

Chancellor Parent Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 15, 2016
5:30-8:00 PM
DCPS Central Office

Meeting Objectives

Meeting participants will:

1. Learn more about the initial research DCPS has conducted on supporting its girls of color
2. Understand the approach DCPS takes when launching these types of large-scale, district-wide initiatives
3. Engage in a dialogue about an initiative for girls of color

Meeting Attendees:

- *DCPS Chancellor's Parent Cabinet Members:* Robin Appleberry, Davena Archie, Tara Brown, E. Andre Carter, Kristine Erickson, Camille Fair-Bumbray, Laurence Gill, Helene Klusmann, Michael Koppenheffer, Corinne McIntosh-Douglas, Dionne Moore, Matthew O'Hara, Beth Osborne, Shanti Sale, Kevin Sampson, Alejandra Vallejo, and Adria Wright
- *Not in Attendance:* Nazanin Ash, Ameen Beale, Charles DeSantis, Diane Jackson, Cristóbal Rodríguez, Sweta Shah, and Shameka Stewart
- Chancellor Kaya Henderson
- *Office of Family and Public Engagement:* Josephine Bias Robinson, Shanita Burney, Cassandra Sánchez, and Allison D'Aurora
- *Guest Speakers:* Pete Weber, Chief of Staff

Notes:

Topic	Comments
Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cabinet member Tara Brown was acknowledged for the presentation she gave in February at Leadership Academy, a professional development forum that recurs throughout the school year to bring together principals and central office leaders. Tara spoke about the powerful experience she had with her children through Cornerstones. It was important for attendees to hear how this work can involve and impact not just students, but families, as well. ▪ Cabinet member Adria Wright recently completed her training to be a substitute teacher and had her first day on the job in a DCPS school. ▪ The July and August meetings have been cancelled because of various scheduling conflicts. The group will have its final meeting in September. ▪ DCPS had its performance hearing in front of City Council on March 4, and it went well. This Committee on Education is a true partner for DCPS, working together as a city to address education. ▪ The Chancellor went to Cuba with the mayoral delegation in February to

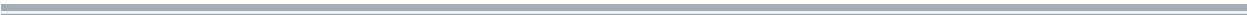
	<p>learn more about their education system. Despite being a poor country, Cuba has some of the best education and healthcare systems in the world. Their schools are proving that poverty and other socioeconomic factors do not have to be barriers to receiving a high-quality education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principals received their budget allocations last month and turned in their final budgets to DCPS on March 7. DCPS submitted its final budget to the mayor’s office this week.
<p>Focus Topic: Girls of Color</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recently, the Office of Family and Public Engagement (OFPE) in collaboration with the Office of Data and Strategy, began looking into the various challenges that face girls of color in DCPS. ▪ Last year, DCPS launched the Empowering Males of Color (EMOC) initiative because boys of color are struggling most academically and comprise such a large percentage of the student body. EMOC presented a set of solutions for one set of students, but those solutions are not necessarily the right answer for all students. DCPS is looking at data and research on girls of color to better understand the different types of supports girls need. ▪ Pete Weber, the Chancellor’s Chief of Staff, has been leading the Office of Data and Strategy (ODS), and shared data his office has compiled that partly explain what the experience in school is like for girls of color in DCPS. Noted trends include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Black boys have consistently been the group with the lowest reading proficiency rates followed by Hispanic boys, Black girls, and then Hispanic girls. ○ Black and Hispanic girls are doing better than Black and Hispanic boys, but there is still a gap between them and their white peers. ○ For in seat attendance, Black boys and Black girls follow a similar trend. Hispanic boys and girls also follow a similar trajectory, but Hispanic students attend school