

DC Public School and DC Public Charter School Collaboration

The traditional and public charter schools in Washington, DC collaborate widely and frequently. This brief identifies over 60 examples.

Washington, DC is home to a unique educational landscape that is based on a core system of high-quality public “schools of right” in every neighborhood, complemented by high-quality public schools of choice. DC Public School (DCPS), the local education agency (LEA) that manages Washington, DC’s neighborhood schools, constitutes one educational sector; the other sector includes over 60 public charter LEAs (66 in SY18-19). In the 2018-19 school year, DCPS and the charter LEAs operated 239 schools, and out of 92,967 public school students, 53% were enrolled at DCPS and 47% were enrolled in public charter schools at the time of the enrollment audit.

Given the rich and diverse array of schools, coordination and collaboration across sectors is an exciting and necessary aspect of our public school system. Collaboration can accelerate innovation, scale good ideas, create efficiencies, build professionalism and collegiality, and bring the best of our system to all students.

Washington, DC is recognized nationally as a leader in bridging the divide between

district-run public schools and public charter schools. In February 2016, Mayor Bowser established a [Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force](#) commissioned to increase collaboration among the two sectors. The Task Force Final Report offers over 100 recommendations and highlights innovative examples of efforts that reach across DCPS and charter schools to improve educational outcomes for students. Building on the work of the task force, we have identified more than 60 examples of cross-sector collaboration implemented across the city.

Cross-sector efforts are conducted by a variety of stakeholders and touch on a number of categories. Our analysis revealed that there are at a minimum 7 examples of best practice sharing, 9 examples of collaborative citywide service delivery, 8 examples of network-based solution development, 8 examples of research development, 4 examples of scaling innovative practices, 5 school partnerships, 2 examples of shared grant application and implementation, 9 professional developments, and 9 task forces that span across public

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Examples of Cross-Sector Collaboration by Category



school sectors (see Appendix I for a full list of examples and descriptions). These examples are not strictly limited to education; rather they address needs such as access to transportation, mental health services, and summer meals.

One powerful example of cross-sector, network-based solution development is the Bridge to High School Data Exchange and Kid Talk. Because rising 8th graders routinely cross sectors into high school, this exchange provides a forum for information and data sharing between 8th and 9th grade teachers to ensure 9th grade teachers know as much as possible about their incoming students. This project involved a groundbreaking data collection effort between the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), DCPS, and several charter LEAs.

Source: [Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force Report](#)

An example of a collaborative professional development opportunity is offered by Restorative DC. Restorative DC supports a dozen DCPS and public charter schools in implementing Restorative Justice practices in order to decrease the use of suspensions and expulsions and to increase school success. In addition to locally-based technical support, Restorative DC offers monthly training and peer learning opportunities that are open to schools from both sectors.

A final example, this time of a school partnership, is the decades-long collaboration between Briya Adult Public Charter School and Bancroft Elementary School that started in 1990. Not only did the schools share space, but children of Briya's adult students attended the DCPS Elementary School as well.

Feedback:

