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# JOINT HEARING ON EDUCATION AT A CROSSROADS: "WHAT WORKS AND WHAT'S WASTED IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SCHOOL SYSTEM?"

## JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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## *TABLE OF CONTENTS*

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... iv

OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ..... 1

OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ..... 3

OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA ..... 4

STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ..... 6

STATEMENT OF DR. JOYCE LADNER, MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY ..... 8

STATEMENT OF BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES ..... 10

STATEMENT OF KEVIN CHAVOUS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION, D.C. CITY COUNCIL ..... 12

STATEMENT OF DON REEVES, PRESIDENT, D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION ..... 14

STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, WASHINGTON, D.C. ..... 26

STATEMENT OF DELABIAN L. RICE-THURSTON, PARENTS UNITED FOR D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ..... 46

STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK, STUDENT, BANNEKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ..... 49

STATEMENT OF DR. JUDITH JONES, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT ..... 50

APPENDIX A -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ..... 59

APPENDIX B – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ..... 63

APPENDIX C -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA ..... 69

APPENDIX D – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ..... 75

APPENDIX E -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JOYCE LADNER, MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY ..... 93

APPENDIX F -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES ..... 105

APPENDIX G -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KEVIN CHAVOUS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION, D.C. CITY COUNCIL ..... 121

APPENDIX H -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DON REEVES, PRESIDENT, D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION ..... 135

APPENDIX I -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, WASHINGTON, D.C. ..... 157

APPENDIX J -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. CONNIE MORELLA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND ..... 171

APPENDIX K -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DELABIAN L. RICE-THURSTON, PARENTS UNITED FOR D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ..... 177

APPENDIX L -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK, STUDENT, BANNEKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ..... 185

APPENDIX M -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JUDITH JONES, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT ..... 191

APPENDIX N -- PEAT MARWICK STUDY ON THE CONDITION OF THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ..... 201

APPENDIX O -- FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE HEARING ..... 231

APPENDIX P -- WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM D.C. PACE ..... 243

APPENDIX Q -- "CHILDREN IN CRISIS: FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE," THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY, NOVEMBER 1996 ..... 249

TABLE OF INDEXES ..... 273

HEARING ON "EDUCATION AT A CROSSROADS:

WHAT WORKS AND WHAT'S WASTED IN THE D.C.

SCHOOL SYSTEM?"

Thursday, May 1, 1997

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The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, The Honorable Pete Hoekstra, [chairman of the subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations] presiding.

Present: Representatives Hoekstra, McKeon, Davis, Morella, Horn, Kind, Ford, and Norton.

Also Present: Representatives Goodling, Ballenger, and Riggs.

Staff Present: Mark Brenner, Professional Staff Member, Leigh Stadthaus, Oversight Associate, Howie Denis, Majority Council, Anne Mack, Professional Staff Member, Cedric Hendricks, Professional Minority Counsel, Jean Gosa, Administrative Staff.

## *OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN*

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Good morning.

The Oversight Subcommittee will come to order. Later this morning I'm hoping to be joined by Mr. Davis, who's Chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee on the District of Columbia and also we'll be joined by Delegate Holmes-Norton. So since this is a Joint Oversight Hearing, I'd like to welcome my colleague, Mr. Horn from California, for being here this morning.

The hearing is part of a broader series of hearings that the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and the Workforce has been engaged in. We have been going around the country in a project that we call Education at a Crossroads.

We're trying to find out what is and is not working in education in America today and we're trying to more clearly establish and identify how the programs that we have in Washington can assist in reinforcing the education that is working at a local level and also finding places where we may be inhibiting or slowing the type of reform that needs to be taking place at the local level.

The project started about a year ago. We asked a simple question: how many education programs are administered out of Washington, D.C.? We went through the Office of Management and Budget and found out that in 1995 there were over 760 different education programs that span 39 agencies and cost more than $120 billion. Those numbers are being updated and we'll have the updated numbers available next week.

Any comments that you have regarding specific federal education programs or those types of things would be very much appreciated today.

There are many ways that people have identified and how we can improve education. There isn't always a lot of consensus about how to do it. I think, as some of you have found, it is a very, very difficult issue. We do think that there are some things that appear to lead us to believe that education is more successful when you have parental involvement, when you focus on basic academics, when dollars are sent to the classroom and not eaten up in bureaucracies and when kids have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment.

This morning we held a press conference where we talked about one of the aspects of that where we said that we believe as we've taken a look at the federal education programs today that perhaps only 60 to 70 cents actually get into the classroom, 60 to 70 cents on every dollar reaches the classroom. We think that this Congress perhaps ought to set as a goal and objective that we reform the federal involvement in education to ensure that 90 cents gets down to the local level, gets down to the teacher level, gets down to the student level, and that that would be a huge improvement and provide a wonderful increase in learning opportunity for our children.

We're looking forward to this as a learning experience for us. We want to learn from you what is going on in Washington, D.C. We want to learn from your experience about what is working and what is not working in education in Washington, D.C. We want to learn from you today about what's working and what is not working from a federal perspective. How can we help? How are we hurting? What should we take a look at reforming? What should we take a look at changing? This whole issue of education is one of the most important things that we should be looking at in this Congress.

We did this for the first time, had a hearing like this a couple of years ago when we were working on a D.C. reform piece of legislation. There's been a lot of change since 1995. We're interested in hearing about the change, the progress, and perhaps some of the frustrations that you've experienced over the last two years and how that may help us work better and improve the programs that we have.

Like I said, our most important aspect that we want to do today is to learn from you how we can help improve the results that you're getting with the children here in Washington, D.C.

[The statement of Mr. Hoekstra follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN – SEE APPENDIX A

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Before I turn it over to Ms. Norton, let me just for a brief comment yield to my colleague, Mr. Ballenger.

Mr. **Ballenger**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the reasons he's allowed me to speak is I'm also a member of Foreign Affairs and we're going to have votes. You'll see me running in and out all day today. But the one thing I would like to add just to talk about is I've asked just about everyone who would listen to me to tell me what help they need to get repairs done of the D.C. schools.

I'm really a pretty good bum as far as getting corporate assistance in issues like this. I want to help get the necessary supplies and help the schools wherever possible. So far, nobody in the District government has taken me up on the offer. I'm making the offer again today to all of you. Please let me know, call me, anything I can do to help you improve the schools, I'll be glad to help. Like I say, corporate America is somebody that I know how to get something out of and I'll be glad to assist.

Thank you.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Good. Thank you, Cass.

Ms. Norton.

## *OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA*

Ms. **Norton**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I thank Chairman Peter Hoekstra for including the District among the school systems the subcommittee is hearing from this year to learn from communities themselves whether the federal government plays an effective role in public education. I believe that the subcommittee will find that the federal and education in the District has not only been effective, it has been indispensable. Large numbers of disadvantaged public school children here depend on federal assistance from school lunches to Goals 2000 to Title I. The District's Early Childhood Program, considered a model in the nation, is an example of what federal assistance can do.

The District schools are largely typical of big city schools across the nation. The schools are plagued with a lexicon of problems: insufficient parental involvement, inefficient and costly bureaucratic structure, poor pupil performance, very high dropout rates, and all the rest. A long awaited shake up in the school system finally occurred this year and is taking hold.

For almost the entire year before new management under General Julius Becton was installed, the Congress showed particular concern about the D.C. Public Schools. Speaker Gingrich appointed Representative Steve Gunderson to work with District officials, school watch dog organizations and parents to come forward with suggestions for improvement. Many of these ideas were put into legislation including a charter school program.

Representative Gunderson put countless hours into this work and deserves immense credit for the work he did, all on a home rule basis. He worked not by compulsion but by bringing local officials together with their critics and with their unions to design effective legislation.

The District has a very long way to go before it meets the standards of excellence we have a right to expect from public schools in the capital of the United States. However, anyone who believes the claptrap that the D.C. Public Schools are a total wasteland got a wake up call over the last few weeks. The school system began the necessary work of closing some schools because of enormous excess capacity. Each revenue is badly needed for hands on education.

Initially, education considerations were not included among the criteria used to determine which schools should be closed. Parents, the best critics of school quality, were able to demonstrate that some of the schools slated for closing were among the best in the city. Ultimately, some schools on the list were removed.

Mr. Chairman, I am a graduate of the D.C. Public Schools. My mother was a teacher in these schools. I graduated from Monroe Elementary School, now Bruce Monroe, from Banneker Jr. High School, not Magnet High School, and from Dunbar High School. For most of the time when I attended these schools, they were segregated by law. I do not claim that the schools of my childhood were the best in the country.

However, they prepared me and countless others to attend some of the best colleges and universities and to achieve something in life. Most of the success of my classmates was not due to the schools alone. Intact families, strong crime-free neighborhoods and institutions, and respect for authority helped the schools to do their job.

Today, however, schools are asked to do the entire job and are bitterly criticized when they are unable to be all things and to play all roles a child needs. I do not approach public policy with a nostalgic, good old days approach, but I do believe that the local schools need help for more than themselves. To succeed, they need greater parental involvement and they will help themselves if they themselves engineer greater parental involvement. Meanwhile, the federal role here in the District where reform has finally begun remains indispensable.

Mr. Chairman, I want to particularly welcome today's witnesses, all of whom are working very hard to improve the District schools and deserve a great deal of credit for the work they are doing, each and every one of them. If I may, Mr. Chairman, note that youngsters have come in the room who are part of a program that I have initiated in the Capital. They come today not because of this hearing but because this is the day they were due to come.

This program is called D.C. Students in the Capital. I've initiated the program because I discovered that there were youngsters who lived in the Capital of the United States who are a Metro bus away from the Capital but who have never visited the Capital. My goal is to see that every youngster in the D.C. schools, public and private, visit the Capital before graduating from high school, get a chance to come to a hearing, get a chance to hear debate on the floor in the House and the Senate, and get the opportunity to have a tour of the Capital.

The young people you see standing before you in their uniforms attend Jefferson Jr. High School, one of the best schools in the city, a school that gives a lie to the notion that there are no good schools in the District. These youngsters deserve great credit for the work they are doing to improve themselves. Before I came here to this hearing, I was able to spend just a few minutes with them, Mr. Chairman, and I asked them whether they could promise raise their hands and promise me that they would never drop out of school, contributing to the 40 percent drop out rate in the District of Columbia and that they would at least finish high school. Each and every hand of these youngsters from Jefferson Jr. High School went up and I love every one of you for it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Ms. Norton follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA – SEE APPENDIX B

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much for that opening statement, and welcome to all the young people who are joining us. It sounds like a great program and you're always welcome to come to our hearings and we're glad that you're going to spend a little bit of your morning with us today and congratulations on the commitment that you made this morning. Thank you.

I will now turn it over to Mr. Davis.

## *OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HON. TOM DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA*

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you. My thanks to Pete Hoekstra for convening this joint hearing on the education in the D.C. school system. It's only by continuing to work in such a collegial manner that we can move forward in our efforts to resolve the many challenges that confront us in the nation's Capital.

My subcommittee is continuing to review various proposals as we seek to take advantage of the rare legislative environment which now exists. The District of Columbia Subcommittee intends to have its next meeting on May 8th in order to review the economic development issues which arise from the Administration's plan. But we're here today to take testimony on education in the District of Columbia. While it is not necessary to review the school closing controversy, I applaud the Board of Trustees for its efforts.

There's a growing uniformity of opinion that the poor performance of most D.C. schools has reached crisis proportions. At this critical juncture, I call upon all interested parties who care about our children to stop blaming each other and to seize the unprecedented opportunity which the present environment affords. I'm gratified that significant stakeholders in the region from business and civic leaders to religious figures and various groups have begun working together to pursue excellence and move our public schools forward.

Clearly, the challenge is a lot deeper than lack of money. This is my view when I sponsored the Control Board legislation two years ago and it remains my firm belief. That's why the law we passed called upon the Control Board to take strong and immediate action to correct what Congress called the severe mismanagement of the District of Columbia public school system. We fully intend that the Control Board carefully examine the operations of the educational system as a part of its mandate to restructure the District government. We gave the Control Board the authority to act, and they did so.

The Control Board report "Children in Crisis" released last November had many disquieting conclusions. Among the most disquieting conclusions was that the longer a child stays in the D.C. Public School system, the greater is his or her decline in scholastic achievement. Violence in the classroom was also studied. We were bluntly reminded that when school violence pervades the classroom that the public school system fails all children.

And so the Control Board established a trusteeship of the D.C. Public Schools. The core of the trusteeship is a new chief executive officer/superintendent General Becton, and a board of trustees. The Board of Education continues to play an important role. Dr. Joyce Ladner played a key role in coordinating this matter on behalf of the Control Board, and I thank her for that.

There are now encouraging signs that the community is mobilized in a positive direction. There is significant business representation on the emergency transition education board of trustees, and I find that very gratifying. Clearly, the status quo is intolerable. Only the boldest actions can rescue the schools and the children. Immediate improvement is essential.

[The statement of Mr. Davis follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. TOM DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA – SEE APPENDIX C

Mr. **Davis**. Now we have our first panel. I'm pleased to introduce General Julius Becton who is the chief executive officer for the D.C. Public Schools. General Becton came to the job in November of 1996 and we're interested to hear what he has uncovered as working and what he has seen that has been wasteful.

Also, Dr. Joyce Ladner is present. Dr. Ladner is a member of the District's Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority known as the Financial Control Board. Dr. Ladner has long had a commitment to

educational issues and is the former president of Howard University.

Also, Mr. Bruce MacLaury, the Chairman of the District of Columbia Public Schools Emergency Board of Trustees, as well as the president emeritus of the Brookings Institution. Also, Mr. Don Reeves, the president of the D.C. Board of Education as well as a member of the Emergency Board of Trustees has joined us. Mr. Reeves has a daughter in first grade attending D.C. Public Schools. Mr. Kevin Chavous is chairman of the City Council Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation.

Thank you all for being with us. It's the committee's policy to swear in its witnesses. If you'd just rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. **Davis**. Why don't we start, General Becton, we'll start with you and just work our way around.

## *STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS*

General Becton. Thank you, Chairman Davis, Representative Norton. I welcome the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss our progress in improving public education in the District of Columbia.

I will summarize my remarks and ask that my prepared statement be submitted for the record.

I'm joined today by several members of my senior staff whom I may call upon to answer certain questions. To understand where we are and where we're going, it's important to consider the tremendous change that has occurred within the last year in the governance and direction of the school system. As you know, on 26 April last year Congress passed the District of Columbia Reform Act of 1995. This Act required the development of a long-term education reform plan. It also required the design and implementation of a comprehensive long-term program for the repair and management of public school facilities. In addition, the Act created a charter school law for the District of Columbia.

On November 15, 1996, about seven months after the passage of the School Reform Act, I became the chief executive officer through an order of the Control Board. This order also established a nine member emergency transitional education board of trustees of which I am a member. The Control Board took this action after concluding that, and I quote, "In virtually every category and for every grade level for virtually every measure of performance, the public school system has failed to provide a quality education for all children and a safe environment in which to learn."

The Control Board found that at the heart of the problem of the school system was a lack of leadership from the District's elected school board and the superintendent. With persistent educational and managerial problems year after year, the public school leadership had abdicated its responsibilities for providing a quality education and a safe environment. The report "Children in Crisis" documented the school system failure.

Specifically the report focused on: education outcomes well below the national norms, mismanagement that undermines learning, unsafe environments that disrupt learning, unacceptable service provisions and poor contract management and lack of accountability such that ultimately no one was held accountable.

Today we operate in a new context of opportunity but face the challenges of the past, failures that mounted over many years. This year we entered midway through the school year and have sought to implement fundamental

improvement in management. We expect the next school year will be a very different one from the children and the parents realized when they first started this last year and we expect to be held accountable for achieving our goals for them.

To characterize our goals as simply as possible, I believe that by June 30, year 2000 our success or failure will be judged on whether or not we achieve fundamental improvement in three core areas. 1) academics, 2) school facilities and 3) personnel and financial management systems.

What I mean by fundamental improvements is that these core areas will be on a firm foundation for continuous progress in future years. My guiding principle of this effort is children first. All of our efforts must be weighed in terns of the impact on our children. Placing the core areas on a firm foundation for continuous improvement implies the following.

First, clearly specifying academic standards we expect of all students so that there can be no question about the results expected in the classroom. Second, effective implementation of a long-term education reform plan that maximizes classroom resources, maintains a constant focus on teaching and learning, and ensures appropriate services for students with special needs. Third, effective implementation of a long-term facilities plan that puts an end to the unsafe environments that disrupt learning and provides for the modernization of school facilities. Fourth, sound contract management with strong internal control to provide for efficient and effective provision of services to our schools. And fifth, full accountability to the public. There'll be no question as to who is accountable for any function of the D.C. Public Schools.

Our first goal in the core area of academics is to ensure that all students are taught to world class academic standards. To accomplish this goal, we must first adopt rigorous content and performance standards with an aligned core curriculum and aligned assessment and professional development.

Our second goal is to provide an academically competent, well-trained and caring staff and hold them accountable for results. Our third goal in the core area of academics is to promote school autonomy and accountability through decentralization and greater parental choice. To accomplish this, we will continue and expand initiatives to restructure school governance and facilitate the development of high quality charter schools.

In the area of public charter schools, the School Reform Act offers a majority opportunity to expand choices among public schools. We intend to facilitate the development of high quality charter schools that will serve as laboratories of change for entire school systems. To accomplish this, we'll work closely with the two chartering authorities and develop an appropriate state level role in the approval and oversight process. By this time next year, we expect that 24 charter schools will have been approved.

A comment briefly on vouchers. One form of school charter that we expect will be a topic of much debate as it has been before in this city is tuition voucher for scholarships for parents to use at private schools. While the emergency trustees have not had an official position in support of or in opposition to tuition vouchers, we do have several concerns that we'll be happy to discuss.

Under school facilities, in the core area of school facilities we have developed a long range facilities master plan which we believe will allow us to return our school facilities inventory to a safe environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. This plan has been completed and we expect its adoption by the City Council in early May.

As you know, we just voted on the closing of schools to reduce the excess space and, while these closings will help to reduce our costs, we continue to face a shortfall of emergency repairs of at least $32.4 million for FY 97 which is the basis for a supplemental appropriation we're currently seeking before the Congress.

I have some more comments but I see my red light is on, Mr. Chairman, and so I would like to talk later on questions about personnel, financial management. But in conclusion, I feel compelled to restate my guiding principle, Children First. The pledge I make today and the pledge I will continue to make is that all of our efforts in

achieving fundamental improvement in the three core areas of academics, school facilities and personnel and financial management system must be weighed in terms of the impact on children. Failure to meet the needs of the children in this city is not an option.

Sir, this concludes my comments. I'm prepared to respond to questions as appropriate.

[The statement of General Becton follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SEE APPENDIX D

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you very much. Your whole statement will be part of the record, and that goes for all of you. Request will be based on the total statement.

Dr. Ladner, thanks for being with us.

## *STATEMENT OF DR. JOYCE LADNER, MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY*

Dr. **Ladner**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am the Board Member of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority who has the lead responsibility for public education in the District of Columbia. I also am a life-long educator. I'm pleased to appear before you to discuss the Authority's efforts to reform the District of Columbia public schools.

Much of what I have in the early part of my testimony has already been stated by several of you as well as General Becton. That is, the data that you cited from the Authority's report on "Children in Crisis." That left us with no choice but to move forward to try to find a new governance structure that would essentially overhaul the schools. Last November the Authority overhauled the governance and administration of the District of Columbia Public Schools and, after issuing an extremely critical report on the quality and management of the schools, the Authority removed the superintendent and appointed a new chief executive officer and an emergency transitional education board of trustees to oversee the schools.

Yesterday the United States District Court for the District of Columbia upheld the validity of our action, an order of November 15, 1996, establishing the trustees and the position of CEO/superintendent. The court states, and I quote, "Put simply, the question is whether the Control Board had the authority, both statutory and constitutional, to issue its order of November 15, 1996. For the reasons set forth herein, the court concludes that the answer is yes."

This morning I will discuss the condition of the public schools that caused the Authority to take such significant action. In fact, as I said, much of what I have in my statement that will be submitted to the record has already been stated. Next, I'll outline very briefly the unique nature of the financing of our schools and finally, I will briefly discuss how the Authority is planning to monitor DCPS's reform efforts.

Last fall, after extensive study by our staff and consultants, we issued a report called "Children in Crisis," a report on the failure of the D.C. Public Schools and in that report the Authority concluded that the deplorable record of the District's public schools by every important educational and management measure had left the system in a state of crisis. We were failing in our mission to educate the children of the District. In virtually every area for every grade level, the system failed to provide the District's children with a quality education and a safe environment in which to learn.

I will just briefly mention those areas that we studied. 1) education outcomes shows that they're very abysmal, that the children in the least affluent wards of the city have experienced a precipitous decline in test scores over the last five years. Several schools in Wards 7 and 8 have seen startling declines in test scores of 15 to 20 percentage points or more and this low achievement level attests to the fact that thousands of children, especially in the poor areas, are not being taught the fundamental skills that are necessary to succeed.

Our drop out rates, we found, are much too high. There's been a dramatic migration of students out of the public school system. Some 40 percent of high school students either dropped out or left the District's public schools between 1989 and 1995. On average, 24 percent of students left their class in 10th grade, 23 percent left in 11th grade, and six percent in 12th grade.

Mr. Chairman, these drop out rates are even greater in the transition from elementary to junior high school as parents who can afford it send their children to private schools.

We also noted or found that we have an extraordinarily unsafe environment that disrupts learning. I need not tell you that if you watch the local television or read the local newspapers that we have examples of violence in our schools much too often. General Becton and his staff have gone a long way in trying to curb that but it is symptomatic of what is going on in the nation but nevertheless, we have a strong commitment to bring it under control.

Our facilities are in disrepair. The infrastructure of the schools is collapsing. The alarming condition of facilities leaves students exposed to discomfort and even to potential harm. Boilers burst, roofs leak, fire doors stick, bathrooms crumble and poor security permits unauthorized individuals to gain access, thereby threatening the safety of the students. Fixing these schools is our primary mission.

Mismanagement undermines the learning. The inability of our District schools to effectively implement long-term education and operational plans leaves students without teachers or classrooms, textbooks unordered or lost in warehouses, and teachers untrained. With these deplorable conditions, we had no choice, Mr. Chairman, but to move forward to establish an Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees last November and that Board of Trustees and our new CEO/Superintendent have moved rapidly to begin to correct these conditions.

On the operational side, our CEO/Superintendent has spent time putting out fires, even as he tries to overhaul the long-term structure.

Let me note that one critical event that occurred earlier this week signaled a turning point in the work of the trustees and that is that the Education Board of Trustees closed 11 schools. They did it with a great deal of fairness in mind and I do believe that we have put that behind us thereby freeing up resources so that we can re-deploy them into those schools that will remain open.

Now let me turn very briefly to the unique financing arrangement for the District schools and its impact on education. I see that my time is up but if I could take one more minute, I think it's important for us to say that several weeks ago the Authority issued a report describing the role of states in providing assistance to their local jurisdictions. One of the functions discussed in that report was public education, Mr. Chairman, and with your permission I would ask that this report titled "Toward a More Equitable Relationship" be made part of the record.

What we found in that report was that around the country elementary and secondary education is usually the responsibility of local jurisdictions or operated by independent school districts at the local level to run schools. However, significant portions of the funding and policy directions are established above the local level, typically by the state. States frequently establish guidelines for local education agencies to follow. They set minimum standards for class size, teacher certification and other educational policies. Also states adhere to broad federal requirements set up in Public Law 94-142 and other legislation. They establish policy regarding how special education is carried out including the categorization of special needs and processing requirements of special education cases. Nationwide statistics show that elementary and secondary education operational funds are provided by all levels of government with states providing nearly half of the operational funds.

I say this, I emphasize this because we are a unique entity here in the District of Columbia because we have no state. Many states assist their local jurisdictions school districts with capital funds for construction and major renovation of school buildings. In addition, many local school district have their own sources of revenue and taxing authority and indeed may issue bonds. But unlike other school agencies, D.C. Public Schools must provide the state and local sources of funds.

In addition, DCPS does not have its own taxing authority nor can it issue bonds for capital improvements but rather the schools rely on the District to ration scarce capital dollars to school repair and construction and most local school districts rely substantially on property taxes. Of course, the city's property tax base is limited because of the significant amount of valuable property that is federally owned.

I will close here but I would like to say that we do intend to monitor very, very closely the work of the trustees. We have a draft document and as soon as we have refined it, we'll be happy to make sure that we share it with the committee and I must say that we will not monitor process of the new governance structure but rather the outcomes. We believe that we have made but the first step and we've established certainly a three and a half year time period here for the CEO and the trustees to operate in and we have every bit of confidence that we will have solved a great many of these problems in that three and a half years.

I want to thank you for allowing me to appear before you.

[The statement of Dr. Ladner follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JOYCE LADNER, MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY – SEE APPENDIX E

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you.

Mr. MacLaury.

## *STATEMENT OF BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES*

Mr. **MacLaury**. Thank you very much, Chairman Hoekstra and members of the committees. The Financial Authority, as you heard, established the trustees after declaring a state of emergency in the District's public school system and, in light of the crisis the words are important, directed, authorized and empowered the trustees and the

CEO/Superintendent to do the following things. I just summarized them. Improve the quality of education, strengthen D.C. Public School management, reduce the cost of non-education services, develop a long range education reform plan, develop District-wide assessments, improve community, parent and business involvement, provide access to students for opportunities in arts and athletics and ensure that students acquire the skills necessary for employment and, finally, ensure that the school system runs ethically and effectively.

Toward these ends, Mr. Chairman, to date the trustees have approved a draft education framework for the D.C. Public Schools. A copy of that long-term education reform plan is attached to my statement. We have also devoted considerable time and energy to assessing various academic standards as well as aligned assessments and teacher training. It is our intent to have standards and assessments in place before the beginning of the next school year.

In a parallel effort to improve school system management, the trustees have approved a proposed '98 budget that is, for the first time, school-based and premised on the reduction of non-instructional positions. As a first step toward eliminating four million square feet of excess footage in the D.C. public inventory, as you know, this past Monday we voted to close 13 schools, two of which will be rebuilt.

In addition, we have approved a long-term facilities plan that the school system submitted to the Council of the District of Columbia this past week. We believe strongly that the formulation of this plan demonstrates that the public school commitment with sufficient funding - I emphasize that phrase - with sufficient funding to make all of our facilities the safe and secure places that our students deserve.

As the trustees move forward in these areas not only, as Dr. Ladner told you, will she be watching us as trustees, we will be watching ourselves and we have published in the statement of framework for education goals the following indicators of success by which we expect to be held accountable. They're not unique but they are imperative that they be followed.

First and foremost, academic performance; second, the percentage of our students who are scoring at or above national norms on standardized tests; the number of our students who are reading at grade level by age nine; the attendance record of our students; the drop out rate; the graduation rate; the number of students who are pursuing higher education and who are employed following graduation; the degree of parent and community involvement and the decreasing incidents of violent conflict; finally, the redirection of resources from central administration to the schools.

That's a long list, that's a tough list. We are establishing a baseline. We have promised that by June 30, no later than June 30, the sooner the better, we will have baseline numbers so that we and the public will know whether and the extent to which we are making progress along each of those measurements.

The ultimate goal of the trustees is set forth in our vision statement that was also approved as part of our draft education plan. It's ambitious and it reads as follows. "We want to educate D.C. Public School students in schools of the future that are collegial communities of professional and intellectually prepared teachers and administrators who teach to world class standards in a safe and caring environment in which students master the academic, technological and social competencies that give them real choices in life and provide bridges to further education, productive work, and responsive citizenship."

Those are not just words. All that we do in the three years which the Control Board has allotted to us will be designed to bring us closer to turning this vision into reality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to be here today and I welcome the opportunity to respond to questions.

[The statement of Mr. MacLaury follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES – SEE APPENDIX F

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you.

Mr. Chavous.

## *STATEMENT OF KEVIN CHAVOUS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION, D.C. CITY COUNCIL*

Mr. **Chavous**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. As you know, I am Chairman of the D.C. Council's Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation which has jurisdiction over the District of Columbia Public Schools, University of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Public Libraries, and the Department of Recreation and Parks.

I would like to thank the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for giving me the opportunity to testify at this hearing today and I, too, will similarly summarize the bulk of my testimony.

Mr. Chairman, in spite of the negative news about our school system, I believe that these are exciting times for the District of Columbia for it's during this time of budgetary chaos and constraints that we can begin to rebuild our entire educational infrastructure. We have no choice but to look for solutions to address the overwhelming under-achievement of our student population. The committee which I chair is in a unique position to foster enhanced collaboration among the educational entities under our purview for the sole purpose of producing a well-rounded student who not only achieves but can compete on a national level.

The problems of the District of Columbia Public School system are well-documented. However, I believe it is in the best interest of the children to focus not just on what's wrong with the system but what we are doing and what we can do to create a dynamic educational system. On the City Council, a major debate rages about educational funding in the city. All policy makers are being faced with increased pressure to do more with less resources. There are those who say because of the problems in the past in our school system, it makes no sense to throw money into a bottomless pit. Yet, on the other hand, there are others who clamor for substantial increases in funding for the schools.

We believe that student achievement must serve as a foundation for whatever additional resources are allocated to the schools. While I do not claim to have the panacea or the quick fix for the ails of our public school system, I'm convinced that if we focus on four major areas we can spend our money more wisely. Those areas are, first, student achievement. All the budgets in the world are for nothing if, quote, "Johnny can't read." In Goals 2000 the residents of the District of Columbia stressed that a performance-based education is tantamount to accomplishing educational reform. The schools have to create more rigorous standards for student performance. The method of student assessment has to change so that the District of Columbia Public School system can measure not only what students know but what they will be able to do with their knowledge.

We have to ensure that students master reading, writing and arithmetic in their appropriate levels before they are moved on to the next grade. In far too many instances, our children have been passed from one grade to the next in the name of social promotion. Perhaps this is the greatest disservice adults can do to children. When the

child ultimately realizes that he can not read, write or perform at the expected academic level, he loses interest in attending school and often drops out.

The second area which I think is important is school by school-based budgeting. As Dr. MacLaury indicated, this year was the first major attempt by the school system to submit a school by school-based budget. It is a step in the right direction. In attempting to achieve a school by school-based budget, however, equity will serve as the foundation for the distribution of resources. Some schools may receive augmented resources depending upon their particular needs.

With such a budget in hand, any citizen in the District of Columbia can pick up the budget book and see how and where funds are spent in any school. A parent should no longer need to question or decipher expenditures since they will be plainly and readily available. Additionally, the people who mis-spend money will be held accountable for their deeds. Last week in improving the school's budget, our committee approved specific line items to support programs at the school level consistent with the school by school-based budgeting approach.

The third area which I would like to commit to your attention is principal/teacher training and evaluation. We must develop strategies that hold principals and teachers alike accountable for the performance of our children. In the District of Columbia Public School system, there has been no tradition of decision making based upon setting priorities that are tied to accountability and teaching mechanisms that work. There should be performance-based appraisal for all employees. Teachers and principals needs to be assessed accurately, fairly, and timely. Just as significantly, our system should be able to reward good teachers and principals and ferret out those who are not performing. Specifically, as it relates to principals, more often than not where we have good principals our students excel. We must endeavor to place the very best principals in each school in our system.

Finally, the community-based school or community hub. As has been noted by many who have spoken before me, family and community participation and parental involvement, coordination and integration of social services, adult education and life-long learning and substantive collaboration in partnerships with all segments of the community are listed as goal #7 of the Goals 2000 plan.

It is in this spirit that the committee has embraced the community hub concept which has been defined by the D.C. Educational Licensure Commission as, "A public school building used as a multi-purpose center that provides the opportunity to integrate support services and enable intergenerational uses to meet the life-long learning needs of community residents. Family and community services could include before and after school care, counseling, tutoring, vocational and career training, art and sports program, housing assistance, family literacy, health and nutritional programs, parent education, employment assistance, adult education and access to technology."

During a hearing in January of this year, our committee was delighted to learn that the community hub concept does not require additional funding. Rather, community hubs coordinate and utilize already existing resources. It is our fervent hope that the D.C. Public School system and other appropriate authorities will replicate the community hub concept as established by Patricia Roberts Harris Educational Center in all wards of the city.

Finally, let me say that over the past six months there has been marked advancement in the management of the District of Columbia Public School system facilities. Our challenge remains in the development of multiple sources and predictable financing for capital improvements at these facilities. We will no doubt have to look at other revenue sources to accomplish our goals. In the future, our committee will be holding oversight hearings and be engaging in vigilant oversight in the area of some of the matters that I have testified to today. That would include not just student achievement, principal/teacher evaluation and community hubs, but it also will include charter schools and truancy.

In conclusion, these are but a few of the endeavors that our committee is in the process of putting forth in this effort and commitment to make the District of Columbia Public School system the pride of the District of Columbia. I thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.

[The statement of Mr. Chavous follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KEVIN CHAVOUS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION, D.C. CITY COUNCIL – SEE APPENDIX G

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much.

Mr. Reeves.

## *STATEMENT OF DON REEVES, PRESIDENT, D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION*

Mr. **Reeves**, Thank you. Good morning, Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I am Don Reeves, President of the D.C. Board of Education and, as a consequence of that, I'm also a member of the Transitional Education Board of Trustees. It is my pleasure to come before you in response to your concerns about what is and is not working in D.C. Public Schools and any plans this city has for the future.

As you know, on November 15, 1996 the Financial Responsibility Management Assistance Authority, the Authority, created a nine member Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees to respond to its own declaration of a state of emergency in the District of Columbia Public School system. This Board of Trustees, which consists of eight appointed members and one elected member who is the President of the D.C. School Board, has the authority to operate public schools. In the order which created this new form of school governance, the school board was given the chartering authority. The elected school board in the District of Columbia is now one of two chartering authorities.

The public charter school legislation passed last spring offers D.C. a great opportunity to improve public education by bringing about competition. However, I regret to report that the elected school board has not received a budget, personnel, training, equipment, or materials to administer its chartering authority.

On the other hand, the other chartering group has received $300,000 to conduct its work. Currently, the school board has no funds, training, equipment, personnel, or even applications to administer its chartering authority. The board has submitted for your consideration an itemized recommendation of $404,000 to be released immediately to the school board so that it can begin to competently administer its duties. Thus far, the elected school board is responsible for only two charters in the District of Columbia that are up and running. Two others have been granted charters but are not operational.

Since the elected school board's budget is unilaterally controlled by the Trustee Board, the elected school board has been rendered impotent with regard to its chartering authority granted by Congress. I urge you to correct this situation. The D.C. school reform law required the Board of Education to expand choice among public schools. Progress over the past five months has not been made because the Trustee Board has failed to provide a budget that contemplated the costs associated with the tasks of being a chartering authority.

In conjunction with this failure, the trustees have drafted legislation at a meeting that I was not notified about to give themselves final review of charter applications. Congress must make the decision to either go forward with the elected school board as a chartering agency or strip the school board of that power as well. Whatever the elected board did or did not do in the past does not justify the maintenance of a governmental facade at taxpayer expense.

We applaud the House and the Senate for beginning to focus on the plight of public education in the District of Columbia but the District's problems in public school education are not going to be solved quickly. School governance is the easiest of its problems to change and the most remote from the needs of the classroom and school-based management.

The latest drop out statistics for the District of Columbia showed that 2,446 students in secondary school dropped out in one year. That represents eight percent per year of all secondary school students enrolled in the system. From the seventh grade through the twelfth grade, 40 percent drop out before graduating. These young people are not leaving the District. They're not on spring break. They're not going to any other high school, and they're not asking for their records when they leave school. They're in the category of voluntary withdrawal and left without explanation.

When the Authority took over operations of public schools by its creation of an appointed board, it provided a scathing report to the public as the basis for the action as well as declaring a state of emergency in public schools. Some of the highlights of the report include that in an area where the District of Columbia does best in public school education, the fourth grade, only 22 percent are getting an adequate education. The longer a child stays in D.C. public schools, the more likely they are to fail or to be harmed by that experience.

The systems in management, procurement, contracting, school governance, delivery of instructional materials, payroll and personnel are all broken. Children are housed in poorly maintained buildings that are often closed due to fire code violations. After years of capital improvement neglect, many of these buildings need full modernization to adequately support instruction.

Last month the Administration's acting chief academic officer presented a plan for raising the reading and mathematics achievements level on twelfth grade students to meet the needs of approximately 1,500 seniors. That figure, 1,500, was based on the following. Over 50 percent of eleventh graders who were tested on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills last spring at six senior high schools tested in the lowest quartile. A third to one half of eleventh graders who were tested on the CTBS last spring at four senior high schools tested in the lowest quartile. This indicates that there is a need for serious help.

However, as we sit here, the District of Columbia does not have a chief academic officer. The District of Columbia does not have a statement of what the vision is for improving the plight of those who need expansion of pre-K services, vocational and career programs, alternative schooling, community access, special education, adult education and even public school education. The consequences of these failures are profound. For example, successful academic performance was not a criterion used by the new administration in selecting public schools for closure. This could only happen where the task of closing schools was given to non-educators who are totally unfamiliar with the culture of public education in the District of Columbia.

In a sea of poorly performing, crime ridden, violence torn, low morale schools, who would have thought that the best elementary schools in the District would be on the chopping block? Only a handful, about a fourth of D.C.'s schools, are doing a good job in public school education. Most of these well performing schools are in buildings that are falling apart but are held together by parental involvement, clearly defined educational objectives, and community involvement. Good principals and dedicated teachers are the key.

What we can do to improve conditions overall is to propose the following items be itemized as top priority. That the same richness of educational offerings be available for all students throughout the District. Children in the District should be able to read by the time they enter the first grade. This should be an objective. We need up to date performance standards for all DCPS jobs. We need coordinated scholastic and facilities master plans developed in conjunction with schools and communities.

A principal evaluation is needed as well as a teacher evaluation process that will enable us to remove unqualified teachers, identify teachers in need of support and training, and reward outstanding teaching. We're at the bottom of scholastic achievement and good teachers are the key in turning the system around, not who is in control

of the school system.

We need to reduce the student/teacher ratio to prohibit a teacher from having more than 25 students in a classroom from grades three though six and 20 for kindergarten through grades two. We need to provide elementary school counselors. The public as well as many people in charge of school governance are naive about the development of contemporary school age children.

In the areas of sex, disease, drugs, violence, children are in need of help outside of their homes and neighborhoods. The schools have no choice but to be involved. We also need a school rating and intervention plan. We need an accurate student enrollment count, an accurate personnel audit, an accurate and comprehensible budget, a program to guarantee the timely delivery of instructional materials and the development of a special security force or special security approaches to remove violence as the principal factor in public school education.

Finally, the most helpful thing that could be done in the area of public school education in the District of Columbia is for the administration to determine two things. First, exactly why is scholastic achievement in D.C. Public Schools so poor and why is it declining? Second, the administration needs to produce a detailed plan and, most important, a time table for redirecting resources into the classroom to improve student achievement.

In testimony provided to the Senate, the new school leadership has talked about benchmarks to measure their success and approvals of drafts and proposals. These all sound good but fail to establish a time when we can expect to see improvement. I urge you to hold those in charge accountable for the establishment of time tables for all the proposals to improve education and I deeply thank you for inviting me to appear before you.

[The statement of Mr. Reeves follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DON REEVES, PRESIDENT, D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION -- SEE APPENDIX H

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much to this panel.

I'm going to yield to the chairman of the full Committee, Mr. Goodling.

Mr. **Goodling**. I don't have any questions. I just have a couple of observations. One, I'll shake up the room with my first statement. I happen to believe that Dr. Smith is an outstanding educator who didn't have a snowball's chance in Hades of ever being an educational leader in the D.C. Public Schools.

Secondly, when the Speaker asked Congressman Gunderson and myself three years ago to make D.C. Public Schools the model for the country, I said, if you can make a dictator, I know I can pull it off. Mr. Chavous, I wish I had had you on my school board when I was superintendent of schools. You're right. Don't concentrate on what's wrong. Move ahead. Do what we know works. And you have, in my estimation, an plan that would bring about the kind of changes that are needed. You also indicated student achievement must serve as the foundation in relationship to additional resources.

I hope to get some federal dollars toward preparing teachers to carry out your remedial reading effort or your changes in reading, as I understand it, in cooperation with the National Institute of Health because, as I tell everybody, set all the standards you want. If you don't prepare the teachers to teach to the standards, it's a hopeless cause.

What I would ask all of you to do is not to cause the children to suffer in D.C. because adults can't work together. Its the children who are going to suffer. When the Speaker asked me to go to a town meeting we had, my

closing statement was that my hope would be that we help children and don't act like children as adults. It's a big job and it's going to take all of you.

Mr. Reeves, I'm sure you and Mr. Chavous could work together to solve the problems that are facing the D.C. schools and I would just encourage you to do that. It is easier to help you if we know everybody in the community is pulling together with only one concern in mind and that's a quality education for every child that attends a school in D.C.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. **Norton**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While Mr. Goodling is here, I would like to thank the chairman of the full Committee for the extraordinary attention and help he has given to the District schools. When you have the Chairman of the full Committee working with a Member who's now left, giving the kind of concentrated time they gave, you are very much ahead of the game. Mr. Goodling has at every turn been helpful to me in all of my work with the D.C. schools.

I would like to ask some questions that go to the long-term and the short-term goals of the school system. General Becton obviously has a task that in its full terms can not pay off tomorrow, and you have taken steps to design plans that enable you to proceed. I'm trying to understand the difference between the various plans you have. There's a framework, there's a long-range educational reform and then there's a strategic plan. Could I ask first about the framework. There's a document that you've submitted, dated March 17. It says it's a draft. Is it now final and how does it relate to the long-range educational reform and the strategic plan?

General **Becton**. Representative Norton, this is the Board of Trustees document under which we're operating and I think Dr. MacLaury would be in the best position to respond to that question.

Mr. **MacLaury**. If I may, Ms. Norton, I don't wonder at the confusion. Let me try and clarify it. When we came into office, we found and knew that there was the D.C. Goals 2000 document. That was a community built plan, built over a period of years and stated the goals for the District of Columbia schools. As trustees, we took that as our starting point and we developed what we are calling the framework for the long-range education reform plan, and that's what is attached to my statement today and has been in the public now for probably a month to a month and a half. That is the trustees' adaptation, if you will, of the D.C. Goals 2000 document which had community input. We now stand behind this framework as our goals.

The long-term education plan required under the School Reform Act of '95, as I understand it, is in process of being developed. It should have been available last February or something of the sort. But grows out of and is linked to this framework document in the following sense, that we have set forth in the framework many goals. The long-range education plan is an implementation plan. It says for each goal, what is the strategy for attaining that goal? That education plan is with the school's administration at the moment, is going out to the public shortly. The trustees will act upon it within the next month. The long-range education plan, in other words, is how are we going to get to these goals which we have enunciated? I hope that clears it up.

You also mentioned a strategic plan. That one is not in my lexicon, I must confess, so I'm as much at sea as you.

Ms. **Norton**. I'm quoting now from your Children First framework document. "The long-range educational reform plan will be part of an overall strategic plan for the school system." This is where I got that word from.

Mr. **MacLaury**. I think that the difference is what we're talking about in the framework and the education plan is one part. It is the academic portion of a much larger strategic plan which would include facilities, it would include the management systems that have to be in place before we can achieve these. So I guess that's my understanding of the distinction.

Ms. **Norton**. Is General Becton responsible for that overall integration of these plans?

General **Becton**. I am responsible, ma'am, for the long-range education plan, the long-range facility plan, that we provide to flesh out what would be considered here and I think that the long-range or strategic plan that you're talking to may be with the Control Authority.

Ms. **Norton**. In any case, I wish you'd clarify that for the record. I don't want to criticize the plans because I think that's what you have to do, but there's a long history in the District of paper documents that don't lead very far.

Let me go to short-term goals. One of the problems, I think, that continues to contribute to flight from the city is that the District government is in such bad shape that it is difficult to show short-term progress. It is absolutely fundamental to keeping people in this city and there's very little short-term progress that we can put our hands on.

Now, the school system would be one of the most difficult to show short-term progress. What, if any, short-term actions would you point to that either have been achieved or that you think could be achieved before the end of the school year so that you might say to parents, Look, we haven't been here very long but since we have been here, this has been accomplished. You can see it, you can feel it. It's short-term but we point it out to you so you will know that progress is being made.

General **Becton**. We believe that our program to deal with contracts that was listed as part of our problems has been resolved. We believe that -

Ms. **Norton**. In what sense? What is the problem that has been resolved?

General **Becton**. Well, we think we've brought a meaningful management to our contract that we had when we came onboard.

Ms. **Norton**. So how long does it take you to do a procurement, for example? When you say something, we have resolved the problems, people are going to say in what way? You're going to have to be much more specific than that, and I'm sure that you can be. But I'm encouraging you to do this just so people will know you're making progress we already know you are making.

General **Becton**. I understand.

Ms. **Norton**. All you say is we've resolved the contract problem. Nobody is going to believe that. They've heard that from the school system.

General **Becton**. We had a contract with Service Master. That contract was terminated because we thought it was not serving the best interests of the D.C. school system or the government. We believe that we have reduced violence, although there have been some recent cases which cite the level of it, but we have reduced the amount of violence. We believe that we have brought about facilities repairs which we are on top of and, as a matter of fact, on the 15th of May, which is our sixth months, we're preparing to have a complete layout of what was in the "City in Crisis" and what we were charged to do by the Control Board and where we are at that moment.

