District of Columbia State Board of Education DCSBOE



FY2014 Performance Oversight Responses of the D.C. State Board of Education

Jack Jacobson, President Karen Williams, Vice President

Program Operations and Community Engagement

- Q1. What were the major accomplishments of the SBOE in FY14 and to date in FY15? Include the following:
 - a. Specific efforts to engage with the community and other jurisdictions;
 - b. Improvements to the process for student discipline;
 - c. Changes made to regulations regarding student attendance, improving content standards, educator quality, and preparing students for post-secondary success;
 - d. Studies, analyses, and research papers conducted by the Board (provide a copy); and
 - e. Reports published by the Board (provide a copy).

In FY14 and to date in FY15, the State Board engaged in many strategies to engage with the community and other jurisdictions, including:

- Continuing to use Facebook and Twitter to engage in real-time with members of the community;
- Maintain an up-to-date website with news, policy updates, and other useful information germane to the operation of the State Board;
- Attending community meetings and activities throughout the year to engage community stakeholders, including SHAPPE meetings, Ward-based Education Council meetings, EdFest, Young Education Professionals-DC's annual conference, and other community events;
- Participating in institutes, study groups, and committees of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), including NASBE's legislative conference and annual conference;
- Assuming leadership positions in national organizations, including President of NASBE's Board of Directors (Mary Lord, At-Large) and President-Elect of the National Council of State Boards of Education Executives (Jesse B Rauch, Executive Director);
- Joining membership organizations such as the United States Ombudsman Association and the Young Education Professionals-DC;
- Co-hosting community meetings with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to introduce the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal Process;
- Involving members of the community in the selection of the Ombudsman for Public Education and Chief Student Advocate;
- Holding roundtables on a Parent and Family Bill of Rights, truancy, and student engagement;
- Inviting Reward Schools to share their achievements at public meetings;
- Inviting the D.C. Teacher of the Year, Social Studies Teacher of the Year, and Milken Educator Award winner to share their experience at public meetings;
- Convening stakeholders on important issues such as truancy and PARCC preparation;
- Aiding with outreach efforts on the boundary and feeder patterns process, ESEA Flexibility Waiver meetings, among other issues;
- Attending Raise DC meetings; and
- Connecting with other regional superintendents, local Boards of Education, and State Boards through the Washington Area Boards of Education and NASBE.

Improvements to the process for student discipline;

In FY14 and to date in FY15, the State Board did not address student discipline as it is not directly within the authority of the State Board. However, through the State Board's authority on truancy and attendance rules, the State Board continues to address some of the root causes of student misbehavior. Starting in FY14, the State Board initiated an investigation into the policies related to truancy and student engagement; these efforts

continue. In FY15, the State Board initiated discussions with the Office of Human Rights' Bullying Prevention Director to discuss ways to assist the District in capturing student discipline and school climate data and including these measures in the District's state accountability plan.

However, while the State Board did not have direct influence on student discipline, the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education reports that after special education, student discipline (along with suspension and expulsion) is one of the top areas of complaint. As the Ombudsman finds trends in student discipline issues, the State Board will have an opportunity to advocate on this issue.

 Changes made to regulations regarding student attendance, improving content standards, educator quality, and preparing students for post-secondary success; and

In FY14 and to date in FY15, the State Board has operated on the following items in these areas:

- Student Attendance: In 2014, the State Board held several roundtables in order to determine appropriate changes that could be made to the District's truancy regulations. While the Truancy and Student Engagement Committee completed a report on the issue, the State Board continues to work with critical stakeholders in order to determine the correct course of action to improve student attendance regulations.
- **Content Standards**: In FY14, the State Board initiated a review and revision of the District's P.E. and Health Standards. It is expected that these revisions will be completed in FY15. The State Board will continue to review content standards and recommend revisions as necessary. In addition, it is expected that the State Board will be considering new CTE standards.
- **Educator Quality**: The State Board has identified teacher quality, including human capital strategies, as a major topic of interest. The State Board has initiated a research project regarding teacher licensing and credentialing and how these polices interact with the distribution of highly-effective teachers.
- Preparing Students of Post-Secondary Success: In FY13, the State Board proposed revised high school graduation requirements with a proposal that permitted schools to transition from traditional seat-time instructional models to competency-based learning models. In addition, the State Board proposed multiple diploma options for students, including a diploma of distinction for high-achieving students, a diploma that recognized completion of career and technical education objectives, and a diploma for students with severe cognitive disabilities. In FY15, the State Board discussed additional competency-based learning policy objectives and a Superintendent's diploma, intended for students who completed the GED or National External Diploma Program (NEDP). The State Board will continue to work on these issues in FY15.
 - Studies, analyses, and research papers conducted by the Board; and
- School Nursing Program for Public Schools in the District of Columbia
- Implementation of Compulsory Attendance Laws (Unpublished Committee Draft)
- Parent and Family Bill of Rights (Unpublished Committee Draft)
- "ESEA Waiver Extension Request: A Swift, Upward Climb towards Excellence"
- Annual Report for 2014 from the Ombudsman for Public Education
- Remembering the "War on Poverty." Poverty And Education In Washington, DC
 - Reports published by the Board.

In FY2014 and to date in FY2015, the State Board produced annual reports for 2013 and is currently producing the 2014 annual report. The Ombudsman for Public Education also published a statutorily-required annual report. These reports have been included with these answers.

Q2. Identify all legislative requirements (both local and federal) that the agency lacks sufficient resources to properly implement.

State Board of Education

N/A

• Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

A result of a growing caseload, the Office of the Ombudsman lacks sufficient resources to respond to complaints and concerns in a timely manner with accurate and helpful information. By serving complaints coming from the over 88,000 students attending the District of Columbia Public Schools and public charter schools, the two (2) currently funded FTEs are overwhelmed by the responsibilities of handling intake, researching policies and applicable laws, reaching out to school officials in order to try to reach resolution, and engaging in outreach activities, among other services. Consequently, the Office of Ombudsman recommends hiring an Intake Specialist to share with the soon-to-be-established Office of the Chief Student Advocate.

• Office of the Chief Student Advocate

In FY15, the Chief Student Advocate was not provided funds to establish and operate public education resource centers throughout the District.

Q3. Identify any statutory or regulatory impediments to your agency's operations.

The D.C. State Board of Education is structured very differently from other State Boards of Education. From this, there are several opportunities to improve the operation of the State Board.

Policy Development and Approval

The Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 (PERAA) provided the State Board with both advisory and approval roles. However, PERAA also stated that the State Board may only "consider matters for policy approval upon submission of a request for policy action by the State Superintendent of Education within a review period requested by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education."

While the State Board will gain independent personnel and budget authority, the State Board's ability to formulate and recommend policy options to encourage increased academic performance is hampered. The State Board needs affirmative action by the DC City Council to allow the State Board to initiate policy discussions and adopt items under its approval authority. This action may require the State Board to have rulemaking authority as well.

Functions of the Board

In addition, the current State Board roles and responsibilities are outdated, especially those that refer to the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001." The State Board's roles and responsibilities are in need of revision so that the

District's law can remain up-to-date and coherent as changes occur to Federal law. Further, given the role of the State Board, it is necessary for the State Board's roles and responsibilities be aligned with those of other State Boards around the country.

In addition, the State Board should be granted greater policymaking authority in areas of particular interest to the District's residents, including student discipline. In other jurisdictions, State Boards already have general supervision over the state's provision of education. While the D.C. State Board of Education is not advocating for that role, topics that require increased public engagement should be placed within the purview of the State Board to ensure that public consideration is provided.

• Interaction with the State Superintendent

In the past, there was a lack of coordination and cooperation between the State Superintendent and the State Board. In order to facilitate coordination and cooperation, as well as increase policy alignment and coherence, there are policy changes that could be made to encourage greater cooperation, more independence for the State Superintendent, and improve governance overall.

Further, the State Board could be required to issue an annual review of the performance of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the State Superintendent in improving educational outcomes for District students and meeting the requirements set forth in PERAA.

State of Education in the District of Columbia

The State Board could play a role in reporting the state of education in the District of Columbia. In the "Public Education Governance Improvement Act of 2013," introduced by Councilmember Catania, the State Board would have been responsible for reporting on the state of primary and secondary public education in the District of Columbia. In collaboration with the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Public Charter School Board, this could be a powerful tool in encouraging increased communication among public education entities as well as another method for parents and students to make informed choices about their child's education.

• Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

The Office of the Ombudsman is exploring legislative changes that would enhance the Office's ability to remedy problems.

Q4. What interagency or intra-agency efforts have been made to improve SBOE functions in FY14 and FY15 to date? Describe efforts to collaborate with other boards and agencies to engage in District education initiatives and include in your response specifically any partnerships or collaborations with the following:

State Board members and staff regularly communicate with officials from each of the mentioned agencies. There are still opportunities to work closer with these agencies and the State Board looks forward to doing so in the upcoming year.

a. Office of the State Superintendent for Education;

In FY14 and FY15-to-date, the State Board worked closely with OSSE on many pivotal projects. Most critical was the collaboration shared between OSSE and the State Board to adopt an ESEA Flexibility Waiver extension. In addition, the OSSE and the State Board worked together to improve science instruction with the adoption of the

Next Generation Science Standards. The State Board continues to work with OSSE to address concerns over the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards, as well as the Common Core State Standards. The State Board often collaborates with OSSE to extend outreach efforts for the agency, specifically on the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, NGSS, and the PARCC assessment.

Since FY14, the State Board has is currently working with OSSE review and adopt revised residency requirement rules, State and LEA Report Cards, Career and Technical Education standards, and revised P.E. and Health Standards.

In the last year, OSSE has increased its communication with the State Board to include more formal and informal meetings, weekly meetings on pressing topics (such as the ESEA Flexibility Waiver and competency-based learning proposals), and joint agenda setting. Since January, OSSE has been very cooperative with the State Board, an auspicious start to the new calendar year.

b. Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education;

In FY14 and FY15-to-date, the State Board further developed its relationship with the Deputy Mayor for Education by hosting the agency at several of its working sessions and public meetings. In FY14, the DME provided frequent briefings on several issues, including the feeder pattern and boundary revision process, allowing the State Board to be informed on behalf of their constituents. In addition, the DME's office briefed the State Board about the Graduation Pathways project. Finally, DME's office brief the State Board on the District's first-ever school equity reports.

In FY15-to-date, the DME has been exceptionally communicative, collaborative, and supportive of the State Board. The newly-selected President and Vice President of the State Board have met with the DME to discuss their visions for moving not only effective policy forward, but other ways of collaborating. To aid in this endeavor, the DME will be attending the State Board's retreat in early February to solidify the relationship between the two offices.

c. DC Public Schools;

The State Board has a strong relationship with DCPS and the members of the State Board frequently lend their support to efforts within their local schools. DCPS has been very supportive of several initiatives of the State Board including offering support for competency-based learning policies. DCPS staff have also been helpful in providing input on truancy policies and parent and home engagement policies. DCPS has also lent a high degree of expertise to the State Board's revision of P.E. and Health Standards.

Finally, the Ombudsman for Public Education reports a high degree of support and collaboration in solving problems for students.

d. Public Charter School Board; and

The Public Charter School Board is a frequent collaborator of the State Board. Over the last year, the PCSB has offered suggestions and guidance for improving truancy rules, provided input to the State Board's graduation requirements proposals, and provided vital information towards improving and enhancing the District's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. The PCSB is also very helpful in sharing information from the State Board to the public charter schools themselves. For example, they introduced the Ombudsman for Public Education to them via email in addition to sharing information on how to get involved in the P.E. and Health Standards revision process. Finally,

in FY14, the State Board and PCSB collaborated to convene a meeting with PARCC to further charter school leaders on expectations related to the new assessment.

e. DC Public Libraries.

The State Board co-hosted the event, "Language Immersion in Urban Public Schools – Exploring the Benefits and Challenges" with the D.C. Public Library on Thursday, December 4, 2014.

However, there are some inter-agency efforts that could be further improved.

Department of Human Resources (DCHR)

When the State Board achieved personnel autonomy, it was necessary for the State Board to sign an MOU with DCHR to perform general services such as support for recruiting and hiring, employee benefits, and compliance with the District's personnel manual. However, the services currently provided by DCHR do not meet the service level expected by the Board's staff. As a result, Board staff spend a considerable amount of time addressing administrative tasks that would be better handled by human resource professionals. In addition, when Board staff have tried to work with DCHR to improve systems or request greater assistance, such requests are often unheeded.

Department of General Services (DGS)

The State Board uses the Old Council Chambers at 441 4th Street NW for its public meetings. While the State Board originally equipped the room with its current audio and visual technology, many other agencies use this space as well. As a result, much of the room is falling into disrepair and various pieces of technology have been stolen or otherwise misplaced. For example, the floor box that is used to plug in presenters' laptops, the Board's microphones, and video cables has been severely damaged. Currently, after use by another District agency, the floor box has exposed wiring (which electrocuted a member of the Board staff), a XLR connection for a microphone was torn out, and video connections can be finicky. In December, DGS agreed to repair the floor box, but as of January 30, 2015, the repairs have not been completed.

Q5. Provide an update on the Board's work to update graduation requirements. Also provide an update on SBOE's monitoring of the implementation of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver and monitoring of the implementation of the Race to the Top including how the Board will collaborate with OSSE on these matters.

Graduation Requirements

In Fall 2013, the State Board submitted proposed revisions of the graduation requirements to OSSE. In early 2014, OSSE committed to working with the State Board to finalize revised graduation requirements. Along with revisions to the standard diploma, the State Board proposed additional diploma options for consideration, including a diploma of distinction, a career credential (aligned with CTE standards) and an "achievement diploma." The State Board is also interested in other diploma credentials, such as a bilingual certification. Towards the end of 2014, OSSE and the State Board began a process of finally amending the graduation requirements by updating language related to competency-based learning as well as exploration of a Superintendent's Diploma. In early 2015, the State Board has received encouragement to continue working on these items in order to afford improved opportunities for students to learn.

ESEA Flexibility Waiver

With the arrival of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Part B Monitoring Report, the State Board and OSSE spent considerable time in 2014 preparing for an extension of the District's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. The Part B Monitoring Report was a critical moment for the State Board as it highlighted many deficiencies in implementing the waiver. To overcome this issue and to highlight the continued importance of not only a strong state accountability system and the need for OSSE to demonstrate competent intervention in low-performing schools, the State Board established an Implementation Committee, chaired by Jack Jacobson, to help review this critical issue. The Committee met several times with OSSE to discuss issues pertaining to the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, but also urged OSSE's inclusion on the agenda at 13 public meetings (of 17) scheduled by the State Board in 2014. Many of these invitations were preceded by submission of questions aimed at reviewing the implementation of the waiver. This kept the entire State Board informed about efforts to turnaround the District's education crisis. In addition, the Implementation Committee published a report on June 18, 2014 titled, "ESEA Waiver Extension Request: A Swift, Upward Climb towards Excellence." The report included areas of concern for the State Board as well as proposed next steps. This eventually led to the development of a new state system of support for lowperforming schools and the adoption of an ESEA Flexibility Waiver extension. In 2015, the State Board and OSSE are already meeting to discuss progress being made in implementing the state system of support as well as initializing discussions for the eventual renewal of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver.

Race to the Top

With the tapering of Race to the Top (RTTT) funds, Board staff reviewed the U.S. Department of Education's annual monitoring reports. Among other successes in Year 3, OSSE continued to provide professional development opportunities for educators on implementing the Common Core State Standards and promote online resources. However, several challenges were also cited, including a large rate of staff turnover, vacancies of key positions, and restructuring, in addition to procurement delays, led to challenges. As Race to the Top provided a great deal of support for the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, more attention was devoted there.

Q6. Provide an update on the Board's plan to establish parent involvement standards for LEAs, including how you will work with the various LEAs on this effort.

Parent engagement is a critical component of a student's success in school and can take many forms. Across the District's schools, parents volunteer their time to help in classrooms, raise funds for the school, participate on local school advisory teams and serve as active members of parent-teacher organizations. Parent involvement includes advocacy as some parents and families must work tirelessly for their child to ensure they have the necessary support, resources, and interventions to succeed in school. The State Board continues to work with parents and other stakeholders on ways to promote involvement in schools and towards the development of parent involvement standards that will ensure all parents/families have opportunities to be engagement, active participants in their child's education.

In FY14, the State Board initiated the development of a Parents and Family Bill of Rights that would inform parents and/or guardians of their rights while fostering opportunities to be more engaged. Ultimately, the purpose of the Parent and Family Bill of Rights is to provide a framework of the core principles and standards of effective parent/school partnerships and to share with parents and guardians (and in some cases students if over the age of 18) the expectations, practices, and information families should expect to receive from schools, LEAs, and state-level education agencies to help support their child's academic success.

To date, the State Board has several conducted public hearings and public roundtables to help facilitate a conversation to create a sound plan surrounding parent involvement standards for LEAs. In the new year, the

State Board will revisit the Parent and Family Bill of Rights, with the understanding that they are a pre-cursor to more permanent parent involvement standards.

Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

Q7. Provide the committee with the operational guidelines, mission, vision, goals, and services for the role of Ombudsman.

The **mission** of the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education is to ensure that all public school students in the District of Columbia have equal access to a high-quality education. We aim to remove the barriers that stand in the way of students' progress. We **envision** an educational system where all schools treat all parents, students, and families as valued partners and where all District students graduate from high school prepared for success in adulthood.

Our office's **goals** include:

- Responding to concerns in a timely, caring, and productive manner;
- Acting as an "early warning system" for emerging issues;
- Identifying and sharing the trends we observe;
- Making recommendations for systemic change to prevent recurring problems and improve existing processes;
- Reducing the need for administrative hearings and litigation by facilitating appropriate and timely resolution of education-related conflicts; and
- Improving communication between parents and schools, on both the individual and systemic levels.

The primary **services** we provide are:

- Providing information about school resources and policies to parents and students;
- Conflict resolution services for issues that impact individual students;
- Making strategic recommendations to improve educational outcomes for all students; and
- Collaborating with families and stakeholders to address systemic issues, such as bullying, educational opportunity gaps, and overrepresentation in school discipline.

It is also important to note that, in order to comply with our authorizing statute and best practices, the services we provide do *not* include the following:

- Playing any role in formal judicial or administrative proceedings;
- Making binding decisions or mandating policies;
- Providing legal advice or legal services; or
- Intervening in school personnel decisions.

Our **operational guidelines** are based to a large extent on our authorizing statute. Additionally, we currently follow these more detailed operational guidelines:

It is our goal to offer responsive customer service, individualized attention and high quality conflict resolution services. We provide timely responses to all concerns and complaints, generally within 48 hours from the receipt of the complaint, and we treat all customers with respect. We expect to review all complaints brought to our office with keen attention to addressing the problem in a way that serves the best interest of the students. Moreover, we will take direct action and will regularly share our progress toward obtaining a favorable outcome.