Aware of other examples of cross-sector collaboration? Email Edsight.DME@dc.gov

Appendix I

Category	Project	Description
Best Practice Sharing	2019 Start of School Summit	During the summit, OSSE staff shared resources and tools and discussed common start-of-school and year-round challenges regarding data quality, data systems, enrollment, and serving special populations of students with LEA-level participants.
Best Practice Sharing	Ahead of the Curve Conference	DC PCSB and DCPS collaborated on the Ahead of the Curve Conferences - Preventing and Managing Sex Abuse in Schools I & II (2018 & 2019).
Best Practice Sharing	American University's Community-Based Heritage Language Schools Conference	This conference is for program directors and administrators of community-based heritage language schools; members of the language communities involved in these schools; and directors and leaders in public, private, and charter schools who are interested in working with community-based heritage language schools.
Best Practice Sharing	Cross-Sector Community of Practice on Trauma-Informed Practices	Collaboration between the DME, Education Forward DC, Relay Graduate School of Education, Georgetown MedStar, and Turnaround for Children launched a community of practice open to DCPS and all public charters on trauma-informed practices.
Best Practice Sharing	Graduation Pathways Summit	The fifth annual Graduation Pathways Summit on Oct. 29, 2018 provided a touch point for schools, agency leaders, and nonprofit partners to examine and strategize ways to ensure more DC youth start high school on the right foot, recover if they have fallen off track, and reconnect if they have dropped out.
Best Practice Sharing	Multilingual Learners Conference	At the Multilingual Learners Conference-Empowering Success Through Language Learning-several DCPS dual language teachers and school leaders presented to their colleagues serving language learners across sectors.
Best Practice Sharing	Multilingual Education Fair	At the annual Multilingual Education Fair sponsored by DC Language Immersion Project, schools come together across sectors to engage with families and each other about their programs.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	DC Free Summer Meals Program	Since 2012, more than 6.6 million summer meals have been served through the DC Summer Meals Program to children and youth in DC. Sponsoring organizations include: -Public and private local education agencies; -Entities of state, local, and municipal government; -Public and private non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) status; and -Non-profit residential and non-residential camps.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	DC ReEngagement Center	Services provided by the DC ReEngagement Center include conducting targeted outreach to students who have dropped out, as well as engaging walk-ins and referrals; assessing academic status and non-academic needs of youth and using this information to help them develop personalized reengagement plans; identifying good-fit educational options (including DCPS alternative schools, public charter schools, and community-based organizations); supporting the reenrollment process (e.g., collecting required documents, accompanying youth on site visits, connecting to resources that will address reconnection barriers); and providing ongoing support for at least one year once reenrolled.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	DC School Reform Now (DCSRN)	DCSRN's leading initiative is the High Quality Schools Campaign (HQSC), which helps families, particularly from underserved communities, navigate the DC school choice process so that all students can access quality public schools. Partners include both DCPS and charter schools.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	Families First	The Families First project is an evidence-based practice initiative created by the DC Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to expand the range of mental health services for families and children.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	High School Course Offerings	DC PCSB collaborated with DCPS to create a master high school course offering document. The purpose of the document is to encourage further collaboration between high schools with credit recovery. The document contains each charter high school's full list of course offerings, as well as the offerings of DCPS.

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Category	Project	Description
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	Kids Ride Free	Mayor Muriel Bowser established and championed Kids Ride Free (KRF) to ensure that enrolled District students who are District residents can get to school and school-related activities for free on Metrobus, Metrorail, and the DC Circulator.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	Kinvolved	KiNVO offers an innovative platform to increase communication with parents and provide administrators with effective tools to better manage attendance. The platform, which is accompanied by staff training, is used by DCPS as well as by charter schools.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	My School DC	My School DC is the common application and common lottery for the District's public school options.
Collaborative Citywide Service Delivery	Safety Transfer Program Pilot	Two pilot programs were launched to improve the process for students across all sectors who made mid-year transitions to new schools.
Network-Based Solution Development	9th Grade Counts Network	The 9th Grade Counts Network serves 8th and 9th grade students who attend a 9th Grade Counts member organization - whether a DCPS school, a public charter school, or a community-based organization.
Network-Based Solution Development	Bridge to High School Kid Talk	As a complement to the information shared through the Bridge to High School Data Exchange, Kid Talk offers middle and high school staff the opportunity to connect with one another in person to: 1) Review 8th grade data and offer insights to guide student-specific planning for rising 9th graders, and 2) Launch ongoing working relationships between middle and high schools to continue supporting shared students throughout their freshman year.
Network-Based Solution Development	DC Can Network	DC CAN is one component of the District's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Strategic Plan which supports the establishment of NAF academies at DCPS and public charter high schools, thereby promoting the City's mission to strengthen the pipeline to college and careers.
Network-Based Solution Development	DC Youth Leadership Network	The DC Youth Leadership Network uses a positive youth development approach to promote self-determination and youth voice for youth with disabilities and their peers through youth-centered capacity building workshops, community-based activities, and civic engagement experiences.
Network-Based Solution Development	Disconnected Youth Change Network	The Disconnected Youth Change Network serves DC youth ages 16 through 24 who are either not enrolled in an educational program or who have reconnected to a nontraditional educational pathway (including adult or alternative schools or community-based organizations) with the goal of attaining their high school credential.
Network-Based Solution Development	Early Grade Change Network (EGCN)	EGCN serves children from kindergarten through 2nd grade who attend an EGCN member organization, including DCPS schools, public charter schools, and in- and out-of-school time programs.
Network-Based Solution Development	Postsecondary Access and Completion Change Network (PACCN)	Focused on supporting students on the path toward college, Raise DC's PACCN consists of local education agencies (LEAs - public charter schools and DCPS) and community-based organizations (CBOs) across DC that together represent more than 15,000 high school students.
Network-Based Solution Development	Voices of Change Peer Network	The Voices of Change Peer Network provides a way for DC youth with disabilities, IEPs, and 504 plans (ages 12-25) to connect to opportunities in their communities to be leaders and build the skills needed to succeed.
Research Development	Bridge to High School Data Exchange	Launched in 2016 as a joint venture between Raise DC and OSSE, the Bridge to High School Data Exchange is a standardized process that transmits individual-level data quickly, automatically, and consistently for students as they move from middle to high school. This data is transmitted among participating LEAs, with the understanding that each LEA is responsible for collecting and distributing relevant data among its respective middle and high school campuses.

