



## Chancellor Parent Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2015  
5:30-8:00 PM  
DCPS Central Office

### Meeting Objectives

1. Provide feedback on their experience as a Cabinet member and insights on how the Cabinet could be developed in the future.

### Meeting Attendees:

- Parent Cabinet Members: Susan Boa, Gary Carleton, Olivia Chase, Craig DeWolfe, David Galbraith, Vivian Guerra, Christena Howell, Laura Levine, Rahul Mereand-Sinha, Thomas Strike, Emily Walton, and Martin Welles
- Cabinet Members Not in Attendance: Patrick Clowney, Marcio Duffles, Sirraya Gant, Dan Rosenthal, Andrew Rowe, Leslie Scott, and Idella Simpson
- Chancellor Kaya Henderson
- Office of Family and Public Engagement: Josephine Bias Robinson, Shanita Burney, and Allison D'Aurora

### Notes:

Issue	Comments
Welcome and Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Cabinet members received a link to an online survey to evaluate their experience as a Cabinet member. Surveys are due February 11 by 5 p.m.</li><li>▪ The School Funding team also created a new dashboard on the DCPS Data Center in response to feedback the Cabinet provided at the January meeting. This new dashboard allows users to compare school budgets side-by-side in the same window. Cabinet members received a link to a test page and a questionnaire to evaluate this new dashboard.</li><li>▪ Last month, DCPS hosted three budget engagement meetings with Local School Advisory Teams (LSAT), which drew more than 300 attendees across the three meetings.</li><li>▪ The Office of Family and Public Engagement (OFPE) is reviewing applications for the second cohort of the Parent Cabinet, which includes applications from several current members for re-appointment.</li><li>▪ There will be additional engagement opportunities for this group, even though members' terms are ending this month. OFPE will reach out to former members to participate in various opportunities.</li></ul>

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## Discussion Questions

- In place of the traditional meeting format, the agenda was revised for this closing meeting. The Chancellor asked Cabinet members to provide feedback on three questions:
  1. What did you like about participating in the Chancellor’s Parent Cabinet?
    - This group provided members with an opportunity to meet parents from other wards and understand their shared challenges as well as the unique challenges schools in different communities face.
    - Cabinet members met chiefs from many different departments with DCPS. The chiefs welcomed the feedback from the Parent Cabinet.
    - Cabinet members put aside their individual needs during these meetings and collaborated around issues that affected the greater good of all DCPS students.
  2. What can we improve for future cohorts?
    - Guest presenters should come prepared to the meeting with specific pieces of feedback Cabinet members can provide during the session.
    - DCPS could be leading more outreach efforts to the Foreign Service and military communities. Many working parents in the Washington, DC area work for either the FSO or the military, which both have transition offices to help their employees as they relocate to Washington, DC, including helping parents find local schools. This is an opportunity for DCPS to recruit new families to their schools.
    - There could be more structured opportunities for Parent Cabinet members to collaborate around specific projects or topics outside of the monthly meetings.
    - Cabinet members should have more guidance in how and what they can communicate information back to their school communities, so they can be stronger advocates for DCPS. Parents in the community are often influenced most by fellow parents, and Cabinet members want to carry out this advocate role.
    - DCPS should consider providing opportunities for the Parent Cabinet to meet with Principal Cabinet and Teacher Cabinet, so these groups can learn from each other and work together on issues where there is overlap.
  3. Were there any topics that you would have liked to discussed?
    - *Professional development for teachers and staff* – Parents are interested to know how professional development is structured and how DCPS selects professional development topics.
    - *Middle schools* – Parents often withdraw their students from their neighborhood schools, or DCPS in general, when they

	<p>reach middle school. Most parents decide which middle school their student will attend far in advance of when their child is middle school aged. It would be helpful to see either internal or external examples of how middle school can work well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Athletics</i> – DCPS offers a host of high-performing athletic programs. While focusing on academics is at the forefront, DCPS athletics could be an important unifying theme for the community.</li> <li>▪ <i>Wrap-around services</i> – DCPS needs to engage the Parent Cabinet in topics broader than traditional education issues, especially when thinking about schools in Ward 8. Students in at-risk communities experience many different types of challenges at home, including violence and drug use. The Parent Cabinet should be thinking about new ways to engage the parents of these children with a community-based approach by connecting police, housing authorities, and other groups to work on these larger-scale issues. Central Office needs to better coordinate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Chancellor explained that this disconnect exists because Central Office has not historically had the best relationship with local schools. Schools that excel at providing these wrap-around services want autonomy in managing this process and sometimes do not trust Central Office to provide the resources they need. Central Office needs to be more proactive in its approach in building these relationships and standardizing the kind of experience students are having at school across DCPS. Central Office needs to work to the point where principals consistently trust the services and support they will receive from this office.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <i>“Specials” (art, music, etc.)</i> – DCPS has strong programs for athletics, performing arts, music, and physical education, among others. The Parent Cabinet should also help the Chancellor and DCPS think about to promote the school district’s strengths in addition to thinking of solutions to challenges.</li> <li>▪ <i>Enrollment/School lottery</i> – The communications plan around enrollment and lottery options should be consistently strong year-round, not just during the lottery deadline, so parents are always aware of their school choices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Closing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cabinet members were reminded to review the test DCPS Data Center Dashboard and provide feedback and submit a year-end survey to evaluate their experience on the Parent Cabinet.</li> <li>▪ Cabinet members were thanked for their service and encouraged to stay in touch with DCPS staff to report on potential parent and community partnership opportunities.</li> </ul>