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DECLARATION OF EDUCATION: TOWARD A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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DECLARATION OF EDUCATION: TOWARD A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:27 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Davis (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Davis of Virginia and Norton.

Staff present: David Marin, deputy staff director/communications director; Rob White, press secretary; Drew Crockett, deputy director of communications; Victoria Proctor, senior professional staff member; Shalley Kim, professional staff member; Teresa Austin, chief clerk; Sarah D'Orsie, deputy clerk; Corinne Zaccagnini, chief information officer; Rosalind Parker, minority council; Earley Green, minority chief clerk; and Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. The committee will come to order.

Welcome to today's hearing on the District of Columbia's public school system.

At a time when so many things are going right in the Nation's Capital, DCPS continues to be plagued with management problems, declining enrollment, crumbling facilities, escalating violence and substandard academic achievement.

We are here this morning to discuss how the renaissance occurring elsewhere in the District can be mirrored in its classrooms. The fact is, the District's improved health cannot be sustained without a better public school system. The lack of performance improvement threatens future growth and stability. It leaves parents and families with unenviable or unattainable choices: move out, try to switch to charter schools with mixed records themselves, or win the lottery for a scholarship to a private school through the D.C. School Choice program, or succumb to the fact that their children are going to have to succeed in spite of, rather than because of, the educational climate around them.

The good news is, there is a new sheriff in town. The arrival of Superintendent Clifford Janey offers an opportunity to begin anew. Dr. Janey has recently unveiled an ambitious plan, a declaration of education, aimed at raising academic achievement in every classroom, in every school. The committee did not invite him here today

to lecture him or offer unsolicited pointers; we invited him to hear more about his vision and ask him how we can help him succeed.

We all know what he is up against. According to the National Assessment of Education Progress, only 10 percent of fourth and eighth graders are proficient in reading. Only 7 percent of fourth graders and 6 percent of eighth graders. In 2003, the average D.C. Scholastic Achievement Test score was 978, while the national average was 1026.

Seven of the 27 schools serving eighth graders offer no foreign languages. Half of the schools have no vocational education teacher. One-third have no art teacher, and one-third have no music teacher. Even John Phillip Sousa's middle school has no band, and no music courses.

DCPS also faces the challenges of instructing a high percentage of disadvantaged students: 62 percent are eligible for free/reduced lunch compared with the national average of 39.7 percent. Students living in low-income families were six times more likely than their peers in higher-income families to drop out of high school, according to a study completed by the National Center for Educational Statistics. District officials have reported an alarming dropout rate of 40 percent.

Almost half of all D.C. public schools have been classified as being in need of improvement under requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. The classification is based on 2004 test scores in math and reading. The number of schools identified as in need of improvement increased from 15 in 2003 to 71 in 2004. Nearly 1,400 teachers are not properly credentialed. Some have not obtained a license in the subject they are teaching or have expired licenses.

Another issue of concern is the high truancy rate. Last year, DCPS reported that it had 20,845 chronic truants and a 23 percent overall truancy rate. The District's truancy rate far exceeds that of Prince George's County, 1.8 percent; Fairfax County, 0.6 percent; and Montgomery County, 0.9 percent.

School principals have said that data largely reflects problems with computer systems that keep track of students, poor recordkeeping and personnel problems. We hope to hear more about this today from the various city agencies collaborating on this front.

And then there are the challenges of crime, dilapidated buildings and ongoing labor negotiations.

Not all the news is bad. The number of D.C. high school graduates continuing on to college increased 28 percent between 1998 and 2003, due in large part to the D.C. TAG program, which levels the playing field for D.C. high school graduates by allowing them to attend State colleges and universities at in-state rates. But we can do better.

For students to take full advantage of this program, all students need to be prepared to attend a higher education institution. I grew up in a single-parent home, believing from an early age that I was going to graduate from high school and then go to college. That was the standard set for me and my siblings and most of my friends, but this is not the standard for too many students in DCPS. We are letting these children down.

What Superintendent Janey's arrival offers is a chance for stability, for perseverance, for optimism. We can all agree that DCPS is

a broken system. Now we need to agree on a strategy to fix the problem.

We have with us today many of the players who will determine in large part whether this chapter succeeds or fails. I am eager to learn more about how reform efforts are proceeding and how students, teachers, administrators, parents and elected officials can support the plan. It is time to change the course.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Tom Davis follows:]

"DECLARATION OF EDUCATION: TOWARD A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS"
Opening Statement of Chairman Davis
Committee on Government Reform
May 20, 2005

Good morning, and welcome to today's hearing on the District of Columbia's Public School System.

At a time when so many things are going right in the Nation's Capital, DCPS continues to be plagued by management problems, declining enrollment, crumbling facilities, escalating violence, and substandard academic achievement. We are here this morning to discuss how the renaissance occurring elsewhere in the District can be mirrored in its classrooms.

The fact is, the District's improved health cannot be sustained without a better public school system. The lack of performance improvement threatens future growth and stability. It leaves parents and families with unenviable or unattainable choices: move out; try to switch to charter schools with mixed records themselves, or win the lottery for a scholarship to a private school through the D.C. School Choice program; or succumb to the fact that their children are going to have to succeed in spite of, *rather than because of*, the educational climate around them.

The good news is, there's a new sheriff in town. The arrival of Superintendent Clifford Janey offers an opportunity to begin anew. Dr. Janey has recently unveiled an ambitious plan – a "Declaration of Education" – aimed at raising academic achievement in every classroom, in every school. The Committee did not invite him here today to lecture him, or offer unsolicited pointers. We invited him to hear more about his vision, and to ask him how we can help him succeed.

We all know what he's up against. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only ten percent of 4th and 8th graders are proficient in reading. Only seven percent of 4th graders and six percent of 8th graders are proficient in math. In 2003, the average D.C. Scholastic Achievement Test score was 978 while the national average was 1026.

Seven of the 27 schools serving 8th graders offer no foreign languages. Half of the schools have no vocational education teacher, one-third have no art teacher and one-third have no music teacher. Even John Phillip Sousa Middle School has no band – and no music courses.

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Not all the news is bad. The number of D.C. high school graduates continuing on to college increased 28 percent between 1998 and 2003, due in large part to the DC TAG program, which levels the playing field for D.C. high school graduates by allowing them to attend state colleges and universities at in-state rates. But we can do better.

For students to take full advantage of this program, *all* students need to be prepared to attend a higher education institution. I grew up in a single-parent home, believing from an early age that I was going to graduate from high school and then go to college. That was the standard set for me and my siblings and most of my friends. But this is not the standard for too many students in DCPS. We are letting these children down.

What Superintendent Janey's arrival offers is a chance for stability. For perseverance. For optimism. We can all agree that DCPS is a broken system. Now we need to agree on a strategy to fix the problem. We have with us today many of the players who will determine in large part whether this chapter succeeds or fails. I'm eager to learn more about how reform efforts are proceeding and how students, teachers, administrators, parents, and elected officials can support the plan. It's time to change the course.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Boehner, the chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, was planning to attend this morning but was unable to make it, but his statement will be entered into the record.

[The prepared statement of Hon. John A. Boehner follows:]

Statement of Rep. John Boehner (R-OH)
Chairman, Committee on Education & the Workforce

Hearing of the House Committee on Government Reform on "Declaration of Education: Toward a Culture of Achievement in D.C. Public Schools"

May 20, 2005

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Government Reform Committee for its important hearing on improving the District of Columbia public schools.

It has been an honor to work with Chairman Davis and other members of the Committee in recent years on some of the issues and challenges facing students in the District. In 2003 I was proud to work with Chairman Davis and other members of the Committee to write the legislation that ultimately became the D.C. Parental Choice Incentive Program, the first federally-funded school choice initiative in American history.

The D.C. school choice program has gotten off to a strong start. As the program enters its second year, parental demand for the D.C. choice scholarships is outpacing the supply by a 2-to-1 margin. The program is already providing new hope to more

than a thousand low-income families in the District of Columbia, and it's working to the benefit of all D.C. students by injecting new competition into the local education system.

The creation of the D.C. school choice program also has meant a lot more money for the D.C. public school system – about $26 million more, so far. That's the amount of extra federal education funding the D.C. school system has received to date, on top of the federal funding it is already receiving through programs like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind), because Congress agreed to appropriate extra funding for the D.C. public schools and charter schools along with the choice program.

I know many people in the District would like to know exactly how that $26 million is being spent. The D.C. public schools reportedly spend an average of more than $12,000 per pupil, among the highest average per-pupil expenditures in the nation, yet District school children rank near the bottom in academic achievement when compared to their counterparts elsewhere in our country. According to the National Center for

Education Statistics, in 2000, 69 percent of D.C. fourth graders scored below basic in reading, and only 10 percent ranked at or above proficient levels in writing. In the following year, District students ranked last in the nation in both SAT and ACT scores. And those are the ones who stayed in school. According to the data I've seen, about 42 percent of D.C. students drop out of school – a rate far above the national average.

And now let me tell you what I really find troubling.

According to an analysis of 2004 data from the National Center for Education Statistics provided by the organization known as First Class Education, the D.C. Public School System spends only about half of its funding in the classroom. The analysis found that only 49.6% of education dollars in the D.C.P.S. go toward classroom expenditures. That's the smallest percentage in the United States. All 50 states spend a larger percentage of their money in the classroom than the D.C. Public School system does.

Which brings me to one of the two topics I actually want to focus on today: an initiative we call Dollars to the Classroom.

For years I've advocated for a fundamental change in how we spend our money on education. Particularly when it comes to federal dollars, I think we need to change our focus.

Our investment must be targeted to helping students. That means bypassing the bureaucracy, and putting our money into the classroom. We took important steps in No Child Left Behind to send more money to classrooms, but there is work yet to be done.

A recent column written by George Will described the so-called 65% solution – a proposal that would ask states to spend at least 65% of every school district's education operational budget on classroom instruction. As Mr. Will described it, that's 65% of funding that would be spent on "teachers and pupils, not bureaucracy." In the case of the District, it would mean less money going to bureaucracy, and more money for things like teacher salaries and classroom supplies.

I'd be interested in knowing whether the 65% solution might be something the D.C. schools could embrace and adopt. And if the answer is no, I'd be interested in hearing why.

I'd also briefly like to mention another issue that is essentially about fairness for students.

The No Child Left Behind Act, like a number of other major federal education laws that preceded it, makes clear that we want to provide equitable participation for private school students. But while the law is very clear on this point, there is some evidence this aspect of the law isn't being fully executed in the District of Columbia.

I've asked the U.S. Department of Education to look into whether or not children in private, Catholic schools here in D.C. are getting access to the services they deserve – the services they are guaranteed under No Child Left Behind. I fear the answer is no.

For those who may not know, I work closely with the Center City Consortium, a group of 13 inner city Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Washington. According to the Archdiocese of Washington, DCPS has not provided equitable services to its eligible private school students for a few years, resulting in

funding that has been set aside to serve these students remaining unspent by DCPS. Now I understand that last fall, through discussion with the Department of Education, DCPS agreed to provide some of these services to students at these Archdiocese schools using some of the old funds, and that's good news. However, I would be interested in knowing how and when DCPS intends to get current in providing these services and spending these back funds as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Once again, I'd like to thank Chairman Davis for the opportunity to provide testimony for this important hearing.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I would now recognize the distinguished ranking member, who shares our concerns, has worked I think diligently to improve the public schools in the District, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome today's witnesses and say as well that I appreciate that Chairman Davis was willing to postpone this hearing until our new superintendent could get his bearings and come to an understanding of how he wanted to proceed to meet the many challenges facing the D.C. public schools, our children and their families.

Superintendent Janey has been in office only since last August. He released a strategic plan earlier this month after broad collaboration within the city. In March, Superintendent Janey announced a standardized curriculum using the Massachusetts model, widely regarded at least by many as the best in the Nation. New standards-based tests will be administered in spring 2006.

Because implementation of the recently announced strategic plan and the standardized curriculum have not begun, we must regard this hearing essentially as a status report, enabling Congress to understand direction, approach and goals. It is also important that today's witnesses include not only school officials; we recognize that many others in the city bear direct responsibility for the city's children. I note, with regret, that there is no representative from the Washington Teachers Union, which has recently been reorganized out of receivership and held elections. My office and I should have requested that a representative be added, particularly considering the heavy responsibility teachers will bear for implementation of the superintendent's plan and the many issues transferred from home and community to the classroom of urban schools today.

I ask unanimous consent that George Parker, the president of the Washington's Teachers Union, who I understand is a strong supporter of the superintendent's new curriculum, be allowed to submit testimony for the record, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Parker follows:]

Declaration of Education:

Toward a Culture of Achievement in D.C. Public Schools

U.S. House Committee on Government Reform

May 20, 2005

Testimony of George Parker
President of the
Washington Teachers' Union

My name is George Parker and I am the newly elected President of the Washington Teachers' Union. I would like to thank Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and the Committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the more than 4000 teachers in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

The leadership and membership of the Washington Teachers' Union are fully committed and supportive of implementing proven research-based reform initiatives that are designed to significantly improve the quality of education for all children in the District of Columbia Public Schools. To this end, we fully support the major components of Superintendent Janey's New Strategic Plan: *"Declaration of Education – Keeping Our Promise to the District's Children."*

Collaboration

The Washington Teachers Union supports Superintendent Janey's initial approach toward meaningful collaboration and inclusiveness of all educational stakeholders, including union representatives, in the decision-making process. We believe this approach is essential in facilitating the level of trust, buy-in, and commitment needed from classroom teachers, educational service providers, as well as the overall educational workforce. The District's teachers can provide critical knowledge and valuable insight into the educational and personal needs of the District's children, based on their daily interactions and instructional experiences. Their opinions, ideas, needs, and strategies for academic success in the classroom must be a continued priority if reform measures are to be highly successful.

I wish to limit and focus the remainder of my testimony on identifying what the Washington Teachers' Union believes are several critical components to successfully reforming the District's Public Schools. We believe that these four basic components must be effectively addressed if the successful improvement of D.C. Public Schools is to become a reality:

1. Standards, Curriculum, Testing, and Professional Development must all be well designed, correlated, and implemented effectively. Teachers must be provided adequate time and preparation to learn and become instructionally adept

in implementing the new standards and curriculum. On-going high quality training and professional development will be critical to teachers' efforts to make the new standards and new curricula come alive in the classroom for students. Also, appropriate alignment of the new curriculum and new textbooks is essential to the overall success of classroom instruction. Equally important, the standardized assessment instrument must be completely aligned with the new curriculum in order to ensure fair and equitable assessment and comparison of the District's students with students nationally whose assessments are aligned with their curriculum.

2. The new Standards must also be accompanied by new standards for classroom resources and materials that are required for successful classroom implementation. Teachers must be assured that they will receive adequate funds for classroom resources, materials, and associated technological needs in a timely fashion. The current procurement process must be improved to achieve this important component.

3. There must be new standards that address safe and orderly environments that are conducive to effective teaching and learning. These include environmental safety, security, as well as policies that give teachers more control and authority in

managing students who display disruptive behavior in the classroom. In a survey conducted by the Washington Teachers' Union during the 2004-2005 school year, teachers were asked, "What do you see as the Number#1 impediment to your ability to provide quality instruction to all students?" The overwhelming response was the lack of authority to prevent a small minority of students from continuously disrupting classroom instruction and significantly reducing the amount of time and quality of instruction provided to other students. Teachers indicated in the survey that they spend approximately 25 percent of their classroom instructional time managing and responding to disruptive behavior. In order to decrease the percentage of instructional time spent on disruptive behavior and increase the amount of teacher time spent on academic instruction, a comprehensive and uniform behavior management plan must be developed and consistently implemented in all schools. Such plan should include effective counseling and intervention services as well as alternative schools and/or school settings to appropriately address appropriate behavior as well as academic needs of students.

4. The Superintendent and the school district as a whole must have the commitment and "buy-in" of the workforce. This "buy-in" cannot be achieved through administrative directives, board rules, or any other policies that may be poorly conceived and dictated to the workforce by those empowered to make

decisions on behalf of D.C. Public Schools. This commitment and "buy-in" will only be achieved if the members of the workforce believe that they are being treated as equal partners, that they are provided necessary support and resources, and that they are fairly compensated for the immense job they are being asked to perform on a daily basis.

The commitment that will be required of our teachers must be met with equal commitment from all educational stakeholders, including those whose decisions will significantly impact the standard of living and quality of life that our teachers are able to provide for themselves and their families. The quality of compensation and benefits provided to the district's teachers will directly impact the districts ability to recruit and retain a highly qualified and effective workforce.

As President of the Washington Teachers' Union, I look forward to working in a collaborative and productive manner with Superintendent Janey and other District educational stakeholders to facilitate the quality of resources, support, and sacrifices necessary to provide a world-class education to all students in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection.

Ms. NORTON. I regret that Chief Ramsey, Superintendent Janey and other officials could find safety issues in our schools worsened in a bill announced by two Texas senators and Virginia Senator George Allen is enacted at this time. Superintendent Janey and Chief Ramsey were prominent in our successful efforts to turn back this same bill last year at a time when 16 children had been killed by gunfire. We again need their help, the assistance of other public officials, and the extraordinary work of the broadbased coalition of citizens and businesses ranging from the Board of Trade to the parents of children killed by gunfire, whose exceptional efforts proved critical last year.