Ms. **Norton**. General Becton, let me encourage you by the end of the year to do something like the following. To say as of this time last year, there were X number of incidents of violence. As of the end of school, they are Y number. Even if those numbers are not good. Do you know people would have enormous respect for you for coming forward to say what they were even if they haven't been decreased. If you could say at the beginning of the school year it took us X number of years or X number of whatever was the number to do a procurement. Today when you don't have to abide by the procurement rules, and when Mr. Goodling said that Mr. Smith wasn't given half a chance, that's the kind of thing he meant, that he was saddled with something that they just simply wished away for you, say, hey, you're not in this any more. You can procure any way you want to. If you could say by the end of the year it used to take, at the time I came in, X number of whatever it turns out to be. Today it takes X number. That kind of report to the public is absolutely essential in order for people to understand that there is progress. I ask you to choose it because this is how everything is done in the private sector. This is the only way to hold people accountable. We all know that improvements are being made. You do yourself a disservice when you don't pick them out and show what the indicators are and what progress is being made.

Mr. Chairman, I know I'm getting near to the end of my time. Could I ask one more question which addresses charter schools? Here we have a pretty ambitious goal, 24 charter schools I believe your testimony said.

General **Becton**. That is correct, ma'am.

Ms. **Norton**. By the beginning of the school year, the coming school year?

General **Becton**. No. I think I said by the end of next year, I believe.

Ms. **Norton**. By the end of next year?

General **Becton**. Yes.

Ms. **Norton**. For the end of the next school year then?

General **Becton**. That is correct.

Ms. **Norton**. So you would be phasing them in over time.

General **Becton**. That is correct.

Ms. **Norton**. Are you saying that there are going to be buildings for entire charter schools located, that 24 schools will be in place, with standards, operating the way an average school operates in the District of Columbia? I'd be interested, for starters, in where 24 schools would be placed, for example.

General **Becton**. It's my understanding that it's up to the charter school to find its location. We are charged with the responsibility to - that is, the chartering agency - to evaluate whether they have the standards, whether they have the students, the parents, the funds and those kinds of things.

Ms. **Norton**. But when you say you will have 24 by the end of the year, do you mean that you will have given permission for 24 or that there will, in fact, be 24 in place by the end of the year?

General **Becton**. Based upon our information, ma'am, there will be 24 schools that will be authorized to be operating at the end of next year.

Ms. **Norton**. Well, I think you ought to say that, because I have the notion that there will be 24 schools located in places which meet safety code violations. Many of these schools are going to have to be in D.C. Public Schools or they won't have any place at all. If what you mean is that you will have in fact authorized them but they may not be up, then I think you should be careful to indicate that.

Mr. Reeves, has the school board drawn standards for charter schools so that the problems that arose this year will not arise again?

Mr. **Reeves**. Ms. Norton, I regret to respond that that task is really with General Becton's shop. The school board is not an originator of any of the ideas with respect to charters, to standards or anything. We have on loan to us Mr. Winnig, Mr. Richard Winnig, who drafted the charter legislation and I think that he, in conjunction with Dr. MacLaury, is preparing the standards for the charter schools.

Ms. **Norton**. See, I thought that that was the one thing that you all got left to do and if I were you, I couldn't imagine looking to others for the one thing you were left to do.

Mr. **Reeves**. I agree with you, Ms. Norton. We are, as I said in my statement, impotent in this regard because we're not in control of anything at this point.

Ms. **Norton**. Well now, wait a minute, Mr. Reeves. It doesn't take $300,000 or $400,000 for educators to sit down and figure out what the standards ought to be. You say you've been lent someone, in any case, who might be of some help to you.

Mr. **Reeves**. I don't think I'm talking about the issue of money. The fact of the matter is that Dr. MacLaury and the trustee group have drafted some legislation or proposed legislation to give to the Control Board in which they're going to establish what the standards will be.

Ms. **Norton**. Let me just involve Mr. MacLaury. Mr. MacLaury, since the elected school board was stripped of all authority except the authority to charter charter schools, with all you have to do, why are you involved with the

charter schools?

Mr. **MacLaury**. The trustees do not want to be in the business of chartering schools. There is a proposal proposed to us by General Becton - us meaning the trustees - proposed by General Becton that said that there should be uniform standards for each of the chartering authorities in this city and that the state education authority, which the trustees now are - we have inherited that role - should have oversight - may I emphasize oversight - responsibility with respect to chartering, that we want to make sure that there are standards, that they are uniform across the District for both - in the case of performance standards, that they are the same for public schools as they are for chartered schools, and that the state authority therefore which would exist in other states is also operational here.

It is also the case, Ms. Norton, that I am not ordering anything personally. I beg to differ with Dr. Reeves, Mr. Reeves, on that score. That there is an effort afoot to have the same kind of staffing for approval process, for oversight process, serve the two chartering authorities that exist, the public chartering board as well as the board of education. Rather than have duplicative staffing for these entities, it is a cost saving measure as well as a uniformity issue.

Ms. **Norton**. Has one chartering authority been given funds and the other not?

Mr. **MacLaury**. That also is not totally accurate. My understanding of that issue is that the public chartering board was authorized, I think by Congress, $300,000. That has been my understanding. Not necessarily paid through the mayor's office to them but is available to them. $300,000 for the public chartering board. What Mr. Reeves was referring to about his budget, the fact is that the trustees did reduce the overall budget of the board of education because its functions have been frankly reduced. We thought it was strange that the trustees who have been given a great deal of authority and responsibility who are trying to operate frankly within a budget of $400,000 per year, that the board of education should have a larger budget than that.

So with that in mind, we have restricted the budget of the school board to $400,000 in the 1998 budget. Now, Mr. Reeves can apply that budget any way he chooses and if he chooses to apply it to chartering, that is his responsibility. I believe that his school board member, Reverend Robert Childs, whose responsibility it is in the education area and in the chartering area, is well apprised of all of this and so far as I understand in conversations with Reverend Childs, is satisfied that the ability of the board of education to cope with its chartering authority is adequate.

Ms. **Norton**. Mr. Chairman, if we have another round, I want to pursue the relationship between the trustees and the elected board, but I appreciate the time you have given me, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. I thank the gentle lady for her questions. Those are exactly the questions that I was interested in hearing answers to and now that you've thoroughly confused me, you altogether because it is, I think, one of the interesting things. As we've gone around the country, we've seen some great things in public education. Many of the same things General Becton is doing to put more accountability, responsibility and clarity in to the process and I applaud you for the efforts that you are doing there and hope that you are very, very successful.

The other component that we have seen is as other school districts or other states have opened up the process to charter schools and those types of additional serious reform, we have seen some wonderful things happening in the schools and what I urge you to do is to come together as a group and address these issues to get the structural reform and the performance reforms in place so that we can work towards developing the kind of quality education that we need here in the city.

I need to run to a conference because we are having a discussion as to exactly the status on what the budget discussions are. As a member of the budget committee, I'll be gone for a few minutes but I will be back. This is a very interesting subject and something that I really want to be involved with.

Mr. **Reeves**. Mr. Chairman, as a result of Dr. MacLaury's responses on this charter issue, I feel that I must inform you that the school board has unanimously voted for Reverend Childs, who's the chairman of the chartering authority, to write a letter to Congress outlining the very presentation that I gave here concerning our budget. I'll be very happy to follow up with Ms. Norton on that.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. I think we're going to be very interested in working together. If there needs to be technical changes to the legislation or whether it needs some additional things, I think you'll find a supportive group here in Washington to work with you to take a look at how we can continue to move this issue forward.

I'm going to turn the gavel over to Ms. Morella. Thank you.

(Chair passes to Ms. Morella.)

Ms. **Morella**. Thank you. I guess I'll move over there for a few minutes, but I wanted to recognize now the distinguished gentleman from California who's been diligently taking notes about what you've been saying, Mr. Horn.

Mr. **Horn**. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman and ladies and gentlemen. I was impressed by each of your statements. You all made good points. I've been an educator for 24 years of my life. My children in the '60s went to the D.C. Public Schools and part of that experience illustrates what I want to stress and ask you, in particular, General Becton and certainly Mr. MacLaury and the others that are deeply involved.

As an educator and administrator and professor, I've read a number of education studies. There are frankly only about two of them that I have much confidence in. One of them is that the key to the success of a school is the principal, and I saw that happen when my daughter went to school. She had an outstanding educational experience in the District of Columbia. It was the only integrated junior high school at that time, Steven. Alice Deal was all white and 25 others were all black. The key to it was Mr. Shirley. He went up and down the halls tooting his whistle, knew the students by name, and cared about educational results. He was replaced by a person who never left the office. Didn't know the students' names, didn't seem to care, etc. Might have been a fine person. Nothing to do with it.

So my first question is, Chief Executive Becton, do you have the flexibility to hire and fire principals or do you have to go through a lot of the nonsense that many governmental bodies have to go through?

General **Becton**. Sir, I'm authorized to hire and fire.

Mr. **Horn**. Good. So you can move principals around, get them out of being a principal, put them in a job that fits and so forth.

General **Becton**. We can and we have.

Mr. **Horn**. Good. #2, it seems to me, and this is the power I had as a university president, I had to fight for it for five years to get it out of the trustees and it was system-wide finally. That is to change the pay scale so you had overlapping pay between very broad categories, got rid of the nonsense civil service specific personnel slots that absolutely make no sense in a modern organization. Do you have that power to give rewards in money based on results? We would get them to write a six month contract with us and I had maybe 110 managerial personnel going from the head of custodians up to vice presidents, and it gave me the first flexibility I had had in that system which unfortunately had followed the U.S. civil service when they started in 1961, and overnight practically things changed when they knew, #1) let's agree on what you're going to do in the next six months.

Then the question is, did you do it or didn't you do it? And if you didn't do it, you're either out of that management slot or you're certainly not getting the pay that you had there. This is results-oriented government. New Zealand has it. Australia has it. Only the state of Oregon has it in our country. We aren't results-oriented government in most governments in this country. We're simply gee, cost of living went up. You're going to have to give me six percent more. That's utter nonsense. What we ought to find out is what did that administration do? What did the faculty do? And if they produce, reward them. If they don't, do something about it. Now, how flexible are you on pay and overlapping civil service type personnel descriptions where it's sort of a game of have you given them the right word and then we'll decide whether you earn that?

General **Becton**. Mr. Horn, first I should point out I, too, spent five years as a university president. I did not have that authority in Texas. I do not have that authority here. I would love to have it.

Mr. **Horn**. Well, I think the board ought to very seriously try to give that to you. If we're to turn the school system around, you need that flexibility or all the beautiful plans, all the rhetoric will be utter nonsense and we'll be sitting here five years from now saying gee, what happened?

My next series of questions. How much authority do you have and what is the policy of the District of Columbia schools now on disruptive students, gang members, etc.? My own philosophy is I don't think these people should forego going to school. On the other hand, they shouldn't be in the same classroom with students who want to learn something.

Now, is there any thought, or maybe you already have it, of having special schools, perhaps run by ex-Marine master sergeants, who have these people and say you're not going to be out on the street. You're going to be in school and you're going to be learning something and you're not going to be disrupting the good students that want to learn something, go on to college, do a trade, whatever. Tell me a little bit about what you're doing in that area.

General **Becton**. We have alternative schools right now for those court directed cases. We'll be setting up this September alternative schools for disruptive students, so we will pull those characters out of school who disrupt the class, disrupt the teacher, and the kids can't learn. We're going to take care of that. We're not going to go to Marine drill sergeants. We may have a couple of Army drill sergeants.

Mr. **Horn**. I'll take them out of either the Army or the Marines. Doesn't matter. Just so they command respect.

General **Becton**. That's exactly right.

Mr. **Horn**. I think they will.

General **Becton**. And I understand exactly what you're saying and we're going to have that.

Mr. **Horn**. Good. At least they won't be running around the streets, and that gets me to my next thought.

General **Becton**. That's a truant problem and my colleague, particularly Representative - Council member Chavous is hot on us about truancy. We're doing something about that, too, to get them off the streets.

Mr. **Horn**. Do you have a sufficient staff of truant officers to do something about it?

General **Becton**. Not sufficient, but we're working on it.

Mr. **Horn**. How many truant officers do you have?

General **Becton**. I can't answer that. Three.

Mr. **Horn**. Three. That isn't going to get much done in a city of this size. No, you need some help in that area and you ought to have the flexibility of moving staff around, creating new positions or not. You shouldn't be second guessed by everybody. They ought to hold you accountable. If nothing happens, fine, get a new chief executive. But in the mean time, they shouldn't be sitting there hampering you.

General **Becton**. No. As you know, I'm sure, sir, combating truancy is not just the truant officer but is the community, is the teacher, is the police, the beat officer, it's the community working to identify hey, you ought to be in school.

Mr. **Horn**. Right.

General **Becton**. And pick up the telephone and call, Johnny is here.

Mr. **Horn**. Well, and frankly the D.C. police ought to be helping on that.

General **Becton**. Well, they are.

Mr. **Horn**. If they see somebody walking around the streets that looks like school age, ask them what are they doing.

General **Becton**. Well, the chief and I have had several discussions about that and they are helping us.

Mr. **Horn**. Good. Obviously the key to education is what happens in that classroom. Do you have the flexibility or are you stuck with a lot of contracts that you can't either get people out of a situation where they can't cope, attract

people, give merit pay for those that are successful and get the ones that aren't successful out of the system?

General **Becton**. We don't have merit pay. We're trying to find a way to implement it so we can maintain what we want to do with it. I do have the authority to remove teachers out of classroom, to remove contracts. All those thighs were given to us by the Control Board.

Mr. **Horn**. I find in some systems the principals are absolutely sheep and things the teacher has a problem with somebody that is disruptive in the class, the principal isn't of much help. I take it you'll be able to deal with those situations when teachers complain they aren't being backed up.

General **Becton**. I think so. As a matter of fact, every principal will be evaluated at the end of this school year. There'll be some movement of principals. Maybe considerable movement of principals based upon what we discover.

Mr. **Horn**. Well, I wish you well. Seems like you've got a lot of talent and people that have some good ideas. Question now is putting them into operation.

General **Becton**. We intend to do that.

Mr. **Horn**. Good. Well, generals ought to know how to do that. So best of luck to you.

General **Becton**. Thank you, sir.

Mr. **Horn**. Thank you.

(Chair passes to Chairman Davis.)

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you, Mr. Horn.

I notice the mayor is here. He's on a very tight schedule. Am I right, Mr. Mayor? Would you want to just come over and make a few words and then we have some more questions from our panel, but we want to give you a chance to speak because I'm afraid we might lose you otherwise. So if you'd like to pull up a chair right alongside General Becton there. General Becton, do you want to hand the mayor the microphone. We'd be honored to hear any comments he has at the same time he just joined the panel. Then we have a couple other questions. Otherwise, I think events may overtake us and we may not hear from him. So welcome.

Mayor **Barry**. Thank you very much, Congressman Davis, for allowing me -

Mr. **Davis**. Let me start. You've got to raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you very much. Welcome.

## *STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, WASHINGTON, D.C.*

Mayor Barry. Let me express my deep appreciation for Mr. Hoekstra and committee members from the Education Committee and the Subcommittee of the District for holding this hearing on reform of our public school system. I speak not only as mayor of our great city but also as a parent who has a 16 year old son in the eleventh grade Wilson Senior High School. I made the decision to enroll him at Jefferson Junior High, a personal decision, and Wilson so I not only see the school system as mayor but also as a parent who has to deal with the problems of a 16 year old African American male growing up in an urban setting.

I think the D.C. school system is facing the same kinds of problems that urban systems all over America are facing. High drop out rates, high truancy rates, lack of achievement in too many of our schools, too high a level of violence, antiquated administrative, procurement and personnel systems. And I certainly want to commend General Becton. I think he has the second toughest job in terms of local government here. I have the toughest one. He has the second toughest one and Ms. Norton has the third toughest one in terms of trying to turn this system around.

I've advocated a student base, school base budget for the school system. In the past, that has not been the case. It has been basically, in my view, an administrative base budget where the school system has the largest number of ratios of administrators and central personnel to students and to staff than most school systems in America. And I sent over to the City Council a model of that budget and I'm delighted to know that the school system is beginning to look at that and set out these pupil/teacher ratios and others.

I think the ideal model, Congressman Morella, is the Montgomery County school system. If you look at how they do their budget, it's very clear what the policies are. It's very clear what the ratios are and they do school by school ratios as opposed to school by school accounting. It's one thing to say you need at Wilson Senior High School X number of math teachers and Y number of science teachers and then you then just plug in that number and that's how many they get and that's beginning to happen in our school systems. I'm so delighted that that's happening.

I believe very strongly that the school system has to do what the police department has done. Look at itself from top to bottom. I think the crisis, kids in crisis that was done by the Control Board was good analysis but it was not the kind of detailed plan of action the school system as we're doing with the police. It took a lot of work in the last three months to turn the culture and the police department around and, believe me, it is rapidly turning around. We have more police officers on the streets now, officers who didn't want to go. We have reduced crime by 30 percent but it took that shock and that critical movement to eradicate and turn that around.

And now I urge that the school system move faster in doing that. I share their frustration, even in my agencies under my administration. We have all these great plans and have all these outlines, but you've got to then get them moving. I would urge, and I'm going to send over a proposal to John Becton and to you in other couple of weeks. I believe the school system ought to have more specialized school areas. We ought to have a school of science and technology. I know we have a school of science at Ballou but it's not really that productive. They don't have enough laboratories. They don't have much of anything.

But we need a school of science and technology. There are over 1,500 high tech companies in Northern Virginia alone, as Congressman Davis pointed out. What are we doing to train our young people for this new world of work where technology and science is a major thrust?

Also I think the school system ought to go to more specialized academic high schools. Banneker Senior High School is an excellent model. I've gone to their commencements every year for the last four or five years and in 1996 they had the same number of graduates in the twelfth grade that started minus one and this person had gotten shot down on Georgia Avenue. Why can't we have several Bannekers in our city where 99 percent of all the graduates of Banneker go to college? it's an elitist school. You have to apply. You have to get in line. You have four or five times more people applying than you do students.

We need several specialized in arts and culture. i don't think Duke Ellington is enough. One school with about 500 young people from throughout the city. Why can't we have at least two or three more Duke Ellington High Schools? We need to do a lot more in encouraging and having programs of work with your hands. Phelps is one of our career development schools. Only has 400 students in it out of a population much larger. Why can't we have more of those kinds of schools that encourage our young people to go and do that?

That's not going to solve all of our problems but it seems to me that with science and technology, with specialized schools, more Bannekers of the world, and as I said, Banneker is not that unique in a sense. You have teachers who've been teaching in a system for a long. You've got a good principal. I agree with Mr. Horn about that. And we could do this very, very rapidly.

The other thing which is happening that I'm very proud of is that we have a community hub at P.R. Harris Educational Center in Southeast where the school is open until 9:00 to 10:00 at night, a collaborative between the school system and the Department of Employment Services and job applications for adults, recreation for our young people, and classes for adults in terms of GED.

The point I'm making here is that this school system, if it's to be turned around, it's going to have to move much more rapidly to do this. I know General Becton knows that it takes a long time between starting something and seeing results in terms of curriculum changes and test scores, but I don't think we can move at the same pace that we've been moving. I've been pushing myself to move rapidly in a lot of areas in my administration. The Control Board has been pushing all of us to move much more rapidly. But we are to attract businesses to Washington, if we are keep businesses in Washington, our work force must be better trained and better developed.

I'm also concerned the low number of young people who graduate from our high schools who don't go to college or go to the military. We initiated a program last year in 1996 where we were in touch with every high school graduate, almost 3,000. We found that less than 40 percent were going to college or to the military or to work. We have young people now who have graduated from our high schools in 1996 who are still not working, and that's no example to those in the neighborhood who say if you went to Ballou Senior High School, you graduate, you're not working, why should I graduate?

So in summary, these schools can be turned around. They have to be turned around and I commend General Becton and the Board for moving rapidly. We've got to move much more rapidly. Got to have these specialized schools. Got to get more parents involved, and the police have been working very closely, Congressman Davis, with the school system.

I'm in the process of having legislation drafted which will put some penalty on the parents. That is, if a young person is out of school. I'm looking at a situation where you could give the person like a citation and the first citation will require the parent to come right back and there.

The second citation may put a fine of $50 on the parent. The third citation may put $500 on the parent. Put some pressure on these parents to be responsible for these young people.

The other thing I'm going to send over to General Becton is an idea about keeping track of our young people. The present situation is our school system is that you take roll in the morning about 8:30 - 9:00. I'm winding down, Congressman Davis. I see you leaving over there. I'll be finished in a few minutes. And at 10:00 some of these kids are out of class and gone. There's no afternoon roll. There's no afternoon accountability. A number of school systems, Memphis and Prince George's County, others, have a twice a day situation where you try to keep

track of these kids. That's just in summary some of my ideas. I support public education.

The final point I think we've got to do, Mr. Reeves and members of the Board of Trustees, look at the charter school. Legislation does not allow capital costs. You've got to find your own building, you've got to fix it up with fire code non-violations and so it's difficult to take this $4,500 - I think is what it comes to - to start a charter school. If you don't have the capital, don't have the building and don't have the money to construct or renovate a building, how are you going to start a charter school? So I would think we ought to look at that process, too, to see if we can't improve the charter school.

And finally, one thing that Congress can do that's very personal. I'm going to be asking you all, each and every one of you, to consider adopting a class, that each member of Congress would adopt a class. That's 535 classes being adopted plus Ms. Norton and representatives from Guam, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. That at least would give us about 10,000 students where Congress people, their staff would be working with mentoring, finding computers and etc. That's in summary, Mr. Chairman.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX I

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you. I'm going to recognize Mr. Ford for a question. Let me just make two very brief comments. First of all, even though you have capital costs, I think you've had over 100 requests for charter schools under the existing financial framework and we want to move some of those requests through as quickly as we can.

Secondly, I would note UDC can do a much stronger role in training people for the work force than they're doing today. I met with the president there. There's faculty resistance to changing the curriculum in some of the arts and humanities areas over to the technology, but that needs leadership from you and if you can help us with that, we'll be helping residents to get jobs over and fill those 18,000 jobs in Northern Virginia.

Mayor **Barry**. I share the same view that we need to -

Mr. **Davis**. - work together on that.

Mayor **Barry**. - restructure the curriculum at UDC to deal with that.

Mr. **Davis**. Let's work together on that. Let me recognize the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. **Ford**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to Mr. Davis and Mr. Hoekstra and to all of my colleagues and to certainly the District of Columbia representatives, Mr. Mayor included.

I'm not a former educator but I'm one who supports education. Just a year ago at this time, I was preparing to graduate from law school so I bring perhaps a different and perhaps youthful and generation X perspective to some of these issues. At least I hope that I do. I think it is difficult, as all of you know, and I must thank you for your testimony and thank you for all of your work. General Becton, you've been blamed for many things, some justified and unjustified. I thought that we might even blame you for the Bulls whipping up on the Bullets like they did three games in a row. At least you didn't get that blame.

But it's difficult to know where to exactly begin the discussion over how to improve the D.C. school system but the problems run deep, as all of you know, and sometimes often seem intractable. Although we hear statistic after statistic about the poor performance and the lack of achievement in the schools, just to name a few in

the school system, we can not become numbed by these horrible figures and lose sight of what truly matters, the plight of our young people, as you talked about, Mr. Mayor.

Earlier this week, as you well know, the Trustee Board decided to close several schools, one being Woodridge Elementary. It happened to be a former constituent of mine from Memphis whose son attended the school and has called to ask that I try to prevent the school from being closed. I regretted to inform her that I did not have the authority or power to do that, but she went on to say something that was very interesting and I wish that Mr. Hoekstra was here to hear this point.

She said that my son is a young black man and his only hope is an education. Now, his race is really irrelevant but the main point is that she recognizes we talk about a lack or dearth of parental involvement in our school systems and you're right, Mr. Mayor, this is not a problem that simply afflicts the D.C. school system. Certainly in my district we face these problems unfortunately, but it's the role of education in helping to change conditions and improve the plight of many Americans which really leads to my second point that the Chairman of the committee, Mr. Hoekstra, and other members of this august body often criticize the role that the federal government has played in education and often cite erroneous, inaccurate and divisive statistics that really don't serve the purpose of identifying, as Mr. Hoekstra has purported to do at the educational crossroads, what works, what's wasted, not only in D.C. schools but schools throughout this nation.

We're not going to solve our problems by continually citing statistics that say that 760 programs exist at the federal level. CRS has rebutted that fact. We're not going to solve it by suggesting that 40 cents of every dollar that we spend on education does not reach students. The reality is that it does reach students, and I would hope that this committee, that the joint subcommittee joining this Education Committee would refrain from making such polarizing and misleading and, quite frankly, untrue statements.

If we're really serious about educating our young people and moving forward, we have an obligation at the federal level to promote standards. We have an obligation at the federal level to provide the financial support to our school districts. It is insulting and disingenuous to suggest to school districts around this nation that more money in school systems don't work. I'm a product of a private school here in Washington. I will certainly tell you that more money in that school certainly made it possible for the entire class to graduate and 70 percent of that class to go on to an Ivy League school so don't insult the intelligence of students, of parents, teachers and D.C. government officials and other city elected officials throughout this nation.

I would remind this committee that as you talk about alternative schools, Mr. Mayor, and providing some - and I believe Mr. Horn and some of my other colleagues have talked about that - we have alternative schools in my district and the alternative school where what we call the incorrigible students attend, they won the Knowledge Bowl. They won the equivalent of here the It's Academic. The students whom have been casted off, have been written off, went on television and won the African American Knowledge Bowl. These kids can succeed, they can flourish if we challenge them, inspire them and stimulate them.

I would ask this committee and ask my colleagues on both sides of the House as we talk about how we improve these conditions and provide more parental involvement, let's pass a budget that is indeed balanced. Let us indeed pass a budget that recognizes the needs of many of our constituents throughout this nation, whether it be housing issues, education issues, welfare reform. Let us revisit the issues that will allow parents to be more involved. Let us revisit the issues that will allow parents and students and teachers and all the parties involved to educate our children, prepare them for the future and, as you talked about, Mr. Mayor, help them meet the needs and really meet the challenges of the 21st Century market place.

I do not mean to suggest the D.C. government or the mayor, General Becton are completely off the hook. You have a responsibility, as well, and we're going to hold you accountable here like you need to be held accountable, but this committee and this Congress needs to be held accountable, as well. With that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you and I'm going to run and vote.

Mr. **Davis**. Thank you. Let me just - I understand this committee has looked at a number of positive school experiments that have worked, the Vaughn Learning Center in San Fernando, California, the ATOP Academy in Phoenix, Arizona, the Harrison, Arkansas Public School system, Los Angeles, New York, Milwaukee and Detroit systems, Lewis and Clark Elementary School in Pocatello, Idaho, Sase Elementary School in Montana and many others and I think this committee, from my perspective - I think Ms. Norton would agree - has tried to be very constructive in the dialogue with the city in terms of innovation and working and getting it.

So we're not looking for blame here. We're looking, trying to look at solutions together and we have differences from time to time and we appreciate you airing your frustrations.

Mr. **Ford**. But the record states clearly, Mr. Chairman, if you would yield for one moment -

Mr. **Davis**. I'd be happy to.

Mr. **Ford**. - what Mr. Hoekstra has said and I just wanted to for the record sake put it in the record that Mr. Hoekstra has repeated this over and over again and we've certainly found instances where there have been successes and I certainly look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and others but we have to be truthful and honest as we talk about these matters. The children, educators, parents, they're counting on us and we have a job to do and I'm certainly going to do my job and certainly going to state the facts clearly and state the facts accurately.

Mr. **Davis**. We appreciate it and we welcome you to this dialogue. I think it's going to be very beneficial to all of us.

Let me just ask a couple of questions here while I've got everybody. We are in the middle of voting and there's a Republican conference explaining the budget agreement which I think is very close to being announced today between the President and Congressional leaders, so that's where members are coming back from. But instead of recessing the way other committees did, we wanted to continue the committee hearing. Mrs. Morella will be back in just a minute to relieve me so I can go vote on the pending amendment. But I have a few questions.

Let me first off start with General Becton. Do we know how many students we have in the school system today?

General **Becton**. Yes, we do.

Mr. **Davis**. I'm anxiously going to write this number down.

General **Becton**. I'll give you the number that we have as of 3 October, 78,348 as of 3 October. Since that time, we have a GAO team to, as you know, determine the accuracy of the way we count, not the actual count, and we'll be having RFP that will give us an audit of the exact count as of May.

Mr. **Davis**. Okay. Well, I think one of the difficulties is the lack of investment in, information technology, which has made it more difficult in some ways to count and hopefully we'll get up to the kind of standards we need over the short haul, and the same goes for the city. For several years there has not been the investment in these kind of things that can give you real time information and if you don't have the real time information, it's hard to make intelligent decisions, no matter who's the leader; no matter who's there. So we need to all work together on those kind of things.

The public schools has a budget right now of approximately $650 million. The city spends between $82.25 per pupil and $200 per pupil depending on the count which is used and the number of students, and I'm going to take your number of students now, General Becton, and divide. I may come up with another number. But it means that the city spends more than the national average on students, certainly more than its suburban neighbors, and this money has not correlated to the success of the school system in educating the youth of the city. In fact, the city ranks at or near the bottom of the nation in both math and English test scores.

Now I'm going to grant you the city has a much more difficult population to work with in terms of the number of kids from homes with single parents, one parent at most, and that is an additional challenge that school systems across the country are having to deal with. But it is not just money. General Becton, are you confident that the money you have is now being spent in a cost effective manner or are you going to need a little more time to sort out the priorities?

General **Becton**. What we're doing, I believe we are spending it cost effective. We'll become better. But may I correct, at least put in the record, our numbers would differ from yours, sir.

Mr. **Davis**. Right.

General **Becton**. If you take a look at the 10 surrounding area school districts in this area, we are #5 in cost per student. We have in front of us Alexandria City, Arlington, we have Montgomery County, we have Falls Church and then comes the District and we have beneath us five more including Fairfax and Prince William behind us by - we're spending -

Mr. **Davis**. General Becton, let me just say without objection, let me put this in the record so that you can tell your story. The committee staff has come up with some different numbers.

General **Becton**. yes.

Mr. **Davis**. And I'm not as concerned as much about what the numbers are in terms of getting some things up and running where we can be confident that the dollars that are being spent are being spent in a cost effective -

General **Becton**. We share that view.

Mr. **Davis**. - a cost effective manner. If I could ask you the drop out rate which is one of the most difficult situations you have. You've dealt with public safety and drop out. Since you have come in as the CEO, can you show us either statistically, anecdotally or in your judgment what we have done to address the safety concerns and how those have improved and secondly, the drop out rate over the short-term. Please try to just capsulize again your long-term vision for these items.

General **Becton**. Well, first the safety record. We have attached that from a standpoint of facilities by making sure that we eliminate fire code violations.

Mr. **Davis**. Your answer is in the record. I got to go vote. But my fellow Amherst alumni, Mr. Ballenger, is taking notes for me.

(Chair passes to Mr. Ballenger.)

General **Becton**. But I'll also tell you when you come back.

So we're dealing with the safety record strictly from the standpoint of violence, improving the condition at the schools, reducing the fire code violations. The drop out rate is something that is of concern to all of us and we do need to do a lot more to preclude that. And what are we doing now? We have tutorial programs, mentoring programs to deal with the at risk student. We also will be having targeted summer school and Saturday academies to again deal with the drop out. We have parent centers in all but 40 of our schools designed to promote parental involvement and support for our children and we also have, as I mentioned, some alternative schools to help to get the youngsters back in.

All of that said and done, we still need the support of the parents, we still need the support of the communities.

By the way, Mr. Mayor, we do have the authority, I think your courts have, to fine parents who fail to get their kids in school. I've been told we did that last year and we expect to continue that.

Mr. **Ballenger**. Mr. Mayor, I understand that we might want to let you get free since you've got other responsibilities, but I would like to say that your estimation of what we need to do in the school system is great. It's wonderful. But coming from an area where the expenditure per pupil in the best school system in the state of North Carolina which is Charlotte, North Carolina, and I think it's got a record of being fabulous. For various and sundry social reasons otherwise, the expenditure here in Washington is 50 percent more and producing substantially less and I think it's great to have a dream. I mean we all look forward to having some substantial working along those lines but you've got to crawl before you can walk and I'm afraid right now that D.C. schools are in a crawling situation and I just want to be able to participate in any way I can to help that out.

But I'd just like to thank you for coming with the good ideas but somewhere along the line we've got to do the basics which is let's make the schools so that the kids don't have to worry about the roof falling in and let's get the parents to commit that they will assist their own children and also keep the school from getting trashed after we fix it. But I thank you for participating in this discussion.

Mayor **Barry**. Congressman, thank you. Also I suspect, a significant part of this school system's budget is personnel. I don't know what the teachers' salaries are in Charlotte. I suspect they may be a little bit lower than our salaries so I think you have to compare apples to apples as you look at these analyses in terms of comfortable pay. I find that in some parts of the south the salaries are much less than in Washington, so that would be another factor.

On the other hand, these numbers are by per pupil cost so if we debate, the real issue is can we have a system where every young person who enters it enters a system where excellence and quality education and motivation and etc. is there from pre-kindergarten to the twelfth grade, where we have teachers who can communicate with these young people much more effectively than some of our teachers can and the cost gets to be an issue because we don't see any results on the other end. And I said earlier when I came in that like other cities, we need to move much more rapidly on trying to reform some of these problems.

Mr. **Ballenger**. With proper leadership, I'm sure that'll occur.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. **Norton**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Ladner, the Financial Authority set performance standards for the IG and I think it was a very good thing you did there, not simply to evaluate somebody but to indicate what was very specifically expected so you'd have some way to re-evaluate and to judge the performance. Have you set performance standards for General Becton and for the Board of Trustees?

Dr. **Ladner**. Yes, Congresswoman Norton, we have. As I indicated in my testimony, we have a draft proposal now that is currently being reviewed by my fellow board members and myself and very shortly, within a couple of weeks, we will make that public.

Ms. **Norton**. For both, for trustees and General Becton?

Dr. **Ladner**. Yes. Yes, absolutely. And I should say that we have ongoing contact with both parties and we're also formalizing what we mean by oversight and that is to say that we meet both. Our staff has extensive contact with the staff, General Becton's staff, and we have extensive contact with trustees, but we will also define very precisely for the record what is meant by oversight. We will receive periodic reports from them, etc.

The Authority's strategic plan issued last December called for the Authority to develop and implement a monitoring plan. The monitoring system that we're developing is designed to measure whether management and programmatic changes that the Board of Trustees and the CEO make are achieving the goals of transforming the system. The performance measures will be centered around the categories that we used in our report, "Children of Crisis."

We're going back to look at all of those specific areas that we found to be very problematic. That is, education, low performance in education and management facilities, safety, supplies, food services, and there was a total of 12 specific areas that we were concerned about. The Authority will specifically review performance based on the 12 specific actions that were contained in that November report so that we will try to maintain a kind of continuity in terms of having spelled out the problem. Then we will benchmark ourselves over time to see how much change has been achieved as a result of the implementation of the plans that General Becton and the Trustees will have put in place.

Also, I just want to say for the record here that we have been very involved with the Trustees and with General Becton in terms of trying to measure informally - assess rather, the changes that we see having taken place and we do - I think they would both say that we've put a lot of pressure on them to move this extraordinarily cumbersome bureaucracy. It's a lot more cumbersome indeed than we had expected it to be. But then we thought we knew how much it was.

But let us not lose sight of the fact that since November 15 when they came in place, they didn't have a three month time frame over the summer as we had when the Authority first came into existence to work and develop plans before we began to operate. But they have closed 13 schools in this short time frame and that is no short order. They have very specific plans to rebuild two schools. They have also worked with a contractor to provide building security and the fact is that we will continue to have situations where a young person or a couple of kids here and there will do things that upset all of us as parents and as educators, professionals.

But I think that while we do hold the school responsible for these, we also have to call into question the parents. I think it's unfair to say that the entire problem of some young children becoming sexually active on the school grounds rests solely on the shoulders of the principal. We do have to find ways to involve parents and to hold them accountable for their children's behavior as well. But I want to say that overall we are pleased with the extent

to which the school system has gotten involved with trying to bring down the day to day level of crime.

The other is on the issue of charter schools, we've had many discussions with the school system employees and board members about the charter schools and there are deficiencies in the legislation. One has to do with standards. There does need to be some uniform standards by which all of the schools in the District can be evaluated.

I don't think the intent of the legislation was to simply allow anyone who wanted to just start a school without any kind of standards being imposed. So that's one of the deficiencies and I believe that - I hope I'm correct in saying that perhaps they will come back to you at some point with some proposals on how to remedy this legislatively.

Ms. **Norton**. Actually, there was a struggle here in the Congress over that. There really Members who wanted charter schools. They didn't care whether there were standards or not. There are a whole school of people who believe that let 1,000 flowers bloom and that's all you need. I very much oppose that. I know that will never fly in any system. The whole notion that if all you have to do is charter a school and somehow it's automatically better than the existing public schools is completely naive, but there are many people who are so fed up with public school bureaucracies that they believe that almost anything would be better. I really wonder though if we need to - I don't think that you are forbidden to do standards.

Dr. **Ladner**. I just don't know.

Ms. **Norton**. But I will be very happy to take a look at that.

Dr. **Ladner**. Okay. But there has to be standards. I think that some of the issues that came up last fall with the Garvey School perhaps would not have had there been more clarity on what are the standards by which you run them.

Ms. **Norton**. You see, I just want to say for the record right here, I really do believe they could have set forward qualifications. Apparently what happened is the school board, or at least what they said, is school board members came forward. Let me note that Mr. Reeves was not on the board. The election had not occurred at that time. They came forward and said I have somebody in my ward who wants a school. Somebody else has somebody in their ward. This is what has raised for me a doubt about elected school boards. I am for home rule but as we redo home rule, if we have this kind of trade off that people feel they have to make and they may, then it seems to me that the new home rule charter may well have to go with scarce resources to the notion that you have to have a kind of CEO system where your mayor does what they did in Chicago. You have an advisory board.

For example, Mr. Reeves, you all would never have closed those schools and I don't know what I can tell you except that you all have been beat half to death, and I don't know if there's any way around that. And we've gotten to the point where if you don't have resources that allow people to do trade offs, maybe you just can't afford the kind of system we have any longer. I'm sorry to interrupt, Dr. Ladner.

Dr. **Ladner**. I think the point you're making is a very, very excellent one because increasingly highly technical skills are needed to run these city's institutions much like corporations do, especially with the scarcity of resources.

The second area I think that certainly has to be looked at very carefully is oversight infrastructure. Who will be responsible for making sure that fire code violations, as one example, are indeed remedied in the charter schools. In all of our inventory of school buildings, if they should use any of them, are indeed very old. We haven't

built new schools since the 1970s here. So that's a problem of the '60s, the '70s, and some sort of a fiscal oversight. I think that's another area. Who will be responsible and ultimately accountable to make sure that the charter schools spend allocation as necessary.

(Chair returns to Hoekstra.)

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you, Dr. Ladner.

Let me just ask a question of somebody that's qualified. I've heard it said over and over again that the budget must be cleared by the council before anything can be done and we have draft proposals that must be cleared by somebody. Is there any way that somebody could have an operating arrangement about who has the authority to do what and what has to be cleared somewhere? I don't know whether we have that or not. I guess we do. Who is the chartering authority? So we have a split personality there. Being a businessman, I think Ms. Norton said it properly, maybe a chief operating officer is what's necessary. I don't know. In listening to what's being said, it appears to me that you've got a whole bunch of people in charge and everybody is trying to do the best they can but who really makes the decision?

I know, General, you get all the heat. I don't know whether you're in a position to make all the decisions if you're going to catch it.

General **Becton**. Actually, we view that as a state level responsibility for the development of those standards and that's one correction we would like to make. Not to take over the responsibility of either chartering agency but there is no one to ensure all the things that you've mentioned, and that's the role of that I think we should be playing. We have a staff to do that, as well.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Mr. Reeves.

Mr. **Reeves**. I'd like to respond to some of the comments that Congressman Norton made. In this last round of school closings I, as a member of the School Board, voted to close what was recommended by the Control Board which was six schools. In the previous year, the School Board closed an additional six schools and since 1977 the School Board has closed 56 schools.

Ms. **Norton**. Let me just ask you, Mr. Reeves, with that comeback. Do you believe that the school system has closed as many schools as need to be closed? I'm quite aware of how many have been closed but do you believe that the school system as we sit here has closed as many schools as need to be closed?

Mr. **Reeves**. I will respond -

Ms. **Norton**. You're using the figure that Congress gave. I think it's a terrible shame that Congress had to give any figure whatsoever. My job is to keep Congress from having to do that. So if the school system had gone ahead and done it itself, Congress wouldn't be in it now. If you think that's enough, what I'm going to be faced with here, you see, is people are going to come forward with another number for the next year and the next year, and what does that do to home rule?

Mr. **Reeves**. Well, Congressman Norton, I'm not a party to opposition to this new form of school governance, first of all. I've cooperated fully with the school closing effort. I understand that there are 40 schools to be closed over

the next three and a half years and should I be involved with that, that's what will happen. I do not have the experience of what it means to be an empowered board member, so I can't respond to the history that you appear to be presenting to me today.

Ms. **Norton**. No, I'm responding to the six that you say you have closed. You came back and said, hey, we closed six -

Mr. **Reeves**. That's what was recommended by the Control Board.

Ms. **Norton**. - as if you had done the job. My question to you is if you close six, is that all you think has to be closed? Look, I'm not -

Mr. **Reeves**. I think there is without question excessive space that was developed from the '60s to now in D.C. Public Schools and that schools need to be closed. However, I will say without any shame whatsoever that I am very proud that I didn't participate in voting to close some of the elementary schools that have been closed in this round of school closings.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you. We're going to get back to regular order and we're going to yield to Ms. Morella.

Ms. **Morella**. Thank you. I wanted to thank you for testifying and certainly you have articulated what we knew was happening and that is the litany of the problems facing the school system in the District of Columbia and the fact that that is, I think, the #1 concern, safety, infrastructure and accountability, when people are looking to the nation's capital.

I was concerned, General Becton, when I heard Mr. Reeves reading off his whole list of the problems the school system faces and then to hear him say that the School Board has received no funds and then to ask for the $404,000. I just wondered if you just might comment on whether that was purposely done and what the reason was to eliminate - not eliminate - to just not come up with any funding for the School Board. Do you feel they don't need it?

General **Becton**. Ms. Morella, I think that the Chairman of our Board is in a better position to respond to that.

Ms. **Morella**. Oh, okay. Great. Fine.

Mr. **MacLaury**. If I may, Ms. Morella.

Ms. **Morella**. Yes, indeed.

Mr. **MacLaury**. I think it is an inaccurate statement that the School Board does not have a budget. The School Board for the current fiscal year has a budget of, I believe the number is around $480,000 and we, the Trustees, have assigned, if you will, a budget of $400,000 to the School Board for all of its functions for the fiscal year 1998. So that budget is available to the School Board and its members for allocation in whatever way it chooses. Some of its funds are spent on its own salaries. It has some staff, a small staff, but some of that staff can be allocated to the

needs of chartering. It is simply inaccurate that it does not have a budget.

Mr. **Reeves**. May I respond?

Ms. **Morella**. I'm going to give Mr. Reeves an opportunity to respond and clarify.

Mr. **Reeves**. Thank you. I think what's being jumbled up here is the fact that there is a budget that was set up for the school board under whatever to pay itself and to continue those operations. What we're talking about is the statutory duty to administer a chartering function. The 11 members of the School Board now addressed with the new form of school governance need training in the areas of chartering. We need legal counsel to understand what we're doing. We need a staff that is competent to go out in the communities to monitor the sites that these applicants are selecting.

What's not being discussed here is that this is a novel situation in Washington, D.C. and certainly probably in American education and you've taken, for example in November, four new people who perhaps didn't even have a concept of what chartering meant and then find themselves in office with the responsibility of administering this program. There's no money set out in the budget that was given to the School Board for training, for counsel, for a charter coordinator. There isn't even an application in the Board of Education office to give out. So I think what we have to do is just look at this. We're not working at cross purposes.

What I have asked for since coming into office is this: An opportunity for a school board that has fallen into disgrace with the public, an opportunity for new people to come in to take this one responsibility that's left to us and to do a good job with that, and we have not been given that opportunity.

Ms. **Morella**. So you feel that there should be additional money as a one shot kind of thing for the training particularly beyond the -

Mr. **Reeves**. Training, counsel and a coordinator. And I must say the figure of $400,000, when I came into office and sat with Dr. Omar and tried to review this school budget, we never started off with $400,000. At the point that I came in, the figure was closer to $200,000 and it appeared to us that we had probably just enough to hire maybe some clerical staff to answer the phones. The Board of Education is more or less like a morgue at this point. I don't even know if - I don't even see any Board Members here. It is a demoralizing situation.

What we've asked for is an opportunity, a fighting chance to win some respect and credibility back with the public by administering this function and unfortunately, we've been off balance, the rug pulled out from underneath us, responding to things and this is not our intent. The four new people that were elected all are parents of public school children and we want the best for the children. We don't see any merit to conflict. I'm not part of a law suit, as I indicated. I've been working with this Trustee group. I have an obligation to continue doing that. I think that I appreciate the fact that you are furthering -

Ms. **Morella**. I don't want to take up too much more of my time, but at some point would you be in touch with us with regard to your response to it.