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Category	Project	Description
Research Development	DC School Report Card	The DC School Report Card gives DC families a look into all public schools in the District. Built in partnership with families, this tool is a step towards a more transparent, equitable public education system with students at the center of critical decision-making.
Research Development	DC Staffing Data Collaborative	OSSE launched the DC Staffing Data Collaborative—a partnership between OSSE, LEAs who opt to participate, educator preparation programs, and TNTP, a national non-profit serving as a research organization. The goal of the Collaborative is simple but bold: help LEAs develop effective strategies to attract, develop, and retain the teachers they need to serve their students through access to better data.
Research Development	EdScape Beta	EdScape Beta is a powerful new planning tool that provides information about the landscape of DC's public schools and students and will support policymakers, agencies, and schools in making data-driven decisions to inform and support programs and school planning.
Research Development	Equity Reports	In the years prior to the publication of the DC School Report Card, OSSE, DCPS, DC PCSB in consultation with charter schools, the DME, and NewSchools Venture Fund partnered to publish annual Equity Reports.
Research Development	Graduation Pathways Project and Report	The Graduation Pathways Project began in summer 2013 to widely engage education agencies, school leaders, and civic partners to act on a shared vision that every student - no matter how far off track they may be - has a path to graduation. The project involved a groundbreaking data collection effort, integrating rich longitudinal student information from OSSE, with LEA-provided data on attendance, behavior, and course marks (ABC) from DCPS and several charter LEAs.
Research Development	OSSE LEA Data Collection	Through the Division of Data, Assessment, and Research (DAR), OSSE supports LEA data managers with tools and resources related to data entry in student information systems, accurate reporting and data analysis, and training. OSSE requires LEAs to send collections on a daily basis, as this data is used to support the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data (SLED) system, the Special Education Data System (SEDS), and the daily validation of student attendance as well as transportation for students with disabilities. For public charter LEAs, data is transferred from OSSE to DC PCSB.
Research Development	STAR Framework	The STAR Framework first measures a school's performance for all students in each of the applicable metrics. Schools earn points based on their students' performance compared to students across the city.
Scaling Innovative Practices	Arts Education Initiative (AEI)	AEI was designed to develop, pilot, refine, and adopt a model process for collaboration in DCPS and DC public charter schools. The goal of this project was to enhance student learning by integrating arts across the curriculum and increasing community support for arts education.
Scaling Innovative Practices	Hamilton Education Program (HEP)	During the 2018-19 school year, DCPS coordinated with the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History to provide the HEP curriculum to students at all DCPS high schools. Additionally, DCPS coordinated with staff from DC PCSB, as well as teachers and staff from nearly all DC public charter high schools to organize programmatic and logistical meetings in preparation for the event, which sent several thousand DC 11th graders to the Kennedy Center to attend a showing of the musical Hamilton. Prior to attending the show, students engaged with the HEP curriculum and prepared original work in response to their research about the founders as depicted in the musical.
Scaling Innovative Practices	Proving Ground	Proving Ground works with school districts to help them identify and test solutions to specific challenges, such as chronic absenteeism, that are obstacles to student achievement. Proving Ground supports partner districts in continuous improvement through data analysis, strategic advice, hands-on assistance, and peer networking opportunities.