at a higher rate than Black students. ○ Black girls are the least satisfied with their school experience out of any other group. ○ DCPS’ dropout rate is 19%, but Black boys and Hispanic girls have the highest dropout rate of 26%. ○ Hispanic students enroll in AP classes more than Black students. One reason that may explain this disparity could be that Columbia Heights Education Campus offers a reputable AP Spanish class and a lot of students enroll in and pass that class. ○ There are high suspension rates for Black girls. ▪ OFPE and ODS have also closely examined the 2012 DC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which is administered by the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE). The challenge in reviewing this data is that the survey is given to all DC students and does not indicate results specific to DCPS or girls of color exclusively. Among the YRBS findings that are being considered includes that in 2007, one in three high school girls reported they felt depressed. In 2012, the number went down for boys, but girls stayed about the same. ▪ Cabinet members also called attention to various statistics from the 2012 DC YRBS, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 15% of high school female students attempted suicide in 2012. ○ Nearly 30% of middle school girls had thought about committing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ suicide. ○ The disparity in girls’ and boys’ emotional health and wellness is growing over time. ○ The percentage of girls who go without eating for 24 hours have been growing over the past few years.
<p>Group Discussion on Girls of Color</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After reviewing the two data presentations, the Cabinet members presented the following ideas about what DCPS should consider in reaction to this data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment: DCPS should keep in mind that there is a lot of peer pressure that influences youth risk behavior, but home life also has a big impact. Students need more supports at school so they can be better prepared to learn at school and resist risky behaviors. ○ Comment: Girls often have pressure to manage more in their home lives than boys, which can lead to a lot of stress. ○ Response: Girls do tend to take on a lot of responsibilities, which is demonstrated by the schools they attend. Of the enrollment at DCPS application high schools, Black and Hispanic girls make up most of the student body at Banneker High School, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, McKinley Technology High School, and Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School. ○ Comment: How does DC’s statistics compare to national data? ○ Response: The nationwide statistics are high, but DC’s data surpass national trends. ○ Comment: Girls’ self-image and how they compare themselves to their peers drives a lot of their behavior. There is a lot of pressure on girls to look and act a certain way, especially on social media. ○ Question: How does DCPS think homeless students are represented in this data? ○ Response: According to an OSSE report, there are about 3,500 homeless students in DCPS. More than 1 in 20 Black students are homeless. If the data could be disaggregated, it’s likely that homeless students make up large percentages of the YRBS report. Teachers need more professional development to identify this type of stress among their students, and Early Childhood Education classrooms need more resources to provide wraparound services to young students to prevent them from being susceptible to risky behaviors later on in life. ○ Question: What is the capacity of the school to help girls address self-care and self-love and combat negative images? Can the data be unpacked into qualitative measures to understand what kind of support services girls need? ○ Response: DCPS understands that the challenges students face are not just academic. DCPS is not structured or funded to take on more social and emotional supports, but one of the benefits of being under mayoral control is that DCPS has more access to city resources. When the Chancellor first took office, she went to the Deputy Mayor of