I wanted to pick up with General Becton on the concept of the GAO report coming out and then hearing from Mr. MacLaury that the trustees will doing their own audit. How do we synchronize what's happening? You've already done a tentative cursory study, General Becton, of the number of students and now the GAO report is going to be on the methodology and then Mr. MacLaury will have his own audit from the trustees. Would you explain

that?

General **Becton**. Yes. The committee asked for the GAO to take a look at our methodology and calculation of our enrollment and they started that about January and the indications are that they will give us a draft of their review in June. The methodology by which we count. What I said is that we will put out a request for proposal to actual count to verify which is a requirement, as I'm told, by law that we have an actual count by an auditor. And that's the two different numbers that we're talking about.

Ms. **Morella**. And how does your trustees report fit into that?

Mr. **MacLaury**. I'm confused, Ms. Morella.

Ms. **Morella**. You're going to do one on what, milestones? Is that it?

Mr. **MacLaury**. In my statement I indicated that as trustees we have set forth in our document "Children First" a list of I think it's 10 measures that we want to be gauged by the public and ourselves over the course of our three year history and those include many, many things other than student count.

Ms. **Morella**. I realize that and I remember you gave us a nice list of it. But that's also going to be coming to us. You're going to have that completed by June 30th, too, I think.

Mr. **MacLaury**. What I said, I think, in terms of June 30, my reference to June 30 was with respect to those characteristics, those measures of success, as we call them, that we intend to have baseline measures. How many students do graduate out of a class? How many students do drop out? How many students do get employment after they graduate? It's getting a baseline. We do not even have baselines as I speak before you today for those factors. How can we measure success if we don't know the baseline? We will have those baselines by June 30. That's what I meant to say.

Ms. **Morella**. General Becton, there are 10 schools that will be closed, never to be rebuilt?. Do you have any plans for what you will do with those buildings or the schools?

General **Becton**. Yes, ma'am. We have approval before the public Monday night to dispose of property and we are actively doing that. We have already some unsolicited proposals. We have other contacts with people who are interested in developing. We believe that we can dispose of the property or at least lease the property so that they can be profit producing so that we can build and do other things within the school system.

Ms. **Morella**. Bearing in mind that you may need more schools eventually, too.

General **Becton**. Yes. We certainly do.

Ms. **Morella**. Let me ask you. I know I'm jumping around. I just have a chart that was given to us, to all of us. I'm curious about the number of teachers per central administrator. I can't understand that. It says "District of Columbia,

16." Can anyone explain that? The number of teachers per administrator.

General **Becton**. Is that the report, ma'am, "Children in Crisis" issued last year?

Ms. **Morella**. I guess it is. Yes. Council of Great City Schools, National Urban Education Goals. Well, I'll let you look at that after.

Mr. **MacLaury**. I recall, I don't have that chart in front of me but I recall I believe that it was in the report "Children in Crisis." The indication that D.C. has more administrators per teacher than many other, if not most other, school districts and that is a problem. We recognize it as a problem and we are trying to, as we speak, make sure that we have allocated to specific jobs all of the employees of the District so that we can tell who is in the classroom, who is in the school, and who is central administration. That's the beginning of wisdom. And then we will start reallocating. But your point is well taken and we are very conscious of it.

Ms. **Morella**. Particularly when I see that more money is spent in the District of Columbia than in Montgomery County Schools which was prefaced by the mayor with the kind of results we have. Finally, let me just make a statement. In Montgomery County, Maryland we have Saturday School where teachers and parents volunteer their time. They tutor at risk kids. Also counselors who are volunteers go into homes where there may be attitude barriers to education to talk to parents, and I just wondered do you have any plans to set up something that is similar to that? I mean with the tremendous number of drop outs you have obviously, a number of creative things should be done. Dr. Ladner, do you want to comment on that? They seem to be pointing to you. I don't know.

General **Becton**. No. We do have Saturday Academies right now for grades one through six. We also have a very large number of mentors who are part of the 12 institution colloquium in the area that have been identified and starting this coming summer we'll have a large number of people working with our youngsters in reading and those kind of things, in addition to the Saturday Academies that we have.

Ms. **Morella**. I hope you have plans to expand that concept, too.

General **Becton**. We intend to do exactly that.

Ms. **Morella**. The more people who get involved, the better.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for giving me the extended time.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. **Norton**. Mr. Chairman, I have only a few more questions but I'd like to ask those and get answers to them on the record. First, could I say to Mr. Reeves, I sympathize with the notion that, particularly with the new member that came on to engage in reforms, that you do not get the opportunity to do that. As you know, while I would have had Mr. Becton come in and would have had the shake up occur, I would not have disempowered the school board and I

do want to say that as long as there are elected officials in this town, I will always defend their role. At the same time, I will criticize them precisely because I believe I am the strongest advocate of home rule in the city.

And if I were in your position on charter schools, if I could just indicate how I would go at it. You indicated about the respect and the credibility that is necessary and you recognize how demoralizing it is that the school board in fact lost the confidence of residents, not just of the Financial Authority.

At a time when the District must come into balance a year early and, therefore, is making even extra sacrifice. The last thing I would say is that in addition to the money they've already given you, they should give you some money for a counselor and a coordinator and so forth. That turns everybody off. Most people don't think you all should get any salary.

This is what I would do. I would feel just as frustrated, but I would feel that I have to build back my credibility. To get some respect, I would go out and find somebody in the school system to be detailed to you, and then I'd go out and I'd find me a volunteer counselor, and I'd go out and find me a volunteer coordinator. After I did that and showed what I could do with nothing and got back some respect, then I would go and try to get some more funds. I just say that because I don't think you truly expect that the trustees are going to give more money. If you let this power lie unused, it will reinforce the low regard in which the school board is held and was held before you got there. This is just a friendly suggestion but I think it's better to make something out of nothing than to say I'm going to do nothing until you give me what I deserve.

Mr. **Reeves**. Congressman Norton, Reverend Childs, who's the chair of our charter - well, he's the chair of our Education Committee. He's the one that's working directly with Mr. Winnig of General Becton's staff, has traveled with Mr. Winnig, worked with him hand in hand, and it is out of his frustration that the proposal was presented to the board by Mr. Childs that basically he didn't see a future for us in this area because of his frustrations in dealing with the administration, things which he was told were going to happen not happening.

So everything that you've said, we have in Reverend Childs somebody that has acted out on that. But I want to share more specifically -

Ms. **Norton**. I was responding to what you said you needed, not to what Mr. Childs has done.

Mr. **Reeves**. Okay.

Ms. **Norton**. And you said you needed a counselor, you needed a coordinator and the rest. Look, I don't want to get into an argument. The Chairman doesn't have much more time. I'm simply saying it is going to be hard to get back some respect for the board, and you're not going to get it by asking for additional funds. You know good and well you're not going to get the additional funds and if they did, they would be criticized for giving you funds for somebody to coordinate for charter schools at a time when they are making the cuts they are making.

I am not criticizing you. I am literally offering a suggestion as to how to get this moving so that even this power does not get taken away and then they say, well, look, you all haven't done it so we need some standards so let's let the trustees do it.

Mr. Chavous, one of the things that the council wanted most of all over the years was line item authority over the school board. Through the authority legislation we have given you that. Could you tell us what specific use you have made of the line item authority?

Mr. **Chavous**. Certainly, Congresswoman Norton. Let me briefly inject myself into your discussion with Mr. Reeves. I think, as you accurately indicated, some of the tension between the elected board and the transitional board of trustees is what happens when democracy, however justified, is suspended. If you look at those persons sitting at this table, none of us were acutely involved in running or managing the school system six months ago yet we are at the point people out in the area of education reform in this city. So some of the tension is understandable but I think as you accurately stated children still aren't learning and I think that our citizens just want results and my view and one of the reasons why I wanted to have the chairmanship of this committee is I think that there's so much we can do, so much the elected board can do to inject itself into the process.

You mentioned line item authority and I think Congresswoman Morella made mention of the fact that there's a large number of central administration. With the budget we just passed, we reduced an additional 134 positions that we identified specifically in the budget document in central administration and we indicated with the caveat that they should not be tied to - they shouldn't be teachers or in the direct services area.

We also - someone mentioned truancy and General Becton acknowledged the fact that that's something that the committee has been pressing him a whole lot about because I think truancy prevention is something that we need to be focused more on. It is an abysmal record to have three individuals in a school system of arguably 78,000 people involved in truancy prevention. So we used the line item authority to dedicate $250,000 in additional money for a truancy prevention program. We're going to have some suggestions on that in the hearing we have later on this month.

We also used the line item authority to designate $10 million for teacher pay raises for the upcoming school year. We used that authority in a number of different ways which we think will aid in improving our school system. So I think we all should be about the business of improving the schools so that our children can read, write and count. And frankly, politics being what they are, that should take a back seat. We almost need to have a collective out of body experience in looking at our respective roles and we need to lay some of these egos aside and work for the benefit of our children.

In my ward, Ward 7, we've lost more residents in this city over the last 10 years than any other ward in the city and it's tied to three areas: schools, crime and taxes. That's why we lose people, and there have been some strides made in the area of crime, as the mayor indicated. The Council has not increased any taxes over the last couple of years. I think that will stabilize. But in this area of schools, we have to do a better job of focusing in on the real problem, identify some student achievement goals that we're going to follow and then, as I mentioned in my statement, General Becton has to put in place some evaluation and training for these principals. I believe, as Mr. Horn indicated, if you have a good principal, you have a good school and frankly, while we have good folks in our school system, we need to fire some of these principals before we start the school year and I think that's where the focus should be and we can do a lot in that area instead of us bickering about our respective roles. The five us here are the ones who are out in front in educational reform and we should act like it frankly, and that's my view.

Ms. **Norton**. Thank you.

Mr. **Reeves**. I want to thank you.

Ms. **Norton**. I'll be back to you, Mr. Reeves.

Mr. Becton, with the schools closed, will you need all the personnel that were used when those schools were open?

General **Becton**. The only personnel that will not be used are those custodial personnel tied to a particular building and principals, and we're going to use those 13 principals, the competent ones to replace the ones that should not be principals in the coming school year. That's why we had a flexibility to make some changes. As far as teachers are concerned, yes, we'll need all the teachers because we're not changing any programs. We're moving teachers, students, or numbers of them and programs to different schools.

Ms. **Norton**. General Becton, I do a lot of work trying to get funds for the D.C. Public School system often out of existing grant money. It Broke my heart when the National Science Foundation pulled back a grant that had been made to D.C., one of the few schools that had gotten it. Have you reapplied for that money and do you have any way to track federal funds so that that will not happen again?

General **Becton**. I feel very confident that we will be able to regain that money from the National Science Foundation. I've had discussions with Dr. Williams on that subject. We've also identified some people who can lead that project and we think that we can not only get that money back but leverage other monies.

As far as the grant administration, we have completely reorganized our grant administration office so that we have clear, separating lines between the state agencies and those other agencies. We need an audit and we are going to conduct an audit in the very near future of all of our grants so that we can make sure that we know exactly where we are.

Ms. **Norton**. That is very good news.

Mr. Chairman, the only other thing I have to say really goes to the relationship that has developed between the elected school board and the Board of Trustees. Mr. Chavous mentioned this and I think spoke to it very well. The tension is understandable and he is absolutely right. When you use authoritarian methods, people get their backs up and I believe there was a way to do this without completely disempowering the school board.

I also believe if the school board - again, Mr. Reeves, this is pre-Reeves school board - for years with Congress breathing down its neck, everybody talking about the schools and their problems and did not move and in a real sense, having not moved, they forced the hand of the Financial Authority. The Financial Authority might have done it a little differently but they couldn't just sit there after the schools failed to open for the second time.

But Mr. MacLaury, recognizing that these people have every reason to be frustrated at the way in which they were frankly undemocratically overthrown in a way that is inconsistent with American principles of democracy, the burden on you, if you are going to turn over a school system that is repaired, is to involve them in it. This is not of your making. It's not of Mr. Reeves' making. But the fact is that if what you do is sit over there in secret doing what has to be done to the school board and you hand it back to people who have not been involved in the repair work, then you will have done the residents of the District of Columbia no service because then they'll get this back which has been fixed by somebody else and they will not have incorporated in their way of doing business how to do business that way.

One of the reasons that authoritarianism doesn't work is that you can't give people fish, you have to teach them how to fish. There's a culture in the school board that needs to be taken apart. It is doing to result in some tension. That goes along with the territory. If you're not prepared for the tension and not prepared to go through what it takes to undo the tension, you will not help the schools. I am going to ask you right here publicly to find a way to incorporate the elected school board more closely in your actual deliberations and in your work, as difficult as that is, because I think that is part of your job.

Mr. Reeves, I think it is part of your job when they give you less money than you want, when they do not do all that you want them to do, to, with Mr. MacLaury and with the trustees, to help the school board develop a

problem solving attitude toward your relationship. Both of you have every reason to be frustrated. Both of you deserve the gratitude of the people of the District of Columbia, but very frankly, the tension between you is not healthy, will not result in the kind of school system we want at the end of your period, and I am here publicly asking you to not only work on a strategic plan for the school system, not only to work on a long-term plan and framework for the school system, but to sit down with Mr. Reeves and with other members of the board to work out a plan for solving your difficulties so that together we can be assured that when the school system is handed back, it is one in which whatever you have done has been actually transferred so that they pick it up and run seamlessly with it as if it was theirs all along. That is your charge, I believe.

Mr. **Reeves**. Thank you for your advice, Congresswoman.

Dr. **Ladner**. Congresswoman Norton, may I speak just one second? I think the assumption you're making is that those efforts are not being undertaken.

Ms. **Norton**. Joyce, I've seen evidence -

Dr. **Ladner**. Well, you see it here but what you don't see is that there have been extraordinary efforts made by Mr. MacLaury to work with the school board, the elected school board. I am pleased at the level of progress that has been made. I believe that the members of the transitional board of trustees is very, very sensitive to this issue. I believe that they understand clearly that they are in place for three years, a little over three years, and they want to try to get as much done as quickly as possible and to get out.

You're talking to a chairman of the board of trustees who works out of his home. He doesn't have an office at the school system. None of them have staff. They don't have offices and so on. All of us are making sacrifices. They aren't paid. Neither are we. It's not a complaint but it's just a statement of fact. What I'm saying is that we are all doing the very best we can with a very difficult situation. The Authority could not have sat by, as you just indicated, and once we came up with the numbers and saw how terrible things had gotten over time and do nothing and we labored for a long time, for months, over what to do, what was appropriate to do.

So none of us are operating in a way that's insensitive to these different boundaries but we do believe first and foremost that the children should not suffer because of the -

Ms. **Norton**. Dr. Ladner, the bell has rung. I want everybody to know once again because I've said several times how much I appreciate what all involved have done, but the fact is that I don't give anybody any credit for doing what he knew he was going to have to do anyway. He knew he was going to have to work out of his home. Mr. Reeves, if anything, didn't know all that would happen to him. Look, I don't myself say to the residents of the District of Columbia, they took my vote, I got to find a way to do it with the Republicans, what do you expect from me, I'm doing the best. I say, Hey, what are the rules of the game? I'm going to beat them at their own rules.

What I say to Mr. MacLaury and Mr. Reeves, Hey, those are the rules, you're in this as volunteers, you're doing wonderfully, you could do a lot better if you had better relationships. All I'm asking them to do is to work out a better relationship in the interest of the children. I'm sure Dr. Ladner would agree that the children will be better served if these two bodies have better personal relationships. They're very intelligent people. They don't need the Financial Authority to do it for them. Mr. MacLaury and Mr. Reeves can do it and if you can get these folks in a room and they can work this thing out, let them do it.

Dr. **Ladner**. All I'm saying is that Mr. MacLaury and his board have gone beyond the call of duty and the fact that it is not reflected here does not mean it doesn't happen.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you. And the rules are I've got the gavel and you don't and your time is up and we're going to have a quick question from Mr. Davis.

Mr. **Davis**. Two quick things. First, I'd ask unanimous consent that Mrs. Morella's opening statement be put in the record.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. CONNIE MORELLA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND – SEE APPENDIX J

Chairman **Hoekstra**. So ordered. It's an excellent statement.

Mr. **Davis**. I would add to what Mrs. Norton said. I think it's important for all of us here to act like grown ups and recognize the predicament we're in. We're in this largely because the school board, prior to you arriving there, was non-functioning and, as a result of that, we had to take some extraordinary action. We want you to be players. We want you in there pitching. The more innovative and cooperative you can become, the easier it's going to be to give you more authority. Mr. MacLaury, we appreciate you taking on a very thankless job but we need to be sensitive to the fact that the people they've elected are now kind of out of the loop a little bit. We want to try to make it as inclusive. I think Mrs. Norton has put it very eloquently and I just associate myself with that. That's not a criticism. I know you're trying. We're all relying on you to work it out.

I just have one question. General Becton, I'll address this to you or anybody else, but I was looking at the preliminary facilities master plan for 2005. This was published October '95, $1.2 billion. Virtually the same plan, April 25, '97, $2 billion. The same plan. I need to see what's happened to increase the cost during that time.

Secondly, the District is estimating that modernization of school space will cost $130 per square foot but in Maryland the cost is only $65 a square. Why is it so much more expensive in the District? And I might add in my district it's closer to $65 a square foot. And worse is the GSA provided the $130 per square foot number. Maybe you got the number from GSA and that may tell me that the General Services Administration is paying twice as much for facilities repairs as it should. I'd also add the cost of roof improvement here is estimated at $14 to $15 while in Maryland and Virginia is $6.70 per square foot.

If you can't explain this now, we could have you provide it for the record but I think some of these assumptions just caught our eye here in the committee staff and caught mine, and we want to get these as realistic as we can, but I don't see any reason why the numbers should have gone up $800 million in such a short time.

General **Becton**. We will provide it for the record, Mr. Davis, but I'm sure you'll be happy to know that we are seeking the requested data from Fairfax County. However, it is not unusual to find cost differences for these projects when you consider that the DCPS inventory is 60 years old, roofing designs, compared to 20 years old in Fairfax County. I live in Fairfax County, as you know. The schools that we have today that are more than 60 years old, there were no schools in Fairfax County. So we're comparing apples and oranges and the numbers -

Mr. **Davis**. We might have been part of Alexandria then. I'm not sure.

General **Becton**. The number is about $1.2 billion. Those are GSA figures and we have to accept something.

Mr. **Davis**. I understand. Other than that, thank you all. I appreciate what you all are doing. The difficult situation.

Kevin, I didn't get to ask you any questions. We appreciate all of you working proactively together. We're all counting on you to do it. We don't like being involved in this stuff day to day either. I'm seeing some progress as we move forward. Thank you all for the job you're doing.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. I've just got a couple of questions. You're ready to leave, but these are easy.

General Becton, I believe Secretary Riley said that at one point he would be willing to waive any rules or regulations from the Department of Education. Have you requested any waivers?

General **Becton**. Sir, we've had meetings as recently as yesterday with the Secretary's office. We've had continuous meetings. They have waived a lot of things. They've given us authority to use Title I that we probably didn't consider before. We're very content with the relationship between the two.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. So they have given you a series of waivers.

General **Becton**. What we've asked for, they've given to us. Yes.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Mr. Reeves, and I think the rest of the panel, I don't know if you have outside relationships on the charter school issue or some of these reform areas, but the State of Michigan has taken the lead on charter schools in many of these areas. If it would be helpful, I'd be more than willing to talk to Governor Engler. In Michigan we do have multiple chartering authorities. That is not that unusual. I'm willing to talk with the governor to see if they are willing to send a team or a group here to spend a day or a couple of days with you talking about how it's administered there. We've also met with people in California and Arizona. Maybe we could bring a cross section in to meet with you and share their experiences with you so that you're not recreating the wheel as you go through the process of some of the types of reforms that you're taking a look at. So if that would be helpful, I will be more than willing to do that and we'll be in contact with you to see exactly how we can follow up on something like that.

General **Becton**. Anything you do will be useful. Again, you've named states and that's what we think is very important so that we can have that same authority to ensure the compliance with what the intent of the charter regulations are.

Mr. **Chavous**. Mr. Chairman, that will be very helpful. Our committee is having a hearing on the charter school issue later this month, so maybe we could get some of those representatives to testify at that hearing. That would be very helpful.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. We will. We'll follow up and we'll see how we can work together on this.

Thank you very much. This panel is completed. The committee will be in recess. We've got a vote right now. We will start again at 1:15.

[Recess.]

Chairman **Hoekstra**. The subcommittee will come to order. I'd like to welcome our second panel. Ms. Norton and I were just discussing how sorry we are that it took so long for us to get to the second panel, but we determined that it was because of her questioning that we're still here, but we thoroughly enjoyed it and we're sure we'll enjoy the second panel as well.

Let me introduce the second panel. We have Ms. Delabian Rice-Thurston who is Director of Parents United for D.C. Public Schools. Ms. Rice-Thurston testified before the Oversight Investigation Subcommittee two years ago and we're looking forward to hearing how she feels things have changed and how they're going in 1997.

We have Ms. Tara Pickstock, a senior at Banneker High School. You're going to be attending Boston College next year. Congratulations. And she's going to share with us her experiences in the D.C. public school system. So thank you all for being here.

And last we have Ms. Judith Jones, who's a parent of a former D.C. Public School student and a charter school proponent. Ms. Jones also worked with General Becton on some of the school facilities problems that the District is facing.

Ms. Rice-Thurston, we'll begin with you.

## *STATEMENT OF DELABIAN L. RICE-THURSTON, PARENTS UNITED FOR D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS*

Ms. **Rice-Thurston** . Thank you. I'm Delabian Rice-Thurston. I appreciate this opportunity to speak on behalf of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools. I'm the executive director and the mother of a public school student at Deal Junior High School and the mother of a graduate of Wilson High School who's a freshman at Columbia University. He was a 1996 National Merit finalist, a National Achievement winner, is a participant in Columbia University's freshman honors program. David and his friends received a first rate education from D.C. Public Schools. They're attending some of the best schools in this country in college.

I'm here as a parent who believes in public education, not in vouchers. I believe that we can make schools perform for more students in the short-term and for all students if we have the will in the long-term. I'm offering a number of suggestions that I hope will help the school system deliver for every student.

I'll start with just a brief statement of our long-standing concerns. Student achievement levels are far too low. The indicators of student outcomes, test scores, drop out rates, and grades have not been well-selected and are not improving. Our salaries for teachers and principals are not competitive and our methods of evaluation don't relate them to student achievement. Local school management needs to expand the options that are available for organizing schools and for educating students.

Our improvement strategies center on basically five or six things. We need a commitment to excellence. We need an education plan, a facilities plan, an administrative plan, state oversight and incentives and parent oversight. I'll elaborate.

We have to develop an education plan. Improving schools to raise achievement requires and implementing a long-range plan for academic instruction, supplies, equipment and facilities. Parents United wants the Congress to encourage this system to create a plan and to follow its implementation and to fund it. The Goals 2000 community plan for educational improvement was developed by our school system, parents, teachers, business and other

sectors. It includes high academic standards, de-bureaucratization, enterprise schools, magnet programs, teacher run charters, school within schools, training, a variety of school reforms. Unfortunately, there is as yet no implementation plan and the reforms are not reflected in next year's budget requests or in the way the school system works.

The fact that the Control Board was put in charge of our schools was an improvement but it was a thin veneer of new leadership. People who were not trained in education were put in charge of a downsized school administrative structure but it was not a changed work force. Parents United is beginning to question the school system's managerial capacity to make proposals real. For example, our DCPS budget request for 1998 is about five hundred seven eight million, but only 60 percent of that is identified as being for schools and school programs.

Parents have not been able to receive the report by KPMG Peat Marwick that was recently completed that shows DCPS administrative costs and needs. Parents need to understand the nature of the school system. We need Congress to obtain this report and share it with us. You can do that. We have tried to FOIA it. We have not yet received it. Please, we need you to be that conduit.

The District of Columbia needs a state to help us organize to raise the quality of our children's schools. It has been effective in Kentucky and in Ohio. But the state function needs to provide both oversight and incentives. Unfortunately, the Emergency Board of Trustees has a wonderful mandate for oversight but it is weakened because it relies on our school system for all of its information and it lacks the capacity to check that information. It also lacks the financial incentives that states like Ohio and Kentucky can offer their local school systems to get them to upgrade achievement.

We would love to see the Congress provide the Emergency Board of Trustees with an incentive fund that they can use to reward schools that improve quality.

We need improved testing. We are delighted that the Board of Trustees is going to adopt the Stanford 9 Examination for third, sixth and ninth grades. Unfortunately, we need testing every year. We need testing used to monitor student progress, to diagnose academic weaknesses and to monitor how effectively teachers are able to move a student. Now, I am very concerned about always hearing the statement that the longer you stay in D.C. schools, the worse you get because the data doesn't prove it and you need and we need the data that would show one way or the other.

For example, if you take one cohort of kids and between the third and the sixth grade a bunch of your best students drop and go to private school, your median is going to go down, even if everybody who was lower than they were went up a whole year and better because you lost the top. Our comparisons are constantly with this median that is never dealing with the same cohort of kids. I would love to know whether our twelfth grade graduates were scoring who, say, graduated at unfortunately ninth grade achievement, but if they started first grade as the equivalent of a four year old and made progress but their progress was low level progress, they're going up. We have done a better job with them than we would have done if they were at home, but the testing and the way we've monitored those tests is not showing what we need to know.

We need early childhood education. We need more of it. Right now our early childhood pupil/teacher ratios are one to 17, one to 22 if you have an aide in the classroom. In private classes, early childhood ratios are one to 10. We desperately need to be able to educate children in public schools the way we're educating them in private schools.

Our funding and planning for school building repairs is terrible and, to be honest about it, a lot of it is your fault as Congress people. You gave us our schools. Don't you remember when you controlled us? Every one of our deteriorated, dilapidated schools was built with federal money when we were under the U.S. Congress. We think that you could do us a great service by putting a capital maintenance reserve fund together to help us make the repairs in basic infrastructure for the buildings that you gave us and keep that as part of a nest egg for basic repairs. Then we can go to the mayor, council for the repairs that will take us to 21st century standards.

Our school system had 11,000 fire code violations in 1989 when we initiated our law suit. Right now, in the course of a year, we understand that they have 1,000 violations perhaps and they repair them but they repair them out of operating money because the capital budget is abysmal. They need capital funding support and they need to do what it takes to give us 21st century schools but that is long-term, very intense money. We're talking about $2 billion.

Finally, we need a commitment to excellence. Our school system in a way often is afraid of excellence because it means that to some extent every school won't be the same. We put our best together. For example, Dunbar has a pre-engineering program, but it doesn't have a pre-engineering kind of facility. Banneker, our academic high school, does not have new modern science labs. It's not a Thomas Jefferson. If you look at School Without Walls, it has three national merit semifinalists but its science lab, it's a converted elementary school. They make do with the use of George Washington University's facilities. We need to have the Congress help us put together 21st century excellent facilities both for elementary, junior high school and senior high schools. We need some magnate programs and we need this as part of your commitment to excellence in D.C. Public Schools.

Finally, we're all talking about how well students are educated, for example, in Japan. I'd love it if you would go back to the time that we defeated Japan and wrote their constitution. We have demanded of Japan that one half to one third of public education funding is federal. They don't have the kinds of discrepancies that we have in funding between local jurisdictions and prefectures or states.

You have asked what the Congress can do to support public education. One of the things that you can do is equalize spending nationally. I realize that is a very big change in the perception of how we look at public education, but if some portion of spending for every student in this country were federally derived, I think you would find a whole lot more quality among states and among jurisdictions than you do.

As we look at our school system's budget, remember they have downsized our school system's administration. They are closing schools. There is money being generated through savings for our school system. But notice, it will go into the city's general fund to fund the city's deficit unless you and the Congress do something to prevent that. Constantly you have been told that our administrative costs are too high and they should be spending more in the classroom. The moment they cut those administrative costs, it does not go into the classroom. It is funding our city's deficit. We need you to help preserve funding for our schools and make sure that it gets into our classrooms.

Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Rice-Thurston follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DELABIAN L. RICE-THURSTON, PARENTS UNITED FOR D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS -- SEE APPENDIX J

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you.

Ms. Pickstock.

## *STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK, STUDENT, BANNEKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL*

Ms. **Pickstock**. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee. My name is Tara Pickstock. I am a 17 year old senior at Benjamin Banneker Academic Senior High School located in Northwest Washington, D.C. I would like to sincerely thank Congresswoman Norton for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this committee about my experiences as a student in the District of Columbia Public School system. It is an honor and a privilege for me to be able to speak to you this afternoon.

Prior to attending Benjamin Banneker Senior High School, I attended Bancroft Elementary School followed by Lincoln Junior High School. To sum up my educational background, I am a product of the District of Columbia public high school. Each time I say that, I wonder how many people around me privately ask themselves why is she so proud of that?

The answer is quite simple. I know the truth. I have been enrolled in the District of Columbia Public School system for 10 years. I know, as I have always known, that there are no wars within our school. I know also that the students are eager to learn. They want to learn and attempt to create a productive learning atmosphere. Teachers such as my French teacher, Ms. Judith Shipley, and my former algebra teacher, Mr. Jeffrey Chopin, are well qualified and have immeasurable concern for their students.

I would be the first to admit that the District of Columbia Public School system does have its problems, problems whose solutions, I believe, are generally beyond the reach of students and faculty.

However, on an annual basis, many of its students are accepted into the most prestigious institutions of higher learning. Something right must be happening within the walls of the District of Columbia schools.

As a D.C. Public School student, I have also been able to participate in a nonprofit, pre-college program called D.C. Works.

Last summer through D.C. Works, I lived in a dormitory with 27 other D.C. public high school students at the George Washington University campus where I attended classes taught by volunteers in math, English, news writing and drama. Also, I participated in community service activities every Saturday morning. It was through this program that I also had a full-time paid internship for four weeks at the Congressional Quarterly.

I am proud to be able to tell you that on June 13, 1997 I will graduate from Benjamin Banneker Senior High School and later this summer I will realize my greatest dream as I pack up and head to Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts to attend Boston College. The college awarded me a full financial aid package including a $29,000 grant without which I would not be able to pursue an education in a reputable school such as Boston College.

Imagine waking up every morning and leaving your home to go to a comfortable, safe place that you truly consider your second home. It is a place where students are so dedicated that on any given day at lunch time, half of the lunch tables are actually filled with students engaged in study groups. Even the libraries are filled with students.

It is a place where often times you get to school early, sometimes half an hour early, before school actually starts just to talk to your teachers about something you are puzzled with or something you are excited about learning and you know that they, too, will be there early with their doors open and eager to talk. It is a place where students are concerned, most of all with learning, where it is safe, where it is so safe, in fact, that you can leave your book bags in front of your lockers.

It is a place where in all of your classes, which averages between 15 and 20 students, teachers lead discussions and not lectures and in every class every student is well prepared because in such a small class, each student knows that they will have a chance for their voice to be heard. It is a place where you are motivated and inspired by your fellow students as well as your teachers, where you are encouraged to dream about graduating from a place like Boston College and where you will receive the nurturing and support to make the dream a reality.

Hearing this description, some of you might have imagined a public school. Some of you might have imagined a private school. I, however, did not have to imagine at all. It is my reality, it is my school. Benjamin Banneker Senior High School. It has been my second home for the last four years.

Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK, STUDENT, BANNEKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL – SEE APPENDIX K

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much.

Ms. Jones.

## *STATEMENT OF DR. JUDITH JONES, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT*

Dr. **Jones**. Good afternoon, members of the House of Representatives. It's a privilege to have been asked to meet with you today. I'm an urban sociologist and a planner, a parent whose children attended D.C. Public Schools. I worked part-time with D.C. Public Schools from 1987 to 1994 as a planner in the realty office, in Facilities Planning, the Presidential Building Relocation Team and in Education Planning and for three months of this year I worked as Chief of Planning under General Becton and Williams on the facilities side.

My 1986 book, "The Six School Complex - A Successful Innovation in D.C. D.C. Public Schools" led me to study the enormous resistance of public education institutions to improvement and reform. As a result, I have become an advocate of public charter schools, choice among public schools. Of the many items that were mandated in the D.C. school reform bill of last year, I would just like to touch on those two and then go on to something that I consider of equal importance and that follows on this morning's discussion of governance highlighting a structural problem in the governance of D.C. public education that I think is key for the committee to address.

Choice and charter schools were mandated because they provide incentives, real world incentives, for public schools to improve. They weaken monopoly control over both the supply side, what groups can provide public education, and the demand side, what public schools consumers can attend. As others have testified this morning, charter schools have been stymied. From my community work, I know that many groups are ready to start charter schools in the District. The approval process for the moment is mired in administrative molasses. Others have spoken to that issue and I am confident that we are going to make progress.

I am not aware, however, of any progress on choice. In fact, as we all know, the recent school closing proposals represented a step backward on choice. Even what choice parents now have is flawed, both by lack of timely information and by the secretive admissions practices of many principals. The ability to choose among

schools has a tremendous positive effect on parental involvement in children's education. Disregard for the value of choice undermines parents' trust in education leaders, and I think this is a serious fall out of the school closing process.

The most frequent criticism of public school choice is that only the most active parents will exercise it and that children from dysfunctional families will continue to go to the worst schools. I think this problem can be overcome in two ways. First of all, it's a matter of will. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, there is city-wide choice. In Norfolk, there have been articles about a strong public school education achievement coming from the fact that the school itself is sending nurses and pre-school teachers to visit and educate children in their homes. There are lots of models for us to use.

For poorer families to enjoy the benefits of choice here, we need to eliminate the monopoly that neighborhood schools have over where children can attend. Instead, I think we can do something like draw a circle of a mile radius, say, around each family's home and define the neighborhood schools as all those schools falling within that circle. Parents of young children should have elementary education nearby. By having two or more options within that circle and by requiring parents to choose among those options, no children will be left without the benefits of choice and having those neighborhood schools compete will give them the right incentives for improving their program and attracting families and the funds which follow the child.

I'd like to go on to the need for an independent monitoring of education quality and finances in D.C. public education. The District faces a unique structural problem. The 1968 law establishing the D.C. Board of Education made it responsible for both local operating schools, D.C. Public Schools, and for monitoring their own operations which is normally a state level function. Thus, we have had no independent monitoring of the quality of public education in the city since 1968. The state level unit of DCPS sends reports to the Department of Education based on information provided by their friends and other DCPS divisions.

I believe that this conflict of interest has been a serious impediment to improvement over the years. The City Council, which should have been providing another level of oversight, did not do so effectively until last year. Reform measures so far do not address this conflict. The D.C. Financial and Management Assistance Authority fell into the same trap when it created the Emergency Transitional Board of Trustees last November. The problem was discussed in detail by the broad spectrum of community and education leaders of the Thursday Group. They warned of this problem in their testimony to the City Council in July of '95 and I also wrote to the Control Board about it in October of '96.

With the advent of public charter schools, DCPS will no longer be the only local education agency in the city. It will no longer represent the only public schools eligible to receive federal grants and for which reports and audits will need to be prepared. The quality of public education will need to be assessed for all public schools, both charters and DCPS-managed schools and it is unreasonable to expect that DCPS personnel would be objective in their oversight or support of competing charter schools and, in fact, we heard Dr. Ladner this morning expressing the need for city-wide, state level, in quote, oversight responsibility.

However, the proposed solution to give this authority to the Board of Trustees I believe is a serious mistake because the Board of Trustees is supposed to be reforming and operating D.C. Public Schools, which is a large local education agency. Charter schools should not be overseen by their competitors.

I will briefly suggest that what we can do next is to remove the major state level functions from DCPS and the Board of Trustees. Those functions include the distribution of funds which are supposed to start going to DCPS as well as the charter schools on a per capita basis in the fall of '97. The second is city-wide education planning. The third is monitoring of education quality and the fourth is school property development and disposition.

I would like to focus on that in particular because the trustees passed a plan, it was the first item of business at the school closing hearing on Monday, which purported to outline a disposition strategy which I believe is seriously flawed. So more detail on that is in my testimony and I would be glad to answer questions. Thank you.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you very much.

[The statement of Dr. Jones follows:]

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JUDITH JONES, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT – SEE APPENDIX L

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Mr. Goodling.

Mr. **Goodling**. I always say that back home they know more than we know down in Washington and obviously listening you three, that's true in D.C. also. I want to congratulate Tara, wish her the best at Boston College, and hope that she'll decide to come back and teach school in D.C. Public Schools.

I did have one question for Ms. Rice-Thurston. I agreed with and thoroughly understood everything you said until you got to your last statement and I became a little confused. I think you were talking about the relationship to equalization of assets being used in the area of education, but I wasn't quite able to put it together with the fact that we are told that D.C. per pupil expenditures are as high as or higher than any other public school expenditures in the United States. Can you straighten me out on what I'm missing there somewhere?

Ms. **Rice-Thurston**. Right. If you look at the National Merit cutoff which is a state-by-state quota, you find that in the state of Mississippi you only need this year I believe it's a 201 to be a Merit Scholar while in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Connecticut - no, Massachusetts - you need 221, I believe. You look at all the states by their cutoff because they get the percentage of National Merit Scholars that they have of high school seniors in the country. It's one of those quotas that works to the benefit of white students. But in any case, it is a quote but the number, I believe, is directly related to the economy of the state that you're in because the state's economy is what attracts people of various income and educational backgrounds and so if you're in a place like Washington, Massachusetts where lots of the parents are college educated and better, then you get lots of kids there who are going to push up that percentage that the state is going to get of Merit Scholars.

That's a part of the national difference in our state economies and, to me, the equalizer is the federal tax pool so that if you're in a state like Kentucky where you have the city of Louisville. The state was sued because in the city of Louisville expenditures for education were higher than they were in the surrounding jurisdictions. But in the state of Kentucky the expenditures in Harlan County were something like $2,000 per pupil compared to maybe four or six in the city of Louisville. The problem is even beyond the ability of the state of Kentucky to handle because if you look at Westchester County, New York, they're spending over $12,000 per pupil to educate children.

We have a national need for well-educated kids and I think that some of the cost of educating children should not rest solely on the county, the township, the state. It should also be a part of the federal pool of how we spend our money. What an individual jurisdiction like the District of Columbia does, as we're trying to figure out how to attract people to teach here in a city in which the median cost of rent and a house is very high. Our salaries are going to be higher than they are in a lot of parts of the country.

In addition, we have a school system that fired every teacher with 10 years seniority or less in 1980, so our salary structure is skewed to the top end. I mean we're losing very highly paid teachers right now because they're retiring after 30, 33, 35 years of teaching. So our costs are very skewed by the age of our teachers and by the high cost of living in Washington. I'm saying that to deal with that statement that we spend so much more than other jurisdictions. Our analyst has shown and the data shows that we are in the middle of costs per pupil in our metropolitan area.

So I'm quite willing to go toe to toe with anybody who says we spend too much. We can do a better job with our money, but I don't believe that we should be cutting our budget overall. We should be just changing how much of that budget gets into the classroom as opposed to how much of it is in administration. But I think nationally we need to figure out how to make sure that every child in this country has access to excellent education, and it's not happening in Harlan County, Kentucky. It's not happening away from Atlanta in Georgia. It's not happening in an awful lot of places and I think it's a federal problem.

Mr. **Goodling**. Well, as I indicated this morning, it's obvious we have some very brilliant minds testifying today. Now all they have to do is get together, if that's possible, speak with one voice to the Congress and Ms. Norton will be able to do a better job helping us do what needs to be done for D.C. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Thank you, Mr. Goodling.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. **Norton**. That is really sterling advice, Mr. Chairman, because Congress is very confused if the District can not itself agree as we saw with the Board of Trustees and the elected School Board.

I am due some place at 2:00. First, let me say how proud I am of this panel. I have learned from this panel in the few minutes in which you've testified. Let me say first to Ms. Pickstock, you make me proud that I went to Banneker Junior High School. Your testimony was deeply insightful and it was not the testimony one expects to hear. Banneker was a feeder school to college preparatory schools when I was there. I'm sure everyone who graduated from Banneker would be very proud of you today because, if anything, we thought we were good. I think you've raised the standards of Banneker Junior High by more than becoming a high school and I just want to congratulate you and wish you good luck.

Ms. **Jones**, I must say as a parent you show deep insight into our school system as somebody that doesn't work on this every day and I think you are quite representative of the many concerned parents who have stuck with this school system through thick and thin and why it was so important to listen to you or to parents like you when the schools closed. I was very afraid that the delicate move of some programs from one place to the other would end up losing us parents as taxpayers and as people in our public schools.

At the same time, if Congress hears up here that you want to keep all the schools open with empty classroom, the reverberations for my work up here is awful. To the credit of those who got the trustees to leave open schools, you were clear that you accepted the mandate to close schools. More is going to come so I hope we're going to be able to work these out and no matter what happened, there would never have been a consensus to close a single school and so we just have to fight it out, get it over with. It all helps me when it happens because people know we're trying to be as efficient and cost efficient as we can.

Finally, let me say to Ms. Delabian Rice-Thurston. Mr. Chairman, you have been listening to one of the true experts in the D.C. Public Schools. I think everybody would agree with that. It's your testimony I think from which I learned that the reforms are not included in the budget. If that's the case, that gives me something but one of the reasons that D.C. is doing layoffs in other parts of the government now or proceeded to do them from the beginning of the school year was because the budget process was not a reconciliation process like ours. The legislation to carry out the reforms had not been passed so that if the budget does not reflect reforms then the reforms don't exist, even if in good faith they are meant. This is something that - I have to go so I'll have staff discuss with you afterwards.

Ms. **Jones**, you're going to have to think carefully when you say remove the state functions from the trustees because there's not a lot of places to move at the moment.

Dr. **Jones**. Yes, and I'd like to make some suggestions if you have the time or I'll do it some other time.

Ms. **Norton**. Yes, I wish you would because I'm supposed to be some place at 2:00. There are not a lot of places. You see how divided the Authority is. You see there's not a lot of confidence in the overall school system. And be very careful about the notion of bureaucracy. Though we are a state, as much consolidation of functions should occur as is possible. I'm not sure that you're right though. It seems to me that making the school systems see what the charter schools are doing pushes them.

Dr. **Jones**. Yes. Rather than -

Ms. **Norton**. Should they be under the system that competes with their competitors? I don't think that binding charter schools that are doing better. They're going to be anything but encouraged. I don't think they're going to say you're our competitor so we want to take things from you. So I'm not sure that charter schools should be under a wholly different authority. I think they can really ignore you. When they have to report to the Congress and to the Council, if they do, that this is what is happening in the charter schools, this is what is happening at our school, I think they ought to be made to explain that. They ought to be told that these folks are under the same authority they are.

In Michigan I'm sure they're all under the state. They ultimately have to report up to the state of Michigan if it's Michigan's money. And in any case, I'm not for creating a single other bureaucrat in the District of Columbia, so try to think this one through so that we can do it without creating more bureaucracy so that we can get more money to the charter schools and the public schools.

Mr. Chairman, could I thank you first for including the District once again as you travel all around the country. And secondly, may I thank you for your great patience and collegiality, first in indulging me and secondly, in the choices you have made about who should testify here today because I think that you have in a real sense gotten principal actors that have not, in fact, been in any one place before and I thank you for it. You've taught me something about my own public schools.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Well, thank you. I think we're going to move forward in a spirit of cooperation here in this Congress and help in whatever way we can. Thank you for being here all day.

Mr. Ford.

Mr. **Ford**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank the panelists and thank Ms. Norton for her leadership. I must say to Ms. Pickstock, as a member of your generation, it is refreshing to see you here and particularly with the sincerity and the brilliance that you bring to the issue. So let me be the first on this committee, really the second, to congratulate you for being accepted at Boston College. I went to school at the University of Pennsylvania. I'll excuse you for not considering Upenn, but congratulate you again on your Boston College selection.

I would add that in the Chairman's absence 30 or 40 minutes ago, we had some of our - the Chairman was here, too, and I must salute the Chairman for his Education at a Crossroads, but we had several members of the D.C. government here including members of the Review Board and the elected board and even the mayor. I expressed

some serious concerns with regard to our role here at the federal level, Mr. Chairman, in terms of some of the efforts that we're undertaking.

As we listen to this young lady's story, I think this is the story and this is the example that we ought to hold up. As you heard her talk about some of the inspirations she received at her school from teachers and from after school programs and the opportunity to proceed and to move on in the educational trek, this is the story that we ought to be holding up. So often here in Congress we focus on the negative and we in many ways amplify the negative, whether it's through mandatory minimum sentencing. I wish that we could bring the same zeal and I challenge Republicans, I challenge the Chairman of this committee as I did before, I challenge my Democratic colleagues that if we can tell young people if they're caught with a certain amount of grams of cocaine, we ought to be able to tell young people like Ms. Pickstock that if you play by the rules, work hard, then we'll give you an opportunity to go to college, that we'll give you an opportunity to pursue and to continue your education.

Also, Mr. Hoekstra, in your absence, Mr. Chairman rather, there were some issues that were raised in terms of the number of programs at the federal level and secondly, that 35 to 40 cents of every dollar that is spent on education at the federal level does not reach the classroom, and I take issue with some of those comments. I know that your staff has approached someone in the committee who has approached me about my comments. I stand firmly behind what I've said.

I would challenge this committee and challenge this body to do more than just hold hearings. I would challenge this committee and challenge this body to do more than just spew out rhetoric. We have a young lady here who is a shining example of what America can be like and what each American, regardless of race or where they may live or what they may look like or what their parents may do. As we move into this next century, Cornell West said it best in his book "Race Matters" but as we move into the next century, education matters more, and this young lady represents that.