Once we accept a complaint, the steps we take typically include:

- Obtaining detailed information about the situation at hand;
- Researching applicable education law, policies, best practices, etc.;

- Interviewing all of the parties involved, which may include the student (with the parent's consent), teachers, school leadership team, parents, other school staff members, and witnesses to the situation in question;
- Reviewing student records;
- Facilitating or mediating conversations between parents, families, and school staff members;
- Considering and recommending student-centered options to solve the problem; and
- Regularly monitoring efforts to address problems until results for the student are achieved.

At the Office of the Ombudsman, we believe that it is important that we do the following when resolving a complaint:

- Listen and understand issues while remaining neutral with respect to the facts. The Ombudsman does not listen to judge or to decide who is right or wrong. The Ombudsman listens to understand the issue from the perspective of the individual. This is a critical step in developing options for resolution.
- Assist in reframing issues, developing options, and helping individuals evaluate options.
- Guide or coach individuals to deal directly with other parties.
- Refer individuals to other appropriate resolution resources if needed. An ombudsman may refer individuals to one or more formal organizational resources that can potentially resolve the issue.
- Assist in surfacing issues to formal resolution channels. When an individual is unable or unwilling to raise
 concerns directly, the Ombudsman can assist by giving voice to the concern and/or creating an awareness
 of the issue among appropriate decision-makers in the organization.
- Q8. Provide the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education's performance plan for FY14. Did SBOE meet the objectives set forth in the FY14 performance plan? Provide a narrative description of what actions the agency undertook to meet the key performance indicators including an explanation as to why any indicators were not met.
 - As the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education's was only re-established on February 26, 2014, there is no performance plan for FY14 outside of the office's rollout and implementation strategy.
- Q9. Provide the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education's performance plan for FY15. What steps has the agency taken to date in FY15 to meet the objectives set forth in the FY15 performance plan?

Accountability

Goal 1: It has been our goal to ensure that we are providing relevant, accurate, and timely intervention services to the District's public school families, students, and parents at the highest level of customer service and attentiveness to the needs of our customers.

- We would like to continue to develop FAQs and other toolkits for parents to engage in self-advocacy and empowerment.
- We would like to work closely with the Office of the Student Advocate, once operational, to ensure that we are partnering to provide parent advocacy opportunities and training.
- We have developed a robust Fellowship program in order to ensure that we are able to expand our outreach to more families and to provide assistance in a more expedient manner.
- We continue to refine our data points for collection on student, parent, and school demographics to better inform our strategies for outreach, education, and also to better inform our education stakeholders of some of the challenges within the DC educational systems.

Outreach

Goal 2: Build relationships with education stakeholders and community professionals in order to ensure that there is a more coordinated approach in serving underserved, underrepresented, and vulnerable populations.

- We have expanded our outreach to DC Government agencies such as The DC Child & Family Services
 agency, the DC Department of Behavioral Health, and the Department of Youth and Rehabilitation
 Services, in order to expand to professionals serving youth in juvenile justice and child welfare systems.
- We have engaged in an information exchange with community professionals and organizations regarding
 opportunities for collaboration and best practices for supporting underserved, underrepresented, and
 vulnerable student populations and their families.

Parent Empowerment

Goal 3: Improve the capacity of parents, families, and guardians to navigate through educational processes and to become better informed of options that allow them to become better self-advocates.

- Create brochures and informational materials for parents on areas of special education, student discipline, and truancy.
- Improve and tailor the Office of the Ombudsman website presence to ensure that it is user-friendly for parents by providing additional resources and links to community resources.
- Improve access to families of diverse populations by providing materials on the website and brochures in translated languages regarding student rights and responsibilities.
- Partner with the Office of the Student Advocate to present conflict resolution strategies and parent empowerment strategies to improve educational access for all students.

Improving Educational Outcomes by effecting systemic change

Goal 4: The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education is committed to identify and recommend strategies to improve educational outcomes for all students. Therefore, the office is committed to building relationships and working collaboratively with stakeholders to identify systemic barriers which impact educational outcomes for students.

- Participate in DC State Board of Education policy committees to ensure more seamless transition between understanding policy objectives and goals of the State Board and providing meaningful data and recommendations to State Board to help inform their policy agenda.
- Provide quarterly data reports and any identified trends to education stakeholders in order to continue conversation about areas that require systemic change.
- Q10. Does the Ombudsman have the resources necessary to execute his or her duties? If not, describe the areas in which resources are lacking.

The Office of the Ombudsman would like additional funds to hire an Intake Specialist that services both the Ombudsman and Chief Student Advocate, additional funds to increase pay for Ombudsman fellows, and funds to pay for interpreters and translating documents. The Office of the Ombudsman also believes that additional funds may be required to provide for outreach materials, improve the Office's website presence, and pay for professional development.

Q11. Describe Ombudsman's stakeholder engagement and outreach efforts for FY14 and to date in FY15.

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education has made a major push to conduct outreach during its first year of operation. We have had over 50 separate outreach meetings with stakeholders since our office opened in late February 2014. In our outreach meetings, we have focused on explaining the services that our office provides and learning from stakeholders about the primary challenges that they see DC students facing. The stakeholders we have met with include DC Councilmembers, PTAs, Ward education councils, nonprofit organizations, Family Court judges, mental health providers, charter schools, and staff from other city agencies such as DCPS, OSSE, and OAH. In our outreach, we have especially focused on engaging vulnerable populations such as homeless students, students with disabilities, students involved with CFSA and DYRS, and students living in Wards 7 and 8.

In addition to attending in-person meetings to describe our services, we have also developed a brochure and a website that explain what issues we are able to assist with and how to access our services. We published an annual report in September 2014 that described our approach and our accomplishments in our first six months of operation. We maintain a Twitter presence. We have developed a brochure on the rights of homeless students that we are in the process of distributing to parents and families. Finally, we tabled at EdFest, OSSE's Secondary Transition Fair, and OHR's Bullying Prevention Fair.

Some of the many people and organizations we have met with in FY14 and so far in FY15 include:

- DC Councilmembers
- DC State Board of Education members
- Ward 2, 5, and 7 Education Councils
- Annual DC PTA Convention
- Hillcrest Association Civic Group
- Homeless Children's Playtime Project
- Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
- Child and Family Services Agency Office of Wellbeing
- OSSE ReEngagement Center
- Public Charter School Board monthly schools leaders meeting
- DCPS Instructional Superintendents' monthly meeting
- Advocates for Justice and Education
- Children's Law Center
- Every Student Every Day Coalition
- Family Voices
- Department of Behavioral Health Children's Roundtable meeting
- Metropolitan Police Department School Safety Division
- DC Superior Court Family Division

Q12. Regarding complaints to the office of the Ombudsman provide the Committee following information for FY14:

- a. Number of complaints were received and completed;
- b. Number of complaints examined and resolved informally;
- c. Number of complaints examined and resolved formally;
- d. Complaints dismissed;
- e. Number of complaints pending;
- f. Number of recommendations made;
- g. Number of recommendations followed; and,
- h. A description of the most frequent issues handled by the Ombudsman's office.

Work Summary for School Year 2013-2014				
How many complaints were received?	150 complaints through August 15, 2014			
Complaints examined and resolved informally?	142 cases=94.6% of the total number of cases			
	(informal mediations, meeting facilitations, etc.)			
Complaints examined and resolved through a formal	0			
process?				
Complaints dismissed as unfounded	8 cases (5%)			
Complaints pending as of August 15, 2014	25 additional cases are pending as of August 15, 2014			
Recommendations made; and	23 cases (15.3%); the types of recommendations made			
	to schools are captured under the "We have			
	Accomplished" section on Page 16.			
Recommendations that were followed, to the extent	21 cases (14%)			
that it can be determined.				

The most common subject of complaints, as provided in our 2014 annual report, was special education (22%), followed closely by student discipline (20%). Other common complaint topics were administrative (20%), bullying (9%), and safety (7%). We expect to see similar trends this school year.

<u>Personnel</u>

Q13. List all employees detailed to or from your agency, if any. Provide the reason for the detail, the detailed employee's date of detail, and the detailed employee's projected date of return.

N/A

Q14. What is the job description and duties of the Executive Director? Describe the functions and duties of the Executive Director and how the Executive Director supports the functions of the State Board of Education.

The job description for the Executive Director is attached in Appendix A.

The Executive Director plays a vital support role for the State Board by providing visionary leadership and management of State Board's programs and initiatives, including overall responsibility for the planning, directing, managing and evaluation of all work conducted by the State Board. Working under the direction of the President of the State Board, the Executive Director is responsible for establishing policies and enforcing standards related to the office's overall administration, including supervision of Board staff, preparing and administering the State Board's budget, overseeing and participating in the State Board's contracting and procurement process, and acting as the State Board's Chief Technology Officer. In addition, the Executive Director is responsible, with the support of Board staff, for supporting the State Board in their activities as advisors, conveners, and policy advocates. Atop these essential administrative functions, the Executive Director assists the State Board President in the execution of the duties of the office, serves as the administrative and organizational link between the President and the State Board, as well as with other District agencies, and is the liaison to outside organizations and stakeholders.

The Executive Director is a vital and consistent presence for the State Board, imbued with historical knowledge of the State Board's practices along with knowledge of education policy and program operations, the Executive Director is a key advisor to the State Board. In this role, the Executive Director assists the State Board with the development of a policy agenda and the serves as the technical authority on policy research analysis for the State Board, working to ensure that the Board office provides satisfactory, well-informed, evidence-based recommendations to the State Board.

Finally, the Executive Director leads the State Board's communications functions. In this way, the Executive Director develops outreach strategies and directs public outreach activities – over the last two years, the State Board's presence has grown considerably in terms of email, Facebook, and Twitter reach.

Q15. List SBOE's committees and subcommittees and which members serve on each one.

In January 2014, the following committees were established:

- Intergovernmental Relations, Governance, and Ombudsman Committee: When required, this committee
 will connect with other government agencies. The committee will also work to address internal governance
 issues and assist the Ombudsman, if required.
 - o Kamili Anderson
 - o Karen Williams, Chair
 - Mark Jones
 - Mary Lord
 - o Monica Warren-Jones

- **Implementation & Oversight Committee:** This committee will review the status of state-level education policies in order to better understand what is working well and what requires improvement.
 - o Jack Jacobson, Chair
 - Kamili Anderson
 - Laura Slover
 - Mary Lord
 - o Pat Mara
 - o Tierra Jolly
- Communications & Outreach Committee: This committee will aid the State Board in engaging the public.
 - Kamili Anderson
 - Mary Lord
 - o Pat Mara, Chair
- **Green/Less Paper Committee:** This committee will propose new processes for reducing the State Board's reliance on paper, and provide guidance for adopting new technology.
 - o Kamili Anderson, Chair
 - Monica Warren-Jones
 - o Karen Williams
- **Graduation Requirements/Competency-Based Learning:** This committee will research and advise on graduation requirement revisions as well as be responsible for guiding the State Board's work on competency-based learning.
 - o Jack Jacobson
 - Jason Perry
 - o Laura Slover, Chair
 - Mary Lord
 - Monica Warren-Jones
 - o Pat Mara
 - Tierra Jolly
- CCSS Implementation and PARCC Assessment: This committee will review information related to the implementation of the CCSS as well as help the State Board monitor the rollout of the PARCC assessment. The committee will help the public understand the role of CCSS and the PARCC assessment.
 - o Mary Lord, Chair
 - o Pat Mara
 - Karen Williams
- Parent & Home Engagement: This committee will review parent and home engagement research and what is currently occurring in the District for the purpose of recommending improved parent and home engagement policies.
 - Jack Jacobson
 - o Kamili Anderson
 - Mary Lord
 - o Monica Warren-Jones, Chair

- Next Generation Science Standards: This committee will review information related to the implementation of the NGSS.
 - o Mary Lord, Chair
 - o Pat Mara
- **Truancy and Student Engagement**: This committee will investigate the causes of truancy and the District's efforts to decrease truancy while researching student engagement and will provide guidance to the continued development and improvement of compulsory attendance rules.
 - o Kamili Anderson, Chair
 - Mary Lord

In 2015, the State Board is considering alternative structures to aid and facilitate Board member collaboration and consideration of policy issues.

Q16. Has the SBOE adhered to all non-discrimination policies in regards to hiring and employment?

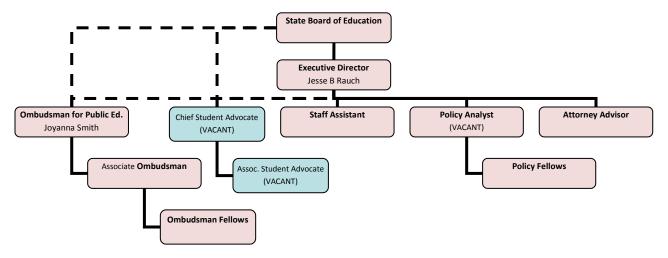
Yes, the State Board has adhered to all non-discrimination policies in regards to hiring and employment.

Q17. Have there been any accusations by employees or potential employees that the SBOE has violated hiring and employment non-discrimination policies in FY14 or to date in FY15? If so, what steps were taken to remedy the situation(s)?

No, there have not been any accusations by employees or potential employees that the SBOE has violated hiring and employment non-discrimination policies.

General Questions

Q18. Provide a current organization chart for SBOE and the name of the employee responsible for the management of each program. If applicable, provide a narrative explanation of any organizational changes made during FY14 or to date in FY15.



Organizational changes made at the State Board in FY14 include the hiring of the Ombudsman for Public Education. In FY15, the State Board received funding for the establishment of the Office of the Chief Student Advocate.

Q19. Provide the agency's performance plan for FY14. Did SBOE meet the objectives set forth in the FY14 performance plan? Provide a narrative description of what actions the agency undertook to meet the key performance indicators including an explanation as to why any indicators were not met.

With the election of new leadership in January, the State Board intends to continue to improve its effectiveness, operations, oversight, and public engagement.

- Goal 1: Build a Strong State Board of Education
 - Establish a multiyear planning process: The State Board is in the process of developing a 15-month strategic plan to guide its work in FY14 and beyond.
 - Review governance of the State Board of Education: The State Board will establish several new committees to focus on the work of the State Board. These committees may include: Governance Committee, Implementation & Oversight Committee, Communications & Outreach Committee, Green/Less Paper Committee, and Ad Hoc Committees for various subjects, such as Graduation Requirements and Parent and Home Engagement. Further, the State Board wishes to collaborate with the Council's Committee on Education on the revision and potential enactment of the "Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act of 2013."
 - Improve internal policy-making processes: In FY14, the State Board intends to review how it offers policy recommendations and the policy approval process.
 - Progress-to-Date:

The State Board was successful in developing a 15-month strategic plan to guide its work in FY14 and beyond. The State Board will continue to plan in advance at their upcoming retreat, scheduled for February 7, 2015.

The State Board successfully established several committees which remained active throughout FY14 and into the beginning of FY15. Further, the State Board submitted potential revisions to the "Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act of 2013" for consideration. The State Board will continue to work with the DC Council's Committee on Education to review possible improvements to the District's governance structure.

In FY14, the State Board established guidelines for improving its internal policy-making process. The updated work flow included formalization of the roles of committees, clearer opportunities for input from members of the State Board in the formulation of policy recommendations, and improvements in how information was disseminated to members of the State Board. In February 2015, the work flow will be reviewed again to ensure it meets the expectations of the State Board.

• Goal 2: Operate as an office of policy, research and analysis.

- Engage in high-quality policy, research, and analysis: The State Board has identified the following policy issues for FY14 and FY15 which will require research and analysis capacity:
 - Finalizing revised graduation requirements with additional diploma options;
 - Establishing a foundation for competency-based learning;
 - Approving standards for Career /Technical Education (CTE);
 - Renewing the ESEA Waiver;
 - Revising Residency Verification Rules;
 - Defining "Proficiency" in the context of the DC CAS, new PARCC assessments, and competency-based learning;
 - Establish parent and home engagement policies;
 - Addressing truancy, tardiness, and other attendance issues;
 - Reviewing and recommending changes to improve the teacher pipeline;
 - Reviewing health and wellness standards; and
 - Reviewing World Languages standards.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board was able to make progress in many of these areas, including the following:

Finalizing revised graduation requirements with additional diploma options;

The State Board shared revisions to the graduation requirements, which included recommendations for additional diploma options for consideration, including a diploma of distinction, a career credential (aligned with CTE standards) and an "achievement diploma." Towards the end of 2014, OSSE and the State Board began a process of amending the graduation requirements by updating language related to competency-based learning and considering a Superintendent's Diploma. The revisions were tabled until more public input could occur.

Establishing a foundation for competency-based learning;

See above.

Approving standards for Career /Technical Education (CTE);

At the encouragement of the State Board, OSSE will be presenting new CTE standards to the State Board in early 2015. These standards will continue efforts underway under the District's CTE strategic plan.

Renewing the ESEA Waiver;

This has been an ongoing activity of the State Board, as detailed in previous answers.

Revising Residency Verification Rules;

While the State Board did receive an initial draft of revised residency verification rules, public comments necessitated further review and revision of the draft rules. It is expected that draft rules will be resubmitted to the State Board by mid-2015.

 Defining "Proficiency" in the context of the DC CAS, new PARCC assessments, and competency-based learning;

The State Board will be able to consider new definitions of proficiency in Fall 2015, as the results of this year's administration of PARCC are normed.

Establish parent and home engagement policies;

In FY14, the State Board initiated the development of a Parents and Family Bill of Rights that would inform parents and/or guardians of their rights while fostering opportunities to be more engaged. Ultimately, the purpose of the Parent and Family Bill of Rights is to provide a framework of the core principles and standards of effective parent/school partnerships and to share with parents and guardians (and in some cases students if over the age of 18) the expectations, practices, and information families should expect to receive from schools, LEAs, and state-level education agencies to help support their child's academic success.

To date, the State Board has several conducted public hearings and public roundtables to help facilitate a conversation to create a sound plan surrounding parent involvement standards for LEAs. In 2015, the State Board will revisit the Parent and Family Bill of Rights, with the understanding that they are a pre-cursor to more permanent parent and family involvement standards.

Addressing truancy, tardiness, and other attendance issues;

In 2014, the State Board held several roundtables in order to determine appropriate changes that could be made to the District's truancy regulations. While the Truancy and Student Engagement Committee completed a report on the issue, the State Board continues to work with critical stakeholders in order to determine the correct course of action to improve student attendance regulations.