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Category	Project	Description
Scaling Innovative Practices	Real World History Course	DCPS continues to partner with the Center for Inspired Teaching (CIT) to jointly offer an elective history class (Real World History), which focuses on the practical applications of history through study of the Great Migration and an internship at a local museum or historical site. The course is taught by a teacher at Thurgood Marshall PCS and includes students from a number of DCPS and charter schools over the past two years, including: Maya Angelou PCS, Next Step PCS, SEED PCS, Capital City PCS, Cesar Chavez PCS, Richard Wright PCS, Washington Latin PCS, and EL Haynes PCS.
School Partnerships	Bancroft Elementary School and Briya Public Charter School Partnership	The partnership between Bancroft Elementary School and Briya existed between 1990 and 2019, making Bancroft Briya's main home for decades.
School Partnerships	Community Schools Incentive Initiative	A "community school" is a public and private partnership to coordinate educational, developmental, family, health, and after-school-care programs during school and non-school hours for students, families, and local communities at a DCPS or public charter school with the objectives of improving academic achievement; reducing absenteeism; building stronger relationships between students, parents, and communities; and improving the skills, capacity, and well-being of the surrounding community residents.
School Partnerships	Connected Schools	Connected Schools take a whole child, whole school, whole community approach by making schools spaces that support not only a student's academic development, but a family's overall well-being through access to resources related to health, employment, housing, and more. This model builds on the full-service community school model and is grounded in national research and educational best practices.
School Partnerships	DC Scholars and Stanton Elementary School Partnership	DC Scholars Stanton Elementary, operated in partnership with DC Scholars Community Schools, works to ensure all children to have access to a high quality public education that challenges them to believe that anything is possible, and equips them with the tools to actualize their dreams.
School Partnerships	ESL After the Bell	In 2017, OSSE awarded Center City a two-year, federally-funded Charter Schools Program Dissemination Grant to expand its ESL After the Bell programming to one of the District's traditional public schools, H. D. Cooke Elementary School.
Shared Grant Applications and Implementation	DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG)	DCTAG was created by Congress in 1999 by the District of Columbia College Access Act for the purpose of expanding higher education choices for college-bound residents of DC.
Shared Grant Applications and Implementation	Race to the Top Grant	Some of the earliest cross-sector work in the District began when OSSE, DCPS, individual charter schools, and charter management organizations, which serve as LEAs for their charter school(s), came together in 2010 to apply for – and won – a federal Race to the Top grant. In the grant proposal, they agreed to implement a common set of initiatives, such as a common student growth measure and common guidelines for teacher evaluations. The grant proposal also required that OSSE staff convene several cross-sector task forces (e.g., a human capital task force and a student growth task force) to engage DCPS, DC PCSB, and charter school leaders to work together.
Shared Professional Development	DC Common Core Collaborative	Using Race to the Top funding, OSSE awarded E. L. Haynes PCS a grant to support a cross-sector lesson study collaborative—the DC Common Core Collaborative.
Shared Professional Development	Emergency Response Planning	DCPCSB and DCPS collaborate on emergency response planning to ensure coordination for both sectors.