I have a question for Ms. Jones and I thank Dr. Thurston for her testimony, as well, but Ms. Jones, with regard to the choice issue. I'm a little confused. I'm not frozen on this issue but I'm concerned. We have school choice in my district. I'm from Memphis, Tennessee. And one of the problems or concerns that I have with it is that if you open up and you allow kids to be treated as commodities - and I don't mean that in a negative way. I think there may be some redeeming value to that - you still are going to end up, in my estimation, with a certain number of slots that are going to be undesirable. They're not necessarily going to educate and train kids.

So if you sensibly have 75 slots that are really, really good slots and you have 2,000 kids - obviously I'm understating the numbers here - and you open it up to everyone, you're still only going to have 75 good slots and I'm agreeing with a lot of your testimony. I don't take issue with a lot of it. I want to work with you and figure out ways how we at the federal level can be more helpful, and you're not alone in what your organization is attempting to do and what your goals are. I think that you will find parents throughout this nation who support your efforts and certainly are kindred spirits.

But how do you propose or how does the organization propose to make up for those students who may not get into one of these slots or may not gain a slot at a school that we all agree educates and trains our kids? For instance, a Banneker or a Duke Ellington, as the mayor spoke about earlier and General Becton and some of our other panelists.

Dr. **Jones**. Well, I think there are two approaches. One is the central administration says hey, we need more programs. How do we go about getting them? And that's a power that this administration and the past school boards have had and have not exercised and I think that's true in the District and I think it's true in a lot of other cities, as well.

The second is the incredible power of parent choice. If you really make the funds follow the child, and there are 2,000 parents out there wanting caliber A schools and they don't get them. In two years, you're going to have caliber A schools or those parents are going to be some place else. So I think working together. An

administration that has a vision that says we need another Banneker, we need another Oyster, we need another Peabody, we need another Patterson in Ward 8. We have recipes for good programs. We need to repeat that instead of saying to themselves oh, isn't that nice that they exist. We don't know how to do it in more than one or two schools. I think that's wrong. I think that's limited vision. But I think if you have an administration that's convinced that they can do it, that they can go out and find those principals and that they understand the value of parent choice, then it will happen.

Mr. **Ford**. If the Chairman would grant me just one more question to Ms. Jones.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Fine.

Mr. **Ford**. You mentioned funding and resources following the students. How important do you - I'm in agreement with you. I listen to my superintendent and school board members as we talk about the notion of standards at the national level even, there's a crazy debate, not only federal but federal standards or national standards are still standards. Many of my school board officials and my superintendents say they want standards but the problem is when you give us standards, you've got to give us the tools and the resources in order to make sure our kids can measure up to these standards. So what you're essentially saying is that the funds and the resources have to follow and if you empower parents -

Dr. **Jones**. That's right.

Mr. **Ford**. - when there are equal number of resources and tools. I know that Chairman Goodling asked the question with regards to the funding and the resources, and I would agree with you there. I mean I just want to make sure we're on the same page.

Dr. **Jones**. It's absolutely crucial. For example, I think one of the problems with charter schools in Massachusetts is that they have cap. There's only 25. Well, the reason that Massachusetts can't raise that cap is they can't afford to. Why can't they raise the cap? Because they are double paying. The state is sending its state contribution for each child to each charter school and to the original district, local school district from which that child came. They are paying twice. We can't afford to do that. The local school district, if it can not offer an education that a parent wants and the parents chooses for the child to attend a public charter school, the money should follow the student. That's the pain that the local district will have the feedback that they need to tell them that they need to improve their programs.

Mr. **Ford**. Thank you and thank the panelists again. Congratulations, Ms. Pickstock.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. I thank the panel for being here and Mr. Ford, we welcome your participation today. If you would have been at some of the hearings that we'd had earlier as we've gone around the country, we've been to Napa, we've been to LA, we've been to Phoenix, Delaware, Georgia, you'd find that our hearings have intended to be bipartisan. We have had wonderful hearings finding out what is working in education, what is wasted. It is coming from teachers, it's coming from parents, it's coming from the teachers' unions, it's coming from the public administrators, and it's providing us with a wealth of information. It's not erroneous data. It is factual data of real life experiences and we're going to have another hearing again on Monday in New York and we hope that you'll be able to participate with us in New York on Monday because it is providing us with a wonderful opportunity to meet and experience some great thighs that are going on in education around this country.

Tara, I congratulate you. You are a wonderful example of the D.C. Public Schools and the exciting thing is we have see students like yourself all over the country in some of what might be described as some of the toughest neighborhoods of America. But they're turning out wonderful kids and there are many successful stories in education and you've added one more to us today.

Ms. **Jones**, we have had extensive hearings and visited schools in Phoenix and in Arizona where they have a very aggressive charter school program and it was pointed out very, very clearly to us the point that you just made. You can't double pay. The dollars have to follow the children that when a parent or a child decides to move from one school to another school, the dollars follow the child. You just can't afford to double pay. And so I'd like to thank this panel for adding some more understanding and knowledge in a very complex problem, not only in D.C. but on a nationwide basis.

Ms. Thurston, you asked for the Peat Marwick study. Is that correct?

Ms. **Rice-Thurston**. Yes.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. I have one. I think they're doing two. The first one is available. It's a summary of short-term cost savings opportunities for the District of Columbia. I will insert this into the record and we will make you a copy if you're willing to stay for a few minutes.

[The Peat Marwick study follows:]

PEAT MARWICK STUDY ON THE CONDITION OF THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM – SEE APPENDIX N

Ms. **Rice-Thurston**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hoekstra**. Before you leave, we'll make you a copy. Ms. Norton also I guess you guys didn't have a copy of this. We'll make one for you. I didn't know this was a problem. If we'd known that this was not available, readily available, we would have given you one before the hearing. We'll also submit "Children in Crisis: Foundations for the Future, the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority" to the record.

So thank you very much for your testimony and you're actually going to leave here with some of the information that you wanted. Great. The committee will be adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:10 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

*APPENDIX A -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. PETER HOEKSTRA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN*

OPENING STATEMENT
House Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
and
House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on the District of Columbia

CONGRESSMAN PETE HOEKSTRA, CHAIRMAN
May 1, 1997

My name is Pete Hoekstra. I am a congressman from Michigan, and I chair the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for the Education and the Workforce Committee. I am pleased to be joined by Mr. Davis Chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, Subcommittee on the District of Columbia as well as Ms. Mink and Delegate Holmes-Norton.

The hearing that we are having today is part of a series of hearings that our Committee is going to be having over the next 9 months. These hearings are a part of a project we are calling "Education at a Crossroads." As the witnesses have been told, we are primarily trying to find out what is working and what is wasted in education.

Throughout 1997, we hope to learn from parents, teachers, students, local and state education experts about what is being done at the local level and at the national level in the area of education reform. At the same time, we as a Committee, hope to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the federal education programs that impact your work. It is important for me to note that this is a learning process for me and the other members who are participating. We sincerely hope you can give us insight into what we can and should be doing to improve education in the United States.

This project started about a year ago when we asked the very simple question "how many education programs are administered out of Washington DC?" As we began that investigation we found out through the Office of Management and Budget that in 1995 there was some where around 760 different education programs that spanned 39 agencies and cost more than 120 billion dollars. Any comments you have regarding your specific involvement with any federal education program would be very helpful. We want to take a look at these programs and ensure that they are working efficiently and effectively. We are taking a particularly close look at a handful of federal programs which include: Eisenhower Professional Development, Technology, Head Start, Title 1, Bilingual Education, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

There are many opinions on how to improve education but there isn't always a lot of consensus about how to do it. But, there are few basic things that I believe work: parental involvement, basic academics, and sending dollars to the classroom. In fact, as we look at these programs we want to ensure that at least 90 percent of your education dollars reach the classroom. Studies show that right now only 60 to 70 cents on the dollar reaches the classroom.

Mr. Pitts spoke this morning about one of our goals, and that is to ensure that 90 cents of every federal education dollar reaches the classroom. Right now the District only sends about 67 cents of their local dollars to the classroom, and maybe today we can learn what is being done to get more money to the classroom.

I am looking forward to you making this yet another great learning experience for us. So far we've had some very productive meetings with people across the country. We have visited schools in Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, New York, Los Angeles, and Phoenix, Wilmington Delaware, and Milladgeville Georgia. These visits have given us a better understanding of what educators are doing at the local level to improve education. Learning from individuals who are in the trenches working with the students is one of the most inspiring, and eye opening, things I have done in a long time. It is also undoubtedly one of the most important things we can and should be doing more of in Congress.

Today we will look at both what is working and what is wasteful in the District of Columbia. Last time we did this was nearly two years ago when we were working on creating the DC School Reform Act of 1995. There were a number of very important components to that legislation including a call for the establishment of Charter Schools, a facilities revitalization program, and the creation of public private partnerships.

The legislation was necessary because the DC schools were in crisis. Since that time there has been a total change in the management of DC school, Franklin Smith the school Superintendent was ousted due to management concerns, and General Becton was brought in to take responsibility for DC schools. It has also come to light that hundreds of millions of dollars were wasted or misspent under the old management, and we need to ensure that those days are behind us.

Most importantly, we are here to learn from the witnesses. We want to know what they have found to be working and wasted in DC Schools. With that I turn to my colleague Ms. Mink and then to Mr. Davis and then to Ms. Norton for their opening remarks.

***APPENDIX B – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA***

**STATEMENT OF CONGRESSWOMAN ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON AT A JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND D.C. SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT**

**May 1, 1997**

May I thank Chairman Peter Hoekstra for including the District among the school systems the subcommittee is hearing from this year to learn from communities themselves whether the federal government plays an effective role in public education. I believe that the subcommittee will find that the federal role in education in the District has not only been effective; it has been indispensable. Large numbers of disadvantaged public school children here depend on the federal assistance, from school lunches to Goals 2000, to Title I. The District's early childhood program, considered a model in the nation, is an example of what federal assistance can do.

The District's schools are largely typical of big city schools across the nation. The schools are plagued by the lexicon of problems -- insufficient parental involvement, an inefficient and costly bureaucratic structure, poor pupil performance, very high drop out rates, and all the rest. A long awaited shake-up in the school system finally occurred this year and is taking hold.

For almost the entire year before new management under General Julius Becton was installed, the Congress showed particular concern about the D.C. public schools. Speaker Gingrich appointed Representative Steve Gunderson to work with District officials, school watchdog organizations and parents to come forward with suggestions for improvement. Many of these ideas were put into legislation, including a charter school program. Representative Gunderson put countless hours into this work and deserves immense credit for the work he did, all on a home rule basis. He worked not by compulsion but by bringing local officials together with their critics and with their unions to design effective legislation.

The District has a very long way to go before it meets the standards of excellence we have a right to expect from public schools in the capital of the United States. However, anyone who believes the clap-trap that the D.C. public schools are a total wasteland got a wake-up call over the past few weeks. The school system began the necessary work of closing some schools because of enormous excess capacity that eats revenue that is badly needed for hands-on education. Initially, education considerations were not included among the criteria used to

determine which schools should be closed. Parents, the best critics of school quality, were able to demonstrate that some of the schools slated for closing were among the best in the city. Ultimately some schools on the list were removed.

Mr. Chairman, I am a graduate of the D.C. public schools. My mother was a teacher in these schools. I graduated from Monroe Elementary School, now Bruce-Monroe, from Banneker Junior High School, now a magnet high school, and from Dunbar High School. For most of the time when I attended these schools, they were segregated by law. I do not claim that the schools of my childhood were the best in the country. However, they prepared me and countless others to attend some of the best colleges and universities and to achieve something in life. Most of the success of my classmates was not due to the schools alone. Intact families, strong crime-free neighborhoods and institutions and respect for authority helped the schools to do their job. Today, however, schools are asked to do the entire job and are bitterly criticized when they are unable to be all things and to play all the roles a child needs. I do not approach public policy with a nostalgic, good-old-days approach, but I do believe that the local schools need help from more

than themselves to succeed. They need far greater parental involvement and they will help themselves if they themselves engineer greater parental involvement. Meanwhile, the federal role here in the District, where reform has finally begun, remains indispensable.

***APPENDIX C – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA***

DAN BURTON, INDIANA
CHAIRMAN

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CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT
STEVEN H. SCHIFF, NEW MEXICO
CHRISTOPHER COX, CALIFORNIA
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA
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STEPHEN HORN, CALIFORNIA
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA
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STEVE C. LATOURETTE, OHIO
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JOHN E. SUNUNU, NEW HAMPSHIRE
PETE SESSIONS, TEXAS
MIKE PAPPAS, NEW JERSEY
VINCE SNOWBARGER, KANSAS
BOB BARR, GEORGIA

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
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ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHAKA FATTAH, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM HOLDEN, PENNSYLVANIA
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND
DENNIS KUCINICH, OHIO
ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH, ILLINOIS
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS
JIM TURNER, TEXAS
THOMAS H. ALLEN, MAINE

BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT
INDEPENDENT

CHAIRMAN TOM DAVIS
OPENING STATEMENT
JOINT EDUCATION HEARING
MAY 1, 1997

My thanks to Pete Hoekstra for convening this Joint Hearing on education in the D.C. school system. It is only by continuing to work in such a collegial manner that we can move forward in our efforts to resolve the many challenges that confront us in the Nation's Capital. My Subcommittee is continuing to review various proposals as we seek to take advantage of the rare legislative environment which now exists. The District of Columbia Subcommittee intends to have its next hearing on May 8 in order to review the economic development issues which arise from the Administration's Plan.

We are here today to take testimony on education in the District of Columbia. While it is not necessary to review the school closing controversy, I applaud the Board of Trustees for its efforts.

There is a growing uniformity of opinion that the poor performance of most D.C. schools has reached crisis proportions. At this critical juncture I call upon all interested parties who care about our children to stop blaming each other and to seize the unprecedented opportunity which the present environment affords. I am gratified that significant stakeholders in the region, from business and civic leaders to religious figures and various groups have begun working together to pursue excellence and move our public schools forward.

Clearly, the challenge is a lot deeper than lack of money. This was my view when I sponsored the control board legislation 2 years ago, and it remains my firm belief. That is why the law we passed called upon the control board to "take strong and immediate action" to correct what Congress called the "severe mismanagement of the District of Columbia

Public School System". We fully intended that the control board carefully examine the operations of the educational system as part of its mandate to restructure the District government. We gave the control board the authority to act, and they did so.

The control board report, "Children in Crisis", released last November, had many disquieting conclusions. Among the most disquieting conclusion was that "the longer a child stays in the D.C. public school system, the greater is his or her decline in scholastic achievement". Violence in the classroom was also studied. We were bluntly reminded that when school violence pervades the classroom that the public school system fails all children.

And so the control board established a Trusteeship for the D.C. public schools. At the core of the Trusteeship is a new Chief Executive Officer-Superintendent, Gen. Becton, and a Board of Trustees. The Board of Education continues to play an important role. Dr. Joyce Ladner played a key role in coordinating this matter on behalf of the control board, and I

thank her for that.

There are now encouraging signs that the community is mobilized in a positive direction. There is significant business representation on the Emergency Transition Education Board of Trustees, and I find that very gratifying.

Clearly, the status quo is intolerable. Only the boldest actions can rescue the schools and the children. Immediate improvement is essential.

***APPENDIX D – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

STATEMENT OF JULIUS W. BECTON, JR.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
AND
THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 1, 1997

Chairman Hoekstra, Chairman Davis, and members of the Subcommittees:

I welcome the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss our progress in improving public education in the District of Columbia.

To understand where we are and where we are going, it is important to consider the tremendous change that has occurred within the last year in the governance and direction of the school system.

As you know, on April 26, 1996, Congress passed the District of Columbia School Reform Act Of 1995. This Act requires the development of a long-term education reform plan that describes how the DC Public Schools will become "...a world-class education system that prepares students for lifetime learning in the 21st century and which is on par with the best education systems of other

cities, States, and nations." The School Reform Act of 1995 also requires the design and implementation of a comprehensive long-term program for the repair, improvement, maintenance, and management of public school facilities. In addition, the Act created a charter school law for the District of Columbia.

On November 15, 1996, about 7 months after passage of the School Reform Act, I became Chief Executive Officer through an order of the Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (Control Board). As CEO, I serve both as superintendent and Chief State School Officer. This order also established the 9-member Emergency Transitional Education Board Of Trustees, of which I am a member. The Control Board took this action after concluding that "...in virtually every category and for every grade level, by virtually every measure of performance, the public school system has failed to provide a quality education for all children and a safe environment in which to learn..."

The Control Board found that at the heart of the problems in the school system was the lack of leadership from the District's elected School Board and the Superintendent. With persistent educational and managerial problems year after year, the public school leadership had abdicated its responsibilities for providing a quality education in a safe environment.

The report, "Children in Crisis," documented the school system's failures. Specifically, the report focused on:

- Education outcomes well below the national norm.
- Mismanagement that undermines learning.
- Unsafe environments that disrupt learning.
- Unacceptable service provision and poor contract management.
- Lack of accountability such that ultimately no one was held accountable.

Today we operate in a new context of opportunity, but face the challenges of past failures that mounted over many years. This year, we entered midway through the school year and have sought to implement fundamental improvements in management. We expect that next school year will be a very different one for the children and parents of the District, and we expect to be held accountable for achieving our goals for them.

## GOALS FOR IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To characterize our goals as simply as possible, I believe that by June 30, 2000, our success or failure will be judged on whether or not we achieve fundamental improvement in three core areas: (1) academics, (2) school facilities, and (3) personnel and financial management systems. What I mean by fundamental improvement is that these core areas will be on a firm foundation for continuous progress in future years. My guiding principle in this effort is Children First. All of our efforts must be weighed in terms of their impact on children.

Placing the core areas on a firm foundation for continuous improvement implies the following:

- Clearly specifying the academic standards we expect of all students so that there can be no question about the results expected in the classroom.

- Effective implementation of a long-term education reform plan that maximizes classroom resources, maintains a constant focus on teaching and learning, and ensures appropriate services for students with special needs.

- Effective implementation of a long-term facilities plan that puts an end to unsafe environments that disrupt learning and provides for the modernization of our school facilities.

- Sound contract management with strong internal controls to provide for efficient and effective provision of services to our schools.

- Full accountability to the public. There will be no question as to who is accountable for any function of the DC Public Schools.

ACADEMICS

Our goals for the core area of academics embrace the objectives specified in the School Reform Act of 1995 and the elaboration on those objectives in the Children First Framework developed by the Emergency Board of Trustees. The Children First Framework provides the blueprint for the Long Range Education Reform Plan currently being developed.

## GOAL I: IMPROVED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

### World Class Standards

Our first goal is to ensure that all students are taught to world-class academic standards to prepare them for productive work, further education, and responsible citizenship. To accomplish this goal, we must first adopt rigorous content and performance standards, with an aligned core curriculum and aligned assessments and professional development. The assessments we adopt must provide data that can be used to (1) measure the progress of individual students, each classroom, each school, and the entire district; and (2) provide information to teachers that is useful for adjusting classroom instruction. We must also integrate state-of-the-art technology into the instructional program.

### Meeting the Needs of Children Placed At Risk of School Failure

We must also pay special attention to our children placed at risk of school failure. Our focus must be on creating a school environment conducive to learning by providing support systems that keep children performing at grade-level, to avoid the discouragement that leads to dropping-out. Steps that will help us accomplish this include:

- Increasing parent participation in reinforcing educational goals.

- Identifying students who fall below core curriculum standards to ensure that each student meets such standards prior to promotion and meets all standards prior to high school graduation.

- Providing intensive after-school, weekend, and summer tutoring for students falling below grade-level standards.

- Restructuring approaches to delivering Title I and special education services, as well as services to language minority students.

- Providing alternative learning settings for students who are not succeeding in conventional schools.

Safety and Security

Another key objective related to improving student achievement is improving the safety and security of schools so that staff and students can focus on teaching and learning. We will take immediate steps in FY 1998 to improve safety and security through security personnel, metal detectors, and student ID badges.

Career Preparation

To improve student achievement, we must also expand career preparation opportunities within the academic program to build a bridge toward future employment and further education. We must ensure that all graduating seniors have the reading, math, communication and computer skills necessary for employment and further education, including guidance toward the development of individual career paths.

GOAL II: QUALITY SCHOOL STAFF

Our second goal in the core area of academics is to provide an academically competent, well trained and caring staff and hold them accountable for results. To accomplish this we will adopt clear standards of competency for hiring and evaluating principals, teachers, and other professional staff. We must also improve teacher and principal compensation and recognition. Investing in our teachers will help us attract and retain the brightest and best educators.

## GOAL III: GOVERNANCE, SCHOOL AUTONOMY, AND PARENTAL CHOICE

Our third goal in the core area of academics is to promote school autonomy and accountability through decentralization and greater parental choice. To accomplish this, we will continue and expand initiatives to restructure school governance and facilitate the development of high quality charter schools.

### School Restructuring

With respect to school restructuring, we will support schools pursuing their own restructuring efforts so long as they meet the academic standards we adopt. For schools needing help with restructuring, we intend to provide choice among total school restructuring models that have proven results for urban schools. Lastly, we plan to identify schools in need of outside help, but not ready to take on the task themselves, and provide targeted assistance (including changes of personnel) to help them move toward a proven restructuring model appropriate to that school.

Central Office Restructuring

Restructuring must also include the role of central administration. We will determine what functions and support services are best maintained by central administration for efficiency. Then we will set goals to move funding and personnel away from central administration and into the schools.

Charter Schools

In the area of public charter schools, the School Reform Act offers a tremendous opportunity to expand choices among public schools. We intend to facilitate the development of high quality charter schools that will serve as laboratories of change for the entire school system. We will seek to develop partnerships with institutions such as the Smithsonian, and provide assistance, when appropriate, to existing public schools that wish to convert to charter status. By this time next year, we expect that 24 charter schools will have been approved.

The School Reform Act of 1995 permits the establishment of up to 100 public charter schools over the next five years, including the conversion of existing public schools, now operated and managed by the Board of Trustees and the CEO. The Board of Trustees believes that charter schools with high quality educational programs and

sound business management hold great potential to improve the choices and quality of public education available in the District.

To ensure the development of high quality charter schools, we will work closely with the two existing chartering authorities. In addition, we are developing an appropriate state-level role in the approval and oversight of charter schools.

Comment on Tuition Vouchers

One form of school choice that we expect will be a topic of much debate, as it has before in this city, is tuition vouchers or scholarships for parents to use at private schools. While the Emergency Board of Trustees does not have an official position in support of, or in opposition to, tuition vouchers, we do have several concerns.

Our first concern pertains to challenges related to accountability. While charter schools are privately operated, independent schools that operate under performance contracts with public bodies, can similar accountability for student outcomes be built into a voucher arrangement? Would private schools receiving tuition vouchers agree to meet certain standards? If so, how would such schools differ from charter schools?

Our second concern pertains to the impact a protracted debate over tuition vouchers, or an effort to implement them, could have on our progress in achieving the fundamental reforms just underway, including implementation of the charter school legislation. As you consider potential legislation in the area of tuition vouchers, we ask that you consider these areas of concern.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

In the core area of school facilities, we have developed a Long Range Facilities Master Plan which we believe will allow us to return our school facility inventory to a safe environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. This plan has been completed and we expect its adoption by the City Council in early May.

The Long Range Facilities Master Plan has three implementation phases. The first phase is contained in the FY 1997 Emergency Capital Improvement Program. Without these critical, envelope-type repairs, we cannot assure that schools will open and stay open during school year 1997-98. This plan requires the obligation of $86.6 million in fiscal year 1997. Within these requirements, GSA is currently executing $11.5 million in contracts, and the $18.25 million in proceeds from the Connie Lee privatization is being obligated and work is commencing. Another $20 million in funds from a forthcoming bond sale for the District of Columbia will be obligated by July. This leaves a shortfall of $36.85 million for FY 1997, which

is the basis for the supplemental appropriation we are seeking from Congress.

The second phase of the plan, pertaining to immediate needs, is encompassed in the Capital Improvement Program for fiscal years 1998 and 1999. During this period, needed repairs, replacements and improvements will be accomplished, and planning will begin for the modernization of existing schools and some new school construction. By this time, significant progress will have been made on the disposition of the school system's portfolio of excess space, which now totals more than 4 million square feet. Decisions as to school closings, swing space, modernization and new construction will be accomplished and planning will begin in earnest for the full revitalization program. The capital budget request for FY 1998 school facilities improvements totals $182.6 million.

The third phase, slated for fiscal years 2000-2007, is when we intend to undertake the full modernization and revitalization of our school facilities. Current estimates for the complete repair and modernization of school facilities in the District of Columbia are in the $1.5 to $2 billion range.

To execute this plan, we have developed an organization and a management approach to ensure quality control. The hallmark of our new organization is the quality of staff and management focus for "fast track" work using the design/build method of delivery on most projects. Since procurement and management information

systems functions are part of the Chief Operating Officer's responsibilities, the DC Public Schools is now in a superb posture to effectively administer the comprehensive long-term program for the repair, improvement, maintenance, and management of public school facilities required by the School Reform Act.

## PERSONNEL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Our goals for the third core area, personnel and financial management systems, involve rebuilding broken systems and implementing new ones. We must restructure the ways that we develop, evaluate, and track personnel. Our first goal must be to know exactly how many employees we have, what they are doing, and how they are funded. We will have that effort completed this month. Then we must determine whether their jobs are consistent with our goals.

In improving our systems that develop, evaluate, and track personnel, we will implement a performance appraisal system for teachers and principals that holds them accountable for student achievement and school performance. We will also set performance standards for teachers and administrators and terminate personnel where necessary.

Our goals for improving financial management include presenting a budget for fiscal year 1998 that is built from scratch and from the bottom-up, based on a school staffing model and activity-based costing. As part of this effort, we will develop school-based budgets based on a funding formula as mandated by the School Reform Act of 1995. In addition, we will implement adequate controls so that funds from Federal grants are managed in compliance with the law.

CONCLUSION

To conclude my statement, I feel compelled to restate my guiding principle: Children First. The pledge I make today, and the pledge I will continue to make, is that all of our efforts in achieving fundamental improvement in the three core areas of academics, school facilities, and personnel and financial management systems must be weighed in terms of their impact on children. Failure to meet the needs of the children in this city is not an option.

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Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be glad to answer any questions that you and the other Subcommittee members may have.

*APPENDIX E -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JOYCE LADNER, MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY*

# Dr. Joyce Ladner
## Member
## District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority

before the
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
and the
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Committee on Education and the Workforce

United States House of Representatives

*May 1, 1997*

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

Mr. Chairmen and Members of the Subcommittees:

I am Joyce Ladner. I am a Member of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (Authority), and I am the Board Member with lead responsibility for public education in the District of Columbia. I am pleased to appear before you to discuss the Authority's efforts to reform the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

**Introduction**

As you know, the Authority was created by the U.S. Congress in 1995 to repair the District of Columbia's failing financial condition and to improve the management effectiveness of government agencies. The Authority in its Strategic Plan identified public education, along with public safety and public works, as priority areas in need of revitalization.

Last November, the Authority overhauled the governance and administration of the District of Columbia Public Schools. After issuing a an extremely critical report on the quality and management of the District's Schools, the Authority removed the Superintendent and appointed a new Chief Executive Officer and an Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees to oversee the schools.

Yesterday, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia upheld the validity of our action and Order of November 15, 1996, establishing the Trustees and the position of CEO/Superintendent. The Court stated:

> Put simply, the question is whether the Control Board had the authority—both statutory and constitutional—to issue its Order of November 15, 1996. For all the reasons set forth herein, the Court concludes that the answer is "yes."

This morning, I will first discuss the condition of the District's Public Schools that caused the Authority to take such significant action. Next, I will outline the unique nature of the financing of the District's Public Schools. And finally, I will briefly discuss how the Authority is planning to monitor DCPS' reform effort.

**The Failure of the District of Columbia Public Schools**

Last fall, after extensive study by our staff and consultants, and after conducting several public hearings, the Authority issued a report entitled "Children in Crisis: A Report on the Failure of the D.C.'s Public Schools". In that report, the Authority concluded that the deplorable record of the District's public schools by every important educational and management measure had left the system in a state of crisis. DCPS was simply failing in its mission to educate the children of the District of Columbia. In virtually every area, and for every grade level, the system failed to provide the District's children with a quality education and safe environment in which to learn.

I want to outline some of the findings contained in our Children In Crisis report --

- Education outcomes are abysmal: DCPS failed to teach its pupils even the basics of education. As a result, the system's students score significantly lower on standardized academic achievement tests than their peers in comparable districts around the nation. In addition, performance varied extensively among sections of the City (wards); the least affluent wards have experienced the greatest decline in test scores over the last five years. Several schools in wards seven and eight have seen startling declines in test scores of 15 to 20 percentage points or more. The low achievement levels attest to the fact that thousands of children, especially in the less

affluent sections of the City, are not being taught the fundamental skills necessary to succeed.

- Drop Out Rates Are Too High: As academic performance continues to decline, many students are dropping out or leaving DCPS for neighboring districts and private schools. There has been a dramatic migration of students out of the public school system—40% of high school students either dropped out or left the District's public schools between 1989 and 1995. On average, 24% of students left their class in 10th grade, 23% in 11th grade, and 6% in 12th grade. Drop-out rates are even greater in the transition from elementary to the junior high level as parents, who can afford it, send their children to private schools.
- Unsafe environments disrupt learning: The District's schools, like other urban environments, have serious problems in terms of security and deteriorating facilities. A National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) survey of teachers revealed that more District Public School's instructors than instructors from other states believed that a variety of serious problems affect their schools. Problems included: lack of parent involvement, unpreparedness to learn, tardiness, disrespect for teachers, student absenteeism, student apathy, and verbal abuse of teachers.
- Facilities Are in Disrepair: The infrastructure of the District's public schools is collapsing. The alarming condition of facilities leaves students exposed to discomfort and even to potential harm—boilers burst, roofs leak, firedoors stick, bathrooms crumble, and poor security permits unauthorized individuals to gain access,

threatening the safety of students. Such conditions make it almost impossible to focus on the primary mission of educating the children.

- Mismanagement undermines learning: The inability of the District's schools to effectively implement long-term education and operational plans leaves students without teachers or classrooms, textbooks unordered or lost in warehouses, teachers untrained and uncertified, and students who are disabled without access. Additionally, poor resource allocation distorts priorities, ensuring that educational needs go unmet even when funds are available.

With such deplorable conditions outlined in our report, the Authority believed that strong action needed to be taken. Therefore, on November 15, 1996, the Authority ordered the removal of the Superintendent and reduced the powers of the elected Board of Education. In their place, the Authority appointed Lieutenant General Julius Becton as Chief Executive Officer and Superintendent. The Authority also established an Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees, made up of experienced leaders, with the ability to improve our schools and to provide our children with a brighter future.

In taking action, the Authority also ordered the Trustees and the CEO to develop specific measures that will be used to gauge their success at meeting the following goals:

- Enhancing the quality of education at all District schools;
- Improving student participation, performance, and outcomes;

- Improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of school system management;
- Creating internal accountability and focus on customer satisfaction;
- Improving the physical condition of school properties;
- Reducing the incidence of crime, especially offenses that threaten student and staff safety.

Let me note one critical event that occurred earlier this week. On Monday night after analysis of considerable data and public comment at a series of hearings, the Education Board of Trustees ordered eleven schools closed. One of the most difficult actions any local jurisdiction can take is the closing of schools. The Authority believes the Trustees acted correctly to reduce unneeded school capacity and, in turn, devote more dollars to educating children.

**Financing Education in the District of Columbia Public Schools**

Let me now briefly turn to the unique financing arrangement for the District's schools and its impact on education. Not only must the District carry out the roles of a city, a county, and a state, but it's budget must be directly approved by the Congress. Several weeks ago, the Authority issued a report describing the roles of states in providing assistance to their local jurisdictions. One of the functions discussed in that report was public education. With your permission, I would ask that this report "Toward A More Equitable Relationship," be made part of the record.

Our report found that, around the country, elementary and secondary education is usually the responsibility of local jurisdictions, or operated by independent school districts at the local level. However, significant portions of the funding and policy direction are established above the local level, typically by the state.

States frequently establish guidelines for local education agencies to follow. Typically, states set minimum criteria for curriculum, class size, number of days/hours in a school year, teacher certification requirements and other educational criteria. In special education, states, within broad federal requirements set up in Public Law 94-142 and other legislation, establish policy regarding how special education is carried out, including categorization of special needs and processing requirements of special education cases. Most federal grants to education are either funneled through state education agencies or are implemented using state requirements.

Nationwide statistics show that elementary and secondary education operational funds are provided by all levels of government—with States providing nearly half of the operational funds. Many States also assist their local school districts with capital funds for construction and major renovation of school buildings. In addition, many local school districts have their own sources of revenue and taxing authority and may issue bonds.

Unlike other school agencies, the District of Columbia Public Schools must provide both the state and local sources of funds. In addition, DCPS does not have its own taxing

authority, nor can it issue bonds for capital improvements. DCPS must rely on the District to ration scarce capital dollars to school repair and construction. Most local school districts rely substantially on property taxes. Of course, the City's property tax base is limited because of the significant amount of valuable property that is federally owned.

As I noted earlier, capital needs of the District's schools are massive. Last month, the Authority requested from the Congress $36 million in emergency funds to ensure that all DCPS facilities can open next fall. School officials have provided detailed plans that document the need for $86 million in emergency repairs. The school system has $50 million available for these repairs. I urge you to support this emergency request for funds to ensure all schools can open in the fall.

**Authority Monitoring of DCPS Reform**

Finally, I will briefly discuss how the Authority plans to monitor progress at the public schools. The Authority's Strategic Plan issued last December called for the Authority to develop and implement a monitoring plan. The monitoring system that the Authority is developing is designed to measure whether management and programmatic changes that the Board of Trustees and the CEO make are achieving the Authority's goal of transforming DCPS into a world class educational system. The performance measures will be centered around the categories used in the Authority's report, Children in Crisis--Education, Management, Facilities, Safety, Supplies, and Food Services. The Authority

will specifically review performance based on the twelve specific actions that were contained in our November 15, 1996 order.

The monitoring plan focuses on measuring DCPS' progress in terms of the results, or outcomes, that the Board and the CEO achieve. Focusing on results, rather than the process by which change is made, will best allow the Authority to fulfill its statutory obligations. The Board and CEO's progress in reforming DCPS will be reported to the Authority on a periodic basis. The Authority will use these results in assessing budget requests as well as the success of DCPS' actions. The report will also provide the public with a status report on the effectiveness of the changes being made to the District's school system.

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In conclusion, the Authority is committed to helping to reform public education in the District of Columbia. No other effort is more important to revitalizing this City—for it is the children of the District who hold its future. The Authority greatly appreciates the public service being provided without pay by the Board of Trustees, and we support the new leadership shown by the schools. I would be happy to respond to any questions that you or the other members of the Subcommittees may have.

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*APPENDIX F -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY BOARD OF TRUSTEES*

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**STATEMENT**
**OF**
**BRUCE K. MACLAURY**

**CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EMERGENCY TRANSITIONAL EDUCATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE**
**AND**
**THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**MAY 1, 1997**

GOOD MORNING, CHAIRMAN HOEKSTRA, CHAIRMAN DAVIS, AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEES. I AM BRUCE MACLAURY, CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EMERGENCY TRANSITIONAL EDUCATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES. IT IS MY PLEASURE TO COME BEFORE YOU TODAY TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF PROGRESS BEING MADE IN IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

THE NINE-MEMBER BOARD OF TRUSTEES WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY TO ACT AS AGENTS OF THE AUTHORITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS. FIVE OF THE TRUSTEES, ALL OF WHOM RESIDE IN THE DISTRICT, WERE APPOINTED DIRECTLY BY THE AUTHORITY. ONE MEMBER WAS SELECTED BY THE AUTHORITY FROM A LIST OF THREE PARENTS OF D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS SUBMITTED BY THE MAYOR, AND ONE WAS CHOSEN BY THE AUTHORITY FROM A LIST OF THREE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. THE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-SUPERINTENDENT OF THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEES.

THE FINANCIAL AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED THE TRUSTEES AFTER DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE DISTRICT'S PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND, IN LIGHT OF THIS CRISIS, "DIRECTED, AUTHORIZED AND EMPOWERED" THE TRUSTEES AND THE CEO-SUPERINTENDENT TO:

- IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDED TO D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS, SO AS TO ENSURE THAT EVERY STUDENT ACHIEVES BASIC LITERACY SKILLS AND LEARNS TO THINK CRITICALLY AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY;

- STRENGTHEN D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHOOL-BASED BUDGETING PROCESS;

- REDUCE THE COST OF NON-EDUCATIONAL SERVICES;

- DEVELOP THE LONG-TERM EDUCATION REFORM PLAN REQUIRED BY THE D.C. SCHOOL REFORM ACT OF 1995;

- DEVELOP DISTRICT-WIDE ASSESSMENTS AND ESTABLISH PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THAT TEACHERS ARE

ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE;

- MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY, PARENT AND BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS;

- ASSESS D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS' OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH ACTIVITIES AS ARTS OR ATHLETICS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO HOW TO INCREASE SUCH INVOLVEMENT;

- ESTABLISH PROCEDURES THAT ENSURE THAT D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS ACQUIRE SKILLS NECESSARY FOR EMPLOYMENT; AND

- ENACT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THAT ENSURE THAT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM RUNS ETHICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

TOWARDS THESE ENDS, THE TRUSTEES HAVE, TO DATE, APPROVED A DRAFT EDUCATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL LONG-RANGE EDUCATION REFORM PLAN, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED TO MY STATEMENT. WE HAVE ALSO DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME AND ENERGY TO ASSESSING VARIOUS ACADEMIC STANDARDS, AS WELL AS ALIGNED ASSESSMENTS AND TEACHER TRAINING. IT IS OUR INTENT TO HAVE SUCH STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS IN PLACE BY THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.

IN A PARALLEL EFFORT TO IMPROVE SCHOOL SYSTEM MANAGEMENT, THE TRUSTEES HAVE APPROVED A PROPOSED FY 1998 BUDGET FOR THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT IS SCHOOL-BASED AND PREMISED ON THE REDUCTION OF NON-INSTRUCTIONAL POSITIONS. AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD ELIMINATING THE FOUR MILLION EXCESS SQUARE FOOTAGE NOW IN THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL INVENTORY, WE HAVE ALSO VOTED TO CLOSE THIRTEEN SCHOOLS, TWO OF WHICH WILL BE REBUILT.

IN ADDITION, WE HAVE APPROVED A DRAFT FACILITIES PLAN THAT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LAST WEEK. WE BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE FORMULATION OF THIS PLAN DEMONSTRATES THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS' COMMITMENT, WITH SUFFICIENT FUNDING, TO MAKE ALL OF OUR FACILITIES THE SAFE AND SECURE STRUCTURES THAT OUR STUDENTS DESERVE.

AS THE TRUSTEES MOVE FORWARD IN ALL THESE AREAS, WE WILL ASSESS OUR PROGRESS BY ASCERTAINING HOW FAR WE HAVE COME IN ACHIEVING THE FOLLOWING "MEASURABLE INDICATORS OF SUCCESS" SET OUT IN OUR DRAFT EDUCATION FRAMEWORK:

- INCREASING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ALL OF OUR SCHOOLS;

- INCREASING THE PERCENT OF D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS SCORING AT OR ABOVE THE NATIONAL NORMS ON

STANDARDIZED TESTS;

- INCREASING THE NUMBER OF OUR STUDENTS READING AT GRADE LEVEL BY AGE 9;

- INCREASING D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL DAILY STUDENT ATTENDANCE;

- DECREASING OUR DROP-OUT RATE;

- INCREASING OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE;

- INCREASING THE NUMBER OF D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTSPURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE NUMBER EMPLOYED FOLLOWING GRADUATION;

- INCREASING PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS;

- DECREASING THE INCIDENCE OF VIOLENT CONFLICT AND CRIMES AFFECTING STUDENT AND STAFF SAFETY IN AND AROUND OUR SCHOOLS; AND

- REDIRECTING RESOURCES FROM CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION TO THE SCHOOLS.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF THE TRUSTEES IS SET OUT IN THE VISION STATEMENT THAT WAS ALSO APPROVED AS PART OF OUR DRAFT EDUCATION FRAMEWORK: TO EDUCATE ALL D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN "SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE THAT ARE COLLEGIAL COMMUNITIES OF PROFESSIONAL AND INTELLECTUALLY-PREPARED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO TEACH TO WORLD-CLASS STANDARDS IN A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH CHILDREN MASTER THE ACADEMIC, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND SOCIAL COMPETENCIES THAT GIVE THEM REAL CHOICES IN LIFE AND PROVIDE BRIDGES TO FURTHER EDUCATION, PRODUCTIVE WORK, AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP." ALL THAT WE DO IN THE THREE YEARS THAT WE ARE TO BE IN EXISTENCE WILL BE DESIGNED TO BRING US CLOSER TO TURNING THIS VISION INTO REALITY.

I WISH TO THANK YOU, CHAIRMAN HOEKSTRA AND CHAIRMAN DAVIS, FOR ALLOWING ME TO TESTIFY THIS MORNING. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE.

# CHILDREN FIRST

*(D R A F T - March 17, 1997)*

## FRAMEWORK FOR THE LONG-RANGE EDUCATION REFORM PLAN FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Introduction

This document sets forth a framework for the Long-Range Education Reform Plan for the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), including a Vision Statement, a Mission Statement, and a list of: measurable indicators of success.

The Long-Range Education Reform Plan will be part of an overall strategic plan for the school system. By June 30, 2000, fundamental improvement must be achieved in the three core areas of: 1) academics, 2) school facilities, and 3) personnel and financial management systems. The strategic plan will chart a course for achieving fundamental improvement in these three core areas, placing them on a firm foundation for continuous improvement in future years.

The Long-Range Education Reform Plan will focus on the core area of academics, as reflected in this framework. ***Because the Trustees must address questions of school facilities (to meet an Authority mandate to close at least six schools by September, 1997) before they have had time to complete an academic plan that has been under development since their inception four months ago in November, 1996, they are releasing this framework to assure the public that the question of academics has been and will continue to be considered in the development of long-range school facilities planning.***

This academic framework embraces the goals and objectives specified in the School Reform Act of 1995 and in the DC Goals 2000 Plan for Educational Improvement. In other words, the DC Goals 2000 Community Plan for Educational Improvement will continue to be the foundation for the Children First Long-Range Education Reform Plan. When completed, that plan will lay out an action agenda for achieving each objective and will include 1) a statement of the action or performance objective, 2) measures to be used to determine progress toward the objective, 3) dates by which the objective shall be met, 4) resources required to meet the objective, and 5) who is responsible for the achievement of each objective and the title of that employee's immediate supervisor.

In considering their vision for greatly improving the academic portion of the DC Public Schools, the Trustees were confronted with important questions that would affect their decisions on facilities. For example: what if plans to improve the DC schools are so successful that District-resident school-age children who currently attend private schools begin to return to public schools; or if suburban families with school-age children begin to move back into the District; or if the drop-out rate is substantially decreased? The public deserves to know that even though the Children First Long-Range Education Reform Plan is not yet fully fleshed out, such questions have been raised and considered with the following conclusion: ***even if we are more successful than any other reform-minded urban school system, it is highly unlikely that we will face such an influx of students from private or suburban schools that we will be unable to accommodate them within remaining school facilities and in non-***

*traditional school settings. What we may find is that parents will again begin to look to District public schools and/or public charter schools as attractive alternatives for younger siblings.*

*Meanwhile, we cannot afford to "mothball" old buildings in need of substantial repair, or even parts of underutilized buildings that are immensely expensive to maintain, while we await such success. We will meet the needs of the future by establishing schools in community-based settings such as museums or private business buildings or with new construction, all incorporating the latest technological and pedagogical innovations available at the time established. If the school programs improve as we hope they will, and if future school administrations are able to maintain the improvements we plan to initiate, we are confident that the community and the Congress will help us find the funding to build when lack of space becomes a problem.*

It is important to keep in mind that while we may have to close school *buildings*, quality school *programs* will not end -- in fact, we foresee that the savings achieved through our facility efforts will result in programming that is greatly improved. It is important to emphasize that *all monies acquired from the sale of property and all savings achieved from the closing of schools will be used for technological, safety, and physical improvements of the remaining schools.*

## 21st Century Schools -- A Vision

The children of the District of Columbia are our most precious human resource. We envision schools of the future that are collegial communities of professional and intellectually-prepared teachers and administrators who teach to world-class standards in a safe and caring environment in which children master the academic, technological, and social competencies that give them real choices in life and provide bridges to further education, productive work, and responsible citizenship.

## 21st Century Schools -- Our Mission

1. To raise student achievement in the skills and knowledge necessary for productive work and further education.

2. To instill in students an ethic of civility, purpose, responsibility, and the resolution of conflict through reason and understanding.

3. To equip students for responsible citizenship through respect for diversity and commitment to the common good.

4. To provide a safe and caring environment in which students are motivated to learn.

## Some Measurable Indicators of Success**

1. Increase the academic performance of all schools.

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** Specific baselines and targets are being developed on a school-by-school basis and will be completed no later than June 30, 1997.

