



Brandon T. Todd
Councilmember, Ward 4
Chairman, Committee on Government Operations

Committee Member
Health
Human Services
Transportation and the Environment



Ward 4 Education Alliance

August 1, 2018

Mayor Muriel Bowser
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser,

On July 17, 2018, the Ward 4 Education Alliance and I hosted a strong group of Ward 4 education stakeholders at a joint meeting to hear their thoughts on the selection and appointment of the DC Public Schools (DCPS) Chancellor and the DC Deputy Mayor for Education (DME).

It was a diverse group of parents and community members, as well as current and former teachers and principals from DCPS and DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS). This group was eager to be involved and to be part of the selection process. We will forward this letter to the members of the Our Schools Leadership Committee and keep our residents informed of the meetings this summer and into the fall.

The purpose of the meeting was to solicit thoughts for what these groups believe would make for good administrators. The following is a thoughtful list generated at our meeting of the qualities our families want to see in our DME and DCPS Chancellor, as well as issues they hope to see addressed by the Chancellor.

Qualities of the Deputy Mayor for Education:

- Good communicator; the ability to connect with varied communities and to make the duties of the office clear and concise.
- Ability to work well with both DCPS and DCPCS officials and advocates.
- Experience and background to effectively receive reports from, evaluate, and support the Chancellor and State Superintendent of Education.
- Facilitate partnerships across agencies serving families so as to increase services offered in schools and better meet their needs.
- Address the needs of families with youngest children age zero to three.
- Effective in working on sensitive matters with elected officials, agency leaders, and various stakeholders across the District.



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Qualities of the DCPS Chancellor:

- Proven record of honesty and integrity.
- Demonstrated a willingness to be fully transparent in their decision-making.
- The ability to listen and translate what they hear into policy and action.
- Values engagement with parents, students, and the community in both large and small settings.
- Strong advocate for DCPS and all staff at schools and the central office.
- Excellent manager who is laser-focused on the local agenda rather than on promotion of national status.
- Proven track record of teacher and administrator support, as well as strong approval on satisfaction surveys from teachers, parents and principals.
- Educator with experience serving in the classroom and as a principal.
- Comfortable and effective in working on sensitive matters with elected officials, agency leaders, and various stakeholders across the District.
- Willingness to make a long-term commitment to our school system.
- Values institutional knowledge while seriously examining reforms.
- Experience working in an urban setting and has demonstrated the ability to address issues at both the individual school, neighborhood, and city levels.

Once appointed, we would like to see the DCPS Chancellor:

- Focus on school-level performance and foster a system that encourages honest feedback from teachers, administrators, and families.
- Understand and champion a job accountability and student evaluation system that works toward creating a process for open dialogue and feedback.
- Continue a focus on social emotional learning, supportively and constructively address attendance and discipline issues early in a child's education.
- Set achievable and realistic goals that are attainable at every level.
- Focus on expanding language immersion programming in Ward 4 and District-wide.
- Be willing to collaboratively and creatively take risks in our schools to re-build trust that some feel has been degraded.
- Continue to focus on equity across all schools.
- Continue to focus on investments in our buildings and programs.
- Examine and adjust how we relate to children with multiple special needs to ensure our schools fully support them over the entire span of their education.



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Ward 4 has a growing population at our DCPS elementary schools. We are looking forward to working with the DCPS Chancellor to ensure that our families see Ward 4 DCPS secondary schools as quality options. We are excited as we watch the modernization of Coolidge High School and the new middle school come to life. Additionally, with MacFarland taking the first full group of 6th graders this year and Roosevelt’s global opportunities, we are excited to see our schools continue to expand.

The Deputy Mayor for Education and the Chancellor will have a full plate working to coordinate the city’s agencies to serve all children and families of our city, including coordinating the planning between DCPS and the charter schools. This community stands ready and willing to be engaged to support this work.

We look forward to continuing this dialogue and working with you to ensure that all voices are heard as we search for the individuals best qualified for these education leadership positions.

Sincerely,

Brandon T. Todd, Councilmember, Ward 4

Cathy Reilly, Chair, Ward 4 Education Alliance

CC: Co-chairs Dr. Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Dr. Charlene Drew Jarvis

- Anita Berger, Principal of Banneker High School
- Rosa Carrillo, DCPS parent and Language Services Program Director of Multicultural Community Services
- Tumeka Coleman, Walker-Jones EC, DCPS 2018 Teacher of the Year
- Elizabeth Davis, President of the Washington Teachers’ Union
- Antwayne Ford, Chair of the Work Force Investment Council
- Nicky Goren, Ward 3 Parent
- Sean Gough, Director of Government Relations at Friendship Public Charter Schools
- Danielle Hamberger, Director of Education Initiatives at A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation
- Arnebya Herndon, Ward 7 Parent
- Jeanie Lee, President and Executive Director of DC Public Education Fund
- Zion Matthews, Student at Ron Brown College Preparatory High School, 10th Grade
- Victor Reinoso, CEO and Co-Founder of Decision Science, Ward 4 Resident Parent