

The Landscape for Student Assignment and School Choice in D.C.

Prepared by: 21st Century School Fund

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Policy Brief #3: The Landscape for Student Assignment and School Choice in D.C.

This policy brief describes the effects of the historical and current student-assignment and school-choice policies and practices of the District of Columbia—described in detail in *Policy Brief #1: D.C. Student Assignment and Choice*¹—on patterns of public-school enrollment. Policy Brief #3 provides basic data and information on city and neighborhood population and demographics, school characteristics, school-facility infrastructure, and school attributes that may be variously considered as causes or effects of student assignment and choice.

This data and information will help stakeholders identify key city and public-education factors that affect the relationships between families, communities, and public education in relation to student assignment and school boundary policies. Using data and information at various unit of analysis levels, such as the city, ward, neighborhood-cluster, school, and student levels will help expand public discussion of the relationship of families and communities with their schools beyond individual personal experiences. For more information about the data sources used in Policy Brief #3, see Section V: Data Sources and Appendices.

Current Structure of D.C.’s Public Education System

The District of Columbia delivers public education through a system of public schools that encompasses two different governance sectors: the District-operated District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools (PCS) authorized by the Public Charter School Board (PCSB). DCPS and each of the 60 individual non-profit corporations with authorized charters are local education agencies (LEAs).

Originally the sole K–12 LEA for the District of Columbia, DCPS is responsible for providing public schools of right for all school-age children in the District of Columbia including incarcerated youth and children who are wards of the D.C. courts regardless of whether they live within or outside of the District of Columbia. DCPS operates 112 public elementary, secondary, adult, alternative, and special education schools in the 2013–14 school year. DCPS is under the responsibility of the Mayor as the city’s executive and is under the oversight and legislative authority of the D.C. Council. DCPS is administered by the Chancellor, who is appointed by the Mayor subject to the advice and consent of the D.C. Council.²

The Public Charter School Board (PCSB) is an independent authority consisting of seven members appointed by the Mayor. PCSB authorizes charter LEAs through 15-year charter agreements and monitors their performance. Each charter LEA is governed by a nonprofit board of directors and operated pursuant to its charter agreement. All D.C. public charter schools must be incorporated in the District of Columbia. Many of these LEAs are single-school agencies; others are charter-management organizations (CMOs) that operate networks of two to five charter schools on different campuses. In school year 2013–14, the public charter sector’s 60 LEAs are operating schools on more than 100 campuses.

At the state level, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and the State Board of Education provide accountability pursuant to federal requirements and set standards for DCPS and the PCS. The Deputy Mayor for Education has responsibilities for planning and policy for both sectors, as well as for the continuum of education from early childhood to post-secondary and adult education.

¹ Available from www.dme.dc.gov

² See D.C. Code § 1-523.01(a).

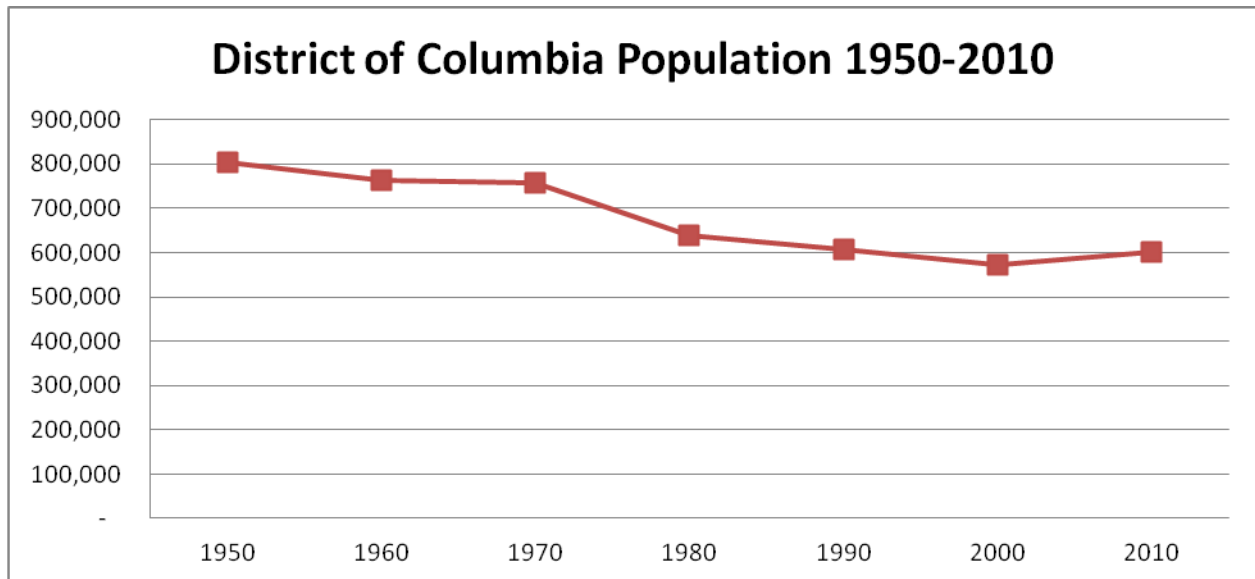
I. The City: District of Columbia Population and Demographics

The District's population, demographic history and projections provide an important context for student-assignment policy. Student-assignment policies in communities with growing school-age populations are often very different from student-assignment policies where there are declining enrollments. Allocating school seats as enrollments increase tends to require more directive planning and greater controls on student assignment.

A. After Decades of Decline, D.C. Population Grows

After 50 years of population decline, the District of Columbia began growing again after 2000. In 1950, the city reached its peak population at over 800,000 people. Over the next half century, it dropped to approximately 572,000 (US 2000 Census). The population began increasing between 2000 and 2010, an increase of 5.2 percent. This increase was fueled by white, Hispanic, and Asian residents, and the Millennial demographic—ages ranging between 18 and 36. These increases offset the continued decline in African American residents (see Washington, DC: Our Changing City by NeighborhoodInfo DC at the Urban Institute for a detailed look at population changes by race/ethnicity and neighborhood).

Figure 1: Sixty Years of D.C. Population History 1950 to 2010



Source: U.S. Census, Neighborhood Info DC.

It appears that this new upward population trend is still ongoing. During December 2013, the Census Bureau estimated that the District's total population is now even higher at 646,449—a number not seen since the 1970s. For the third year in a row, the District remained among the nation's fastest-growing states growing by 2 percent between 2012 and 2013, or by an average of 1,085 new residents per month.

The DC Office of Planning (OP) projects that the overall population of the District will continue this new trend and grow from 601,767 in 2010 to 732,783 in 2022, a 22 percent increase. Already their 2013 population estimate is lower than the Census's most recent estimate for the same year.

B. Overall D.C. Child Population Declined but the Infants and Toddlers Increased

The total city population increased between 2000 and 2010, but the child population, ages 0-17, declined by 12% or 14,177 children in the same time period (Table 1). Looking at the changes in child population by

single ages, the number of infants and toddlers actually increased between 2000 and 2010 while the elementary and secondary age students experienced large decreases. Infants (children under age 1) increased by 10%, and children ages 1 year and 2 years old increased by 7% and 3%, respectively.

Table 1: Child Population by Single Year of Age, 2000 and 2010

	2000	2010	% Change
Total population (all ages)	572,059	601,767	5%
Children 0-17	114,992	100,815	-12%
Under 1 year	6,518	7,156	10%
1 year	6,280	6,728	7%
2 years	6,478	6,667	3%
3 years	6,474	6,267	-3%
4 years	6,786	5,795	-15%
5 years	6,790	5,543	-18%
6 years	7,078	5,315	-25%
7 years	7,170	5,047	-30%
8 years	7,176	5,113	-29%
9 years	7,171	5,129	-28%
10 years	6,983	5,026	-28%
11 years	6,116	4,944	-19%
12 years	5,759	4,884	-15%
13 years	5,687	5,047	-11%
14 years	5,473	5,140	-6%
15 years	5,545	5,347	-4%
16 years	5,648	5,659	0%
17 years	5,860	6,008	3%

Source: 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

C. Child Population Is Not Evenly Distributed in the City

The City's wards are crafted to encompass equally distributed number of residents, but this does not result in equal shares of children by wards. In 2010, Ward 8 with 16,415 children ranging between the ages of 4-17 had, by far, the most children of any Ward (see Table 2). Child population is not evenly distributed and in 2010, Ward 8 had about eight times as many children as Ward 2 and about twice as many children as Ward 3. In 2010, Ward 7 had the next highest number of children followed by Ward 4.

D. Overall, D.C.'s Child Population Declined, but Varied by Ward

While the District's population increased between 2000 and 2010, its population ages 4–17 declined by 17%. This decline was seen in every ward to some varying extent except for Ward 3, where there was a 13% increase in the number of children ages 4–17.

Table 2: Children Ages 4-17 by Ward U.S. Census 2000 and 2010

Ward	Children Ages 4-17			% Change
	US Census 2000	US Census 2010	10 Year Change	
1	9,753	6,074	(3,679)	-38%
2	2,777	2,167	(610)	-22%
3	6,550	7,413	863	13%
4	12,397	11,319	(1,078)	-9%
5	12,166	9,677	(2,489)	-20%
6	10,160	7,178	(2,982)	-29%
7	15,099	13,754	(1,345)	-9%
8	20,340	16,415	(3,925)	-19%
Total	89,242	73,997	(15,245)	-17%

Source: US. Decennial Census, 2000 and 2010. Data analyzed by the Urban Institute

E. D.C.'s Child Population Is Projected to Grow

Because so much of the District's population growth has included people of child-bearing age and infants and toddlers had already increased, OP projects that the number of children ages 0–17 will increase substantially over the next decade. OP projects that the population of children ages 0–17 years old will increase by 59,000 between 2010 and 2022. The share of children 0–17 in the total population is projected to increase to 22% from 17% over the same time period. The last time the share of children ages 0–17 reached 22% of D.C.'s population was in 1980. Table 3 shows the total and child population increases projected by OP.