2. Increase the percent of students scoring at or above the national norms on standardized tests.
3. Increase the number of students reading at grade level by age 9.
4. Increase daily student attendance.
5. Decrease the drop-out rate.
6. Increase the high school graduation rate.
7. Increase the number of students pursuing higher education and the number employed following graduation.
8. Increase parental and community involvement in the schools.
9. Decrease the incidence of violent conflict and crimes affecting student and staff safety.
10. Redirect resources from central administration to the schools.

# CHILDREN FIRST: GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**GOAL I: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: Ensure that all students are taught to world-class academic standards to prepare them for productive work, further education, and responsible citizenship.**

A. Adopt rigorous content and performance standards, with aligned curriculum, aligned assessments, and aligned professional development.

1. Adopt world-class, district-wide content and performance standards in core curriculum subjects.

2. Establish curriculum frameworks and curricula aligned with content and performance standards.

3. Integrate state-of-the-art technology into the instructional program.

4. Adopt assessments aligned with both curriculum and standards that provide data that can be used to 1) measure the progress of individual students, each classroom, each school, and the entire district; and 2) provide information to teachers that is useful for adjusting classroom instruction.

5. Adopt secured standardized assessments to measure effectively the standing of DC schools nationally and internationally.

6. Provide aligned professional development opportunities for school teaching staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary for their students to reach high

standards, including the ability to utilize state-of-the-art technology for instructional purposes.

7. Design and implement a public engagement campaign to ensure community understanding and support of new school standards and other academic goals.

B. Create a home and community environment conducive to learning, with special attention to needs of children placed at risk of school failure.

1. Improve parent involvement in the education and development of their children by creating or augmenting parent education programs that emphasize the importance of infant stimulation, toddler development, and other interventions that address the developmental needs of children. Such programs must be easily accessible to parents around the city.

2. Work with government agencies, corporations, collaborations of neighborhood small businesses, and non-profit organizations to provide quality day-care programs near or at work sites for working mothers and children placed at risk of school failure.

3. Improve school readiness by offering all 3-4 year old children, at risk of school failure, quality, content-specific pre-school programs. Work with corporations and collaborations of neighborhood small businesses to provide such programs for their employees.

4. Improve parent involvement in the education of their children and their ability to reinforce school learning at home through school-based family resource centers and through parent training in English as a second language, reading, computer literacy, and math in sites easily accessible for parents.

5. Create community-based centers offering comprehensive school-linked social services to improve student health and safety, and provide an environment conducive to tutoring, mentoring, and other parent and community involvement with schools.

6. Conduct a community-wide public relations campaign with help from corporations, foundations, and community-based organizations to promote high academic achievement as the desired goal for students from any and all cultural backgrounds.

7. Increase community participation through school partnerships with corporations, universities, cultural institutions, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

C. Create a school environment conducive to learning by providing support systems that keep children performing at grade level, to avoid the discouragement that leads to dropping-out.

1. Keep class size and school size small enough to foster an atmosphere where all students are known by the faculty and administrators. Within larger school buildings, this can be achieved with "schools-within-schools" or "academies."

2. Increase parent participation in reinforcing educational goals by developing a frequent and systematic method of communication between parent and teacher.

3. Identify students who fall below core curriculum standards to ensure 1) that each student meets such standards prior to promotion, and 2) that students meet all standards prior to high school graduation.

4. Provide intensive after-school, weekend, and summer tutoring for students falling below grade-level standards with the help of trained volunteers from universities and community service organizations.

5. Expand after-school, weekend, and summer enrichment programs, including tutoring, mentoring, arts, athletics, and other activities focused on youth development and education. Invite participation from community health, recreation, library, social services, and other programs.

6. Restructure approaches to delivering Title I and special education services, as well as services to language minority students, maximizing federal and foundation funding for these and other programs.

7. Provide alternative learning settings for students who are not succeeding in conventional schools to ensure that all children, whatever their needs, have a place in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

D. Create a school environment conducive to learning by improving the safety and security of schools so that staff and students can focus on teaching and learning.

1. Strengthen discipline policies to ensure a safe, disciplined environment conducive to learning, including monitored "set-aside" rooms for disruptive students within D.C. public schools.

2. Develop alternatives to violence through such strategies as peer mediation and conflict resolution.

3. Develop a school-based dress code that minimizes distractions from academic performance.

4. Improve safety and security through security personnel, metal detectors, and student ID badges.

5. Establish additional alternative programs for disruptive students.

E. Expand career preparation opportunities within the academic program to build a bridge toward future employment and further education.

1. Ensure that all graduating seniors have the reading, math, communication and computer skills necessary for employment and/or further education, including guidance toward the development of individual career paths.

2. Establish a career preparation resource center to promote partnerships between schools and businesses and public and private agencies.

3. Increase the number of students successfully completing higher level math and science courses to encourage careers in math, science, technology, and engineering.

F. Create and expand programs for citizenship training that build a bridge toward responsible citizenship as an adult.

1. Adopt curricula that foster civic responsibility, civility, community service, and respect

for the law in a free democratic society.

2. Sensitize students to the contributions of varying cultures in society, and show how diversity offers strength and potential for the common good.

3. Establish after-school programs that promote self-confidence, discipline, respect for self and others, and good citizenship.

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**GOAL II: A QUALITY SCHOOL STAFF: Provide an academically competent, well trained and caring staff and hold them accountable for results.**

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A. Adopt clear standards of competency for hiring and evaluating principals, teachers, and other professional staff.

1. Implement policies requiring competitive appointments for all public school positions.

2. Implement policies to evaluate and hold principals accountable for 1) management skills, 2) budgetary accountability, 3) teacher morale and development, 4) school discipline, 5) personal integrity of all staff, and 6) relations with parents and community.

3. Establish a principal leadership development program.

4. Implement policies regarding testing requirements for teacher certification and recertification.

5. Implement policies regarding alternative teacher certification requirements.

6. Evaluate teachers as teams within a school, holding them accountable for 1) individual student progress, 2) competency in subject matter to be taught, and 3) keeping parents informed and engaged.

7. Establish professional development for teachers that is aligned with the standards and curriculum being taught. Create incentives for teachers to work toward higher professional certification.

8. Provide special mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession.

B. Improve Teacher/Principal Compensation and Recognition.

1. Bring teacher/principal compensation to levels of surrounding communities with differing salary ranges for subject areas or other positions that are difficult to fill.

2. Recognize outstanding teachers, principals, and schools through an equitable and objective evaluation that has true meaning for the entire community.

3. Evaluate the pros and cons of pay for teacher performance and develop policy recommendations.

## Goal III: GOVERNANCE AND SCHOOL AUTONOMY

A. Promote school autonomy and accountability through decentralization and greater parental choice.

1. Continue and accelerate the move toward school-based management and budgeting, working through LSRTs and building on experience with enterprise schools and school-within-school charters. Encourage and support schools independently pursuing restructuring so long as they meet the standards set by DCPS.

2. For schools needing help with restructuring, provide choice among proven total school restructuring models that are designed for urban schools and can meet the standards set by DCPS.

3. Identify schools in need of outside help but not ready to take on the task themselves, and provide targeted assistance (including changes of personnel) to help them move toward a proven restructuring model appropriate to that school.

4. Facilitate the development of high-quality charter schools that will serve as laboratories of change for the entire school system.

B. Role of Central Administration

1. Determine what functions and support services are best maintained by Central Administration for efficiency.

2. Set goals to move funding and personnel away from Central Administration and into the schools as Management Information Systems permit accountability.

3. Establish evaluation processes for accountability for both school units and Central Administration.

4. Review central office budget and staffing reductions for each fiscal year compared to fiscal year 1995.

*APPENDIX G -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KEVIN CHAVOUS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION, D.C. CITY COUNCIL*

**STATEMENT OF KEVIN P. CHAVOUS**
**CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL'S**
**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND RECREATION**

**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS**
**AND SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**May 1, 1997**

Gentlemen and Members of the Subcommittees:

I am Kevin P. Chavous, the new Chairman of the D.C. Council's Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation which, as you may know, has jurisdiction over the District of Columbia Public Schools, the University of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Public Libraries, and in addition, the Department of Recreation and Parks.

I would like to thank the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and the House Subcommittee on the District of Columbia for giving me an opportunity to testify on "What Is and Is Not Working in the District of Columbia Public Schools and Any Plans the City May Have in Regards to the Future of Educating Its Children".

Mr. Chairman, these are exciting times for the District of Columbia, for it is during this time of budgetary chaos and constraints that we can begin to rebuild

our entire educational infrastructure. We have no choice but to look for solutions to address the overwhelming underachievement of our student population. Our Committee is in a unique position to foster enhanced collaboration among the educational entities under our purview, for the sole purpose of producing a well-rounded student, who not only achieves, but can compete on a national level.

To that end, the Committee is working closely with the D.C. Public School System (DCPS) to "jumpstart" educational reform in the District of Columbia. One of our most important goals is to make sure that DCPS refines the recently developed FY 1998 School Based Staffing Model, which is the initial step in building a zero based budget for schools. Once all facets of the school-by-school based budget are honed, the Committee will insist that the needs of the students be adequately addressed.

The problems of DCPS are well-documented. However, I believe it is in best interest of the children, and my time before you, to focus not on what is wrong with the system, but we what we have done and are doing to create a dynamic educational system.

Currently, a major debate rages about educational funding in this city. All policymakers are being faced with increased pressure to do more with less resources. There are those who say, we can no longer throw money into a

vacuum. Yet, on the other hand, there are others who clamor for substantial increases in funding for schools. Student achievement must serve as a foundation for whatever additional resources are allocated to schools. While I do not claim to have the panacea or the "quick-fix" for the ails of the Public School System, I am convinced that if we focus on four major areas, we can spend our money wisely. Those areas are:

**Student Achievement**

All the budgets in the world are for naught if "Johnny cannot read". In Goals 2000, the residents of the District of Columbia stressed that a performance based education is tantamount to accomplishing educational reform. The schools have to create more rigorous standards for student performance. The method for student assessment has to change so that DCPS can measure not only what students know but also what they are able to do with their knowledge. We have to ensure that students master reading, writing, and arithmetic in their appropriate levels before they are moved on to their next grade.

In far too many instances our children have been passed from one grade to the next in the name of "social promotion". Perhaps, this is the greatest disservice adults can do to children. When the child ultimately realizes that he cannot read,

write or perform at the expected academic level, he loses interest in attending school and often drops out.

**School by School Based Budgeting**

In attempting to achieve a school-by-school based budget, equity will serve as the foundation for the distribution of resources. However, some schools may receive augmented resources depending upon their particular needs. With such a budget in hand, any citizen of the District of Columbia can pick up the budget book and see how and where funds are spent in any school. A parent should no longer need to question or decipher expenditures since they will be plainly and readily available. Additionally, the people who misspend money will be held accountable for their deeds.

Last week, the Committee approved specific line items to support programs at the school level.

**Principal/Teacher Training and Evaluation**

We must develop strategies that hold principals and teachers, alike, for the performance of our children. In DCPS there has been no tradition of decision making based upon setting priorities that are tied to accountability and teaching

mechanisms that work. There should be performance-based appraisal for all employees. Teachers and principals need to be assessed accurately, fairly, and timely. Just as significantly, our system should be able to reward good teachers and principals, and ferret out those who are not performing. Specifically, as it relates to principals, more often than not, where we have good principals, our students excel. We must endeavor to place the very best principals in each school in our system.

**Community-Based Schools/Community Hubs**

Family and community participation, coordination and integration of social services, adult education and lifelong learning, and substantive collaboration and partnerships with all segments of the community are listed as Goal VII of the Goals 2000 Plan. It is in this spirit that the Committee has embraced the Community Hub Concept, which has been defined by the D.C. Education Licensure Commission as " [a] D.C. Public School building used as a multi-purpose center that provides the opportunity to integrate support services and enable inter-generational uses to meet the lifelong learning needs of community residents. Family and community services could include before and after school care, counseling, tutoring, vocational and career training, art and sports programs,

housing assistance, family literacy, health and nutrition programs, parent education, employment assistance, adult education, and access to technology." During a hearing in January of this year, the Committee was delighted to learn that Community Hubs do not require additional funding. Rather, Community Hubs coordinate and utilize already existing resources. It is our fervent hope that DCPS and other appropriate authorities will replicate the Community Hub Concept, as established at Patricia Roberts Harris Educational Center, in all wards of the city. I have already introduced legislation entitled the "Resource Centers or Community Hubs Establishment Act of 1997" to further this concept.

Chairmen, children are no longer taught under trees or in one-room schoolhouses. In addition to strengthening the academic core of our schools, we must also concern ourselves with school facilities in which learning and other activities take place. Public school facilities have to be rebuilt, modernized and maintained at 21st century standards. Children and all those who are involved in schools are entitled to the use of attractive facilities in which they feel safe, in which they want to come, and perform to their fullest potential. Additionally, the infusion of state-of-the art technology is mandatory if our students are to leap into the next millennium with a competitive edge.

Recently, the Committee received the "District of Columbia Public Schools Long-Range Facilities Master Plan". Unfortunately, an essential element -- the academic component, which should be the driving force behind any facilities planning and improvements -- was absent. DCPS's effort to devise a comprehensive facilities master plan has been laudable, however, the Committee felt it was necessary to solicit parental and community involvement from a knowledgeable panel of persons from around the city to help DCPS produce a Facilities Master Plan for submission to Congress by April 25, 1997, as required by the School Reform Act. Consequently, as Chair, I appointed a Special Task Force to assist General Becton's office with the development of this edict.

I am pleased to announce that the Special Task Force met with General Charles Williams and presented his office with its views on the fundamental parts which need to be included in the final plan. Despite tremendous effort on the part of General Williams' office, the Committee determined that the Plan is still deficient in major areas. Both parties agreed that the Plan would be a living document for further revision and continuous update; yet, it is the Committee's view that more work is necessary and plans to have a revised document available for transmission on May 6, 1997. In spite of this minor setback, the level of cooperation between

the Committee and DCPS gives credence to the commitment of both entities to move forward in the best interests of the children.

Over the past six months there has been marked advancement in the management of DCPS facilities. Our challenge remains the development of multiple sources and predictable financing for capital improvements for these facilities. We are aware that the D.C. Government's resources are insufficient to pay for these much needed improvements. We will, no doubt, have to look to other revenue sources in order to accomplish our goals.

Of all the tasks the Committee is charged with, perhaps none is more crucial than exercising vigilant oversight and holding parties accountable for the spending of taxpayer dollars. The Committee intends to be aggressive in its oversight responsibility, and has scheduled the following hearings:

- Student Achievement ( June TBA)

  In this hearing the Committee will examine policies relating to student achievement in D.C. Public schools with special emphasis on early childhood development, Pre-Kindergarten through the third grade and meeting national tests standard goals.

- Charter Schools (May 15, 1997)

  The Committee intends to examine the progress that the District of Columbia Public Schools has made in: chartering new schools, monitoring existing schools, or revoking the charters of problem schools, if circumstances warrant such revocation.

- Truancy (May 28, 1997)

  The purpose of this Public Oversight Hearing is to discuss truancy in the District of Columbia and to unveil a model truancy program that the Committee has been instrumental in helping develop and which is designed to empower children to stay in school.

- Principal/Teacher Training and Evaluation (June 5, 1997)

  The Committee will examine what DCPS is doing to revolutionize this area.

In conclusion, these are but a few endeavors the Committee is in the process of putting forth in its effort and commitment to make the D.C. Public Schools the pride of the District of Columbia.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

# BIOGRAPHY
# OF
# KEVIN P. CHAVOUS
# D.C. CITY COUNCILMEMBER-WARD 7

Kevin P. Chavous, is in the first year of his second term as Ward 7 Representative on the Council of the District of Columbia. Ward 7 includes some of Washington's most historic and distinctive neighborhoods. He is currently Chairman of the Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation and serves on the committees on Public works and the Environment, and the Judiciary. From 1992 to 1994 Mr. Chavous chaired the Committee on Self-Determination. From 1995 to 1996, Mr. Chavous chaired the Committee on Labor. At age 40, Mr. Chavous is the youngest member of the Council.

As Councilmember, Mr. Chavous has been a forceful advocate for fiscal restraint and improved city services. He has sponsored a number of innovative community programs including several job fairs, community-wide forums on everything from public safety to how citizens can lobby government, the Ward 7 Family Day, and the restoration of historic Woodlawn Cemetery.

**He has authored a number of important pieces of legislation including the Abatement of Controlled Dangerous Substances Nuisance Act, which empowers community groups to bring civil action to force the closing of crack houses, and the Enterprise Development Strip Amendment Act to stimulate economic development by expanding tax relief options for commercial and industrial businesses in underdeveloped areas.**

Mr. Chavous is a graduate of the Howard University School of Law. He earned his undergraduate degree in political science from Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, where he was also an NCAA District All-American in basketball.

Mr. Chavous is also an attorney with the Washington, D.C. law firm of Cadeaux and Taglieri. He periodically teaches trial tactics at the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and Harvard University. He was previously elected by the residents of Ward 7 to the District of Columbia Democratic State Committee. Mr. Chavous is also chairman of the D.C. Statehood Compact Commission, a member of the national board of directors for Handgun Control, and the board of directors of the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington.

Mr. Chavous has provided free legal counsel for civic groups, and for many years, served as legal counsel for Southeast Neighbors, Inc., a non profit community organization that provides scholarships for high school seniors.

In addition, Mr. Chavous successfully represented the River Terrace Community Organization in halting the proposed expansion of the Potomac Electric Power Company Benning Road power plant. He was also the host of "The Law and You" on WDCU 90.1 FM.

He was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana. He is a member of various civic associations in Ward 7 and is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and Phi Alpha Delta, an international legal fraternity. He has organized and participated in a number of charitable activities.

The Chavous family attends St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Ward 7. He and his wife Beverly Bass Chavous have two sons.

#

1/97

*APPENDIX H -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DON REEVES, PRESIDENT, D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION*

STATEMENT
OF
DON REEVES
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS (SUBCOMMITTEE) OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.
MAY 1, 1997

Good morning, Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. I am Don Reeves, President of the District of Columbia Board of Education and member of the Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees. It is my pleasure to come before you in response to your concerns about: "What is and is not working in D.C. public schools and any plans the city has for the future."

As you know on November 15, 1996 the Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (hereinafter the "Authority") created a 9 member Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees to respond to its own declaration of a state of emergency in the District of Columbia public school system. This board of trustees which consists of 8 appointed members, and one elected member who is the president of the D.C. school board, has the authority to operate the public schools. In the Order which created this new form for school governance the school board was given chartering authority. The elected school board is now one of two chartering boards in the District of Columbia.

The public charter school legislation passed last spring offers D.C. a great opportunity to improve public education by bringing about competition. However, I regret to report that the elected school board has not received a budget, personnel, training, equipment or materials to administer its chartering authority. On the other hand $300,000 has been released to the other chartering authority so that it can begin its work. Currently, the school board has no funds, training, equipment, personnel or even applications to administer its chartering authority.

The Board has submitted for your consideration an itemized recommendation of $404,000.00 to be released immediately to the school board so that it can begin to competently administer its duties. Thus far the elected school board is responsible for the only two charters in the District that are up and running. Three other charters have been granted, but are not functioning as of this date. Since the elected school board's budget is unilaterally controlled by the trustee board, the elected school board has been rendered impotent with regard to its chartering authority granted by Congress. I urge you to correct this situation.

The D.C. School Reform Law required the Board of Education (BOE) to expand choice among public schools (Section 2101 (b) (1) (D)). Progress has not been made on this choice issue because the Chair of the trustee board failed to provide a budget that contemplated the costs associated with tasks of being a chartering authority. In conjunction with this failure, the trustees have drafted legislation (at a meeting that I was not notified about) to give themselves final review of charter applications. Congress must make the decision to either go forward with the elected school board as a chartering agency or strip the school board of that power as well. Whatever the elected school board did or did not do in the past does not justify the maintenance of a government facade at taxpayer expense. It appears to many of us currently serving on the school board that we were left in existence only to support the Authority's legal argument, that the school board was not totally stripped of its powers.

Of the four new members to join the elected school board in November 1996, not a single one campaigned to be a member of a chartering authority; this was a responsibility dictated to us by an Order that nullified a democratic election and stripped us of our greatest desire--which is to make a difference in the education of public school children.

We applaud the House and the Senate for beginning to focus on the plight of public school education in the District of Columbia, but the District of Columbia's problems in public school education are not going to be solved quickly. School governance is the easiest of its problems to change and the most remote from the needs of the classroom and school-based management.

The latest drop out statistics for the District [June 1996 for school year 1994-1995] showed 2,466 students in secondary school dropped out in one year. This represents 8% per year of all the secondary school students enrolled in the system. From 7th grade to 12th grade 40% drop out before graduating. These young people are not leaving the District, they are not on spring break, they are not going to any other high school and they are not asking for their records when they leave their school. "Voluntary Withdrawal," and "Left without explanation" fill in the categories of those who fall through a non-existent safety net.

When the control board took over operations of the public schools by its creation of an appointed trustee board, it provided a scathing report to the public as the basis for the action as well as declaring a state of emergency in public schools. Some of the highlights of that report include:

1. That in an area where D.C. does the best in public school education, the fourth grade, only 22% are getting an adequate education;

2. The longer children stay in D.C. public schools the more likely they are to fail or to be harmed by that experience.

3. The systems in management, procurement, contracting, school governance, delivery of instructional materials, payroll and personnel are all broken.

4. Children are housed in poorly maintained buildings that are often closed due to fire code violations. After years of capital improvement neglect many of these buildings need full modernization to adequately support instruction.

Last month, the administration's Acting Chief Academic Officer presented a plan (which was not accepted) for raising the reading and mathematics achievement levels on 12th grade students to meet the needs of approximately 1500 seniors. The 1500 figure was based on the following:

o Over 50% of the 11th graders (current 12th graders) who were tested on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) last Spring at six (6) senior high schools (i.e., Anacostia, Ballou, Cardozo, McKinley, Phelps, and Spingarn) tested in the lowest quartile.

o One-third to one half of the eleventh graders (current 12th graders) who were tested on the CTBS last Spring at four (4) senior high schools (i.e., Chamberlain, Dunbar, Roosevelt, and M.M. Washington) tested in the lowest quartile.

o Less than one fourth of the eleventh graders (current 12th graders) who were tested on the CTBS last Spring at four (4) senior high schools (Banneker, Ellington, School Without Walls, and Wilson) tested in the lowest quartile.

o The cumulative GPA for current 12th grade students is 1.5 on a 4.0 scale. The statistics indicate a clear need for support.

However, the fact is, the District of Columbia does not have a Chief Academic Officer. The District of Columbia does not have a statement of what the vision is for improving the plight of those who need expansion of pre-k services, vocational and career programs, alternative schooling, community access, special education, adult education, public school education.

The consequences of these failures are profound. For example, successful academic performance was not a criterion used by the new administration in selecting public schools for closure. This could only happen where the task of closing schools was given to non educators who are totally unfamiliar with the culture of public school education in the District of Columbia. In a sea of poorly performing, crime ridden, violence torn, low morale burdened schools, who would have thought that the best and brightest among them would be the first to be on the chopping block?

Only a handful, about a fourth of D.C.'s schools, are doing a good job in public school education. Most of these well-performing schools are in buildings that are falling apart, but are held together by parental involvement, clearly defined educational objectives and community involvement. Good principals and dedicated teachers are the key. What we can do to improve conditions overall is to propose the following items be characterized as "top priority":

1. That the same richness of educational offerings be available for all students;

2. Up-to-date performance standards for all DCPS jobs;

3. A coordinated scholastic and facilities master plan developed in conjunction with schools and communities;

4. A principal evaluation process as well as a teacher evaluation process that will remove unqualified teachers, identify teachers in need of support and training, and reward outstanding teaching. Teachers must be compensated at a rate that will attract good teachers to this area. We are at the bottom of scholastic achievement and good teachers are the key to turning the system around--not who is in control of the school system.

5. Reduce the student-teacher ratio to prohibit a teacher having more than 25 students in a classroom for grades 3 through 6 and 20 for kindergarten through grade 2.

6. Provide elementary school counselors. The public as well as many people in charge of school governance are naive about the development of contemporary school aged children. In the areas of sex, disease, drugs, violence--children are in need of help outside their homes and neighborhoods. The schools have no choice but to be involved.

8. An accurate student enrollment count;

9. An accurate personnel audit;

10. An accurate and comprehensible budget.

11. A program to guarantee the timely delivery of instructional materials.

12. The development of special security approaches to remove violence as a principal factor in public school education.

Finally, the most helpful thing that could be done in the area of public education in the District of Columbia is for the administration to determine two things. First exactly why the scholastic achievement of D.C. public school students is so poor and why it is declining. Second, the administration needs to produce a detailed plan and timetable for redirecting resources into the classroom to improve student achievement.

In testimony provided to the Senate, the new school leadership has talked about "benchmarks" to measure their success and "approvals of drafts" and "proposals." These all sound good but fail to establish a time when we can expect to see improvement. I urge you to hold those in charge accountable for the establishment of timetables for all proposals to improve education. I thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Reeves

Don Reeves
President, District of Columbia Board of Education
Ward 3 Member
Member Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees

Don Reeves
President, District of Columbia Board of Education
Ward 3 Member of the District of Columbia Board of Education
Member, D.C. Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees

Don Reeves, author and educator, is currently an Adjunct Professor of English at Prince George's Community College. He has taught English Literature and composition at Northern Virginia Community College, American University, George Washington University and Cornell University.

Don Reeves is author of Notes of a Processed Brother, published by Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, 480 pp., January 1971 hardcover, republished in paperback by Avon Books, a division of the Hearst Corporation. He has served as editor for Fortune 500 companies and has written editorials for the New York Times, served as a reporter for Newsweek, and published numerous articles in national publications on contemporary issues.

Don Reeves is a graduate of New York City's High School of Music and Art, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, its Masters in Fine Arts Program and George Washington University Law School. He was a Telluride scholar, a substitute teacher in the Ithaca public schools and served as assistant editor of Cornell Alumni News. He is currently a member of the advisory board of Cornell's Catherwood Library--a project to put user-friendly labor relations research on the Internet.

His other experiences include : U.S. Navy Personnel, Procurement and Contract Specialist; and Labor Specialist for the District of Columbia Public Employee Relations Board.

Sheet1

**BUDGET REQUEST FOR CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM,BOARD OF EDUCATION**

| EXPENSES | | | | TOTAL THRU OCT 1ST 97 | DRAFT TOTAL THRU OCT 1ST 98 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PAYROLL EXPENSE | | | | | |
| DIRECTOR | $70,000 | | | | |
| COUNSEL | 60,000 | | | | |
| CHIEF STAFF ASSISTANT | 28,000 | | | | |
| STAFF ASSISTANT | 25,000 | | | | |
| SUB TOTAL PAYROLL | | 183,000 | | | |
| PAYROLL TAXES 15.5% | | 28,365 | | | |
| TOTAL PAYROLL EXPENSE | | | 211,365 | | 211,365 |
| 5 Months Expense to 10/1/97 | | | | 85,069 | |
| CONSULTANTS | | | | 30,000 | 15,000 |
| Est. Avg. $375/day (80 Days) | | | | | |
| TRAVEL (Consultants) | | | | | |
| 10 Trips @ $650 | | | 6,500 | | 3,250 |
| Lodging and per diem @$150/day | | | 12,000 | | 6,000 |
| TRAVEL (Board) | | | | | |
| 11 persons , two trips each | | | 24,200 | | 6,600 |
| at $1100 per trip | | | | | |
| TRAVEL (staff)6 trips @$1100 | | | 6,600 | | 6,600 |
| TOTAL TRAVEL | | | | 51,500 | 24,650 |
| CONFERENCE AND HEARING EXP. | | | | 6,500 | 6,500 |
| OFFICE EXPENSES | | | | | |
| SET UP | | | | | |
| 4 COMPUTEERS @2000 | | | 8,000 | | |
| 2 PRINTERS @ $1500 | | | 3,000 | | |
| FAX MACHINE | | | 1,000 | | |
| TELEPHONE SETUP | | | 850 | | |
| SOFTWARE PROGRAMS | | | 1,000 | | |
| MISC SET UP COSTS | | | 1,000 | | |
| TOTAL SETUP COST | | | | 14,850 | 3,500 |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES (5 MOS) | | | | 500 | 1,200 |
| COPY MACHINE LEASE (5MOS) | | | | 1,250 | 2,500 |
| TELEPHONE EXPENSE ( 5 MOS) | | | | 3,500 | 6,000 |
| PRINTING(mags,applications etc.) | | | | 5,000 | 10,000 |
| ASSOCIATION DUES | | | | 750 | 750 |
| MISC EXPENSE | | | | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| TOTAL OFFICE EXPENSES | | | | 202,410 | 282,865 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | | | | 484,838 | |

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

DON REEVES
PRESIDENT
WARD 3 REPRESENTATIVE
415 12th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-1994
202-724-5450

April 19, 1997

Re: Status of D.C. public schools
Subcommittee Hearing Thursday, May 1, 1997
Rm 2175 Rayburn House Office Bldg.

To: Messers Tom Davis and Pete Hoekstra

I received yesterday your invitation to testify /dated 4-8-97/ on the status of D.C. public schools. I am aware that General Becton DCPS CEO and Bruce MacLaury have testified in the Senate--while I was not invited. Both General Becton and Bruce MacLaury are newcomers who have no real experience in DCPS or D.C. Both are charged with closing D.C. schools and have developed a process and procedure which has undermined real community input and threatens many school communities which are successful and enjoy widespread support from teachers, parents and children. I, the elected representative, should have already been provided with an opportunity to present the people's case on the status of D.C. public schools. The school closing process will be complete before May 1, 1997, the date you have invited me to testify. Therefore, I respectfully request that you stop the process until I have testified.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Reeves
President, D.C. School Board
Ward 3 Representative
Member Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees

encl.

# WARD 3

**Term of Office:** 4 years.
Vote for no more than 1 candidate.
**Annual Salary:** $15,000.
* Indicates incumbent.
**Question to Candidates:** *1.) In your view, what is the biggest problem in D.C. schools, and what would you do about it? 2.) If you have school-age children, where do you send them to school? Why that school?*

## NONPARTISAN

### Howard Grimmett

*A: 1. Overall student achievement below acceptable levels. Exercise oversight to improve management performance. Target savings to directly support students, educational aides, instructional supervision, staff development. 2. No school-age children.*

* **AGE:** 62.
- **RESIDENCE:** 45th Street NW.
- **OCCUPATION:** Retired.
- **EDUCATION:** BA, Miles College; MS, Atlanta University.

### Don Reeves

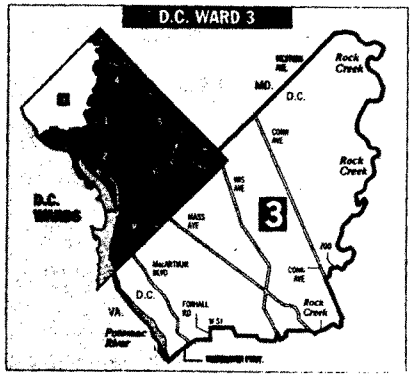
*A: 1. Lack of accountability for budget deception which results in children being casualties and teachers, victims. I will exercise my oversight responsibility to stop this. 2. Yes, to Ben Murch Elementary School. Murch is as good as any private school, perhaps even better then most because of its tremendous diversity and excellent parent-teacher cooperative efforts.*

- **AGE:** 44.
- **RESIDENCE:** Connecticut Avenue NW.
- **OCCUPATION:** Adjunct professor of English, Prince George's Community College.
- **EDUCATION:** BA, Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations; MFA, Cornell University Graduate School of English; JD, George Washington University Law School. Basic diploma, Defense Acquisition Contracts Course, U.S. Army Logistics Management Center, Fort Lee, Va.

### David Yassky

*A: 1. Lack of accountability. Each school cluster should have its own budget. Board should scrutinize—not rubber stamp—major contracts. Hold administrative personnel responsible for failures. 2. No school-age children.*

- **AGE:** 32.
- **RESIDENCE:** Veazey Street NW.
- **OCCUPATION:** Lawyer, O'Melveny & Myers LLP.
- **EDUCATION:** AB, Princeton University; JD, Yale University Law School.



**Congress of the United States**
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 8, 1997

**VIA FACSIMILE: 202/724-2040**

Mr. Don Reeves
President
D.C. Board of Education
415 12th Street, NW, Rm. 1205
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear President Reves:

The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations (Subcommittee) of the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight will hold a joint hearing on the status of the D.C. Public Schools on Thursday, May 1, 1997, in room 2175 of the Rayburn House Office Building. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to testify before the Subcommittee.

We are interested in receiving testimony about what is and is not working in the D.C. Public Schools and any plans the city may have in regards to the future of educating its children. Please submit 100 copies of your written statement, a diskette containing your written statement and one curriculum vitae by 1:00 p.m., Monday, April 28, 1997. Should you anticipate any problems with this request, please contact Mark Brunner or Leigh Stadthaus at (202) 225-7101.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to be a part of the hearing and we look forward to seeing you on May 1.

Sincerely,

Pete Hoekstra

PETE HOEKSTRA
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations

Tom Davis

TOM DAVIS
Chairman
Subcommittee on the
District of Columbia

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

THE WASHINGTON POST

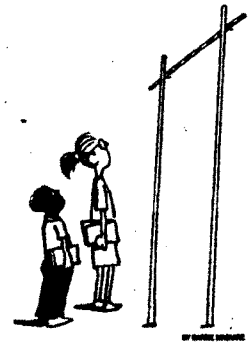
*Don Reeves*

# Why D.C. Schools Are Abysmal

"High expectations" has been the battle cry of school reformers for the past two decades, based on the belief (supported by a lot of evidence) that kids will learn a whole lot more than they currently do if we expect them to do it.

Despite all the cheerleading about high expectations, many D.C. students are being held down by a program that expects little of them. Kids in fifth grade are given high marks for doing third-grade arithmetic and encouraged to think they are good at math. They find out too late that they have been on a slow train to nowhere because they don't know the math required to learn chemistry or physics—courses they will need for both the trades and college. Even though writing is an essential skill for whatever future students choose, District kids, in the main, are not expected to learn to write and do not learn to write. The fact that most University of the District of Columbia students are enrolled in remedial writing courses bears witness to this lapse. In D.C. schools, kids can pass from grade to grade without having met even the most minimal expectations. They can earn a diploma by merely showing up and refraining from mayhem. Why, when they could learn so much more, are they expected to learn so little?

- First, there are no clear standards for what students are expected to know at each level, and many teachers complain that they do not know what they are supposed to be doing.
- Second, the obsessive focus on standardized test scores keeps expectations low because the tests themselves expect so little and fail to measure the most important things. Nevertheless, test scores have become the coin of the realm because the media and the city's elites naively (or cunningly) accept these tests as legitimate measures of student performance. The school system strives to placate the press and city leaders by engineering minuscule rises in the scores; teachers are prodded to focus on these minimal skills and therefore have less time to teach students what they really will need in the world.



- Third, and related to test-obsession, is that teachers, not students are held responsible for student achievement. Although this idea has a nice ring, it has had unintended consequences; students now have the power to determine the teachers' standing, not the other way around. Kids are smart about the power relationships between adults and children. When students are not responsible for their own learning, they can say to their teachers, "So teach me!" or more often, "Entertain me!" They can, and often do, refuse to turn in assignments, knowing they can make the teacher look bad for failing to motivate them to work. If low expectations are to be reversed, the power relationship between teachers and children needs a major adjustment.
- Fourth, the criteria for hiring and assigning teachers fosters low standards. Hiring criteria are not only misshapen, but widely ignored by the administration. Assignment practices are a scandal: A teacher who had one course in physics 20 years ago will be assigned to teach physics; a teacher who cannot write a correct paragraph is assigned to teach writing. And the parents are not told that the teacher is unqualified. When teachers do not have a firm grip on the subjects they teach, they inevitably teach at the lowest level and often teach poorly.
- Fifth, school administrators are rewarded (with more resources and staff) for keeping enrollment up, even if the kids aren't learning much. Administrators look good if lots of kids are enrolled in advanced academic courses, even if the kids can't read the textbook and don't understand what's going on. There are, at present, no adverse consequences for administrators who let kids slide though without working or learning.
- Last but not least, a subtle and often unwitting racism and classism works to keep expectations low. The belief that poor children from single-parent families can't learn is widespread, despite evidence to the contrary. This belief serves the interests of those who, for whatever reasons, want to maintain the maximum social distance between themselves and the children they teach. This belief serves those teachers who are just marking time and undercuts those teachers who fight for their kids but get little or no support.

One wonders why the media—if they really believe these kids can learn more—have not thrown a fit over the decline of student learning in the District in the past two decades.

Creating high expectations is a complex task. It cannot be accomplished by staging rhetorical festivals or by hounding teachers to teach harder. The elected board and new appointed board will have to eliminate all the little policy elbows and hidden practices that have institutionalized low expectations. They need to insist on meaningful standards, a more challenging curriculum and tests that measure important things. They must create incentives for students to work harder and meet standards, for teachers to take risks and stretch the kids, for administrators to work on quality rather than numbers and for parents to ask harder questions.

*The writer is president of the D.C. Board of Education and a member of the Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees.*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## *Secrecy and the D.C. Schools' Trustees*

I need to respond to The Post's March 3 editorial "The Secretive Trustees."

First, about the use of the word "secrecy." I made it clear to reporter Debbi Wilgoren [Metro, Feb. 28] that I was not defending secrecy. The trustees believe it is essential to quickly build knowledge and trust through weekly meetings. This cannot be done in public session.

Second, no other trustee on our board would agree with the provocative statement attributed to Don Reeves that the trustees are "afraid" to meet in public. We welcome communication and advice from the elected school board members when they offer it constructively. A joint meeting on March 3 was scheduled to try again to establish that kind of relationship.

Third, we have been communicating with and listening to the public. Just since Jan. 1, I have attended 53 meetings on school matters. (Other trustees have their own list.) Of those 53 meetings, 20 have been spent communicating with the public or with its elected officials. Six have been public meetings—the mayor's budget hearing, a Feb. 6 open meeting of the trustees, a Feb. 12 meeting with the Congress of PTAs, a Feb. 18 D.C. Council hearing, a Feb. 24 elected school board open meeting, a Feb. 25 meeting with the board and ward representatives of Parents United, and a March 1 meeting with the Cleveland Park Citizens Association. The trustees held an open meeting on March 2 and will again on March 18.

Finally, I have initiated seven other meetings either with the elected school board or with individuals serving on that board.

BRUCE K. MacLAURY
Chairman
Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees
Washington

The D.C. public schools should not be reorganized during closed sessions of an appointed board of trustees. As president of the D.C. Board of Education and the only elected member on the nine-member trustee board, which now has authority over the D.C. public schools, I must be allowed to share the proceedings of the trustees with my elected board.

I want the trustees to respect the need for public disclosure and for input from the public. The lack of communication from the trustees, Gen. Julius W. Becton Jr. and the elected school board is one of the most serious problems facing us now.

For example, at a March 18 public meeting, trustees plan to announce schools proposed for closing, but they have provided almost no information on the poor resale and use of school buildings already closed or on why this new round of school closings should produce any different results.

To date, the trustees have held only one public meeting. Bruce MacLaury's presence in the audience at community meetings is not a fair substitute for public hearings and public input.

I feel a veil of secrecy undermines the public interest. The trustees should disclose to the public:

- A budget explaining how every dollar of taxpayer money is being spent.
- An independent and accurate student enrollment count; without one, no one can say how much we are spending per pupil.
- A special education master plan. The District's inability and unwillingness to address its failures in special education has cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.
- An independent and accurate personnel count. Only by requiring all school employees to reapply for their jobs will we be able to get out of the personnel and payroll mess. All job descriptions also should be upgraded to conform with proposed higher standards for our children.
- A method for addressing fire-code violations and implementing a repair, replacement and maintenance program for school buildings. The almost $2 billion needed to bring our facilities up to par will require a dollar commitment from Congress.
- A plan for making the District an attractive place to teach. A 5 percent pay increase for teachers is an insult.
- New standards for educational equality. Setting standards without regard to the zoo-like atmosphere crippling many of our schools is to consign our youth to a cycle of failure.
- A program to guarantee the timely delivery of instructional materials, support and funds to make site-based management a reality in the schools. Academically achieving schools should not be closed; they should be empowered by the central administration and given their share of money to operate; instead, money is frozen.

These are just a few of the important considerations that the board should discuss in open session. The public's schools belong to the public.

DON REEVES
President, D.C. Board of Education
Ward 3 Representative

FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1997

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

# Wrong About Schools In Ward 3

In talking to residents in other parts of the District, I have been surprised by the misconception people have about Ward 3 and its schools. Many people believe that Ward 3 schools are among the most modern and well-equipped in the D.C. Public School System. In actuality, Ward 3 school buildings are among the oldest in the city.

Woodrow Wilson Senior High School, constructed in 1935, is—at age 61—the newest school in Ward 3. Most of the ward's school facilities need new toilets, boilers, roofs, gutters, air conditioners, upgraded electrical wiring, lead-paint abatement and windows, just like the schools in the rest of the District.

But unlike the situation in most parts of the city, where underused school buildings abound, Ward 3 schools are all either at or beyond capacity, and many simply are out of space. In my daughter's elementary school, for example, a children's bathroom was converted into a nurse's office and another into an office for the special education teachers. The library had to be divided to make room for instruction in English as a second language.

The most disturbing comment I have encountered, however, is that "Ward 3 schools can take care of themselves." Underlying this assertion—questionable in itself—is a false assumption that Ward 3 schools serve only affluent Ward 3 children. This is far from true.

Children from every ward in the city attend Ward 3 schools. Four of the 10 schools in Ward 3 have official boundaries that also encompass wards 1,2 and 4. Wilson High School's boundaries extend into Ward 5.

Several Ward 3 schools, including the ward's only high school, Woodrow Wilson High School, have a majority of students who live outside the ward's boundaries.

When I take office on Jan. 1, I will be representing students and parents from all eight wards. My top priorities are that:

- Every child finishing first grade is able to read.
- Performance standards are updated for all public school jobs.
- A teacher evaluation process is implemented to remove unqualified teachers, identify teachers in need of support and training and reward outstanding teaching;
- A school rating and intervention plan is implemented.
- An accurate student enrollment is taken and an accurate personnel audit done.
- The schools have an accurate and comprehensible budget.

Each member of the D.C. Board of Education, whether elected at-large or representing a single ward, has a responsibility to promote the highest standards for public education for all the District's children. Once in office, I intend to publish a parent newsletter, and I invite other school board members to join me in an effort to improve and expand communication among parents across the city.

With more information and better communication, D.C. public-school parents can come together to fight for better educational opportunities for the community's most precious resource, its children.

*—Don Reeves*

*a member-elect to the D.C. Board of Education, will represent Ward 3.*

THE WASHINGTON POST

C8 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1996

# Close to Home

**DON REEVES FOR SCHOOL BOARD WARD 3**
Deal Junior High School Ward 3 Candidates' Forum
October 21, 1996

**1. WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, WHY DO YOU WANT THE JOB AND WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO IMPROVE OUR SCHOOLS?**

**MY QUALIFICATIONS**

I am currently an Adjunct Professor of English at Prince George's Community College. My most recent and relevant qualifications are as an involved parent at Murch Elementary school: elected parent representative to the Murch school-based management team; room parent; HSA newsletter staff; and after-school program volunteer.

I am a graduate of New York City's High School of Music & Art. I have a BS from the School of Industrial & Labor Relations at Cornell University and an MFA from its Graduate School of English. I have a JD from George Washington University Law School. At Cornell, I was a substitute teacher in the Ithaca public schools, a Telluride scholar and served as assistant editor of Cornell Alumni News. I am currently a member of the advisory board of Cornell's Catherwood Library--a project to put user-friendly labor relations research on the Internet.

My other relevant experience includes:

Substitute teacher in the Ithaca public schools; U.S. Navy Personnel, Procurement and Contract Specialist; and Labor Specialist for the District of Columbia Public Employee Relations Board.

**WHY I WANT THE JOB OF WARD 3 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER**

As the only Ward 3 candidate who has a child enrolled in a D.C. public school, I have a vested interest in seeing that the public schools are as good as they possibly can be. My second daughter will be enrolled in a D.C. public school next fall. I will be involved in the D.C. public schools for the next fifteen years. I am frustrated with the way the school system is being mismanaged and I want to bring my energy, my experience, and my expertise to the school board--the body that has a duty to oversee the system.

I want to be on the Board of Education in order to: demand accountability of every single employee of DCPS, from the Superintendent on down; insist that every DCPS employee performs his or her job to a minimum level of competence or faces dismissal; stop the endless shifting of budget authority from one program to another; implement a contract review process as part of the Board's oversight responsibility; demand that all Ward 3 schools have adequate heat, are safe, and are free from water damage; work to see that all the systems' schools are brought into a state of good repair; insist that a greater percentage of funds flow to the local schools and into the classrooms; vote against teacher furloughs; demand a new teacher evaluation process that will remove incompetent teachers and reward truly outstanding ones; see that instructional materials are updated and delivered to classrooms in a timely fashion; advocate the needs of Ward 3 principals and PTAs; and organize parents and public school supporters from around the ward and from other wards into a visible and vocal constituency demanding improved public education in the District of Columbia.

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**WHAT I WOULD DO TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS**

First, I would establish a working relationship with each of my fellow Board members. The current Board has been so ineffectual, in part, because it has been divided and deadlocked. I believe I have the skills and expertise to find common ground and to build consensus on a common goal--in this case, improving public education--even among people who hold diverse views and opinions.

