it didn't reflect input of Task Force, that's an oversight.
- Task Force Member: There was no intention on my part to leave that out. We want strong neighborhood schools that are by-right and high-quality charters. We want both and want to make that clear.

- Task Force Member: We could take a fresh look at the vision statement and put it in what we're going to share with people.
- Facilitator: Because we only meet once a month for a couple of hours, the vision statement dropped off the agenda because we needed more time for discussions within our working groups.
- Facilitator reviewed Objective 2 (slide 8).
- Task Force Member: There are 3-4 more things we could add in the list for data points that could match the fidelity of our recommendations; this is on the margins. Some really important points were raised, and there was strong agreement they mattered. We have a list somewhere. We could email it around – something around quality factors.
- DME Staff: We did discuss quality; we didn't come to an agreement but the concern was about relying on only ESSA. The others were transportation, budget, student-teacher ratios; there was not agreement but things we brainstormed. There needs to be more thought.
- Task Force Member: We can phrase it as "Should include factors such as:" and then add a couple more, for the focus groups especially.
- Task Force Member: One short cut might exist in the work going on in the State Board of Education (SBOE) for the ESSA Report Cards. They are taking testimony and discussion on what should be in the report cards. One could look at their work and find other data points that are valuable.
- Task Force Member: We are also assuming all the Report Card data goes into that analysis.
- Task Force Member: We don't know what will be in the Report Cards yet, and neither do members of the public.
- Task Force Member: SBOE should be finished with that by the end of February, and their work might be available if we want to integrate it.
- Facilitator: We can include more detail about the analysis. The bigger picture is we are changing the way to do this planning. We are thinking about how to get common information to the entities that do school planning to have some comparability- that's the higher-level takeaway.
- Facilitator: Objective 3 is about aligning timelines, where a cycle occurs every year (slide 9).
  - Some of this we still don't know, such as the DCPS process under the strategic plan.
  - The goal is to change the way this happens, and there's more coordination and ways for people to know what's happening.
- Task Force Member: Aligning each sector's engagement process is hard; they don't lay on top of each other. It's hard to consider a master timeline as a recommendation when the variables don't connect. In theory, the questions are fine, and it gets at some of what families and communities are interested in weighing in on, but our structures don't line up.
- Facilitator: We would need to put together a group to think about how that works and whether it's feasible, as noted in 3.1.1.
- Task Force Member: When we think of what the community asks us for, does this begin to answer that question, or are there things missing from what community members want in transparency and decision-making?
- Task Force Member: I think the master timeline doesn't mean the engagement process and opportunities for engagement are the same; we would just put them all out there on the same calendar. I would tweak the language on 3.2; thinking about application approval is PCSB language. You're getting at decisions made around new schools and programming. What does that timeline look like? PCSB isn't changing their process. There's some translating that will have to happen. A master timeline doesn't mean moving to one process or another.
- Facilitator: Part of the reason for the vagueness is PCSB has a transparent process; everyone knows it. DCPS doesn't have that process yet, and rather than dictate it, we want to leave room to for them to align if and when possible. It's vague because it's not apples to apples.
- Task Force Member: Is the goal alignment or transparency? I get alignment would be ideal, but in reality it's unaligned. Charters are, on a regular basis, reviewing and granting charters, and ESSA

timelines are driving the DCPS process. So much of that is legislated. I wonder if the biggest point is transparency, such as a shared transparency where parents can understand both processes at once and you don't have to search out two timelines. We could slightly reframe it.

- Task Force Member: For 3.3, we have had discussions at Task Force meetings and on the phone about forms of community engagement. We talked about the desirability of having a continuum of appropriate engagement points, involving people who have expertise from the community. None of that is in recommendations, but it can be including with "such as." It's probably in the notes.
- Facilitator: With 3.3.1, we were thinking about how to suggest to both sectors the best way to do community engagement that is transparent and easily accessible to the community.
- Task Force Member: It would be useful to make suggestions on what effective community engagement looks like. It's a question of transparency. This would extend to the At-Risk recommendations.
- Task Force Member: I'm thinking about this differently. I think about transparency differently than making dates and processes accessible. That to me doesn't indicate transparency. We have a process with multiple steps about how to open, close and site schools – we can put down what each sector's process is and try to align them and not have overlapping dates. That's easy. I'm thinking about a level deeper, true transparency. Folks want to know after we engage them, then what will happen? This is sort of the floor in Objective 3. In terms of what folks want to engage in, how do we make those decisions? We should make sure there's a feedback loop. What's underneath the decision-making, what are the key decisions, and who is at the table?
- Facilitator: People want to know how decisions are made or how to affect the decisions?
- Task Force Member: Both.
- Task Force Member: The first point is being honest and up front. People get that even if the decision isn't something they like, if they know how it's made, that's ok. This doesn't get to the being heard.
- Task Force Member: The suggestion in 3.3.1 for a citywide guide allows for more qualitative points for what high-quality community engagement looks like. We're underselling what we're recommending. It's more than a timeline.
- Facilitator: So we got to the first piece not the second piece.
- Task Force Member: It's an important place to start, a floor, something we don't have now, and it can only help. We are building on these things that will get us to transparency piece, but no guide or process with dates will get to that.
- Task Force Member: In the first two objectives, 1.3 and 2.3 are engagement pieces too. For the public to effectively participate, they need background information, like why we are doing something and the problem we're trying to solve.
- Facilitator: Can we include that in 3.3.1?
- Task Force Member: We also need it more in other two.
- Facilitator: Objective 3 is meant to apply to the entire framework. Everything in objective 1 is affected by the community engagement principles and guide in objective 3.
- Facilitator: I will take the feedback and make changes, and send the updated draft out to everyone. The first focus group is next week. We plan to have this conversation with the focus groups to understand what this looks like and come back together in March to consider the input.
- Task Force Member: What are you sharing with focus groups?
- Facilitator reviewed slides 12-13
    - We are sending a hold for Task Force meeting in March.
    - Looking at what we just looked at here in the focus groups. We'll have posters with objectives and recommendations plus handouts with everything, then have a conversation based on that. We will try to understand from a policy perspective if the

recommendations are worthwhile, and from an implementation perspective whether they are feasible.

- o Need volunteers from task force members to help facilitate. Next week call to walk through script and plan for the focus groups, how to gather feedback.
- Task Force Member: Do you have a way for participants to sign up in advance, and can they view the materials ahead of time?
- Facilitator: Yes.
- Task Force Member: Is there still opportunity to inform the format?
- Facilitator: What are you thinking?
- Task Force Member: It's lots of information to digest, just thinking about recent experiences with similar amount of complex and large volume of material. It would minimize opportunity for people to give input if we review everything because they'll spend most time asking questions. We should narrow what we're trying to get feedback around. It will be much smaller than what we ideally want but gets richer feedback and more time for feedback.
- Facilitator: I can reach out tomorrow. Let me know if anyone else has ideas.
- Task Force Member: How will the public submit comments?
- Facilitator: We thought about an open-ended comment via email vs. a more structured Google survey.
- Task Force Member: I have a new tool that may be able to help.
- Facilitator: We are coming back together after the focus groups before the citywide meetings and public comment period with updated recommendations.
- Task Force Member: Thank you for getting us to a coherent place after a lot of robust conversation. We may not have covered everything, but we are going to the community engagement with specific, thoughtful, deliberated items, and I appreciate all the hard work that took.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.