

2023 - 2024 Chancellor's Parent Advisory Board

March 21, 2024

Meeting Notes

Board Members in Attendance:

		Attendance
First Name	Last Name	
Aaron	Hanna	
Ada	Ezeh	X
Ammena	Nazeen	X
Beth	Davis	X
Charles	DeSantis	X
Connie	Guevara	X
Dana	Watson	
Dorian	Thomas	
Ebone	Tyson-El	X
Ericka	Mahdi	
Feleece	Mitchell	X
Gabrielle	Holmes	X
Glenda	Diaz	
Jamiel	Dawson	X
Jessica	Campos	X
Julius	Terry	
LeSeana	Andrews	
Lisa	Addison	
Mishaela	Duran	X
Olu	Ajisafe	

Patricia	Price	X
Pauline	Mzava	X
Pepper	Reed	X
Quentin	Long	
Ritu	Upadhyay	
Stephen	Rodriguez	
Suzanne	Schneider	X
Teressa	Walton	
Tasha	Kennedy	
Yolanda	Anderson	X
Yolanda	Powers	X

Notes

SEL activity: What was your favorite snack as a kid?

- Oreos
- Gummy bears
- Pringles
- Goldfish
- Sunflower/pumpkin seeds
- Peanuts
- Instant pudding
- Doritos

Chancellor's Section:

- Online enrollment is launching on March 29th. We are using a platform that collects required enrollment information from users and compiles responses in a centralized database. The platform will safely, securely, and directly transfer data from the online enrollment platform to Aspen.
 - o Reminder about the March 29th lottery results
 - o Reminder about the new enrollment online platform – launching on March 29th
 - Holds information in a centralized database – the platform will be safe, secure, and easy to use
- Since enrollment season is here, the question that I would like to pose to you is: Is there anything DCPS can do to increase early enrollment across the city?

- There were 2 days for inclement weather, schools will not need to extend days to make up for them – last day of school will remain June 17th (barring any additional weather issues between now and then)
- Last Saturday in April (4/27) = Enrollment Saturday
- First Saturday in April (04/06) = Math Expo
- Still waiting on final budget for the city – once that is done, DCPS will be able to discuss further

Chancellor’s Q&A Session:

- School recently lost its Vice Principal – how does DCPS support the school communities?
 - DCPS has “Resident Administrators” - assigned to schools based on need to help support schools with a gap in leadership
- Are schools going to be notified in advance about the drug free zones?
 - More work needs to be done to communicate with schools and students
- School budgeting
 - Communicate with school advisory teams to better help allocate resources – schools decided not to reduce the number of positions initially anticipated (from 5% to 2%)
 - Schools did a good job with the scaling down
 - Students identified in need – there are tough choices when there is a tight budget; the budget isn’t final, yet, so there will be more to share once that budget is finalized
 - DCPS is confident that the schools that need more will receive more
- Questions about the calendar – holidays, breaks in February, etc.
- Approaches to behavioral interventions between elementary and middle school – are schools allowed flexibility in how they treat behavioral concerns? Elementary and middle schools for children are handling these issues differently (restorative justice vs. evidence-based, etc.)
 - Schools have a certain level of autonomy – but overall, we do recommend the use of restorative justice approaches to help get to the root causes of many issues
 - Re: age – the impacts can be different based on developmental factors and outcomes; CLF tracks these things (such as the restorative board) weekly
 - Older grade levels also try to use other models that may not be used in elementary, such as ISS
 - Working on new program at the 6th grade level – “6th grade academy”
 - 6th graders are “really excelling” this year – happy to see these changes because a strong middle school experience can help prepare these kids for high school.
- Not a significant reduction in school staff – what do you envision will be the reductions/changes in DCPS staff (especially – mental health staff)
 - Still expecting approximately 10% - including ESSER related positions which will be sunset. DCPS is still working to finalize which strategic decisions need to be made.
 - Looking to recruit top talent to support schools and make strategic decisions

Food and Nutrition Presentation:

Intro – reflect in a few words: what has your student’s experience been with school meals?