Table 3: 2010-2022 Projections for 0-17 Year Olds

District Totals	2010 Census	2022 OP Projected	
Age	Total	Total	% change
0-4 year Total	32,613	51,896	59%
5-11 Year Total	36,117	67,968	88%
12-14 Year Total	15,071	21,402	42%
15-17 year Total	17,014	18,494	9%
Total population 0-17	100,815	159,759	58%
Total population	601,723	732,783	22%

Source: D.C. Office of Planning, File: OPForcasts2_Scenario1_recomm_2013_01_25

While OP's projections are ambitious and the rate of population increase is not certain, there is strong agreement and early evidence that the child population in the District of Columbia is trending upward and is likely to sustain its upward trajectory.

F. Out-Migration of Families with Adolescent Children Is Anticipated

A key factor affecting population projections is the in- and out-migration of population (that is, the movement of individuals into and out of D.C. as opposed to moving between neighborhoods within D.C.). The rate of in- and out-migration of families is particularly significant for public-school planning and will

affect recommendations related to student assignment and school choice. OP's projections indicate that the number of D.C. children ages 5–11 will increase by 88% between 2010 and 2022, but that the increase over the same time period will be smaller for children ages 12–14 (42%) and significantly smaller for children ages 15–17 (9%). This is likely explained by the fact that OP based its projections on historic in-/out-migration rates, which reflect that families with older children were more likely to leave the District.

Of particular interest in planning for student assignment and school choice is whether the historic in-/out-migration patterns of families with school-age children will continue into the District's future. It appears that the trend of families leaving the public-school system at the secondary level may continue unless the middle-schools in D.C. improve. If DCPS is as ambitious in improving its high school education programming as the city has been in investing in its iconic and substantial modernization efforts for high school facilities, this could increase the desirability of D.C. public middle and high schools to families. Improvements in secondary schools will decrease drop-outs and out-migration to schools to the suburbs. It remains an open question whether the District wants to or can affect the out-migration of families with adolescent-age children. However, if it does so, there will be pressure for capacity at the high school level beyond the projected 9% increase in 15-17 year olds.

G. D.C.'s Racial and Ethnic Diversity Is Increasing

D.C.		
2010 POPULATION	CHANGE FROM 2000	
601,723	+5.2%	
RACE/ETHNICITY	SHARE OF POP.	CHANGE FROM 2000
Whites:	35%	+32%
Blacks:	50%	–11%
Hispanics:	9%	+22%
Asians:	3%	+38%
Native Amer.:	0%	+4%
Multiracial:	2%	+32%

The city's population is increasing and the demographic makeup of the city is changing as well. In 2000, 61% of the total population was non-Hispanic black. In 2010, the share of non-Hispanic black residents fell to 51%. During the same time period, the non-Hispanic white population increased to 35% from 28% and the city's Hispanic population (of any race) increased to 9% from 8%.

The trend is similar for non-Hispanic African-American children. While, in 2000, a little more than 60% of D.C.'s children were non-Hispanic black, the share decreased to approximately 50% in 2010. Non-Hispanic white children increased to approximately 35% from 30%.

Source: Neighborhood Info DC

However, while the overall makeup of the city has changed, the distribution of school-age children by race and ethnicity illustrated in Map 1 indicates the extent of neighborhood segregation by race and highlights both the challenges and opportunities for diversity facing the public schools. While some neighborhoods have become more racially/ethnically integrated over the decades, only 10 out of 42 residential neighborhood clusters have a child population with no racial/ethnic majority, which is defined as more than 67% of a single race or ethnicity (Master Facility Plan, 2013)³. These 10 clusters (represented by colors orange or dark teal on Map 1) can be considered as more diverse than the others because no single race is more than 67% of the school-age population (Those neighborhoods include clusters 1,2,5,6,7,16,17,18,26 and 44.) In all of the other neighborhood clusters, more than 67% of the school-age children living in the clusters are of one race.

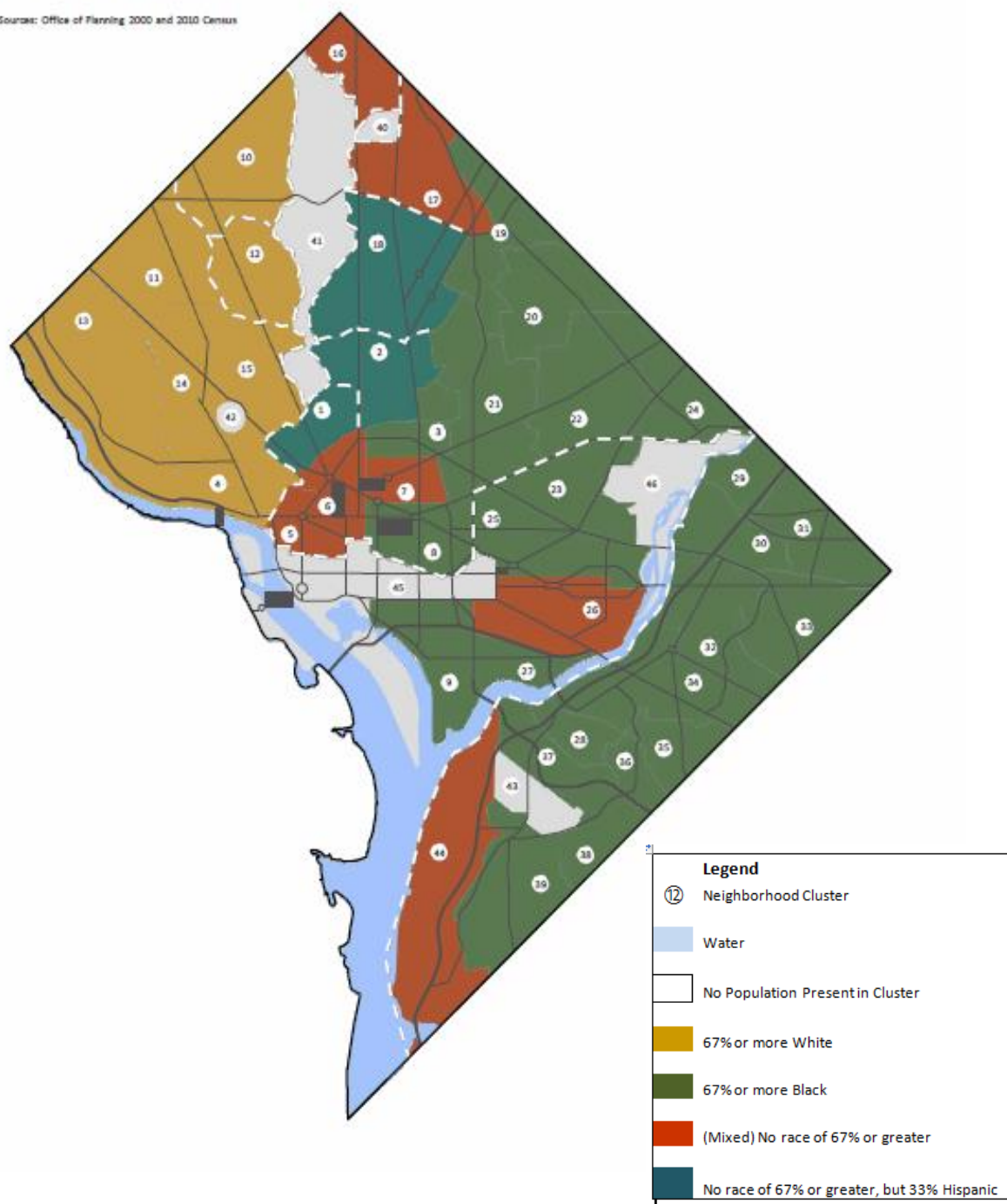
³ For a list of neighborhood cluster names and respective DCPS and PCS schools located within each cluster, see Appendix A.

Map 1: Neighborhood Clusters and Racial Majorities of School Aged Children of 67% or Greater

DEMOGRAPHICS

2010 School Aged Children Racial Majority (67% Threshold)

Data Sources: Office of Planning 2000 and 2010 Census



Source: Public Education Facilities Master Plan for the District of Columbia (2013), Appendix E: Demographic Analysis

II. The Children: Characteristics of D.C.'s Public School Students

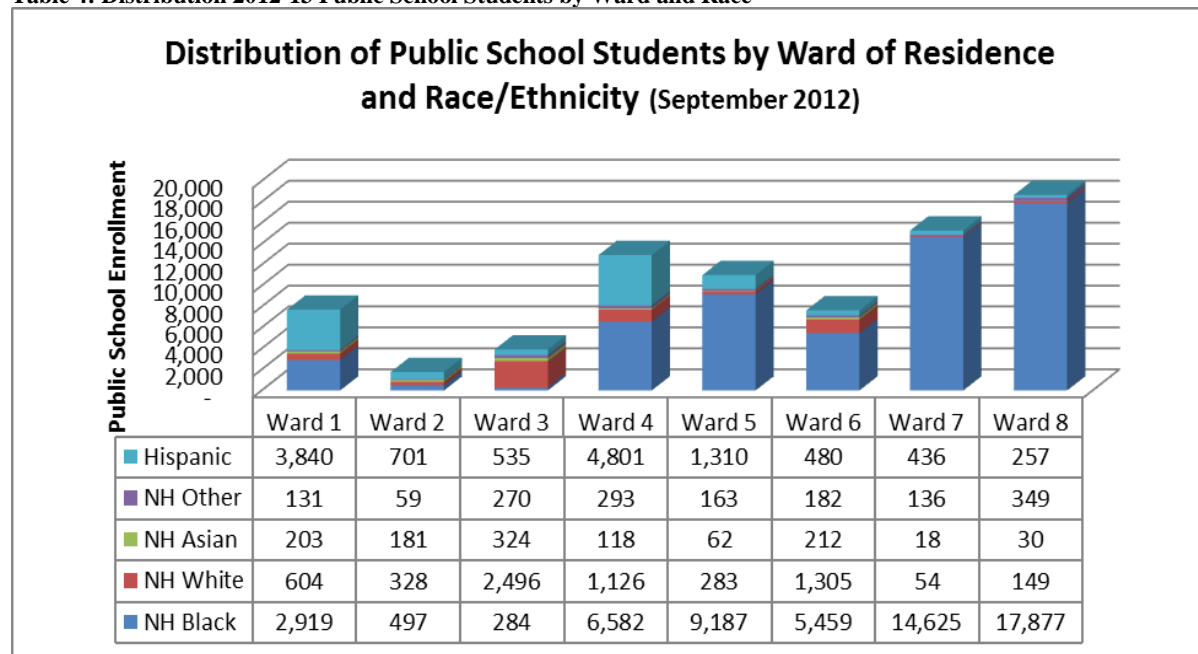
When doing student assignment and school choice planning it is important to look for opportunities to support and expand strong multi-racial and multi-cultural communities in schools and neighborhoods, since all students benefit from experiences across differences of race, ethnicity, and family socio-economic status. A major advancement of the last decades (following the end of de jure segregation by race) has been reforms that provide and integrate special education into schools and that support inclusion of special need students in regular classrooms. To understand the opportunities and limitations for integration of any number of types, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of the student population. In this section we will look at data on public school enrollment by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status of students, special education, and home language. Student assignment and school choice policies and systems will impact the rights, access and distribution of students by race, ethnicity, and special needs differently.

