



## Proposal to Close Washington Metropolitan High School

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### Community Meeting 1

December 9, 2019

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Washington Metropolitan High School (Wash Met), 300 Bryant St. NW

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#### Meeting Objective

Opportunity for DCPS leadership to share information and allow the public to provide feedback on the proposal to close Wash Met.

#### Overview of Attendees

**DCPS Leadership:** Melissa Kim, Shanita Burney, Andria Caruthers, Sito Narcisse, Claudia Lujan, Milo Howard, Deitra Mallory Bryant, Aiyana Mourtos, Chancellor Ferebee joined for part of the meeting

**Participants:** Washington Metropolitan Students, Parents, and Teachers; Parents and Teachers from other DC Public Schools; WTU Board Members; State Board of Education Representative; 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Fund; Ward 6 Public School Parent Organization; SHAPPE/Ward 4 Education Alliance; Ward 1 Education Council; Community Members; Media

#### Written Feedback

27 out of 45 participants completed the feedback sheet and responded to the following prompt: *DCPS is proposing to close Washington Metropolitan HS at the end of this current school year. What is your level of support for this proposal?*

Strongly Disagree w/proposed closure	Disagree w/proposed closure	Undecided/Neutral w/proposed closure	Agree (with some changes) w/proposed closure	Strongly Agree w/proposed closure
22	2	1	1	1



## Proposal to Close Washington Metropolitan High School

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### Community Meeting 2

December 12, 2019

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Martha’s Table, 2375 Elvans Road SE

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#### Meeting Objective

Opportunity for DCPS leadership to share information and allow the public to provide feedback on the proposal to close Wash Met.

#### Overview of Attendees

**DCPS Leadership:** Melissa Kim, Shanita Burney, Andria Caruthers, Sito Narcisse, Sarah Navarro, Claudia Lujan, Aiyana Mourtos, Chancellor Ferebee joined for part of the meeting

**Participants:** Washington Metropolitan Principal; Washington Metropolitan Students, Parent, and Teachers; Teachers from other DC Public Schools; Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANC 7C04 & ANC 8B04); Ward 7 Education Council; Howard University, Washington Legal Clinic; Community Members; Media

#### Written Feedback

18 out of 37 participants completed the feedback sheet and responded to the following prompt: *DCPS is proposing to close Washington Metropolitan HS at the end of this current school year. What is your level of support for this proposal?*

Strongly Disagree w/proposed closure	Disagree w/proposed closure	Undecided/Neutral w/proposed closure	Agree (with some changes) w/proposed closure	Strongly Agree w/proposed closure
18	0	0	0	0



**Feedback**

*Discussions, Comments, and Questions from Community Meetings 1 & 2*

Themes	Comments
<b>Data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy levels of families and students may have resulted in inaccurate Panorama data regarding student satisfaction.</li> <li><i>*Note: Panorama is an annual survey for families, staff, and students that asks questions about school climate, school satisfaction, engagement, etc.</i></li> <li>• Low attendance and poor performance are often why students enroll in Wash Met so it isn't perceived to be fair that this data informs the rationale for closing.</li> <li>• Wash Met data shouldn't be compared to the data from other Opportunity Academies (OA).</li> <li>• The enrollment numbers for Wash Met should remain intentionally small and not be a reason for closure.</li> <li>• The DCPS rationale for closing isn't clear.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Wash Met's program were moved to a nicer building in another part of the city, performance and attendance would improve.</li> <li>• Being housed in an elementary school building is detrimental to programming and morale.</li> <li>• There is no gym, auditorium, science lab, or "specials" classes because the building is too small.</li> <li>• The facilities have not been modernized which leaves the students and school community feeling forgotten.</li> <li>• A larger school building would allow for more school programming options which would result in higher levels of student engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>School Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students in this population need a small school and small class size in order to build trusting relationships.</li> <li>• This student population needs an experience that is different than what is offered in a large high school.</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rather than closing the school, more resources would allow the school to better serve their population.</li> <li>• The Comprehensive Staffing Model is not appropriate for Wash Met. Although the number of students enrolled may be smaller than other schools, the needs of the population the school serves are greater.</li> <li>• The school needs more special education and social emotional resources.</li> <li>• The school is not fully staffed and cannot get substitute teachers.</li> <li>• If we compare Wash Met to other OA's in terms of enrollment and programming, we should also compare the other OA school budgets.</li> </ul>
<b>Programming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summit is not a rigorous or joyful program for students or teachers.</li> <li><i>*Note: Summit is an online competency-based learning platform used by all DCPS OAs that allows students to move at their own pace to ensure mastery of each subject's content.</i></li> <li>• DCPS should change the programming to support the students rather than close the school.</li> <li>• There are no job programs at Wash Met like other OAs, nor are there "specials" classes available.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students do not get to do fun activities like field trips and learning isn't interesting.</li><li>• The students need wraparound services and DCPS should consider making Wash Met a Connected School or OSSE Community School.</li><li>• DCPS should redesign Washington Met similar to what is being done at Ballou and Anacostia.</li><li>• There is not the same level of awareness or knowledge of the programs that are available at Wash Met compared to other OAs.</li></ul>
<b>Student Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Returning to their neighborhood school poses a concern for some students due to peer conflicts.</li><li>• Many current Wash Met students have already gone through multiple school transitions, some of which were a result of previous school closures.</li><li>• There is a perception that Wash Met is held to different standards than other schools as far as the students they are required to enroll.</li><li>• There is a concern that the current Wash Met students will not stay in school if Wash Met closes.</li><li>• More trauma supports are needed for students.</li><li>• The addition of middle grades is perceived to have made it more difficult for the high school students to stay focused.</li><li>• Students at Wash Met would benefit from being provided childcare options.</li></ul>
<b>Decision Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It does not seem like alternatives to closing were considered by DCPS.</li><li>• Reconstitution is recommended rather than closure.</li><li>• DCPS leadership responses during Q/A make it seem like the decision has already been made.</li><li>• The fast timing of the announcement and scheduling of meetings made engagement feel inauthentic.</li><li>• A year of planning is needed before making this decision.</li><li>• If changes need to be made, it should be a part of a larger secondary school plan.</li><li>• There are concerns that other uses for the building were factors in the proposal to close Wash Met.</li><li>• It is important for student voice to be heard throughout the process.</li></ul>
<b>Student Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Wash Met student who has also attended Luke C Moore shared that the experiences at Wash Met did not feel any different from that at Luke C. Moore.</li><li>• A student shared that school felt boring to them and there weren't enough activities or classes for them to attend.</li><li>• A student shared that it felt like they were expected to put the puzzle pieces together by themselves, but they didn't have all the pieces.</li><li>• A student shared that they didn't feel like DCPS had done enough to improve the performance of Wash Met.</li><li>• A student shared that they needed more programming and more social workers to improve attendance.</li><li>• A student shares that the teachers feel like family and provide for them in ways that go above and beyond the requirements of the position.</li></ul>