The District alone must take responsibility for its schools and deserves to do so without interference from Congress and others who cannot be held accountable. However, the District also bears State costs not imposed on any other city school system.

The physical condition of many of the city's schools have been a source of special concern to residents in recent years. The District now is moving to address these facilities with an understanding that dilapidated schools have palpable effects on children, including truancy and the denial of an environment conducive to learning.

However, perhaps the most intractable and troubling cost facing the District is its total responsibility for special education without the State assistance that other cities depend upon to meet this growing need mandated by Congress. Members of Congress and their Governors regularly complain that special education costs have gotten so out of hand that States must have additional Federal help. It should be clear that the District's unique responsibility for special education has become increasingly untenable, with a rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul effect on the overall school system. These are two areas in which the Congress could be especially helpful to the city.

I am a proud graduate of the public schools of this city. My late mother was a D.C. public school teacher. My sister, who is president of Albany State University, is a graduate of Minor Teacher's College. I have known our schools from both sides. We cannot do the job; they cannot do the job for our kids by themselves. These are our children; we all have an obligation to define our role and to do our part.

I thank today's witnesses for their many efforts to improve the lives of our children and of our city. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton follows:]

Statement of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton
Government Reform Committee Hearing
"Declaration of Education": Toward a Culture of
Achievement in District of Columbia Public Schools

Friday, May 20, 2005

I welcome today's witnesses and appreciate that Chairman Davis was willing to postpone this hearing until our new superintendent could get his bearings and come to an understanding of how he wanted to proceed to meet the many challenges facing the D.C. public schools, our children and their families. Superintendent Janey has been in office only since last August. He released a strategic plan earlier this month after broad collaboration with the city. In March, Superintendent Janey announced a standardized curriculum using the Massachusetts model, widely regarded as the best in the nation. New standards-based tests will be administered in spring 2006.

Because implementation of the recently announced strategic plan and of the standardized curriculum has not begun, we must regard this hearing essentially as a status report, enabling Congress to understand direction, approach and goals. It is also important that today's witnesses include not only school officials. We recognize that many others in the city bear direct responsibility for the city's children. I note with regret that there is no representative from the Washington Teacher's Union, which has recently been reorganized out of a receivership and held elections. My office and I should have requested that a representative be added, particularly considering the heavy responsibility teachers will bear for implementation of the superintendent's plan and the many issues transferred from home and community to the classrooms of urban schools today. I ask unanimous consent that George Parker, the President of the Washington Teacher's Union, whom I understand is a strong supporter of the superintendent's new curriculum, be allowed to submit testimony for the record.

I regret that Chief Ramsey, Superintendent Janey and other officials could find safety issues in our schools worsened if a bill announced by two Texas senators and Virginia Senator George Allen is enacted this time. Superintendent Janey and Chief Ramsey were prominent in our successful efforts that turned back the same bill last year when 16 children had been killed by gunfire. We again will need their help, the assistance of other public officials, and the extraordinary work of the broad-based coalition of citizens and businesses--ranging from the Board of Trade to the parents of children killed by gunfire--whose exceptional efforts proved critical last year.

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Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much, Ms. Norton.

Now the Members will have 7 days to submit opening statements for the record. We're going to recognize our first panel. We have Mr. Robert C. Bobb, who is the Deputy Mayor/City Administrator for the government of the District of Columbia.

We have the Honorable Kathleen Patterson, a chairperson on the Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation from the D.C. Council, who has worked tirelessly for better public education in the city.

Kathy, welcome.

We have our new superintendent, Dr. Clifford Janey.

And we very much appreciate you being here, Mr. Janey.

Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz is ill this morning, but her statement will be put into the record.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cafritz follows:]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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STATEMENT OF PEGGY COOPER CAFRITZ

PRESIDENT OF THE D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE

ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2005

REGARDING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GOOD MORNING CHAIRMAN DAVIS, CONGRESSWOMAN NORTON AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM. I AM PEGGY COOPER CAFRITZ, PRESIDENT OF THE D.C. BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOARD). I APPEAR BEFORE YOU TODAY TO SPEAK ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (DCPS).

THE BOARD HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING GOALS TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

- ADOPT THE BEST STATE ACADEMIC STANDARDS THAT WILL ENSURE ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STUDENTS MEET THE HIGHEST EXPECTATIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AT EACH GRADE LEVEL. THE BOARD IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT THE CHILDREN OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BE COMPETITIVE REGIONALLY AND NATIONALLY.

- ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT-WIDE INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES A NEW READING AND MATH PROGRAM, COHERENT CURRICULUM FOR ALL GRADES, UNIFIED AND FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW CURRICULUM, REGULAR ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT PROGRESS, CLOSE MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION AND STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS INCLUDING PERFORMANCE CONTRACTS FOR STAFF.

- BUILD A WORLD CLASS BUSINESS SYSTEM FOR DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO HELP SUPPORT TEACHING AND LEARNING AND IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY IN OPERATIONS.

- ADOPT A DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN, AND PARTNER WITH CITY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SCHOOL CHILDREN.

- ADOPT THE BEST PRACTICES TO ENSURE THAT ALL DC PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS HAVE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITH MODEL SCHOOL FACILITIES THAT PROMOTE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING AND MEET NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- ELIMINATE COURT OVERSIGHT OVER THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY ESTABLISHING AND PROVIDING COST EFFECTIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN THE FACILITIES OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WITH THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF MAYOR WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN CROPP, CITY ADMINISTRATOR ROBERT BOBB AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, THE BOARD HIRED CLIFFORD JANEY AS SUPERINTENDENT. THE BOARD BELIEVES THAT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM HAS HIRED A STRONG AND EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTIONAL

LEADER, WHO WILL MAKE THE NECESSARY SYSTEMIC CHANGES, IMPLEMENT AND BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR RIGOROUS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, AND BUILD A STRONG INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THE BOARD IS ALREADY WITNESSING PALPABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE MANAGEMENT AND DIRECTION OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM. RECENTLY, THE BOARD APPROVED THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT NEW ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHICH ARE RECOGNIZED AS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND ACADEMICALLY CHALLENGING IN THE COUNTRY. THESE NEW ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR EVERY GRADE WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AND INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM BY THE FALL.

DR. JANEY RECENTLY PRESENTED HIS STRATEGIC PLAN THAT HAS AS ITS SINGULAR FOCUS – IMPROVED STUDENT LEARNING. IT IS A CULMINATION OF A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT WITH THE D.C. EDUCATION COMPACT, WHOSE MEMBERSHIP CONSISTS OF CITY LEADERS, BUSINESS, PHILANTHROPIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITIES AS WELL AS STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS. BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE

EDUCATION COMPACT, DR. JANEY PREPARED THE STRATEGIC PLAN WHICH WILL SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE MASTER EDUCATION PLAN WHICH WILL BE INTRODUCED IN DECEMBER. THE MASTER EDUCATION PLAN WILL ARTICULATE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S VISION FOR EDUCATION FOR YEARS TO COME. THE PLAN INCLUDES RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ACADEMIC PROGRAM OFFERINGS, GRADE CONFIGURATIONS, NEIGHBORHOOD OR CLUSTER DELIVERY MODELS, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS THAT WILL ALLOW MORE CHILDREN TO BE EDUCATED IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

THE RECORD IS CLEAR – TOO MANY OF OUR STUDENTS ARE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMANCE GAP. THE SUPERINTENDENT HAS OUTLINED IN HIS STRATEGIC PLAN A MORE EFFECTIVE PROGRAM TO HELP TURN AROUND LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS – ONE THAT WILL REPLACE THE TRANSFORMATION MODEL AND REACH MORE SCHOOLS WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES. BASED ON A SUCCESSFUL MODEL IN MASSACHUSETTS, THIS PLAN ALIGNS MORE CLOSELY WITH FEDERAL STANDARDS IN "NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND." THIS MODEL PROVIDES PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS WITH TOOLS TO MAKE MORE SYSTEMIC CHANGES. SCHOOLS THAT ARE IN NEED OF

IMPROVEMENT – THOSE FAILING TO MEET ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) TARGETS FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS -- WILL BE SERVED BY ON-SITE SOLUTIONS TEAMS: DISTINGUISHED EDUCATORS, WHO WILL COACH PRINCIPALS; TEACHER SPECIALISTS, WHO WILL COACH TEACHERS IN EACH CONTENT AREA; AND CURRICULUM SPECIALISTS, WHO WILL WORK WITH ALL SCHOOL STAFF. TO ACHIEVE AYP, A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR STATE MUST ACHIEVE THE ACADEMIC TARGETS FOR UP TO 9 GROUPS OF STUDENTS AND TEST 95 PERCENT OF THE STUDENTS WHO WERE ENROLLED FOR A FULL ACADEMIC YEAR.[1] THOSE SCHOOLS FAILING TO MEET ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS FOR FOUR OR MORE CONSECUTIVE YEARS WILL REQUIRE RESTRUCTURING, INCLUDING REPLACEMENT OF STAFF AND OUTSOURCING OF OPERATIONS. DCPS WILL CONTRACT WITH OUTSIDE EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP TURN AROUND THE LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS.

THE BOARD'S REFORM EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT CANNOT SUCCEED IF STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITH MODEL SCHOOL FACILITIES, WHICH

[1] THE NINE GROUPS ARE: THE FIVE MAJOR RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS, DISABLED, LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT/NON ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP/NEP), ELIGIBLE FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS AND TOTAL GROUP

PROMOTE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND MEET NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY. THE CONDITION OF D.C. SCHOOLS IS A LEGACY OF INHERITED DETERIORATED BUILDINGS FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE CONTINUED UNDER FUNDING OF THE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OPERATES AND MAINTAINS 147 SCHOOLS. THE AVERAGE AGE OF A SCHOOL BUILDING IS 63 YEARS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS AN ABSENT LANDLORD WHEN IT HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOLS. THE UNFORTUNATE RESULT IS THAT MOST OF THE SCHOOLS ARE NOT BEACONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE -- RATHER THEY ARE ISLANDS OF NEGLECT.

THE BOARD RECENTLY APPROVED A PLAN THAT IDENTIFIES 10 SCHOOLS WHERE CHARTER SCHOOLS OR APPROPRIATE D.C. AGENCIES CAN SHARE SPACE. CO-LOCATING WILL EXPLORE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL ACADEMY PROGRAMS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL, CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE A COMBINATION OF CENTERS AND INCREASED INCLUSION CLASSES SERVING SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN, AND WILL ALLOW OTHER CITY AGENCIES TO PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED HUMAN SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES AROUND THE DISTRICT. THE CO-LOCATION PLAN

ADDRESSES SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITIES TO USE SPACE AND LEVERAGE FACILITIES DOLLARS THAT THE CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL TO OPERATE AND IMPROVE DCPS. THE PLAN PROVIDES A LIMITED OPPORTUNITY TO FIX AND REPAIR BUILDINGS ABOVE AND BEYOND THE FUNDING ALLOWED IN THE CAPITAL BUDGET.

THE BOARD ALSO ADOPTED PROPOSED RULEMAKING FOR PUBLIC/PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS TO HELP WITH CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS. THIS EFFORT WILL BE COMPLIMENTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OFFICE SUPERVISED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, THAT IS DESIGNED TO DEVELOP PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS BY WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY, BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES WHICH ARE INTERESTED IN ASSISTING DCPS IN THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOLS. A GREAT EXAMPLE IS THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OYSTER BILINGUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WHICH ALLOWED DCPS TO BUILD A NEW SCHOOL IN EXCHANGE FOR LAND TO ACCOMMODATE THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS FOR MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND A NEW SCHOOL.

ENROLLMENT IN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CONTINUES TO GROW. IN SCHOOL YEAR 2004-2005, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS 19 OPERATING CHARTER SCHOOLS ON 23 CAMPUSES, WITH A TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF 3,945 STUDENTS FROM EVERY WARD OF THE CITY. THIS INCLUDES 3 SCHOOLS THAT OPERATE BOTH AN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAM. FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2005-2006, THE BOARD WILL OVERSEE 21 CHARTER SCHOOLS ON 26 CAMPUSES.

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE CHARTER SCHOOLS IS IMPROVING. IN SCHOOL YEAR 2004-05, THREE CHARTER SCHOOLS SERVE ONLY SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN AND DO NOT HAVE TO MEET AYP, OF THE REMAINING 16 SCHOOLS THAT ARE REQUIRED TO MEET ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) UNDER THE "NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND" ACT, 10 ACHIEVED AYP IN READING AND NINE (9) ACHIEVED AYP IN MATHEMATICS. SEVEN (7) SCHOOLS ACHIEVED AYP IN BOTH READING AND MATHEMATICS. EVERY SCHOOL THAT DID NOT MEET AYP IN BOTH READING AND MATHEMATICS HAS DEVELOPED IMPROVEMENT PLANS.

DCPS WILL NOT BE HELPING ANYONE BY PUTTING CHARTER SCHOOLS IN DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS. ACCORDING TO THE MARCH

2005 "TRANSITION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN," ALMOST HALF (48%) OF D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE IN POOR CONDITION, REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION, 41 PERCENT ARE IN FAIR CONDITION, AND ONLY 11 PERCENT OF D.C. SCHOOLS ARE IN GOOD CONDITION. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTED $147 MILLION IN FY 2006 AND $98 MILLION PER YEAR IN FISCAL YEARS 2007-2011 TO FUND THE MASTER FACILITIES PLAN THAT ACTUALLY COSTS $300 MILLION PER YEAR TO IMPLEMENT – A SHORTFALL OF ALMOST $1.2 BILLION, WHICH IS THE AMOUNT NEEDED TO FULLY FUND THE MASTER FACILITIES PLAN. THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THE INADEQUACY OF THE FUNDING TO SUPPORT DCPS CAPITAL NEEDS AND PROPOSED SOME ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS. THE DISTRICT CANNOT FUND THE ENTIRE AMOUNT NEEDED TO ADEQUATELY ENSURE THAT ALL SCHOOLS MEET EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS.

HISTORICALLY, FACILITIES MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS AND TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN UNDER FUNDED. THE INDUSTRY STANDARD FOR FACILITY OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING IS $2.20 PER SQUARE FOOT FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES WITH A SUSTAINED MAINTENANCE

PROGRAM. DCPS' FY05 FUNDING WAS $1.47 PER SQUARE FOOT. THE FY 2006 BUDGET REQUEST INCREASES MAINTENANCE EFFORTS TO $1.76 PER SQUARE FOOT AND CLOSER IN LINE WITH INDUSTRY STANDARDS. HOWEVER, THIS INCREASE WILL BARELY COVER THE BACKLOG OF WORK ORDERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DETERIORATING CONDITION OF D.C. SCHOOLS.

THE IMMEDIATE NEED TO IMPROVE SCHOOL FACILITIES IS A CRITICAL PRIORITY THAT REQUIRES THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, CONGRESSIONAL COMMITMENT AND COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN HELP BY PARTNERING WITH THE DISTRICT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GAVE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS $6 MILLION FOR LIBRARIES WHICH PROVIDED FOR MUCH NEEDED TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT, BOOKS, PAINT AND REPAIRS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALSO GAVE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS $4 MILLION FOR 36 NEW PLAYGROUNDS AND RENOVATED 54 PLAYGROUNDS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN HELP CLOSE THE SCHOOL'S CAPITAL FUNDING GAP BY APPROPRIATING ADDITIONAL DOLLARS TO HELP MEET THE IMMEDIATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT NEEDS.

THE BOARD LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AS WE CONTINUE TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING FOR ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHILDREN. THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO TESTIFY TODAY. I'LL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We have Charles Ramsey, the chief of police, and no stranger to this committee.

We appreciate your being here today, and we appreciate the job you're doing.

And Brenda Donald Walker, the director of Child and Family Services Agency.

Thank you very much for being here.

It is our policy to swear everybody in before they testify, so if you would just rise and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Go ahead, Mr. Bobb. Thank you for being with us.

STATEMENTS OF ROBERT C. BOBB, DEPUTY MAYOR/ CITY ADMINISTRATOR, GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; KATHLEEN PATTERSON, CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND RECREATION, COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; CLIFFORD B. JANEY, SUPERINTENDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CHARLES RAMSEY, CHIEF OF POLICE, METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND BRENDA DONALD WALKER, DIRECTOR, CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY

STATEMENT OF ROBERT C. BOBB

Mr. BOBB. Good morning, Chairman Davis, Ms. Norton, and members of the Government Reform Committee. I am Robert C. Bobb, city administrator for the District of Columbia, and I am pleased to testify on behalf of Mayor Anthony A. Williams' administration regarding our work with the District of Columbia public schools and our support for public education.

I would like to thank you, Chairman Davis, on behalf of the Mayor for the leadership, support and encouragement you have provided our great city.

As you know, education is a major priority for the mayor and his administration. In the District of Columbia, every child, regardless of the school they attend, can and should have access to a high-quality education in a healthy and safe environment.