A. Public School Enrollment Is Majority African American (*Non-Hispanic Black*)

Racial/ethnic make-up of our public schools does not match the overall current population of the city. The DC public school system has a greater share of African Americans and Hispanics than the overall population, and a much lower share of white students. The racial breakdown of all public school students city wide from the SLED September 19th 2012 data is 73% non-Hispanic (NH) black, 16% Hispanic of any race, 8% non-Hispanic (NH) white, 2% non-Hispanic (NH) other and 1% non-Hispanic (NH) Asian.

Most of D.C.'s schools are predominantly African American. Two thirds or 77% of all of D.C. public schools (DCPS and PCS) have an enrollment that is made up of more than 95% African-American students. More than one third (38%) of all public school students attend a school that is almost exclusively African American. Mirroring D.C.'s neighborhood segregation, schools in Wards 7 and 8 are almost exclusively African American and schools in Ward 3 are majority white.

Table 4: Distribution 2012-13 Public School Students by Ward and Race



Source: OSSE student level data, September 19, 2012; analyzed by 21st Century School Fund

B. DCPS Has More Racially Diverse Schools.

A look at the racial composition of DCPS's schools compared to the PCS schools reveals that DCPS has more schools that are racially diverse and more students who attend racially diverse schools. DCPS has 36% (15,055 students) attending 30 DCPS schools where the enrollment is less than 50% non-Hispanic Black with the other half of the enrollment a combination of Hispanic, NH Asian, NH White, and NH other. By contrast, 21% (7,085 public charter students) attend 18 PS through Adult PCS where enrollment is less than 50% Non-Hispanic Black.

Table 5: DCPS 2012 Enrollment by Race and by Grade

Grades	Hispanic		NH Asian		NH Black		NH White		NH Other		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	Total
PK3	399	19%	36	2%	1,401	66%	254	12%	43	2%	2,133
PK4	627	19%	62	2%	2,072	61%	546	16%	79	2%	3,386
Kinder	750	18%	76	2%	2,517	61%	698	17%	92	2%	4,133
1 st	690	18%	87	2%	2,276	61%	621	17%	70	2%	3,744
2 nd	623	17%	69	2%	2,231	63%	553	16%	85	2%	3,561
3 rd	498	16%	77	2%	2,081	65%	472	15%	62	2%	3,190
4 th	510	16%	68	2%	2,069	67%	390	13%	60	2%	3,097
5 th	450	16%	64	2%	1,954	69%	308	11%	41	1%	2,817
6 th	341	15%	42	2%	1,644	72%	227	10%	43	2%	2,297
7 th	339	14%	48	2%	1,743	73%	202	9%	42	2%	2,374
8 th	345	15%	37	2%	1,653	74%	160	7%	36	2%	2,231
9 th	584	14%	59	1%	3,127	78%	215	5%	49	1%	4,034
10 th	337	13%	49	2%	1,965	77%	164	6%	46	2%	2,561
11 th	314	14%	49	2%	1,783	77%	129	6%	33	1%	2,308
12 th	291	15%	42	2%	1,465	75%	122	6%	39	2%	1,959
Adult	173	12%	4	0%	1,307	87%	8	1%	7	0%	1,499
Ungraded	22	6%	6	2%	283	83%	28	8%	2	1%	341
Total/Average %	7,293	16%	875	2%	31,571	69%	5,097	11%	829	2%	45,665

Source: OSSE student level data, September 19, 2012; analyzed by 21st Century School Fund (Note: Excludes any DC non-residents and all Non-Public Special Education Providers and OSSE State Programs)

Table 6: Public Charter School 2012 Enrollment by Race and Grade

Grades	Hispanic		NH Asian		NH Black		NH White		NH Other		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	Total
PK3	247	9%	20	1%	2,250	82%	192	7%	47	2%	2,756
PK4	368	12%	27	1%	2,344	79%	170	6%	60	2%	2,969
Kinder	364	13%	19	1%	2,238	79%	153	5%	65	2%	2,839
1 st	275	11%	17	1%	1,965	82%	97	4%	49	2%	2,403
2 nd	243	12%	7	0%	1,703	82%	99	5%	33	2%	2,085
3 rd	216	12%	10	1%	1,469	81%	77	4%	34	2%	1,806
4 th	166	11%	10	1%	1,206	78%	57	4%	115	7%	1,554
5 th	183	10%	14	1%	1,330	75%	128	7%	114	6%	1,769
6 th	195	8%	23	1%	1,884	81%	95	4%	127	5%	2,324

Grades	Hispanic		NH Asian		NH Black		NH White		NH Other		
7 th	244	11%	18	1%	1,799	82%	71	3%	62	3%	2,194
8 th	207	10%	9	0%	1,680	84%	64	3%	34	2%	1,994
9 th	191	9%	6	0%	1,973	90%	21	1%	9	0%	2,200
10 th	138	8%	7	0%	1,468	90%	8	0%	12	1%	1,633
11 th	119	9%	5	0%	1,228	90%	5	0%	7	1%	1,364
12 th	123	10%	4	0%	1,127	88%	12	1%	11	1%	1,277
Adult	1,847	66%	80	3%	821	29%	38	1%	10	0%	2,796
Ungraded	67	42%	0	0%	92	58%	0	0%	0	0%	159
Total/Average %	5,193	15%	276	1%	26,577	78%	1,287	4%	789	2%	34,122

Source: OSSE student level data, September 19, 2012; analyzed by 21st Century School Fund (Note: Excludes any DC non-residents and all Non-Public Special Education Providers and OSSE State Programs)

C. The Early Grades Reflect Greater Racial Diversity than the Secondary Grades

While D.C.'s schools currently lag in reflecting demographic changes in the overall population, there are indications that the public schools will become more racially diverse over time. Table 7 provides the race by grade of all public-school students enrolled on September 19, 2012. Grades PK4, Kinder, 1, and 2 are highlighted to emphasize the variation from the overall total averages. At these early grades, the public schools are more racially diverse than the upper grades.

Table 7: Profile of All Public School Students by Grade and by Race 2012-2013

Grades	Hispanic		NH Asian		NH Black		NH White		NH Other		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
PK3	646	13%	56	1%	3,651	75%	446	9%	90	2%	4,889
PK4	995	16%	89	1%	4,416	69%	716	11%	139	2%	6,355
Kinder	1,114	16%	95	1%	4,755	68%	851	12%	157	2%	6,972
1 st	965	16%	104	2%	4,241	69%	718	12%	119	2%	6,147
2 nd	866	15%	76	1%	3,934	70%	652	12%	118	2%	5,646
3 rd	714	14%	87	2%	3,550	71%	549	11%	96	2%	4,996
4 th	676	15%	78	2%	3,275	70%	447	10%	175	4%	4,651
5 th	633	14%	78	2%	3,284	72%	436	10%	155	3%	4,586
6 th	536	12%	65	1%	3,528	76%	322	7%	170	4%	4,621
7 th	583	13%	66	1%	3,542	78%	273	6%	104	2%	4,568
8 th	552	13%	46	1%	3,333	79%	224	5%	70	2%	4,225
9 th	775	12%	65	1%	5,100	82%	236	4%	58	1%	6,234
10 th	475	11%	56	1%	3,433	82%	172	4%	58	1%	4,194
11 th	433	12%	54	1%	3,011	82%	134	4%	40	1%	3,672
12 th	414	13%	46	1%	2,592	80%	134	4%	50	2%	3,236
Adult	2,020	47%	84	2%	2,128	50%	46	1%	17	0%	4,295
Ungraded	89	18%	6	1%	375	75%	28	6%	2	0%	500
TOTAL/AVG	12,486	16%	1,151	1%	58,148	73%	6,384	8%	1,618	2%	79,787

Source: OSSE student level data, September 19, 2012; analyzed by 21st Century School Fund (Note: Excludes any DC non-residents and all Non-Public Special Education Providers and OSSE State Programs)

D. Public Schools Serve Children from Immigrant Families

The OSSE student level data indicated that about 10% (7,854 public school students) lived in families where a language other than English was spoken in the home. Although 6,063 or 77% indicated that Spanish was the language spoken at home, there were 79 other languages from Akan to Yoruba that were reported. The second most report language, after Spanish, was Amharic, but only 331 families reported that Amharic was the language spoken in their home out of the 7,854 public school students.

E. Most Public-School Students in D.C. Qualify for Free and Reduced Price Meals

For many decades, the vast majority of public schools students have been low income. Across all D.C. public schools in the school year 2012-13 the average eligibility for the federal free or reduced-price meal (FARM) subsidy program was 80%. The 2012-13 FARM percentage is higher than past years due to the new guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch (NSLP) and School Breakfast (SBP), discussed below. Before this policy change took effect, in school year 2011-2012, the average share of FARM eligible public school students was 73%.