Reviewing and recommending changes to improve the teacher pipeline;

The State Board did not engage in work in this area in FY14, but has started to research the issue in FY15 as it directly relates to the Equitable Access Plan required by the Department of Education.

Reviewing health and wellness standards; and

The State Board's Implementation Committee is in the process of finalizing a draft of revised P.E. and Health Standards. With the support of over 30 local and national organizations, in addition to DCPS, PCSB, OSSE, and educators, the revision is proceeding smoothly and a new set of academic standards should be produced in 2015.

Reviewing World Languages standards.

Learning from the P.E. and Health standards revision process, the State Board will approach World Language standards, as well as Arts standards, later in 2015.

• Goal 3: Operate as a convener of education stakeholders.

Develop a comprehensive communications and community engagement strategy: In FY14, the State Board has continued to advance a communication strategy. The launch of a new website along with a newsletter in 2014 will be an important step in improving public engagement and transparency, particularly in terms of access to testimony from the State Board's monthly public meetings. The State Board will solicit feedback from stakeholders to improve quality, timeliness, and access to information.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board has continued to advance in its role as a convener. In addition to bringing stakeholders together for roundtables on truancy regulations and the establishment of a Parent and Family Bill of Rights, the State Board convened over 100 stakeholders for a graduation requirements summit. More, the State Board, at the encouragement of LEAs, facilitated a meeting of LEAs to discuss the upcoming PARCC assessment with OSSE.

In mid-2013, after receiving independence from OSSE, the State Board launched a new website, which remains updated with current meeting and contact information. In addition, in FY14, the State Board added 933 new subscribers to its email list, added 1,285 new Twitter followers, and established a new Facebook page which now has 174 likes.

Goal 4: Operate as a public advocate.

- Provide leadership on improving student achievement and closing the achievement gap: The State Board is invested in examining systemic problems facing the District's education system. With the completion of a report analyzing the links between poverty and education, undertaken in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the War on Poverty, the State Board can help work to ensure all students have access to equally good schools. As part of this effort, the State Board has requested and the Deputy Mayor for Education's office has agreed to involvement in revising school attendance boundaries and feeder patterns.
- Operate an Office of the Ombudsman: The State Board is committed to supporting the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. By tracking trends and recurring concerns, the ombudsman fills a vital role not only in helping families and students, but also in highlighting the need for new policies or rules.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board continued to advocate on behalf of children, youth, and their families. The boundary and feeder pattern discussion illuminated the challenges of school quality and equitable access to an excellent education. However, through the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the State Board continues to support strong, evidence-based interventions for low-performing schools.

The State Board remained committed to supporting the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. The role of Ombudsman was filled in February 2014 and the office heard over 150 cases in its first six months of operation. In that time, the State Board supported the hiring of an Associate Ombudsman and the hiring of Ombudsman Fellows who help the Ombudsman solve problems for the District's students.

Q20. Provide the agency's performance plan for FY15. What steps has the agency taken to date in FY15 to meet the objectives set forth in the FY15 performance plan?

The mission of the District of Columbia State Board of Education is to provide policy leadership, support, advocacy, and oversight of public education to ensure that every student is valued and gains the skills and knowledge necessary to become informed, competent, and contributing global citizens.

The State Board set five work goals in FY15, including:

- Goal 1: Revised graduation requirements that align with the District's college- and career-ready literacy, math, and science standards; Improve flexibility for schools and students; lay a foundation for competency- and project-based learning; and provide different levels of diplomas that acknowledge distinguished scholarship or special programs.
- Targeted Outcome: Approve revised graduation requirements and establish implementation working group.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board shared revisions to the graduation requirements, which included recommendations for additional diploma options for consideration, including a diploma of distinction, a career credential (aligned with CTE standards) and an "achievement diploma." Towards the end of 2014, OSSE and the State Board began a process of amending the graduation requirements by updating language related to competency-based learning and considering a Superintendent's Diploma. In early 2015, the State Board was encouraged to continue working on these items in order to afford improved opportunities for students to learn.

Goal 2: Develop a protocol and process for regular review of policy implementation.

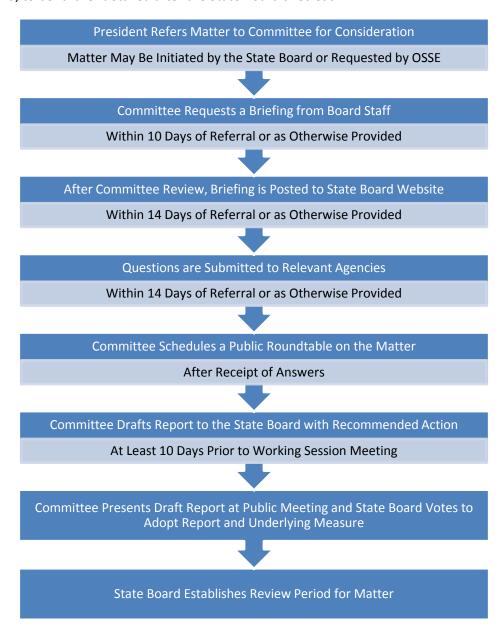
Policymakers rarely look in the rear-view to evaluate how well the rules they approved are working. The State Board recently created a policy implementation review committee to make such monitoring a part of the annual work plan. In addition, the State Board recently won a competitive grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education to develop a protocol for reviewing policies, including the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. This protocol will provide a template for regular review of next generation assessments, the

District's accountability plan (ESEA waiver), Race to the Top, learning standards approved in 2008, and compulsory attendance rules.

o Targeted Outcome: Establishment of a policy review protocol and annual policy review calendar.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board, aided by a grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education, discussed a revised policy review protocol, summarized below. At the State Board's retreat on February 7, 2015, the State Board will identify its priorities, align them with the policy review protocol, and establish an agenda for 2015-2016. Each agenda item will be linked to specific goals of the State Board, to be further detailed after the State Board's retreat.



Goal 3: Refine truancy and attendance rules.

- O In approving revisions to the District's truancy and attendance reporting rules in December 2013, the State Board heard from various stakeholders that the policy was exacerbating absenteeism and causing unanticipated problems in some schools. Hearing these concerns, the State Board declared its intention to focus on discipline, truancy, and student engagement with an eye toward researching what was happening at the school level and recommending changes, if needed, by year's end.
- Targeted Outcome: Establishment of a Truancy and Student Engagement Committee that will research
 and report findings and recommendations to the State Board and relevant stakeholders, including
 recommendations for policy change.

Progress-to-Date:

The Truancy and Student Engagement Committee is in the process of finalizing a set of proposed actions and recommendations to improve student attendance regulations. These recommendations may address concerns such as the definition of "present," compliance with Student Support Team meetings, late arrival policies, and transportation access.

Goal 4: Monitor state accountability.

O In its approval as well as advisory capacity, the State Board will be working with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to revise and improve the District's accountability plan, most notably the District's waiver from No Child Left Behind, due to the U.S. Department of Education in early May. Approval of an amended ESEA waiver in addition to approval of changes to State and LEA Report Cards on the LearnDC website. Continued engagement aimed at helping to get the District's Race to the Top efforts to transform teaching and learning back on track.

Progress-to-Date:

The Stare Board continues to monitor state accountability as the OSSE undergoes a process to renew the District's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. As states are required to submit an application by March 31, 2015, the State Board is working closely with OSSE to ensure that the renewal is consistent with current practice. After the renewal is submitted, the State Board and OSSE will be considering several amendments that would further strengthen the District's accountability system. Meanwhile, the State Board will monitor OSSE's plans to increase equitable access to quality teachers.

• Goal 5: Support the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

- The State Board has moved forward with the re-establishing of the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. Over the next year, the State Board will continue to monitor the needs of the Ombudsman and ensure that the Office is properly and sufficiently funded, staffed, and supported.
- Targeted Outcome: The Office of the Ombudsman receives adequate support to fulfill its mission.

Progress-to-Date:

The State Board continues to support the Office of the Ombudsman as well as the creation of the Office of the Chief Student Advocate. Together, these offices will allow the State Board to find

additional issues facing the District's students and make recommendations on how they can be addressed.

- Q21. Provide the following budget information for SBOE, including the approved budget, revised budget, and expenditures, for FY14 and to date in FY15:
 - a. At the agency level, provide the information broken out by source of funds and by Comptroller Source Group and Comptroller Object.
 - b. At the program level, provide the information broken out by source of funds and by Comptroller Source Group and Comptroller Object.
 - c. At the activity level, provide the information broken out by source of funds and by Comptroller Source Group.

FY14

Fund Title	GAAP Category Title	CSG	Agy Object	Agy Object Title	Approved Budget	Revised Budget	Expenditures
Local	PS	0011	0111	CONTINUING FULL TIME	\$371,584	\$356,448	\$364,592
		0012	0121	TEMPORARY FULL TIME	\$0	\$0	\$40,229
			0123	TEMPORARY PART-TIME	\$750	\$750	\$9,231
			0124	WHEN ACTUALLY EMPLOYED - WAE	\$0	\$0	\$18,111
			0125	TERM FULL-TIME	\$152,283	\$152,283	\$68,056
		0014	0141	GRP LIFE INSURANCE	\$0	\$0	\$128
			0142	HEALTH BENEFITS	\$0	\$0	\$30,763
			0147	MISC FRINGE BENEFITS	\$122,546	\$122,546	\$8,848
			0148	RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION - FICA	\$0	\$0	\$29,964
			0154	OPTICAL PLAN	\$0	\$0	\$293
			0155	DENTAL PLAN	\$0	\$0	\$999
			0158	MEDICARE CONTRIBUTION	\$0	\$0	\$7,157
			0159	RETIREMENT	\$0	\$0	\$19,628
			0161	DC HEALTH BENEFIT FEES	\$0	\$0	\$1,677
	PS Total				\$647,163	\$632,027	\$599,676
	NPS	0020	0201	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
		0031	0308	TELEPHONE, TELETYPE, TELEGRAM, ETC	\$0	\$5,136	\$5,729
		0040	0402	TRAVEL - OUT OF CITY	\$13,554	\$13,554	\$0
			0408	PROF SERVICES FEES AND CONTR	\$156,331	\$166,331	\$158,955
			0410	OFFICE SUPPORT	\$0	\$0	\$19,125
			0424	CONFERENCE FEES LOC OUT OF CITY	\$10,330	\$10,330	\$0
			0425	PAYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$26,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
		0050	0507	SUBSIDIES	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,850
		0070	0702	PURCHASES - EQUIPMENT AND MACHINER	\$7,098	\$7,098	\$4,711

FY2014 Performance Oversight Questions DC State Board of Education

	NPS Total				\$219,312	\$234,448	\$220,370
Local Total					\$866,475	\$866,475	\$820,046
PRIVATE							
DONATIONS	NPS	0040	0402	TRAVEL - OUT OF CITY	\$0	\$1,500	\$0
			0408	PROF SERVICES FEES AND CONTR	\$0	\$10,000	\$0
		0050	0507	SUBSIDIES	\$0	\$16,800	\$0
	NPS Total				\$0	\$28,300	\$0
PRIVATE							
DONATIONS							
Total					\$0	\$28,300	\$0
					\$866,475	\$894,776	\$820,046

FY15

Fund Title	GAAP Category Title	CSG	Agy Object	Agy Object Title	Approved Budget	Revised Budget	Expenditures
Local	PS	0011	0111	CONTINUING FULL TIME	\$697,780	\$697,780	\$94,739
		0012	0121	TEMPORARY FULL TIME	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$16,738
			0123	TEMPORARY PART-TIME	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0
			0124	WHEN ACTUALLY EMPLOYED - WAE	\$0	\$0	\$0
			0125	TERM FULL-TIME	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$29,570
		0014	0141	GRP LIFE INSURANCE	\$0	\$0	\$46
			0142	HEALTH BENEFITS	\$0	\$0	\$8,918
			0147	MISC FRINGE BENEFITS	\$206,972	\$206,972	\$964
			0148	RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION - FICA	\$0	\$0	\$8,560
			0154	OPTICAL PLAN	\$0	\$0	\$165
			0155	DENTAL PLAN	\$0	\$0	\$547
			0158	MEDICARE CONTRIBUTION	\$0	\$0	\$2,002
			0159	RETIREMENT	\$0	\$0	\$5,655
			0161	DC HEALTH BENEFIT FEES	\$0	\$0	\$580
	PS Total				\$1,039,752	\$1,039,752	\$168,483
	NPS	0020	0201	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$0
		0040	0402	TRAVEL - OUT OF CITY	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$726
			0408	PROF SERVICES FEES AND CONTR	\$41,803	\$41,803	\$0
			0410	OFFICE SUPPORT	\$0	\$0	\$2,289
			0424	CONFERENCE FEES LOC OUT OF CITY	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$859
			0425	PAYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
		0050	0507	SUBSIDIES	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
	NPS Total				\$111,803	\$111,803	\$3,874
Local Total					\$1,151,555	\$1,151,555	\$172,357
PRIVATE							
DONATIONS	NPS	0040	0402	TRAVEL - OUT OF CITY	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
			0408	PROF SERVICES FEES AND CONTR	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
		0050	0507	SUBSIDIES	\$16,800	\$16,800	\$0
	NPS Total				\$28,300	\$28,300	\$0
PRIVATE					\$28,300	\$28,300	\$0

DONATIONS				
Total				
		\$1,179,855	\$1,179,855	\$172,357

Q22. Provide a complete accounting of all intra-district transfers received by or transferred from SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15. For each, provide a narrative description as to the purpose of the transfer and which programs, activities and services within SBOE the transfer affected.

FY14

Intra-District Agency	Amount	Purpose
DC Human Resources	\$5,000.00	Provision of Human Resources
		Report
DC-NET	\$5,729.00	Provision of Office Telephone and
		Cell Phone Support
OFRM	\$10,000.00	Advance for Purchase Card Balance

FY15

Intra-District Agency	Amount	Purpose
DC Human Resources	\$5,000.00	Provision of Human Resources
		Report
DC-NET	\$500.00	Provision of Office Telephone and
		Cell Phone Support
OFRM	\$25,000.00	Advance for Purchase Card Balance

Q23. Provide a complete accounting of all reprogrammings received by or transferred from the SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15. For each, provide a narrative description as to the purpose and reason of the transfer and which programs, activities, and services within the agency the reprogramming affected. In addition, provide an accounting of all reprogrammings made within the agency that exceeded \$100,000 and provide a narrative description as to the purpose and reason of the transfer and which programs, activities, and services within the agency the reprogramming affected.

FY14

Source	Destination	Amount	Purpose
CS11, Regular Pay – Cont Full			Revised Appropriation/
Time, Continuing Full Time		(\$15,136)	Limitation Control
	CS40, Other Services and		
	Charges, Prof Services Fees and		Revised Appropriation/
	Contracts	\$10,000	Limitation Control
			Revised Appropriation/
			Limitation Control; funds
			were not budgeted for
	CS31, Telephone, Telegraph,		telecommunications when
	Telegram, Etc., Telephone,		the State Board became
	Teletype, Telegram, Etc.	\$5,136	independent.

FY15

N/A

Q24. Provide a list of all SBOE's fixed costs budget and actual dollars spent for FY14 and to date in FY15. Include the source of funding and the percentage of these costs assigned to each SBOE program. Provide the percentage change between SBOE's fixed costs budget for these years and a narrative explanation for any changes.

FY14

Source	Purpose	Budgeted Amount	Expended Amount	Percentage
Local	Telephones, etc.	\$5,136	\$5,729	100%

FY15

Source	Purpose	Budgeted Amount	Expended Amount	Percentage
Local	Telephones, etc.	\$5,136	TBD	100%

Q25. Provide the capital budget for SBOE and all programs under its purview during FY14 and so far in FY15, including amount budgeted and actual dollars spent. In addition, provide an update on all capital projects undertaken in FY14 and so far in FY15. Did any of the capital projects undertake in FY14 or so far in FY15 have an impact on the operating budget of the agency? If so, provide an accounting of such impact.

N/A

Q26. Provide a current list of all properties supported by the SBOE budget. Indicate whether the property is owned by the district or leased and which agency program utilizes the space. If the property is leased, provide the terms of the lease. For all properties provide an accounting of annual fixed costs (i.e. rent, security, janitorial services, electric, etc.).

The State Board operates out of 441 4th Street NW, Suite 723N, property owned by the District of Columbia.

Q27. Do the properties and facilities meet current ADA requirements? If not, describe the situations that do not comply.

Yes, the properties and facilities meet current ADA requirements.

Q28. Describe any spending pressures that existed in FY14 and so far in FY15. In your response provide a narrative description of the spending pressure, how the spending pressure was identified, and how the spending pressure was remedied.

The State Board may be subject to spending pressures in the Office of the Ombudsman. The State Board recognizes that the Ombudsman and one (1) assistant may be insufficient to handle the expected call volume and caseload. From February 2014 to August 2014, the Ombudsman received 150 cases. However, from September 2014 to January 12, 2015, the Ombudsman had already received approximately 180 cases, which puts the Ombudsman to more than double the rate of expected cases. This may result in the State Board diverting funds from Policy Fellows to additional support for the Ombudsman.

An additional spending emerges from a need to repair outmoded or broken equipment in the Old Council Chamber at 441 4thStreet NW. Currently, the technology is at risk of being incompatible with the digital transmission capabilities required by the Office of Cable Television. In addition, through the use of the space by many District agencies and organizations, some equipment has become damaged. At this time, it is not clear who is responsible for the upkeep and upgrading of the Old Council Chambers, therefore, if DGS does not repair the damaged equipment, the State Board may be required to use local funds to do so.

Q29. Identify potential areas where spending pressures may exist in FY15. Provide a detail narrative of the spending pressure, including any steps that are being taken to minimize the impact on the FY15 budget.

There are no additional spending pressures anticipated in FY15.

Q30. Provide a list of all FY14 full-time equivalent positions for SBOE, broken down by program and activity. In addition, for each position, note whether the position is filled (and if filled, the name of the employee) or whether it is vacant. Finally, indicate the source of funds for each FTE (local, federal, special purpose, etc.).

FY14				
Funding				
Source	Name	Title	Vac Stat	Total
Local	Program: Board Members			
	Anderson, Kamili	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Jacobson, Jack	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Jones, Mark	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Lord, Mary	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Mara, Patrick	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Slover, Laura	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Warren-Jones, Monica	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	White, Trayon	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Williams, Karen	Board Member	Filled	1.00
	Program: Board of Education	1		
	Briscoe-Kendrick, Jamikka	Staff Assistant	Filled	1.00
	Davis, Kelly	Attorney Advisor	Filled	1.00
	Rauch, Jesse B	Executive Director	Filled	1.00
		Policy Analyst	Vacant	1.00
	Program: Ombudsman for Po	ublic Education		
	Smith, Joyanna	Ombudsman for Public Education	Filled	1.00
	Tossell, Elizabeth	Associate Ombudsman	Filled	1.00
Total				16.00

Q31. How many vacancies were posted for SBOE during FY14? To date in FY15? Which positions? Why was the position vacated? In addition, note how long the position was or has been vacant, what steps have been taken to fill the position, whether or not the position has been filled, and the source of funding for the position.