City leaders are working collectively to ensure that the DCPS students enter school ready to learn and leave with the skills necessary to be successful.

The Williams administration has two key objectives to overcome the challenges facing DCPS. First, we provide the financial resources; and second, we provide the necessary non-academic supports to successfully implement Superintendent Dr. Clifford Janey's strategic plan. Importantly, this plan reflects the education goals of the council, school board and citizens of the District of Columbia.

The fiscal 2006 proposal budget includes a total of $1 billion in local funds to educate an estimated 80,000 students within the District of Columbia public schools and public charter schools. This funding level represents an increase of $81.6 million, or 9 percent of the 2005 budget. The fiscal 2006 budget is aligned with the superintendent's core budget request of $775 million and provides an additional $25 million to support strategic educational investments

in academic and support services at both DCPS and charter schools and funds 11 new charter schools.

In addressing the non-academic needs of students, such as nutritional, physical and mental health and other social services vital for educational success, the Mayor plays a central role in aligning district agencies to support low-performing schools, to provide wraparound services to the neediest students.

The Williams' administration implemented various interagency collaborations, such as the Transformation Schools Initiative, school-based mental health services and school help program, and while we are very pleased with DCPS recent successes, we fully acknowledge that we must work collaboratively to overcome existing hurdles.

In the past, DCPS process as a result of opportunities for leverage investments were unrealized as evidenced by the lack of funds budgeted for schools within various HOPE–6 projects. We are working with the new administration under Dr. Clifford Janey to jointly develop our capital budgets to align our priorities and planning. Through our city-wide capital planning committee, we will ensure the most strategic investment of our resources.

Another hurdle is shifting enrollments between 2002 and 2004, DCPS enrollment declined by nearly 6,000 students, while charter schools enrollment increased by 4,000 over the same period. A significant issue facing charter schools is the ability to acquire educational appropriate facilities. Faced with few options, charter schools use facilities allotment given to them by the city to lease spaces in the private sector. Making DCPS schools available to charter schools will help keep our public dollars invested in our public facilities by rightsizing DCPS facilities inventory through consolidation, disposition, co-location and partial demolition.

This administration applauds Dr. Janey for presenting a budget that recognizes the need to spread resources more equitably across all schools by scaling back on a scope of projects, capital projects, where appropriate.

We understand that, by December 2005, Dr. Janey will have developed his master educational plan which will update the master facilities plan, and the administration welcomes the opportunity to work jointly with and in support of the superintendent. We firmly believe that DCPS and the city share a common set of goals, and we are committed to working collaboratively to best serve the children and residents of the District of Columbia.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bobb follows:]

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis, III, Chairman
The Honorable Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Member

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Testimony of
Robert C. Bobb
City Administrator

May 20, 2005
2154 Rayburn House Office Building
10:00 A.M.

Good morning Chairman Davis, Ranking Member Waxman and members of the Government Reform Committee. I am Robert C. Bobb, City Administrator of the District of Columbia and I am pleased to testify on behalf of the Williams Administration regarding our work with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and our support for public education. First, I would like to thank you Chairman Davis, on behalf of the Mayor, for the leadership, support and encouragement you have provided our great city.

As you know, education is a major priority for the Mayor and his administration. In the District of Columbia, every child, regardless of the school they attend, can and should have access to a high quality education in a healthy and safe environment. In order to achieve this, the leaders of this city must collectively work to ensure that every young person 1) comes to school ready to learn, and leaves with the necessary skills to be successful in our increasingly complex world; 2) is taught to be a responsible citizen and make valuable contributions to their local and global community; and 3) has access to necessary resources that support learning. We have made major progress, but we still have a long way to go before realizing this vision.

First, I will highlight a few of the good things that have happened in and with the District's schools over the last year. The Mayor, Chairman of the Council, and I participated in the Board of Education's search for a new school superintendent. We are pleased that the process resulted in the selection of Dr. Clifford Janey. Under Dr. Janey's leadership we have witnessed a renewed sense of urgency in identifying and addressing the systemic challenges plaguing DCPS, and a strong commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning. In his short tenure, Dr. Janey has brought new academic standards and curricula to our system and is ably leading the charge to level the academic playing field for all students. In November 2004, we launched the DC Education Compact, which is a historic partnership of various stakeholders across the city, including the philanthropic, business, advocacy and parent communities, to improve outcomes for our children. This effort has also helped to re-open lines of communication and has sparked a renewed sense of collegiality. For the first time, the Superintendent and his senior staff now participate in Executive Cabinet and Senior Staff

meetings, to identify and resolve cross-cutting issues and increase opportunities for interagency collaboration.

As we move forward to address the many challenges facing DCPS, the Mayor and I remain committed to supporting Dr. Janey in his efforts to reform our system and better serve public school students. We are focused on initiatives that will improve academic achievement and building capacity and infrastructure to sustain systemic reform. The primary objective of the Williams Administration is to provide both financial resources and necessary supports to successfully implement the Superintendent's strategic plan, which reflects the education goals of the Council, School Board and citizens of the District of Columbia.

In terms of funding, during the Mayor's tenure, he and the Council have increased the public education operating budget from approximately $559 million in FY 1995 to approximately $961 million in FY 2005, and have added over $350 million additional local dollars to DCPS alone. During that same time, the Mayor and Council provided $1 billion in capital funding to DCPS, representing approximately 25 percent of the city's entire capital budget.

Further, the Mayor remains committed to maximizing local investment in public schools. The FY 2006 Proposed Budget includes a total of $1 billion in local funds to educate an estimated 80,000 students within the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools. This funding level represents an increase of $81.6 million, or nine percent, over the FY 2005 budget. The FY 2006 budget is aligned with the Superintendent's core budget request of $775 million and provides an additional $25 million to support strategic educational investments in academic and support services, at both DCPS and charter schools, and funds 11 new charter schools. This budget also provides $147 million in capital funding to support the rehabilitation and modernization of DCPS school buildings. We look forward to the completion of the Council of Great City Schools comparative finance study that will explore what it truly costs to adequately educate children in our urban environment; review the District's current

public education budgeting and expenditures practices; and provide recommendations on future funding.

In addition to funding, the Mayor plays a central role in aligning District agencies to support the non-academic needs of students, such as nutritional, physical and mental health, and other social services that are vital to their educational success. The Williams Administration has been involved in various interagency collaborations, such as the Transformations Schools Initiative, School-Based Mental Health Services, and the School Health Program, in an effort to provide wrap-around services to the neediest students.

The District's Office of the Deputy Mayor for Children Youth Families and Elders partnered with DCPS to offer mental and social services, provided by counselors and health professionals, to the children and families at low-performing schools. In fact, the Transformation Schools Initiative was a pilot for the expansion of mental health services to several other schools in communities in need. As the school system transitions from the Transformation Schools to the Effective Schools Initiative, we look forward to working with Dr. Janey to continue providing the necessary wrap-around services at the newly identified schools.

Currently, the School Based Mental Heath Program provides supports to 29 public schools across the city. The FY 2006 Budget will expand services to 15 new schools clustered in two of our targeted New Communities. The New Communities are high poverty areas with underperforming public schools and underutilized public facilities, scourged by violent crime, economic segregation, and a lack of services and affordable housing.

Our approach is simple - the Department of Mental Health places one qualified, culturally competent mental health professional in each of the 29 schools. These professionals, who split their time between prevention, early intervention and targeted interventions, are focused on breaking down barriers to learning, not pathologizing the school or the students. Program staff often intervene with gangs to reduce problems in other schools and work with families and

community-based organizations. They are active in after-school programs and summer youth programs.

The School Based Mental Health Services approach is efficient, cost effective and highly valued by teachers, students, families and school administrators. A recent Progress Report demonstrated that in the schools where mental health staff are working, there are fewer suspensions, fewer referrals to special education and improved school climate.

The D.C. Department of Health School Health Program supports a .5 FTE school nurse (i.e. at least 20 hours of nursing coverage per week) in each of the 150 D.C. public schools. School nurses provide first aid in the event of an accident or other injury, assess students' health needs, provide health education and preventive health screenings, administer medications and medical procedures as appropriate, refer them for follow-up care if necessary, and also help ensure that students get required immunizations. DCPS provides additional resources to double the number of nursing hours, to 40 hours, in 30 schools. Additionally, the Mayor's proposed FY 2006 budget includes funding for a school health initiative that would make it possible for new charter schools to have nurses on site as soon as they open, as well as ensuring that all school nurses have basic supplies.

We are very pleased with the success of these three initiatives, but we fully acknowledge that there is room for significant improvement in the area of interagency coordination. We must work collaboratively, whenever and wherever possible, to ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness of our efforts and to better leverage our limited resources. In particular, one area that could benefit from greater collaboration is school facilities, which has significant challenges.

One major challenge impacting not only our public schools but all facilities across the city is the structural imbalance, which prevents us from fully funding our capital needs.[1] Over

[1] Documented in the May 2003 GAO report, "District of Columbia: Structural Imbalance and Management Issues"

the last generation, there has been tremendous disinvestment in our basic infrastructure and facilities. Over the six year period from 2003-2008, the District's total capital needs are $5.8 billion, but we have only been able to fund $3.3 billion. Of the total needs, $2.1 billion is for deferred maintenance, and over 50% of that is for schools. Our ability to borrow additional funds is significantly constrained by the fact that we have the highest debt per capita in the nation. Since our current borrowing capacity and revenue are not enough to meet our basic needs, we must continue to defer infrastructure maintenance and spending on new capital projects.

Currently, a tremendous amount of community revitalization is taking place throughout the city. For example, there are seven Hope VI projects under development and last week, the DC Council approved nearly $60 million for the *New Communities* initiative—an unprecedented plan to invest millions into the city's most distressed neighborhoods. As we work to revitalize these communities, we are mindful of the importance of strong community anchors such as vibrant schools and community centers.

This presents the challenge of ensuring that planning and budgeting efforts across all agencies are coordinated and aligned. For example, DCPS develops its capital budget separately from the city's capital budget process. In doing so, DCPS responds to its needs and priorities. Unfortunately, opportunities for leveraged investment go unrealized, as evidenced by the lack of funds budgeted for schools within various Hope VI developments. This uncoordinated capital planning sends a mixed message to communities. To address this, we have worked over the past year with a team from the Brookings Institution to reform our capital budgeting process. This will ensure coordinated capital planning across all agencies, to better integrate community development and public infrastructure projects. We have begun implementing the Brookings recommendations, such as the establishment of a Technical Review Team (TRT). The TRT used the FY06 capital budget process to vet projects and identify opportunities for cost efficiencies through co-located facilities, public private partnerships and leveraged investment in neighborhood redevelopment.

A third challenge is shifting enrollments. Between 2002 and 2004, DCPS enrollment declined by nearly 6,000 students, while charter school enrollments increased by 4,000 over the same period. To help address this challenge, the administration fully supports and encourages the "right-sizing" of DCPS' facilities inventory through consolidation, disposition, co-location and partial demolition. One of the greatest challenges facing charter schools is the ability to acquire educationally appropriate facilities. Faced with few options, charter schools use the facilities allotment given to them by the city to lease spaces in the private sector. Making DCPS space available to charter schools will help keep our public dollars invested in our public facilities.

The Administration recognizes that the DCPS Master Facility Plan, which sets the goal of modernizing or replacing all DCPS facilities over 10 to 15 years, was developed with community participation and reflected the well-intended ambitions for first class public schools for all District students. However, DCPS' financing plan did not reflect actual available funding. They identified significant sources of funds such as congressional appropriations, public/private partnerships, donations and grants that have yet to be realized. Implementing the DCPS Master Facility Plan, as it was envisioned, would require roughly $300 million per year--almost the District's entire capital budget.

In order to be fiscally responsible and ensure that resources are spread more equitably to all schools, it is imperative that DCPS revisits the scope of its projects and prioritizes critical needs. Over the past five years, despite the nearly $1 billion in city capital funding for DCPS, only eight out of 147 schools have been completely modernized or replaced. This year, for the first time since the Master Facility Plan was adopted, the DCPS capital budget included comprehensive renovations rather than only full-scale modernizations and replacements. This allows critical improvements to be made to more schools throughout the city. The administration applauds Superintendent Janey for taking this tremendous first step in rationalizing the DCPS capital budget.

Although scaling back projects was a first step towards a fiscally responsible DCPS Master Facility Plan, there is more to be done. The Master Facility Plan must be updated to reflect shifting enrollments, alignment with citywide initiatives, and current building conditions. We recognize that adjusting the ranking and priorities for school building improvements as established by the Master Facility Plan, as well as consolidating space in existing schools and making space available to charter schools, will require tremendous community outreach and input. We understand that by December 2005, Dr. Janey will have developed his Master Educational Plan, which will inform an updated Master Facilities Plan. The administration welcomes the opportunity to work jointly with and in support of the Superintendent in his efforts. We firmly believe that DCPS and the city share a common set of goals and we are committed to working collaboratively to best serve the residents of the District of Columbia.

This concludes my statement for the record. I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you and welcome any questions at this time.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.
Councilman Patterson.

STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN PATTERSON

Ms. PATTERSON. Thank you. Chairman Davis, Congresswoman Norton, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am Councilmember Kathy Patterson, and since January, I have served as chair of the Council Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation. I have been a member of the Council since 1995 and sought the position as a public school parent and advocate.

The council's priorities for D.C. public schools include improving school facilities, seeking accountability for the expenditure of public funds by D.C. public schools and directing resources to the local schools. My priorities as chair of the committee include promoting stable leadership, providing stable and adequate funding and using oversight to promote steady progress on our school system's reform agenda that includes comprehensive new educational standards and strengthening professional development.

Part of promoting stability includes advocating for a multi-year budget for the school system, a subject that I will come back to. Another policy goal is promoting and funding universal pre-kindergarten in the District of Columbia. Unlike most school systems, we already serve roughly half of the city's 4-year-olds in D.C. public schools. Given the extensive research on the importance of good early childhood education, there is no question we should be serving all 4-year-olds, and moving from there to provide all 3-year-olds with quality pre-K education.

My committee's agenda often includes oversight of the public charter school legislation, and I anticipate one or more hearings in the fall. There are several specific issues to be addressed, including the funding process and issues of financial liability when a charter school closes. And I expect a range of other issues will surface during the course of testimony.

During my tenure on the Council, D.C. public schools have had seven superintendents, seven in 11 years. There have also been four different and distinct institutions in that time standing in the shoes of the Board of Education. The Mayor and the Council have gone through two long and contentious debates over whether there will be a Board of Education in 2000 and again last year.

It is not possible to serve children well when the leadership changes by the month. The best education reform plans in the world—and those of Superintendents Franklin Smith and Arlene Ackerman were sound—can't succeed without time, perseverance, buy-in from the political establishment and confidence on the part of parents and staff.

What we have today in the public schools is a chance for that stability. That's one of the reasons I am more optimistic about the future of the public schools than at any other time during my tenure on the Council. We settled the issue with the school system's governance structure.

The leadership of the city, Mayor Williams, Chairman Cropp and my predecessor's committee chair were invited by the Board to participate in a superintendent search last year, and they recruited and hired Dr. Janey, from whom you will hear this morning. This

is not his first superintendency, and that is significant. This is only the second time in recent memory that D.C. public schools have been led by someone who was not engaged in on-the-job training. The Board itself is gaining new experience, with two new members elected last year who bring both energy and patience to the task.

As Mr. Bobb noted, the Mayor added funding for the schools, as did the Council in the budget debates we just concluded at the Council. Even with those funding increases, school leadership has identified additional spending needs, including raises that might need negotiating and additional special education costs. And it is my hope that, as committee chair, the Education Committee can be of assistance to the superintendent and the Board as they revise their 2006 operating budget to take into account both the additional funding and the additional spending needs.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer is reviewing special education spending, focusing on private school tuition payments. I'm hopeful that audit will provide options to better manage expenditures.

And the superintendent initiated a comprehensive finance study by the Council of the Great City Schools to compliment the academic study released last year. I am hopeful that will also be helpful to the Board in reviewing the system's expenditures.

The committee asked that we speak to facility needs, one of the highest priorities for members of the Council. The budget just approved includes $147 million in capital funding for 2006, and the Council approved an additional $12.2 million to cover debt service for additional capital funding. That additional funding is designed as a special revenue fund to promote public/private partnerships, enhance in-house Special Ed capacity and facilitate co-location with charter schools. We are still working on the details of that legislative language.

And that brings me to what I hope will be an agenda for this committee, securing additional Federal support to meet the facility needs of D.C. public schools. I hope to see the special revenue fund we are creating become a repository for Federal support, including funding based on Congresswoman Norton's Fair Federal Compensation Act.

A parent-led coalition has, as you know, promoted a 100 percent Federal funding to rebuild the District's schools, and I have attached a summary of the PROP 100 proposal to my testimony.