D.C. is one of the “states” that is adopting a “Community Eligibility Option.” The Community Eligibility Option makes it easier for children attending school in low-income neighborhoods to receive free meals at school. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education defines schools eligible to participate in the Community Eligibility Option based on whether they have 40 percent or more of identified students who are direct certified for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, are homeless, or are in foster care.⁴

This policy change allows for more children attending schools in low-income neighborhoods to receive free meals at school, but at the same time, it complicates how we can interpret and use FARM data. Traditionally, FARM has been used as an individual student-level proxy for family income and for schools with high shares of children from low income families. This however is no longer the case, and any FARM data starting in school year 2012-13 and beyond cannot provide a complete accurate picture of the variation between schools or LEAs. The ODME is working to develop new indicators that can be used as a proxy for family income in conjunction with the funding adequacy study.

In order to draw more meaningful conclusions on the distribution of FARM by ward and by sector, school year 2011 will be analyzed instead of school year 2012 due to the Community Eligibility policy change in school year 2012. Of the 213 public schools reporting FARM data in school year 2011-12, there were 45 public schools reporting that 90% or more of their students were eligible for FARM—20 of which were PCS and 25 were DCPS schools. There were only 5 public schools with 10% or fewer FARM-eligible students, 4 of which were DCPS schools. The schools with the lowest poverty rates (based on FARM) were all elementary schools, with two schools located in Ward 3 and one school located in Ward 4, Ward 5 and Ward 6. The overall school-level FARM average across sectors was fairly similar with DCPS reporting 72% FARM eligibility compared to 74% for Charters. However, sector differences across wards were present. Ward 2 had the largest sector difference for FARM eligibility with an overall school average of 51% FARM eligibility for DCPS compared to 85% for Charters. Other significant variances between sectors were found in Ward 1, Ward 4 and Ward 5, with DCPS reporting a higher average FARM eligibility rate by 9%, 13% and 10% respectively compared to Charters.

⁴ Data is reported in the District of Columbia’s Direct Certification System, by the state agency homeless coordinator, and/or by the department of child and family services as of April 1st of each year to determine school level eligibility.

Overall, Ward 3 had the lowest reported FARM eligibility with an average of 19% school-level FARM eligible students in school year 2011-12 and 18% eligible in school year 2012-13. Ward 7 and Ward 8 schools had the highest eligibility rates, with an average of 87% (ward 7) and 89% (ward 8) of students in DCPS schools and an average of 84% (ward 7) and 87% (ward 8) of students in PCS schools reporting FARM. The FARM eligibility distribution pattern that is present by ward is also reflected in the distribution for family median income across the City---with Ward 3 having the highest family median income and Ward 7 and Ward 8 having the lowest.⁵

Table 8: Public School Student by Ward and School Average Free/Reduced Lunch

	Average of SY2011-2012 FARM	Average of SY2012-2013 FARM	PCS Audited Enrollment 2011-12	PCS Audited Enrollment 2012-13
Charter Total/Average	74%	78%	31,562	34,674
Ward 1	69%	62%	5,450	6,136
Ward 2	85%	55%	303	751
Ward 4	61%	70%	4,724	4,962
Ward 5	72%	81%	5,837	6,182
Ward 6	67%	77%	3,383	3,758
Ward 7	84%	90%	6,142	6,497
Ward 8	87%	91%	5,723	6,388
	Average of SY2011-2012 FARM	Average of SY2012-2013 FARM	DCPS Audited Enrollment 2011-12	DCPS Audited Enrollment 2012-13
DCPS Total/Average	72%	82%	45,191	45,557
Ward 1	78%	87%	5,286	5,407
Ward 2	51%	52%	2,718	2,721
Ward 3	19%	18%	5,843	6,144
Ward 4	74%	88%	6,260	6,540
Ward 5	81%	95%	5,447	5,193
Ward 6	63%	73%	5,706	6,136
Ward 7	87%	99%	5,949	5,752
Ward 8	89%	99%	7,982	7,664
All Public School Students	73%	80%	76,753	80,231

Source: OSSE SY 2012-2013 Audited Enrollment, and SY 2011-12 and SY 2012-13 School-level FARM reported directly by DCPS and PCSB.

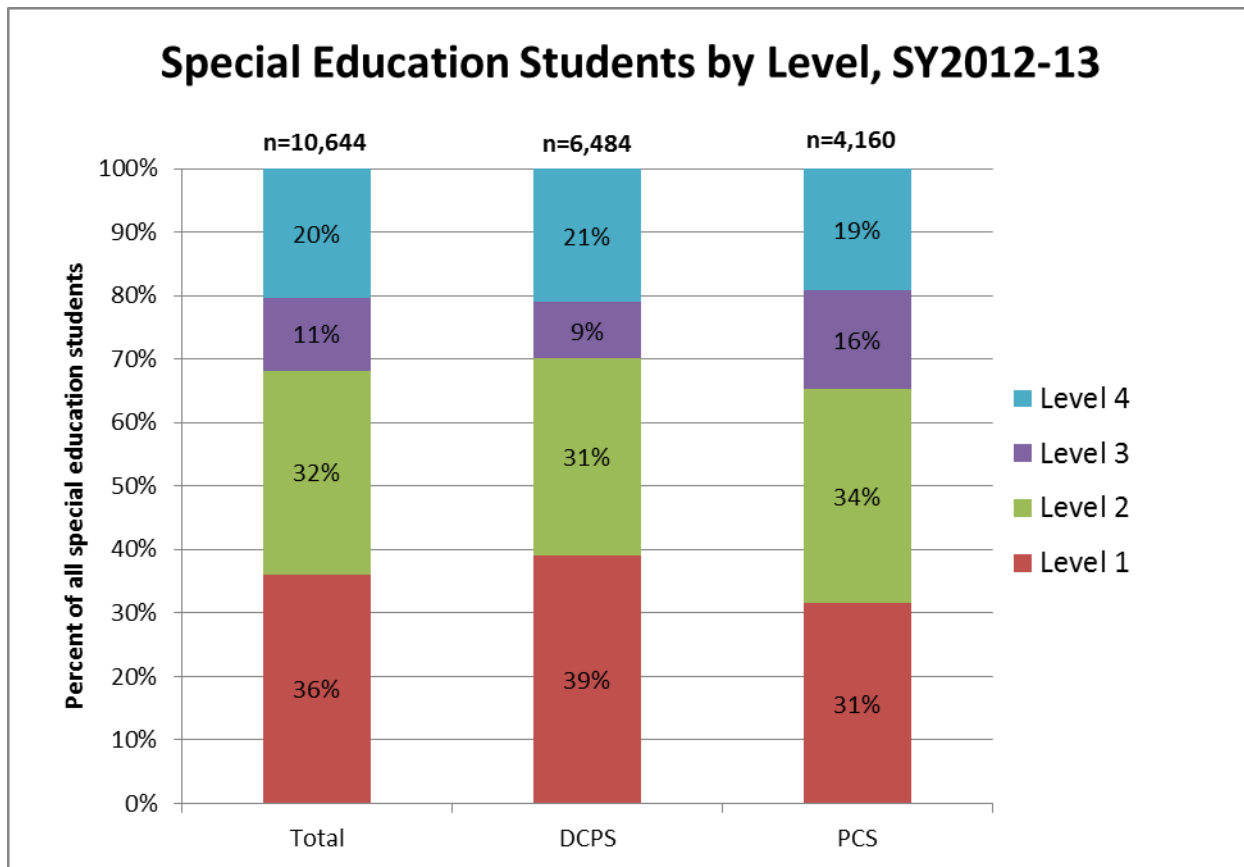
F. The Public Schools Serve Many Students with Special Needs

Special education students have the same rights to attend their neighborhood school as non-special education students, however, if the services required to meet the terms of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) are not available in the neighborhood school, DCPS has the right to transfer a student to a school with

⁵ Public Education Facilities Master Plan for the District of Columbia (2013), Appendix D: Complete Population and Enrollment Forecast Study, Page 60.

an appropriate program. The city is also required to offer transportation as part of the IEP. Students served at Levels 3 and 4 are generally self-contained programs, whereas students served at Levels 1 and 2 are generally included in the regular existing education programs with special supports and services provided. In the SY 2012-2013, DCPS and PCS served 10,644 students with special needs in the DCPS or PCS operated public schools (excludes students in private placement), which comprised 13% of the total student population. However, the share of special education students varies by sector—14% for DCPS and 12% for PCS. The majority of public school special education students (68%) were classified as either a Level 1 or a Level 2, meaning they required the least amount of time for special education services. Figure 2 breaks out SY 2012-13 special education enrollment by service level and by sector, conveying that DCPS serves a higher proportion of level 1 and level 4 special education students, whereas Charters served a higher proportion of level 2 and level 3 special education students.

Figure 2: Number and Type of Special Education Service Levels for Public School Students 2012



Data Source: OSSE SY 2012-2013 Audited Enrollment report

III. The Schools: Qualities of the District's Public Schools

The issue of equitable access to high-quality schools is at the core of student-assignment and school-choice policy. Access to schools is rationed through policy that establishes attendance zones, feeder patterns, and preferences used in lotteries. The scarcity or abundance of this public good affects how it should be rationed and how families feel about whether there is equitable access to high-quality schools.

For the purposes of understanding how the current student-assignment and school-choice policies affect access to high-quality schools, we will use data and information that is publicly available and uniformly

applied to DCPS and PCS that families might use in making their decision about what schools would be good options for their children. By no means are the factors we choose to examine in this process all inclusive of the information that parents use when making decisions about where to send their children. Families also use informal information in formulating their opinions about schools, and families may interpret official information differently. The school qualities that will be examined are:

- OSSE's School Index Score used to meet federal Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) requirements
- School-wide special programming
- Space adequacy

To start, we review the overall supply of public schools and then describe their qualities using the above indicators.