In FY14, three (3) positions were posted.

FY14					
Funding		Reason for	Duration of	f	Vac
Source	Title	Vacancy	Vacancy	Steps Taken	Stat
Local	Attorney Advisor	New Position	N/A		Filled
	Ombudsman for Public				
	Education	New Position	N/A		Filled
	Associate Ombudsman	New Position	N/A		Filled

In FY15, two (2) positions were posted.

FY15					
Funding		Reason for	Duration of		Vac
Source	Title	Vacancy	Vacancy	Steps Taken	Stat
Local	Chief Student Advocate	New Position	3 Months	The State Board is currently reviewing finalists for the position. Position was opened in	Vacant
	Policy Analyst	Personal Reasons	3 Months	January 2015	Vacant

In FY15, one (1) position will remain vacant until the selection of the Chief Student Advocate is completed.

FY15					
Funding		Reason for	Duration of		Vac
Source	Title	Vacancy	Vacancy	Steps Taken	Stat
	Associate Student				
Local	Advocate	New Position	N/A		Vacant

Q32. How many employee performance evaluations were completed in FY14 and how was performance measured against position descriptions? To date in FY15? What steps are taken to correct poor performance and how long does an employee have to correct their performance?

• State of Education in the District of Education

In FY14, performance evaluations were initiated for most members of the Board staff. Performance evaluations are conducted using DCHR's performance management process (PMP) as detailed in the District Personnel Manuel. The evaluations are comprised of three components: competencies, SMART goals, and individual development goals. As employees craft their narratives for each competency, they are asked to relate the competencies to their roles and responsibilities.

Employees demonstrating subpar performance are provided with opportunities to improve their performance throughout the calendar year. They are encouraged to attend professional development courses and engage in regular coaching by the Executive Director. If performance does not improve, employees are placed on performance improvement plans with measured and specific goals that are then figured into decisions on their retention.

• Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

The Office of the Ombudsman only has one subordinate employee, the Associate Ombudsman. The Associate Ombudsman started in September 2014, at the end of the FY14 evaluation cycle. The Associate Ombudsman will receive a performance review in FY15.

Q33. Provide the committee with the following:

a. A list of employees receiving bonuses, special pay, additional compensation, or hiring incentives in FY14 and to date in FY15, and the amount; and

No employee received bonuses, special pay, additional compensation, or hiring incentives in FY14 and to date in FY15.

b. A list of travel expenses for FY14 and to date in FY15, arranged by employee.

Travel Expenses

Traver Expenses			
Name	Title	FY14	FY15
Anderson, Kamili	Board Member		
Jacobson, Jack	Board Member		
Jolly, Tierra	Board Member	\$282.70	\$510.60*
Jones, Mark	Board Member	\$388.20	\$167.63
Lord, Mary	Board Member		\$502.89*
Mara, Patrick	Board Member	\$334.20	\$670.52*
Slover, Laura	Board Member		
Warren-Jones, Monica	Board Member	\$267.20	\$502.89*
White, Trayon	Board Member		
Williams, Karen	Board Member	\$321.70	\$502.89*
Briscoe-Kendrick, Jamikka	Staff Assistant		
Davis, Kelly	Attorney Advisor	\$267.20	\$502.89*
Garcia, Amaya	Policy Analyst		
Rauch, Jesse B	Executive Director	\$321.70	\$502.89*
Smith, Joyanna	Ombudsman for Public Education	\$534.70	\$528.64*
Tossell, Elizabeth	Associate Ombudsman		
		\$2,717.60	\$4,391.84

^{*} These travel costs include pending transactions from the State Board's participation to NASBE's annual conference.

Q34. Provide the following information for all grants awarded to SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15:

- a. Grant Number/Title;
- b. Approved Budget Authority;
- c. Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances);
- d. Purpose of the grant;
- e. Grant deliverables;
- f. Grant outcomes, including grantee performance;
- g. Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided;
- h. SBOE program and activity supported by the grant;

- i. SBOE employee responsible for grant deliverables; and
- j. Source of funds

FY14

Grant Number/Title;	NASBE Stipends
Approved Budget Authority;	\$11,500.00
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances);	\$0.00
Purpose of the grant;	The stipends were awarded to assist State Boards in building capacity along specific policy strands.
Grant deliverables;	Mid-Year Report, Final Report
Grant outcomes, including grantee performance;	See below.
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided;	N/A
SBOE program and activity supported by the grant;	See below.
SBOE employee responsible for grant deliverables; and	Jesse B Rauch
Source of funds	National Association of State Boards of Education

The State Board was impacted in the following ways by the NASBE stipend:

- Implementing College and Career Ready Standards
 - With this stipend, the State Board was able to drive conversations regarding amending the District's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. As the waiver rests on the adoption and implementation of college- and career-ready standards and high-quality aligned assessments, it was critical to review the status of CCSS and PARCC implementation. Ultimately, the State Board approved an amended ESEA Flexibility Waiver that included a revised LEA Support Model.
 - Alongside these efforts, the State Board began to review and revise the District's physical education and health standards. This review is the foundation of developing a protocol for reviewing academic standard implementation.
- New Science Standards State Stipend
 - The State Board held a hearing on NGSS implementation and is in the process of developing a report on the first year of NGSS implementation with the help of a policy fellow. This effort will further develop the State Board's protocol for reviewing academic standard implementation.
- Deeper Learning: Education for the 21st Century
 - The State Board worked with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to develop a framework for LEAs to pursue competency-based learning initiatives. Work with stakeholder groups and organizations in developing the other strategies included within this proposal. While there is general support for a moving away from Carnegie units, there is additional work required to put forth a policy proposal that would be amenable to both traditional public schools and the public charter schools of the District of Columbia.

Grant Number/Title;	Bennetta Bullock Washington Scholarship	
Approved Budget Authority;	\$16,800.41	
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-	\$0.00	
encumbrances);		
Purpose of the grant;	To provide \$500.00 scholarships to District students	

Grant deliverables;	District students receive a \$500.00 scholarship
	annually
Grant outcomes, including grantee performance;	Delivery of a \$500.00 scholarship
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance	For six years, the scholarship funds were not
provided;	available to the State Board. Now that budget
	authority has been reestablished, the State Board
	must revisit and revise the application guidelines so
	that it can begin disseminating the scholarship again.
SBOE program and activity supported by the grant;	Bennetta Bullock Washington Scholarship
SBOE employee responsible for grant deliverables; and	Jesse B Rauch
Source of funds	Private Donation

FY15

Grant Number/Title;	Bennetta Bullock Washington Scholarship	
Approved Budget Authority;	\$16,800.41	
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-	\$0.00	
encumbrances);		
Purpose of the grant;	To provide \$500.00 scholarships to District students	
Grant deliverables;	District students receive a \$500.00 scholarship	
	annually	
Grant outcomes, including grantee performance;	Delivery of a \$500.00 scholarship	
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance	For six years, the scholarship funds were not	
provided;	available to the State Board. Now that budget	
	authority has been reestablished, the State Board	
	must revisit and revise the application guidelines so	
	that it can begin disseminating the scholarship again.	
SBOE program and activity supported by the grant;	Bennetta Bullock Washington Scholarship	
SBOE employee responsible for grant deliverables; and	Jesse B Rauch	
Source of funds	Private Donation	

Q35. Provide the following information for all grants/subgrants awarded by SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15:

- a. Grant Number/Title;
- b. Approved Budget Authority;
- c. Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances);
- d. Purpose of the grant;
- e. Grant deliverables;
- f. Grant outcomes, including grantee performance;
- g. Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided;
- h. SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the grant;
- i. Source of funds.

N/A

Q36. Provide a complete accounting of all grant lapses in FY14, including a detailed statement on why the lapse occurred and corrective action taken by SBOE. Also indicate if the funds can still be used and/or whether they carried over into FY15.

The NASBE Stipend was a one-time grant. The funds can be carried over into FY15.

Q37. Provide the following information for all contracts awarded by SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15:

- a. Contract Number;
- b. Approved Budget Authority;
- c. Funding Source;
- d. Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced;
- e. Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances);
- f. Purpose of the contract;
- g. Name of the vendor;
- h. Contract deliverables;
- i. Contract outcomes;
- j. Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided; and
- k. SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract.

FY14

Contract Number	PO485685-V3
Approved Budget Authority	\$10,000.00
Funding Source	Local
Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced	Sole Sourced
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances)	\$9,541.63
Purpose of the contract	Transcription Services
Name of the vendor	Capital Reporting Company
Contract deliverables	Transcription of Public Meetings and Public Roundtables
Contract outcomes	Electronic and Paper Copies of Transcripts
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided	N/A
SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract	Jesse B Rauch

Contract Number	PO493372
Approved Budget Authority	\$30,071.00
Funding Source	Local
Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced	N/A
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances)	\$30,071.00
Purpose of the contract	Association Membership
Name of the vendor	National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
Contract deliverables	N/A
Contract outcomes	N/A
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided	N/A
SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract	Jesse B Rauch

Contract Number	PO497745
Approved Budget Authority	\$55,360.00
Funding Source	Local
Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced	Competitively bid
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances)	\$55,360.00
Purpose of the contract	Development of a Case Management System
	for the Ombudsman for Public Education
Name of the vendor	Document Managers
Contract deliverables	Delivery of a Case Management System

Contract outcomes	Delivery of a Case Management System
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided	Corrective action is being considered to
	address unsatisfactory delivery of the case
	management system.
SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract	Joyanna Smith

FY15

Contract Number	PO507442-V2
Approved Budget Authority	\$10,000.00
Funding Source	Local
Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced	Sole Sourced
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances)	\$4,592.25 (as of January 27, 2015)
Purpose of the contract	Transcription Services
Name of the vendor	Capital Reporting Company
Contract deliverables	Transcription of Public Meetings and Public
	Roundtables
Contract outcomes	Electronic and Paper Copies of Transcripts
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided	N/A
SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract	Jesse B Rauch

Contract Number	PO509321
Approved Budget Authority	\$25,071.00
Funding Source	Local
Whether it was competitively bid or sole sourced	N/A
Expenditures (including encumbrances and pre-encumbrances)	\$25,071.00
Purpose of the contract	Association Membership
Name of the vendor	National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
Contract deliverables	N/A
Contract outcomes	N/A
Any corrective actions taken or technical assistance provided	N/A
SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract	Jesse B Rauch

- Q38. Provide the following information for all contract modifications made by SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15, broken down by SBOE program and activity:
 - a. Name of the vendor;
 - b. Purpose and reason of the contract modification;
 - c. SBOE employee(s) responsible for overseeing the contract;
 - d. Modification cost, including the budgeted amount and actual spent; and
 - e. Funding source.

N/A

- Q39. Provide the following information for all purchase card transactions during FY14 and to-date in FY-15:
 - a. Employee that made the transaction;
 - b. Transaction amount; and
 - c. Transaction purpose.

FY14

Employee	Transaction Amount	Vendor	Purpose
Jamikka Briscoe-Kendrick	\$25.49	Amazon	Reference Book
	\$84.98	Amazon	Voice/Meeting Recorder
	\$115.49	Amazon	White Noise Machines
	\$1,986.02	Capital Reporting Company	Transcription Services
	\$1,846.74	Capital Reporting Company	Transcription Services
	\$1,090.32	Capital Reporting Company	Transcription Services
	\$99.75	Champion Awards	Nameplates
	\$642.60	Dale ProAudio	New Microphones
	\$99.00	DC Bar	Membership
	\$125.00	Document Managers	Business Cards
			Refreshments for
	\$415.00	Dutch Mill Catering	Graduation Requirements
			Summit
	\$39.00	Education Week	Subscription
	\$49.94	Education Week	Subscription
	\$131.28	FedEx Office	Photocopying
	\$1,689.23	Laser Art Inc.	Office Supplies
	\$107.38	Overstock.com	Reference Book
	\$1,295.00	Center for Dispute Settlement -	Training/Professional
	\$1,295.00	Ombudsman training	Development
	\$2,400.00	CronicaMedia	Communications
	\$2,400.00	Cromcaiviedia	Consultant
	\$150.00	U.S. Ombudsman Association	Membership
	\$340.00	Senoda Inc.	Office Supplies
	\$134.00	Senoda Inc.	Office Supplies
	\$48.07	Staples	Office Supplies
	\$36.91	Staples	Office Supplies
	\$76.56	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$38.28	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$38.28	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$38.26	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$38.28	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
TOTAL	\$13,181.07		

FY15

Employee	Transaction Amount	Vendor	Purpose
Jamikka Briscoe-Kendrick	\$38.28	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$38.29	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$25.49	Amazon	Reference Book
	\$118.65	Champion Awards	Plaques
	\$267.20	American Airlines	Conference Travel
	\$534.70	United Airlines	Conference Travel
	\$1,285.13	AOP Business - Al's Office Supplies	Office Supplies
	\$643.40	Southwest Airlines	Conference Travel
	\$388.20	Southwest Airlines	Conference Travel
	\$38.29	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
	\$2,498.75	Premier Office Supplies	Office Supplies
	\$282.70	Southwest Airlines	Conference Travel

\$528.64	Marriott Cornhusker	Conference Lodging
\$167.63	Westin Westminster	Conference Travel
\$419.24	4imprint	Tablecloth Purchase
\$930.00	Champion Awards	Plaques
\$33.50	Champion Awards	Plaques
\$84.94	Education Week	Subscription
\$268.00	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
\$32.85	Amazon	Reference Book
\$50.85	Champion Awards	Nameplates
\$405.00	Bluebay Office	Office Supplies
\$50.00	Young Education Professionals of the District of Columbia	Conference Registration
\$114.85	Thomson West Law	WestLaw Access
\$9,244.58		

Q40. Provide copies of any investigations, reviews or program/fiscal audits completed on programs and activities within SBOE during FY14 and to date in FY15. This includes any reports of the DC Auditor or the Office of the Inspector General. In addition, provide a narrative explanation of steps taken to address any issues raised by the program/fiscal audits.

N/A

- Q41. Provide a citation of all regulations that were reviewed and/or revised in FY14 and FY15 to date.
 - E9 DCMR § 929 et seq. —Graduation Requirements
 - 5-A DCMR § 2100 et seq.—Compulsory Attendance
 -2100.1, 2103.5, and definitions.
 - DC State Board of Education By-laws, specifically, Article III (Voting)(Rule 3.8)
- Q42. Are the agency's information technology needs met? If not, what areas are in need of attention (i.e. computer support, internet and phone functionality, etc.)?

State of Education in the District of Education

The State Board could be served by upgrades in the following areas:

- Upgraded laptop computers with videoconferencing/webcam capability;
- Adoption of a paperless agenda system to streamline agenda preparation and enhance communication to stakeholders;
- Functional phone lines in Judiciary Square's City-Wide Conference Center that would permit teleconferencing; and
- o Technology to stream Working Sessions and Public Meetings over the internet.

Another pressing technology need is that the Old Council Chambers at 441 4th Street NW are in need of repair. The Old Council Chambers is a frequently used public space, currently used by not only the State Board, but by District agencies and outside organizations as well. However, with this frequent use, technology and equipment have been damaged and are in need of repair. Even now, the floor box in the Old Council Chambers has exposed

electrical wires, presenting a serious safety hazard. DGS shared that they would fix the floor element in December 2014, however, by February 6, 2015, the repairs have not yet taken place.

Meanwhile, the space requires maintenance to ensure continued functionality for both the State Board and the other District agencies that use the space. The technology, installed more than five (5) years ago, was installed at a time when analog technology was in use. As digital technology advances and is used more frequently, the Old Council Chamber challenges the Office of Cable Television as they require digital content. This incompatibility means that presentations and other content types cannot always be televised. This also means that no activity in the Old Council Chamber can be streamed over the internet. More, presentations are not always able to be shown in the space.

For now, Board staff are attempting to reach DGS staff who can aid in the repairs of the Old Council Chambers.

Q43. Describe the agency's working relationship with OCTO. Are there areas in need of improvement? If so do they prevent or inhibit the agency from reaching its performance goals?

Compared to the operations of other agencies, the State Board enjoys a generally positive and productive working relationship with OCTO. When the State Board became independent, OCTO provided the State Board with several hand-me-down laptops to replace obsolete equipment. In addition, the State Board received strong support from OCTO in the development of its website. This relationship continues as the web maintenance team is readily available to help correct technical issues.

However, one area of improvement is in technical support. At times, responsiveness to service requests can be slow. Possibly complicating these efforts may be that according to OCTO's technical support infrastructure, the State Board is still listed as being under OSSE. This causes some technical support requests to be routed through OSSE instead of directly to the technical support team responsible for assisting our agency. This can lead to delays in service delivery.

Overall, however, the State Board requires assistance in upgrading its technology. The State Board would like to collaborate with OCTO on an audit of its current inventory for the purposes of determining if an upgrade is warranted.

Appendix A

Executive Secretariat for the State Board of Education MS-1720-13

INTRODUCTION

This position, located in Office of the State Superintendent of Education, provides leadership and direction to the Board for support staff in the Office of the Chief of Staff and reports directly to the Chief of Staff and the State Board of Education. The incumbent of this position is responsible for performing regulatory responsibilities related to the board's by-laws and regulations.

POSITION CONTROL

The incumbent provides general assistance to the State Board President and Board Members in the performance of their responsibilities; including a coordination of task forces and/or feedback from external stakeholders on issues for the State Board of Education's consideration.

Work is performed under the direction and supervision of the Chief of Staff and has overall responsibility for the planning, directing, managing and evaluating of all work conducted by OSSE, in establishing system wide polices and enforcing standards related to the office's overall administration. Incumbent functions with a high degree of independence. Incumbent and supervisor, within the framework of priorities, funding, and overall project objectives, develop a mutually acceptable plan. Work performance is evaluated for soundness of approach; consistency with agency guideline; and overall effectiveness in achieving desired goals and objectives.

Guidelines include applicable laws, Federal and District regulations, and agency directives and policies. These guidelines are only generally applicable to the work; therefore, the incumbent exercises initiative, resourcefulness, and experienced judgment in interpreting and applying the guidelines, as well developing and implementing, or guiding others on solutions to problems that are unique and outside the scope of current written guidelines. The incumbent employs appropriate leadership models in the development and interpretation of guidelines.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

 Serves in an advisory capacity, responsible for interpreting various regulations, legislation, policies, etc., affecting the operation of OSSE. Confers with the highlevel officials of the District of Columbia regarding legislative policies, as deemed appropriate.