The second agenda item I would urge the committee to consider, mentioned earlier: Dr. Janey and President Cafritz have asked us to consider a transitional multi-year budget for D.C. public schools. This would require a change to the charter. I have introduced a sense of the Council provision to this end. And while my colleagues have not had an opportunity to weigh in on the issue, I'm hopeful they will be supportive. I have scheduled a public hearing on June 23rd and hope to see a charter amendment acted on by the Congress by the end of this year, and I urge you to support and champion that proposal. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Patterson follows:]

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

KATHY PATTERSON
COUNCILMEMBER, WARD 3

CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,
LIBRARIES, AND RECREATION

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Testimony of

Councilmember Kathy Patterson, Chairperson

D.C. Council Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation

Before the

Committee on Government Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

May 20, 2005

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the House Committee on Government Reform. I am Councilmember Kathy Patterson. I represent Ward 3 in northwest Washington and since January, have served as chair of the Council Committee on Education, Libraries and Recreation. I have been a member of the Council since 1995, and I sought the position as a public school parent and advocate.

The D.C. Council's formal responsibilities with regard to the public school system are these:

- Consider and approve an annual allocation of funds for D.C. Public Schools and public charter schools;
- Consider and confirm the mayor's nominees for four members of the Board of Education until we return to an all-elected Board in two years;
- Approve collective bargaining agreements and all contracts that exceed $1 million or are multi-year;
- Provide oversight of the school system;
- Consider and approve changes to the D.C. Code that affect schools. Last year, for example, we approved legislation retaining a Board of Education as the policy-making body that governs D.C. Public Schools; we also approved legislation transferring the function of school security from DCPS to the Metropolitan Police Department.

I was asked to address the Council's priorities for D.C. Public Schools. These include improving school facilities; accountability for the expenditure of public funds by D.C. Public Schools; and directing resources to local schools. In addition to these priorities established by the Council in our annual planning process, there are priorities for me as chair of the Committee. These include promoting stable leadership; providing stable and adequate funding; and using oversight to promote steady progress on the school system's reform agenda that includes comprehensive new educational standards and strengthened professional development. Part of promoting stability includes advocating for a multi-year budget for the school system, a subject I will come back to and one I expect will be discussed by other witnesses today.

Another specific policy goal of mine is promoting and funding universal pre-kindergarten in the District of Columbia. Unlike most school systems, we already serve roughly half of the city's 4-year-olds in D.C. Public Schools. Given the extensive research on the importance of good early childhood education, particularly for disadvantaged populations, there is no question that we should be serving all 4-year-olds and moving from there to provide all 3-year-olds with quality pre-K education.

My Committee agenda also includes oversight on the public charter school legislation and I anticipate one or more hearings in the fall. There are several specific issues to be addressed, including the funding process and issues of financial liability when a charter school closes, and I expect a range of other issues will be raised during the course of testimony.

It is important to understand both the breadth of and the limitations on the Council's role with regard to public schools. Under the Home Rule Charter, the Board is the policy making entity governing the schools. The Council approves a budget each year, but may not direct how those funds are spent. You have asked this question, and it reflects a priority for my colleagues: how does the Council work with the Board to promote financial and management accountability? Our principal formal means for promoting accountability is the bully pulpit of open, televised Council oversight hearings. We serve accountability by asking hard questions and doing the follow up to make sure we receive candid and complete answers. We use our annual consideration of the school system budget as an opportunity to secure the kind and level of accountability for the expenditure of public funds that is expected by the public we serve.

I would now like to describe where I think DCPS has been; where the system is today, and what I would recommend as an agenda for this committee with regard to public schools.

I have been involved in public school advocacy for 15 years – 11 years on the Council and several years prior to that, from the point at which my children entered public school and I began my own education on the school system, and the city's, financial crisis. During my tenure on the Council the D.C. Public Schools have had seven superintendents. There have also been four different and distinct institutions standing in the shoes of the Board of Education. The mayor and Council have gone through two long and contentious debates over whether there will be a Board of Education, in 2000 and again last year.

It is not possible to serve children well when the leadership is topsy turvy; when it changes by the month. The best education reform plans in the world – and those of Superintendents Franklin Smith and Arlene Ackerman were sound – cannot succeed without time, perseverance, buy-in from the political establishment and confidence on the part of parents and staff.

What we have today in D.C. Public Schools is a chance for stability. That is the reason I am more optimistic about the future of the public schools than at any other point in my tenure on the Council. Local political leaders settled the issue of the system's governance structure. We will have a Board of Education that is part elected, part appointed, for two more years, then move to an all-elected Board. We know that, and though there is one more change coming, that knowledge promotes stability.

The leadership of the city – Mayor Williams, Chairman Cropp and my predecessor as committee chair, Councilmember Chavous -- were invited by the Board of Education to

participate in a superintendent search last year, and they recruited and hired Dr. Janey from whom you will hear this morning. This is not his first superintendency, and that is significant. This is only the second time in recent history that the D.C. Public Schools have been led by someone who had served as a superintendent before; who is not doing on-the-job training. The Board itself is gaining in experience; two new members elected last year bring energy and patience – but patience that is not without limits, and that is a good thing in and of itself.

The Council recently completed work on the DCPS budget for FY 2006. The Board proposed a budget of $775 million, and noted another $38 million in unbudgeted needs. The mayor proposed a budget of $800 million, including funding to meet what had been described as unbudgeted needs. The Council added roughly $15 million to avert local school staff reductions while the school system reevaluates its local schools funding formula. Even with those funding increases approved by both the mayor and the Council, the schools leadership claims to need additional funds to cover raises that might be negotiated with school labor unions, and additional special education costs.

It is my hope, and I have made this clear to both Dr. Janey and President Cafritz, that the Council's Education Committee can be of assistance to the Superintendent and Board as they revise their FY 2006 operating budget to take into account the additional funds, and the additional spending needs. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer is reviewing the special education spending, with a particular focus on private school tuition payments and I am hopeful that that audit will provide options to better manage expenditures. And the superintendent initiated a comprehensive, comparative finance study by the Council of the Great City Schools, to complement the academic study released early last year. I am hopeful that this study will be helpful to the Board in reviewing the system's expenditures.

The Committee asked that we speak to facilities needs, one of the highest priorities for members of the D.C. Council. The budget just approved includes $147 million in capital funding for FY 2006, and the Council approved an additional $12.2 million to cover debt service for additional capital funding. That additional funding is designed as a special revenue fund to promote public-private partnerships, enhance in-house special education capacity and facilitate co-location with public charter schools. We are still working out the details of that special funding among Councilmembers, the Board and the administration and will finalize the legislative language early next month.

This brings me to what I hope will become an agenda for this Committee: assisting in securing additional federal support to meet the facilities needs of D.C. Public Schools. I hope to see the special revenue fund we are creating becomes a repository for federal support, including funding based on Congresswoman Norton's Fair Federal Compensation Act. That legislation would transfer federal taxes already paid by individuals who work in the District of Columbia into a designated D.C. infrastructure account. A significant portion of that funding can, and should, be allocated for school facilities. A parent-led coalition has, as you know, promoted 100% federal funding to rebuild the District's schools, and I have attached a summary of the PROP 100 proposal

to my testimony. I am an elected official and an appropriator, and I do not enjoy asking for federal dollars: but the need is obvious and it is large. And as long as District taxpayers continue to pay the bill for police protection for the President of the United States, I will be sanguine coming here and asking for federal support to improve the bricks and mortar that house District school children.

There is a second agenda item I would urge the Committee to consider, one I mentioned earlier. Dr. Janey and President Cafritz have asked the Council to consider a transitional multiyear budget for D.C. Public Schools. This would mean a 3-year budget beginning next July when the school system transitions to a July-June fiscal year. A multiyear budget will promote stable planning and funding, but would require an amendment to the District of Columbia Charter. I have introduced a sense of the Council provision to this end, and while my colleagues have not had an opportunity to weigh in on this issue, I am hopeful that they will be supportive. I will hold a public hearing on this legislation on June 23 and hope to see the charter amendment acted on by the Congress by the end of the year. I urge you to support and to champion that proposal, noting, again, that I speak as the Committee chair and not for the full Council.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on D.C. Public Schools, and I will be happy to respond to the Committee's questions.

PROP 100%

Pledge to Rebuild Our Public Schools 100%

Adoption by the Federal Government of the financial responsibility for their fair share of the cost for the rebuilding and modernization of the District of Columbia Public Schools and Public Charter Schools

Facts

- **DC needs almost $1.6B** more to rebuild the DC Public Schools than the $0.6B the Mayor has authorized for the next six years of its capital program, as already documented by the GAO[1] and several other public and private studies.[2]

- DC is unable to issue its own bonds for this **$2.2 billion rebuilding program**, because of the City's statutory borrowing limits, credit rating, and the need to pay for all other capital needs, including safety and security[3]. Homeland Security is already relying on DC schools for neighborhood shelters, yet many schools don't pass basic fire, safety, health, and building codes.

- Public Charter Schools are struggling to find adequate space and to support the improvements needed for their educational programs.

- Due to DC's large percentage of federal land and buildings that generate zero tax revenue for DC schools, **DC does not have the tax base or legal structure** to raise revenue to pay for the requirements of a comprehensive school modernization program.

- Until DC was granted municipal borrowing authority from Congress in 1980, all school design and construction was paid for by Congress through the District appropriation, with the building program of the 1960s managed by the General Services Administration.

- **Most cities get substantial funding for school construction from their states:**
  - Newark – 100%
  - Cleveland – 65%
  - Baltimore – 75%
  - Boston – 80%

Proposal

A portion of US Government funding (from HR4269) should be **earmarked solely for DC Public School and Public Charter School rebuilding**, with a "Marshall Plan" approach to complete the effort and not let another generation of school children suffer the consequences of unhealthy, unsafe, educationally inadequate school buildings.

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[1] "D.C. Public Schools' Modernization Program Faces Major Challenges," April 25, 2002. GAO Testimony.

[2] "Guide to the D.C.P.S. Capital Budget, " January 28, 2003. The 21st Century School Fund.
"Assessing the District of Columbia's Financial Position," March 14, 2002. McKinsey & Company.
"Envisioning a Future Washington," June 2001. The Brookings Institution, C. O'Cleireacain and Alice M. Rivlin. "Leaving Children Behind: The Underfunding of DCPS Building Repair and Capital Budget Needs," July 2003. Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools Civic Leader Advisory Committee Report. Testimony before the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, from Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, the GAO, Mayor Anthony Williams, Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va), Ted Trabue (Greater Washington Board of Trade), Stephen Trachtenberg (DC Chamber of Commerce), The Honorable Fred Thompson (Federal City Council), Alice Rivlin, et al, June 22, 2004.

[3] See "District of Columbia Structural Imbalance and Management Issues," May 2003. GAO Report to Congressional Requesters.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Dr. Janey, welcome. This is your first time before our committee, and I'm happy to have you here.

STATEMENT OF CLIFFORD B. JANEY

Dr. JANEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Davis, as chairman of the committee, and Ms. Norton, Congresswoman and a long time leader and supporter of Washington, DC, public schools and the District of Columbia.

My name, as it has been mentioned, is Clifford Janey, and I serve as superintendent of schools and chief State school officer for the District of Columbia. I welcome this opportunity to appear before you to talk about what we are doing to not only reverse the current data points as outlined by Chairperson Davis but the perception as well of our schools. We are doing that with partners who are working with us in the interest of education reform and also strengthening the role of schools as anchors in our communities.

We know what children need to succeed in school. They need good nutrition and physical education, consistent guidance, safety, and access to enriching educational and cultural experiences that will help them see and understand the global context of K–12 education.

Children need to be taught successfully at every level in school before moving to the next grade level. The formula is basically the same for all children, regardless of race, class and ethnicity. Variation, however, in performance occurs most frequently as a result of differences in preparation of the student before entering school or differences in preparation of teachers and administrative staff while the student is in school.

Numerous studies have confirmed the relationship between successful schools and vital communities. In her 2003 report for the Brookings Institute of Greater Washington, Alice Rivlin observed that improving schools was a key condition for attracting a diversity of families who would make their homes in the District of Columbia, which is in turn an essential element of our city's goal of increasing our population by 100,000 residents by 2013.

Excellent schools bring other benefits to our city, they attract and keep excellent teachers and principals who make their homes in the District. They train our young people to move successfully into college or the workplace and a well-trained workforce who attracts businesses to locate in the city. They serve as anchors in the neighborhoods and raise property values. Building on the foundation and the momentum created by the D.C. Education Compact, I recently introduced the first step to making the substantive and sustainable changes that this system needs, a strategic plan for change that I call the Declaration of Education.

There are three mutually supportive goals that frame this Declaration of Education. The first, as it should be, focuses on academics. That includes looking at our new standards and our new assessments which should be implemented next year. The second goal focuses on management systems, areas such as procurement, human resources and security facilities and technology. The third goal is in the area of communication and collaboration.

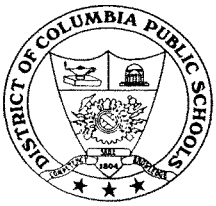
The overall philosophy of the plan places a high value on creating a culture of collaboration, the aim of which is to create a school system that collaborates with all segments of the community, and assuming respective roles and owning their fair share of responsibility and accountability for student success.

I agree with the recent Washington Post editorial that I alone cannot bring youth from home to school ready to learn, keep them engaged in class all day, and get them ready for college or a challenging career when they graduate from high school. In my own words, education can no longer be everybody's business and just my job.

The DCEC is a significant partnership. That is, the D.C. Education Compact is a significant partnership created solely to support DCPS. This compact, which includes the Board of Education, the Mayor, the Council members, parents, teachers, students, principals, union leaders, foundation community and business leaders, is proving to be a tremendous reservoir of resources and support for DCPS as we work through complex problems and simultaneously reach important milestones that will restore universal public confidence. This compact is an unprecedented coalition under the major sponsorship of the Fannie Mae Foundation. And to date, more than 1,000 stakeholders have participated in an intensively focused and nonpartisan process. The core beliefs that guide the DCEC can be summarized under three value propositions that underline the development and continuation of student success: a culture of achievement that accepts the belief that all children are capable of achieving a variety of success indicators notwithstanding their starting point; a culture of excellence in which we rely upon the highest academic standards and the best known business practices; and a culture of open engagement that values coordination, collaboration and cooperation through communication.

With this testimony, I hope to jumpstart a conversation about how we can do business better, looking at those three goals and looking at how some of the partners who are here this morning will continue to be engaged with District of Columbia's public schools. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Janey follows:]



TESTIMONY OF
DR. CLIFFORD B. JANEY
SUPERINTENDENT AND CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICER
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BEFORE

A HEARING OF THE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE

ON

GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2005

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM. I AM CLIFFORD B. JANEY, SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING TO TURN AROUND THE DISTRICT'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE PARTNERS THAT ARE WORKING WITH US IN THE INTEREST OF EDUCATION REFORM AND STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS AS ANCHORS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

WE KNOW WHAT CHILDREN NEED TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL. THEY NEED GOOD NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, CONSISTENT GUIDANCE AND ACCESS TO ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES THAT WILL HELP THEM SEE AND UNDERSTAND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT OF K-12 EDUCATION.

CHILDREN NEED TO BE TAUGHT SUCCESSFULLY AT EVERY LEVEL IN SCHOOL BEFORE MOVING TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL. THE FORMULA IS BASICALLY THE SAME FOR ALL CHILDREN, REGARDLESS OF RACE, CLASS AND ETHNICITY. VARIATION IN PERFORMANCE OCCURS MOST FREQUENTLY AS A RESULT OF DIFFERENCES IN PREPARATION OF THE STUDENT BEFORE ENTERING SCHOOL, OR DIFFERENCES IN PREPARATION OF TEACHERS OR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF WHILE THE STUDENT IS IN SCHOOL.

NUMEROUS STUDIES HAVE CONFIRMED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS AND VITAL COMMUNITIES. IN HER 2003 REPORT FOR THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTIONS' GREATER WASHINGTON RESEARCH PROGRAM, ALICE RIVLIN OBSERVED THAT IMPROVING SCHOOLS WAS A KEY CONDITION FOR ATTRACTING MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES TO MAKE THEIR HOMES IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA – WHICH IS, IN TURN, AN ESSENTIAL

ELEMENT IN OUR CITY'S GOAL OF INCREASING OUR POPULATION BY 100,000 RESIDENTS BY 2013.

EXCELLENT SCHOOLS BRING OTHER BENEFITS TO OUR CITY AS WELL:

- THEY ATTRACT AND KEEP EXCELLENT TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS, WHO MAKE THEIR HOMES IN THE DISTRICT.
- THEY TRAIN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO MOVE SUCCESSFULLY INTO COLLEGE OR THE WORKPLACE – AND A WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE, IN TURN, ATTRACTS BUSINESSES TO LOCATE IN THE CITY.
- THEY SERVE AS ANCHORS IN NEIGHBORHOODS AND RAISE LOCAL PROPERTY VALUES.

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION OF AND THE MOMENTUM CREATED BY THE DC EDUCATION COMPACT, I RECENTLY INTRODUCED THE FIRST STEP TO MAKING THE SUBSTANTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CHANGES THAT THIS SYSTEM NEEDS -- A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CHANGE THAT I CALL THE DECLARATION OF EDUCATION.

THERE ARE THREE MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE GOALS THAT FRAME THIS DECLARATION OF EDUCATION. THE FIRST, AS IT SHOULD BE, FOCUSES ON ACADEMICS.

