

DCPS STRATEGIC PLAN

Virtual Listening Session Summary

Virtual Session Overview:

On Tuesday, October 18, 2022, DCPS leadership engaged with listening session participants through the Zoom virtual platform. As part of the event's agenda, attendees engaged by listening to an opening presentation led by DCPS leadership, followed by robust group breakout sessions and report-outs. During these exercises, attendees were asked to share their feedback around four main topical questions:

- What does a welcoming and affirming school community look like for all students, families, and staff?
- What can we do to ensure equitable programming and policies across all of DCPS?
- What do our students need academically, socially, and emotionally to reach their full potential?
- What resources do our staff, families, and students need to ensure all students thrive?

Summary of Feedback:

What does a welcoming and affirming school community look like for all students, families, and staff?

- Family-oriented and activities at all schools
- Summer open houses for families of new/young students
- Back to school nights hosted as early as possible in new school year
- Staff equipped with excellent customer service training, skills, and standards for better interactions with students, families, and community
- Welcoming and friendly staff and a school community that is respectful to diversity
- Translations offered and provided to parents, families, and guardians
- School environments that work to understand and address what parents need and cultivate parent engagement
- Awareness about restorative justice opportunities
- Ensure all students have access to drug use prevention programming and information
- Ensure outdoor spaces near and around schools are maintained and clean in addition to safe streets

What can we do to ensure equitable programming and policies across all of DCPS?

- Ensure electives and arts classes are offered at all schools
- Ensure program and curriculum are well rounded
- Ensure continuity of programming when students switch schools
- Ensure school clusters are aligned and communicating to collectively meet benchmarks
- Ensure schools with less resources have PreK-3 programming and after school care
- Need more interpreters available at schools
- Training on white supremacy culture. DCPS needs to know the data it collects and why, and how it may tie to correlations.
- Address historic inequities across the river and ensure populations with the most need receive appropriate resources

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What do our students need academically, socially, and emotionally to reach their full potential?

- Committed teachers who are supported by their administration and community
- Account for the stress students have endured through pandemic as well as teachers who have had to adjust to new norms
- Give teachers latitude to choose and express what they need
- Authentic focus on SEL with intentional model examples that are measured and upheld
- Introduce second language mastery while young for all students as an option and not just at immersion or bilingual schools
- Every school should have therapists and counselors. Students should have routine mental health check-ins as well as extending opportunities to families
- Focus on critical thinking and less on “teaching to the test”
- Bring back curriculum nights with real workshops to educate families and make it more accessible for families to support their student(s)
- Don’t pit subjects like art, physical education and other electives against each other

What resources do our staff, families, and students need to ensure all students thrive?

- Mental health resources
- Additional wellness, mental and emotional support opportunities for teachers and school staff to check-in
- Life skills classes for high school students and home economics
- Promote all programs that DCPS offers high school students to increase awareness
- Inclusion of electives for students with special needs
- Funding for critical positions
- Other languages should be included in curricula in addition to PreK, nutrition, emotion and resilience, the arts, finance are important
- Post pandemic resource planning and mapping to ensure DCPS restores to levels pre-pandemic
- Less of an emphasis on standardized testing
- Continue organizing and hosting feedback sessions and promoting transparency in what was discussed and feedback shared to adequately address challenges

Participation Statistics:

- Number of exit surveys completed: **0**
- Total number of attendees signed in (not including all central office/school staff assisting): **81**