

## District of Columbia Public Schools

*All Students Succeeding: A Master Education Plan for a System of Great Schools* (2006, February)

[http://dcps.dc.gov/downloads/ABOUT%20DCPS/Strategic%20Documents/MEP/MEP\\_final.pdf](http://dcps.dc.gov/downloads/ABOUT%20DCPS/Strategic%20Documents/MEP/MEP_final.pdf)

This master plan groups 36 goals into 8 categories. Each goal is supported by a rationale and key actions with implementation dates for the actions.

*Making Student Achievement the Focus: A Five-Year Action Plan for District of Columbia Public Schools* (Working Draft; 2009, April)

<http://dcps.dc.gov/downloads/SCHOOLS/Strategic%20Documents/Five%20Year%20Plan/DCPS-TMO-STRATEGIC%20DOCUMENTS-FIVE%20YEAR%20ACTION%20PLAN-APR-2009.pdf>

This 78-page 5-year plan seeks “to refine, define, and sequence the steps we are taking to achieve the lofty goals of the MEP” [Master Education Plan (see above)]. The document reviews the recent progress, current status, and 5-year goals for students, teachers, and community. It specifies the means of achieving the six major interrelated goals—developing a compelling portfolio of schools, with great people, aligned curriculum, data-driven decision making, an effective central office, and an engaged community—and sets forth general principles for turning around underperforming schools (e.g., “job-embedded professional development strategies”).

Schools will undergo an annual Quality School Review, and underperforming schools will first receive “aggressive improvement” effort (p. 10). Should those school fail to improve, they will be reconstituted, converted, or closed. Determining what changes a school will undergo will be dependent on the findings of the QSR, and processes for these changes are outlined (pp. 12–16). Partnerships will be established with organizations proven effective in turning around low-performing schools and their ability to excel at improving student attendance and graduation rates, and student achievement. An appendix presents a tabular summary of aims in each category, strategies, and benchmarks.

*ECPS Effective Schools Framework* (2009, February)

[http://dcps.dc.gov/downloads/SCHOOLS/Effective%20Schools%20Framework/DCPS-Schools\\_Effective\\_Schools\\_Framework\\_Full\\_Version-February-2009.pdf](http://dcps.dc.gov/downloads/SCHOOLS/Effective%20Schools%20Framework/DCPS-Schools_Effective_Schools_Framework_Full_Version-February-2009.pdf)

“The goal of the DCPS Effective Schools Framework is to ensure that every child, in every classroom, has access to a high-quality and engaging standards-based instructional program, and that all school supports are aligned to support teaching and learning. The elements of the DCPS Effective Schools Framework reflect the foundational elements of district reform efforts. The framework has been developed to ensure alignment with the DCPS Five-Year Strategic Plan and related Performance Plans. In the spirit of our commitment to data-driven inquiry and the “Plan, Do, Assess” model, this framework will be continuously evaluated to examine effectiveness and make modifications as needed.” The 8-page framework lists expectations of schools and the district.

*2009–2010 School Opening Report* (2009)

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Files/downloads/ABOUT%20DCPS/Strategic%20Documents/DC-Public-Schools-School-Opening-Report-September-2009.pdf>

This document outlines the timeline, tools, and benchmarks of a 9-month process by which the district determined that schools were ready to open in August 2009. Data regarding the status of readiness is supplied and recommendations are made for improving the fall school opening.

#### *Office of Family and Public Engagement*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/About+DCPS/Office+Directory/Office+of+Family+and+Public+Engagement>

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Parents+and+Community/Help+Your+Child+Succeed/Ways+for+Parents+and+Families+to+Participate>

These webpages offers a number of links to parent resources and news and information about the district. It describes a number of electronic as well as face-to-face communications formats to disseminate information and gain perspectives of parents and the community.