THE SECOND GOAL FOCUSES ON MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

THE THIRD GOAL IS COMMUNICATION – HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH AND ENGAGE OUR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, STAFF, PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS PARTNERS.

THE OVERARCHING PHILOSOPHY OF THIS PLAN PLACES A HIGH VALUE ON CREATING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION, THE AIM OF WHICH IS TO CREATE A SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT COLLABORATES WITH ALL SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY IN ASSUMING RESPECTIVE ROLES AND OWNING FAIR SHARES OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS. I AGREE WITH A RECENT WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL THAT I, ALONE, CANNOT "BRING YOUTH FROM HOME TO SCHOOL READY TO LEARN, KEEP THEM ENGAGED IN CLASS ALL DAY AND GET THEM READY FOR COLLEGE OR A CHALLENGING CAREER WHEN THEY GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL." IN MY OWN WORDS,

EDUCATION CAN NO LONGER BE EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS AND JUST MY JOB.

BUILDING UPON OUR STRATEGIC PLAN THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE DC EDUCATION COMPACT (DCEC), I BELIEVE WE CAN STABILIZE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND SUSTAIN IT FOR YEARS TO COME BEYOND MY TENURE. THE WORK OF THE DCEC IS CRITICAL TO BUILDING THE KIND OF BROAD-BASED SUPPORT NEEDED TO REVERSE PAST SINS AND REDEEM A FUTURE NATIONAL SUCCESS STORY.

DCEC IS A SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP CREATED SOLELY TO SUPPORT DCPS. THIS COMPACT, WHICH INCLUDES THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, MAYOR, COUNCIL MEMBERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, UNION LEADERS, FOUNDATION COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS, IS PROVING TO BE A TREMENDOUS RESERVOIR OF RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR DCPS AS WE WORK THROUGH COMPLEX PROBLEMS AND, SIMULTANEOUSLY, REACH IMPORTANT MILESTONES THAT WILL RESTORE UNIVERSAL PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. THE COMPACT IS AN UNPRECEDENTED COALITION UNDER THE MAJOR SPONSORSHIP OF THE FANNIE MAE FOUNDATION. TO DATE, MORE THAN 1,000

STAKEHOLDERS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AN INTENSELY FOCUSED NON-PARTISAN PROCESS.

THE CORE BELIEFS THAT GUIDE THE DCEC WORK CAN BE SUMMARIZED UNDER THREE VALUE PROPOSITIONS THAT UNDERLINE THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUATION OF STUDENT SUCCESS:

- A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT THAT ACCEPTS THE BELIEF THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING A VARIETY OF SUCCESS INDICATORS, NOTWITHSTANDING THEIR STARTING POINT;
- A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE IN WHICH WE RELY UPON THE HIGHEST ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND THE BEST KNOWN BUSINESS PRACTICES; AND
- A CULTURE OF OPEN ENGAGEMENT THAT VALUES COORDINATION, COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION THROUGH COMMUNICATION.

WE INVITE ALL DC RESIDENTS WHO SHARE A COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPACT'S PLAN TO HELP RECLAIM PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

BASED ON THE RECOGNITION OF HOW CRITICAL COLLABORATION WILL BE TO DELIVERING HIGH ACADEMIC OUTCOMES, WE DREW UPON THE EXPERTISE OF LOCAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERS WHO MADE APPROPRIATE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE MASSACHUSETTS LEARNING STANDARDS THAT WERE UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN MARCH 2005.

WE ARE ALSO WORKING TO IMPROVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH CITY AGENCIES TO OFFER "WRAPAROUND" HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES; WORKING WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMMING, REDUCE TRUANCY AND INCREASE STUDENT ATTENDANCE; AND JOINING WITH BUSINESSES TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WHO LEAVE HIGH SCHOOL PREPARED FOR GOOD CAREERS.

FOR EXAMPLE, WE, ALONG WITH THE YOUTH COURT AND OTHERS ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY, ARE PART OF AN INTERAGENCY TRUANCY WORK GROUP THAT WAS CONVENED LAST APRIL TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION ACROSS DISTRICT AGENCIES TO REDUCE TRUANCY. DURING YEAR ONE (SEPTEMBER

2004 - JUNE 2005), OUR EMPHASIS IS ON REDUCING TRUANCY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. THE FOCUS FOR YEAR TWO WILL BE TO ADDRESS TRUANCY ISSUES IN MIDDLE AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS. ALREADY THIS YEAR, WE HAVE SEEN A CONSISTENT DECLINE IN THE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS WITH 15 DAYS OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, AS COMPARED TO LAST YEAR.

ON A RELATED NOTE, WE ARE STRENGTHENING OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT IN THE SHORT TERM TO HELP US MANAGE SECURITY OPERATIONS IN AND AROUND OUR SCHOOLS.

OUR COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS ARE BASED UPON A TWO-TIERED APPROACH -- ACADEMIC AND OPERATIONAL REFORMS WITH ONE COMMON GOAL, TO STABILIZE OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM TO BETTER SERVE OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

FOR EXAMPLE, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH THE CITY TO IMPROVE OUR PROCUREMENT SYSTEM AND FULLY AUTOMATE OUR PERSONNEL SYSTEM AND TO ELIMINATE THE PAYROLL BACKLOGS THAT HAVE PLAGUED THE DISTRICT FOR YEARS. SINCE JANUARY, WE HAVE PROCESSED MORE THAN 10,000 PERSONNEL ACTIONS TO CORRECT MANY OF THOSE ERRORS.

IN THE AREA OF OUR MANY FACILITIES' NEEDS, WE ARE EXPLORING INNOVATIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS CRITICAL NEEDS, GUIDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION VISION. ONE SUCH PARTNERSHIP IS WITH GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, A PARTNERSHIP THAT WILL HELP US REBUILD OUR ACADEMICALLY OUTSTANDING SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION IS REFLECTED IN OUR NEW CO-LOCATION PLAN. UNDER THIS PLAN, WE WILL ALLOW EDUCATIONALLY COMPATIBLE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, SUCH AS LIBRARIES, HEALTH CLINICS, COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS OR CHARTER SCHOOLS, TO SHARE IN THE USE OF OUR UNDERUTILIZED FACILITIES.

AND AN IMPORTANT PARTNERSHIP CURRENTLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT STAGES THAT WILL HELP US MEET OUR FACILITIES NEEDS IS THE CREATION OF A STRATEGIC FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES OFFICE. THIS NEW OFFICE WILL SEEK TO FOSTER INNOVATIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO GENERATE NEW FUNDING ALTERNATIVES FOR OUR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

WE ALSO NEED A COMMITMENT OF WILL AND COLLABORATION. DCPS IS AGGRESSIVELY REVIEWING ITS

RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS. WE ARE SETTING A STANDARD OF EXPECTATIONS WITH AN EYE TOWARD EXCELLENCE AND A PERFECT FIT FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN.

BORROWING A PAGE FROM THE DC EDUCATION COMPACT, BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS WOULD INCLUDE:

- A PARTNERSHIP WITH GOVERNMENT AND ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT WOULD HELP US INSTITUTE A MULTI-YEAR BUDGET.
- PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, AMONG OTHERS, TO MANAGE LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS OR ADOPT ONE OF OUR PRE-K THROUGH 12 EDUCATION CLUSTERS.
- PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO ALIGN STANDARDS THAT WILL ALLOW STUDENTS TO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT AS THEY COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL, WHICH CAN SERVE AS BRIDGE PROGRAMS TO VARIOUS CAREER PATHS IN CRITICAL AREAS SUCH AS HEALTH CARE OR ENGINEERING.

- A PARTNERSHIP WITH SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY PLAN AND TO EXPAND WRAPAROUND SERVICES TO INCLUDE WARDS 4 AND 8.
- A PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, FAMILIES AND CITIZENS TO STRENGTHEN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS OF DCPS HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGH MEMBERSHIP EVENTS.

WE HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS THAT ARE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR DCPS AND THE DISTRICT.

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME BEFORE YOU TODAY TO TALK ABOUT DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS -- WHERE WE ARE, WHERE WE NEED TO BE, AND, ULTIMATELY, HOW WE WILL PROVIDE THE KIND OF EDUCATION STUDENTS IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL DESERVE.

THIS CONCLUDES MY TESTIMONY.

I WILL NOW ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Chief Ramsey, welcome.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES H. RAMSEY

Chief RAMSEY. Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on the issue of school safety, a topic of vital importance to the District of Columbia, to our young people and their families, indeed, to our entire city and its future.

I have submitted a complete written statement to the committee, and I will summarize the key points here. Today's hearing comes at a critically important time in the District's ongoing efforts to enhance the safety of our public schools. Recent legislation transfers management responsibility for school safety from the D.C. public schools to the Metropolitan Police Department effective July 1st.

There has been a misconception out there that this transfer of responsibility will mean that we will only have uniformed police officers protecting our schools. This is not the case. The District will continue to use contract security personnel, along with MPD school resource officers, to provide safety services to our schools.

What is changing is that MPD will oversee management of the security contract and performance of the contract security personnel in the schools. The results, we believe, will be a better-trained, higher-quality workforce, greater coordination among private security, MPD personnel and school staff, and, ultimately, safer schools for our students, faculty, staff and parents.

The schools' new security contract is a result of a cooperative effort among the MPD, DCPS and the D.C. Office of Contracting and Procurement. The proposed new contract has been presented to the D.C. Council for approval. What is noteworthy about the contract is that it sets standards for the selection and training of school security personnel. It establishes integrity and performance standards for personnel, including regular drug testing of employees. And it provides for strict and regular auditing of the contractor's performance in meeting the provisions of the contract. These are critically important reforms that will go a long way toward improving the quality of security services in our schools.

Even before the legislation on school security was enacted, the MPD took a number of steps to enhance school safety using the resources at our disposal. Chief among these was the assignment of additional school resource officers, 99 officers and 14 supervisors assigned to our middle, junior and senior high schools based on a risk analysis conducted by the MPD. School resource officers and their sergeants not only provide a uniformed police presence inside the schools, they also facilitate critical coordination with the neighborhood patrol officers in the communities where schools are located. We know from the tragic shooting death of James Richardson inside Ballou Senior High School 15 months ago that crime problems in our neighborhoods often end up in our schools, and vice versa. The MPD is working to prevent this spillover effect by fully integrating school safety into the broader strategy of community policing that we call Policing for Prevention.

SRO and neighborhood officers are in the same chain of command. They share information and resources about crime in the

community, and they coordinate crime-fighting plans. And the principal and other school officials have access to the full range of police personnel to address crime and disorder issues affecting their schools. We're not compartmentalizing school safety, but rather integrating it into our broader community policing philosophy.

The committee asked that I provide data on the nature and extent of crime in our schools. Based on our data, there are at least 522 serious crimes reported on D.C. public school property during calendar year 2004. That compares with an estimated 510 such crimes in 2003, an increase of about 2 percent. The vast majority of these crimes, about 73 percent in 2004, were property offenses, such as thefts, auto theft and theft from auto. So far this year, the number of crimes reported in D.C. public schools have declined 18 percent when compared to the same period in 2004. So we are encouraged that the numbers are moving in the right direction.

In the community at large, juvenile involvement in crime, both as offenders and victims, remains a serious concern, although there may be some encouraging trends emerging here as well. During 2004, there were 24 juveniles murdered in D.C.; that's nearly double the number of juvenile homicide victims in 2003 when there were 13. Of the 24, 5 were the victims of abuse and neglect. The remaining 19, all except one, were the victims of gun violence. So far this year, there have been 5 juvenile homicide victims, down from 13 such victims at this time last year, and we're hopeful that last year's spike in juvenile homicides was a 1-year aberration, not a statistical trend.

During 2004, MPD officers arrested approximately 2,950 juveniles for a variety of crimes from homicide, robbery and weapons violations, and various misdemeanor offenses. The 2004 arrest total is approximately 15 percent higher than the 2003 total and almost 22 percent higher than the 2002 total. So far this year, we've made just over 1,000 juvenile arrests.

We've also substantially increased our enforcement of truancy and curfew laws as part of our strategy to reduce juvenile victimization and offending. Over the past 17 months, we've picked up more than 4,300 truants. Curfew violations increased from about 230 in 2003 to more than 1,200 in 2004.

My written statement outlines several examples of programs that we're involved in to work with young people. These are not simply feel-good approaches but very concrete approaches to dealing with the issue of juvenile crime.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee.

[The prepared statement of Chief Ramsey follows:]

Government of the District of Columbia

Metropolitan Police Department

Testimony of
Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police

"Oversight Hearing on the District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS)"

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
Honorable Tom Davis, Chairman

May 20, 2005

Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2154
Washington, DC

Mister Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, other members of the Committee, staff and guests ... thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on a topic of vital importance to the District of Columbia, to our young people and their families – indeed, to our entire city and its future. That topic is the safety of our public schools.

Mayor Anthony Williams, City Administrator Robert Bobb and other members of the District government are to be applauded for their commitment and leadership on the issues of juvenile crime and school safety. The Mayor, in particular, has worked hard to raise awareness of the issue, to develop programs that are supported by budgeted funds, to pursue legislation that assists the police in our enforcement and intervention efforts, and to insist that all agencies involved in the safety of our young people are working together and in a coordinated manner.

Today's hearing comes at a critically important time in the District's ongoing efforts to enhance the safety of our schools. Recent legislation passed by the DC Council and signed by the Mayor transfers management responsibility for school safety from the DC Public Schools to the MPD, effective July 1. Under this transfer of responsibility, the District will continue to use contract security personnel, along with MPD School Resource Officers, to provide safety services in our schools. What is changing is that the MPD will now oversee management of the security contract and performance of the private security personnel in the schools.

The results, we believe, will be a better-trained, higher-quality school safety workforce; greater coordination among private security, MPD personnel, and school staff; and, ultimately, safer schools for our students, faculty, staff and parents. Of course, with this new responsibility also come the expectation and the opportunity for the police and the schools to work more closely on a range of issues that impact the safety of our young people, in the schools and in the community. The MPD stands ready to meet those expectations and take advantage of those opportunities.

* * * * *

The new school security contract is the result of a cooperative effort among the MPD, DCPS and the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement. Together, we developed a comprehensive RFP and completed a thorough evaluation of the offerors who responded. The proposed new contract has been presented to the DC Council for approval. The contract is noteworthy because it sets standards for the selection and training of school security personnel. It establishes integrity and performance standards for personnel (including regular drug testing of employees). And it provides for strict and regular auditing of the contractor's performance in meeting the provisions of the contract. These are all critically important reforms that will go a long way toward improving the quality of security services and the sense of safety in our schools.

Even before the legislation on school security was enacted, the MPD took a number of steps to enhance school safety using the resources at our disposal. For example, the MPD created a new Office of Security Services, headed by an assistant chief, to help plan and oversee the transfer of school safety (as well as other security responsibilities) to the MPD. In addition, our Department substantially increased the number of School Resource Officers this school year, to 99 officers and

14 supervisors. Based on a risk analysis the MPD conducted, SROs have been assigned to middle, junior and senior high schools throughout the District. All of these schools have at least one SRO; those deemed to be at the highest risk have several officers.

School Resource Officers and their sergeants not only provide a uniformed police presence during school hours and after-school events; they also facilitate critical coordination with the neighborhood patrol officers in the communities where schools are located. From the tragic shooting death of James Richardson inside Ballou Senior High School 15 months ago to any number of other incidents of school violence, we know that crime problems in our neighborhoods often end up in our schools – and vice versa. The MPD is working hard to prevent this spill-over of crime between schools and neighborhoods by fully integrating school safety into our broader strategy of community policing, what we call "Policing for Prevention."

School Resource Officers and sergeants are detailed to the police districts where the schools are located. This places them in the same chain of command as neighborhood patrol officers, and provides them with access to the same information and resources about crime in the community. The sergeants help ensure that patrol officers working in the vicinity of the school pay attention to the area around the school and share information and coordinate efforts with the SROs assigned to the schools. School safety is included in the broader crime prevention plans that are developed by the various Police Service Areas (or PSAs). Regional Assistant Chiefs, District Commanders and PSA lieutenants are all encouraged to develop relationships with the schools in their areas of command. And anytime a Principal has an issue about a neighborhood crime or disorder problem that impacts the safety of students and staff, he or she is encouraged to contact the Commander of the Police District where the school is located. So coordination between school safety and neighborhood safety is a critical element of our overall strategy.

* * * * *

The Committee asked that I provide data on the nature and extent of crime in our schools. Based on our data, there were at least 522 serious (or "Index") crimes reported on DC Public School property during calendar year 2004. That compares with an estimated 510 such crimes in 2003, for an increase of about 2 percent. It should be noted that the vast majority of these crimes – about 73 percent in 2004 – were property offenses such as thefts, thefts from autos and stolen vehicles. While the more serious crimes of violence – robberies, assaults and even homicides – occur less frequently in our schools, there were still 139 violent crimes reported on school property during 2004. That is an increase from 117 in 2003. So far this year, the number of crimes reported at DC Public Schools has declined 18 percent, when compared with the same period of 2004. So we are encouraged that some of the steps we have already taken to combat school crime may be having an impact.