- Speakers
 - Robert Jaber
 - Jennifer Konish
 - Robyn Douglas Scholar
 - Kelsey Metcalfe
- FNS Mission – DCPS Eats!
 - FNS puts students first
 - Equity-minded
 - Community is internal
 - External – here to engage and to welcome feedback from the community
- 110+ schools serving over 50,000 students
 - 4 service providers – operating through the DC Healthy Schools Act
 - 3 divisions, almost 8.5 million meals served annually
- Discussion of Food Service Management – contract roadmap
 - Awards offered to DCCK, Sodexo, and Aramark
 - Final cluster of schools have fully transitioned
 - Transitions of clusters took place over time
 - FNS team went through an extensive process to plan these transitions – site walks/visits, product delivery, pre-opening checklist, cleaning and inventory, and site reviews
- FNS clusters do not mirror the other DCPS cluster models – FNS has 11 clusters to support all schools; each cluster supported by a FNS Field Specialist and an Area Director appointed by each service provider
- How School Food Programs Work
 - Rules set by the Federal govt – dietary guidelines
 - There are rules and regulations for nutrition standards
- Student Engagement – highlighting student voices in school meals
- Self-Operation program – what it looks like for DCPS employees to get involved in the school nutrition efforts; it is a pilot program – it has been expanding since 2012
- Q&A
 - Hard to get students to try different foods – how do they do that?
 - Getting an additional food corps service members – working to help students get excited about trying new foods; bringing new chef on board and showcasing different foods; working on standardizing processes as well
 - Huge fans and supporters of the FoodPrints program – it is not in a lot of schools, and the funding has not necessarily been available (OSSE)
 - “Chickenless” chicken nuggets at Ludlow Taylor– students complained of chicken nuggets missing the chicken
 - Brought to FNS attention recently – launched an investigation (collected information from the school, which school periods, etc.); there were a number of issues that took place that day that caused these to make it onto the serving line – issues with Aramark as they are newly brought on

- Reminded cafeteria staff to perform quality checks for the food – if something doesn't meet the quality, do not serve it
 - The meals were noncompliant and did not meet FNS standards so DCPS did not collect reimbursement from OSSE
 - Every meal is cooked at every site – DCPS does not have a production center for its food – experiences will vary across 118 schools
- What happened to DCPS staff with these new vendors?
 - DCPS absorbed – many employees from before are still employed after the switch to contractual
- How was Aramark chosen? Especially given its previous scandal/controversy
 - Not all vendors bid on all schools
 - Not every vendor can meet the requirements that are set at DCPS – only a certain type of vendor can meet the scale needed; wanted to focus on quality in the schools by adding a third vendor to take some of the pressure off of Sodexo before DCCK expanded its capacity
 - There are multiple steps in the process
- Who is responsible for cleaning the cafeteria?
 - The school cafeterias use a “clean as you go” approach – cafeteria staff – regular tidying of kitchens, cleaning tables between lunch periods, etc.
 - Custodial staff responsible for floors, walls, and ceilings
- Are vendors rotated or are they set to one particular set of clusters?
 - Vendors have a set of clusters (FNS cluster model, not DC cluster system)
- Council does not have “influence” on the process, they just vote on vendors – not influenced by lobbyists, politics, etc.

Monthly Updates:

- No School 4/5 & 4/15 – 4/19
 - We have a couple of days off from school in the next month
 - The end of Term is on April 5th (04/05)
 - DCPS Spring Break (04/15 – 04/19)
- My School DC results and waitlist positions available 3/29
 - Lottery results will be available on March 29th. Your lottery results explain your child's outcome for every school you selected on your child's application. If you have questions, please call the My School DC hotline at 202-888-6336. We will put the number in the chat
- Community Cash Conference 4/27
 - Chisholm Elementary (formerly known as Tyler Elementary) is excited to host an inaugural Community Ca\$h Conference on Saturday, April 27, 2024 from 10 AM - 2 PM! The College Gurl, Jessica Brown, will open the event! Then, participants will explore empowering personal finance sessions about budgeting, buying a home, & more!