#### *2008–09 Survey Results: Staff, Parents, Students*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/About+DCPS/Satisfaction+Stakeholder+Surveys/2008-09+Survey+Results%3A+Staff%2C+Parents%2C+Students>

“During the 2008–2009 school year District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) conducted a survey of students, parents, faculty and staff. Nearly 20,000 DCPS stakeholders confidentially weighed in on topics, including satisfaction levels, facilities, and academics. The purpose of the stakeholder surveys is twofold:

- To identify areas of improvement
- To use as both an accountability and progress measure.”

Results are present for the district, for both elementary and secondary schools, and for individual schools in the district.

#### *Office of School Innovation*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/About+DCPS/Office+Directory/School+Innovation>

“The Office of School Innovation is responsible for:

- Developing and supporting innovative school models
- Providing more choices to families in the District of Columbia”

The variety of school models now implemented in the district are describe below.

#### *Catalyst Schools*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/Catalyst+Schools>

Thirteen “DC Public Schools [were] selected to transform into theme-based Catalyst Schools. Schools will spend the [2009–2010] year creating plans to refocus their strategic school design and content delivery, by adopting one of three themes: STEM (science, technology, engineering, math), Arts Integration, and World Cultures. While adopting a theme is not a new educational

tool, DCPS is taking a different approach by keeping all 13 schools comprehensive and not requiring a special admissions process.

#### *Dual Language Education Programs*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/Dual+Language+Education+Programs>

“Students can learn a second language while learning grade level academic content.”

#### *Schoolwide Applications Model*

[http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/How+Students+Are+Supported/Schoolwide+Applications+Model+\(SAM\)](http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/How+Students+Are+Supported/Schoolwide+Applications+Model+(SAM))

Developed by faculty at the University of Kansas, 16 District of Columbia elementary schools implemented the Schoolwide Applications Model (SAM) in 2009–10. SAM “is a whole-school, all-staff, all-students school model designed to provide the best possible educational environment. At SAM schools, the entire staff is focused on creating a safe and orderly learning environment so that all students can achieve at high levels. SAM schools strive to become community schools that promote home-school partnerships as well as increase parent satisfaction....SAM is a response to intervention (RtI) model, which means school leaders and teachers use individual student achievement and behavior data to identify the supports students need to progress and meet grade level expectations. Frequent and ongoing assessments help determine the instructional approaches best suited to meet each student’s needs. SAM schools undergo a very large change in which they move from providing isolated and separated support services to a model where services and supports are fully integrated and available to all students.”

#### *Full-Service Schools*

[http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/How+Students+Are+Supported/Full+Service+Schools+\(FSS\)](http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/How+Students+Are+Supported/Full+Service+Schools+(FSS))

The Full-Service Schools (FSS) pilot program brings together leading practices from the fields of education and mental health, with the goal of fully serving the entire student population.

#### *International Baccalaureate*

[http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/International+Baccalaureate+\(IB\)](http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/International+Baccalaureate+(IB))

The International Baccalaureate (IB) in District of Columbia schools is comprised of three programs, one for elementary school students, one for middle grades students through the tenth grade, and a rigorous 2-year diploma program.

#### *Partnership Schools*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/Partnership+Schools>

In the last two years, DCPS has established relationships with school management organizations with practical (and successful) experience improving struggling high schools. These

organizations, commonly referred to as “turnaround experts” or “turnaround organizations,” specialize in turning schools around from consistently low-performing to high-performing in a short span of time. Partnering with established turnaround organizations gives high schools the additional resources, expertise, and professional development opportunities necessary to create a better academic experience for students. The partnerships are focused on:

- Making partnership schools more engaging environments for students by increasing instructional rigor and ensuring that the school buildings are safe and engaging learning environments.
- Giving school staff the support and growth opportunities that we know are so important in challenging schools.
- Building the capacity of the central office to focus on future turnaround opportunities.

#### *Selective Citywide High Schools*

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Academic+Offerings/Selective+Citywide+High+Schools>

Six high schools that focus on specific academic and/or arts curricula are open to all students in the district by application.