A. There Are Many Public Schools in the District of Columbia.

There are 112 DCPS and 106 PCS schools in the District of Columbia for the 2013-14 school year with an unaudited enrollment of 83,339. There are a different number of options depending upon the grade level. For example in the 2012-13 school year 123 different schools offered 5th grade and 39 schools offered 9th grade.

Table 9: Number of Public Schools by Grade for SY12-13

Elementary Grades								
Grade Offered	PS-3	PK-4	Kinder	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Total	122	138	133	130	125	123	121	123
# of DCPS	71	81	81	81	80	80	80	82
# of Charters	51	57	52	49	45	43	41	41
Middle Grades								
Grade Offered	6th	7th	8th					
Total	75	73	74					
# of DCPS	32	32	32					
# of Charters	43	41	42					
High School and Adult								
Grade Offered	9th	10th	11th	12th	Adult			
Total	39	39	37	36	10			
# of DCPS	18	18	18	17	3			
# of Charters	21	21	19	19	7			

Source: OSSE Audit Report 2012-2013;

B. Most Schools Offer Traditional Grade Level Programs

Both DCPS and PCS differentiate themselves according to nominal categories of special programs. Schools differentiate themselves by the grades they serve and specialized programs. Through self-reporting, the program categories are: dual-language/immersion, International Baccalaureate, Montessori, Single-sex, and DCPS selective admission. Individually, schools may identify themes and offer different instructional approaches, special course offerings, and co-curricular activities as part of their basic grade level programs.

Table 10: Schools with Self-Identified Special Programs by Sector SY13-14

	DCPS	Charter¹	Total
Dual-language/immersion	9	7	16
International Baccalaureate	10	1	11
Montessori	4	2	6
Single-sex	0	1	1
DCPS selective admissions high schools	6	0	6

Source: MySchoolDC.org.

¹Adjusted to include charter schools not participating in Common Lottery and excluded from MySchoolDC.org

C. D.C. Has Walkable DCPS Neighborhood Elementary Schools

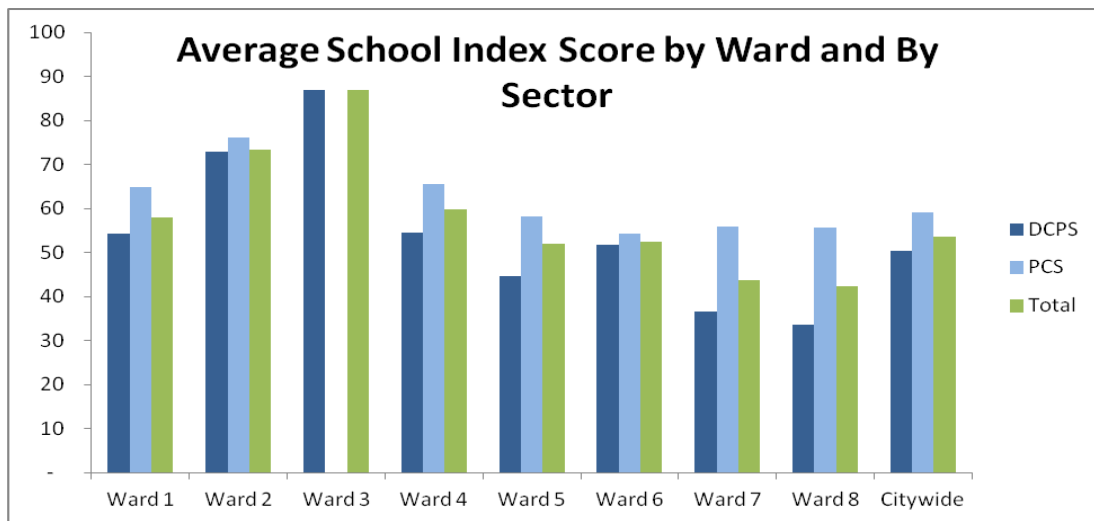
We found that even though students are traveling between 1.5 and 2.1 miles for elementary schools, in 2012-2013 (before last round of school closings for 2013-14) there was a DCPS elementary school within .55 miles for 41,000 of the age-appropriate population of public school students, leaving only 2,350 elementary age students further than .55 miles from an elementary school.⁶

D. School Ratings Vary by Ward, with Variability between Sectors

Under the ESEA Accountability System required under No Child Left Behind, each school and local education agency (LEA) receives student proficiency and growth targets. Schools and LEAs are then accountable to reach targets to improve academic achievement. Under the DC ESEA Accountability System, each school is given an Index Score that ranges from 1-100 (the higher the index number the better the school is ranked) that reflects the number of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the DC CAS and the change in test performance of students at a given grade level from year to year. Using a School Index as a descriptor of public school quality, it is clear that the Ward 3 DCPS schools out perform all public schools. The differences between PCS and DCPS schools, by School Index in Wards 5, 7 and 8 are striking, with the average school index far higher in the PCS in these wards, than in the DCPS schools.

⁶ This will be different for SY2013-14 since 6 neighborhood elementary schools were closed—Davis, Marshall, M.C. Terrell, Ferebee Hope, Winston, Kenilworth.

Figure 3: Comparison by Ward and Sector of the School Index Scores 2013



Source: School Index data reported by OSSE in the 2012-2013 Audited Enrollment report

E. There Are Not Enough Highly Rated Public Schools

Under the ESEA Accountability System, in addition to receiving an index score, schools are also classified in one of five categories summarizing the following measures: DC CAS, growth on DC CAS, graduation rates, attendance and test participation rate. School level achievement gap is also taken into account when classifying schools. A Focus school is a school that has large achievement gaps between specific groups of students. Schools within this category can have varying index scores – both high and low. A school's classification determines the rewards or supports they will receive and the flexibility they have in using federally allocated funds.

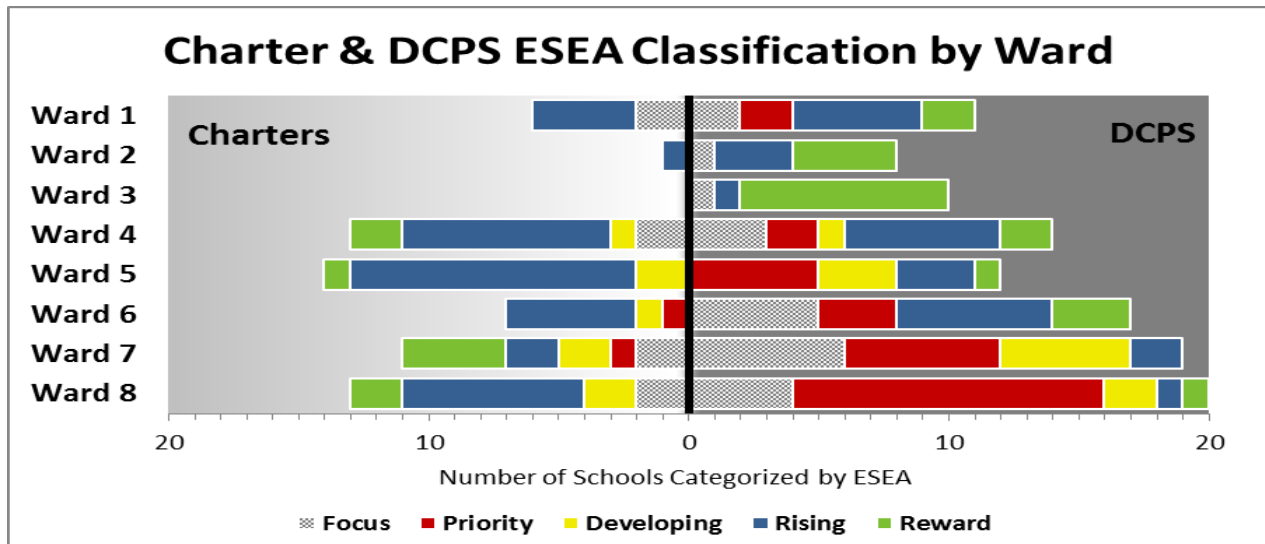
Table 11: Description of ESEA Classifications and Number of Schools by Classification and by Sector

Total	DCPS	PCS	ESEA Classifications
30	21	9	A Reward school is a school with the highest level of student performance and/or growth on the DC CAS. Reward schools have a School Index Score of 80 or above or growth in the top 5% of all schools.
65	27	38	A Rising school is a school with good performance, defined as a School Index Score between 45 and 79.
19	11	8	A Developing school is a school with moderate performance, defined as a School Index Score between 26 and 44 that also needs support to continue growing.
32	30	2	A Priority school is a school needing intense support to address low performance of all students, defined as a School Index Score of 25 or below, or a graduation rate of less than 60% for two or more years in a row.
30	22	8	A Focus school is a school needing targeted support to address large achievement gaps between specific groups of students. Schools in this category have varying index scores.

Source: ESEA data reported by OSSE in the 2012-2013 Audited Enrollment report

Using the classifications from the ESEA waiver⁷ as a measure of high quality, and considering the “Reward” schools as the highest quality, then there are only 30 out of 176 public schools in D.C. that are of the highest quality for the 2013-14 school year, with most of these in Wards 2 and 3. If the 65 “Rising” schools are also counted as high quality, then the “quality” options expand to be about half of the public schools.