- Translates Board policy and direction to activate, and adjust tasks when necessary
 with clearly defined goals. Advises on the development and direction of shortand long-range policy and Strategic Plan.
- Engages stakeholders within or outside DC Government to facilitate execution of identified talks expeditiously and effectively.
- Establishes effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders to ensure a collaborative and results-driven operation.
- Identifies issues of significance with relevance to OSSE's mission, and develops and implements strategy to address such issues in consultation with OSSE.
- Performs management functions on behalf of the Superintendent, particularly as they relate to board support, strategic planning and performance management, legislative relations, and administrative support.
- Plans, implements, and evaluates programs and procedures that accomplish the Superintendent's goals and those expressed in the OSSE Strategic Plan. Directs the preparation of position papers, briefing papers, and statistical reports for internal or broad distributions to include the Superintendent and other stakeholders.
- Recommends and implements the revision of regulations, policies, and procedures as needed.
- Monitors and evaluates mechanisms that enhance integrated communications within and between the Superintendent, Board Members, and cabinet staff, and other stakeholders.
- Assists in problem solving between and among offices on issues involving the Superintendent's office input.
- Prepares agenda and required materials for Superintendent's cabinet meetings.
- Establishes and maintains relationships with various organizations, elected
 officials and other key stakeholders in order to advance the goals and interests of
 the Superintendent and OSSE.

Represents the State Superintendent within the agency and with agencies and organizations by establishing, developing, and maintaining effective working relationships with other coordinating organizations. Delivers presentations on program status, accomplishments, problems, and program objectives to other government officials, and executives, both internal and external.

Leads and participates in the continuous improvement of performance of OSSE and the education system of the District.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

Expert knowledge of and skill in problem-solving, negotiation strategies, and project management. Expert who demonstrates the ability to guide and provide counsel to complex problem solving efforts for a multi-functional organization.

Superior skill in oral and written communication to prepare and present recommendations and solutions regarding complex issues based on analysis and evaluation, including the presentation of reports, proposals, etc.

Expert knowledge of the mission, objectives, strategies and program goals of OSSE and the agencies it serves in order to effectively and efficiently integrate support services with the broader objectives of the organization.

Demonstrate skills and experience in providing leadership in a managerial capacity.









The District of Columbia State Board of Education

Annual Report 2013

Improving Educational Outcomes for All District of Columbia Residents

District of Columbia
State Board of Education

202-741-0888 441 4th St NW, Suite 723N Washington, DC 20001

www.sboe.dc.gov

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

April 2014

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to share the District of Columbia State Board of Education's Annual Report for 2013. This was a milestone year in which a newly autonomous State Board strengthened its capacity to continue playing a critical role in the District of Columbia's ongoing education reform efforts.

Most notably, the State Board became independent from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) with passage of the "State Board of Education Personnel Amendment Authority Act of 2012." Our statutory responsibilities remain the same as outlined in the "Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007," including approving academic standards, high school graduation requirements, compulsory attendance rules, and the District's school accountability plan. However, the State Board now manages its own staff and budget.

In collaboration with the State Superintendent and OSSE staff, the State Board engaged with experts and the public to complete several key policy initiatives. We approved new attendance rules aimed at reducing truancy and spotting chronically absent students before they fail out. We also approved sweeping new Next Generation Science Standards that include engineering design and emphasize hands-on projects that open science to all students. In addition, the State Board launched a discussion about quality with principals at our city's "reward" schools. We look forward to working with OSSE in the upcoming months to ensure these and other policies are implemented effectively.

Over the past year, the State Board revised its mission statement and by-laws to enhance our ability to provide policy leadership, support, advocacy, and oversight of public education so that every student is valued and gains the skills and knowledge necessary to become informed, competent, and contributing global citizens. To realize that vision, the State Board has created committees to review implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. In addition, the State Board has committed to reviewing compulsory attendance rules and school report cards. Our goal is to develop a protocol and process to review of state-level policies and evaluate how well they have worked to improve education for each and every student in the District of Columbia.

Finally, the State Board took on new leadership roles in the National Association of State Boards of Education, giving the District of Columbia a strong voice in shaping national education policy. At-large member Mary Lord was elected NASBE's President-Elect. Ward 1 member Patrick Mara served on the Government Affairs Committee. And executive director Jesse Rauch will serve next year as president of the National Council of State Board of Education Executives.

Much work remains. But by working together, we will achieve our shared goal of building a world-class public education system in the nation's capital – one that prepares every child for success as scholars and as citizens.

Sincerely,

Mark Jones, President District of Columbia State Board of Education Ward 5 representative In 2013, the State Board developed the following vision, mission and core values.

Vision Statement

 All District of Columbia students will acquire the skills and knowledge to lead healthy, productive lives as engaged global citizens in a democratic society.

Mission Statement

- The mission of the District of Columbia State Board of Education is to provide policy leadership, support, advocacy, and oversight of public education to ensure that every student is valued and gains the skills and knowledge necessary to become informed, competent, and contributing global citizens.
- The State Board views its role in the achievement of this mission as one of shared responsibility, whereby it engages families, students, educators, community members, elected officials, and business leaders to play a vital role in preparing every child for college and/or career success.

Board Values and Statements

- **Quality**: Every student should have exemplary learning experiences with qualified teachers, responsive administrators, and the resources necessary to succeed in college, careers, and life.
- Choice: All students and families should have a choice of flexible course options, learning
 opportunities, and pathways to achieving competency along with ease of access to quality
 school options.
- **Equity**: All students should be ensured the provision of and/or access to high quality educational resources across the District of Columbia as a matter of right, regardless of community economic status or geographic location.
- Accountability: Students, schools, and educators should be measured regularly and fairly against established and transparent goals so taxpayers can readily determine the return on their investment in public education.
- **Engagement**: Diverse communities of students, parents, and stakeholders should be involved and engaged in educational matters in a manner that is respectful of all cultural backgrounds and abilities.
- High Expectations: All stakeholders should be fully engaged in a collaborative process with the
 goal of ensuring that all students can think critically and creatively, and contribute to their
 communities while acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to lead healthy, productive
 lives.

MEMBERS OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION 2013

President and Ward 3 Representative

Laura McGiffert Slover

Vice President and Ward 5 Representative

Mark A. Jones

At-Large Member

Mary Lord

Board Representatives

Ward 1 Ward 2
Patrick Mara Jack Jacobson
Ward 4 Ward 6

D. Kamili Anderson Monica Warren-Jones Ward 7 Ward 8

Karen Williams Trayon White

Student Representatives 2012 - 2013

Ray Clark Kelsea Johnson

Student Representatives 2013 - 2014

Jason Perry Daniel Spruill

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STAFF

Executive Director

Jesse B Rauch

Policy Analyst Staff Assistant Amaya Garcia Jamikka Briscoe-Kendrick

Attorney Advisor Kelly Davis

PREAMBLE

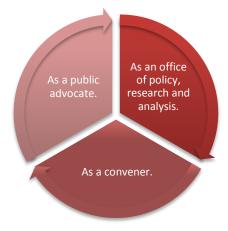
The District of Columbia State Board of Education (State Board) is a critical player in the District of Columbia's ongoing school reform efforts. Prior to June 2007, the Board of Education (i.e., the former "School Board") was the central policymaking entity on education matters. It existed as both a local and state board of education, responsible for providing leadership and monitoring the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). The old school board also established and monitored state-level education policy, such as setting graduation requirements and attendance rules.

Today, the State Board's focus and purpose are very different. Established by the "Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007" (PERAA), the State Board of Education is responsible for state-level policy matters, including approving academic standards for students; high school graduation requirements; home school regulations; the state accountability plan, including approval of school "report cards" and definition of "proficiency;" and the rules for establishing residency. A complete list of responsibilities is included on page nine. In collaboration with the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), the State Board has made great strides in these and other areas, and the State Board looks forward to continued collaborative efforts to improve educational outcomes for students.

On April 1, 2013, the State Board was granted personnel and budget autonomy – a watershed moment in the governance of District of Columbia public education. The "State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012" allows the State Board to perform its duties as an independent, impartial agency responsible for fulfilling its mission. The law also moved the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education to the State Board, re-establishing this important family and student support service while strengthening the State Board's ability to advocate for policies to ensure all students acquire the skills and knowledge required to lead healthy, productive lives.

Lay governance of public education is a deeply held American tradition that dates back to Horace Mann's original 'common school.' The State Board serves as an unbiased broker for education decision-making, focusing on the big picture, articulating the long-term vision and needs of public education, and approving policies based solely on what is best for students. In short, the State Board encourages high expectations while ensuring that all students, whether they attend a traditional or public charter school, are held to the same high expectations and have an equal chance at a great education.

The State Board plays a key role in maintaining and improving the quality of public schools through the following roles:



As an office of policy, research and analysis.

The State Board operates as a state-level policy office, providing comprehensive and objective research and analysis on state-level education issues in conjunction with its advisory and approval authorities. The State Board advances the public interest by generating, articulating, and advocating for creative and influential policies and programs that support high quality teaching, learning, and programs for students and their families. The State Board's work can inform other agencies and the DC Council, resulting in enhanced policy creation and development.

As a convener.

The State Board acts as an impartial convener of education stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, school leaders, universities, research organizations, and youth service providers, among others. By expanding communication among diverse groups, the State Board supports the search for innovative solutions while providing a robust platform to broaden public understanding of education issues in the District.

As a public advocate.

The State Board believes that high-quality educational opportunities must be available for all youth, and uses its "bully pulpit" to advocate for policies to promote equity and excellence.

The newly re-established Office of the Ombudsman furthers the State Board's capacity to respond to individual students and families, and to create policies that reflect classroom and community realities. The Office of the Student Advocate would augment the State Board's ability to identify problems and recommend changes to improve education.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES¹

The District of Columbia State Board of Education is responsible for advising the State Superintendent of Education on educational matters, including state-wide policies and regulations governing traditional, special education, academic, vocational, charter and other schools proposed by the Mayor or the State Superintendent of Education. The State Board also is responsible for approving the following state-level policies:

- State academic standards that specify what children are expected to know and be able to do, contain coherent and rigorous content, encourage the teaching of advanced skills, and are updated on a regular basis;
- High school graduation requirements;
- Standards for high-school equivalence credentials;
- State definitions of "adequate yearly progress" and "proficiency" that will be applied consistently to all local education agencies;
- State definition and standards for "highly qualified teachers," pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001;
- Standards for accreditation and certification of teacher preparation programs of colleges and universities;
- The state accountability plan for the District of Columbia developed by the Chief State School Officer, pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ensuring that: (A) the plan includes a single statewide accountability system that will ensure all local education agencies make adequate yearly progress; and (B) the statewide accountability system included in the plan is based on academic standards, academic assessments, a standardized system of accountability across all local education agencies, and a system of sanctions and rewards that will be used to hold local education agencies accountable for student achievement;
- State policies for parental involvement;
- State policies for supplemental education service providers operating in the District to ensure
 that providers have a demonstrated record of effectiveness and offer services that promote
 challenging academic achievement standards and that improve student achievement;
- The rules for residency verification;
- The list of charter school accreditation organizations;
- The categories and format of the annual report card, pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001;
- The list of private placement accreditation organizations, pursuant to Uniform Per Student Funding Formula for Public Schools and Public Charter Schools and Tax Conformity Clarification Amendment Act of 1998;
- Approve state rules for enforcing school attendance requirements; and
- Approve state standards for home schooling.

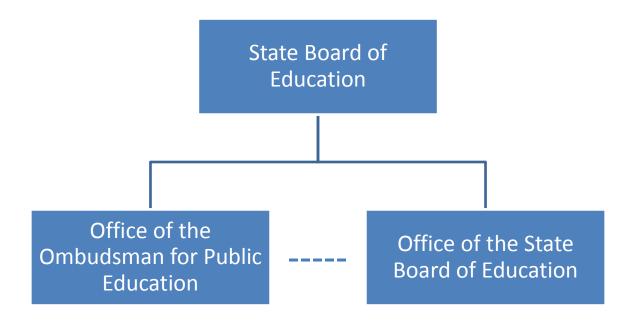
¹ For more information about the State Board of Education's role and responsibilities, visit www.sboe.dc.gov.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CALENDAR YEAR 2013

Organizational Changes

Budget and Personnel Authority

The enactment of the "State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2013" granted the State Board personnel and budget authority from the Office of State Superintendent of Education and re-established the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education within the State Board. The State Board established a committee and process to review applications for the Ombudsman's position, including a community review panel. The position was posted November 8, 2013, and the Ombudsman Selection Committee reviewed the 40 applications. Sixteen candidates were interviewed by phone per the committee's request, with six candidates interviewed in-person by the committee by year's end. In February 2014, a review panel comprised of community members from Wards 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 Interviewed the leading six candidates, resulting in the selection of Joyanna Smith, a lawyer and Ward 8 resident with charter school and mediation experience.



In addition, the "Parent and Student Empowerment Act of 2013" created a new "Office of the Student Advocate" within the State Board to provide outreach to students and parents in the District. This position was not funded for FY14. The Office was charged with facilitating the enrollment process of students, helping students and parents understand the educational options available to them, and advocating for students in mediation before the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. Like the Ombudsman, the Student Advocate also has the ability to recommend policy changes and strategies to improve the delivery of public education services and to operate Public Education Resource Centers across the District.

Officers

At the first public meeting of each year, State Board members elect a President and a Vice President. In January 2013, the State Board re-elected Ward 3 representative Laura Slover as President and Ward 5 representative Mark Jones as Vice President.

Staff

In 2013, the newly autonomous State Board hired a policy analyst – a position that had been ceded to OSSE in 2008 – and an attorney adviser. The State Board also prepared for the hiring of the Ombudsman for Public Education.

Policy and Engagement Fellows

In 2013, the State Board augmented its capacity by offering fellowships to undergraduate and graduate students interested in education or youth-related public policy. Policy and Engagement Fellows assist the State Board by conducting policy research, developing policy fact sheets, tracking policy and legislative changes, and attending the many symposia on public education held in the nation's capital.

Policy Accomplishments

Adoption of Revised Early Learning Standards

A consequence of the State Board of Education's 2010 adoption of the Common Core State Standards was the need to adopt revised (and realigned) early learning standards In February 2013, the State Board approved revised early learning standards. The revised standards represent a continuum of learning and development expected of all young children, from birth through grade three. Further, the standards are aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics, in addition to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, thus ensuring that all children will receive the same standards-based instruction regardless of where the student attends pre-kindergarten.

Adoption of Revised Compulsory Attendance Rules

In June 2013 and in December 2013, the State Board approved revised compulsory attendance rules to comply with the "South Capitol Street Memorial Amendment Act of 2012" and the "Attendance Accountability Act of 2013." However, in the process of reviewing the revised rules, the Stare Board became aware of questions and concerns about a component of the original rules, specifically some unintended consequences of setting the definition of "present" as being in school for 80% of the day. In partnership with OSSE, DCPS and the Public Charter School Board, the State Board continues to research truancy and student engagement and has formed a committee to investigate policy options.

Adoption of Revised State and LEA Report Cards

The "Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965" (ESEA) requires state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) to produce State and LEA report cards. The report cards provide important information to parents, the public, educators, community members, researchers, and others about schools in the District. They also contain the accountability information to encourage transparency in the public education system. In September 2013, the State Board reviewed and

approved revised State and LEA report cards. However, the State and LEA Report Cards are out-of-compliance with Federal guidance and the State Board has requested that the State and LEA Report Cards be updated and returned to the State Board for review and approval.

Adoption of Next Generation Science Standards

In December 2013, the State Board joined California, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington in approving the Next Generation Science Standards. Since then, Nevada and Oregon have adopted the standards. These sweeping new interdisciplinary K-12 science standards include engineering and emphasize hands-on learning that will benefit all students, including English language learners and those with special needs. Drafted by representatives from over a dozen states, including four District of Columbia teachers, the state-led effort to revise science standards reflect a new vision for American science and was strongly supported by the District's science educators. The NGSS:

- Reflect the interconnected nature of science as it is practiced and experienced in the real world;
- Are aligned to the Common Core State Standards for literacy and math;
- Integrate science and engineering; and
- Are designed to prepare students for college, careers, and citizenship.

Given that a third of District of Columbia jobs are in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields, according to a Brookings Institute report, the NGSS has clear benefits for our children and society.

Recommended Revised Graduation Requirements

To thrive in today's complex, globally competitive economy, young people must acquire skills and knowledge beyond the traditional core subjects. They need to think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, work in diverse teams, and apply what they have learned to unfamiliar tasks. They also need to develop a deep understanding of the shared heritage and values that bind Americans and communities together. Above all, if tomorrow's generations are to lead healthy, productive lives as full participants in a free society, they must learn to learn.

Research shows that completing a challenging, rigorous, and well-rounded curriculum builds a strong foundation for future success. The courses, experiences, and activities that compose this academic bedrock are expressed as credits required for a high school diploma.

At the request of the then-State Superintendent, the State Board began a review of graduation requirements in 2012. The proposed revisions to the District's high school graduation requirements were crafted with input from educators, community groups, students, parents, and other stakeholders, and formally presented to OSSE in September 2013. The State Superintendent has shared his commitment to work with the State Board to finalize the revisions, as well as to continue discussion of multiple diploma options.

The proposed revisions also incorporate support for competency- or performance-based learning. In allowaing schools to provide credit for mastery, the District would join other cutting-edge states, including Colorado, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, and New Hampshire, that currently permit credit for mastery or competency.

Adoption of Revised Organizational By-Laws

The State Board required new organizational by-laws to reflect its new independent status. In a series of working sessions and retreats, board members identified policy priorities that reflected shared concerns and core values, established committees to lead the work and develop recommendations, and adopted revised organizational by-laws to support an autonomous agency. The State Board was aided enormously by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), which facilitated a daylong workshop on effective policymaking and board practices. As a part of this process, the State Board stated its intention to add non-voting Educator Representatives to the State Board and established operational guidelines for the Ombudsman for Public Education that will maintain the ombudsman's independence.

National Youth Science Camp

The State Board is committed to expanding learning opportunities for District of Columbia youth, particularly in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Since President Obama made STEM a priority, the State Board has been involved in promoting STEM in the District's schools. Since 2011, State Board member Mary Lord has served as the selection committee coordinator for the National Youth Science Camp – a prestigious residential summer science program in West Virginia. The District's 2013 delegates were Sasha Rickard, who graduated from School Without Walls, and Tyler Rogers, a graduate of Capital City Public Charter School. The State Board honored them at its June public meeting.