As the MPD assumes management responsibility for school safety, we will continue to emphasize data collection and analysis. This will help us in deploying our resources – both School Resource Officers and contract security personnel – in the most effective manner possible.

In the community at large, juvenile involvement in crime – both as offenders and as victims – remains a serious concern in the District of Columbia, although there may be some encouraging trends that are emerging here as well. During 2004, there were 24 juveniles murdered in DC. That is nearly double the number of juvenile homicide victims in 2003, when there were 13, and is 41 percent higher than the 2002 total of 17. So far this year, there have been five juvenile homicide victims, down from 13 such victims at this time last year. We are hopeful that last year's spike in juvenile homicides was a one-year aberration, not a statistical trend.

What is most perplexing about the 2004 increase in juvenile homicides was that it came during a year in which the total number of homicides in the District declined by 20 percent, to its lowest level in 18 years. In 2003, about 5 percent of all homicide victims in our city were juveniles, but in 2004, the figure was 12 percent – about one out of every eight homicide victims last year was age 17 or younger. A report analyzing all juvenile homicides between 2002 and 2004 – including information about victims, offenders, methods, location, time and other factors – has been made available to the Committee and is posted on the MPD website as well.

During 2004, MPD officers arrested approximately 2,950 juveniles for a variety of crimes – from homicide, robbery and weapons violations to various misdemeanor offenses. The 2004 arrest total is approximately 15 percent higher than the 2003 total, and almost 22 percent higher than the 2002 total. So far this year, officers have made just over 1,000 juvenile arrests, which represents a slight decrease from the 2004 total but still reflects the enhanced attention we are paying to juvenile crime.

It is difficult to know whether recent increases in juvenile arrest activity are the result of more crime committed by young people or more vigorous enforcement by the police – or some combination of factors. It is interesting to note that as arrests of *adults* increased 14 percent last year, overall crime in DC declined by 18 percent. I can tell the Committee that our Department has placed increased attention on juvenile crime in the last few years, particularly on such "gateway" crimes as unauthorized use of a vehicle, narcotics and burglary. And we are hopeful that this increased attention to offenses committed by juveniles will have a positive impact on juvenile crime trends.

We have also substantially increased our enforcement of truancy and curfew laws, as well as our investigations of child abuse. Over the past 17 months, MPD officers have picked up more than 4,300 truants, including approximately 1,200 since the beginning of this calendar year. Curfew violations increased from only about 230 in 2003 to more than 1,200 in 2004 and approximately 800 so far this year already. And the number of newly reported cases of child abuse investigated by the MPD increased by more than 50 percent between 2003 (1,088 cases) and 2004 (1,672 cases), and this number continued to rise during the first quarter of 2005. These statistics provide further evidence of our Department's commitment to reducing juvenile crime – both victimization and offending – and to intervening early in the cycle of crime by investigating child abuse.

* * * * *

When it comes to combating juvenile crime, enforcement of the law is critically important. But it is also clear that it will take much more than just law enforcement to address the problem in a

meaningful and lasting way. That is why the MPD is actively involved with other agencies in a variety of intervention and prevention programs targeting juvenile crime inside our schools and in the community at large. Allow me to provide you just a few examples.

Conflict Resolution Teams from the MPD's Office of Youth Violence Prevention visit schools on a regular basis – both to solicit information about emerging conflicts and to mediate those disagreements before they escalate. These teams were particularly active in the aftermath of the James Richardson shooting at Ballou. Organizationally, we are moving the Office of Youth Violence Prevention into the Office of Security Services so that our school enforcement, intervention and prevention efforts can be consolidated and better coordinated under one chain of command.

Our Department also works closely with the Alliance of Concerned Men on conflict resolution activities, and we have partnered with the East of the River Clergy-Police-Community Partnership on a number of initiatives to address the underlying causes of youth violence. For example, our two organizations, along with the Department of Parks and Recreation's Roving Leaders and the DC Public Schools, recently collaborated on the "Girlfriend to Girlfriend" summit involving more than 160 young women from 10 major female gangs. In Northwest DC, the multi-agency Gang Intervention Partnership we created almost two years ago, in response to a spike in gang violence involving Latino youth, has been very successful in combating that serious problem. And the MPD remains actively involved in other citywide initiatives, including the Child Fatality Review Committee and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council's Truancy Working Group, among others.

The MPD is also leading a number of our own prevention and intervention initiatives. These include our Youth Advisory Councils, "40 Days of Increased Peace," Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Clubs, the "DC Fashion Idol" program that is currently under way, late-night basketball and football, and numerous ongoing and ad hoc efforts in all seven police districts. The important point is that these are not simply "feel-good" initiatives, but rather aggressive and creative approaches to combating youth crime and violence on many levels – and with many different partners.

The MPD is also working with the Mayor's Office and the DC Council on legislation that will give our Department and others the tools we need to address juvenile crime and violence. Last year, the Council passed the Mayor's juvenile justice legislation that holds juveniles and, in many cases, their parents more accountable. This year, the Mayor's omnibus crime legislation includes a number of important provisions dealing with juveniles, including measures on gang recruitment, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect. Our Department looks forward to testifying on behalf of this legislation before the DC Council and, ultimately, to carrying out these and other important provisions of the proposed law.

* * * * *

Earlier in my testimony, I mentioned the February 2004 murder of James Richardson inside Ballou High School, at the hands of a fellow student. That incident sparked a level of anger and frustration in the community that I have rarely witnessed in my 34-plus years as a police officer. In the aftermath of that tragic murder, Ballou students, parents, faculty and staff, as well as the community

at large, demanded answers and demanded action. Our city and our Department responded with a number of initiatives that I have touched upon today – actions that are designed to enhance safety and promote learning not just at Ballou in the short term, but at all of our public schools for the long term.

But as much as the community may want a "quick fix" to the problem of school crime, the fact remains that school safety is a complex issue that demands thoughtful, careful and comprehensive solutions. School safety involves much more than guards and metal detectors at the door and cameras in the hallways. Creating a safe and positive school environment – one that is free of drugs, violence, intimidation and fear – encompasses a wide range of physical, social and academic factors that involve a number of different agencies and individuals. Coordinating these myriad activities – and getting everyone working together – is essential to our success. The Metropolitan Police Department is committed to this goal, and we stand ready to continue working with other agencies and individuals to help make our schools safer.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Walker, thanks for being with us.

STATEMENT OF BRENDA DONALD WALKER

Ms. WALKER. Thank you so much, Chairman Davis and Congressman Norton and staff.

I am Brenda Donald Walker, director of the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency [CFSA]. CFSA is the District's child protective agency responsible for abuse and neglected children.

The District of Columbia public schools are responsible for the education of all school-age children in our care. Currently, about 1,100 children and teens involved with CFSA attend public school in the District, and about 900 attend school out of the District, primarily in Maryland. DCPS is responsible for paying the tuition of those students. About 40 percent of the students in our care are in special education, and approximately 750 children receive ongoing tutoring assistance.

Coming from varying degrees of abuse and neglect, many of our children must overcome barriers to learning. For example, they may suffer prenatal exposure to drugs, separation from family and community, developmental delays, undiagnosed learning disabilities and past inconsistency in school attendance.

In advocating for our children, we are collaborating with Dr. Clifford Janey and others at DCPS from our frontline social workers working directly with teachers to high-level collaboratively tackling specific issues. One issue I would like to highlight is our collaborative effort to combat chronic truancy. About a year ago, a city-wide truancy task force was formed to grapple with chronic truancy, which was defined as a child missing 10 or more days of school, unexcused absences, within a 3-month period. This is relevant to our efforts at CFSA because unexcused absences from school, especially with younger children, often indicate serious issues at home that may constitute risks of abuse or neglect.

As a member of the task force, CFSA helped to devise a plan to address truancy at the elementary school. When parents impede children from attending school regularly, they can be found guilty of educational neglect, which in and of itself is often a symptom of other serious issues.

We entered into a memorandum of understanding with DCPS to establish a standard protocol for elementary schools to follow in reporting chronic absences. And basically the protocol is that after a child under the age of 12 has 10 or more unexcused absences in 3 months and the school has initiated appropriate interventions, then the school will report the case to CFSA, and we will investigate. This collaborative effort has allowed CFSA to identify children at risk far earlier than in the past. In the first 4 months of 2004, before the MOU was in place, we substantiated 149 cases of educational neglect. After the MOUs, for the same period of time, we substantiated 236.

In delivering services to the families, we have partnered with the community-based Healthy Families Thriving Communities Collaborative. And last summer, as a strategy of the task force, the CFSA and the collaboratives contacted nearly 200 families whose children

were chronically truant. As a result of this initiative, the truancy among this population the subsequent school year was cut in half.

Looking forward, the District is now beginning to address truancy among middle school students. This population will prove far more challenging, and CFSA's role will diminish because the connection between abuse and neglect and truancy diminishes as students get older. Broader resources are needed to address this population, but we will continue to play a supportive role.

I also want to discuss briefly the educational needs of foster children. For some foster children, education may temporarily take a backseat to the immediate needs of safety, overcoming trauma and adjusting to a foster home. National data suggests that children in foster care are at a disproportionately high risk of educational failure, as well as, I mentioned earlier, participation in special education. To support the educational needs of children in foster care, we have two educational specialists on staff, and we are finalizing an MOU to train foster parents with special education parents to become surrogate parents so they can better advocate for their foster children.

Finally, as you know, CFSA receives Federal early intervention funds designed to avoid bringing children into care. Among many of the important services these funds support, we pay for transportation services to keep children in their home schools if they have to be temporarily removed from their homes.

As everybody in this room knows, education is vital for all children, especially those in the child protection system, and we look forward to continuing our work with DCPS, other District agencies and the community to ensure consistent quality education for our children. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Walker follows:]

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency

Testimony of

Brenda Donald Walker, Director
D.C. Child and Family Services Agency

U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Government Reform
Hearing on District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
May 20, 2005

Good morning, Representative Davis and members of the Committee on Government Reform. I am Brenda Donald Walker, director of the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA). CFSA is the District's child protective agency responsible for abused and neglected children. We are currently serving 5,750 children, including 2,750 in out-of-home care and 3,000 at home.

From the moment children come into our care, it is our mission to improve their safety, permanence, and well being. Education is a critical element of that mission. The District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS) is responsible for the education for all school-age children in our care. Currently, 1,100 children and teens involved with CFSA attend public school in the District. About 300 of those children are in special education. DCPS also provides tuition for about 900 District foster children who attend school in other jurisdictions, primarily Maryland. For all of our children, about 750 are receiving educational tutoring.

Coming from varying degrees of abuse or neglect, many of our children must overcome barriers to learning. For example, they may suffer from prenatal exposure to drugs, separation from

family and community, low self-esteem and achievement, developmental delays, undiagnosed learning disabilities, and past inconsistency in school attendance. In advocating for our children, we have collaborated with Dr. Clifford Janey and others at DCPS - from CFSA social workers interacting directly with teachers, to high-level administrators collectively tackling specific issues.

One specific issue CFSA and DCPS have confronted together is chronic truancy. A year ago, the presiding judge of the Family Court and a member of the school board convened a District-wide committee to grapple with chronic truancy, defined as a child missing 10 or more days of school within three months. It is relevant to our efforts at CFSA because unexcused absences from school, especially with younger children, often indicate serious issues at home that may constitute risks of abuse or neglect. What's more, truancy among children and teens frequently correlates with gang activity, criminal behavior, and dropping out of school.

As a member of the truancy task force, CFSA helped to devise a plan to address truancy at the elementary school level. When parents—through action or inaction—impede children from attending school regularly, they are guilty of educational neglect. Educational neglect, in turn, is often a symptom of other serious issues. To facilitate school reporting of allegations, CFSA and DCPS developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that established a standard protocol for District elementary schools to follow. Basically, the protocol is that after a child under age 12 has 10 unexcused absences in three months and the school has initiated appropriate interventions, the school then reports to CFSA, and we investigate.

This collaborative effort has enabled CFSA to identify children at risk far earlier than in the past. In the first four months of 2004, before the MOU was in place, we substantiated 149 cases of educational neglect. In the first four months of this year, we substantiated 236. This indicates that, through cooperation with DCPS, we are better able to identify children and families who are in need of services. In delivering services, we have partnered with the community based Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives. Last summer, as a strategy of the truancy committee CFSA and the Collaboratives initiated contact with nearly 200 children DCPS identified as being chronically truant the previous school year. This was a major initiative, which commanded a substantial commitment on the part of both CFSA and the Collaboratives. I share the schools' pleasure in reporting that truancy among this population of children has been cut by half.

Looking forward, the District is now beginning to address truancy among middle-school students. This population will prove far more challenging. CFSA's role will diminish because the connection between abuse and neglect and truancy diminishes as students get older. Broader resources are needed to address this population, but we will continue to play a supportive role.

I also want to discuss, briefly, the educational needs of foster children. For some foster children, education may temporarily take a back seat to the immediate needs of safety, overcoming trauma, and adjusting to a foster home. However, education is a strong element of child well being and needs to continue with as little disruption as possible. CFSA is working with DCPS to identify, meet, and track the educational needs of foster children. National data suggest that children in foster care are at a disproportionately high risk of educational failure. In light of the educational needs of children in our foster care system, we have two educational specialists on

staff, and we are finalizing an MOU to train foster parents with special education children to become surrogate parents. As surrogate parents with training from DCPS, our foster parents will be better equipped to monitor their children's grades and attendance reports and to advocate for them at school. Finally, as you know, CFSA received Federal Early Intervention Funds, designed to avoid bringing children into care. Among many other important services these funds support, we can pay for transportation services to keep children in their home schools if they have to be temporarily removed from their homes.

As everybody in this room knows, education is vital for all children, especially those in the child protection system. I look forward to continuing our work with DCPS, District agencies, and the community to ensure consistent, quality education for the children CFSA serves.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, thank you all very much for your testimony. I think the problem here is institutional more than just individuals. I think all of you have been working hard on the front line—some of you for years—trying to improve the school system.

Let me start with a question, I'll start with you, Mr. Bobb, but, Ms. Patterson, Dr. Janey, may have a slant on it.

Two issues that have been raised for us is, one, giving the public school system their own CFO gives them more flexibility. I think the District CFO Ghandi is wonderful. I think he has been a huge asset to the city. But for the city to have their own CFO, it gives them more rapid response time. It gives the superintendent, I think, some flexibility. And second, giving the school system a multi-year budget, maybe a 3-year versus a 1-year, and I would like to get a reaction, if I could, Mr. Bobb, from you, and Mrs. Patterson and Dr. Janey.

Mr. BOBB. Yes. Having served as a city manager in cities all across this country, I would always like to have my own CFO and my own budget people. And it doesn't take away at all from the good work that Dr. Gandhi is doing. And certainly, having had conversations with Dr. Janey and several superintendents and served through the superintendent search process, it seems like every superintendent we interviewed felt strongly that they should have their own CFO as well as their own budget office. And it is certainly something that the Mayor would consistently look at and would be in support of in that regard.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Patterson.

Ms. PATTERSON. Thank you. From the standpoint of the Council, it is very useful to have an independent CFO because, for any piece of financial information that a Council member wants, we have not one but two places to go for it, directly to the operating agency and/or to the CFO, as necessary. So there is a certain practical utility.

I think the school system could have its own CFO or continue to work with Dr. Ghandi's shop. I don't think that is as important as a close and collaborative working relationship. So, quite frankly, I could go either way on that issue.

I am very supportive of the multi-year budget. I think that makes a lot of sense. I would like to be able to spend time discussing how money is spent instead of how many dollars there are.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Bobb, on the multi-year budget, do you have any thoughts on that?

Mr. BOBB. Oh, yes, very definitely. I am in support of a multi-year budget. As a matter of fact, I had a brief conversation with our chairman of City Council in that regard.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Janey, let's get your reaction.

Dr. JANEY. Thank you, Mr. Davis.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I'll tell you, my experience has been, when you come into office and you're new, you ask for everything up front, because 6 months, 2 years later, it gets tough.

Dr. JANEY. We do it while the window is open.

I am supportive of both subjects you raise. The first one, with respect to having the CFO report to the superintendent of schools, I think that's an issue that has come to a time where that needs to be done. And let me just cite a couple of reasons.

First of all, all of the direct reports within an organization like a school district should have a standard of communication and a standard of accountability not only between that direct report and the superintendent, but a standard of relationship and accountability among and between the direct reports, so the chief financial officer, the chief operating officer, the chief accountability officer all need to work together and be held to a standard of accountability. It doesn't make much sense for a school district superintendent to be responsible for all of the affairs when the authority is not there.

With respect to a multi-year budget, it was one of the questions I raised during my interview last year. And Chairman Cropp, at the time, I recall said she thought there would be some interest in exploring the implementation of that subject. It would provide our schools with an opportunity to plan over time. Programs wouldn't be 1 year; they could be at least 3 years in nature, but would afford the school district's senior staff to spend less time preparing budgets and anticipating fights with others. And we could be monitoring. We could be assisting in the development of the implementation of those budgets instead of just doing the preparation.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you, thank you very much.

