

Abigail Smith
Deputy Mayor for Education
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 303
Washington, DC 20004

Deputy Mayor,

ANC6B is writing in accordance with a vote of 9-0 with a quorum present and at a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting of ANC6B on June 10th, 2014.

Our Commission has previously taken the position that the education of our City's children be a top budget priority for the Mayor and the City. The Commission has also submitted testimony to the Education Committee of the Council that addresses the student boundary and assignment process being undertaken.

We would like to commend you and your staff for the thoroughness of the process and the transparency with which you are conducting the review of the data and the development of policy proposals. Our Commission believes that the timely review of feeder patterns and boundaries represents an important building block in ongoing education reform and improvement efforts.

From the orderly investment of capital resources to curriculum continuity and efficient management, the decisions that are made in this process will have a significant impact on our ability as a city to offer the highest quality education to every student and to support a strong neighborhood based school system.

This connection to the other planning and reform aspects for education also raises a concern for our Commission. The integration of DCPS renovation plans and some appropriate connection to the system of charter schools is an important consideration for DCPS leadership, the Public School Charter Board and city leadership to ensure. Without full cooperation and a strong hand from city leadership, the best efforts for long term planning by your office could be undermined, particularly as it relates to the opening and location of new charter schools and the future execution of the DCPS Facility Improvement Plan.

We understand that neighborhood schools cannot be the entirety of a school system, but we also understand from our experience on Capitol Hill how strong schools, economic development and strong communities can all go hand in hand.

We share the concerns that have been raised about some of the earlier proposals, particularly choice sets which we believe will only undermine confidence and commitment to neighborhood schools. Based on our experience on Capitol Hill, the Commission believes matter-of-right neighborhood schools are a necessary and critical component of the District's public school system. Many parents understandably desire clear and predictable path for their community from early

education through high school.. Comments by some members of the Council have suggested we abandon this process. We believe that would be unwise. However, we respect the work that has been done and believe that it is appropriate we stick with the objective of developing updated boundary and student-assignment policies as an important building block in school reform.

On Behalf of ANC6B

Brian Flahaven,
Chair ANC6B

Cc: Mayor Gray
DC Council