Figure 4: ESEA Waiver Classification by Sector and Ward



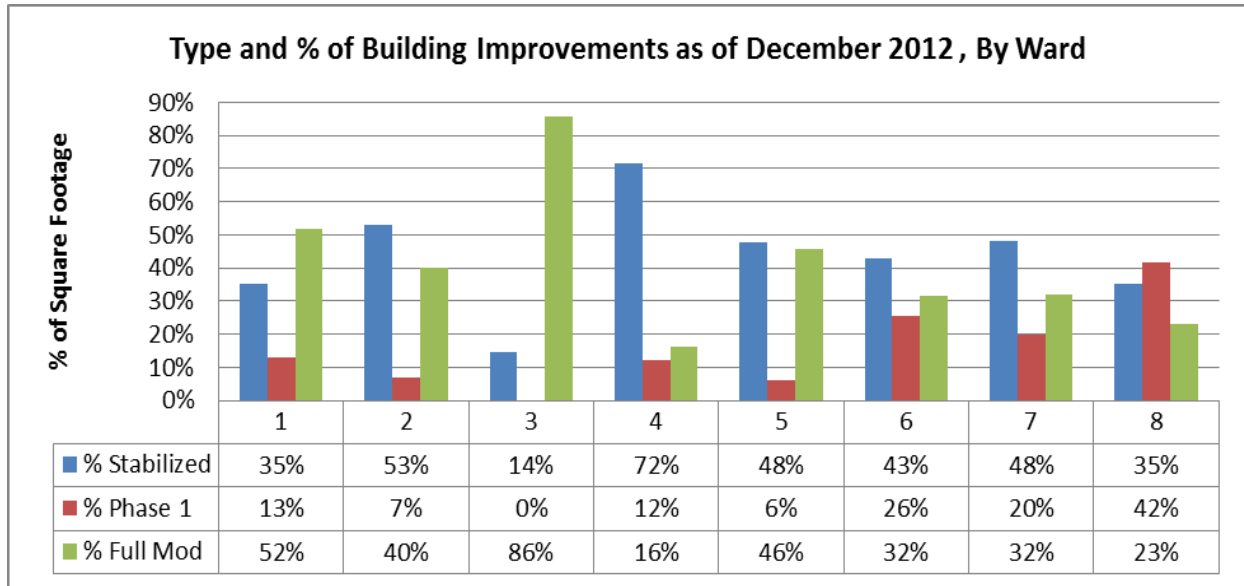
Source: ESEA data reported by OSSE in the 2012-2013 Audited Enrollment report

F. DCPS Schools Have Had Major Building and Grounds Improvements

The District of Columbia has invested billions into modernizing its DCPS public school building infrastructure. This has been a significant achievement that was long overdue and has impacted the growth of enrollment in nearly all of the schools that have had full modernizations. The condition and design of buildings and grounds is one of the tools educators have to work with to provide high quality teaching and learning environments. It is well established in research that the design and condition of facilities impacts student achievement. Figure 4 shows the extent and type of facility improvements by ward. Full modernization as it has been done in the District, are major capital projects that include modernizing design, systems, site amenities, furniture, fixtures and equipment. This category also includes buildings that were replaced with new structures. The Phase 1 Modernization focuses on updating basic systems that affect the learning environment and advances a part of the school toward its Full Modernization. Stabilization project ensures that the school has basic systems and components in working order and that the school provides a healthy and safe environment. It does not provide improvements that advance a school toward its modernization or that ensure it is educationally adequate. As of 2012, Ward 4 followed by Ward 8 had had the least amount of school space fully modernized. Ward 3, followed by Ward 1 and then Ward 5 have had the largest amount of school space fully modernized.

⁷ See OSSE’s LearnDC site for more information: <http://www.learnDC.org/schoolprofiles/about/glossary/esea-accountability>

Figure 5: Percent and Type of DCPS Building Improvements by Ward



Source: 21st Century School Fund

G. Many Charter Schools Struggle with Inadequate Space

DCPS has published facility space standards based on a standard program specification which includes design assumptions about schools at each level, including for example whether there are art rooms, libraries, an auditorium, green house or teacher break out rooms. The DCPS standards result in a recommended average square foot per student based on the program specifications, which is listed in Table 12. PCS on the other hand do not have a similar set of standards. PCS are responsible for securing their own facilities and often face challenges in securing appropriate facilities.

Using the most recent data available (2012 reported facility square footages and 2011 audited enrollment), the average PCS has 132 gross square feet per student, which means that the PCS are crowded on average and do not have common areas, such as gyms, assembly and media spaces that would be considered part of an adequate school facility. Table 12 compares the actual space per PCS student and the DCPS gross square foot per student standards.

Table 12: Actual Gross Square Feet per Public Charter School Student 2011

School Type	Total Charter GSF	2011 Audited Charter Enrollment	Actual GSF per Charter Student	DCPS GSF Space Standard
Charter Schools				
Elementary Schools	956,047	8,839	108	140
Middle Schools	408,983	3,306	124	170
High Schools	857,719	5,580	154	200
Education Campus (ES-MS)	1,117,585	8,910	125	170
Education Campus (ES-HS)	582,300	3,042	191	200
Total GSF (excludes special & alternative ed)	3,922,634	29,677	132	

Source: Educational Facilities Master Plan 2013

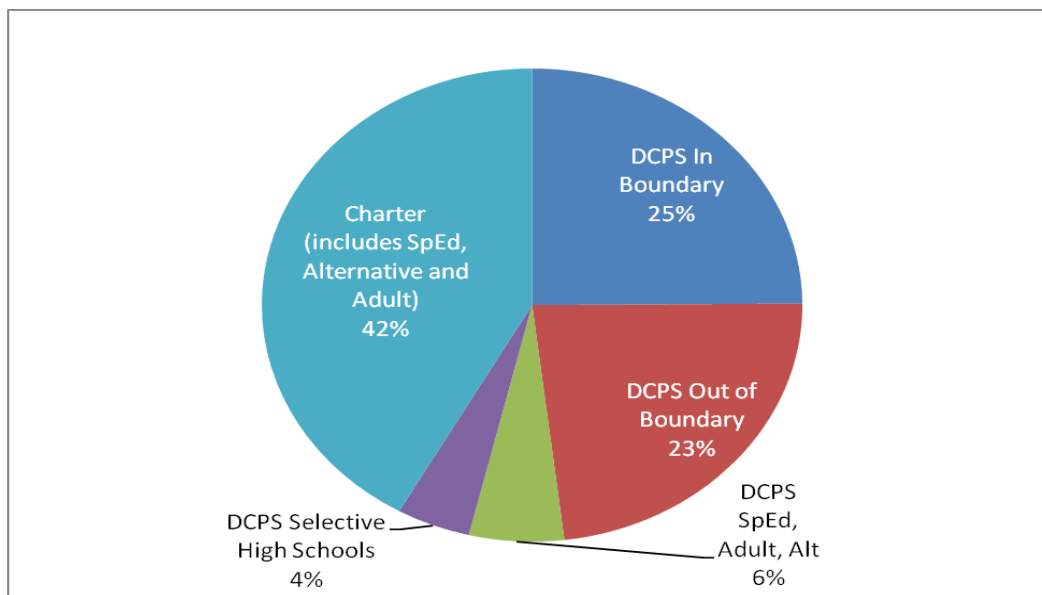
IV. The Students: Public School Enrollment Patterns

This section examines the interplay of the city, child population and schools by analyzing patterns of where public school students attend school, how far they travel, and whether they go to their neighborhood school or their feeder schools. D.C.'s current student-assignment system is based on neighborhood schools and destination schools (feeder pattern) of right. DCPS is the LEA responsible for providing a seat at the corresponding neighborhood school to each school-age child in grades K–12 who chooses to enroll. These seats are allocated according to the parent or guardian's place of residence, a feeder school, an out-of-boundary application and lottery process, a special-admissions application, or an administrative assignment for alternative or special education. Each PCS must— within its authorized enrollment capacity—provide a seat to any age-appropriate D.C. resident student who applies. However, each PCS may decide its enrollment level based on its facility capacity, staffing, and budget. If there are more applicants than seats for a given PCS, the LEA must allocate its seats space through a lottery. Beginning for the first time in spring 2014 for the 2014–15 school year, DCPS and 42 of the 56 charter LEAs serving grades PK-12 will participate in a common application and combined lottery process.

A. Most Students Do Not Attend Their In-Boundary DCPS School

The pattern of public school student enrollment in the District of Columbia in terms of how many students are enrolled in what sector and through what assignment process is illustrated in Figure 6. It shows that of all public school students who were enrolled in DCPS and PCS on September 19, 2012, 58% attended a DCPS school and the other 42% attended a PCS. Only 25% of all students actually attended their in-boundary DCPS assigned neighborhood elementary, PS-8th, middle, or high school. Another 23% attended a DCPS out-of-boundary school. Because DCPS students have a right to attend a school based on defined feeder relationships, a portion of the DCPS out-of-boundary students attended an out-of-boundary school, but attended it by right, not through application and lottery. Another 10% of all public school students attended either the DCPS selective high schools or DCPS adult, special education or alternative high schools.