Next, I would encourage the Board to establish goals and timetables for the Superintendent and his top administrators. I would propose the following items be characterized "top priority" and be produced by June 30, 1996:

- Up-to-date performance standards for all DCPS jobs;
- A scholastic and facilities master plan;
- A teacher evaluation process that will remove unqualified teachers, identify teachers in need of support and training, and reward outstanding teaching;
- A school rating and intervention plan;
- An accurate student enrollment count;
- An accurate personnel audit;
- An accurate and comprehensible budget.

Throughout my tenure, I will also advocate: higher curriculum standards, improvements in the delivery of special education; an end to the "social promotion" of students; better in-service training and support of classroom teachers; more administrative support for principals; and local school budgets for those schools prepared to engage in school-based management. I am willing to advocate the abolition of the school board if it should continue to fail to exercise its statutory oversight responsibilities.

**2. WHAT I WOULD DO TO ENCOURAGE THE BEST TEACHERS TO APPLY FOR JOBS IN THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND HOW I WOULD RETAIN THEM, ONCE HIRED.**

The starting pay for a teacher in the DCPS is the lowest in the metropolitan region. The working conditions here are often among the toughest. I will advocate increasing the starting pay for teachers as part of an overhaul of the teacher evaluation process. For years, the current teacher appraisal process (TAP) has resulted in 45% of DC teachers receiving an "outstanding" rating and fewer than one or two percent being rated "inadequate." I will demand that the administration design and implement a teacher rating system that will lead to the removal--not the transfer--of incompetent teachers. I also favor a system that gives financial rewards to truly outstanding teachers and will propose that we explore offering sabbaticals to teachers after fifteen or twenty years of service, as some other school systems do. With an improved pay scale, job security and incentives tied to performance, and improved in-service training and support for teachers, I think we could attract and retain the best new teachers to our school system.

**3. THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS AT A DESPERATE POINT. WE ALL AGREE THAT CHANGE IS NEEDED NOW. THE KIND OF CHANGE I SUPPORT IS.**

I favor immediate and comprehensive change. I have enumerated most of my specific suggestions for change in answering the previous questions. In addition, as a Board member, I will demand that the Superintendent outline for the public:

1. Exactly how $500 million is spent on education in the District of Columbia.

2. Exactly why the scholastic achievement of D.C. public school students is so poor; why it is declining; and a detailed plan and timetable for improving student achievement.

3. Exactly what the Superintendent intends to do to assure that every employee of DCPS performs his or her job to a minimally acceptable level of competence.

A20 Thursday, October 31, 1996

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

# For D.C. Board of Education

DESPITE DISAPPOINTING performances by both sides of the sharply divided D.C. Board of Education, the 11-member body nonetheless is a key to turning around a troubled school system. With two at-large seats and seats in Wards 1, 3, 5 and 6 up for grabs, Tuesday's general election offers District voters a chance to select a better caliber of board members. In our view, the city will be best served by electing **Tonya Kinlow** and **Robert Childs** to at-large seats, **Wilma Harvey** in Ward 1, **Don Reeves** in Ward 3, **Janice Denise Smith Autrey** in Ward 5 and **Benjamin Bonham** in Ward 6.

■ At-Large (vote for two): These two seats are being vacated by school board President Karen Shook and member Valencia Mohammed—leaders of opposing wings of the board. We have supported Mrs. Shook in all her previous election bids, and we often have differed with Mrs. Mohammed's stance on important educational issues. But in this instance, we think both are doing the right thing in leaving the board. Mrs. Shook's uncritical embrace of Superintendent Franklin Smith's every action and her open disdain for the board's minority came to severely limit her effectiveness as board president. Mrs. Mohammed's inclination to often view issues through a racial prism have done neither her nor the school system any good.

**Tonya Vidal Kinlow** and **Robert Childs** should be outstanding replacements. Mrs. Kinlow is a reform-minded parent, former PTA president and experienced policy analyst who knows her way around educational issues and the city's political and public-affairs community. The Rev. Childs knows the city's schools as a parent, volunteer, religious and community leader. Both have balance, vision, a commitment to public education and broad local support.

■ Ward 1: **Wilma Harvey**, the incumbent, is far and away the superior candidate in this two-person race. That is especially true given her opponent's complete lack of experience. While often found on the other side of the reform wing, Mrs. Harvey nonetheless is a hardworking board member who deserves reelection. She is hardly the disruptive, figure of fun her reform-wing opponents have unfairly made her out to be.

■ Ward 3: **Don Reeves**, educator and parent, stands out in a very competitive three-way race to fill the seat being vacated by Erika Landberg. Mr. Reeves has the hands-on school experience of opponent Howard Grimmett and the enthusiasm and savvy of challenger David Yassky. Ward 3 council member Kathy Patterson recognizes that potent combination and has endorsed Mr. Reeves. He's a good choice.

■ Ward 5: **Janice Denise Smith Autrey**. The general feeling is that incumbent Angie Corley, after many years of pedestrian service, has run out of steam. Parents and children in the ward need an active representative who is up to date on the school system's problems and how to solve them. While Mrs. Autrey did not display the sense of urgency we expected in a challenger, we believe her commitment to educational reform and willingness to work for it gives her the nod over Mrs. Corley,

■ Ward 6: **Benjamin Bonham**. Voters will do themselves and District children a big favor by replacing incumbent Bernard Gray with Mr. Bonham. Mr. Gray has spent his time on the board behaving as if "cooperation" and "consensus" are dirty words. He takes pride in having been on the losing side on many important issues. Mr. Bonham—a District native, former high school All American, honors graduate of Southern University, parent of school-age children and community leader—brings a different approach. He is interested primarily in holding the system accountable for preparing District youngsters to get ahead in today's competitive world. Mr. Bonham was a unsuccessful challenger before, this time we hope he makes it. The board can use his leadership, experience and vision.

A18 Monday, March 3, 1997 The Washington Post

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

# The Secretive Trustees

DISTRICT SCHOOL board president Don Reeves is thinking about leaving the emergency trustee board because the trustees are afraid of conducting their business in public view. Mr. Reeves should abandon that idea. Instead he should remain in the trustee slot reserved for the school board president and press the case for opening more of the board's deliberations to the public. For the moment, trustees may have the votes to keep the public out, but the public's right to know what's going on behind closed doors is compelling.

It's worth noting what's at stake here. The trustee board was set up (without the consent of District voters, we note) to bring overdue improvements to one of the District's most basic responsibilities: its public school system. With that transfer of authority from an elected school board to an unelected body went control over nearly $500,000 of taxpayer funds and responsibility for the education of about 70,000 District children. The trustee board is not engaged in a private enterprise. It is doing a critical piece of the public's business—the recovery of a failed educational system. If any group has a responsibility to regularly communicate with the public—to provide information as well as to have open and frank exchanges with community organizations, PTAs, civic groups and the public at large—it's the trustee board. Except for sensitive discussions of personnel issues, the board's business ought to be conducted in the sunshine. And that's where Mr. Reeves comes in.

As the only elected member of the nine member board, Mr. Reeves is expected to be a conduit for the views of the elected school board, but his presence among the trustees cuts both ways. He is also the public's link to the trustees. Accordingly, Mr. Reeves should feel free to report to his elected school board colleagues, his Ward 3 constituents and to the public at large on any and all of the trustee board's deliberations, excluding confidential personnel matters. Without a free flow of information between trustees and the public about the board's plans and activities, trustees will be deprived of the information they need to ensure that their decision-making process is well-informed.

Bruce MacLaury, chairman of the trustee board, apparently in defense of secrecy, said, "We need coherence and agreement among ourselves and to forge a condition of trust amongst each other in order to get the job done." The trustees, to be effective, we might add, need one more thing: public confidence. Unlocking the doors is one way to achieve that end.

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# D.C. Board of Education President Reeves is reaching out to all parents

In your Feb. 27 editorial "Listening to parents about schools," you mention that I should reach out to all parents, noting that I organized a citywide parents forum, word of which, it seemed, "reached the Barney Circle and South Capitol Street Bridges, then fell into the murky waters of the Anacostia."

I personally wrote letters to the representatives of each ward, inviting them to the meeting and requesting that they make a statement concerning the school problems in their ward. I personally organized a volunteer staff that called every school in the District of Columbia and advised each of the meeting. I personally wrote a letter to every principal and PTA president in the District and urged them to attend the forum.

Through the D.C. Board of Education, I instructed my staff to fax invitations to every school PTA/HSA/LSRT and principal as well as all news media. I called radio stations and requested that they announce the forum. Several TV stations responded to my request that they broadcast the meeting on their community calendars. At the stated board meeting on Feb. 19, I announced over the District's education station, Channel 26, that the forum was scheduled and that the board needed to hear from all parents.

Prior to announcing the meeting, I organized a variety of parent groups for the purpose of having them establish an agenda for the board. Those same groups, which included Parents United, the D.C. Congress of PTAs and others, helped me in mailing out announcements and organizing the forum. In the course of our efforts, we updated poorly maintained mailing and fax lists. I can confidently state that every school in the District of Columbia was notified of the forum — by a variety of methods: fax, letter, phone, television, radio and word of mouth.

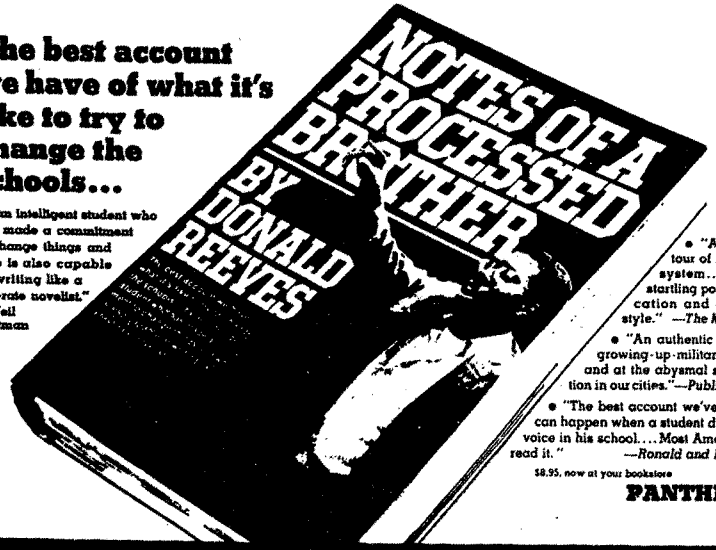
Noting that I received little to no help from many of my colleagues on the board, I have undertaken the task of visiting every school in the District to establish personal contact with each. I am starting with Ward 8. Therefore, you can imagine that I have some reaction to your editorial.

I want everyone in Washington to know that as far as I am concerned, there are no boundaries for me in my quest to bring about educational equality in this city.

DON REEVES
President, D.C. Board of Education
Ward 3 representative
Member of the Emergency Transitional Board of Trustees
Washington

**"The best account we have of what it's like to try to change the schools...**

by an intelligent student who has made a commitment to change things and who is also capable of writing like a first-rate novelist."
—Neil Postman

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**PANTHEON**

*APPENDIX I -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARION BARRY, MAYOR, WASHINGTON, D.C.*

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

MARION BARRY, JR.
MAYOR

**TESTIMONY**
**MAYOR MARION BARRY, JR.**
**THE STATUS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
**1 MAY 1997**

GOOD MORNING! TO COMMITTEE CHAIRS, CONGRESSMAN PETER HOEKSTRA AND CONGRESSMAN THOMAS DAVIS, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO TESTIFY ON THE STATUS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THIS YEAR, I PROPOSED A BUDGET FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT WAS STUDENT-CENTERED, CLASSROOM DIRECTED AND SCHOOL-BASED. WE BEGAN WITH THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS--WHERE EVERY EDUCATION BUDGET

SHOULD BEGIN--AND FORMULATED A BUDGET BASED ON THOSE NEEDS.

I INVITE YOU TO LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE MY PROPOSAL. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME HAVE MISINTERPRETED MY BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEIR MISINTERPRETATIONS HAVE BEEN CITED IN THE WASHINGTON POST. TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. I HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED TEACHERS AND APPRECIATED THEIR DEDICATION TO THE WELFARE OF STUDENTS. NEWSPAPER REPORTS SAYING MY BUDGET DID NOT INCLUDE FUNDS FOR PAY RAISES ARE, QUITE SIMPLY, DEAD WRONG. FURTHERMORE, THESE REPORTS INDICATE AN UNWILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF REPORTERS AND OTHERS TO CAREFULLY READ AND EVALUATE A LEGITIMATE, WELL THOUGHT OUT PROPOSAL.

IN FACT, BY BUILDING A NEEDS BASED BUDGET FROM THE GROUND UP, MY APPROACH ACTUALLY REDUCES CLASS SIZE BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AND DIRECTS RESOURCES TO

THE CLASSROOM IN SUPPORT OF TEACHERS. BY CONTRAST, THE BUDGET SUBMITTED BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE SCHOOLS, BY THEIR OWN ADMISSION, ADDS ON TO THE 1997 BUDGET--A BUDGET THAT THE CONTROL BOARD DENOUNCED AS ONE BASED ON FLAWED ASSUMPTIONS AND INACCURATE DATA. IN DISCUSSING PRIOR YEAR SCHOOL BUDGETS, ANTHONY WILLIAMS WAS QUOTED IN THE WASHINGTON POST AS SAYING, "I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING IN GOVERNMENT LIKE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES. THEY DEFINITELY BROUGHT IT TO A HIGH ART FORM."

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S BUDGET REQUEST EVEN STATES THAT "THERE IS NO STRAIGHTFORWARD METHOD OF DETERMINING CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION NEEDS OR COSTS." THAT APPROACH TO BUDGETING IS UNACCEPTABLE, ESPECIALLY NOW WHEN EVERY DISTRICT AGENCY IS STRUGGLING TO MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY LEVEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE FACE OF SEVERE BUDGET CUTS. FOR THE WASHINGTON POST, OTHER MEDIA AND, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE POSITION OF MAKING CRUCIAL

BUDGET DECISIONS TO SANCTION SUCH AN UNPROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO PREPARING A BUDGET IS UNCONSCIONABLE. WE MUST APPLY THE SAME STANDARDS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE TO THE SCHOOLS AS WE DO TO OTHER AGENCIES AND SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT GOVERNMENT. THE SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT BE EXEMPT FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR JUSTIFYING BUDGET REQUESTS.

THE NEEDS-BASED MODEL

I HAVE PROPOSED BUILDING THE BUDGET FROM THE GROUND UP, DEVELOPING A BUDGET THAT IS STUDENT-CENTERED, CLASSROOM-DIRECTED AND SCHOOL-BASED. WE NEED A BUDGET THAT STARTS FROM THE GROUND UP, NOT THE TOP DOWN. WE NEED A BUDGET THAT IS NEEDS BASED. WE NEED A BUDGET THAT USES SOUND PRINCIPLES FOR SCHOOL BUDGETING USED AND HAS BEEN WELL TESTED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS. THE BASIC PREMISE IS THAT THE BUDGET SHOULD CLEARLY SHOW HOW EVERY BUDGETED ITEM IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN THE

CLASSROOM.

FOR EXAMPLE, A MODEL USED IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY CALCULATES THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS NEEDED FOR STUDENTS AT VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS AND AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF LEARNING ABILITY. THE FORMULA USES THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN EACH CATEGORY AS THE BASIS OF THE CALCULATION. OTHER STAFF ARE ASSIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH FORMULAS BASED ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE SERVICES. IN THE CASE OF MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT STAFF, THE ASSIGNMENTS ARE MADE, GENERALLY, ON THE BASIS OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

WE RECOMMEND STRUCTURING A BUDGET BASED ON THE NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION TO 78,648 STUDENTS. RESOURCES MUST BE BASED ON ENROLLMENT-- THE UNAUDITED HEADCOUNT IN OCTOBER OF 1996 OF 78,648. MY PROPOSED FY 1998 BUDGET EXCEEDED THE TEACHER/STUDENT RATIO PROPOSED BY THE EMERGENCY TRANSITIONAL BOARD OF

TRUSTEES BUDGET AND ACHIEVES AN OVERALL TEACHER STUDENT RATIO OF 17/1. THIS FIGURE INCLUDES ALL TEACHERS INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION AND KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS. THAT'S SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, IS 17.3/1. TO ACHIEVE THE 17 TO 1 RATIO, OUR SCHOOLS NEED 4,626 TEACHERS, IN THE CLASSROOM NOT IN SOME ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE. AGAIN, THIS IS BETTER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

IN ADDITION, THIS PROPOSAL INCLUDED FUNDS FOR POSITIONS NEEDED AT EACH SCHOOL BUILDING TO SUPPORT TEACHERS AND STUDENTS. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO RECOMMEND A SITE-BASED AND SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET. FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE CEO-SUPERINTENDENT TO HAVE ENOUGH FUNDS TO PROVIDE ENOUGH SUPPORT PERSONNEL--PRINCIPALS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS, SECRETARIES, COUNSELORS, LIBRARIANS, MAINTENANCE PERSONS, NURSES, ETC.-- FOR EACH SCHOOL BUILDING.

WHILE THESE STAFFING LEVELS ARE LESS THAN THE 1997 LEVEL, THEY ARE GENERALLY IN LINE WITH STAFFING LEVELS IN SCHOOLS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS. IN FACT, THE D.C. SCHOOLS HAVE HISTORICALLY HAD A HIGHER NUMBER OF STAFF PER STUDENT THAN OTHER JURISDICTIONS. IN 1994, FOR EXAMPLE, THE STAFF/PUPIL RATIO FOR THE D. C. SCHOOLS OF 1:7.7 WAS ONE OF THE MOST FAVORABLE IN THE NATION. ONLY MISSOURI AND NEW JERSEY HAD MORE STAFF PER STUDENT. THE NATIONWIDE AVERAGE IN 1994 WAS 1:9.0. THE RATIO IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS 1/8.4 AND IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, IT IS 1/9.5.

THIS MODEL IS BEING ADOPTED BY THE D.C. SCHOOLS

WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HAS ENDORSED THE SCHOOL-BASED, NEEDS-BASED BUDGETING MODEL FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND WE ENDORSE THE D.C. SCHOOLS' NEW APPROACH TO BUDGETING WHICH REFLECTS THE MODEL. WE BELIEVE

THIS WILL GREATLY ENHANCE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S ABILITY TO DIRECT SCARCE RESOURCES TO STUDENTS AND TO SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR WORK

MY BUDGET WOULD ALLOW FOR NEARLY THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES' REQUEST FOR NON-PERSONAL SERVICES OF $127,710,000 IN APPROPRIATIONS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE SUPPORT STUDENTS BY ENSURING THAT THEY HAVE TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES THAT ARE DELIVERED ON TIME. FURTHERMORE, WE MUST EXPAND OUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS. TECHNOLOGY IS THE TOOL OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WILL USE TO PREPARE FOR LIFE IN THE 21ST CENTURY. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE GIVE THEM THE SKILLS THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS. THIS BUDGET MAKES AN INVESTMENT TO HELP ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL.

WE ARE COLLABORATING WITH THE SCHOOLS TO ENSURE THAT EVERY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE WILL EITHER CONTINUE HIS

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OR HAVE A JOB. THROUGH PROJECT GREAT, WE ARE PROVIDING ONE ON ONE MENTORING AND COUNSELING TO ASSIST THEM IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL DO AFTER GRADUATION.

IN ADDITION, WE ARE PREPARING TO IMPLEMENT OUR SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM WHICH WILL USE THE ACADEMY MODEL TO PROVIDE WORK AND SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE MARKETABLE SKILLS UPON GRADUATION.

I BELIEVE STRONGLY IN THE CONCENTRATION OF RESOURCES FOR SPECIAL EMPHASIS INSTRUCTION. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS THAT FOCUS ON SPECIAL INTERESTS AND TALENTS OF OUR YOUTH. THERE CAN NEVER BE ENOUGH DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS OR BANNEKER ACADEMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS. FOR EXAMPLE BANNEKER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATED 91 OUT OF 92 POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR GRADUATION, A SUCCESS RATE UNEQUALLED IN THE DISTRICT SYSTEM. THE LOSS OF ONE STUDENT IN THIS GRADUATING CLASS WAS NOT

DUE TO POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OR DROP-OUT BUT TO THE TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF GUN VIOLENCE THAT INFECT EVERY MAJOR CITY IN THE UNITED STATES. THE VIOLENCE HAS TO STOP..... OUR STUDENTS ARE NOT UNDERACHIEVERS OR A LOST GENERATION THEY SIMPLY NEED AND DESERVE THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES TO SUCCEED. BANNEKER HAS A 99.9% COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE AND PLACEMENT RATE.....

I AM WORKING ON A PROPOSAL THAT ADVOCATES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS WITH A CURRICULUM CONCENTRATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THE DISTRICTS' YOUTH CAN NOT AFFORD TO MISS THE ON RAMP TO THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY. THE FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISTRICT IS DEPENDENT ON A SKILLED AND WELL TRAINED WORK FORCE.

MARSHALLING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOLS

IN ADDITION, WE ARE WORKING CLOSELY WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOLS.

--WE MUST SECURE EVERY FEDERAL GRANT FOR WHICH WE ARE ELIGIBLE.

--WE MUST EXPAND OUR PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO RESHAPE OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:

--WE MUST SEEK THE SUPPORT OF PRIVATE CONTRACTORS TO ASSIST WITH THE RENOVATION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

--WE MUST ESTABLISH MORE PROGRAMS LIKE THE COMMUNITY HUB PROGRAM AT P.R. HARRIS TO BRING HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL. NEXT WEEK WE WILL BE OPENING A SECOND HUB AT WINSTON ELEMENTARY.

--WE MUST REDUCE IMPROVE SCHOOL SAFETY BY ESTABLISHING A YOUTH ANTI-VIOLENCE TASK FORCE IN EVERY JUNIOR AND

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL.

THROUGH THESE EFFORTS, WE EXPECT TO COMPLEMENT THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE NEEDS-BASED BUDGET.

LET ME THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HERE TO TESTIFY REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THE NEED FOR BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE YOUTH OF OUR COMMUNITY.

## *APPENDIX J -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HON. CONNIE MORELLA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND*

**Statement of Congresswoman Constance A. Morella**
**Joint Hearing to Review**
**"What Works and What's Wasted in the D.C. Public School System"**
**Subcommittee on the District of Columbia of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight**
**Subcommitte on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee Education and the Workforce**
**May 1, 1997**

**Chairman Davis and Chairman Hoekstra, I want to thank you for holding this important hearing on the public schools in the District of Columbia.**

**I wholeheartedly believe that most issues that affect our nation's public schools are local matters, and that most decisions are best made at the local level. I do not in any way want to tell any local school panel what they can or cannot do. General Becton has been on the job for only a few months, and I believe that it will take a long time to turn this beleaguered school system around. At the same time, as a former teacher, I**

**am very concerned about the education system in the District, and I am interested in learning more about what is working in the City's schools and how we, in Congress, can help.**

**Almost on a daily basis, the Washington Post carries stories about D.C. Schools. Headlines like: "Three Stabbed in Fight at D.C. School," "Student at McKinley High School Pleads Not Guilty in Shooting," and "Teacher at D.C.'s Winsto Arrested on Sex Charge," get my attention and raise my level of concern. Every day, do parents in the District send their children off to school wondering whether they will meet a gun-toting classmate? For certain, most of the schools in our nation's capital are no longer safe citadels of scholarship. Instead, metal detectors and sometimes armed guards greet students on their way to their classrooms.**

**A federal employee who was participating in a mentor program in one of the City's elementary schools, asked his student what he envisioned doing in the future. The student replied that he merely wanted to live past the eighth grade.**

**Childhood should be a sheltered time, away from the woes of the world. Instead, violence has escalated against those we have the greatest duty to protect. One litmus test will be how we restore security and physical safety to our children in the District so that they will be able to function in an academic setting.**

**Not all of the headlines are negative. "D.C. Students Give Gift of Themselves" told how 10th graders at Cardozo High School are teaching first-graders at Meyer Elementary School how to read by sharing stories they have written. This is the kind of program that could be a model for other schools to follow, not only here in the District, but in other parts of the country.**

**During the debate over which D.C. schools should be closed, I heard from many parents who spoke passionately about the academic performance of their children's schools. For example, I learned that many of the schools in the District are educationally strong, as well as racially-mixed. I was very**

**impressed.**

**According to Thomas Edmonds and Raymond Keating in their book, D.C. By the Numbers, the District ranks number one in expenditures when compared with all of the States. Yet, it academic performance, it ranks near the bottom.**

**Edmonds and Keating report that the District spends $9,549 per pupil. Maryland ranks seventh, spending $6,679 per student, and Virginia ranks number 32 spending $4,880 per pupil. Clearly, the dollars are not reaching the classroom.**

**Again, I want to thank Chairmen Davis and Hoekstra for holding this important hearing, and I look forward to hearing testimony from our expert witnesses.**

***APPENDIX K -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DELABIAN L. RICE-THURSTON, PARENTS UNITED FOR D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools

1300 19th St., N.W. Suite 330 Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 833-4766

**STATEMENT OF PARENTS UNITED FOR THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORK FORCE OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Delabian L. Rice Thurston, Executive Director

Thursday, May 1, 1997

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, for giving Parents United the opportunity to participate in this roundtable hearing. I am Delabian L. Rice Thurston, the Executive Director of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools, and the mother of public school students - one son in 9th grade at Deal JHS, the other a freshman at Columbia University, who is a 1996 National Merit finalist, a National Achievement winner and participant in Columbia's freshman honors program. David and his friends received a first rate education from our public schools. They are attending college in the best schools in our country. I am here as a parent who believes in public schools - not in vouchers. I believe we can make our schools perform for more students in the near term and for all students if we want to.

I will offer a number of suggestions that I hope will make this school system deliver for every student. I will start, however with a variety of longstanding concerns.

CONCERNS AND LONGSTANDING ISSUES

**Student achievement levels are far too low.**

Academic standards and expectations are very low in many schools, particularly those in the lowest-income neighborhoods. In too many classrooms teachers and children seem to have given up on each other.

Special education programs are dreadfully inadequate in identifying, diagnosing and providing services to children with handicaps. This longstanding and continuing failure may be one of the primary sources of both the District's school failure and of its crime rates.

**Indicators of student outcomes - test scores, drop-out rates, grades - are neither good nor improving.**

*Standardized test scores* have been flat for the last eight years. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, a test of low level performance that we have finally abandoned in favor of a more rigorous test, has consistently followed a pattern of being near its national norm in 3rd and 6th grades, lower in the 8th and 9th grades and appallingly low in the 10th and 11th grades.

*SAT scores* have also been flat and continue to be a good one hundred points below the national average on both verbal and mathematics. The combined D.C. average in 1996 was 821 points, compared to the national average of 1,013.

The *National Assessment of Educational Progress* in reading and math for D.C. has consistently found lower than any of the states, even when comparison is limited to "disadvantaged urban" children -- as is the case with almost all other comparisons within subgroups. In math 75% of D.C. 4th graders and 74% of D.C. 8th graders scored "below basic" proficiency in 1992. In reading 72% of D.C. 4th graders scored "below basic" proficiency in 1992, and more - 78% - scored " below basic proficiency in 1994.

The *dropout rate* is high enough to cause alarm no matter how it is measured. Of students entering 9th grade dropouts are officially projected as 34%. The rate is worse, over 40%, if one uses multi-year data and starts with 7th graders.

**Salaries and teacher/principal evaluation**

Our school system does not have competitive salaries and does not evaluate teachers and principals in ways that assure high performance. Years of unstable conditions in which salaries have been frozen, earnings robbed through furloughs, staff shortages have increased from hiring freezes and funding for supplies are reduced have led many committed and highly motivated teachers and principals to leave our system.

Our teachers and principals are generally paid less than teachers and principals in our suburbs, though their jobs are harder in many ways. They are demoralized by poor working conditions and repeated pay cuts. If the District cannot attract and retain good teachers and principals, it cannot have good schools.

Teacher/principal appraisal currently has no relationship to student performance. Despite estimates that as many as 15 to 20% of teachers are either unable or unwilling to perform competently, the teacher evaluation system has consistently rated 10% of all teachers "satisfactory" and the remaining 90% either "very good" or "outstanding". It has been virtually impossible to remove incompetent teachers who are past the "probationary" stage.

**Local School Management needs to expand the options available for organizing schools and educating students.**

Schools, teachers and children are not well served by a large, inflexible bureaucracy. Inflexible staffing, freezes in procurement, inability to select staff, inability of parents to gain information on the school from sources other than the principal hamper school reform and parent monitoring.

## IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

### Develop an Education Plan

Improving our schools to raise achievement requires adopting and implementing a long range strategy for academic instruction, supplies and equipment and facilities. Parents United wants the Congress to encourage the system to create a plan, follow its implementation and see that it is funded.

The Goals 2000 "Community Plan for Educational Improvement," developed jointly by the school system and dozens of representatives of parents, teachers, business and other sectors calls for new high academic standards, de-bureaucratization, enterprise schools, magnet programs, teacher-run charter programs within schools, staff training, local school restructuring teams, and management reforms for the school system. Goals 2000 includes most of the elements that we believe are needed to improve instruction. Unfortunately, there is as yet no implementation plan for Goals 2000. The reform program is not reflected in next year's budget request or in the way the system works.

The Control Board takeover has put in control of our schools, a thin veneer of new leadership, without knowledge or experience in education, over a downsized but largely unchanged work force. Parents United is beginning to question the system's managerial capacity to make these proposals real.

Parents are concerned that the administration will not keep resources in the classroom. The new leadership does not seem to recognize some of the resources currently there and we fear some resources will be omitted from next year's budget. The DCPS budget request for FY 1998 is currently $507.6 M. Only $308.1 M, or 60% is identified as being for schools[1] and their programs.

Parents have been unable to obtain the reports that KPMG Peat-Marwick recently completed of DCPS administrative costs and needs. Parents could use it to understand the nature of the school system and what needs to happen to make these reforms real. In addition, parents need to see how system spending will change to implement the plan. Parents therefore encourage the Congress to share information with us. We would like to see the KPMG reports. You can obtain them. Parents would like for the Congress to look closely at spending on classroom services and assure that resources remain in the classroom. The Congress can also insist on the completion of the education plan for the school system and its review by the public.

### State Monitoring

The District of Columbia schools needs an external "state" to help us organize to raise the academic quality of our children's schools. DCPS particularly needs an entity that will not be lenient and accepting of mediocre plans and outcomes. The state function needs to provide both oversight and incentives. Though the present independent mandate of the Emergency Board of

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[1] $291.8 M in the April 1, 1997 "School Based Staffing Model" plus $15 M for a teacher pay increase plus $1.3 M more for athletics.

Trustees (EBOT) is potentially strong on oversight, the EBOT is weakened because it relies on the school system for all information and lacks an independent capacity to check information. The EBOT also lacks any of the financial incentives that states like Ohio and Kentucky are offering local school systems to upgrade achievement.

Parents would like for the Congress to provide the Emergency Board of Trustees with an Initiative Fund they can use to reward success and encourage initiatives in improved education in D.C. Public Schools. Because the members of the EBOT are removed from the normal operations of the school system they will not be lenient and accepting of mediocre proposals.

**Improved Testing**

Parents applaud The Board of Trustees proposal to use the Stanford Nine examination as a new rigorous test to evaluating system success. Students should be tested every year, rather than simply at the 3rd, 6th and 9th grade levels. We want testing used to monitor system progress at the same time it helps teachers diagnose student academic weaknesses. Historically, the testing division has used budget limitations as a rationale for inadequate testing and for failing to obtain the complex data runs that would improve our understanding of our system's problems.

First, students must be tested at the beginning of the year and the end to determine how far they have developed under the individual teacher. Teachers should use the test to identify areas they need to help the student strengthen. While teachers know which of their fellows send them students who are well prepared and which do not, they may not use that information to strengthen their teaching skills. The system should also chart each student's test progress over their DCPS career.

Parents have been bewildered by the statement that student achievement drops the longer one stays in the DC Public Schools because most of us find that our own child has learned more each year. The truth can only be examined if we chart the academic progress of the specific students who remain in the school system year by year. Parents need to know if their child has grown nine months or more each year. Principals need to know which teachers raise student achievement nine months or more each year. Now DC's median test scores are skewed downward by the number of high achieving students who leave the school system. We need to know whether the students DCPS retains are growing academically and at what rate. Then, we need to accelerate their rate of achievement.

**Reaching Children Early**

D.C. Public Schools needs to offer early childhood education to every three year old - particularly to low income three year olds. DCPS has one of the country's best and most extensive early childhood education programs. When DCPS is criticized for our high per pupil costs, remember that we offer all day pre-k which requires more teachers than upper grades. In fact, our staffing criteria 17/1 without an aide and 22/1 with an aide violate the legal guidelines for private programs. We desperately need formal programs for early learning because it can enrich the mental growth of children who are being raised by parents who, themselves, have limited educational backgrounds.

Parents call upon the Congress to support more funding for Head Start and Even Start programs to reach more three-year olds and to lower the DCPS student teacher ratio to the level required of private schools.

**Funding and planning for building repairs**

Public school buildings are antiquated, dilapidated and dangerous. Since every school in our city was either begun or completed when our city was completely controlled by the Federal Government, Parents United recommends that the Congress establish through the escrow process a Capital Maintenance Reserve Fund (CMR Fund) to repair and replace major systems in our schools.

The federal government should have established this CMR Fund and given it to the city when we took over the schools. Upgrading our schools would be DCPS' responsibility from new funds, but the basic maintenance and repairs would be funded largely through this CMR Fund. We were disappointed when President Clinton's plan for stabilizing the city's budget did not include a funding plan to repair the schools which the federal government gave us in deteriorated condition.

Parents United sued the city to make the Fire Department and Office of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs obey the law by inspecting schools and requiring that the buildings comply with the codes. We assumed that the city would then have to provide the capital funds that would led the school system repair the buildings. The results of our lawsuit have been a mixed blessing. When schools were closed for fire code violations, the school system found ways to repair the buildings.

Unfortunately, the amount in the capital budget has not kept pace with the need. The situation has improved since 1989 when DCPS had 11,000 violations and many schools had not been inspected in years but only because of short-term patchwork repairs. School system reports show that inspectors are finding only about 1000 violations during the year most of which are minor and are corrected within 10 days. Thus far this year the number of leaking roofs has dropped from 91 down to 27 and 135 of our 157 schools have been inspected.

Facilities assessments done by outside experts have concluded that it will cost $1 billion to bring our buildings into good repair. The cost of having schools suited for 21st century learning, however, may be as much as $2 billion.

Parents would like to see a federal commitment to supporting general repairs in our schools. The Capital Maintenance Repair Fund would be an important first step. Parents would work on the city government to fund the expanded renovations that would give our children 21st century schools.

**Assessment of administrative functions**

Parents need to know where the system's employees work and what functions they perform. We want an accurate list of authorized positions by job title and division. We want individual school budgets and spending patterns for our schools so that parents may be effective members of Local School Restructuring Teams which are critical parts of School Based Management.

Parents need that information in order to understand what we should recommend be changed in the system so that DCPS does a better job delivering educational services. Parents also need data on employees at the school level so that we may participate more fully in School Based Management. We urge the Congress to obtain and share the information on our school system which you receive as part of the budget justification. Parents want to assure that cuts in personnel do not reduce classroom services. We also want to feel confident that the new administration and the high salaries under which it is employing new staff are leading to higher achievement and efficiency.

**A commitment to excellence**

The DC Public Schools has developed its entire educational program in fear of excellence. Our community acts as though spending money to achieve excellence in outcomes is not democratic because every student in the city will not attend the facility. For example, the facility that is Banneker Academic High School lacks the first class science labs and computer access that would be expected of a suburban academic high school. The Marine Science program at Woodson SHS, the Pre Engineering program at Dunbar SHS all provide more in curriculum and standards than our typical school but they do not have facilities and equipment that reflect high performance, high expectations and an investment in our students. The School Without Walls which has three National Merit Semi-finalists this year is a converted elementary school that uses a "make do" approach to providing science and computer-math facilities. Without access to George Washington University's facility and other services beyond the walls, there would be no program.

Parents invite the Congress to help our city create "state of the art" magnet schools. We recommend upgrading two high schools, at least two additional magnet junior high schools to serve students who cannot find room in Jefferson Junior High, and at least four model magnet elementary schools located in our lowest income communities. Whether Congress helps us find corporations like Comsat, which has augmented the Jefferson program, or whether Congress provides funds itself, Congress should help the nation's capital be a national showcase for high quality education in urban areas. The creation of magnet schools as part of an Education Plan and Facilities Plan will help parents understand that improved educational quality can result from school consolidations.

Background

Parents United is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization founded in 1980 to improve public education in the District of Columbia. It is run entirely by parents of children in the D.C. Public Schools. More than 8,000 people receive our newsletter which provides some of the best information on our DC Public Schools that is available. Of the 154 local schools, 130 participate in Parents United advocacy activities.

In addition to organizing and educating parents about the school system and engaging in advocacy on financial and educational issues on behalf of public school parents, we have done research and maintained data on the D.C. Public Schools for the last 17 years. Today's testimony is based both on our research and on our experience and knowledge as public school parents.

***APPENDIX L -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK, STUDENT, BANNEKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL***

**STATEMENT OF TARA PICKSTOCK**
**12TH GRADE STUDENT AT BANNEKER H.S.**

Good Morning. My name is Tara Pickstock. I am a 17 year-old senior at Benjamin Banneker Academic Senior High School, located at Georgia Avenue and Euclid Streets in Northwest Washington, D.C. I would like to sincerely thank Congresswoman Norton for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this Committee about my experience as a student in the D.C. public schools. It is an honor for me to be able to speak to you this morning.

Prior to attending Banneker Senior High, I attended Bancroft Elementary School, followed by Lincoln Jr. High. To sum up my educational background, I am a product of the District of Columbia public school system. Each time I say that, I wonder how many people around me privately ask themselves, "Why is she so proud of that?" The answer is quite simple: I know the truth. I have been enrolled in D.C. public schools for 10 years. I know, as I have always known, that there is no war within our schools, the majority of the students within the school system want to learn, are eager to learn, and attempt to create a productive learning atmosphere. The teachers, such as my French teacher, Ms. Judith Shipley, and my Algebra teacher, Mr. Jeffrey Choppin, are well-qualified and have immeasurable concern for their students. I would be the first to admit that the D.C. Public schools have their problems -- problems whose solutions I believe are generally beyond the reach of students and faculty. However, on an annual basis, many of its students are accepted into the most prestigious institutions of higher learning. Something right must be going on. As a D.C. public school student, I have also been able to participate in a non-profit

pre-college program called DC WORKS. Last summer, through DC WORKS, I lived in a dormitory with 27 other D.C. public high school students on the George Washington University campus where I attended classes taught by volunteers in Math, English, Newswriting and Drama, received tutoring for the S.A.T., participated in community service activities every Saturday morning, and where I also had a full-time paid internship for four weeks at the Congressional Quarterly. I am proud to be able to tell you that on June 13, I will graduate from Banneker Senior High School and later this summer, I will realize my greatest dream as I pack up and head for Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts to attend Boston College.

Imagine waking up every morning and leaving home to go a comfortable, safe place that you truly consider your second home. It is a place where students are so dedicated that on any given day at lunchtime, half of the lunchtables are actually filled with students engaged in studygroups. It is a place where oftentimes you get to school early, half an hour before school actually starts, to talk to your teachers about something you're puzzled with or something you are excited about learning and you know that they too will be there early, with their doors open and eager to talk. It is a place where students are concerned most of all with learning, where it is so safe that you can leave your bookbag in front of your locker as you go to lunch or to class. It is a place where, in your classes, which usually have between 15 and 20 students, teachers lead discussions, not lectures, and in every class every student is prepared, because in such a small class each student knows they have the chance to have their voice heard. It is place where you are motivated and inspired by your fellow students as well as your teachers, where you are encouraged to dream about

graduating to a place like Boston College and where you will receive the nurturing and support to make that dream a reality. Hearing this description, some of you might have imagined a private school, while others might have imagined a great public school. I did not have to imagine anything -- this is my reality, my school, Banneker Senior High School. It has been my second home for the last four years.

***APPENDIX M -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JUDITH JONES, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT***

4/28/97 Dr. Judith D. Jones

Congressional Testimony
May 1, 1997

Status of D.C. Public Schools - What Is and Is Not Working in the D.C. Public Schools

Good Morning, Members of the House of Representatives, ladies and gentlemen. It is a privilege to have been asked to meet with you today.

I am an urban sociologist and planner, a parent of children who attended DC public schools, and a community advocate. I have not received any federal grants for my work in education, nor has the organization I am associated with, Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS). I worked part-time for DCPS from 1987 to 1994 as a planner in the Realty Office, in Facilities Planning, on the Presidential Building Relocation Team, and in education planning. From mid-January to mid-April of this year I worked full-time for DCPS as Chief of Planning on the facilities side. My 1986 book, "The Six School Complex - A Successful Innovation in D.C. Public Schools," led me to study the organizational structures that contribute to the enormous resistance of public education institutions to reform.

Of the dozens of items in the D.C. School Reform Law, I would like to discuss the progress made on two: introducing choice and charter schools in D.C. I will also highlight a major structural problem with the governance of D.C. public education which I believe must be addressed if improvement is to occur.

1. PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Both choice and charter schools were mandated in the D.C. School Reform Law. They will provide effective incentives for public schools to improve education quality. They weaken monopoly control over both the supply side - what groups can provide public education, and the demand side - what public schools consumers may attend.

As others have testified this morning, charter schools have been stymied. From my community work, I know that many groups are ready to

start charter schools in the District. However, the approval process is mired in administative molasses. Others have spoken to this issue and I will go on to choice.

I am not aware of any progress on the choice issue. In fact, as we all know, the recent school closing proposals represented a step backward on choice. Even what choice parents now have is flawed - by lack of timely information and by the secretive admissions practices of many principals.

The most frequent criticism of public school choice is that only the most active parents will exercise choice and that children from dysfunctional families will continue to be served by the poorest quality schools. I believe this criticism can be overcome in two ways.

First, if educators commit themselves to reaching all children, we will find ways to do so. Citywide choice exists in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for all students. It is supported by identifying children from birth and by regular home visits during the pre-school years. Strong academic results are being achieved by a public school in a low-income area of Norfolk that identifies neighborhood children and provides pre-school health and parenting information. We can do this in Washington if we have the will.

To enable poorer families to enjoy the benefits of choice, the next step is to eliminate the monopoly power of neighborhood schools with exclusive attendance zones. Instead, we can draw a circle of one mile radius around each family's home and give the family choice among all the elementary schools within that circle. Parents of young children should have elementary education nearby, but by having two or more options and by requiring all parents to choose among them, no children will be left without choice. Having schools compete for their students will give them incentives to improve their programs to attract students, and the funds which follow students. Parents' choices will give feedback to principals about the quality of their programs.

2. NEED FOR INDEPENDENT MONITORING OF EDUCATION QUALITY AND FINANCES

The District faces a unique structural problem because the 1968 law gives the D.C. Board of Education both "state-level" monitoring responsibilities and responsibilities for operating local schools. The same people are responsible for both operating schools and inspecting those operations. We have had no independent monitoring of the quality of public education since 1968. The "state-level" unit of DCPS sends reports to the U.S. Department of Education based on information provided by friends in other DCPS divisions. This conflict of interest within the Board of Education is a serious impediment to reform. The City Council provided no effective oversight until last year.

Reform measures so far do not address this issue. The D.C. Financial and Management Assistance Authority fell into the same trap when it created the Emergency Transitional Board of Trustees (BOT) in November 1996, in spite of being alerted to the problem. This issue was discussed in detail by the broad spectrum of community and education leaders of the Thursday Group, an informal group of concerned citizens and educators who met weekly at Berean Baptist Church in 1995 and 1996. They warned of this problem in their testimony to the City Council on July 10, 1995. I also wrote to the Authority on October 3, 1996, to highlight this problem.

With the advent of public charter schools, DCPS will no longer be the only local education agency (LEA) in the city. It will no longer represent the only public schools eligible to receive federal grants for which the U.S. DOE will require reports and audits. The quality of public education programs will need to be assessed for all public schools, both charters and DCPS-managed schools. It is unreasonable to expect that persons employed by DCPS would be objective in their oversight or be supportive of competing charter schools.

Other examples of these conflicting roles relate to planning and to funding. I felt this tension strongly during my recent stint as Chief of Planning for DCPS. In its "state-level" role, DCPS, as the implementing arm of the BOT, should be planning for all children in the city and all public schools in the city. As the DCPS LEA, however, its planners naturally concentrate on programs and facilities they control and avoid

helping the competing charter schools. The BOT has been given enormous powers over public education in the city, but neither its members, nor the employees of its operating arm, the DCPS administration, identify with their citywide responsibilities. They identify with "DCPS" as an institution and a "system" which they want to save.

The funding issue is critical, since the D.C. School Reform Law requires that all public schools, both charters and traditional public schools, be funded on a *per capita* basis beginning with SY 1997. The concept that funds should follow each child is a crucial element in the reform legislation. It must not be lost or delayed. This is the mechanism which supports true competition among public schools and empowers parental choice. The Mayor is supposed to distribute annual operating funds on a *per capita* basis to public charter schools and to DCPS. Right now, DCPS, in its state role, is distributing *per capita* operating funds to the new charter schools. This is a conflict of interest! Further, the setting of the annual per capita amount depends on an accurate count of DCPS students, which has not yet been achieved.

3. WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT?

How can we improve the current situation, riddled as it is with conflicts of interest for the BOT/BOE? We should identify the major "state-level" functions and pull them out of DCPS. The major oversight functions include:

1. monitoring education quality;
2. citywide planning for educational needs;
3. distribution of funds; and
4. school property development and disposition.

If we were to propose another government agency to perform these functions, people would laugh (or cry), because there are already too many government agencies and too many turf battles among them. What might we do on an interim basis, knowing that the governance of public education in the District will continue to evolve over the next few years.

For the money part, we need an "education funding unit" that will employ a small number of accountants to manage federal, local and grant

monies for education. These monies would then be distributed to public schools on the *per capita* basis required by Congress. Appropriate fiscal reporting procedures and audits would also be handled by this group. The education funding unit might be attached to the office of the District's Chief Financial Officer.

Citywide education planning might be led by a special unit within the existing D.C. Office of Planning, with an advisory committee of representatives from the community and relevant planning organizations, such as National Capital Planning Commission, the Historic Preservation Review Board, the Census Bureau, housing agencies, Goals 2000, etc. In its planning, DCPS has for too long operated in isolation from other city agencies and groups.

For education assessment, we should establish an "education quality panel" of subject matter experts, who would be responsible for assessing the quality of the programs being offered by all public schools and distributing their findings to the public, so that informed parents could better exercise their choice. This panel would function like a state education department and be responsible for developing benchmarks for future assessments, for providing information on the strengths and limitations of different kinds of assessment techniques, and for visiting schools and monitoring their student achievement.

These functions are critical to ensuring that parents will exercise their choice among programs that meet certain defined standards. For example, state boards in Maryland and elsewhere have created an exit exam for high school seniors, and are developing standards to compare achievement among all schools. State boards have often been the wedge for the introduction of charter schools when local school districts have been resistent to competition. Where would we put such a unit? Since we don't have a state office, the U.S. Department of Education might add this function to its "D.C. desk" during the start-up phase.

In the draft Long-Range Facilities Plan submitted by the BOT, responsibility for excess school properties and potential joint venture development of existing school properties is assigned to the Office of the Chief of Operations, which is also responsible for day-to-day management of the DCPS buildings, for facilities planning, for capital budget

renovation and construction projects, and for public-private development partnerships. This concentration of tasks and power is an invitation to trouble. No checks and balances would exist; a small group of people would control decision-making for all buildings and properties currently and formerly under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. The draft Long-Range Plan does not show what procedures would be used to ensure open, fair and publicly-accountable decision-making.

Elsewhere, state responsibilities include setting standards for school design and construction and funding a significant portion of construction costs. In the District, we confront declining rather than growing enrollments, and many properties are no longer being used as schools. The big question is - will this decline continue or do we anticipate future economic growth and families returning? We need to proceed carefully in decidin what to do with school properties. We are a small city geographically. Once property is transferred to the private sector, it is hard to get back. Development and disposition of school properties requires close coordination with economic development initiatives and citywide planning efforts.

Citywide education asset management and property disposition should be removed from DCPS and housed where there are specialized staff and appropriate public processes. The federally-chartered Redevelopment Land Authority has those attributes and might house these functions.

CONCLUSION

It is imperative that we find, quickly, a better way to organize the governance of publicly-funded education in the District of Columbia. We are making education far more complicated than need be. We have the means to accomplish large-scale projects in the city. We can find simpler and more effective ways to provide high quality public education for all our children. Thank you.

*Resume*

***JUDITH DENTON JONES***

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**Areas of Interest:** Urban Planning, Policy Analysis, Small-Area Analysis, Geographic Information Systems, Education Reform, Public Charter Schools

**EMPLOYMENT**

D.C. Public Schools:
***1997*** - January to April Chief, Planning, Office of the Chief of Operations
***1993-1994*** Project Coordinator, Office of Choice/Education Initiatives
***1987-1993*** Project Coordinator, DCPS Realty Office and Facility Planning Branch

Six School Council:
***1984-1986*** Consultant to the Six School Council, Washington, D.C.; conducted in-depth study of the Six School Complex and published the results.

University Positions:
***1974-1978*** Adjunct Assistant Professor, George Washington Univ., Sociology Dept.
***1974-1975*** Instructor & Director of the Urban Semester Program at American Univ.
***1973-1974*** Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution.
***1971-1973*** CUNY Research Associate; projects with NYC Planning Commission, Bureau of the Budget, Department of Welfare, CUNY Sociology Program's East Harlem project, Mt. Sinai Hospital.

New Jersey Government:
***1969*** Secretary to the N.J. Board of Higher Education and Program Analyst. Assisted in the coordination of the master plan and developed population projections and planning models.

U.S. Agency for International Development:
***1965-1968*** Selected as a U.S. Management Intern in 1965. Worked for the Agency for International Development (AID) as Assistant Desk Officer for Peru and as Regional Projects Coordinator and Contract Monitor for new projects in education, training, and family planning for several Latin American countries.

**EDUCATION**
B.A., 1964, Middlebury College, Vermont, *cum laude*. Political Science, French.
M.A., 1965, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Medford, Mass.
Ph.D., 1976, CUNY Graduate Program in Sociology. Dissertation: "Who Needs Social Services? The Impact of Differential Perceptions of Need for Social Services on the Development of Service Programs for Welfare Recipients in New York City from 1969 to 1973."

**PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Chairperson, Doctoral Students' Council, CUNY Graduate School, 1972-1973
Board member, Acting Chairperson, D.C. Community Research Foundation, 1975-77
Key Elementary School PTA, Treasurer, 1981-1982; President, 1982-83
Palisades Citizens Association, Vice President, 1983; Chair of the Palisades Fourth of July Parade, 1986.
Six School Council, Secretary, 1980-82; Co-Chair, 1987-89; Treasurer, 1990-92.
Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS), Board of Directors, 1996 on
Member: American Sociological Association, D.C. Sociological Society, Parents United for the DC Public Schools, The Communitarian Network
Attended the Third Annual California Conference on Charter Schools, March 1996
Testimony on education issues at numerous public hearings held by the D.C. Board of Education, the D.C. Council and the Mayor

**STUDIES AND PUBLICATIONS**

"Community Planning District Profiles, Part I: Population and Housing" and "Part II: Socio-Economic Characteristics," NYC City Planning Commission, 1973
"Allocating Scarce Urban Services: How Sociologists Can Help City Hall," National League of Cities, 1977, 22 pp.
Six School Complex: A Successful Innovation in Washington, D.C.'s Public Schools, (Newington, VA: MasterPrint, 1987), 231 pp.
"The Six School Complex: A Cluster Provides Choice Among Local Public Schools in Washington, D.C.," Equity and Choice, Winter 1988, pp. 31-38.
"Projections of Student Enrollment in DCPS, 1990-2000," for the Committee on Public Education, Washington, D.C., March 1989.
"The Benefits of Pubic Education and How to Improve It," How to Choose the Right School for Your Child, Missy James & Blythe Lyons, Editors, (Madison Press: 1990), pp. 29-32.
"Factors Affecting Enrollment," Volume I of the "Recommendations for Changes in Utilization of School Facilities," with Julius Daugherty, D.C. Public Schools, March 1990, 42 pp.
"The Use, Re-Use and Preservation of Historic Schools," Presentation to the D.C. Preservation League, March 30, 1993.
"Weak Management Makes System's Reforms Inadequate," Northwest Current, Vol. 27, No. 19, September 21, 1994, p. 7.
"The Right Reforms Will Help Schools, " Northwest Current, Vol. 28, No. 25, Dec. 6, 1995, p. 11.
"Public Charter Schools - Organizing Shared Learning Communities," Sociological Practice Association Annual Meeting, June 7, 1996, 10 pp.

*APPENDIX N -- PEAT MARWICK STUDY ON THE CONDITION OF THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM*

KPMG
The Global Leader

# Summary of Short-Term Cost Savings Opportunities

for

*The District of Columbia Public Schools*

March 26, 1997

KPMG Peat Marwick LLP

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March 26, 1997

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Suite 1150 North
Washington, DC 20001

General Julius W. Becton, Jr., Chief Executive Officer
The District of Columbia Public Schools
415 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Williams and General Becton:

KPMG Peat Marwick LLP (KPMG) is pleased to present this **Summary of Short-Term Cost Savings Opportunities**—identifying short-term improvement opportunity areas *(low hanging fruit)*, based upon our previous studies of DCPS to-date.

This summary is part of our ongoing project to develop an activity based costing and site-based reporting system for DCPS, as outlined in our proposal to both of you dated February 14, 1997.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact either Mindy Finfer or me at (202) 467-3043, or (202) 467-3072, respectively.

Very truly yours,
KPMG Peat Marwick LLP

Lawrence S. Herman
*Principal*

## Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary ..... 1-1

2. Discussion of Findings and Recommendations ..... 2-1

Short-Term Cost Savings Opportunities ..... 2-1

Revenue Enhancement Opportunities ..... 2-13

Investment Opportunities ..... 2-16

Appendices

Priority Setting Methodology ..... A

Potential Financial Impact for Fiscal Year 1997 and Fiscal Year 1998 ..... B

Cost Savings Breakdown by Budget Codes ..... C

## 1. Executive Summary

The District of Columbia's Office of the Chief Financial Officer is in the initial stage of improving the financial management systems throughout the City, a goal being to institute activity-based budgeting and reporting systems in each of its agencies—supported by sound financial information. To this end, the District is planning to develop an activity based costing system (ABC) that will provide District-wide costs, provide data for identifying immediate and long-term cost saving opportunities, and ultimately drive agency budgets in the future.

As part of its overall plan to pursue ABC for all its agencies, the District is beginning ABC with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS.) The District has asked KPMG Peat Marwick LLP (KPMG) to develop a cost allocation model, incorporating site-based reporting for DCPS, and, in addition, to identify short-term improvement opportunity areas—based upon previous studies of DCPS in the near term and later through analysis of the cost allocation model. This interim summary provides our recommendations for short-term cost savings opportunities based upon findings from previous studies of DCPS.

In addition, this interim summary provides our recommendations for opportunity areas where DCPS may potentially enhance its local revenue and identifies areas for potential investment.

### Identifying Short-Term Cost Savings Opportunities

Based on KPMG's recommendations to improve operational efficiency, we identified those areas where potentially immediate action could be taken to realize short-term savings for DCPS. The following describes the methodology and approach used to categorize and select the areas of recommendation.

#### Categorized Recommendations

Our initial selection process involved summarizing the recommendations having potential fiscal impact and classifying them into three broad categories:

- Level 1: Recommendations that have potential for short-term cost savings opportunities and require no further research
- Level 2: Recommendations that have potential for short-term cost savings opportunities but require some additional research and review
- Level 3: Functional service areas that have potential short-term cost savings opportunities but require an initial review and assessment.

## Established Criteria

To further refine and prioritize the recommended areas within Level 2—recommendations requiring additional research and review—KPMG and DCPS staff, developed a list of criteria that would target the short-term cost savings areas. These criteria included:

- A high probability that the recommendation could be implemented
- A fiscal impact for fiscal year 1998 in terms of estimated cost savings
- A high probability for significant cost savings based on KPMG's experience with other school systems
- A solid base of knowledge already possessed by KPMG
- Accordance with the vision of the Emergency Board of Trustees and Chief Executive Officer

## Identified Level 1 Opportunities

Using this classification and selection process, KPMG identified those items within the first category, or Level 1:

- Office of the Chief Academic Officer
- Facilities Management (selected recommendations)
- School Operations
- Contract Administration
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer

Recommendations within these Offices and Divisions represent potential short-term cost savings opportunities.

## Identified Level 2 Opportunities

Level 2 opportunity areas—those that have potential short-term cost savings opportunities but require additional research and review included:

- Office of the Chief Executive Officer
- Office of the Chief Operations Officer
- Special Education
- Facilities Management (selected recommendations)
- Transportation
- Food Services

Based on the established criteria, KPMG selected the following three Divisions to focus our additional review efforts:

- Special Education
- Transportation
- Food Services

After our additional review of these areas, several recommendations, including those related to Special Education and Transportation, were reclassified from Level 2 to Level 1. The final classification is shown in Appendix A, "Priority Setting Methodology," and it is from this final classification that we identify our potential short-term cost savings opportunities.

- **Identified Level 3 Opportunities**

Only one area, the Division of Corporate and Community Relations, was identified as a Level 3 cost savings opportunity area that requires an initial review and assessment. This division is an increasingly important one for DCPS as public funding for education diminishes. KPMG has not conducted a detailed review of this division.

## Summary of Results

The following table is a summary of potential short-term cost savings, revenue enhancements, and investments for the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, the Office of the Chief Academic Officer, which includes Special Education; the Office of the Chief Operations Officer, which includes Facilities Management, Transportation, Food Services, and Contract Management; the Office of the Chief Financial Officer; and the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

| | Short-Term Opportunities for: | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Office | Net Cost Savings | Revenue Enhancement | (Investments) |
| Office of the Chief Executive Officer | | | ($10,600,000) |
| Office of the Chief Academic Officer | $7,888,000 | $2,000,000 | ($1,000,000) |
| Office of the Chief Operating Officer | $7,128,000 - $13,727,000 | $254,000 | ($21,000,000) |
| Office of the Chief Financial Officer | $257,000 | $3,000,000 | |
| Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer | $547,000 | $53,000 | |
| Total | $15,820,000 - $22,419,000 | $5,307,000 | ($32,600,000) |

## 2. Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

This section provides a summary of information regarding the short-term cost savings, revenue enhancement and investment opportunities, including a discussion on each of the recommendations, and the assumptions used in the calculation of the fiscal impact of each recommendation.

### Short-Term Cost Savings Opportunities

The following recommendations highlight short-term cost savings opportunities. Together these recommendations total nearly $15.8 million - $22.4 million in net savings.

### Office of the Chief Academic Officer (CAO): Non-Special Education

**Summary:**

| | Recommendations | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| CAO1 | Reduce number of positions | -88 | $3,707,000 |
| | Total Net Savings | -88 | $3,707,000 |

**Recommendation CAO1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing personnel by 88 FTEs.***

The Office of the CAO has recently undergone reorganization, which consolidated the former Office of Educational Accountability and the former Center for Systemic Educational Change into a single office. These two offices now comprise the Office of the Chief Academic Officer.

Comparisons of DCPS's personnel levels (within the two former offices) with that of local peer jurisdictions showed that DCPS has a 67% higher number of positions across the curriculum, staff development, and educational monitoring functions. The average number of positions in this area for peer and neighboring districts is 14 per 10,000 students, while DCPS dedicates 24 per 10,000 students.

Coupled with the new organizational structure, DCPS should consider streamlining substantial functions and consolidating duplicative functions and components of the two former offices. DCPS should also consider assigning line management significant responsibility for educational accountability and program monitoring. The combination of these operational changes could potentially permit DCPS to reduce 88 FTE positions across the curriculum, staff development, and educational monitoring functions, bringing DCPS in line with its peers. The following table details the calculations in determining the appropriate number of positions for each area. DCPS could achieve a possible reduction in positions by 88 FTEs, resulting in a potential cost savings of $3,707,000.

| Area | Peer Average per 10,000 students | DCPS Staffing Level per 10,000 students | Recommended Reduction* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Curriculum and Staff Development | 4.66 positions | 10.22 positions | 44 |
| Research, Testing and Evaluation | 1.46 positions | 3.21 positions | 14 |
| Special Programs/ESL | 1.73 positions | 4.57 positions | 23 |
| Title 1 | .97 positions | 1.85 positions | 7 |
| | | Total Possible Position Reductions | 88 |

*Assumes approximately 81,000 for total student enrollment.

CAO: Average salary: $37,946; $4,174 fringe benefits.
Based on benchmarking averages from neighboring districts (Prince George's, Fairfax County, and Montgomery County).

## CAO: Special Education Division

**Summary:**

| | Recommendations | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| SPED1 | Reduce number of positions | -68 | $2,645,000 |
| SPED2 | Add new positions | +5 | ($240,000) |
| SPED3 | Reduce Legal Fees by Meeting Timelines | | $421,000 |
| SPED4 | Rebid Medicaid Collection Contract with Lower Commission Rate | | $460,000 |
| SPED5 | Reduce the number of out-of-district placements of LD or SED students each year by 50 until quality in-house programs can be fully developed/Add teachers/aides | -10 | $1,250,000<br>($350,000)<br>($5,000) |
| | Total Net Savings | -53 | $4,181,000 |

**Recommendation SPED1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing personnel by 68 FTEs.***

Special Education currently operates with a total of 911 FTEs, 326 of which are central office administrative and professional staff. Sixty-eight (68) positions, 40 of which are Service Delivery Model Coordinators, could potentially be reduced from this number. The SDM Coordinators have not been fully effective in making appropriate and timely assessments and placements of Special Education students. The new organization compensates for this reduction by recommending that DCPS add five new positions (See SPED2). This personnel reduction would result in a potential savings of $2,645,000.

**Recommendation SPED2:** ***DCPS should consider adding 5 new positions.***

In conjunction with Recommendation SPED1, DCPS should consider the addition of three supervisory positions to oversee school-based staff (1 elementary, 1 junior high, 1 senior high), the addition of one Deputy Director position, and one Professional Development Coordinator position. Combined with the new organizational structure and effective streamlining of the department, these five positions would be able to assume the responsibilities formerly managed by the SDM Coordinators. Total recommended additional FTEs: 5. Total potential investment: $240,000.

**Recommendation SPED3:** ***DCPS should try to reduce legal fees by meeting timelines.***

Non-compliance with the 50-day assessment and placement timeline has resulted in excessive legal fees. If timelines were met, the cost avoidance related to legal fees could be approximately $842,000, based on previous year expenditures. Based on a 50% reduction of non-compliance hearings in the short-term, DCPS could potentially realize savings of $421,000.

**Recommendation SPED4:** ***DCPS should rebid the Special Education contract for reimbursement and recovery of expenditures for Medicaid and other liable third parties.***

DCPS contracts the collection of Medicaid reimbursement claims. The contract was recently rebid consistent with previous study recommendations for lower rates, reflected in the following table. A reduction from previous rates ranging from 11 percent to 16 percent to a flat 10 percent had been proposed in previous studies; however, DCPS was able to negotiate an even more favorable rate structure ranging from 6 percent to 8 percent. The additional recovery of special education expenditures, assuming similar levels of claims approved and based on the newly negotiated rates, is $460,000.

| *Approximate Current Recovery: $6.2 m.* | | Totals |
|---|---|---|
| Total Claims Approved | | $6,200,000 |
| $3,000,000 x 16% | ($480,000) | |
| $3,000,000 x 13% | ($390,000) | |
| $200,000 x 11% | ($22,000) | |
| Less Medicaid Collector Commission | | ($892,000) |
| Total Recovery for DCPS | | $5,308,000 |
| *Recovery Based on New Rate Structure* | | |
| Total Claims Approved | | $6,200,000 |
| $3,000,000 x 8% | ($240,000) | |
| $3,200,000 x 6% | ($192,000) | |
| Less Medicaid Collector Commission | | ($432,000) |
| Total Recovery for DCPS | | $5,768,000 |
| Additional Potential Recovery | | $460,000 |

**Recommendation SPED5:** ***DCPS should try to reduce the number of new special education referrals from being placed out-of-District by at least 50 each year.***

DCPS loses 82% of its special education hearings, resulting in placement of students in out of District programs. Further, DCPS sends 229% more special education students to out-of-district private schools than peer and other jurisdictions. For ten special education students attending out-of-district schools, total tuition is estimated to be about $250,000. The cost of educating these same students in-district would be approximately $71,000 (1 teacher @ $50,000 + 1 aide @ $20,000 + $100 supplies/student). DCPS should become compliant and develop high-quality programs to keep future special education students in-district. In addition, during the program development stage DCPS should consider establishing a goal of sending fifty fewer students out of district each year—potentially resulting in a net savings of $1,250,000. Once the programs are developed, this target can be increased until ultimately all students can be provided quality special education in-district.

To accommodate 50 new students, ***DCPS should consider adding 5 special education teachers and 5 aides***. With an average teacher's salary of $50,000, average teacher's aide's salary of $20,000, and an additional $100 per student for supplies factored in, the total cost of these new positions is estimated to be $355,000. The total potential net savings of SPED 5 is $895,000.

SPED1: Average salary for reductions: $35,042; $3,854 fringe benefits.
SPED2: Average salary for additions: $43,243; $4,756 fringe benefits.
SPED3: Assuming a reduction of 50% in the average number of hearings resulting from timeline non-compliance (total paid in fiscal year 1996 = $842,000).
SPED5: Assuming DCPS is able to reduce the number of new special education referrals from being placed out-of-District to by at least 50, $1,250,000 will be saved in private school tuition. (An estimated average tuition of $25,000 per student was used.)

### Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO)

The cost savings identified under the Office of the Chief Operating Officer are specific to Facilities Management, Administrative Services, School Operations (including Transportation), Food Services, and Contract Management.

**COO: Facilities Management**

**Summary:**

| | Recommendation | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| FM1 | Facilities | | |
| | - Reduce warehouse positions | -51 | $1,865,000 |
| | - Reduce custodial/maintenance positions | -71 to -183 | $1,734,000 - $8,333,000 |
| | Total Net Savings | -122 to -234 | $3,599,000 - $10,198,000 |

**Recommendation FM1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing facilities management positions by 122 - 234 FTEs.***

DCPS maintains a supply warehouse to store school supplies. Standard government and industry practice, however, is to use "just-in-time" delivery schedules directly to user locations rather than to warehousing facilities. DCPS should consider negotiating direct delivery of goods and supplies, enabling it to close its warehouses and reduce 51 positions associated with that function. The total estimated savings resulting from the closing of the warehouse is approximately $1.9 million, as illustrated below. At the same time, DCPS should consider moving toward a purchase card system which would allow school principals to purchase authorized supplies directly.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Supply Management | (1 x $44,953) | $45,000 |
| Distribution Facilities | (36 x $44,953) | $1,618,000 |
| Inventory Management | (13 x $13,538) | $176,000 |
| Construction Warehouse | (1 x $26,000) | $26,000 |
| | Total: | $1,865,000 |

Position reductions in the area of maintenance and custodial services of 101 to 183 FTEs could yield a cost savings of approximately $1.7 million - $8.3 million, as illustrated below.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Custodial | (58 x $26,015) | $1,509,000 |
| Maintenance | -15 x $58,917 to (97 x $58,917) | $(884,000) - $5,715,000 |
| Program Contract Mgmt. | (10 x $30,000) | $300,000 |
| Equipment Maintenance | (18 x $44,953) | $809,000 |
| | Total: | $1,734,000 - $8,333,000 |

DCPS manages 170 buildings, or approximately 17 million square feet of school and administrative space. Applying best practice standards of 1 custodial position per 20,000 square feet of estimated utilized building space, DCPS, with its current level of 766 custodial FTEs, could reduce the number of custodial level positions by 58 FTEs. This would result in a potential cost savings of approximately $1.5 million.

DCPS currently sustains 320 maintenance FTEs, an average of approximately 53,000 square feet per maintenance position. Best practice standards for maintenance workers indicate one maintenance position for every 75,000 square feet. Recognizing the level of repair required by DCPS's facilities, KPMG applied a range of 1 maintenance level position for every 50,000 - 75,000 square feet. The results of this analysis indicate that DCPS's current maintenance level positions could range from an increase of 15 FTE positions to a reduction of 97 FTE positions, bringing total maintenance FTEs to between 223 and 335 FTEs. The range of additions/reductions result in potential costs of $884,000 to potential cost savings of up to $5.7 million[1].

There are currently 10 unauthorized positions in Program Contract Management. DCPS could potentially reduce these positions up to 10 FTEs in order to meet budget requirements. Further study is needed, however, to determine if these positions perform essential functions. This would result in a total estimated savings of approximately $300,000.

DCPS should also consider contracting out the Equipment Maintenance function. There are currently 18 FTEs performing maintenance work on computers and other office equipment. This service may be more efficiently and cost effectively provided by an outside agency. This would result in a total estimated savings of approximately $809,000.

The total reduction of FTEs within Facilities Management is 122 to 234, with a potential total estimated savings of approximately $3.6 million to $10.2 million.

The recommendations for Facilities Management, as with all other areas, are based on information gathered in previous studies. Since completion of this initial assessment, Facilities Management has undergone several organizational changes which could affect the level of cost savings opportunity. For example, since the reorganization of the department, DCPS has canceled its contract with Service Master, which had been providing custodial and routine maintenance services to the schools. DCPS has opted to bring this function in-house, which may require the addition of new supervisory positions to assume the functions previously overseen by Service Master employees. In light of the changes that have been implemented since the initial

[1] Because many of the district schools are old and in need of repair and/or upgrading (the average age of DCPS facilities is 54 years old while in peer districts the average age of facilities is between 20 and 30 years old) the needs for maintenance from building to building vary. Some buildings may require more maintenance workers, or require a one-time investment to bring them up to par with other newer buildings before regular routine maintenance services would be sufficient upkeep. A more detailed school by school analysis is necessary to determine which buildings would require additional resources.

## COO: Food Services

**Summary:**

| | Recommendations | FTE | FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| FS1 | Personnel Reductions | 120.5 | $2,526,000 |
| | - Salary increases | | ($460,000) |
| | Total Net Savings | 120.5 | $2,066,000 |

**Recommendation FS1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing food services personnel by 120.5 FTE positions.***

Benchmark analyses indicates that Food Services central administration operates with high levels of staffing - a staff to student ratio of 1:2,011. Peer district ratios range between 1:4,731 to 1:7,886. A reduction in administrative personnel by 7.5 FTEs could result in an estimated savings of $157,000 and bring DCPS in line with peers. If more efficient delivery contracts were negotiated, an additional 21 FTE positions could be reduced from the Food Services payroll for a potential estimated savings of $440,000.

Also, there are currently 92 schools with kitchens operating with both a manager and a cook position. These positions could be combined so that cooks also function as managers, thus reducing the need for 92 manager positions, although an increase in salary would be necessary for this new cook/manager position. The reduction of positions by 92 FTEs, combined with the necessary increase in salaries for cook/managers would potentially result in a net savings of approximately $1,928,000.

The total potential reduction in FTEs is 120.5, with a total estimated savings of $2,525,000.

Since the initial assessment, Food Services has reduced its number of FTE positions. The department has also implemented other cost cutting measures. As with Facilities Management, it is necessary to revisit this area to reassess the potential short-term cost savings impact.

FS1: Average salary used: $20,960, which includes benefits. Salary increase of approximately $5,000 per cook/manager.

assessment, it may be necessary to revisit this area and make the appropriate adjustments to potential cost savings.

### COO: Administrative Services

**Summary:**

| | Recommendation | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| AS1 | Mail / Reproduction | | |
| | - Reduce number of positions | -3 | $80,000 |
| | Total Net Savings | -3 | $80,000 |

**Recommendation AS1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing personnel by 3 FTEs.***

The reduction of 3 custodial personnel within the mail/reproduction facilities, could result in potential savings of $80,000.

AS1: Average salary: $26,667 which includes fringe benefits.

### COO: School Operations

**Summary:**

| | Recommendation | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| SO1 | Transfer Museum Restoration to outside agency | -7 | $443,000 |
| | Total Net Savings | -7 | $443,000 |

**Recommendation SO1:** ***DCPS should consider transferring the Museum Restoration program to an outside historical society.***

DCPS, through the Museum Restoration Projects program, provides a centrally located facility for conferences, symposia, staff development activities, and cultural and other events at the historical site of the Sumner School in the northwest quadrant of the District. The availability of alternative funding sources for maintenance of this site, such as historical foundations and philanthropic grants, would allow DCPS to identify an alternative sponsor for assisting the program. DCPS should consider transferring the function of the Museum Restoration program to an outside historical society, resulting in potential cost savings of $443,000.

SO1: Average salary: $37,946; $4,174 fringe benefits.

CAS: Average salary: $30,541; $3,359 fringe benefits.
CAS: Salary increases assumes a minimum increase of $6,100.

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

**Summary:**

| | Recommendation | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| CFO1 | Reduce number of positions | | |
| | - Payroll | -10 | $314,000 |
| CFO2 | Increase salaries | | ($57,000) |
| | Total Net Savings | -10 | $257,000 |

**Recommendation CFO1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing payroll personnel by 10 FTEs.***

Benchmarking analyses of processes and staffing levels indicated that the payroll function within the Division of Finance is staffed at a 44% higher level than that of peer districts (522 school employees per payroll positions compared to the peer average of 1,182). Based on this, DCPS could potentially reduce the level of payroll positions by 10, adding temporary help as necessary, for a potential cost savings of $314,000. One issue contributing to the inefficiencies within this office is the manual payroll process. As in other offices throughout DCPS, the level of automation is low, requiring higher than average levels of total positions. Moving toward automated systems would greatly streamline processes and alleviate many of the problems associated with the payroll function.

**Recommendation CFO2:** ***DCPS should consider adjusting staff salaries.***

Accounts Payable salaries are 20% lower than peer and neighboring district averages. The average FY 1996 salary per Accounts Payable position for peer districts was $39,000 compared to $31,135 for DCPS. DCPS should consider adjusting Accounts Payable position salaries to reflect new job responsibilities to bring DCPS more in line with the peer district average. This would require a total estimated investment of $57,000.

CFO1a: Payroll - average salary: $28,320; $3,115 fringe benefits. Budget - average salary: $41,763; $4,593 fringe benefits.
CFO1: Increase of $7,623 per FTE

**Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer**

**Summary:**

| | Recommendation | Potential FTE Reductions | Potential FY98 Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| CHRO1 | Reduce number of positions | -12 | $505,000 |
| CHRO2 | Contract Employee Assistance Program | -1 | $42,000 |
| | Total Net Savings | -13 | $547,000 |

**Recommendation CHRO1:** ***DCPS should consider reducing the number of Human Resource positions by 12 FTEs.***

Based upon benchmark comparisons to peer school districts, DCPS has 50% more Human Resources FTEs than do peers of a comparable or larger size. This would allow for a potential reduction of 8 FTE positions. The technological improvements in CAPPS, UPPS, imaging technology, and electronic transfer of timesheets made in FY 1997, coupled with the recommendations in this area, would allow for further streamlining of processes and further possible reduction of 4 currently vacant positions for a total potential estimated savings of $505,000.

**Recommendation CHRO2:** ***DCPS should consider contracting Employee Assistance function.***

The Employee Assistance function is designed to provide counseling for job-related issues such as personality conflicts, time management, balancing work with home-life, and handling job-related stress. The Employee Assistance function also serves as a referral service for employees who may require additional, more long-term assistance. There is currently one full-time position performing this function. DCPS could consider contracting this positions which would inculcate more objectivity to the function, follow the trend of the industry, and shift the responsibility to the Contract Administration Division. This could result in a potential savings of approximately $42,000.

CHRO1: Average salary: $37,946; $4,174 fringe benefits.
CHRO2: Average salary: $37,946; $4,174 fringe benefits.

### Revenue Enhancement Opportunities

The following recommendations highlight areas where additional revenue could be generated for DCPS. Together these recommendations total nearly $5.3 million.

### CAO: Special Education

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| SPED 6 | Increase Medicaid Reimbursement for Private School Students | $2,000,000 |

**Recommendation SPED6:** ***DCPS should begin collecting Medicaid reimbursement for private school students.***

Approximately 850 students are sent to private out-of-district schools. Of these, a number of them are eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. However, private schools do not assess students for eligibility and also do not submit claims for reimbursements on DCPS' behalf. Consequently, millions of dollars in potential Medicaid monies remain uncollected by DCPS. Collection of Medicaid reimbursement from private schools could result in an estimated increase in revenue of $2 million.

### COO: Facilities Management

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| FM2 | Auction surplus and obsolete materials | $50,000 |

**Recommendation FM2:** ***DCPS may be able to auction off surplus and obsolete materials.***

As the warehouse is closed, surplus and obsolete materials could be auctioned off. Although the warehouse will need to be kept until the remaining inventory is sold, the estimated revenue from selling surplus materials is about $50,000 or more, based on year-end inventory levels in school year 1995-1996.

### COO: Transportation

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| Trans4 | Auction vehicles/parts | $174,000 |

**Recommendation Trans4:** ***DCPS should consider auctioning inoperable vehicles.***

Of the 202 busses and vans owned by DCPS to transport special education children, 87 are inoperable or in need of minor or major repairs. Rather than incurring further costs of repairs, DCPS should consider auctioning off these inoperable vehicles. Research indicated that the current estimated average value of an operable vehicle is $5,000. Auctioning the vehicles should bring a conservative estimated price of $2,000 per vehicle. The estimated average revenue that the District could generate from auctioning 87 vehicles is approximately $174,000.

### COO: Food Services

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| FS2 | Auction vehicles | $30,000 |

**Recommendation FS2:** ***DCPS should consider auctioning its 6 delivery trucks.***

Food Services currently maintains its own warehouse and a small fleet of delivery trucks. The standard government and industry practice in procurement is to negotiate for direct delivery of goods by the contractor to the sites where the goods will be used. This arrangement would facilitate the closing of warehouses and the reduction of warehouse positions, and allow DCPS to auction its Food Services delivery trucks. Selling the vehicles would generate revenue of potentially $30,000

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| CFO3 | Collect tuition from out of district students | $3,000,000 |

**Recommendation CFO3:** ***DCPS should seek to collect tuition from out of district students.***

A significant number of non-resident students are enrolled in DCPS. Non-resident tuition enforcement will be either additional revenue or cost savings from reduced enrollment. Estimates suggest that $3 million in additional local revenues (or cost savings) may be attainable

given DCPS' current rate structure for non-resident tuition and the identification rate of non-resident students in FY 1997.

### Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer

| | Recommendation | Revenue Enhancements |
|---|---|---|
| CHRO3 | Revenue from licensure functions | $53,000 |

**Recommendation CHRO3:** ***DCPS could generate revenue from teacher licensure function.***

There has been no consistent link between the hiring of instructional personnel, the professional development of these personnel, and DCPS' certification requirements for the same. For this reason, the Teacher Education and Licensure function has been combined into the Office of Human Resources to ensure that all DCPS instructional employees, current as well and new hires, establish and maintain current certification, and receive certification guidance based upon the needs of DCPS children.

The Board of Education is authorized DCMR 1001.18 to charge fees for the certification of educational personnel who seek licenses authorized by the Board of Education, and for the approval/accreditation of teachers education programs at the seven institutions of higher education in the District of Columbia. Projected certification revenue for FY 1998 is $ 50,000 based upon renewal needs and improvements in bringing delinquent employees into compliance (estimated at 19% non-compliance rate). Projected program approval revenue for FY 1998 is $3,000 based upon anticipated approval schedules and rates for new program development Estimated savings: $53,000.

**Investment Opportunities**

The investments proposed for fiscal year 1998 represents DCPS's determination to advance toward a more modern, technologically and academically current environment and improve the physical environment in which children learn and grow. These potential investment opportunities are presented as one-time expenditures which, in the long run, will assist DCPS to keep ongoing costs down and provide better and more efficient services to its students and employees.

Cost savings achieved through the recommendations contained within Section 2 of this report could potentially be redirected and supported by investments in areas such as teacher training, curriculum development, and information systems upgrading. The following summarizes the areas recommended for additional investments. Together these potential investments total approximately $32.6 million.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| INV1 | Training | $10,600,000 |
| INV2 | Curriculum & Assessment Tools | $1,000,000 |
| INV3 | Technology | $21,000,000 |
| | Investment Opportunities - Total | $32,600,000 |

**Recommendation INV1:** ***DCPS should consider investing in training.***

As part of its management reform efforts and its commitment to employ quality personnel, DCPS central administration areas and schools should consider sharing training dollars in the amount of $10,600,000. Of this amount, $6.7 million should be targeted towards technology skill development and $3.9 million to other areas of development. The technology allotment is 33% of the technology budget, while the staff development allotment is based on benchmarked training budgets from peer and neighboring school districts. Recommended areas for concentration of training dollars are listed in this section. Specific training needs and priorities should be determined and executed within the offices and division.

**Recommendation INV2:** ***DCPS should consider instituting a new curriculum and develop criterion-reference tests concurrent with curriculum development. DCPS should consider instituting a nationally respected norm-reference test for late spring.***

DCPS's last significant curriculum revision in the full range of subject areas occurred in 1978—18 years ago. DCPS may wish to expedite the completion of a revised curriculum across all subject areas by selecting and obtaining components of the "nation's best" as a starting point to undergo an abbreviated comment and review period. The components could be selected to complement the Performance-Based-Education (PBE) curriculum development work in progress, which requires approximately 3 years for each subject area. DCPS has completed one new

curriculum framework (available in a "revised edition") in math/science/technology and an English/Language Arts framework is in a draft ("first") edition. Development of a social studies and other frameworks have not yet begun. Materials such as study guides and training materials will need to be selected and purchased to facilitate and support use of the new curriculum.

As curriculum choices are made, criterion-reference tests covering most subject areas should be developed in alignment with them. Criterion-reference tests compare what students have learned to what they should have been taught from the curriculum. The lack of alignment between the current criterion-reference tests and both the old Competency-Based Education (CBC) and the new Performance-Based-Education curricula raises questions about the accuracy of historical assessments of both student performance and teacher aptitude. The costs for the purchase of these instruments coincides with the revision schedule of the curriculum.

Implementation of a new curriculum and criterion-reference tests could mean a potential investment of around $675,000.

DCPS has used a version of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) as a norm-reference test for more than ten years. This year, however, use of this test was discontinued. Norm-reference tests compare DCPS students to those in other systems. Although three potential norm-reference tests were piloted this fall (no available results yet) it is in the best interest of students and teachers to select a norm-reference test which covers a broad range of subject areas and which is well-respected nationally in urban school systems. The estimated cost for this test, approximately $244,000, is based on average testing costs provided by McGraw-Hill. As part of the recommendations in this area, the results of this test along with the pre-test (Stanford 9 reading assessment) results should be consistently released to the schools in a format that permits principals and teachers to begin using it as a tool to improve student performance, to assess and plan staff development requirements, to monitor and evaluate advancement in both areas.

**Recommendation INV4:** ***DCPS should consider investing in technology.***

- **Infrastructure:**

DCPS may want to expand its current networking capabilities and ensure that every school and DCPS administrative office are 'hardwired' with the cable, wiring, and other infrastructure necessary to support the number of users at that site. The total potential investment in infrastructure is estimated to be $2,224,000.

- **Personal computers:**

Increasing the number of PCs throughout the district would allow schools to have access to local data processing and would allow DCPS to continue using technology to educate students so that they are prepared to succeed in a technological environment upon graduation. The current terminals located in school offices throughout the district are not sufficient to realize the full benefits of the new environment, and the migration to an open-systems architecture would allow

for advances in local administrative computing capabilities. It is estimated that total potential investment in PCs at schools and administrative offices could be $13,754,000.

- **Technology training:**

DCPS operates in a complex technological environment that is constantly changing and expanding. Approximately 60% of the current MIS staff do not have the expertise in many areas that will become critical in the future. Therefore, DCPS should consider identifying the requisite skills to operate in a new technological environment and implement a formal training program. Implementation of increased technology training is approximately $100,000.

- **Migration to an open systems environment:**

In the past, DCPS has relied on a single hardware/software platform for central data processing. This limits the options available for implementing automated solutions. Migration to an open systems environment would allow for purchasing and developing applications on several software platforms. Total potential investment required to migrate to an open system environment is estimated to be $1,774,000.

- **Fully-integrated financial management system:**

Currently DCPS does not have a fully-integrated Financial Management System. As a result, DCPS has not been able to effectively manage its resources with the level of financial information available. A fully-integrated Financial Management System would provide integrated Budgeting, Accounts Payable, Accounting, Purchasing, Fixed Asset management, and other related financial reporting tools. Should DCPS invest in an integrated system, the total first-year investment could be approximately $2.5 million.

- **Modification of the Student Information System (SIS) to meet the needs of Special Education Division:**

The Special Education Department uses a Special Education System (SPEDS) for student information tracking and IEP tracking, which requires support and maintenance skills that are different than those required to support the other major DCPS Information Systems. Modification of the current Student Information System would eliminate duplicate tracking of information in SPEDS and would allow MIS staff to better support the technology needs of the Special Education Department. Modification of SIS is estimated to cost approximately $300,000.

- **An automated time and attendance reporting system:**

The time and attendance reporting system currently used by DCPS is manual and requires large amounts of staff time and resources. Use of an automated time and attendance reporting system

# Appendices

that can be integrated with the City's Human Resources/Personnel system would streamline and improve processes. The total potential investment is an estimated $300,000.

## Appendix A. Priority Setting Methodology

This worksheet summarizes by Office and Division all costs savings, revenue enhancements and investments recommended for fiscal year 1997 and fiscal year 1998. It further indicates which items are ready to be implemented without further research, which recommendations should be implemented but require some additional research, and which areas need an initial assessment.

## Appendix B. Potential Financial Impact for Fiscal Year 1997 and Fiscal Year 1998

The following worksheet breaks out the potential financial impact of the Level 1 and 2 short-term cost savings opportunities. Potential savings and investments are shown for fiscal years 1997 and 1998, assuming that cost savings are realized for three months beginning July 1, 1997 for fiscal year 1997 and for twelve months beginning October 1, 1997 for fiscal year 1998.

## Appendix C. Potential Cost Savings Breakdown by Budget Code

The following section details the cost savings in terms of the current budget structure. For each area the cost savings are presented as personal services and other than personal services.

*APPENDIX O – FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE HEARING*

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Office of the Chief Executive Officer*
415 12th Street, N.W., Room 1209
Washington, D.C. 20004-1994
202-724-4222, fax: 202-724-5580

June 9, 1997

The Honorable Pete Hoekstra
Chairman, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
U.S. House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20616-6100

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed are my responses to the follow-up questions you submitted after your hearing on the District of Columbia Public Schools. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Richard Wenning at 724-2490 of my staff.

Sincerely,

J.W. Becton, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer-Superintendent

JWB:ljs

Enclosure

**1. Section 2401 authorized a procedure for establishment of a per pupil funding formula for traditional public schools in the District and for public charter schools. What specific steps have been taken to implement this provision?**

**a) What is the per pupil funding for traditional public schools in the District.**
**b) What is the per pupil funding for the two public charter schools.**

Last fall, DCPS established a per pupil funding formula for charter schools as required under the act. We have attached a copy of the per pupil rates that were developed. As required under the law, DCPS is currently updating those calculations based on newer costs. Because the rates are based on the specific expenditure amounts that tare being incurred for DCPS' students, the per pupil funding for DCPS and charter schools is identical.

**2. At the hearing, you indicated there were 78,648 students in the DC public school system. Section 2402 sets forth a specific manner of calculating the number of students according to various categories such as K-12, preschool/pre kindergarten, nonresident students, and adult education. Does the 78,648 number categorize the students according to the statute? If no, please explain.**

The official membership report dated October 3, 1996 is the basis of the 78,648 figure. This report does not fully include all of the categories specified in Section 2402. DCPS is presently examining the manner in which the enrollment calculation was conducted and we will make necessary improvements to ensure that the enrollment calculation is accurate and reported properly.

**3. Section 2403 sets forth a specific payment mechanism for public charter schools whereby funds are placed into escrow and then transferred to the charter schools based on a per pupil based formula. What specific steps have been taken to implement this provision?**

DCPS has established procedures consistent with the act to transfer funds to charter schools and has implemented those procedures this year to transfer funds to the two existing charter schools. In general, as required under the act, DCPS transfers 75 percent of the annual budget for a charter school to the escrow account in October. The following March, the remaining 25 percent is transferred along with any required adjustments because of changes in the charter school enrollment.

**4. What are the names of the two public charter schools that were established pursuant to the D.C. School Reform Act? What are the distinctives of each of these charter schools?**

The two charter schools currently operating are the following:

-- Options Public Charter School, SY 1996-97 enrollment of 94 in grades 4-9; FY 97 funding of $738,816. This school is intended to provide an alternative learning environment for underachieving students who are at risk of dropping out of school.

## 97 PER PUPIL ALLOCATIONS BY LEVEL/SPECIAL NEED

**ublic School Operating Budget Allocable**

| | |
|---|---|
| FY 1997 Budget | $482,514,000 |
| Excluded Costs | $25,357,300 |
| Net Budget Allocable | $457,156,700 |

**Enrollment adjusted to reflect weightings**

Weighting times Funding per Weighted Pupil Unit = Allocation by level

| Level | Weighting | Projected enrollment | Weighted pupil units | Per Pupil | Total Dollars |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Preschool | 1.00 | 1,270 | 1,270.0 | $4,437 | $5,634,358 |
| Prekinder | 1.40 | 4,138 | 5,793.2 | $6,211 | $25,701,545 |
| K–3 | 1.20 | 28,247 | 33,896.4 | $5,324 | $150,381,456 |
| Gr 4–6 | 1.00 | 16,164 | 16,164.0 | $4,437 | $71,711,623 |
| JHS | 1.25 | 15,097 | 18,871.3 | $5,546 | $83,722,344 |
| SHS | 1.40 | 12,614 | 17,659.6 | $6,211 | $78,346,856 |
| Add–on weightings | | | | | |
| Special education | | | | | |
| Level 1 | 0.22 | 1357 | 294.2 | $962 | $1,305,047 |
| Level 2 | 0.80 | 1457 | 1,166.0 | $3,558 | $5,184,508 |
| Level 3 | 1.73 | 2572 | 4,460.3 | $7,694 | $19,788,244 |
| Level 4 | 2.55 | 748 | 1,905.7 | $11,303 | $8,454,452 |
| LEP/NEP | 0.30 | 5,204 | 1,561.2 | $1,331 | $6,926,267 |
| Total Weighted Pupil Units | | | 103,044.4 | | $457,156,700 |
| | | | | Excl'd costs | $25,357,300 |
| | | | | Total budget | $482,514,000 |
| Net budget allocable divided by Total weighted pupil units = Funding per Weighted Pupil Unit | | | $4,437 | | |

-- Marcus Garvey Public Charter School, SY 1996-97 enrollment of 73 in grades pre-K - 12; FY 97 funding of $389,227. This school is intended to emphasize a multi-cultural educational program focused on the needs of boys.