- FREE childcare and FREE lunch will be provided to registered participants.
Registration is open now. Use this link to register:
<https://bit.ly/CashConferenceApril27>
- Upcoming Parent U Sessions 3/26 & 4/23
 - We have 2 parent U sessions coming up in the next month.
 - March 26th - join us for a session with our DCPS experts to provide you information on how you can know whether your child is making progress toward graduation and what you can do in the summer to help them stay on track.
 - April 23rd - join us for an exciting online event where we will guide you through the necessary steps to complete the enrollment process for the academic year 2024-2025. Whether you are a new student or a returning one, this event is designed to make the process seamless and hassle-free. Our team of experts will walk you through each step, ensuring that you have a clear understanding of the process. From filling out forms to submitting required documents, we will provide detailed instructions and answer any questions you may have.
 - Register at bit.ly/dcpsparentureg to send your questions in advance and request interpretation services!
- CAPE Testing 4/1 – 5/24
 - The District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessments of Progress in Education include the DC ELA assessment, the DC Math assessment and the DC Science assessment. Together, these assessments create a comprehensive system that provides important information on students' progress and proficiency relative to DC's educational standards.
 - Testing will take place from April 1, 2024 – May 24, 2024
- Family Engagement Survey launched in March
 - The Panorama Spring 2024 Surveys for students, families, and staff opened on March 1.
 - Families will take the survey at this link: <http://bit.ly/dcpsfamily>
 - We hope you will share feedback about you and your child's experiences at DCPS!
- CAT in the community
 - Upcoming
 - 3/25 - Ward 5
 - 3/28 (Ward 6)
 - The Community Action Team (CAT) is responsible for building and sustaining strategic relationships with key community stakeholders; empowering them through sharing resources offered by DCPS and communicating external needs and trends back to DCPS.
 - Come connect with the Community Action Team for tips, support, and guidance on how to help your school community finish the school year strong. Have other questions/feedback? We would love to chat!
 - Feel free to come talk to one of our CAT members about the budget, enrollment, or anything else DCPS related.

- Please see the CAT member’s email below in case you’d like to make a virtual connection.
 - Quintin (clusters 1,9,&10)- quintin.floyd2@k12.dc.gov
 - Damian (clusters 5,6,&8)- damian.popkin@k12.dc.gov
 - Ja-Naia (clusters 4&7)- ja-naia.adams@k12.dc.gov
 - Dwaine (Cluster 2&3)- dwaine.carr@k12.dc.gov
- SUN Bucks
 - The District has temporary increased SNAP benefits and soon will be offering a new benefit program called SUN Bucks (or Summer EBT) for low income families with school-aged children to buy groceries during the summer months. All school-aged children on SNAP and TANF will be automatically certified to receive the \$120 in SUN Bucks.
 - Especially given the rising costs of food for all families, it is a very important time for eligible families to apply for SNAP. Families can learn more and apply using this link: <https://dhs.dc.gov/service/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>
- DCPS Family Math Expo
 - The DC Public Schools’ Family Math Expo will bring math to life in fun interactive ways for elementary families. Participate in math games, math-themed read aloud, and receive math resources from partner organizations. This Expo will help families foster a love and joy in learning math both in school and at home.
 - There will be food and family math activities for all elementary students, and additional activities like a moon bounce, face painting, and a science show!
 - [DCPS FAMILY MATH EXPO / EXPOSICIÓN DE MATEMÁTICAS PARA FAMILIAS DE DCPS Tickets, Sat, Apr 6, 2024 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Post Meeting Survey Responses:

Four board members filled out the exit survey.

Question	Average Score
1 Star = Not Good to 5 Star = Very Good	
Please rate the DCPS Food and Nutrition Presentation	4.25
How would you rate the meeting overall?	4.50

Additional comments from board members on exit survey:

- “The [FNS] presentation was very informative. I would have LOVED to have been on the panel of taste tester in selection of the vendors for our students. I am concerned of why some locations have a better options of food than others, but I guess that goes to the RFP and where the vendors choose to service. [...] Thanks for sharing the great information tonight.”

- “The best part [of the FNS presentation] was about the chef in the school, but most of the schools do not have access to a chef. I would have liked to learn more about and health metrics that DCPS is tracking as part of its nutrition program. [...] I did like that they answered some tough questions head on. My 11 year old son likes Aramark’s spaghetti and meatballs and pizza - thought I would focus on the positive.”
- “This was a great meeting.”
- “I would have liked if the Chancellor had focused on a different topic outside of enrollment. I know it was a heavy lift to get the new system in place, but would love to hear his insights on what he is seeing with students on the ground and how DCPS is tackling these problems (with support of parents and teachers).”