	<p>Health and Human Services to ask for support for the 40 lowest performing schools. The Department of Behavioral Health added mental health practitioners in those schools to help special education students and students with mental health needs. There is an intervention philosophy called Response to Intervention (RTI) that states that there are three critical tiers of supports to develop successful students, and if Tier 1 approaches and interventions are successful, it greatly minimizes the need for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions which become the way of addressing the needs of students with more extreme or clinical challenges. If looking at instruction, RTI presents a model where if Tier 1 Instruction is high quality in content, methodology, differentiation and classroom management, then the number of students needing targeted academic supports (Tier 2) or intensive academic supports (Tier 3) are tremendously reduced. The most resources should be deployed for the highest quality Tier 1 approaches, while adequate resources are also needed to identify and address students who have needs at the Tier 2 or Tier 3 levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment: The YRBS was administered to students in 2007 and 2012, meaning the data points explain students’ behavior at the beginning and end of the Great Recession. The troubling piece is that girls continue to decline towards the end of the Great Recession, but boys improved, even if slightly, in most areas. ○ Comment: DCPS should consider asking the mayor’s office or another organization to do a study similar to YRBS in DCPS schools, so there could be a better understanding of how DCPS students align to these citywide trends. ○ Comment: The most troubling statistic is that 30% of girls in 2012 felt depressed. When people are depressed, they can’t learn and they’re not motivated to engage in intervention or prevention programs. DCPS has to target girls at a young age to shape their self-image and confidence. All the other statistics are a result of what happens when you are depressed. Students are not prepared to learn when they are depressed. ▪ Cabinet members then presented responses to preventive and intervention strategies that could be used for girls of color: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment: Girls, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that works primarily with Black and Hispanic girls and has a location in DC near Howard University. The goal of the program is to empower girls so they can overcome these kinds of challenges. The program starts in fifth grade. ○ Comment: Strategies like art therapy could also be effective, or, schools could incorporate more de-stressing activities into the school day routine, like puzzles, so students have a few minutes to take their minds off stressors and practice focusing. ○ Comment: There must be a correlation between the high performing
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	<p>high schools and the extracurricular activities they offer. At those schools, there are more kids that are engaged after school in enriching activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Response: DCPS has required that all schools implement a certain number of extracurricular activities, so more students have these opportunities. ○ Comment: DCPS could also partner with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for afterschool activities. DPR offers a lot of activities that are not well attended. ○ Comment: Part of the problem is that girls are generally very mean to each other because they are mean to themselves. DCPS should find ways to help girls be authentic in who they are and reinforcing that they play an important part in our society and should take care of themselves. ○ Comment: Single gender classes or schools could be an effective strategy as part of this initiative. ○ Comment: Part of making girls happier is teaching boys how to work with girls. Boys should not be left out of the strategy. ○ Comment: To some extent, schools are being held responsible to provide health and psychological services. DCPS might consider adding a health and wellness director that sits alongside the Chancellor to look at how DCPS is providing these services. ○ Response: DCPS recently created the Office of Student Wellness to continue to incorporate this lens into our work. ○ Comment: DCPS could model practices big corporations provide for their employees, such as providing free yoga classes or other wellness initiatives. ○ Response: One challenge for DCPS is that there are many different components that have to be included as part of the school day. Any time there is a new initiative, DCPS has to figure out how to fit into the schedule. All of these initiatives are important, but there is not enough time in the day for everything. The government is prescriptive about how time is spent in schools, so it becomes a challenge to fit everything in the school day. DCPS will work with schools to implement an Extended Day program in some cases, which allows for creative scheduling to accommodate more activities. ○ Comment: It is likely that some subset of the data presented represents students in foster care. For these types of initiatives, DCPS should reach out to the Child and Families Service Agency to see if they can help provide aligned services. Not every foster child has a great experience in a foster home, and that experience can shape how a child performs at school. DCPS should consider how these programs can be a bridge for students to help them cope with what they are experiencing in their home life.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment: A mentorship program for families could be a useful resource in supporting girls of color. Families could benefit from peer coaching on how to best support their children at home. ○ Comment: For some students, all they have is the school. While schools can't fix every problem, they have to be structured to better support the students who have no other support systems at home. The focus should be on getting earlier Tier 1 interventions to students to prevent small issues from becoming problematic and potentially delaying a student's growth and development later. If DCPS starts teaching students about self-worth and esteem when they first enter school, then they can get through a lot of the harder issues they'll face later on. ○ Response: Problems aren't solved at a meta level; they are solved student-by-student. DCPS does not use statistics like graduation rate as the sole metric to measure its success. School leaders want to know where students are going after graduation because if they do not have a plan after high school, then it does not matter what happened in their K-12 education. DCPS is piloting a program at Anacostia High School, Ballou High School, and Woodson High School that gives each school a college counselor who tracks every single student and keeps them accountable to a plan for after high school. ○ Comment: Home visits have been beneficial to families because it builds trust among families and teachers. Students also look forward to these visits. Home visits should continue past elementary school. Parent-teacher conferences could also be more student-led to give students ownership of their learning and boost their self-esteem. ○ Response: Home visits are a part of the Family Engagement Partnership (FEP) that OFPE manages in partnership with the Flamboyant Foundation. The FEP is in 23 DCPS schools that run the model with the entire school, and there are also some individual teachers who are also trained on home visits. In this model, teachers visit the families of all of their students in teams of two toward the beginning of the school year to talk with parents about their hopes and dreams for their children. FEP schools also use a new style of parent-teacher conferences called Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) that take place three times throughout the school year in place of traditional parent-teacher conferences. Teachers meet with all parents at once and look at data about how their students are performing compared to other students in the school using anonymous data to help parents, teachers, and students with goal setting. APTT has proven to be most effective at the elementary school level. Some middle schools have started student-led parent-teacher conferences, and DCPS is working with high schools on also using student-led conferences focusing on the steps they're taking to get ready for college. ○ Comment: Mentoring programs for girls could be beneficial. DCPS should survey girls of color to better understand what their needs and desires are. DCPS could also consider creating a Cornerstone that addresses some of these risk factors. ○ Response: OFPE has just started conducting research and
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	<p>engagements on this topic. Bringing this topic to the Parent Cabinet was one of the initial pieces of the engagement plan. OFPE will be holding focus groups with female students of color, school staff, and other stakeholders to design this strategy.</p>
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The next meeting is on Wednesday, April 13.