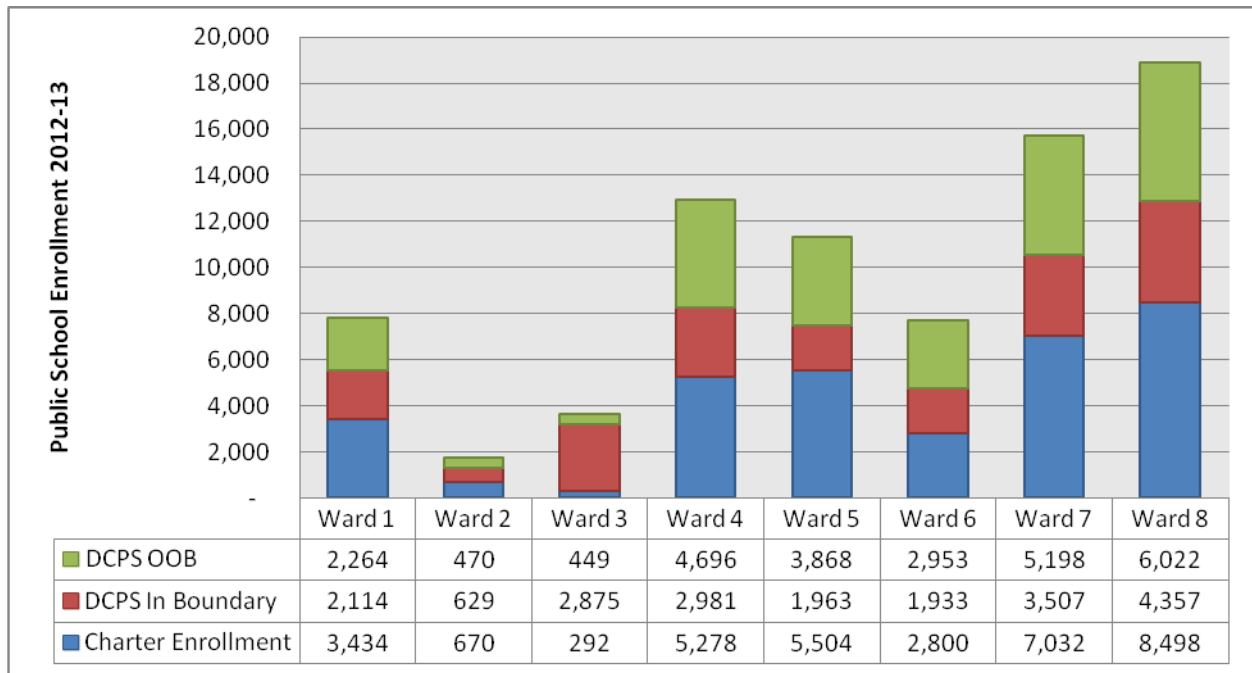
Figure 6: City-wide Distribution of Public School Enrollment between Sectors and by Student Assignment Access



Source: OSSE student level data, September 2012

The participation rates of in-boundary DCPS schools vary by ward. The wards with the highest number of charter schools present tended to have the lowest rates of in-boundary attendance by families. Figure 7 shows, for example, that in Ward 4, only 3,000 of 13,000 public school students who lived in Ward 4 attended their DCPS in-boundary school, but slightly over 5,000 students who lived in Ward 4 attended a PCS. The remaining 5,000 students attended a DCPS school out of their boundary, a specialized selective high school or a special, alternative or adult education school.

Figure 7: Distribution of Public School Students on Sept 19, 2012 by Student Ward of Residence and Student Assignment Type (excluding access through feeder school rights)



Source: OSSE student level data, September 2012

B. Most 5th Grade DCPS Students Do Not Attend Their Designated Destination (Feeder) School

One of the student assignment policy options for DCPS is feeder schools, or designated destination schools. Feeder school policies that gave out-of-boundary students a right to attend the designated destination school of the school they attended were adopted in 2008. This was done in order to provide more continuity and predictability for families so they did not have to apply out of boundary at major transition points. However, over a three year period (2010-2013) only 23 DCPS elementary schools sent 50% or more of the rising 6th graders to their designated destination middle school. Over the same three years, an average of 39% of the rising 6th graders enrolled in their designated destination middle schools. The data on this needs more analysis, as it is not clear what the standards should be. It is clear from the preliminary studies that OSSE has done on student mobility that a large number of students leave the District's public schools altogether, which should be factored into this analysis. Table 13 includes a report of the three year average for the percent of 5th graders that enrolled in the designated destination middle school the following year.

Table 13: Analysis of 3 year Average for Middle Schools Capture of Rising 6th graders

Designated Destination School	DCPS Elementary Schools sending Rising 6th Graders	3 year elementary school average, SY10-11 to 13-14
DEAL MS	Hearst ES	92%
DEAL MS	Janney ES	87%
DEAL MS	Murch ES	84%
DEAL MS	Lafayette ES	84%
DEAL MS	Shepherd ES	80%
STUART-HOBSON MS	Watkins ES	79%
DEAL MS	Eaton ES	78%
JEFFERSON MS	Amidon-Bowen ES	71%
KELLY MILLER MS	Drew ES	61%
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS EC (CHEC)	Powell ES	59%
HART MS	Hendley ES	58%
KRAMER MS	Ketcham ES	58%
STUART-HOBSON MS	Ludlow-Taylor ES	57%
JOHNSON MS	Turner ES	57%
DEAL MS	Bancroft ES	56%
HART MS	<i>M.C. Terrell ES / McGogney ES (closed)</i>	55%
KELLY MILLER MS	Aiton ES	54%
HART MS	<i>Ferebee-Hope ES (closed)</i>	52%
JOHNSON MS	Malcolm X ES	52%
HART MS	Simon ES	51%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Maury ES	51%
KELLY MILLER MS	Houston ES (to Ron Brown until 2013)	50%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Tyler ES	49%
KELLY MILLER MS	Burrville ES (to Ron Brown until 2013)	49%
JOHNSON MS	Garfield ES	48%
STUART-HOBSON MS	J.O. Wilson ES	46%
HARDY MS	Stoddert ES	46%
SOUZA MS	<i>Davis ES (closed)</i>	45%
HART MS	Patterson ES	45%
HARDY MS	Hyde-Addison ES	45%
SOUZA MS	Kimball ES	44%
SOUZA MS	<i>River Terrace ES (closed)</i>	44%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Miner ES	44%
HART MS	King, M.L. ES	42%

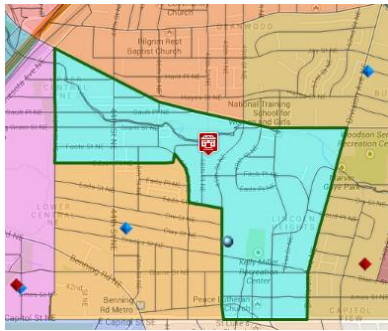
Designated Destination School	DCPS Elementary Schools sending Rising 6th Graders	3 year elementary school average, SY10-11 to 13-14
KELLY MILLER MS	C.W. Harris ES	42%
KELLY MILLER MS	Smothers ES	42%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Payne ES	41%
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS EC (CHEC)	H.D. Cooke ES	35%
SOUSA MS	Plummer ES	35%
KRAMER MS	Savoy ES	35%
KELLY MILLER MS	Nalle ES	33%
JOHNSON MS	Moten ES	29%
KRAMER MS	Orr ES	28%
HART MS	Leckie ES	26%
SHAW/CARDOZO EC	Garrison ES	26%
KRAMER MS	Stanton ES	25%
SOUSA MS	Beers ES	24%
JEFFERSON MS	Brent ES	22%
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS EC (CHEC)	Tubman ES	20%
KELLY MILLER MS	<i>Kenilworth ES (closed)</i>	19%
SHAW/CARDOZO EC	Seaton ES	18%
KELLY MILLER MS	Thomas ES (to Ron Brown until 2013)	16%
JEFFERSON MS	Thomson ES	15%
HARDY MS	Key ES	15%
STUART-HOBSON MS	Cap Hill Montessori @ Logan	11%
TRUESDELL EC	Barnard ES	10%
KRAMER MS	Randle Highlands ES	9%
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS EC (CHEC)	Bancroft ES	8%
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS EC (CHEC)	Bruce-Monroe ES @ Park View	8%
HARDY MS	Mann ES	6%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Brent ES	4%
SHAW/CARDOZO EC	Cleveland ES	4%
HARDY MS	Eaton ES	2%
WEST EC	Barnard ES	2%
SHAW/CARDOZO EC	Ross ES	2%
SHAW/CARDOZO EC	Marie Reed ES	1%
ELIOT-HINE MS	Cap Hill Montessori @ Logan	0%
Average		39%

Source: DCPS Note: **Bolded elementary schools** have more than one designated destination school.

C. Neighborhood Students Attend Many Different Public Schools⁸

The current data shows low in-boundary participation and high PCS and out of boundary DCPS participation results in students of the same age, from the same neighborhood boundary, attending many different schools. On average, elementary age students within one neighborhood school boundary attend 64 different elementary schools. The public school students living in DCPS elementary school boundaries with participation rates of less than 30%, on average, attend more than 80 different public elementary schools.

Figure 8: Aiton Boundary



In one example, Aiton Elementary School, in Ward 7 had 243 students enrolled on September 19, 2012. There were, however, 546 age appropriate (PS3 thru 5th grade) public school students living in the Aiton attendance zone, shown on the map. However, only 148 of the 546 elementary age appropriate public school students in Aiton's attendance zone attended Aiton—a 23% in-boundary participation rate. The remaining elementary age appropriate public school students living in the Aiton attendance zone were enrolled in 83 other public elementary schools—34 of these were DCPS elementary schools and 49 of these were public charter schools serving elementary age students. This level

of dispersion and low in-boundary participation is not unusual, except in Ward 3 elementary schools and a for a handful of school boundaries in Ward 6 and 8.

In another example, the Powell Elementary School boundary, in Ward 4 had 687 PS3 through 5th grade students enrolled in public schools on September 19, 2012—203 of these students were enrolled at Powell, a 30% in-boundary participate rate. But the other 484 in-boundary elementary grade students also attended 83 other elementary schools—44 of these schools were DCPS schools and 39 were charter schools.

D. Travel Distances Vary by Grade and by Ward

The proximity of families to schools and the distance travelled from home to school are important considerations in student assignment and school choice, not just for families, but for the quality of life for all district residents who travel in the City. Families are responsible for getting their children to school themselves. The District of Columbia does not provide transportation to school for any public school students, except for those with Individual Education Plans that require transportation. Up until the 2013-14 school year public transportation costs were only subsidized for students, however starting in 2013, Metro Bus costs to and from school are fully paid for by the District and Metro Rail is subsidized.

Students lived an average distance of 1.5 miles from DCPS schools they attended and 2.1 miles from PCS they attended, with students in Wards 7 and 8 traveling the furthest from home to schools they attended. The outlier for distance from home to school is for Ward 3 students attending PCS. This reflects the fact that no PCS are present in Ward 3, but also constitutes less than 100 children traveling 3.2 miles. Table 14 shows that the 33,205 students who live in Wards 7 and 8 live farther on average from the schools they attend than students in other wards.

⁸ See Appendix B: Boundary Participation Data Table, for a complete listing of DCPS school boundaries and the participation rates and the list of other schools attended by in-boundary students. This listing also includes the characteristics of DCPS Boundary School and of the DCPS or PCS Schools Attended by Age Appropriate In-Boundary Students.