The two other charter schools that were approved last August and should become operational during the coming school year include:

-- Children's Studio Public Charter School, projected enrollment of 72 in grades pre-K - 6. The school is intended to provide an arts-based educational program.

-- Next Step Public Charter School, projected enrollment of 24 teenage students. This school is intended to serve pregnant teens and students at risk of dropping out of school.

**5. The Department of Education has recently allocated $1 million to the District of Columbia for charter schools pursuant to the national charter school program (20 USC 8061, et. seq.) Please provide a specific accounting of how this money has been or will be spent.**

These grant funds will be used for making subgrant awards for planning and implementation to the charter schools already approved and establishment of a revolving loan fund for charter schools. In addition, some of these grant funds may be used for planning grants for prospective applicants during the next application cycle.

**6. It is our understanding that the new D.C. Charter Board has had some difficulty receiving operating expenses from the District of Columbia government. Please verify whether this is the case, and if so, please explain the circumstances.**

The Charter Board has had difficulty receiving its operating budget. This occurred, in part, because no funds were appropriated for the Board in the 1997 Appropriations Act.

**7. Section 2551 required the Superintendent and the Administrator of the General Services Administration to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for technical assistance regarding public school facilities management, including facilities repair work and other improvements. What steps have been taken to implement this provision?**

DCPS and the General Services Administration has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for Technical Assistance regarding schools' facilities management, repair and other improvements. Several projects and tasks are currently underway under the provisions of this agreement (e.g. GSA validated our cost estimates for the FY '97 request).

**8. What specific efforts have been undertaken to involve the private sector in the donation of goods and services for the repair of D.C. schools?**

DCPS has sought donations through building trade organizations (i.e. Building Future Council, Washington Building Congress and etc.). The response has been positive, and we are currently discussing arrangements with several companies.

**(a) What has the private sector contributed?**

The major contributions to date have been computers and related equipment.

**(b) What bureaucratic barriers exist to private sector involvement?**

The major barrier is the indemnification of consultants and contractors who would work in our schools: liability has be carried by the donor in as much as DCPS cannot provide the coverage.

**(c) Do you support waiving the Federal Davis-Bacon Act for purposes of the repair and/or construction of D.C. Public Schools?**

Waiving the Davis-Bacon Act would be helpful in our ability to attract donated services.

**9. What is being done to bring fiscal accountability and management accountability to the D.C. school system for the short-term and long-term?**

DCPS has undertaken several steps to establish and institute fiscal accountability. Key actions taken during the first six months include hiring new leadership in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), including a new CFO, budget director, and controller. Several former officials were fired. The CFO has also developed a strategic financial management plan to outline steps being taken to improve all aspects of the office from budgeting to bill paying to payroll. The CFO established a school-based staffing and funding model to be used as a guide to develop the FY '98 budget. Special intensive efforts are currently being taken to ensure all employees are working in the units they are being charged to and all grants are being effectively managed.

**10. Has the "Commission on Consensus Reform" authorized by Subtitle H of the D.C. School Reform Act been established? If so, what action has the Commission taken to date?**

The Consensus Commission has not been established. Its duties have been given to the Emergency Board of Trustees through the November 15, 1996 order of the Control Board.

**11. The "District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995" included a number of reporting requirements to the Education and Workforce Committee, the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, and the Appropriations Committee. The deadlines for some of the reports have passed, yet the Education and Workforce Committee has not seen any reports. What is the status of the various reports listed in the chart below? (See reporting requirements and due dates listed below.)**

The reporting requirements contained in the School Reform Act of 1995 were established prior to the reorganization of the school system by the Financial Control Authority, a body created by the Congress. This reorganization occurred on November 15, 1996 and established an Emergency Board of Trustees and a Chief Executive Officer to operate the school system as agents of the Financial Authority. A fundamental overhaul is underway of all aspects of the school system, including the manner in which we monitor performance and report results. Due to this reorganization, it may be necessary to deviate from the

specific timelines and reporting requirements included in the Act. This in no way, however, diminishes our responsibility for providing accurate and timely information to the Congress detailing our progress.

**-- long term reform plan sec. 2101, due 90 days after April 26, 1996 and each Feb. 15th thereafter.**

In August of 1996, then Superintendent Franklin Smith submitted the Washington, DC Goals 2000 Community Plan for Educational Improvement to the appropriate Congressional Committees as the long term reform plan required under the Act. The Act also requires that a long-term plan be submitted by each February 15th thereafter. Due to the reorganization of the school system in November, a revised plan was not submitted by February 15, 1997. A draft plan has been developed that incorporates priorities of the Emergency Board of Trustees as well as aspects of the plan developed through extensive community input and submitted last year. This plan has been released for public comment and substantial revision is anticipated before it is submitted as meeting the requirements of the Act.

**-- superintendent's report on' reforms, sec. 2102, due Dec. 1, 1996**

The DC Public Schools will develop a comprehensive performance measurement system that will permit Congressional oversight of the progress the school system is making toward achieving it reforms.

**-- annual report of calculations of number of students in D.C. public schools according to category (i.e. K-12, adult education, non-resident tuition paying, pre-kindergarten/pre-school, etc.), sec. 2402(c), due 30 days after April 26, 1996 and not later than Oct. 15th of each year thereafter.**

We are in the process of determining if this report was transmitted as required by the previous DCPS administration.

**-- audit of calculations of number of students, sec. 2402(d), due not later than 45 days after the annual report of student calculation pursuant to sec.2402(c) is received by the Authority, or as soon as thereafter is practicable**

A GAO audit of the methodology of the enrollment calculations is being conducted. We anticipate that the audit will reveal weaknesses in the approach used last October. We plan to improve the approach used to calculate enrollment, incorporating the findings of the GAO audit, and implement this improved approach for the next school year.

**-- FY 1997 budget request in new format with categories, sec. 2753, not later than 60 days after April 26, 1996.**

DCPS has developed a new budget structure consistent with the new leadership's creation of chief officers responsible for academics, operations, human resources, and finances. This budget will be executed for fiscal year 1998 with a completely new charter of accounts at the responsibility center level and other reporting categories.

**12. What, if any, changes do you recommend be made in the Federal D.C. charter school statute (Sec. 2201 et. seq. of the "District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995")?**

The charter school statute was passed prior to the establishment of the Emergency Board of Trustees, which now has the duties of the State Educational Agency. At the time of the Act's passage the elected school board, one of the eligible chartering authorities, had the duties of the State agency. The change in the governance of the school system has created a disconnect in the duties of the State agency and the eligible chartering authorities. In response to this disconnect, the Board of Trustees is developing a means to ensure adequate State agency accountability while not diminishing the authority of the School Board or Public Charter School Board as eligible chartering authorities. Our goal is to ensure a role for the State agency in the establishment and operation of charter schools that provides adequate oversight, evaluation, and technical assistance for this important reform.

STUDENT LOAN FUND OF IDAHO MARKETING ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. BOX 1000 • FRUITLAND, IDAHO 83619-1000 • (208) 452-4058

June 10, 1997

Monica Moultrie, Certification Representative
US Department of Education
Consolidation Department
Loan Origination Center
PO Box 1723
Montgomery AL 36102-1723

Dear Ms. Moultrie:

We are writing with respect to a serious problem that this organization, Student Loan Fund of Idaho Marketing Association, Inc., lender number 827116 ("IMA"), is experiencing with your Direct Loan Origination Center (the "Center"). We have sought in the past to address the problem by use of the proper Department of Education forms, but to no avail.

Over several months IMA has received from the Center various lender verification certificates with respect to loans owned and held by IMA which were not in default, however, such certificates list Student Loan Fund of Idaho, Inc. (guarantor number 00716) as the holder/servicer under item 1 of such certificates. We have attempted to correct the situation by completing question number 2, i.e., the institution and address to which the payoff amount is to be sent and returning the form to you. Similarly, corrections have been made to form SF 1081 Detail Report for Loan Holders. To date, we are not aware of any corrective action.

IMA has thereby not received payoffs due in excess of $368,000.00 for 41 Borrowers (see attached list), assumedly under your misunderstanding that the referenced loans were defaulted and held by a guarantor.

The failure to correct these listings has lead to confusion and distress on the part of the borrowers who are being double-billed. Use of the Department of Education Consolidation Toll Free Number has not given them any satisfaction. In several instances they may have no alternative but to file a complaint.

We would expect that good customer relations would be as important to the Department of Education as they are to us.

Attached is a list of items for which IMA has not been paid with payoff amounts computed as of June 20, 1997. We would appreciate your earliest response and payment by such date.

Thank you for your expected consideration.

Sincerely,

Diana L. Black

Diana L. Black
Technical Support Supervisor

cc: Dr. David Longanecker
Senator Dirk Kempthorne
Senator Larry E. Craig
Representative Helen Chenoweth
Representative Michael D. Crapo
Representative Peter Hoekstra

*APPENDIX P – WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM D.C. PACE*

**D.C. PACE**
***Parents And Community for Education***
**3323 14TH Street, NE**
**Washington, DC 20017**
**202-526-1632**

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC, 20515

April 23, 1997

Dear Representative Davis,

We are writing to you in your capacity as one of the Representatives with responsibility for oversight of the District of Columbia. We represent a broad based coalition of concerned parents and citizens who are deeply concerned about the proposed school closings which are soon to be voted on by the Emergency Board of Trustees for Education in the District of Columbia.

No one, particularly parents of public school children in DC, doubts that our system is desperately in need of help. Years of flawed decision making and incompetent and corrupt administration have left our schools in deteriorating conditions.

While we are in agreement that much urgently needs to be done to improve conditions in our schools, the current proposals are precipitous and ill informed. They will do much damage or destroy many existing high quality programs, while accomplishing little or nothing to improve conditions in deteriorating and languishing programs.

Specifically, the current proposals are flawed administratively, academically, economically, and racially and socially.

- ADMINISTRATIVELY: The Emergency Board's proposed school closings were made without development of an appropriate set of educational criteria. Even their facilities decisions were predicated upon building reports that are incomplete and substantially inaccurate, rendering these decisions egregiously flawed. They have refused to acknowledge inaccuracies in their reports or to examine facilities themselves.

- ACADEMICALLY: By their own admission the Emergency Board did not consider academic performance as a criteria in deciding which schools to close, only building size. It is not coincidence that in targeting small schools for closure they have threatened some of the finest academic programs in the city; studies across the nation have proven that the

optimal size for academic excellence in the elementary years are schools of 300 to 400 students. Warehousing children in 600 to over a thousand seat institutions is not an educational policy -- it is child abuse.

- ECONOMICALLY: As the Washington Post ably documented on Monday, April 21, over half of the buildings scheduled for closure have no appraisable commercial value. The remaining half have been given exorbitantly inflated estimates of their worth. Similarly, in assessing which schools to close the Emergency Board has ignored documentation that the operating cost/ per/ student of the small schools they are closing is actually less than the cost/ per/ student of the receiving schools they have designated.

- RACIALLY AND SOCIALLY: This proposal, if implemented, will resegregate Washington DC. It will segregate it racially and economically, isolating low income minority students in oversized, deteriorating institutions, while the middle class of all races continue to flee the city. It will remove special need children from the current, flourishing full inclusion programs, and segregate them in more restrictive environments.

We have sought relief through appropriate channels, first seeking dialogue and partnership with the Emergency Board in correcting and amending their information and proposals, and after that was rebuffed through unanswered attempts to contact the Control Board.

We are now appealing to you to exercise not only your authority but also your responsibility in making sure that a Board which has no direct accountability to the citizens of the District of Columbia will not be allowed to do additional harm to the schools and the children they are supposed to serve. Specifically we are requesting that all school closings be postponed until:

1) An Academic Officer is hired and an academic plan developed for the D.C. school system. School closing must be based on educational goals, and must include protecting high academic performance as a primary criteria.

2) A master plan for facilities is prepared that includes dealing with the current inventory of closed schools, and assesses schools not only based on their crude real estate value but on their value as suitable places of learning.

3) A process is developed to ensure meaningful public participation in decisions about school closings, utilizing the abundant expertise available to the Board by involving parents, educators, and community members, particularly those with background on the needs of special education.

Sincerely,

D.C. PACE
Susan Gushue, 526-1632
Wayne Proctor, 462-8211
Rita Sykes, 882-5457

April 21, 1997

Dear Policy Makers:

We are writing to you with the increasing alarm and outrage we feel as D.C. Public School parents, educators, and taxpayers over the proposed school closings.

Our alarm is many-fold: our outrage singular.

We are alarmed that the proposed closings and consolidations will effectively *warehouse* young children in large, open-classroom, often windowless, energy-inefficient, cost-inefficient, education-inefficient settings. Filling up these *mega-schools* means destroying small, protective school environments. Yet we know from decades of educational research that young children learn better, are safer, more secure, more personally valued and respected in small schools than in jumbo settings. We are alarmed that these *mega-schools* will not support the educational needs of the most vulnerable young children in this city, including those with special needs. We are alarmed that the costs of supporting *mega-schools* will not even save the system money on maintenance, climate control, and custodial costs. We are alarmed that the real estate projections of salability and price, even the assumptions about legal ownership of property to be sold, are deeply flawed, even wrong. We are alarmed that current and future demographic trends have been erroneous or ignored.

Our outrage is that we--as parents, citizens, and taxpayers in a nation ***that will not even grant us the dignity of a vote in our Senate or a vote in our House of Representatives*--have now been denied the dignity of voting for our own educational decision makers--indeed, we have lost the dignity of a voice in the public education of our children.** Throughout this entire process of targeting schools, we the citizens and parents of this city have had no real, legal or philosophical influence. We feel that we have been lied to, manipulated, and sold down the river.

Therefore, we urge that a vote on school closings be postponed until the following conditions are met:

- An academic officer is hired and an academic plan developed for the D.C. school system. School closings must not be decided without considering educational goals.
- A master plan for facilities is prepared that includes dealing with the current inventory of previously closed schools.
- A process is developed to ensure meaningful public participation in decisions about school closings, involving parents, educators, and community members, including those concerned with special education.

We speak of these conditions in a voice united with parents, educators, and residents across the city.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Bruce and Michael Oliver
2814 5th Street, N.E. - Washington, D.C. 20017
202-529-3143 (home) 202-332-4200 (work)

Ms. Chris Llewellyn
3731 18th St NE
Washington, DC 20018
202 832 1430

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND PROPOSED CLOSINGS OF DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA) AND DCPS HEARINGS: The recent April 1997 hearings for proposed school closings were open to the public and in a public school building, yet these hearings did not meet ADA standards. Consequently, students, parents, and other community members with disabilities did not have equal access to testify on behalf of their neighborhood school. Of these hearings, I participated in that of April 9 at Spingarn HS and watched the others on television. To my knowledge, there was no sign interpretation for the hearing impaired and none of the schools were wheelchair accessible. Because the microphone needed to be handheld and close to the mouth, persons reading braille and others unable to hold the microphone could not or could not independently give testimony.

Effective January 26, 1992, Title II of the ADA "prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services of public entities. It applies to all state and local governments, their departments and agencies, and any other instrumentalities or special purpose district of state or local governments. A state or local government must eliminate any eligibility criteria for participation in programs, activities, and services that screen out or tend to screen out persons with disabilities, unless it can be established that the requirements are necessary for the provision of the service, program, or activity."

2. NO ONE ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES IS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY OR HAS DEMONSTRATED AN EXPERTISE IN THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. . Although individual testimonies at the April 9 hearings did address particular programs in schools serving special needs students, the Board of Trustees has yet to acknowledge that the school closings will affect an untold number of special education and special needs students.

3. ADA AND SCHOOL CLOSING CRITERIA: Ironically, one criteria for school closings is that schools buildings must meet ADA requirements. According to the Disabilities Rights Council of Greater Washington, very few schools meet ADA requirements. However, some schools which are proposed to closed meet more requirements than the receiving schools, e.g., Woodridge Montessori ES has a ramp and appropriate door widths. while Langdon ES meets no ADA requirements.

4. FACILITIES REASSESSMENT REPORT: Although the Board of Trustees has pledged to reform Special Education Division (SED) to the degree that privately schooled students will return to local schools, they cannot successfully do so without the partnership of SED and the disability rights community. The aforementioned report was compiled without consultation with Mr. Jeff .Myers, Executive Director, or Dr. Mattie Curry Cheek, the Inclusion Coordinator, or other SED administrators. Neither did the Office of the Chief Operating Officer/Director of Facilities DCPS consult with the special needs students or their advocacy groups to insure that "reasonable accommodations" required by ADA and IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) are incorporated into the master facilities plan.

5. PROPOSED SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND SEGREGATION: While there has been testimony about the illegality of closings which would further the racial segregation of local schools, attention needs to be paid to those school closings which would create the segregation of those special education and special needs students who are currently in inclusion programs. The Board of Trustees has yet to acknowledge that ADA and IDEA are as much of a public mandate as is the ruling of BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION.

6. SEGREGATION AND EXCLUSION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SHOULD BE AMONG THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL CLOSINGS. It is well documented that DCPS lacks the needed appropriate placements for special education students and that DCPS spends one-third of its $63 million budget on private school placements.

***APPENDIX Q – "CHILDREN IN CRISIS: FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE," THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY, NOVEMBER 1996***

# Children in Crisis:

## *Foundations for the Future*

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**The District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority**

November 1996

# Children in Crisis:

## *Foundations for the Future*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION:** *The Challenge and The Hope* ..... 1

THE CHALLENGE ..... 1

THE HOPE ..... 3

**SETTING THE STAGE:** *A Structure in Place* ..... 6

LEGAL ESTABLISHMENT ..... 6

MEMBERSHIP ..... 6

**LOOKING FORWARD:** *The Successful Organization of the 21st Century* ..... 7

ORGANIZATION ..... 7

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ..... 8

**MEASURING PROGRESS:** *Our Goals for Success* ..... 11

**LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS:** *Our Children, Our Future* ..... 12

**APPENDIX:** *Chronology of the Discussions, Deliberations, and Communications Concerning DCPS* ..... 13

**INTRODUCTION:** *The Challenge and The Hope*

## The Challenge

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is broken. Our children lag in every measure used to evaluate educational performance—standardized test scores, drop-out rates, and graduation rates. The assessment based on these statistics is frightening: for each additional year students stay in DCPS, the less likely the are to succeed, not because they are unable to learn, but because the system does not prepare them to succeed. The system's credibility has been further destroyed by a steady stream of management failures caused and aggravated by DCPS' leadership.

The damage being done to young minds is shocking:

- Basic reading achievement scores of fourth grade students on the 1994 Trial State Assessment fall short of the national average and the Northeast regional average by more than 15 percent
- On a comprehensive test of basic skills administered to sixth, eighth, and eleventh grade students, more than 60 percent of the District's students score below the national average
- Educational inequity persists, as evidenced by the substantial decline in students' test scores in wards 7 and 8, the poorer areas of the city, while the test scores of the more affluent wards of the District have remained stable
- SAT scores fall short of the national average by more than 20 percent for the past five years
- 40 percent of the District's high school students either dropped out or left the city's public schools between 1989 and 1995— in 1995 alone, 27 percent of the District's students left the tenth grade and 24 percent left the eleventh grade
- Schools have been unable to open on time due to numerous safety violations for the past two years
- Contract failures are abundant, including poor quality food served to students

While public education is a concern across the country, it has reached crisis proportions in the District. Although some of the factors are outside the school system's control—the high poverty rate, the number of single parent families, the number of students arriving at school unprepared to learn, as well as the growing demand for scarce resources to fund technology, court orders, and other initiatives—one critical factor *is* under DCPS'

control: the quality of education provided. Unfortunately, management failures at DCPS interfere with teachers' ability to teach and students' ability to learn.

In terms of effectiveness and efficiency, the schools can do far better. For example:

- A survey of 20 sample schools indicated that 10-15 percent of the students do not have necessary materials, including textbooks
- A review of the Personnel Office's records found that 19 percent of surveyed classroom staff either had no teaching certifications or had been determined ineligible to teach
- Funds that should go to the classroom are used to cover budget shortfalls in administrative areas

Yet no one is held accountable for these shortcomings: not the Superintendent, not the School Board, not the people directly responsible for managing individual schools. While the adults argue that they are not responsible and complain about the lack of money, the students pay the price. If the elected and appointed leaders of the schools are not responsible for the results, who is?

The District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (the "Authority") has clearly articulated its point of view on the state of education in the District. After spending the last several months analyzing enormous amounts of data, observing the operation of the District's public schools, and holding three public hearings, we have concluded that *immediate action must be taken to reform the school system*. The appendix to this report contains a chronology of the discussions, deliberations, and communications the Authority has had concerning DCPS since May 1996.

### A call for reform

Something has to change if we expect the District's youth to obtain a proper education, if we are to stem the flow of migration to the suburbs, and if we want to attract growth and prosperity to the Nation's Capital. Something has to be done, not in three years or five years, but now. The tough question we have grappled with is exactly what to do.

Simply replacing the Superintendent or electing new School Board members will not change the educational outcomes, as well-meaning groups have concluded. Instead, we need to reinvent the school system, inject new talent and leadership, demand better management, expect more from those involved in the educational process, and make it clear that we will not tolerate anything less than excellence for our children.

## The Hope

The good news is that the problems the Authority identified in DCPS can be fixed. There is no reason why we have to maintain schools that are barely used, pay more than necessary for contracted services, tolerate unsafe school buildings, hire unqualified personnel, and send our children to school without the books and materials they need in order to learn.

But to make the needed changes, we will have to rebuild the foundations of our educational system, which starts by *inspiring hope:*

- Hope for students that they will get the education they need to succeed
- Hope for teachers that they will be supported in the classroom and rewarded on the basis of their performance
- Hope for parents that the system can and will improve
- Hope for taxpayers that operations will be well managed and cost effective
- Hope for the business community that the schools will be a drawing card, rather than an obstacle, to economic development

Hope is what drives improvement. And improving the schools—and ultimately, our children's performance—is the best hope for the District's future.

### For the children

We firmly believe that *every child can learn,* given the opportunity. But our children, due to economic and social conditions beyond their control, too often start off behind their peers, and, once at school, receive fewer resources and advantages than their peers. We have tolerated this unacceptable state of affairs for too long. The people of the District and the members of this Authority are now ready to effect change.

The Authority has been granted the power to issue any orders that we believe are necessary to fulfill our mission—to fundamentally restructure the administration of the educational system in order to give children the education they deserve. The ultimate measures of our success will be how well we meet students' needs, how many students stay in school, how many of them gain the skills they need to succeed, and whether their test scores steadily increase.

Change of this magnitude cannot be expected to come from inside DCPS, however, because the system is simply too entrenched in the way things have always been done.

What it needs is a catalyst that can break the mold of the past, make major changes, and get the momentum moving in a positive direction.

That's why the Authority is taking the bold step of setting aside the current management structure and temporarily putting in a new structure that will direct resources to the District's children. The new structure will consist of the DC Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees made up of experienced leaders with the ability to instill a vision and lead a large organization in the direction of that vision. A Chief Executive Officer will work with a core management team to repair DCPS and restore credibility in its performance. The role of the Authority, meanwhile, will be to empower this new organization to be successful.

We believe this mechanism will help the District's schools in three critical areas:

- Improve the educational attainment of the District's children
- Increase the management capacity to operate more effectively and efficiently
- Instill the ability to evaluate progress, to make continual improvements, and to hold managers accountable for performance

It is a transition step, implemented with the expectation that the system will move to new management within three years. Parents will see some immediate changes: safe and clean facilities; ample textbooks and supplies; hot, healthy food; and the proper management of resources. Important as all this is, however, the purpose of the schools is to improve educational performance—and those improvements are not going to occur overnight. They will occur over time as DCPS revitalizes itself.

Such changes *can* and *will* happen if the District can stand together on this important initiative. The example of Chicago, which is already reaping the rewards of a similar approach implemented in 1995, shows just what can happen with the injection of new leadership and community support.

When Mayor Richard Daley was given the authority to manage the Chicago public schools, he established a Board of Trustees and asked key members of his administration to lead the reform effort. In just over a year, this team has launched the "Children First" education initiative that set goals to improve student performance and involved teachers, parents, and the community; eliminated a $1.3 billion four-year budget deficit; developed a four-year balanced budget; cracked down on school violence; and established a capital improvement plan. These actions led to an improved national bond rating, which enabled the system to sell investment grade bonds for the first time in 17 years and produced further savings for taxpayers.

The Authority is not expecting this to be a simple matter. Inevitably, schools that are performing well will fear that changes will take resources away from them; some residents will resent these actions as an infringement on Home Rule, and school reformers may feel they are losing influence just when they believed they had things going in the right direction.

From our perspective, however, *the actions outlined here do not take anything away from the current system, but add greatly to it*. What we are doing is supplementing and enriching the leadership of the school system by bringing into the governance structure talented, experienced people who would otherwise not be involved in the District's educational system.

It is not a step the Authority takes lightly. In fact, we have deliberated and debated, studied and reviewed, and considered and reconsidered the problems of the schools, our responsibility, and the best approach for the future. We have determined that this is the very best way to achieve our vision—a school system that allows children to envision and prepare for a productive life, competes with the best schools in the nation, provides a safe haven for our children and our communities, attracts residents and businesses, revitalizes our economy, helps build pride in the Nation's Capital, and lays foundations for the future.

To achieve this vision, we have to take action—*now*. This means:

- Directing resources to the students
- Improving the quality of instruction
- Restructuring organization and staffing
- Establishing clear performance standards and expectations
- Ensuring integrity in the system's processes
- Duplicating successful programs in other locations
- Building a first-rate special education program
- Increasing teachers' pay, especially at the entry level

Taking these actions will help bring all of our schools up to a higher standard.

## SETTING THE STAGE: *A Structure in Place*

Significant structural change is required to reform the administrative, operational, and educational functions within the District's public school system. This section of our report outlines the new governance structure—its legal establishment and membership.

### Establishment

Under Emergency Declaration of the Authority and pursuant to Public Law 104-8, as amended by Public Law 104-208 and other federal statutes, a nine-member Emergency Transitional Education Board of Trustees (the "Board of Trustees") has been established until June 30, 2000 for the District of Columbia Public Schools. The Board of Trustees will have all the powers and responsibilities of the District of Columbia Board of Education (the "Board of Education"), under Title 31 of the District of Columbia Code and any other provision of District of Columbia and federal law, except those which remain to be exercised by the Board of Education.

At the conclusion of the emergency transitional period, the existence of the Board of Trustees will terminate and the Board of Education shall exercise its full powers and responsibilities under District of Columbia and federal law.

### Membership

The nine-member Board of Trustees consists of the following Trustees who will serve until June 30, 2000:

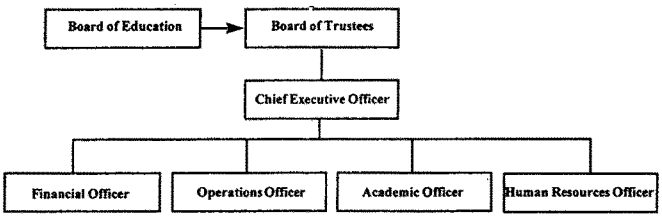
- The Chief Executive Officer
- The President of the Board of Education
- Five members appointed by the Authority
- Two members the Authority selects from two separate lists:
  - A list of three candidates provided by the Mayor, all of whom shall be parents of school children in the District of Columbia Public Schools
  - A list of three nominees supplied by the City Council (the "Council"), all of whom shall be teachers in the District of Columbia Public Schools

**LOOKING FORWARD:** *The Successful Organization of the 21st Century*

The school system must be reformed by laying the foundations for the future—in the management and leadership of the District's public school system—to provide for a successful journey into the 21st Century. The following governance structure will be that foundation for DCPS.

## Organization

The following is illustrative of our new organization:




The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), an individual of recognized administrative ability and management experience, will report to the Board of Trustees. The CEO will appoint, with the approval of the Trustees, such officers and employees as the CEO deems appropriate.

Four key positions will report to the CEO: the Financial Officer, the Operations Officer, the Academic Officer, and the Human Resources Officer. The CEO will also designate an individual who will be responsible for overall facilities management.

## Roles and Responsibilities

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the positions in the new organizational structure.

### Financial Authority

The Authority has direct oversight of the Board of Trustees. The Mayor and Council retain their functions with respect to review of the school system budget. The Authority may issue such orders, rules, and regulations as it deems appropriate to provide the Board of Trustees with the ability to carry out its powers and responsibilities.

### Board of Trustees

The Trustees are ordered, by the Authority, as agents of the Authority, to exercise all the powers and responsibilities of the Board of Education, under Title 31 of the District of Columbia Code and any other provision of District of Columbia and federal law, except those reserved for the Board of Education. In addition, the Trustees, including the CEO, are empowered and charged with:

- Increasing the quality of educational services in the District of Columbia public schools
- Ensuring ongoing academic improvement in schools with the establishment of a strong school improvement and recognition process
- Streamlining and strengthening DCPS' management, including developing a responsible school-based budgeting process, in order to refocus resources on student achievement
- Reducing the cost of non-educational services and implementing cost-saving measures, including the privatization of services where deemed appropriate
- Developing a long-term financial plan that, to the maximum extent possible, reflects a balanced budget for each year
- Developing a long-term reform plan under the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995
- Developing programs that ensure every student in a District of Columbia public school achieves basic literacy skills; ensure every such student possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to think critically and communicate effectively by the completion of grade 8; and lower the dropout rate in the District of Columbia public schools
- Developing District-wide assessments, including individual assessments, that identify District of Columbia public school students who lack basic literacy skills, with

particular attention being given to grade 4 and the middle school years, and establish procedures to ensure that a teacher is made accountable for the performance of every such student in such teacher's class

- Making recommendations to improve community, parent, and business involvement in District of Columbia public schools and public charter schools
- Assessing opportunities in the District of Columbia to increase individual student involvement and attention through such activities as arts or athletics, and make recommendations on how to increase such involvement
- Establishing procedures that ensure that every District of Columbia public school student is provided the skills necessary for employment, including the development of individual career paths
- Enacting policies and procedures that ensure that the school system runs in an ethical as well as efficient manner

Charged with these objectives, the Trustees will establish overall school system objectives and goals, approve the budget and forward it to the Mayor and Council, and oversee the CEO as he carries out his mission. The Trustees will not be compensated.

### Chief Executive Officer

The CEO has all the powers and responsibilities of the Superintendent of Schools, under Title 31 of the District of Columbia Code and any other provision of District of Columbia and federal law, and such other powers and responsibilities as the Board of Trustees, in its discretion, delegates to the CEO.

The CEO has responsibility to carry out all functions of DCPS consistent with the overall objectives and goals established by the Board of Trustees. The CEO will also serve as the State Educational Officer.

### Board of Education

As elected representatives of the citizens of the community, the Board of Education, through its President who will be a member of the Board of Trustees, shall have a vote on all matters coming before the Board of Trustees. The Board of Education shall provide input, advice, counsel, guidance, reports and recommendations on education policy to the Board of Trustees, including such matters as:

- Curriculum
- Testing
- Instructional methods

- Specialized or alternative programs
- Education of the handicapped
- Assessment and evaluation of the needs and achievements of students, teachers, and other employees of the public school system
- Distribution of educational resources
- Licensing and certification
- Admission
- Grading
- Promotion
- Graduation
- Discipline
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Interscholastic athletics
- The school calendar

Such input, advice, counsel, guidance, reports and recommendations shall be provided to the Board of Trustees and the CEO through the President of the Board of Education or through procedures established by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees and the CEO shall accord due and appropriate weight to the input, advice, counsel, guidance, reports and recommendations of the Board of Education in formulating and implementing general educational policy for the District of Columbia public schools. Such input, advice, counsel, guidance, reports and recommendations of the Board of Education shall be consistent with the educational goals and objectives established by the Board of Trustees. In providing such input, advice, counsel, guidance, reports and recommendations to the Board of Trustees and the CEO, the Board of Education shall seek out the views of the Mayor, the Council, and the residents of the District of Columbia, in furtherance of Chapter 4 of Title 5 of the D.C. Municipal Regulations dealing with community involvement in education. The Board of Education shall be an eligible chartering authority for Public Charter Schools pursuant to the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995.

### Budget and Legislative Process

The Board of Trustees' relationship to the District's budget and legislative process remains the same as under the previous structure. The District's public school budget will be approved by the Mayor and Council, and reviewed by the Authority, as part of the overall District budget. The budget is then sent to Congress. Legislation relating to the schools is enacted by the Council and Mayor, and reviewed by the Authority, like all other District legislation.

## MEASURING PROGRESS: *Our Goals for Success*

How will we know when we have succeeded? By defining our goals at the outset of reform. As we begin refocusing on the educational mission of the public school system, it is necessary to identify measures of success. The Trustees and CEO are committed to achieving system-wide reform throughout DCPS, and to improving its educational quality, managerial and operational efficiency, and safety. The Trustees and the CEO will develop specific measures that will be used to gauge their success at meeting the following goals:

- Enhancing the quality of education at all District schools
- Improving student participation, performance, and outcomes
- Improving the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of school system management
- Creating internal accountability and focus on customer satisfaction
- Improving the physical conditions of school properties
- Reducing incidences of crime, especially offenses that threaten student and staff safety

### Reports on performance

The Trustees will report to the Authority on its performance; on the nature of reforms instituted; on the effect that those reforms have on the DCPS' operation and administration as well as the performance of students, teachers, and staff; and on such other matters as the Trustees deems necessary to help assure continuing improvement throughout the school system.

### Summary

The Authority has created a Board of Trustees, including a CEO, to operate DCPS and has endowed the Board of Trustees with the authority required to fix the system's ailments. The Trustees have a clearly defined mission to guide their actions and ensure that our children receive a quality education in a safe environment. Their participation in this significant reform initiative is unparalleled in the District's public schools: *to provide leadership that lays the foundations for the future and success of our children in the 21st Century.*

Recognizing that there is no time to waste, the members of the Authority and the Trustees make this commitment to the District's residents, taxpayers, parents, students, teachers, and administrators:

- We commit ourselves to continuous improvement, starting today
- We commit ourselves to ensure excellence, not just adequacy, in the District's schools
- We commit ourselves to direct the resources of the schools to the classroom
- We commit ourselves to giving children a better chance to succeed today and tomorrow than they had yesterday

With your help, there is hope for our children, our future.

**APPENDIX:** *Chronology of the Discussions, Deliberations, and Communications Concerning DCPS*

1996

Mar. 4 — Authority members Dr. Joyce Ladner & Mr. Ed Singletary meet with:
Dr. Abdusalem Omer;
Jim Ford; and
Barbara Bullock. / separate meetings

Mar. 11 — Dr. Ladner meets with Wilma Harvey.
13 Authority meets to discuss DCPS.

Mar. 21 — The Authority issues a "Report on the Mayor's District of Columbia FY 1997 Budget and Multiyear Plan" containing nine recommendations on the public schools, including:

Moving central administrative staff to government owned space–The Authority notes that the proposed site, Franklin School, is located in the heart of downtown. The Authority recommends that DCPS appraise this property to determine whether selling or leasing the buildings and moving into alternative space might be more beneficial to the school system. Status: Other locations are being considered, no appraisal of Franklin School has been undertaken.

Undertake a cost/benefit analysis of privatization for all support services—Status: Privatization efforts are severely hampered by untrained and incapable procurement staff.

Monitor non-resident enrollment in DCPS and charge tuition to non-District residents—Status: DCPS is currently preparing to undertake a census of the student population. DCPS has a private firm to enforce tuition collection once non-resident students are identified.

Apr. 10 — Authority meets with members of the Board of Education (Karen Shook, Wilma Harvey, Bernard Gray and Valencia Mohammed).

Apr. 11 — Dr. Ladner and Executive Director John W. Hill attend a community meeting at Hine Junior High.

Apr. 29 — Mr. Hill meets with members of the Board of Education to discuss concerns about the administration of the Board and DCPS.

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| May 1 | Authority Chairman Dr. Andrew Brimmer and Dr. Ladner meet with Senator James M. Jeffords. |
| May 2 | Dr. Ladner meets with representatives of the Ad Hoc Parent's Coalition. Miles Glasko + Ladner |
| May 6 | Mr. Hill meets with Superintendent Smith. |
| May 8 | Dr. Ladner and Authority staff meet with representatives of parents and teachers. |
| | The Authority issues its report, "Final Report on the Mayor's District of Columbia FY 1997 Budget and Multiyear Plan", which contains recommendation # 6 increasing the DCPS budget from $568,790,000 to $589,630,000. |
| May 10 | Authority discusses the ServiceMaster contract. |
| May 15 | Dr. Ladner + Mr. Hill meet with Mike Peabody |
| May 21 | Dr. Ladner meets with Councilmember Kathy Patterson. (DCPS enrollment) |
| | Dr. Ladner and Mr. Singletary meet with representatives of the community. |
| | Superintendent Smith provides answers to questions submitted concerning the ServiceMaster contract. |
| May 22 | Dr. Ladner ~~and Authority~~ meet with Dorothy Goodman. |
| May 30 | Dr. Ladner and Mr. Singletary meet with Karen Shook. |
| | Authority discusses the ServiceMaster contract. |
| Jun. 12 | Authority discusses proposal on DCPS. |
| Jul. 10 | Dr. Ladner meets with Bob Bates (Public Education Reform Partnership). |
| Jul. 11 | Authority staff meets with Bob Bates. |
| Jul. 18 | Dr. Ladner meets with representatives of community groups. |
| Jul. 25 | Dr. Ladner has separate meetings with Delabian Rice Thurston (Parents United) and Board member Wilma Harvey. |

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| | Authority conducts a public meeting on the DCPS food service contract and rejects the proposed contract because the terms of the proposed contract are significantly different from the solicitation for proposals; it does not guarantee a reduction in the subsidy; and it is not consistent with the Financial Plan and Budget. |
| Jul. 30 | Authority staff meets with Wanda Moorman, Department of Administrative Services, on DCPS Food Services issues |
| Jul. 31 | Dr. Ladner meets with representatives of teachers and parents. |
| | Authority writes to Superintendent Smith explaining the reasons for the Authority's disapproval of the food services contract and its direction to staff to work with the City Administrator, CFO and DCPS to ensure that food is provided to children in the public school system. |
| Aug. 1 | Authority meets with Superintendent Smith and sends him a letter expressing regret that he "did not reciprocate the Authority's offer of cooperation". Such refusal regrettably causes the Authority to issue orders to compel cooperation to assure provision of food for children in the public schools. |
| Aug. 2 | The Authority receives an update on the DCPS food service contract situation. |
| Aug. 7 | Superintendent Smith responds to a staff request for financial impact data on the implementation of the Fire Code Amendment Act of 1996 (DC Act 11-339). The cost to permanently close 500 exit doors at a cost of $300 per door for a total cost of $150,000, funds are to be found in FY 1997. |
| Aug. 9 | Authority conducts a public hearing with Board of Education acting-President Trusdale and Superintendent Smith concerning preparations to open school for the 1996-1997 school year. |
| Aug. 13 | The Authority submits additional questions to Superintendent Smith concerning the readiness of schools to open. |
| Aug. 14 | Authority receives an update on fire code violation abatement in DCPS facilities. |
| Aug. 20 | Authority staff meets with Premisys regarding DCPS facilities. |
| Aug. 21 | Authority staff meets with teachers on school issues. |
| Aug. 22 | The Authority receives an update on the situation in DCPS. |

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| Aug. 23 | The Authority provides Superintendent Smith with a draft copy of the Authority's "Guidance for Collective Bargaining" to District agencies upon what is expected from collective bargaining agreements. He is invited to comment. |
| Aug. 27 | Superintendent Smith is notified of the Authority's September 4, 1996 hearing on management issues in DCPS. |
| | Superintendent Smith notifies the Authority of an amendment to the ServiceMaster contract providing $750,000 for fire code violation repairs ($600,000 of which is for Wilkinson E.S. roof replacement). |
| Aug. 29 | Authority staff meeting with Michael Casserly, Executive Director of the Council of Great City Schools. |
| Sep. 3 | Dr. Brimmer meets with Valencia Mohammed and 4 other individuals. Bd. Mbrs. |
| | Authority staff meets with DCPS Level II maintenance employees. |
| Sep. 4 | The Authority conducts a hearing with Board of Education President Shook and Superintendent Smith concerning the opening of school and management accountability in DCPS. |
| Sep. 6 | Authority issues an order for DCPS information requested by D.C. Auditor in July, 1996 but ignored by DCPS staff. The order required DCPS to provide the information to the Authority by COB September 9, 1996 |
| | In a separate letter an order and request for documents was sent to Superintendent Smith as a follow-up to the September 4 hearing. |
| | Authority staff meets with Donald Winstead, DCPS Textbook Director. |
| Sep. 9 | Superintendent Smith writes to Dr. Brimmer to express concern about the number and limited turn-around time for requests made by Authority staff of DCPS staff. |
| Sep. 10 | Superintendent Smith writes to Mr. Hill requesting that all contacts between the Authority and the DCPS be made only through his office. |
| Sep. 11 | Authority receives an update on the situation in the DCPS. |
| | Superintendent responds to the Authority's September 6 request for information required by the D.C. Auditor. |

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| Sep. 12 | Mr. Hill responds to the Superintendent's letter of September 10 that such a procedure would be an unnecessary encumbrance to fulfilling the Authority's mandate. |
| | Mr. Singletary meets with Councilmember Kathy Patterson. |
| | The Authority meets with Superintendent Smith. |
| | " " " " Bd of Education * |
| | Authority staff meets with ~~Kevin~~ Kathleen Campbell, Executive Director of COPE |
| Sep. 13 | Authority members Dr. Ladner and Mr. Steve Harlan, along with Authority staff, travel to Chicago to meet with representatives of the Chicago Public Schools. |
| Sep. 16 | Dr. Ladner meets with Councilmember Kathy Patterson. |
| | The Authority meets with Mayor Barry concerning the DCPS. |
| | The Authority meets with members of the District Council concerning the DCPS. |
| Sep. 18 | Authority receives information pertaining to section 5 of September 6 order from Superintendent Smith. |
| Sep. 19 | Authority staff visits Gidding School with Dr. Abdusalam Omer. |
| Sep. 20 | Authority staff meets with Fawcett & Fawcett regarding special education. |
| Sep. 23 | The Authority meets to deliberate upon the DCPS. |
| Sep. 25 | Authority staff meets with Barbara Bullock, Washington Teachers Union. |
| Sep. 30 | Authority staff visits Chicago Public Schools. |
| Oct. 1 | Dr. Ladner and Mr. Hill meet with representatives of community organizations at the Martin Luther King Library. |
| Oct. 2 | The Authority receives an update upon the DCPS situation and continues its deliberations. |
| Oct. 8 | Dr. Ladner and Mr. Singletary meet with Authority staff concerning DCPS. |
| | The Authority talks by phone with Chicago Public School officials. |

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| | Authority staff visits Newark Public Schools. |
| Oct. 9 | The Authority receives an update upon the DCPS and continues its deliberations. |
| Oct. 17 | The Authority receives an update upon the DCPS situation and continues its deliberations. |
| | Superintendent Smith notifies the Authority of a RIF of 21 positions in the Division of Logistical Support. |
| Oct. 23 | The Authority receives an update upon the DCPS situation and continues its deliberations. |
| Oct. 25 | Dr. Ladner, Mr. Singletary and Mr. Harlan continue deliberations upon the DCPS. |
| Nov. 1 | Superintendent Smith provides a copy of a proposed staffing reduction plan to the Authority. |
| Nov. 5 | Mr. Hill writes to Superintendent Smith requesting (by 12:00 p.m. November 7, 1996) a copy of the reorganization plan referenced in the Superintendent's October 17 communication; supporting documentation; and other relevant documents. |
| Nov. 6 | The Authority receives an update on the DCPS situation and continues its deliberations. |
| Nov. 10 | Authority staff brief the staff of Rep. Davis and Del. Norton upon the legal authorities to support any actions of the Authority concerning the DCPS. |
| Nov. 12 | Dr. Brimmer meets with Rep. Davis and Del. Norton upon the possible actions of the Authority. |
| | The Authority releases "Children in Crisis: A Report on the Failure of D.C. Public Schools" and "Children in Crisis: Statistics, Facts, and Figures." |
| Nov. 15 | The Authority releases "Children in Crisis: Foundations for the Future." |

***TABLE OF INDEXES***

Ballenger, 2, 32
Barry, 25, 28, 32
Becton, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45
Chavous, 12, 41, 45
Davis, 5, 6, 8, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 44, 45
Ford, 28, 30, 54, 56
Goodling, 16, 52, 53
Hoekstra, 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 35, 36, 39, 44, 45, 46, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57
Horn, 22, 23, 24, 25
Jones, 50, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57
Ladner, 8, 33, 34, 43, 44
MacLaury, 10, 17, 18, 21, 36, 38, 39
Morella, 22, 36, 37, 38, 39
Norton, 3, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 53, 54
Pickstock, 48, 49
Reeves, 14, 17, 20, 22, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 42, 43
Rice-Thurston, 46, 52, 57

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