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Involvement

At its annual conference in June, 2013, NASBE members from across the country elected Mary Lord to represent them as the NASBE President-Elect. In addition, executive director Jesse B Rauch was elected to be the President-Elect of the NASBE-affiliate organization, NCSBEE, the National Council of State Board of Education Executives.

Patrick Mara continues to serve on the Government Affairs Committee, giving the District of Columbia a voice in shaping federal education policy. Through NASBE, State Board members get to exchange views with education leaders from other states, learn from experts, and bring back best practices and innovative ideas from the annual conference.

TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES & ACTIONS

January 16, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Discussion of Revised Early Learning Standards
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

January 23, 2013 - Public Meeting

- DC State Board of Education Leadership Vote
- Welcome of New Board Members
- Commemorating the 2nd Anniversary of William Lockridge's Passing
- Reward Schools Presentations
- OSSE Presentation: Revised Early Learning Standards

February 6, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- OSSE Presentation: National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)
- OSSE Presentation: Revised Early Learning Standards

February 13, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Review Feedback on Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

February 20, 2013 - Public Meeting

- DC Teacher of the Year Presentation
 - Jacqueline Simms 2012 Milken Educator Award Winner
 - o Julian Hipkins, III 2012 DC History Teacher of the Year
 - Julia King 2013 DC Teacher of the Year
- Action: Approval of Revised Early Learning Standards

March 13, 2013 – Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revising State and LEA Report Cards
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

March 20, 2013 – Public Meeting

• OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements

April 10, 2013 – Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal
- SBOE Discussion: "Testing Integrity Act of 2013"

April 17, 2013 - Public Meeting

- Reward Schools Presentations
- Expert Panel: Testing Integrity
 - Peggy Carr, Association Commissioner for Assessment, NCES
 - Jeff Noel, Director of Data Management, OSSE
- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements

April 18, 2013 - DC Council Hearing on the "Testing Integrity Act of 2013"

Action: Provided Testimony on the "Testing Integrity Act of 2013"

May 1, 2013 – Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal
- SBOE Presentation: Update from the Parent & Home Engagement Committee

May 29, 2013 – Public Meeting

- Reward Schools Presentations
- OSSE Presentation: Administration of the DC CAS
- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements

June 5, 2013 – Working Session

OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards

June 12, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- SBOE Presentation: Update from the Parent & Home Engagement Committee

June 12, 2013 - Working Session

Briefing on DC Education Adequacy Study

June 19, 2013 - Public Meeting

- Celebration of DC's Representatives to the National Youth Science Camp
- Revised State and LEA Report Cards
 - Expert Panel
 - Candice Santomauro, Vice President, Local Engagement, Great Schools
 - Paige Kowalski, Director, State Policy Initiatives, Data Quality Campaign
 - o Government Panel
 - Jeff Noel, Director of Assessment and Accountability, OSSE
- OSSE Presentation: Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- Action: Approval of Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- SBOE Presentation: Update from the Parent & Home Engagement Committee

July 3, 2013 – Working Session

- Introduction of SBOE Policy and Engagement Fellows
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

July 10, 2013 - Working Session

- SBOE Presentation: Update on Introduced Legislation at the DC Council
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

July 17, 2013 – Working Session

- SBOE Presentation: Revising the State Board's Mission and Vision Statements
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

July 24, 2013 - Working Session

OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards

July 31, 2013 – Public Meeting

- SBOE Presentation: Report from the NASBE Annual Conference
- OSSE Presentation: Briefing on SY2012-2013 DC CAS Results
- OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards

August 7, 2013 – Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Career and Technical Education Strategic Plan
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal

August 2013 - Public Meeting

State Board Recess – No Meeting

September 4, 2013 – Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards
- SBOE Presentation: Distribution of Draft Revised Organizational By-Laws
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal
- Action: Transmittal of Recommended Revisions to Graduation Requirements

September 11, 2013 - Working Session

- SBOE Presentation: Update on Graduation Requirements Proposal
- OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards
- OSSE Presentation: Next Generation Science Standards
- SBOE Presentation: Discussion of Draft Revised Organizational By-Laws

September 25, 2013 – Public Meeting

- SBOE Presentation: Next Generation Science Standards
- OSSE Presentation: Briefing on SY2012-2013 DC CAS Results
- OSSE Presentation: Revised State and LEA Report Cards
- Action: Approval of Revised State and LEA Report Cards

October 2, 2013 - Working Session

- Briefing on Raise DC
- OSSE Presentation: Next Generation Science Standards
- DC Council Presentation: Update on Introduced Legislation at the DC Council
- SBOE Presentation: Discussion of Draft Revised Organizational By-Laws

October 23, 2012 - Public Meeting

- SBOE Presentation: Introduction of New Student Representatives
 - o Jason Perry, Woodrow Wilson Senior High School
 - Daniel Spruill, Friendship Collegiate Academy
- SBOE Presentation: Update from Competency-Based Learning Study Tour
- SBOE Presentation: Update from National Summit on Education Reform
- OSSE Presentation: Next Generation Science Standards

- SBOE Presentation: Discussion of Draft Revised Organizational By-Laws
- Action: Approval of Revised Organizational By-Laws

November 6, 2013 – Working Session

- SBOE Presentation: Update on the Ombudsman Selection Process
- SBOE Presentation: Update on Introduced Legislation at the DC Council

November 13, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Common Core State Standards Implementation and Lessons Learned
- OSSE Presentation: Revisions to Compulsory Attendance Rules

November 20, 2013

- Reward Schools Presentations
- OSSE Presentation: Revisions to Compulsory Attendance Rules
- OSSE Presentation: Next Generation Science Standards

December 4, 2013 - Working Session

- SBOE Presentation: Legislative Update
- OSSE Presentation: Review Feedback on Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- OSSE Presentation: Review Feedback on Next Generation Science Standards

December 11, 2013 - Working Session

- OSSE Presentation: Revised Residency Verification Rules
- OSSE Presentation: Unpacking the Next Generation Science Standards

December 18, 2013 - Public Meeting

- Reward Schools Presentation
- OSSE Presentation: Update Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- Action: Approval of Revised Compulsory Attendance Requirements
- OSSE Presentation: Update on Next Generation Science Standards
- Action: Approval of Next Generation Science Standards

RESOLUTIONS AND RULEMAKING

RULEMAKING

On June 19, 2013, the State Board of Education approved additional revisions to the District's compulsory attendance rules (Title 5, Chapter A-21, in the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations) to address student attendance at public schools and schools receiving District funding. The need for revisions emerged with the implementation of the "South Capitol Street Memorial Amendment Act of 2012."

Compulsory attendance laws have a long history in the United States; the District of Columbia made attendance in school mandatory in 1925, almost 90 years ago. Since then, the laws, as well as the accompanying administrative rules, have undergone many changes and revisions. Today, a school age student is defined as a child who reached the age of five (5) years on or before September 30th of the current school year. This definition does not include homeschooled students.

The "South Capitol Street Memorial Amendment Act of 2012" (Act) reconfirms and strengthens compulsory attendance laws. First, it recognizes that reporting attendance is a requirement that applies to all schools in the District of Columbia, including private schools. Second, the Act requires all schools to appoint an attendance monitor. The attendance monitor has specific responsibilities with regard to reporting daily attendance. Third, the Act requires schools to establish school-based student support team for students who are chronically absent or chronically. Finally, the Act requires OSSE to collect attendance data on a daily basis and use this information to report on the District's rates of truancy. The rules provided guidance on these legislative mandates as well as established new definitions for chronically absent and truant children and created a uniform definition to be used in a formula to calculate truancy rates:

Truancy Rate = Number of Chronically Truant Students

Number of Enrolled Students

The compulsory attendance rules were further revised with the enactment of the "Attendance Accountability Amendment Act of 2013." In addition to technical amendments, the Attendance Act made the following changes:

- Changed "school days" to "business days" for reporting purposes;
- Mandated a referral of students who are fourteen (14) through to seventeen (17) years of age
 after the accrual of fifteen (15) unexcused absences rather than the twenty-five (25) unexcused
 absences previously mandated by the "South Capitol Street Memorial Amendment Act of 2012;"
- Amended the definition for the term "Educational institution," and
- Amended the definition for the term "Parent."

Nonetheless, members of the community shared additional concerns about the truancy rules. Consequently, the State Board established the Truancy and Student Engagement Committee, which will be responsible for investigating issues of truancy and student engagement. This work will continue in 2014.

STATE RESOLUTIONS

SR13-01 – Adoption of Revised Early Learning Standards – March 20, 2013

On December 17, 2008, the State Board of Education adopted revised Early Learning Standards for Infants, Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) English/Language Arts and Mathematics in July 2010, the State Board committed to aligning other academic standards with the CCSS. The State Board reviewed the revised Early Learning Standards and found they: 1) specified the knowledge and skills that students are expected to achieve; 2) contained coherent and rigorous content; and 3) encouraged the teaching of advanced skills.

SR13-02 - Compulsory Attendance and School Attendance Rules - March 15, 2013

The State Board approved revisions to the District of Columbia attendance rules in Title 5A, Chapter 21 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations. The proposed rules implement attendance-related provisions in the "South Capitol Street Memorial Amendment Act of 2012" by addressing school attendance monitors, data reporting requirements, intervention services, school-based student support teams, technical assistance to schools, and the creation of a truancy resource guide for parents.

SR13-03 – Improving Testing Integrity – April 17, 2013

The District of Columbia, in accordance with the mandates of the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001," utilizes standardized testing to measure student proficiency in reading, math, and science. The State Board believes it is critical that the results of this testing be accurate, fair, useful, interpretable, and comparable to ensure a meaningful state accountability system for its schools and students. The State Board further believes that assurances of testing integrity and a statewide testing integrity framework are vital elements of education reform. The State Board, given that it is tasked to approve standards and set expectations for what District of Columbia schoolchildren should know and be able to do, approved a resolution in support of increased testing integrity via the passage of the DC Council's "Testing Integrity Act of 2013."

SR13-04 – Approved Revised Categories and Format of the State and LEA Report Cards – September 25, 2013

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is mandated by the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001" to produce Statewide and LEA Report Cards to provide parents and stakeholders access to a uniform set of factors and data points across all LEAs consistent with the District's statewide accountability system. OSSE reformatted the State and LEA Report Cards and added new categories, aligning them with the District's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. The State Board is responsible for approving the categories and format of the State Report Card as presented at this meeting.

SR13-05 – Adoption of Revised Organizational By-Laws – October 23, 2013

On April 1, 2013, the State Board received independent budget and personnel authority with the enactment of "State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2013." Consequently, the former organizational by-laws put in place by Mayoral order in 2007 expired with the implementation of the new law. The State Board's Governance Committee revised the by-laws to reflect relevant District laws and regulations, including the District's "Open Meetings Act" and ethics policies. The revised by-laws were deemed legally sufficient by the Office of the Attorney General.

SR13-06 – Adoption of Revised Compulsory Attendance Rules – December 18, 2013

The State Board is responsible for approving state rules related to the enforcement of school attendance requirements. The State Board recognizes that truancy has a complex etiology that varies by student.

Research indicates that truant youth are often coping with multiple risk factors, which call for a holistic assessment of the underlying causes of behavior. The State Superintendent of Education prepared rulemaking that aligned compulsory attendance regulations with the "Attendance Accountability Amendment Act of 2013," which became effective on September 19, 2013.

SR13-07 – Adoption of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) – December 18, 2013

The State Board believes that Next Generation Science standards have benefits for both children and society, and that the District of Columbia must prepare our students to be critical and flexible thinkers capable of working in emerging science, engineering, and technology fields]or other high wage careers. The NGSS are based on a framework developed by the National Academies of Science, which brought the latest research on learning and teaching in science together with experienced science educators to guide the writing of interdisciplinary new K-12 science standards that stress learning by doing.

CEREMONIAL RESOLUTIONS

CR13-01 – Honoring Julian Hipkins III, DC History Teacher of the Year - February 20, 2013 The State Board recognized Mr. Julian Hipkins III, of Capital City Public Charter School, as the 2012 recipient of the DC History Teacher of the Year award.

CR13-02 – Jacqueline Simms, Milken Educator Award Winner – February 20, 2013

The State Board recognized Jacqueline Simms, of Anne Beers Elementary School, as the 2012 recipient of the prestigious Milken Educator Award, which provides public recognition and an unrestricted financial award of \$25,000 to elementary and secondary school teachers, principals, and other education professionals who are furthering excellence in education.

CR13-03 - Honoring Julia T. King, 2013 DC Teacher of the year - February 20, 2013

The State Board recognized Julia T. King, a 7th grade mathematics and reading teacher at DC Preparatory Public Charter School – Edgewood Middle Campus, as the 2013 DC Teacher of the Year.

CR13-04 – Honoring Sasha Rickard, District of Columbia Delegate to the 2013 National Youth Science Camp – June 19, 2013

The State Board coordinates the selection of two graduating high school seniors each year to represent the District of Columbia at the prestigious National Youth Science Camp in West Virginia. This experience, which provides the opportunity to exchange ideas with top scientists and participate in outdoor learning experiences with peers from around the country, is granted to students who have exhibited leadership and outstanding scholastic achievement in science and mathematics. The State Board recognized School Without Walls graduating senior Sasha Rickard for excellence in science, robotics, athletics, and music throughout her high school career.

CR13-05 – Honoring Tyler Rogers, District of Columbia Delegate to the 2013 National Youth Science Camp – June 19, 2013

The State Board coordinates the selection of two graduating high school seniors each year to represent the District of Columbia at the prestigious National Youth Science Camp in West Virginia. This experience, which provides the opportunity to exchange ideas with top scientists and participate in outdoor learning experiences with peers from around the country, is granted to students who have exhibited leadership and outstanding scholastic achievement in science and mathematics. The State Board recognized Capital City Public Charter School graduating senior Tyler Rogers for excellence in the areas of science and mathematics throughout his high school career.

CR13-06 – Honoring Lorraine Lamont-Brandon on her retirement – June 19, 2013

The State Board honored Mrs. Lorraine Lamont-Brandon, the Business Manager for Grover A. Cleveland Elementary School, upon her retirement after 27 years with the District of Columbia Public Schools.

CR13-07 – Honoring Ray Clark, DC State Board of Education Representative, 2012-2013 – July 31, 2013 Annually, the State Board invites two public school juniors or seniors to apply to represent their peers as Student Representatives to the State Board. The role of Student Representative provides students with an opportunity to exchange ideas with State Board members and educational stakeholders while participating in the creation of educational standards and policy. The State Board recognized Mr. Ray Clark, from Benjamin Banneker Academic High School, for academic excellence and honored him as one of the District of Columbia's most promising and creative young leaders in the high school graduating Class of 2013.

CR13-08 – Honoring Kelsea Johnson, DC State Board of Education Representative, 2012-2013 – July 31, 2013

Annually, the State Board invites two public school juniors or seniors to represent their peers as Student Representatives to the State Board. The role of Student Representative provides students with an opportunity to exchange ideas with State Board members and educational stakeholders while participating in the creation of educational standards and policy. The State Board recognized Ms. Kelsea Johnson, from School Without Walls, for academic excellence and honored her as one of the District of Columbia's most promising and creative young leaders in the high school graduating Class of 2013.

CONNECTING WITH THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The District of Columbia State Board of Education holds public meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are held in the Old Council Chambers located at 441 4th Street, NW, Lobby Level, unless otherwise specified.

All meetings are open to the public. Members of the public are welcome to testify before the State Board on educational matters. Meeting dates and times are posted at least one week in advance on the agency's website, www.sboe.dc.gov. The monthly meetings include discussions on education topics that have an impact on students in the District of Columbia. Depending on the topic of discussion, internal and external stakeholders are welcome to present on topics for which they or their organization serve as subject matter experts.

All interested individuals who would like to testify on an agenda item or other education issue can do so by contacting State Board staff by email at sboe@dc.gov by the close of business (5:30 p.m.) on the Monday prior to the meeting.

All meetings are broadcast live on the District Knowledge Network (DKN) on Comcast Channel 99 and RCN Channel 18.

Monthly Meetings

Public Hearings

Public hearings offer individuals an opportunity to provide comment on an education-related topic of their choice or on topics included in the meeting's agenda. All who wish to comment must submit their name and affiliation in advance to the State Board office. All comments are compiled and reviewed by the State Board prior to a vote. If warranted, the State Board has the authority to re-open the public comment period. This forum also provides an opportunity for State Board members to ask questions and gain new information about important education topics during presentations from researchers, advocates, community organizations, parents, students and other stakeholders, as well as the Office of the State Superintendent of Education on a number of key initiatives.

Working Sessions

The State Board convene monthly working sessions in order to offer State Board members the opportunity to ask questions and gain new information about important education topics during presentations from researchers, advocates, community organizations, parents, students and other stakeholders. These sessions are intended to provide the State Board with opportunities to engage subject matter experts in in-depth discussions about a specific topic or issue.

Votes

The State Board takes all public comments and expert testimony into consideration before voting on regulations, rulings, or resolutions.

Public Engagement and Outreach

The State Board is committed to engaging the public on educational matters regarding the children and young adults in the District of Columbia. In keeping with its advisory authority and mandate to inform the public, the State Board receives input from hundreds of parents, teachers, students, education experts, scholars, and community advocates at regular meetings as well as during community forums.

State Board staff also responds to phone calls, emails, and correspondence from residents with concerns or questions about issues from bullying to obtaining copies of high school diplomas. Since State Board meetings are televised, the State Board reaches a broad home audience beyond those who attend the monthly meetings.

In addition to the District Knowledge Network, the State Board uses television, radio, print media, and social networking to further engage residents in education policy and reform. The State Board can be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/dcstateboard and on Twitter by following @DCSBOE.



The Office of the Ombudsman is responsible for assisting students and parents resolve problems as they engage with the District of Columbia Public Schools and public charter schools. The Office offers conflict resolution services to parents, families, and students and is committed to resolving school-related complaints, disputes and problems quickly and efficiently in all areas that affect student learning.

The Office of the Ombudsman is independent and impartial, and through the provision of conflict resolution services, will ease the frustration of students and parents as they engage with the education system. The Office's efforts are directed at improving all public schools, assisting with closing the achievement gap, and promoting family engagement.

What is the State Board of Education's mission?

The overall mission of the State Board of Education is to provide policy leadership, support, advocacy and oversight of public education to ensure that every student is valued and learns the skills and knowledge necessary to become informed, competent, and contributing global

How does the Office of the Ombudsman work?

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education is independent, impartial, neutral, and confidential. The Ombudsman will facilitate and/or mediate conversations between parents and school officials, guide all parties towards the resolution of problems, with the primary focus on what is best for the student, and advocate for fair processes along the way. Our Office will respond to you in a timely manner, listen carefully to your complaints and concerns, and will work with you and all participating parties to achieve a meaningful resolution.