Table 14: Average Travel Distance by Ward and Sector, 2012-2013

Ward	DCPS Average Travel Distance	PCS Average Travel Distance	ALL Students Average Travel Distance	All PS Students
Ward 1	1.0	1.3	1.1	7,632
Ward 2	1.0	1.6	1.2	1,709
Ward 3	0.8	3.2	1.0	3,942
Ward 4	1.4	1.8	1.6	12,825
Ward 5	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,889
Ward 6	1.2	1.9	1.5	7,608
Ward 7	1.9	2.4	2.1	15,150
Ward 8	1.7	2.5	2.1	18,055
Total	1.5	2.1	1.7	77,810

Source: Sept 19, 2012, student level data. Calculations excludes non-DC residents and non-public schools in and outside the District of Columbia.

Table 15 shows the average distances traveled from home to the DCPS schools by grade. Elementary age students are traveling less than a mile from home to school in Wards 1,2,3 and 6. However, in all other wards they are traveling more than a mile for elementary school.

Table 15: DCPS Students 2012-2013 Average Travel Distance in Miles by Grade and Ward

Grades	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8	Average
PK3	0.6	0.5	2.8	1.0	1.2	0.6	1.1	1.1	1.1
PK4	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.4	0.7	1.3	1.4	1.0
Kinder	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.1	0.9
First	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.3	0.7	1.3	1.1	0.9
Second	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.1	1.4	0.7	1.4	1.3	1.0
Third	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.1	1.5	0.9	1.4	1.0	1.0
Fourth	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.1	1.4	0.8	1.6	1.2	1.0
Fifth	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.2	1.4	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.0
Sixth	1.4	1.5	0.9	1.4	1.5	1.3	2.0	1.8	1.5
Seventh	1.1	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.4	1.2	2.0	2.0	1.4
Eighth	1.2	1.4	0.9	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.9	1.8	1.4
Ninth	1.3	2.1	1.5	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.7	2.8	2.1
Tenth	1.4	1.7	1.5	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.8	2.7	2.1
Eleventh	1.4	2.4	1.6	2.0	2.2	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.3
Twelfth	1.3	1.9	1.4	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.8	2.8	2.1
Average	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.8	1.4

Table 16 provides the average travel distances for PCS students from their residence to their PCS. Because there are no PCS in Ward 3, there are a few PCS students from Ward 3 traveling the furthest, but the majority of students and families covering the long distances are 8th through 12th graders in Ward 8.

Table 16: PCS Students 2012-2013 Travel Distance in Miles by Grade by Ward

Grades	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8	Average
PK3	1.2	1.0	3.2	1.9	1.6	1.4	2.3	2.1	1.9
PK4	1.3	1.0	3.1	1.8	1.5	1.7	2.6	2.1	1.9
Kinder	1.6	1.2	3.2	1.6	1.6	1.9	2.5	2.2	2.0
First	1.5	1.9	3.2	1.8	1.5	1.8	2.5	2.1	2.0
Second	1.4	1.5	3.7	1.6	1.4	1.7	2.5	2.1	2.0
Third	1.5	1.7	3.5	1.7	1.5	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.1
Fourth	1.6	1.3		1.7	1.5	1.8	2.7	2.3	1.8
Fifth	1.4	1.5	3.4	1.7	1.5	1.7	2.7	2.4	2.1
Sixth	1.2	1.5	3.6	1.8	1.7	1.7	2.6	2.6	2.1
Seventh	1.2	1.4	3.4	1.5	1.7	1.6	2.4	2.9	2.0
Eighth	1.3	2.2	3.0	1.4	1.8	1.9	2.5	3.0	2.1
Ninth	1.8	3.2	3.5	1.5	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.8	2.5
Tenth	2.4	3.0	3.7	1.9	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.9	2.5
Eleventh	2.2	2.9	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.0	3.3	2.5
Twelfth	2.5	3.5	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.4	2.0	3.3	2.7
Average	1.6	1.9	3.3	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.4	2.6	2.2

E. Public Schools Have Some Excess Enrollment Capacity

Facilities are a key element to student assignment and school choice policy and practice because it is a constraint to “access” to public schools that is not easily or economically addressed. Efficient utilization of facilities is a major component of efficient use of public resources and adequate facility space and conditions are important elements of a high quality school. The key data points related to the full utilization of facilities are in Appendix C: Complete Enrollment, Capacity and Utilization Study and were analyzed as part of the Educational Facility Master Plan 2013. According to this study, as of 2011, there was capacity for 108,348 students in elementary, PS8, middle, high school, special and alternative education facilities and enrollment of 77,500 students—an overall utilization rate of 79%. With 75% of DCPS school facilities being utilized and 85% of PCS facilities being utilized.

F. Facility Enrollment Utilization Not Well-Aligned to Capacity

The average gross square feet (GSF) per student in DCPS was 306 GSF per student indicating capacity for growth. The actual GSF per student in the PCS for the same year was 129 GSF, which suggests both that some PCS are operating with inadequate amounts of space, but also that there is little capacity for growth. The PCS square footage, which is not regularly or officially monitored, may be under reported. The challenge arises when PCS lease or use space within another facility, where there is a shared lobby, stairs, storage, or other spaces, which would typically be included in the calculation of the gross square footage of a building, but might be excluded from this comparison.

Table 17: Building Capacity by Grade Level and by Sector

Agency/School Type	No. of Schools 2012	Total Gross Square Feet	Total Enrolled 2011 Audited	Total Capacity	Avg GSF per Student Capacity	Utilization (Enrollment/Capacity)
DC Public Schools						
Elementary Schools	64	4,594,718	20,468	25,879	177	81%
Middle Schools	13	1,763,497	4,759	9,157	197	52%
High Schools	16	3,878,548	11,292	14,934	259	76%
Education Campus (ES-MS)	19	1,683,173	6,819	9,071	184	78%
Education Campus (MS-HS)	1	325,217	1,203	1,400	232	86%
Special Education	3	185,500	298	1,050	174	29%
Alternative Education	2	246,228	360	1,350	n/a	n/a
Vacant Campuses	10	1,158,600	0	5,858	203	n/a
DCPS Total/Average	128	13,835,481	45,199	68,699	193	75%

Concern over the joint analysis of capacity also arises because the PCS approach enrollment capacity differently. Enrollment capacity of a PCS is usually meant to refer to the maximum number of students it is authorized to serve, not the building capacity of the school facility. PCS cannot take students over their “charter capacity” or enrollment cap. But also, PCS have no requirement to provide a seat to students beyond their building capacity.

Table 18: Public Charter Facilities in 2012

School Type	# of Schools	Total GSF	2011 Audited Enrollment	Total Capacity	Avg GSF per Student Capacity	Utilization
Charter Schools						
Elementary Schools	36	956,047	8,839	11,553	82	77%
Middle Schools	10	408,983	3,306	4,052	98	86%
High Schools	15	857,719	5,580	6,352	149	94%
Education Campus (ES-MS)	24	1,117,585	8,910	10,261	128	91%
Education Campus (ES-HS)	4	582,300	3,042	4,057	151	75%
Special Education	1	99,540	234	287	347	82%
Alternative Education	4	125,513	2,390	3,087	169	86%
PCS Total/Average	95	4,159,687	32,301	39,649	116	85%

Source: Public Education Facilities Master Plan for the District of Columbia (2013) Appendix C, Complete Enrollment, Capacity and Utilization Study

V. Data Sources and Appendices

The data and information used for this policy brief are extensive and come from primary and secondary sources. This brief takes advantage of data and information from other studies, particularly the D.C. Office of Planning Population Projections and the 2013 Educational Facilities Master Plan. It uses already published school level data about diversity, performance, and facilities from various sources, including data from DCPS and www.LearnDC.org.

The primary source of information that the study team used to analyze where students live and the schools they attend is a snapshot of student level data pulled on September 19, 2012 by OSSE from their Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED). The student-level data include student records from DCPS, public charters, and non-public placement paid for by the District. This student level data set includes student addresses, demographic descriptors, and the school attended. The study team geo-coded the students' addresses to enable analysis by boundaries, wards, neighborhood cluster, and census blocks. The non-public students, non-DC residents, and non-DC based schools were excluded from the analysis. The total number of student records including both DCPS and public charter students from this file is 79,832.

Because these data are a snapshot of SLED and are not official audited data sources, the totals for school enrollments or other summaries are unlikely to equal the official audited enrollments. There will be other differences in the totals, based on whether there is missing information like race, special education, or other identifiers, but for the purposes of this analysis, the differences are not relevant.

Other good sources of data and information can be found in the D.C. Educational Facilities Master Plan, January 2013. Of particular relevance to the student assignment and school choice landscape are:

- The Population and Enrollment Forecast Study Appendix D
- Enrollment, Capacity and Utilization Study Appendix C
- Demographic Study Appendix E
- Neighborhood Cluster Demographic Summary Appendix F

Appendix A: DCPS and Charter Schools Listing by Neighborhood Cluster and Map

Appendix B: Boundary Participation Data Table

As part of the analysis to help the Advisory Committee and the public with the review and planning for student assignment policy, the technical team consolidated data about the number of grade appropriate public school students living within the current DCPS boundaries and the schools attended by the students living within those boundaries. Appendix B provides detail on the level of in-boundary participation by elementary, middle and high school age students living within the boundaries that are currently mapped in the DC GIS system. In the case of PS8 schools, the boundary participation detail is divided so that elementary grade students and middle grade students can be viewed separately. With the Boundary Participation Data Tables in Appendix B, it is possible to see the choice patterns of students from boundary to boundary. These Data Tables also include a set of descriptors for the in-boundary school and the other DCPS or charter schools attended. The descriptors are defined in the introduction to the Boundary Participation Data Tables. The Data Tables are being expanded to include facility and program descriptors.

These can all be downloaded from <http://dme.dc.gov/book/student-assignment-and-school-boundaries-review-process>