DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ISI Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 6, 2018
5:00 – 7:00 PM
Emery PD Center, 1720 First St NE
Presenters:

- Amy Maisterra, Deputy Chancellor of Innovation and Systems Improvement (ISI), DCPS
- Justin Good, Manager, Continuous Improvement (CI), DCPS
- Juliana Herman, Deputy Chief, Policy, DCPS

Notes:

Meeting Attendees:

- DCPS ISI Advisory Board Members: Alexandra Simbana, Frances Davidson, Robert Vinson Brannum, Jacqueline Gran, Kimberly Harrison, Lea Howe, Grace Hu, Avril Knott, Daniel Obregon,, Bianca Singh, Raymond Weedon
- Not in Attendance: Carlos Ellerbe, Andrew Weltman, Tina Fletcher, Lissa Rosenthal-Yoffe, Sherice Muhammad and Brittany Wade
- Office of Family and Public Engagement: Mahogany Blank
- Office of Innovation and Systems Improvement: Amy Maisterra and Brooke Strother
- Office of School Design and Continuous Improvement: Juliana Herman and Justin Good

Agenda item	Comments
Pre-Meeting	- Dinner and mingle

Welcome and Opening Activity: Student Budget Hearing Topics	- Opening Activity: Members were prompted to choose a key topic highlighted by students at the November 5th Student Budget hearing and discuss how it may impact their community or neighborhood school.
	  o **Key topics raised:**
	    ▪ Need for mentoring, social emotional supports, mental health services
	    ▪ Need for college/career counseling
	    ▪ Concern about community safety
	    ▪ Interest in exposure to trades, work-related internships
	    ▪ Need for diversity training (staff and students)
	    ▪ Recommendations regarding scheduling, lunch
	  o **Question:** Did any students discuss the length of lunchtime?
	  o **Question(s):** What was DCPS' response to students at the hearing? Are there impediments to the kids accessing these resources? What are the next steps to resolve their concerns?
	    ▪ **Amy's Response:** Some resources already exist and DCPS hasn't done a good enough job communicating to students.
	      • DCPS capacity to address volume of need
	      • At the hearing, DCPS did respond directly and in the moment to some concerns raised by

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students. There was a concern surrounding harassment, and the DCPS team spoke directly to whom and where follow up should be directed.

- Another concern around community safety is being followed up on by leadership.
- There were other concerns raised around design – planning pieces, work-related internships that were acknowledged and will be followed up on.
- DCPS is keeping students and experiences at the center of all planning.
  - o **Suggestion:** There should be training across the board for school staff's support of mental health services. Staff should know what signs to look for, could potentially partner with CFSA on this effort.
  - o **Suggestion:** There is a need for stronger neighborhood schools. DCPS should make a concerted effort to bolster and create strong feeder programs. DCPS should drill down on why families choose certain schools/travel times and try to make great programs available in their communities.
  - o **Question(s):** Does the principal have autonomy in the budget? How are tradeoffs made to address school-specific problems?
    - ▪ DCPS is considering the data (quantitative and qualitative) that we need to produce to ensure we are distributing resources effectively.
    - ▪ DCPS transitioning back to operating food services and considering what that could mean for student involvement – we know one size doesn't fit all. Considering how to respond to and support the diversity of students.
      - Piloting this effort at Excel Academy
      - Food and Nutrition Services just completed a study with American University to look at food consumption and what we can learn about what students are throwing away.
    - ▪ **Comment:** Many children who just want milk in the cafeteria are not allowed to go through the regular food line.
    - ▪ **Comment:** There is a need for diversity training, board members would like to learn more about specific reforms that students are proposed.
- **Amy comment**: Students also brought up the poor management of race, ethnicity, and racism in some schools.
  - o Another theme was sexual orientation, gender identity, and dress code (female students felt like dress code expectations differed from their male counterparts).

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	• **Question:** Re: mental health services, how can we partner with other DC government or external organizations to provide students with these supports? o **Amy's response:** The Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) has a new strategic plan around mental health that they are proposing and vetting this season.

Comprehensive School Plan (CSP) Overview
View your school's CSP snapshot [here](#).
	• Comprehensive School Plans (CSPs) are improvement plans for each school.
	• They are living documents used by schools to support their development work.
	• CSPs focus on student perception, achievement data, suspensions, etc. to inform key levers for improvement.
	• School leaders are encouraged to engage their communities and Local School Advisory Teams (LSATs) on these plans.
	• CSP timeline: Planning begins in spring and late summer when principals should begin the conversation with their LSATs.
	    o Central Office teams begin looking for final plans in late August.
	        ▪ In the past, CSPs have not been publicly accessible – the Continuous Improvement (CI) team has developed snapshots of each school's CSP plan, available [here](#).
	            • Snapshots have been developed for each school to communicate information around school-specific strategies, educator actions, and what students will experience in learning.
	            • Snapshots are not full tools but are great ways to engage with the community.
	    o CSPs are schools' annual "road maps" which capture significant instructional and socio-emotional plans for improvement.
	    o As Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) STAR ratings are released for this school year, schools can go back to their CSPs and see what they need to improve upon.
	• **Question:** Who oversees CSPs? And who helps the schools implement these plans?
	    o **Justin's response:** Now, school leaders are not the only folks who implement this work. Principals should be empowering their staff to support planning.
	        ▪ Plans used to be 15 pages long, the CI team has encouraged school leaders to narrow their focus and priorities.
	        ▪ **Support:** Justin's team works 1:1 with teams to think about executing these plans effectively.
	• **Question:** Is there an opportunity for folks to view full CSPs?
	        ▪ Not currently, but this is being considered for future state.
	        ▪ Principals can share full school plans with community members.
	• **Question:** How the does the role of the Instructional Superintendent play into the support and execution of CSPs?