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Category	Project	Description
Shared Professional Development	Executive Masters in Leadership (EML) for DC School Leaders	Known as the DC Public School Leaders EML, this program features a cohort model of 10 DCPS and 10 DC charter school leaders. Cohorts work together to create cross-sector solutions on a variety of topics.
Shared Professional Development	Medication Administration Training	DC PCSB and DCPS collaborate on Medication Administration training for school staff and on school health-related items, such as school-based nurses.
Shared Professional Development	Mikva Challenge DC	This program provides teachers and students with training to pursue action civics, studying and taking informed action on problems in their local communities. DCPS has collaborated with Mikva Challenge DC to bring their curricular resources into our 12th grade U.S. Government, D.C. History, and English curriculum and a number of DCPS high schools have participated in their two main initiatives: Project Soapbox and the Action Civics Fair. Along with DCPS high schools, the following charter schools have participated in professional development and these competitions: SEED PCS, Center City PCS, Thurgood Marshall Academy, E.L. Haynes PCS, Capital City PCS, and Paul PCS.
Shared Professional Development	Restorative DC	Restorative DC, a project of SchoolTalk, supports around one dozen DCPS and public charter schools in whole-school implementation of Restorative Justice practices and culture change. It does so through intensive, trauma-informed, collaborative, customized, onsite, and locally-based technical support in order to lower incidents of conflict and harm, reduce the use of suspensions and expulsions, increase school performance, and center the school community around relationships, inclusivity, and accountability. Restorative DC offers monthly training and peer learning opportunities that are open to all DCPS and public charter schools, as well as the agencies and organizations that serve youth. In partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the DC Office of Attorney General (OAG), Restorative DC provides restorative alternatives to prosecution such as Restorative Justice Conferencing.
Shared Professional Development	Social Studies Professional Development:	Teachers from 8 local public charter schools receive monthly email newsletters from DCPS that highlight information on professional learning opportunities offered by DCPS, as well as other local partner organizations (e.g., The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, the National Museum of the American Indian, Teaching for Change, etc.). Teachers from those schools have periodically attended DCPS Professional Development Days. These charters include: Inspired Teaching Demonstration PCS, Thurgood Marshall PCS, Center City PCS, Cesar Chavez PCS, Washington Yu Ying PCS, EL Haynes PCS, Friendship PCS, and Paul PCS.
Shared Professional Development	Teach for America	Teach for America corps members work in both DCPS and charter schools and attend professional development, trainings, and other convenings together.
Shared Professional Development	Two Rivers Public Charter School	Two Rivers PCS (Two Rivers), has been hosting an annual "Evening of Learning," with presenters from schools throughout the District. The school has a rigorous professional development program that was featured in the book <i>Data Wise in Action: Stories of Schools Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning</i> published by Harvard University.
Task Force	2018-19 Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) Working Group	OSSE convened a UPSFF Working Group pursuant to section 112(c) of the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula for Public Schools and Public Charter Schools Act of 1998.
Task Force	Coordinating Council on Mental Health	DC PCSB and DCPS collaborate on mental health expansion through the Coordinating Council on Mental Health.

Category	Project	Description
Task Force	DC Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force	The DC Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force was charged with developing clear and fair recommendations for the Mayor on how to improve the coherence among and collaboration across public schools to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
Task Force	DC Career and Technical Education (CTE) Working Group	DC PCSB participates on the DC CTE Working Group hosted by OSSE. DC PCSB participates in all meetings and the supplemental business rules working group. The purpose of the group is to monitor the implementation of the citywide CTE Strategic Plan that was adopted in December 2012. Other members of the group include OSSE, DCPS, UDC, DME, and WIC.
Task Force	ESSA Task Force	Over the course of two years, subcommittees addressed school report cards, an access and opportunity measure, a high school growth measure, and school climate pilots.
Task Force	Every Day Counts! Taskforce	The Every Day Counts! Taskforce is a partnership of diverse DC agencies and stakeholders that collectively advance and coordinate strategies to increase student attendance and reduce truancy.
Task Force	OST Commission	The OST Commission is a public body composed of engaged residents and representatives from government agencies to support equitable access to high-quality OST programs for DC youth through coordination among government agencies, targeted grant-making, data collection and evaluation, and the provision of training, capacity building, and technical assistance to OST providers.
Task Force	School Safety and Safe Passage Working Group	Based on concerns around student safety, the District established the School Safety and Safe Passage Working Group to better understand and enhance safety-related policies that impact DCPS and public charter schools.
Task Force	Social Studies in DC Task Force	DCPS has connected with charter school social studies teachers and administrators to try to identify areas of common challenge and potential collaboration. At a series of meetings in spring 2019, task force members decided to create and collect data across the sectors on a number of indicators related to the use of DC social studies standards, instructional time/staffing, curriculum and resources, and professional development. The task force was led by social studies leaders from DCPS, Friendship PCS, and the Center for Inspired Teaching, with additional participants including: E.L. Haynes PCS, Paul PCS, Washington Latin PCS, Achievement Prep PCS, Sela PCS, Center City PCS, Thurgood Marshall PCS, Howard University Middle School PCS, the DC PCSB staff, and members of the State Board of Education.