What issues does the Ombudsman deal with?

- Bullying/ harassment
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Special Education
- Enrollment
- Transportation
- Discipline
- Academic Progress
- Truancy
- Transition from Pre-school to Kindergarten and many other important issues!

For more information about the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education, please visit www.sboe.dc.gov, or call 202.741.0888. If you would like to drop by our office, Ombudsman services staff are available Monday through Friday from the hours of 9:00 am-5:30 pm.

District of Columbia Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

Ombudsman for Public Education Joyanna Smith











Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education

Annual Report 2014

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September 17, 2014

To: District of Columbia State Board of Education

Letter from the Ombudsman for Public Education

We are so excited to have completed our inaugural school year in the re-established Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education was re-established in



order to provide parents, students, and families with support in all areas that affect student learning. We are problem solvers. We help parents resolve disputes within DCPS¹ and public charter schools for any issue that affects student learning. Some of these areas include bullying, special education, school discipline, truancy, transportation, and academic progress. We are here to help students, parents, and families outside of the judicial system in a way that will reduce the number of litigants, balance inequities in power distribution, and help parents and families to achieve resolution much faster than the judicial system will allow. Moreover, we serve as an early warning system for public schools because we are able to alert them to recurring problems and identify opportunities to resolve problems quickly before they become systemic issues.

As Education Ombudsmen, we do not conduct formal investigations, but rather resolve issues through informal and formal conflict resolution practices. We offer confidential services as confidentiality is essential to gaining the trust of families and encouraging openness both from the complainant and the public school system. This openness by all parties also enables the Ombudsmen to gather information and evaluate the facts based on the fullest understanding.

Our role as Education Ombudsmen may take different forms, including taking time to listen, identifying issues, assessing how problems affect student learning, coaching parents through challenging conversations, intervening in a school-related conflict that has not reached resolution through previous attempts, or facilitating a neutral and safe place for schools and families to collaboratively reach resolution.

We are so honored to have already worked with so many families. We believe that students benefit and that student achievement is improved when there is a collaborative relationship between families, students, and schools. Parents and families should be equal partners in making decisions that affect students in DC's public schools. Family engagement is critical to a student's success in the classroom and parent involvement is not a peripheral activity or a box on a checklist. Instead, meaningful parent involvement seeks to engage parents in the day-to-day endeavor of educating children. Moreover, we believe parents and families should be equipped with the knowledge and resources that will allow them to make informed decisions to ensure high levels of learning for their students.

Warmly,

ooyanna Smith

Ombudsman for Public Education

¹District of Columbia Public Schools



Executive Summary

ROLE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education is an independent and neutral office that helps parents and students resolve complaints regarding public schools in DC. After a several year hiatus, the office reopened its doors on February 26, 2014.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE FIRST YEAR

Between March 2014 and August 2014, the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education received 150 complaints and concerns. Operating with just one staff member for most of that time, the Ombudsman was able to resolve 94% of those complaints. Some of the Ombudsman's successes included:

- Retrieving credits in order to help students graduate with a high school diploma;
- Returning students back to school after they had been wrongly forced out of school;
- Preventing bullying by negotiating classroom reassignment within a school; and

Equipping parents with tools for self-advocacy in the special education process.

OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

More than two-thirds of complaints came from parents of DCPS students. Just over a fourth of complaints came from parents of students in DC public charter schools.

Nearly half of the complaints came from families living in Wards 7 and 8, though the office did receive complaints from all wards.

The most common subject of complaints was special education (22%), followed closely by student discipline (20%). Other common complaint topics were administrative (20%), bullying (9%), and safety (7%).

A disproportionate number of the discipline complaints received by the office involved students in special education and African-American students.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING DC'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEMS

- Welcome parents as partners: Parents need to know that school staff welcome their participation in their children's education and value their opinions.
- Transparent sharing of information: Parents need full information about school policies, especially regarding the special education and discipline processes. DC schools should also regularly report comprehensive discipline data to the public.
- Increase parent advocate training: Expand parent training, empowerment and advocacy. The Office of the Ombudsman will recommend to the Office of the Student Advocate to work with non-profits, advocacy groups, and schools to create a cadre of trained parent advocates who will offer an accessible support network to parents with special education students.

Section I

The Office of Ombudsman for Public Education

STAFF

Joyanna Smith, Ombudsman for Public Education Elizabeth Tossell, Associate Ombudsman for Public Education Holland Rainey, Fellow Jason Amirhadji, Fellow



Our office is now staffed with seasoned professionals who have demonstrated expertise in public education, special education law, conflict resolution, and family involvement. We have worked to expand our staff capacity, and as of August 25, 2014, have added an Associate Ombudsman and two fellows who were recruited in order to meet the growing demand for our services.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education was first established in the "District of Columbia Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007." This Act, "PERAA"² established the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education so that parents and residents would have a place to express concerns and seek results. In 2009, due to changes in funding, the Office of the Ombudsman was defunded.

In 2012, the Council of the District of Columbia recognized the continuing great need and strong community desire for such an entity, and reestablished the Ombudsman's office within the State Board of Education under the "State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012."³ The new mandate declared that "the Ombudsman shall serve as an independent entity responsible for receiving concerns and mediating complaints from parents and students concerning public education and to provide outreach to parents, students and teachers to further this purpose." With the appointment of the current Ombudsman for Public Education, Joyanna Smith, the office formally reopened its doors to District of Columbia families on February 26, 2014.

WHAT IS AN OMBUDSMAN?

"Ombudsman" is derived from a Swedish word meaning an "entrusted person" or "grievance representative." The word has come to denote a trusted commissioner or agent who looks after the interests or legal affairs of a particular group. In the United States, numerous public ombudsman offices have been created—through

legislative, executive, or judicial authorization—as independent agencies that monitor the delivery of services for certain populations such as children, the elderly, incarcerated adults, university students, and government workers.

OUR UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY AS THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Nationally, just a handful of states offer educational ombudsman services, and frequently those are not fully independent but operate under the auspices of a local school district. There are few states which offer an education ombudsman office whose services are truly autonomous, operating solely as a neutral agent for the benefit of the education community. As we succeed in reducing the level of conflict and litigation by increasing the level of trust and transparency among educational stakeholders, our goal is that our burgeoning office in the nation's capital will ultimately become a model to be followed.

OUR MISSION

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education's mission is to provide equal access to education for all students within District of Columbia public schools and to support student engagement and achievement.

OUR VISION

We envision an educational system where all parents, families, educators and students are fully engaged in the public school systems and are empowered to make informed decisions that improve student achievement.

OUR GOALS

- Respond to concerns in a timely, caring, and productive manner.
- Contribute creative policy solutions by identifying and sharing trends.
- Act as a source of detection and early warning for emerging issues.
- Recommend suggestions for systemic change to prevent recurring problems and improve existing processes.
- Reduce the need for administrative hearings and litigation by facilitating appropriate and timely resolution of education related conflicts.
- Facilitate replicable processes for encouraging communication between parents and schools.

ADVOCACY

We serve as a neutral party and do not advocate for any particular individual or entity. We are here to ensure fairness of process and equitable outcomes for students and families within the District of Columbia.

SERVICES

Our primary functions are as follows:

- Conflict resolution services for issues that impact individual students;
- Strategic recommendations to improve educational outcomes for all students;
- Collaboration with families and stakeholders to address systemic issues such as bullying and harassment, educational opportunity gaps and overrepresentation in school discipline;

² A17-0038.

³ A19-0651.



4. Information to families about the educational opportunities and resources in DC.

We provide our free and confidential services in person, through an online form, email, and the telephone. Our online form is available at

www.sboe.dc.gov/Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman will facilitate and/ or mediate conversations between parents and school officials and will guide all parties toward resolution of problems, with a primary focus on what is best for the student. As part of our process, we research applicable education laws, policies, and best practices. We also interview all of the parties involved, which may include teachers, principals, other school staff members, and witnesses to the situation in question. Furthermore, we review student records in order to have an informed perspective on the issue at hand. The Office will respond to all complaints in a timely manner, listen carefully to the concerns presented, and will work with all parties to resolve complaints efficiently and effectively.

As an example of our approach, if a party has reached out to the Office about a long-term suspension or expulsion, the Ombudsman may 1) identify the applicable discipline policy, 2) review the facts to determine whether the school system is following the appropriate process based on the policy, 3) ensure the long-term suspension did not violate any specific law, 4) explain school processes to the parent and families, and 5) figure out the most expedient way of getting the student back in school.

While we are committed to resolving cases as quickly as possible, we are more focused on finding the resolution that is best for the student. We will keep cases open as we work tirelessly to address and resolve issues presented to our office.

SERVICES INCOMPATIBLE WITH OUR MISSION:

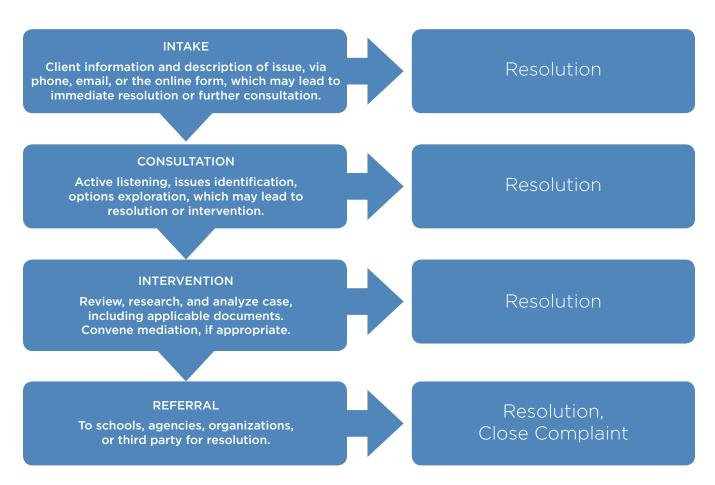
Because of the informal, neutral, confidential, and independent positioning of an ombudsman office, Education Ombudsmen do not undertake the following roles or activities:

- Participate in formal investigations or play any role in a formal judicial proceeding.
- Serve in any other organizational role that would compromise the neutrality of the ombudsman role.
- Make binding decisions or mandate policies. We cannot force a school or a Local Education Agency (LEA) to take a specific action. Instead, we will recommend a course of action based on discussions between various parties involved and assist with reaching a resolution that is focused on the best interests of the student.
- Provide legal advice or legal services.
- Intervene in school personnel decisions. We have no authority to hire or fire anyone based on the merits of a complaint.

OUR CASE PROCESS - HOW WE GET RESULTS

The Ombudsman's case management process⁴ has four (4) steps, though some may repeat:

1) Intake 2) Consultation 3) Intervention 4) Resolution.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH EFFORTS

We have met with and/or presented before a number of organizations, community groups, and District Government agencies, including:

- Advocates for Justice and Education
- Annual DC Parent Teacher Association Convention
- Back-to-School Giveaway with the OCASE Foundation
- Center for Court Excellence
- Children's Law Center
- Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN)
- District of Columbia Public Schools
- Flamboyan Foundation and Parent Leadership Training Institute
- Hillcrest Civic Association Group

- Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
- Ward 2 Education Network
- Ward 5 Council on Education
- Ward 7 Education Council
- Watkins Elementary School

The Office of the Ombudsman has also been featured in the Washington Post, Greater Greater Education Blog, and two radio shows—the DC Politics Hour with Eugene Dewitt Kinlow and WPGC 95.5.

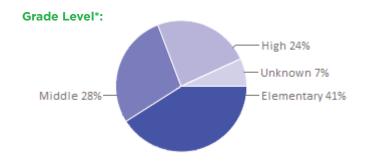
⁴ This chart is an adaption from the Washington State Office of the Ombudsman's "Ombudsman Resource Manual," Jan. 6, 2011, p.9.

Section II 2014 Ombudsman's Office Data

WHO WE SERVE

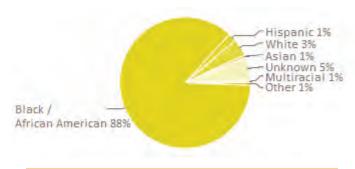
In nearly six months from March 2014 to mid-August 2014, the majority of calls to our office came from parents (71%) of DCPS students. Another 26% came from parents of DC public charter school students. Most parents (41%) learned about our office through the Office of the Ombudsman website. Additionally, 9% were referred by DC City Councilmembers' offices, and 22% were referred through DC Government agencies. To ensure that all community members are aware of the Ombudsman's office, we will continue establishing strategic partnerships with non-profits and advocacy groups within the District of Columbia.

Of all calls placed to the Ombudsman's office, nearly 45% of the students and families that contacted our office lived in Wards 7 and 8. We find that these wards tend to be areas with the highest need for our services. In 2011, Ward 8 reportedly had "the highest unemployment rate in any area that had a labor force of comparable size." 5 Wards 7 and 8 are both predominantly African-American: in the 2010 census, 94.9% of Ward 7 residents and 93.5% of Ward 8 identified as black or African-American.⁶ Almost three quarters of all teenagers living in Wards 7 and 8 live in single female headed households.⁷ Nearly half of all births to teenage mothers in the District were in Wards 7 and 8.8 Areas of high distress often require additional resources. Aligned with that need, our office is heavily utilized by parents and students in Wards 7 and 8.

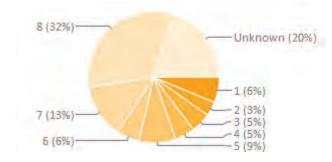


*Grade levels: Preschool-4th Grade=Elementary School; 5th-8th=Middle School; 9th-12th=High School.

Student's Race/Ethnicity:



Wards Represented:



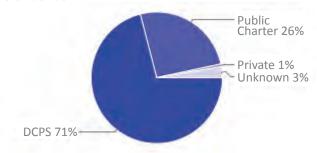
⁵ Timothy R. Homan, "Unemployment Rate in Washington's Ward 8 is Highest in U.S.," Bloomberg News, Mar. 30, 2011, available at http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-30/unemployment-rate-in-washington-s-ward-8-is-highest-in-u-s-.html.

⁶ DC Metropolitan Police Department, "Demographic and Housing Profiles 2010 by Ward," available at http://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Demographic%2520and%2520Housing%2520Profiles%25202010%2520by%2520Ward.pdf.

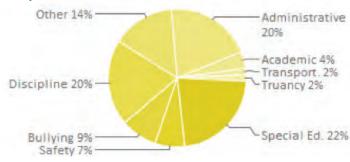
⁷ Jennifer Comey, Eshauna Smith & Peter A. Tatian, "On the Road to Adulthood: A Databook about Teenagers and Young Adults in the District, 2009," Urban Institute and DC Alliance of Youth Advocates, p. 13, available at http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411896 road to adulthood.pdf.

⁸ Jennifer Comey, Eshauna Smith & Peter A. Tatian, "On the Road to Adulthood: A Databook about Teenagers and Young Adults in the District, 2009," Urban Institute and DC Alliance of Youth Advocates, p. 48, available at http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411896 road to adulthood.pdf.

Type of School:

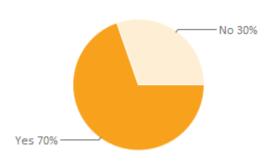


Complaint Issues



Almost one-third of the calls involved students who were currently out of school, whether because of formal discipline, informal discipline, safety concerns, or other reasons.

IS THE STUDENT ATTENDING SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE CALL?

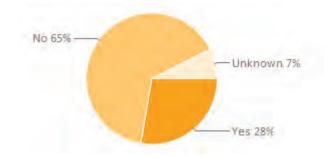


Complaints from families of students with disabilities comprise the largest share of calls we have received (22%), with discipline matters a close second (20%). Some categories were identified to address a singular issue, like bullying and safety, but we found that those students, too, frequently had overlapping special needs. When adjusted for these factors, we find that more than half of our work (59%) addresses disability and discipline challenges experienced by students and their families. Although our data is preliminary due to a short term of operation since

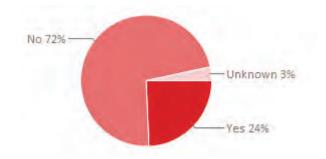


the re-establishment of the office, we have found our data mirrors both national and local trends

DOES THE STUDENT HAVE A DISABILITY?

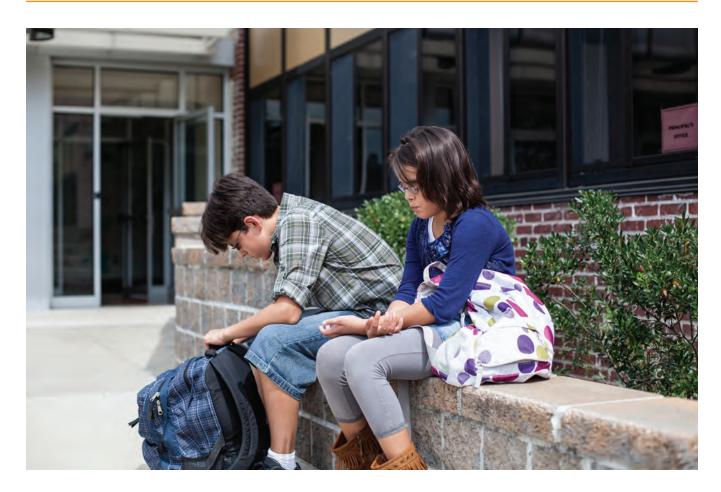


DOES THE STUDENT HAVE AN IEP?



Section III

Observations in Special Education and School Discipline



A. SPECIAL EDUCATION CHALLENGES

Very few parents send their child off to their first day of school anticipating that their child will fall behind and struggle with an educational disability, yet there were 11,043 students in DC special education for the 2013-14 school year.⁹

Most parents are initially unaware of "routine" childhood behaviors that may be symptomatic of disabilities. It is only after their child has had a pattern of disciplinary actions or educational failure that parents typically become aware of the special education system. At that point, navigating the administrative processes can be overwhelming to parents. It is critical that parents quickly receive the information they need to advocate for their children, as unaddressed disabilities are often devastating to a student's educational progress.

Parents report that the special education process often feels like an intricate maze. There are dozens of acronyms to master, dense documents to read, and sometimes multiple DC Government agencies are involved. Feeling

⁹ District of Columbia State Advisory Panel on Special Education, "2013-2014 Annual Report," Jul. 1, 2014, p. 6, available at http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/SAPAnnualReport2013-2014.pdf.

overwhelmed by the opaque process, parents often decide to retain special education attorneys or advocates. But there are not enough attorneys in DC who represent low-income parents on a pro bono or contingency basis. Although groups such as the Children's Law Center ("CLC") and Advocates for Justice and Education ("AJE") offer attorney assistance to certain qualifying populations, representation is not guaranteed nor are there sufficient resources to meet the needs of parents. Furthermore, many of the problems parents face do not require formal legal action. In those cases, parents are better served by an office that can provide them with information, facilitate their communication with schools, and offer mediation.