	- o Instructional Superintendents are principal supervisors - o They review CSPs with principals in their check-ins and have monthly accountability conversations - o **Question:** How does the CSP correlate and connect with student concerns? ▪ **Response:** Students complete a panorama survey every year. • **Resource:** Learn more about the panorama survey and view past results here. • Within the panorama survey, students reflect upon their feelings related to school climate and learning environments. • Schools consider the student panorama survey when creating their CSPs and pull in data from that survey. • Principals conduct student focus groups for temperature checks. • **Question:** What is the connection between budget and CSP priorities? ▪ Public budget forums were held in mid-December (December 12) ▪ This is an area flagged for improvement ▪ There will be roundtables with LSATs in January • DCPS is thinking about the alignment piece. • Next year, the CSP planning and budget pieces will intersect. • **Question:** What is informing DCPS' ask to the mayor for budget/plan? ▪ There needs to be a mindset shift on how to use data ▪ The CI team has a host of data to pull from throughout the year to create a plan without waiting for end of year (EOY) data. ▪ We are trying to ensure data is available and easy to use. • Considering how to create informative suspension and attendance data into a user-friendly dashboard. • **Comment:** Your school budget is true assessment of your school population.
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Student Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework	• On Friday, December 7, the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) released its new accountability framework. • **Background:** In 2015, President Obama signed a new act that set the parameters nationwide for sharing information on how schools are doing and reporting on their improvement. • OSSE has been working with DC Public Charter Schools and DCPS to design the implementation plan. • Most prominent features of this framework are the report card and School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) rating system. • **Key piece:** STAR Framework

	- o The STAR Framework shares information about the performance of public schools in the District for groups of students in the school. - o Each school receives a rating from 1-5 stars. - o OSSE has bucketed out different focal areas: ▪ Academic Achievement ▪ Academic Growth ▪ School Environment ▪ English Language Proficiency ▪ Graduation Rate - o Each category is assigned a weight which differs by school level. - o OSSE is committed to creating an academic growth level for high school (currently do not have). **Question:** How does the panorama survey work with the STAR framework? - o The ESSA STAR framework and the report card include both DCPS and DC Public Charter Schools. ▪ Currently, there isn't a single survey that is shared across schools in the district. - o **Question:** How are transitional families and the impact on schools considered within the framework? ▪ Several attendance measures are considered: • Absolute attendance • Growth measure • Schools may have low attendance, but they can earn points if they are working to improve this area. - o OSSE looks at all measures for all students: students with IEPs, English Language Learners (ELL), At-Risk students, and considers race and ethnicity. • Each of the groups are assigned a point number • Two-step process: - o How did the group of students perform on the measure rating? - o What does that tell you about the entire school's performance in the aggregate? - o OSSE and DCPS have gotten feedback re: clarity. ▪ Individual schools are sending out letters to inform parents of their STAR rating. ▪ OSSE and DCPS have gone through multiple rounds of feedback with parents focused on communicating the framework clearly. ▪ OSSE has added the STAR ratings to MySchoolDC lottery system for families to review ratings while making enrollment decisions. - o The STAR ratings are not the sole school narratives. - o Teams are thinking about messaging to parents and communities. ▪ Messaging framing: STAR ratings are one bucket of information that includes a lot of data – but is not the defining piece.

		▪ The Chancellor's Advisory Board helped prepare turn-key ESSA STAR rating documents.
		▪ Parents/families weighed in on the STAR rating letters and information.
		  • The Office of Family and Public Engagement (OFPE) will continue to support and share messaging.
		o DCPS' job is to uplift and celebrate schools no matter their rating.
		o **Question:** Does school size factor into how schools are rated/weighted?
		  • No, just by school-level.
		o **Question:** Is the STAR rating across the board?
		  ▪ Yes, summative rating across the board.
		• **DCPS' Response to STAR Ratings**
		o Districtwide Improvement Framework
		  ▪ **School-specific goals** aligned to district goals
		  ▪ **Core improvement strategies**: developing educators, high-quality instruction, and engaging curriculum
		o Prioritizing supports and resources
		  ▪ **Prioritized**, **high-leverage strategies, supports**, **services**, and **resources** aligned to the school's pathway to excellence
		  ▪ Augmenting and investing in **school leadership** and **school-based strategic planning**
		o Transformation for lowest performing school – schools in bottom 5% that have struggled over time and need to change dramatically.
		  ▪ **Innovative approaches** to dramatically **accelerate progress** in our lowest performing schools
		o The improvement framework is both related to STAR rating and overall approach to improvement.
		  ▪ DCPS is thinking about how we prioritize and make resource
		  ▪ Using the STAR rating as a tool to operationalize next steps and support to schools
		  ▪ The star rating is already telling us info we know, it's a just piece
		o **Question:** Do you anticipate having many one-star schools?
		  ▪ **Response:** No, we want to be ready to organize and push in resources and support for schools who need them the most.
		o **Question:** Is part of the conversation how did schools get to 1 star, and how you are going to fix it?
		  ▪ It would be nice for DCPS to acknowledge the pain points and talk about how they're going to fix that.
		    • **Response:** Yes, DCPS will encourage schools to remember what we're doing well and will also have real conversations about where we're going.

Next Steps and Closing	• Amy thanked the members for their attendance. • Members were asked to fill out evaluation forms.
Related Resources	• Learn more about the panorama survey and view past results here. • View your school's CSP snapshot here. • DC School Report Card • Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) • STAR Framework At A Glance