Chief Ramsey, let me talk to you a bit. We're going to have uniformed officers now doing the schools as opposed to contractors; is that what I have understood?

Chief RAMSEY. No, we have both, sir. We have 99 Metropolitan police officers that are serving as school resource officers, another 14 sergeants and three lieutenants assigned as well. But we also have a contract security that is still a part of the security network for the schools.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And what was the limitation that Council put on that, on—didn't the Council put a limitation on going outside for your security contracts in the schools?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, a process is being followed now where a contract is about to be awarded, it is with the Council now for their review, so that in the fall we will have a contract in place. We currently are operating on an extension of the old contract for the contract security.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And how does that work, or does that prejudice the awarding of the new contract to talk about that publicly?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, I'm not part of OCP, so I would probably be very careful, but without getting into specifics, we have done what we need to do at this point in time, it's just a matter of it being reviewed. There is a roundtable scheduled for Monday, this coming Monday. It's a joint roundtable, and Ms. Patterson and Mr. Mendelson, who chairs judiciary, are having a roundtable to discuss various aspects of the contract that is before them.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Patterson, in the case of a capital program, the public school system is relying on authorizations of the Council and the barring authority of the District government. Does the Council hold oversight hearings on the implementation of the school's capital budget on a regular basis?

Ms. PATTERSON. Well, we certainly do in the course of doing both our performance and budget hearings early in the year. In addition, I had an additional hearing on school facilities just right after

the calendar year began because it is such a high priority. So yes, the answer is, we will be having regular hearings on what is done with those dollars.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. In 2 years, the school board is going to go back to being entirely elective, is that my——

Ms. PATTERSON. That was a mistake in my written statement; it's 4 years. For the 2008 elections, it will be all elected, one for each board, and the chairman and president elected city-wide.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. You think we'll have a better experience than last time? You were one of the shining examples, but we had great difficulty, in my opinion, before in terms of a functioning school aboard.

Ms. PATTERSON. I think the school board is getting stronger by the day. I see a real interest in oversight, an interest in accountability, an interest in working closely with the superintendent as well as with other officials in the city. So I'm optimistic there will be that change, but we know that change is coming, and that certainly gives an opportunity for any of us who do care to seek and recruit candidates to run in each of the eight wards.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Janey, how responsive has the Teachers Union been to your strategic plan?

Dr. JANEY. I think Mr. Parker has been demonstrating his commitment more and more to see a Teachers Union as being an enabler, as opposed to being resistant to change. He is one voice, however. He is just one voice, and he is new in his position. We have developed a working relationship; he has developed, along with other key staff members of my team, a very good working relationship. I think the jury is out in terms of the actual quality of the reception of the entire teaching force with respect to the strategic plan. I think that's partly a function of just not having, to date, the opportunity—as we plan to over the summer and the fall—to actually work with our teachers in developing, A, an understanding, B, some ownership, and, C, some skillful knowledge in terms of how it's going to enable them to become better teachers.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Now, a lot of the teachers, as I understand it, that are currently in the system were never certified or have their certification lapsed; is that correct?

Dr. JANEY. That is correct.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Is that a practical problem or is that a bureaucratic problem?

Dr. JANEY. It's more the former, it's a practical problem and an education one; it has implications for service as well.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. What is our strategy on that?

Dr. JANEY. It is best understood in two parts; one, there are teachers who have not updated their certification, and we believe that there will be many who will be doing that as we have been seeing that change over the last several weeks. I think the more critical issue is in the area where we have no record at all of a teacher not having fulfilled a certification requirement and, therefore, no license. We are reviewing that right now. It will probably end up with an action on my part to dismiss a certain number of teachers who do not have evidence of license. In my review, there was a number of teachers, close to a couple hundred, who did not have any record of license from 1990 and earlier.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. How did that happen? This is before any of your time. That is before your time Kathleen; wasn't it?

Dr. JANEY. As I'm plowing into the data and looking at the numbers against how many years without certification, I can't account for what was certainly not done, but it would be clear to me that these lapses, they just weren't accidental.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Do you think there is a chance in some cases for these teachers to get certification? In some cases, it's an opportunity maybe to get people out that maybe weren't performing and get new people in? Is it a combination of all these?

Dr. JANEY. It's probably a combination, that's fair, of all of the above. But our strategic objective here is more than just trying to be compliant with No Child Left Behind. We want to make sure our staff is credentialed, and beyond being credentialed, they're really prepared to deliver on the new standards that we have just adopted.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Getting new teachers in that are certified, that are qualified, is that a problem? Or is there a surplus of good teachers out there that we can attract in the marketplace?

Dr. JANEY. The challenge, Mr. Chairman, has to do more with attracting, recruiting and then retaining high-quality teachers. There is a sufficient amount of interest in coming to work in Washington, DC; that's been evidenced over the last several years. Our challenge has been beginning our recruitment process earlier so that we can be competitive with our neighboring districts. We made that commitment this year, and we delivered on it. We have a pool right now of some 400 teachers who have expressed interest in working with us and becoming a part of the DCPS family, and we are having another interviewing session this coming Saturday, tomorrow.

So I'm encouraged. There are initiatives that we are working with, special recruitment organizations that have partnered with us to make sure that we are getting the best talent and particularly the best talent spread over where our demands are, demands in special education as well as regular education.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The follow-up to that is getting good teachers is important. It can be tough, but you're sorting that out. Getting good principals is also very, very important.

What is the pool like of what are we doing to find them? Do you think there will be many replacements? Can you give us any kind of preview of what your——

Dr. JANEY. Last year we appointed 24 new principals. I'm sure we will exceed that this year, this coming school year. I am not as encouraged with respect to the depth of the pool in the area of the principalship as I am with high-quality teachers.

I think we will be more deeply challenged to find the kind of talent and the kind of matches that we'll need, particularly at the high school level. But we started early. Again, we started early, and our goal is to have, at least at the high school level, in the next several weeks, appointments, so that we'll take care of that particular issue and move throughout the organization in our junior high schools, our middle schools and our elementary schools.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Do you give any thought at going out and looking at retired principals? Because some of them retire at relatively young ages. They could still have several years ahead of

them, could draw their retirement from another system and come in. Is that a possibility?

Dr. JANEY. It is. It is. And we would maintain a premium interest of making sure that there is quality evidenced in their background and the match is there.

And we would look, again, Mr. Chairman, at whether or not a person who is currently retired in another district has the kind of energy to continue over a period of time so it leads into a succession plan. So it is not just taking Cliff Janey from Fairfax County, who has 2 more years of good playing time. It is looking at how it positions us for the next generation of players coming in to work with us.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And finally, Chief Ramsey, let me just ask you, how safe are the schools today?

Chief RAMSEY. I think that the schools are a lot safer than they were last year. The city is overall—last year we had an 18 percent reduction in crime in the city in general, and when you look so far this year, we actually have an 18 percent drop in reported crimes in the schools.

It needs a lot of work. A lot of the problems in our community spill over into the schools and vice versa, and we have to be constantly aware of that. So we have to have very solid communication between the schools and the officers that work on the streets so they know if there is a problem, it may spill over; and then vice versa, so that if we have a problem occur at night, that we can alert that school that you might have some fallout the next day from groups of kids that attend that school.

Those are the kinds of challenges that we face. But we are 100 percent committed to creating an environment where kids don't have to worry about their personal safety. They can focus on learning. And that is our one and only goal in trying to make the schools better.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Do you use undercover officers in the schools?

Chief RAMSEY. No. We have not done that.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We did that in Virginia. And, in fact, in one high school, we had an undercover officer, and he got elected president of the student council. It is a true story. He was a State police officer.

OK, but you haven't seen to go in that direction at this point for intel gathering and that kind of thing?

Chief RAMSEY. Well, one of the things that I have found is very important as our officers, the school resource officers, who are especially trained do develop a lot of relationships with youngsters—and every school has far more good kids that want to learn than they have problem kids. They will come up to you and tell you when something is wrong.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. It used to be a problem. Kids isolated. And if you can do that and still find a way to educate them, kids who want to learn can learn.

Chief RAMSEY. Yesterday was a good example where we got a—it was a BB gun, but it looks like a real gun—from a student in front of Eastern High School yesterday, but the information came from another student that told us what was going on. So that is

the kind of communication and relationships we need to build, the trust with the youngsters that go to school.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Janey.

Dr. JANEY. Yes. I would just like to add a comment or two to Chief Ramsey's response. And I really appreciate the work that they're doing with us. That has been my experience, both in Boston and in Rochester, working closely with social service agencies and with the respective law enforcement agencies. But I would like to point out a distinction that I think needs to be made here between crime and behavior.

While the Chief has testified that we're safer with respect to crime, in some situations and in some schools we're still challenged by behavior. We have an expectation, to the greatest extent possible, that parents and family members are preparing their students for school. And it's our job to make a difference once they're in school. And that preparation not only includes, in terms of early childhood, some prereadiness skills in terms of reading and literacy, but as kids get older, it is also important to have schools and homes work together on the preparation of our students with respect to their social behavior.

And that cannot be done just by teachers, support staff, administrators and social service collaborations. And we're still challenged in some situations where, while it is not a crime, behavior begins to be distracting to teaching and learning. And I'm pushing hard to make sure that kind of responsibility is shared as well.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Let me just say I think Ms. Patterson, in her remark, talked about how they had 7 superintendents in 11 years, and without continuity it is tough even with really good people.

Dr. Janey, you're the team captain. You are the new sheriff in town. This is your team. You're going to have turf fights and everything else occasionally, but I think everybody here will chip in and try to give you the tools you need, including the Congress, to get your job done.

Everybody who sends their kid to public school thinks they are an expert on the public schools, but this situation has gone on way too long, without the appropriate corrective action. And part of it is that people get frustrated. They get impatient, like you say.

I was impressed with your answer on retired principals and stuff, that you need to build the team for the longer haul. This isn't going to get resolved in a year or two. And I will tell you, the last thing you want is Congress trying to run a school system or a government or anything else.

We work well with the D.C. government, where now they are running the largest surplus in the country, I think, of any city. Crime is down, capital is being attracted, the real estate market is going well.

We want to take those same principles of where we've all worked together as a team, apply it to the school system, and you have some good people around you, and if we all work together, I think we have a shot at doing this.

But this has been a tough nut to crack historically, and I just applaud you for the efforts you're making, and I appreciate the fact

that you've chosen to come here, and we want to be as helpful as we can.

So, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to quickly get through a set of questions. While I appreciate this report, entitled Juvenile Homicide in the District of Columbia, and you've given us some of the statistics in your testimony, we have counterintuitive trends in the District of Columbia, and perhaps in the two most important areas.

Unemployment is going up and jobs are going up. Unless those two come together—I congratulate the District of Columbia on making jobs for the suburbs to, in fact, take. But the other counterintuitive statistic is in your report. Total homicides decreasing in 2004 by 20 percent, violent crime by 14 percent; juvenile homicides, and we are talking about 17 or younger, up sharply, and most of that, according to your report, by gunfire, 24 children 17 or under compared to 13 in 2003.

I would just like to ask you and Dr. Janey to say for the record or respond to the rationale that was offered for the introduction of a bill to repeal D.C.'s gun laws by the Senators who appeared at a press conference yesterday. They said that everybody is entitled to have a gun in their homes to be used for self-defense.

What is your view of the consequences of guns in the homes in the District of Columbia and their impact in the areas in which you work? And here we're particularly interested in the schools.

Chief RAMSEY. Ma'am, I'll start off, if that is OK.

I'm totally opposed to any lessening of the gun laws as they currently exist in the District of Columbia. I think it comes at a very curious time, when you look at the history of the District, 10 years ago versus today, crime numbers are literally cut in half.

When you look at the amount of guns that we take off the street now, when you look at the number of people, which is consistent that 80 percent of our homicide victims are victims of gun violence, and that has been consistent for years, and not just in the District of Columbia, but other cities have a similar statistic as well, it just doesn't make any sense to me that we would try to put more guns on the street.

Most of the time, when you have an incident involving a gun in a household, it is an accident, a child finds a gun, what have you, as opposed to actually protecting or defending your property with the use of that firearm. Burglars that break into a home now have a weapon that they can steal in addition to VCRs and DVD players and that sort of thing that in turn are then used for criminal activity.

Younger and younger people are carrying very sophisticated weapons. I mentioned earlier of the 24 juveniles that were killed last year, 5 were the result of abuse and neglect, but of the remaining 19, all but 1 died as a result of gunshot wounds.

It is a horrible statistic, and I just don't think we need to add to that. So I'm personally opposed, and I stand ready to do whatever it takes and whatever you think is appropriate to stand alongside you to try to fight that back.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I don't think that it is any business of Congress to interfere with the city's gun laws. And I think Ms.

Norton knows my position on that. But in addition to that 18 juveniles were killed with guns last year?

Chief RAMSEY. Yes, sir.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is higher than the total murder rate in Fairfax County, with over a million people, to give you a sense of proportion. And you are just talking about youths with guns.

Chief RAMSEY. Just juveniles.

Ms. NORTON. I appreciate the chairman didn't afford a hearing for the bill that was introduced last year. The 18 kids who died from gunfire last year died from gunfire that thugs somehow brought into the city. They didn't get those guns in their homes. Of course, I wonder what a—if a kid would feel that he had hit the jackpot if he found one in his home simply to take out into the street.

Dr. Janey, you, of course, are new to the city. You and the Chief were very helpful to me last year in coming to the Hill when I asked you to so that you, who perhaps would be most credible on this issue, were able to express yourselves.

Would you indicate what you think the effect of having a gun on the—what you think would be the effect of having a change in our laws so that people could keep guns in their homes?

Dr. JANEY. I don't believe there should be a change in the law. I say that for a couple of reasons; one, on a personal basis, growing up in Boston, and I recall like it was yesterday, my experience when I was a middle school principal, when there was this appeal from those who lived and worked on the streets of Boston. There was a saying, Chief, that you would rather be caught with it than without it. And the "it" was a gun.

And I would oppose any change in the legislation, because I don't believe we should have universal access to guns. We should have universal access to knowledge and human resources to make sure our youth are making good decisions about their lives and for their lives over time. So I would stand with you once again.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much. Just to have your expert opinion on the record is important for us.

Ms. Patterson, I remember and understand, perhaps, that during the recession that began in 2000, 2001, one of the first things to go was capital funding for the schools. This year, what is this, 2005, there seems to be a very good effort on the part of the schools to recharge the capital funding notion.

I remain perplexed, though, because the city has increasingly reported since those first couple of tough years surpluses and compared itself and said how well it was doing. But here we are in 2005, when in a real sense, as I hear constituents, they're more likely to complain about the crumbling state of the schools than even about what they always complain about, which is how well the children were doing in the schools.

So I didn't understand why the council did not move earlier here. And frankly, what my question is, is since the capital funding, a whole plan that a whole bunch of people have participated in, and since that was the first thing to go, almost the first thing to go, I'm not sure I have confidence that whatever is going to happen this time has any permanency.

I would like you to respond to what was in the council's mind to wait until 2005, since it looked like it could have begun it earlier, and what do you think the council should do this time to maintain some presence of capital funding throughout so that you don't have schools like Wilson saying, hey, we want to be a charter school, then we would have at least greater control over ourselves.

With the loss of students from the D.C. public schools, it looks like the tardiness in dealing with capital funding plays a role in that very transfer from one public school system to another.

Ms. PATTERSON. Thank you, Congresswoman Norton.

The city has, in fact, spent about $1 billion over the last decade on D.C. public schools facilities, and the question that I get most often from my colleagues is, "Where have the dollars gone?" Because a lot of the dollars have been spent ineffectively, and too many dollars were way over the market in terms of per-square-foot expenditures. That, keep in mind, was during the control board period of time when the Army Corps of Engineers basically ran the D.C. schools capital program. I think that is changing today——

Ms. NORTON. I am aware of the large—I don't really think it is sufficient to talk about the billion dollars, because I agree with that. And if you want to get into that, I agree with the way in which the school system has been spending money, period. My question is very specific.

I think there must have been something more at work when capital funding was jettisoned for reasons that I perfectly understand, but despite all these outcries from the city, capital funding didn't come back into the budget in any kind of substantial way until this year.

And the reason I ask that is by no means to engage in recriminations against the city, but since I saw the budget improving, I'm really asking for an answer that tells me whether or not capital funding is here to stay, whether there is any commitment, whether there is any way to keep it from taking a dive the next time, or taking the ultimate dive, disappearing, the next time there is a recession, which is sure to come at some point in any kind of economy—market economy.

Ms. PATTERSON. I think the commitment is there on the part of myself, certainly, as the chair of the committee on the council, but I can't speak for the other 12 council members. I believe the commitment is there on the part of Mayor Williams to keep capital funding.

Ms. NORTON. Is there a way to have some kind of capital fund so that—I recognize things have to be funded. You have a fund, I believe, for which I compliment you, on housing for—because of the difficulty of finding housing, affordable housing. And I suppose when the statistics are the 6,000 youngsters—you know, 6,000 lost in D.C. public schools, 4,000 in the increase in the charter schools, that at least is telling me something. And I'm not sure it is all about capital funding.