As stated earlier, since March 2014, 22% of the calls to the Office of the Ombudsman were related to special education. It is our observation that most special education complaints, both formal and informal, arise out of frustration at the lack of timely, informational guidance through a complex process full of procedures defined by both federal and local law. Parents have complained to our office that they need timely resolution and are often disappointed by the time it takes to achieve resolution through due process hearings.¹⁰ Moreover, special education policies are often not transparent and leave the resolution to a disinterested hearing officer through an adversarial process. By then, it is too late for many students to regain the education they have missed awaiting due process to correct or ratify educational placements made by DCPS and public charter schools. Thus, we propose that disputes concerning the provision of special education services be addressed by a collaborative process between students, families, and schools prior to due process complaints being filed.

The District of Columbia State Advisory Panel (SAP) on Special Education observed in 2010 that "the District's special education system continues to be challenged by the lack of understanding of parental and student rights, and system knowledge not just by parents but by providers and school staff as well." Their recommendations included the need for a systemic effort to "develop more dynamic methods of communication, outreach and training...with a special focus on parental rights, support and system-wide understanding...as well

 $^{\rm 10}$ Due process hearings typically take 75 days from the filing of the complaint to the issuance of the hearing officer's decision. 34 C.F.R. \$ 300.515.

as in-person communication and trainings."¹² Consistent with SAP's observations, we have found that parents need education and assistance during the eligibility process and then consistently through the initial IEP and annual follow-up process. Many complaints originate from a fracture in communication between schools and parents as well as the lack of incentive for schools to ensure that parents fully understand the special education process.

In 2010-2011, SAP observed that, "[although] OSSE has created workgroups on the two key issues of Secondary Transition and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)... parent involvement in these initiatives continues to be minimal, and the area of parent and community outreach continues to be a challenge and concern."13 The SAP further observed that "the various arms of communication and coordination are too scattered and sporadic to make a long lasting impact" and "too many parents still do not trust DC special education."14 Several years after these reports, within the Office of the Ombudsman, we regularly observe that there is still a lack of information sharing and coordination between parents, school systems, DC government agencies, and advocacy groups. Thus, we recommend targeting these critical issues anew in the 2014-2015 school year.

By assisting parents much earlier in the special-education process—at every grade level—we can reduce frustration and advance the mutual goal of educating children in the most timely and efficient manner.

B. DISCIPLINE CHALLENGES

1. DISCIPLINE IN DC

Suspension is a fact of life for too many DC students. In the 2011-2012 school year, more than 13% of all students in the city were suspended at least once according to a public, citywide data analysis by the Every Student, Every Day Coalition.¹⁵ African-American students received a

District of Columbia State Advisory Panel on Special Education, "2009-2010 Annual Report," Jul. 1, 2010, p. 31, available at http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/State%20Advisory%20Panel%20on%20Special%20Education%202009%20-%202010%20Annual%20Report%207%201%2010%20FINAL.pdf.

¹² Id.

¹⁵ District of Columbia State Advisory Panel on Special Education, "2010-2011 Annual Report," Jul. 1, 2011, p. 19, available at <a href="http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/State%20Advisory%20Panel%20on%20Special%20Education%202010%20-%202011%20Annual%20Report%207.01.2011%20FINAL_0.pdf." 0.01.2011%20FINAL_0.pdf.

¹⁴ District of Columbia State Advisory Panel on Special Education, "2010-2011 Annual Report," Jul. 1, 2011, p. 19, available at <a href="http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/State%20Advisory%20Panel%20on%20Special%20Education%202010%20-%202011%20Annual%20Report%20Tol.2011%20FINAL O.pdf.

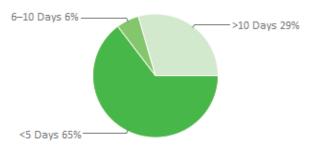
¹⁵ The Every Student Every Day Coalition, "District Discipline: The Overuse of School Suspension and Expulsion in the District of Columbia," p. 1, available at http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/dcly/pages/64/attachments/original/1371689930/District_Discipline_Report.pdf?1371689930.

disproportionate share of suspensions: in school year 2012-2013, 16% of African-American students were suspended at least once, as compared to only 1% of white students. Students in special education also received a disproportionate share of suspensions, with a suspension rate of 23%.

Many of the parents who call our office with concerns about out-of-school suspensions have children who either have been identified as having a disability or are awaiting evaluation. It also appears that most of the calls we received regarding suspension involved African-American students, as 88% of the total calls to our office were from African-American families.

These disproportionalities mirror national trends. The Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection shows that African-American students without disabilities are more than three times as likely as their white peers to be expelled or suspended. Nationally, students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension (13%) as students without disabilities (6%)." U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has stated that "as many as 95 percent of out-of-school suspensions are for nonviolent misbehavior—like being disruptive, acting disrespectfully, tardiness, profanity, and dress code violations." Often, these are the undiagnosed symptoms of disabilities.

IF THE STUDENT HAS BEEN SUSPENDED, FOR HOW MANY DAYS?



From the limited data available to us, it appears that while public charter school students do not often receive suspensions that exceed five (5) days, they are more

¹⁶ DC Public Schools, Office of the State Superintendent of Education & Public Charter School Board, "District of Columbia School Equity Reports 2013," p. 2, available at http://issuu.com/pcsb/docs/dc_equity_reports_part_one.

¹⁷ DC Public Schools, Office of the State Superintendent of Education & Public Charter School Board, "District of Columbia School Equity Reports 2013," p. 2, available at http://issuu.com/pcsb/docs/dc_equity_reports_part_one.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, "Date Snapshot: School Discipline," Mar. 2014, p. 1, available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-discipline-snapshot.pdf.

likely than DCPS students to receive expulsions. Rather than imposing expulsions, DCPS more typically imposes long-term suspensions. We had numerous cases where DCPS imposed long-term suspensions exceeding 11 days, and a few cases where students received suspensions exceeding 60 days. These trends seem to have been fairly consistent over the past several years: in 2012-2013, public charter schools expelled 186 students, whereas DCPS expelled only one student that year.¹⁹ Similarly, last school year, public charter schools expelled 139 students, but gave long-term suspensions (over 10 days) to only approximately 70 students.20 While there has been a significant drop in expulsions within charter schools, last year's data still suggests the need for additional resources for earlier interventions when students begin to exhibit behavior problems.

In the cases presented to our office in order to avoid outof-school time, a number of students who were suspended were out of school for multiple days and sometimes weeks and even months. We found that the top three reasons for students being out of school were:

- Misunderstanding about whether the student could return back to school, as some students were permitted to return back to school while due process procedures were being carried out, but parents did not understand the disciplinary process and understandably kept the students out of school, with the belief that they couldn't return. In addition, parents complained that DCPS schools did not provide the findings from the Office of Administrative Hearings to them;
- 2. Designation of many cases as "emergency" cases for DCPS schools under Chapter 25, which allows for suspension to be imposed before the student receives due process;²¹ and
- 3. Disconnect between schools and parents about how to enroll their children at CHOICE Academy.

In the District, there are few options for students excluded from school because of misbehavior. Most charter schools do not provide an alternative educational setting for students who are suspended or expelled. DCPS moves suspended and expelled students to CHOICE Academy.

¹⁹ Emma Brown, "Fewer Expulsions in DC Public Charter Schools in 2012-2013 Year," Washington Post, Oct. 15, 2013, available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/fewer-expulsions-in-dc-public-charter-schools-in-2012-13-year/2013/10/15/5212a95a-35c3-11e3-80c6-7e6dd8d22d8f story.html.

²⁰ Public Charter School Board, "SY2013-14 DC Public Charter School Discipline and Attendance Briefing." Sept. 4, 2014.

 $^{^{21}}$ 5 DCMR § B2504.4 allows DCPS to suspend a student before going through the discipline process if the student is "contributing to an emergency situation in the school."

Our office has documented a number of concerns about CHOICE Academy:

- CHOICE Academy and the transferring school did not communicate to confirm that students were actually attending CHOICE Academy.
- Parents complained that CHOICE Academy did not provide a safe setting for their children, did not offer rehabilitative services, and did not appear to be giving actual instruction within the classroom their children were attending. One parent described it as a "holding cell" where students go until they can return to their original school.

Moreover, some parents within both public school sectors expressed difficulty and requested the assistance of The Office of the Ombudsman to obtain homework packets for their children while they were serving a suspension. Other parents expressed the desire to ensure that classwork and homework that was assigned during the suspension period actually resembled the work being assigned within the classroom and then expressed frustration when they found that homework packets were not graded upon the student's return.

It is imperative that schools provide—at least—homework packets and online access to work in a timely manner so that children do not suffer a loss of learning while they are suspended from school. Children who have received out-of-school discipline are already at high risk for failure to graduate²²; making it difficult for them to make up their schoolwork only compounds this risk.

2. BEST PRACTICES

Even when well-intentioned and used as a last resort, long-term suspensions and expulsions have far-reaching negative effects. One national report demonstrates links to criminal involvement, unemployment, and increased reliance on social programs.²³ The American Academy of Pediatrics calls for out-of-school suspensions to be limited to the most egregious circumstances in part because "children growing up in homes near or below the poverty line are more likely to be expelled."²⁴ Schools with high

suspension rates also score lower on state accountability tests even when adjusting for demographic differences.²⁵ We also know that there are grave consequences for students who receive out-of-school suspensions who are also doubly represented as both a student with disabilities and a member of a minority group.

Approaches that have proved effective in schools around the country include having teachers focus on relationship building to better understand the causes of student misbehavior, modifying data collection practices to focus on the causes of behavior problems rather than disciplinary outcomes, and implementing a measured and predictable pattern of escalating response that offers students multiple opportunities to correct their behavior.²⁶

Education Secretary Duncan articulated three guiding principles to address the problem of exclusionary discipline:

- Schools and districts should be intentional about developing positive school climates to prevent misbehavior and target student support in a way that helps to address the underlying causes of the behavior such as trauma, substance abuse and mental health issues.
- 2. Schools and districts should develop "appropriate and consistent" expectations regarding behavior and the consequences in response to misbehavior.
- School leaders and educators should strive to ensure fairness and equity for all students. Through the use of data, school leaders should monitor and evaluate the impact of their discipline policies on all students and subgroups.²⁷

As an education community, we need to assess the value that removing a child from a classroom offers. As we review long-term suspensions, we need to ask whether they actually change students' behavior. As Ombudsmen, we will always strive to support families, students, and schools in keeping children in the classroom and on an uninterrupted learning trajectory.

²² See, e.g., Fran Pokorski, "Speaking Out: The Consequences of Suspensions," National Association of Elementary School Principals, Dec. 2010, available at http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/Pokorski.pdf.

²³ Team Child, "The Road to Re-Engagement: Providing an Education to Long-Term Suspended and Expelled Youth," available at http://www.teamchild.org/docs/uploads/The_Road_to_Re-Engagement_Policy_Paper.pdf.

²⁴ American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on School Health, "Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion," available at http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/112/5/1206.full.

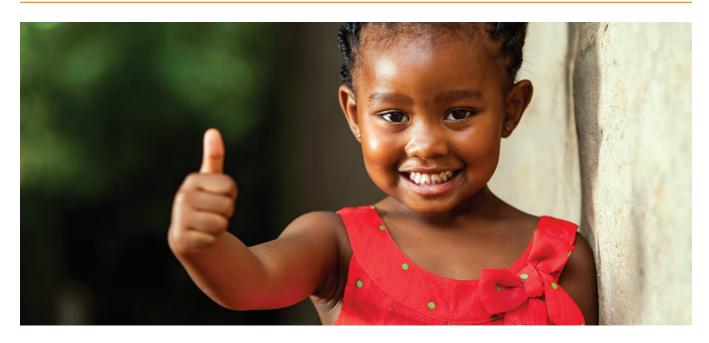
²⁵ National School Boards Association, "Addressing the Out of School Suspension Crisis: A Policy Guide for School Board Members," Apr. 2013, p. 2, available at http://www.broward.kl2.fl.us/talentdevelopment/news/hottopics/3NSBA-Out-Of-School-Suspension-School-Board-Policy-Guide.pdf

²⁶ See, e.g., Advocates for Children and Youth, "Effective School Discipline for Maryland: A Shared Approach to Keeping Children in School and Learning," Jan. 2014, available at https://acy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/EffectiveSchoolDisciplineinMarylandBriefFinal.pdf (describing successful approaches used in Anne Arundel County, MD and Walla Walla, WA).

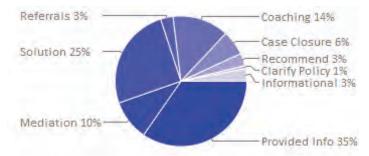
²⁷ U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, "Data Snapshot: School Discipline," Mar. 2014, p. 1, available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-discipline-snapshot.pdf.

Section IV

Common Complaint Resolution Outcomes



OUTCOMES PROVIDED TO PARENT/ GUARDIAN/STUDENT:



WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED:

- Preventing bullying of a student by convincing a school to move students from a classroom;
- Preventing the removal of out-of-boundary students from schools based on DCPS attendance protocols which had not been applied with fidelity;
- Returning students back to school who were forced out of school;
- Ensuring that services outlined in an IEP were actually provided to students and that parents better understand how to request evaluations, reevaluations and independent evaluations;

- Helping to find vocational and alternative schools for expelled students;
- Retrieving credits in order to help students graduate with a high school diploma;
- Equipping parents with tools for self-advocacy such as sample language for requesting IEP evaluations from their schools;
- Providing guidance on whether disciplinary policies were correctly applied based on facts presented;
- Successfully coaching schools who have changed their original positions based on the intervention and options provided by the Office of the Ombudsman:
- Equipping parents to present complaints in a persuasive manner that focuses on student and outcomes;
- Articulating applicable school policies in ways that parents understand and trust because the information we provide comes from an independent and neutral source not affiliated with any school system.

Section V Family Engagement



Engagement requires meaningful dialogue between parents, guardians, families and schools about matters that affect student learning. Meaningful parent engagement requires that schools recognize that there should be a true partnership between families and schools. Some of the barriers to true parent engagement include:

- Parents feeling that they are not welcome within the school:
- Parents feeling that their values and ideas are not appreciated and celebrated;
- Parents feeling that they are being patronized or talked down to by school leadership teams;
- Recurring negative interactions and experiences with schools which impact parents' ability to have future conversations with administration or faculty about their child's education; and
- Language and cultural differences.²⁸

²⁸ The Down East Partnership for Children, "Building Family Engagement to Support Children," Summer 2011, available at http://www.depc.org/pages/ccr_rsprng11.pdf.

In some of the work performed by the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education, we have witnessed parents struggle to reach principals both in public charter schools and DCPS schools through email or telephone. In addition, we have witnessed principals who were disrespectful and ultimately unwilling to address parent concerns in a way that acknowledged the parents' contribution or perspective in the matter at hand. Further, parents have complained that schools have failed to educate them on applicable school policies and how they apply to their student's situation.

For example, parents have asked about how to obtain an evaluation for their student and how quickly such an evaluation can be facilitated by the school. Some schools have either ignored the request, stalled parents for weeks or months, or have informed parents that their children just had behavioral problems and did not require an IEP. To parents, these discussions made them feel as if their input, insight as a parent, and desire to engage in participatory decision-making concerning their students were not valued by the school.

Section VI 2014 Annual Recommendations

- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Continue professional development efforts for teachers and school staff members on classroom management and continue to look for strategies to increase student engagement and engage parents in an effort to raise student achievement.
- Expand parent training, empowerment and advocacy. The Office of the Ombudsman recommends that the Office of the Student Advocate and non-profits recruit and train a cadre of engaged parents as advocates from among the families currently or formerly involved in DC special education programs in order to create an affordable, accessible support network for parents of special education students.
 - We further recommend cross-training parent advocates to develop an understanding of school discipline policy and procedures within DCPS and public charter schools so that they can help identify where discipline and disability issues overlap.
- IMPROVE INFORMATION ACCESS WITHIN SPECIAL EDUCATION: We found that parents are challenged by a lack of both access and awareness of special education rights, procedures, and resources. Parents need a better understanding of their rights, help requesting evaluations, assistance with determining whether an IEP has been properly implemented, and help recognizing when disciplinary actions may be symptomatic of underlying behavioral or mental health needs of the student. Parents need assistance understanding

- and addressing the often very long wait time for schools to start the evaluation process.
- MORE TRANSPARENCY: DC should build on the Equity Reports to publicly report disaggregated data annually on topics including the number of students suspended, the number of incidents, reasons for out-of-school suspensions, and days of lost instruction, and do so by school level (elementary, middle, and high school). Ensure that the reported data are disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, English learner status, and disability status."²⁹
 - This data should be shared with the Office of the Ombudsman and other educational entities in real time. We would recommend data sharing no more than 3-4 months from the end of the school year.
- TIMELY ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING DECISIONS
 FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CASES: Parents need to be able to obtain findings from the Office of Administrative Hearings regarding out-of-school suspension and expulsion in a timely manner. Schools are responsible for sharing this information with parents within a reasonable time frame.

Section VII Conclusion - Looking Ahead

In our nearly six months of work, we are honored to have been able to help parents, families, and students reach resolution in their individual cases. We have also assisted parent-teacher organizations in resolving conflict and look forward to additional opportunities to assist with resolving conflict in the coming years.

As we look ahead, we would like to engage more families through outreach and strategic partnerships with non-profit organizations, DC governmental agencies, and social services providers in order to provide a robust array of services to parents, students, and families. At the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education, we welcome your input and hope to meet you in the coming year!

²⁹ See recommendations provided by The Center for Civil Rights Remedies of the UCLA Civil Rights Project in "Out of School and Off Track: The Overuse of Suspensions in American Middle and High Schools." April 8, 2013, available at <a href="http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/out-of-school-and-off-track-the-overuse-of-suspensions-in-american-middle-and-high-schools/Exec Sum OutofSchool OffTrack UCLA.pdf.

Appendix

Work Summary for School Year 2013-2014	
How many complaints were received and completed?	150 complaints through August 15, 2014
Complaints examined and resolved informally?	142 cases (94.6%) of the total number of cases (informal mediations, meeting facilitations, etc.)
Complaints examined and resolved through a formal process?	0%
Complaints dismissed as unfounded?	8 cases (5%)
Complaints pending	25 additional cases are pending as of August 15, 2014
Recommendations made	23 cases (15.3%); the types of recommendations made to schools are captured under the "We have Accomplished" section on Page 16.
Recommendations that were followed (to the extent that it can be determined).	21 cases (14%)



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