Attendees:
- Shanita Burney
- Caryn Ernst
- Irene Holtzman
- Melissa Kim
- Mary Levy
- Claudia Lujan
- Jennie Niles
- Scott Pearson
- Jim Sandman
- Antwan Wilson
- Shantelle Wright

Jenn Comey introduced the conversation by going over Denver's planning cycle and giving the group 10 minutes to brainstorm in groups of two or three about a planning cycle for DC.

Discussion:
- Q: Did we decide what was going into the Strategic Citywide Analysis (SCA) last time?
  - A: We came up with and finished talking about a high-level recommendation around what should be in the SCA.
- How do the main players (PCS, PCSB, DCPS, DME) respond to and address the gaps that come out of the SCA? There should be an opportunity for all those players to say "Here's what the SCA is saying, here's what we are doing on which gaps." Each entity should reflect how it will address those gaps in its plans.
- Agreed that the point of an SCA should be to guide the opening and siting of schools and the development and location of programs. If that is not done across sectors, it's a lost opportunity. Both sectors doing it on their own undermines the strategic parts of the SCA. I am concerned that just saying from the outset that the SCA will lead to coordination does not mean that we will develop an SCA that supports join decisions. It takes a process to set up a centralized process for the two sectors to work together around the SCA. The SCA should factor into comprehensive city planning. This should be tied to all the city planning data and should feed into a common coordinated decision-making process for school program development.
  - I have a strong reaction to this. Siting of schools for public charter schools is out of the LEAs' control and depends on where there is space available. Charters are intended to be citywide. Also, the fact that the real estate market drives where charters locate does not necessarily reflect the schools' intentions.
- Perhaps a coordinated process could deal with this. The real estate market should not determine where we locate schools and this process should address this issue strategically.

- Agreed that there should be a level of coordinated strategy around where we want buildings. I don't go all the way to centralized decisions but I agree that we can use the SCA to say something like, "We need 5 more schools and we need to find places for them." If we know that a place is going to have housing units on it, we should also plan to have a school there. That level of thinking makes a lot of sense.
  - We could call this a Call For Quality Schools.
  - It's actually more like a call for buildings. We had buildings in years past and now we don't have surplus buildings. If we are adding 3,000 students a year, we need to be adding buildings.
- I want to make sure we think broader than just new schools. Not all schools that already exist are where they need to be from a quality perspective. The solution is not just opening a brand new school. There are many options and strategies when we think about increasing quality such as improving the quality of our existing schools and programs. We need to address the needs and supports of the schools we have now, across both sectors.
- If there is a call for siting or call for quality, what is the next step? We currently have two sectors with two separate processes around approving schools.
  - My reaction to Denver is that they have supports that they have put in place over time to support the district schools being a contender in applying to meet the needs and/or open new schools. The Denver Public Schools needed its own school leaders to apply and so the district needed to provide supports for school leaders to use so that they could step up to the plate and participate in the process of getting new schools approved. This would have to be a proactive and intentional strategy from DCPS because this is not their skill set right now.
- I am thinking about the timeline for opening a new school or program. We need to be thoughtful about coordinating need and time horizon to put together the right team and the right application to address the need. It easily takes 18 months to start up a school. Starting and running schools are two different things. I'm not sure we can answer the call to address the needs in a timely fashion. We need to build infrastructure around this
- CityBridge foundation is doing this right now and is working on incubating school redesign or new school ideas. I'm sure they would partner in something like this.

- Facilitator: Looking at the lottery would be the next step in the process. We have thought about putting in-boundary enrollment into this step as well. Any thoughts or new things to add to this step in the process?
- What we do is good but it's not unified choice like what Denver has. Denver's system is all schools, even if it's the in-boundary school down the street. They are at 90% of kids participating in the choice system. There are implications around transportation if you do this. There are issues that Denver still has around transportation questions. There are unique differences between the transportation challenges in DC as compared to Denver.
- It should be easy to sign up for by-right schools on the MSDC system.
- Users learn what their in-boundary school is in in My School DC. But users cannot rank their in-boundary schools and you can't register for in-boundary now on MSDC. It is not an enrollment process; it is just an application process.

- The idea to do enrollment through MSDC was a future goal. DCPS is in a different position now to do online enrollment. However, right now each LEA has a different Student Information System (SIS) so there are some logistical challenges.
- Are we talking about having everyone's SIS plugged into MSDC? Or that every student has to select a school even if it is their in-boundary school?
  - What we can do now is put it in our planning cycle and then see where we want to be. There is an advantage to doing it through a common platform. We could track data but can't now because of SIS differences.
- There are small steps we could do before getting into the SIS differences that would cause a problem. There are things to be done that would be responsive to parent accessibility needs.
- It is compelling for a neighborhood school to see that they could have had X number of kids selecting the school but the kids did not choose the school. This kind of information is what Denver decided it wanted to have. It is not the exact same in our cycle. Generally it's best if people make an affirmative decision to be somewhere rather than being placed there. This does give some schools a disadvantage when not everyone chose to be there.
  - I want to clarify that while we don't have this information from the My School application because it does not include in boundary schools, DME does calculate the in-boundary percentage rate. This rate is the share of students who attend their in boundary school compared to the total number of public school grade-appropriate students. This isn't as complete as including the in boundary schools in the My School application but it is a start.
- How does Denver address people just walking into schools to enroll anyways? How do they deal with students who were the last to pick schools?
  - It's hard. The district had to spend a lot of time in spaces with parents getting them to apply. The original goal was to make it easier and reduce the paper. But now it's at 7% of people not selecting their schools in Denver. When they just started maybe around 20% of students did not.
- It seems like a parent could walk in and register and do this at their schools. You could still walk in and apply but the system needs to be set up to allow you to do that either way.
  - DCPS is piloting this now with the mid-year process; DCPS registrars will be telling parents who walk into their in boundary school mid-year that they have to apply first with My School DC . The My School team is going to capture information to learn about why students are enrolling mid-year and we will all be able to see how easy or confusing it is for families to enroll this way. This is being piloted due to the recommendation from the Cross Sector Collaboration Task Force to address mid-year mobility.