

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office of Communications



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Doxie McCoy 202.727.9691; doxie.mccoy@dc.gov
Matt Desjardins 202.727.5011; matthew.desjardins@dc.gov

Mayor Gray, Citing Need to Continue Progress on Education Reform, Accepts Committee's Final Recommendations on Student Assignment Policies and DCPS Boundaries

Boundary Changes to Take Effect For 2015-16 School Year

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Mayor Vincent C. Gray today announced that he has accepted the final recommendations of the D.C. Advisory Committee on Student Assignment to implement updated assignment policies and school boundaries. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education released the recommendations to the public today. In a letter to the Advisory Committee, among other reasons for agreeing to the recommendations, the Mayor noted that the benefits of moving forward far outweigh the cost of inaction, and cited the need to update policies and boundaries that have not been reviewed in more than 40 years.

"I am accepting the Advisory Committee's recommendations to continue the tremendous progress we have made in recent years reforming public education in the District," said Mayor Gray. ***"While change like this is never easy, it is in the best interest of the District – and especially our children – to move forward with the Committee's recommended policies and boundaries."***

The Mayor noted that the Committee's final recommendations came after extensive feedback from parents and community members throughout the District and, as a result, reflect significant revisions from earlier drafts. He commended the committee's diligence in undertaking a very difficult task, writing:

"The reason District leaders have put-off this project for a generation is the work is complex, inevitably controversial, and there is no way to avoid difficult choices. However, it is clear that you took the time to consider the full range of perspectives and all relevant information before developing your final recommendations... The path of education reform we embarked on as a city in 2007 can go only so far without taking this critical next step."

The Mayor's letter outlined the proposed timeline and key steps the District will take in updating school boundaries:

“Implementation of the school boundary changes will start in school year 2015-16. The phase-in policies of the new attendance zones and feeder patterns outlined in your recommendations strike the important balance between maintaining consistency for children and families and moving ahead with implementation so that we can begin to see the benefits to the reformed system as soon as possible. To effectuate these changes we will immediately begin the process of notifying families who may be affected by the changes in 2015, and we will engage in a broad ongoing information effort over the next year.”

The Mayor then recognized that some of the recommendations related to student assignment policies will take time to implement and directed Deputy Mayor for Education Abigail Smith and DCPS Chancellor Kaya Henderson to work with the relevant District agencies and stakeholders to develop an implementation plan and timeline to be completed by the end of October.

A copy of the Mayor's letter is attached to this release.

To view the Committee's Final Recommendations, an FAQ, and other background documents visit www.dme.dc.gov/boundaries.

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