But I'm looking for some notion that there would be some attention to capital funding that would say to parents who are thinking of leaving the city, who are thinking of leaving the public school system, that they at least have a fund so that every year they're

going to try to put a little bit into that fund. That is really what I'm after.

Ms. PATTERSON. This fund that we have created in this year's budget cycle I hope will become that fund, because it is a special fund with—again, it is only 12.2 for debt service this year that will spring $135 million in additional capital. But my hope is that can be managed sufficiently well that it can be funded—in the budget it is funded for the subsequent years. But it is certainly my hope that this is a sort of step by step. We add some money, it is well spent; we add more money, it is even spent better. It is that kind of a process.

And I think it is aided incredibly by the work that the Office of the City Administrator is doing with technical assistance from Brookings, from 21st Century School Fund, of trying to improve the way the whole capital program for the whole city works with schools being a big part of that. And so the springboard for getting the dollars from the fund the council is creating is to do public-private partnerships and public-public partnerships. That is sort of the way in the door to access that special money.

Ms. NORTON. This method of my madness here, the attention of the Congress to charter schools has resulted in a revolving fund. And I'm able to go back and ask the Congress to put money in that revolving fund and to say it is for capital funding. I don't have any such way to get funding for the D.C. public school capital fund to say, look, this is what they're doing. If the District got a little help to leverage what is in their fund the way you leverage capital funding, perhaps something comparable could be done here with public schools as well.

Let me ask you, Mr. Bobb, a question. I've been very gratified at the way you receive calls from me when somebody tries to come in to speak to me about a District matter. You are aware that I have an ironclad policy that if the matter involves the District of Columbia, you've got to go to the District of Columbia.

And to the extent that people are able to get in to see me on a District issue, they have, in fact, inveighed to my staff and others that they are very, very desperate. And then I let them come in, I hear them out, and I tell them what I tell Members of Congress, that I'm not an expert in D.C. matters at any level. So I will hear you out, and then I will try to use what I hear you saying to refer you to the right—to the appropriate party, just as I would appreciate the council, when a matter involving the Congress comes up, I would appreciate more communication from the council before decisions are made on their own sometimes about matters that are solely within the jurisdiction of the Congress of the United States. That kind of reciprocity would be very much appreciated.

For 15 years that is the way I've approached every single notion involving the District of Columbia. And it's helped me, by the way, if I may say so, to keep Members from doing things they would otherwise have done.

I raise this question because you are aware of the people from mental health that came here, and you personally dealt with those people. I am beginning to receive systematic calls from people who tell me they have not been paid. Some of them are very troubling. D.C. General Hospital—sorry. What is the name of it? Greater

Southeast, a hospital that we—the only hospital east of the river, has a demonstration. Some people, not the woman who heads the hospital, call in to my office.

Whitman Walker in the paper just this week. Here are the sickest people in the District of Columbia. At least part of the problem, they say they haven't been paid by the District of Columbia.

I sense a systemic problem just from calls to my office and from what I read in the paper. We know that a lot in the District of Columbia has been fixed. In fact, I've spent a lot of time in the Congress congratulating the council and the Mayor for all you have done in the city. But I can't understand whether or not this one problem, part of the reason D.C. General was brought down in the first place, was that people couldn't keep track of how much money was going where.

What is the problem with the financial system here? What is the problem with the financial system in the D.C. public schools that meant that for 2 years running apparently nobody caught the fact that the raises for teachers, which have been there for as long as there's been a school system, were somehow not figured into what the school budget had to be? Perhaps the chairman's question on CFO, I don't know, may come from the fact that there is a CFO from the CFO's office sitting right in the school system, and yet for not 1 year, but 2 years, a very obvious cost, was not reflected in the school system budget. Could you talk about that? But then talk about whether or not we still have a systemic financial system in the District of Columbia.

Mr. BOBB. Yes, I can. We have worked very hard to correct some of the billing issues, particularly in the Department of Mental Health, with the number of agencies that have come to your office and you referred them to me. And I've actually gone out to a number of those agencies to see their problems firsthand.

Ms. NORTON. You certainly have.

Mr. BOBB. And so those issues——

Ms. NORTON. And that is a poor way to use your time. But you have been wonderfully responsive on this score.

Mr. BOBB. Thank you very much. But Deputy Mayor Albertson and I were working through the issues on the mental health side in terms of billings in some of the mental health community-based organizations based on the fact that we have a new—I don't want to just blame the problem on the fact that we have a new financial system in place, but we have to fix those problems, and they're being addressed. With respect to the issues——

Ms. NORTON. There is a new financial system for the entire government?

Mr. BOBB. Mental health. Just in the mental health system, yes. But with respect to the issues of the billings for some of the HIV, Whitman Walker and others, we have some procedural problems and issues that were put in place during the control board era we were in. When an agency submits a bill, we, in fact, have to do an audit on the front end, and that has been some delays.

Ms. NORTON. For each and every bill?

Mr. BOBB. Each and every bill. And those policies, Deputy Mayor Albertson and I are working with the Department of Public Health,

and we are going to be changing some of those procedural policies in terms of how agencies are paid.

And then finally, in the case of Whitman Walker, for example, they—as a result of their self-reporting, they actually reported that they owe the District $2 million. And so we're working through some of those issues.

And we will have a report——

Ms. NORTON. So they found money they owed before you all found. What was the difficulty at Whitman Walker? Goodness, I'm glad they are so honest.

Mr. BOBB. They actually owe us. But the fact of the matter is you would think that, however, since we are auditing these bills each time we get them, that those problems would be addressed early on. And so Deputy Mayor Albertson, Dr. Payne, the new director of public health, are working through those issues, and we will have a report to the Mayor next week.

Ms. NORTON. You don't think that is a citywide problem here, and that it is just agency by agency, and maybe I'm just getting the ones that are raising the problem.

Mr. BOBB. If you go back historically, it has been a huge problem in the District, but over the years the District has worked really hard to address the issues of nonpayment and slow payment of its vendors. And I think, you know, we have made huge progress in that regard.

Now, with respect to the other issue and the budget and teachers' salaries, I would have to defer that question to Dr. Janey.

Ms. NORTON. What about the 2 years without perhaps Dr. Janey, perhaps Ms. Patterson, by the raises somehow not being factored in even though they take place on an annual basis?

Whichever of you can——

Ms. PATTERSON. What became an issue this year were step increases. That is one issue, step increases already in the contract that weren't really taken account of. But by law the school system right now is funded by the per-pupil funding formula. And the answer that I have gotten from the financial people is we provide all the data to provide all the funding formula information, and therefore, we don't do what-are-your-underlying-cost assessment, because the funding formula generates the dollars that go into the Mayor's budget.

The step increase issue, as I understand it, arose because the board of education approved a 3 percent increase in funds going to local schools which—where they cover local schools' salaries, but the average teachers' salaries were rising at 4.7 percent. And obviously, you can't cover 4.7 percent with 3 percent, so the schools were looking at reducing staff. And that is the issue that we're working on.

Ms. NORTON. Did anybody know that or catch that? The reason I ask is because it is not a new cost. It is the one cost you would expect would be step increases to be factored in.

Ms. PATTERSON. Right. And when we went back and looked at the——

Ms. NORTON. And the reason I ask it again is because, you know, over here, even when we do something right, like we have a big

thing, we have a debriefing to say how could we have done it better?

Now, if we do something where there has been a problem, the only way to make sure that the problem is gone is not to say, you know, they did it wrong. Why did they do it wrong? What would it take to make sure that it does not take place again? Would the CFO, the school system CFO, have to be given more responsibility? You say they tell you what—they don't look at the final, the final numbers, they just tell you, all of these numbers must be included? Well, who looks at the final ones? Who checks them? I'm trying to find out whether or not the problem is cured.

Ms. PATTERSON. I think Dr. Janey can probably speak to this, but as I understand it, the cure on this particular issue is a reevaluation of the weighted student formula, the dollars that go to local schools. And Dr. Janey has his financial people looking at that issue.

Dr. JANEY. Thank you. I want to first commend Council Member Patterson for her being a very quick study on this issue.

When I brought it to the council, I believe, the first week in April, and brought it before the board of education as well, I found—and it was my observation—that there wasn't sufficient attention being paid to the fine detail or to the fine print. And their pupil funding formula in how it accounts for cost of living changes was not staying up with the step increases. And so, for example, teachers on average, were entitled to a step increase between 4 and 9 percent, and the formula was only at 3 percent. So you've got a shortage there.

So again, part of the solution is a reevaluation of the formula, but part of the solution is administrative, that you have to do the fine detail work and be transparent in your work in presenting that information.

Ms. NORTON. Who would do that, what office?

Dr. JANEY. The CFO's office. Both CFOs' offices.

Ms. NORTON. So you're working with the CFOs so that they understand?

Dr. JANEY. Dr. Gandhi and the school district CFO would have responsibility.

Ms. NORTON. A third year in a row would be very unfortunate. And I understand there are difficulties in—the difficulties presented, but it is only numbers, and that is the one thing I think we can do.

Could I ask about foster children? I am working here—I know the chairman will help me on a misstep. At the time of the Revitalization Act critical to bringing the District out of insolvency, the formula was apparently changed—the formula was changed from 50/50, some ridiculous number that would have still kept us bankrupt, to 70/30. But the health care of foster children is not in the same budget, Medicaid budget, as the formula, and therefore, apparently, that percentage was never changed.

This is really for Ms. Walker. Is it your understanding that still the greater part of health care for foster children is being paid by the District of Columbia different from the way in which children in Medicaid are, in fact——

Ms. WALKER. Thank you for bringing that up, Congresswoman Norton. If I could explain a little bit, it's very complicated.

The Revitalization Act that you mentioned did adjust the Medicaid reimbursement rate, the local share, that was 50/50, and the adjustment was made to 70/30, 70 Federal, 30 percent local. The corresponding fix for title 4(e), which is not for health care—Medicaid primarily pays for health care of children in foster care; 4(e) under Social Security Act pays for most of our case management services, our direct services to children. Every other State has the same match rate for 4(e) as Medicaid.

We did not get the fix. It is in a different title. So that adjustment was not made. So 4(e) match rate is still at 50/50. And we have been having conversations, and we really appreciate your staff's participation over the last couple of years, with Members of both sides to talk about having—adjusting that rate so that it's equitable with all other States, and we believe that there is support to do that. We're looking for the legislative vehicle and the complicated processes that we have to go through to get that match rate increased. But that would make it equitable. Every other State has exactly the same match rate, and we are still burdened with having a much reduced rate that affects the Federal dollars that go on behalf of foster children.

Ms. NORTON. That is clearly a mistake, you know. It is not like people asking for an increase. I'm concerned, the Mayor is sufficiently concerned, about the number of children who must be taken out of their home. And I congratulate him for the notion that grandparents should have a special stipend, grandparents who are not adopting, in order to encourage grandparents, as opposed to nonrelatives in foster homes.

A lot of us would like to see that money go into that very good initiative on the part of the District of Columbia, so we will continue to work on that. I just want to make sure how that was happening.

Ms. WALKER. Thank you.

Ms. NORTON. Let me ask about the other end of the scale. We always talk about—with good reason—about the children who are not doing as well as they should. I wonder about children—I would like to ask about advanced placement and other such programs.

When I was in the District public schools, they were ruthlessly tracked. That is something that I am not recommending. But they were tracked so that you knew exactly who was in the first track, who was in the second track, third track, all the way down to the bottom track.

Now, the interesting thing is huge numbers of children nevertheless went to college, because it was a different kind of city, with aspirational parents, even when they didn't have college educations themselves. But the tracks pretty much guaranteed that some students would be focused on—maybe in the way advanced placement does today.

What high schools have advanced placement in the District of Columbia? What does it take to get advanced placement, particularly if you live in a neighborhood and don't go to one of the special high schools? What are the special high schools? Banneker, School

Without Walls. Are there any others? Duke Ellington. Is all of it piled up in those schools?

Dr. JANEY. Congresswoman Norton, all of our high schools do have advanced placement courses. In this declaration of independence, we are expanding that opportunity so there will be a minimal threshold of existing courses at each of our high schools at least forward.

On the second question, what does it take? It fundamentally takes a real good teacher who has been trained to teach advanced placement to make that——

Ms. NORTON. Is it possible that students in one school, for example—I don't expect any time soon to have advanced placement courses equally everywhere in the District of Columbia. Perhaps where there is no call, less call for advanced placement, would it be possible for students to travel to a school to take advanced placement in something that was not particularly offered in that child's own high school, for example?

Dr. JANEY. Yes. Yes. It makes a lot of sense, because some schools have had lots of experience with advanced placement, will have a lot of exams as well for the courses. And when you have a school that really specializes in that, as Banneker is, and it was listed in Newsweek's top 100 high schools again a couple of weeks ago—it is not reasonable to think that every school is going to have an AP course in ancient history or African art or—I'm making that up. But it is within some context.

So while we're having a floor that creates universal access for courses, and we are increasing the number of students taking courses, I think the real key here is who takes the exams and who earns at least a three or more on the examinations. And that is where our effort is going to be concentrated, making sure that there is a relationship between the number of students who take the course, and making sure they're taking the exam, and the preparation is, therefore, success in the exam. That is how you really move the needle.

Ms. NORTON. And, of course, building excellence, yes, in the teachers. And I would just encourage you to look for innovative ways to make these courses available across the system. And it looks like that is what you're doing.

I'm going to quickly try to get through these. I was troubled by what you said about the principal pool, because the prevailing wisdom is that you've got to have a good principal in order for everything else to fall into line. And I notice that, while we have a teacher of the year who is going to be testifying on the next panel, and you are drawing, of course, teachers from this wonderful program, Teach for America, as much as I would like to see teachers promoted from within to be principals, it does look like there is a difficulty—if much depends upon their success, and if the pool isn't what you would like it to be, is there any way to increase your pool.

You testified that you increased entry level pay for new teachers. Is pay a problem? What is the reason that—is there a problem that confined you to the existing pool? Is there a larger pool that is available to you as well? Is there training needed for principals, or teachers who strive to be principals? Is such training offered?

Dr. JANEY. Yes, there is training that is provided. More training and development, I believe, is needed.

I think it is an open question as to whether our principals are competitive with our regional counterparts. That is not the case with our teachers. Our teachers are now competitive in salary with our regional counterparts at school districts.

Ms. NORTON. But not the principals' salaries?

Dr. JANEY. No. The principals, I believe, are not as competitive as our teachers are. And I think we're going to have to be really in a situation to double, triple our efforts to get the kind of depth in pool and quality within that depth in pool for principal selection over the next several months.

This is not a new issue, and it is not unique to the District of Columbia. It is a national challenge that school districts, whether they're urban, suburban, or rural, face. And it is going to require a major effort that is coordinated between pre-K to 12, higher ed, and the corporate community to see this over a period of time, because we can't resolve it with a 1-year double dosage of energy, and then next year we're faced with these attrition rates that continue. So we need a multiyear plan on this issue.

Ms. NORTON. You know, some of us who are simple-minded and don't know anything about education come up with solutions like we ought to be paying teachers more who go into the most troubled schools. We ought to be paying principals more who are going into the most troubled schools. But what do we know?

Let me ask you about special education. That didn't come up much, but that is the wail one hears from the District of Columbia so often. Have we finally gotten those costs, including the cost of transportation, under control?

Either of you may answer.

Dr. JANEY. I'll take the lead here.

One of the ways—first of all, let me just give you some context. Overall, our percentage of students who have a disability, the overall percentage, 18, 19 percent, as high as it is, almost one-fifth of the children enrolled in the District of Columbia, DCPS, are students with a disability. That is not out of line with other urban districts, Boston being one.

No. 2, what is out of line is the proportion of our students for whom we pay tuition and pay exorbitant transportation costs who are being served outside of the District. The number, however, isn't increasing, and one of the ways by which we've been doing that is by adding seats each year in the school district. We plan to add 700 new seats next year. We added 600 new seats this year; 75 percent of those 600 seats are filled.

So we're trying to bring back more students, but we don't control the cost of their tuition outside of the placement within the District of Columbia. So it is a pretty complex issue, and while we have heard the impact of this with respect to transportation costs, and we would quickly like to blame the transportation administrator, part of his challenge originates with us. I mean, if he is transporting students, and we could service them here, and there is an agreement through the individual education plan process that we could service them here, then that relieves the burden on the transportation costs.

But I would like to point out as well that we are collaborating with the council of the great city schools. Ms. Patterson has been part of that dialog for them to come in, and they will be coming in from June 5th through June 8th to review the system and the infrastructure of how routing is done for students with disabilities, and Mr. Gilmore is onboard, and we should have some findings on that issue that may relieve some costs. And we should have some findings in terms of the overall picture with respect to purchasing buses and the like. So we are going to have a full picture on this.

Ms. NORTON. Ms. Patterson, I was concerned that as the costs went up, the school system had no recourse except to just look at the cards on the table and switch to special education if necessary. This is a very important mandate.

Do you believe that what Superintendent Janey is doing may, in fact, get us into some kind of balance here?

Ms. PATTERSON. I think so. I think that adding seats is something we have been aware of. It has been ongoing over the last several years. I think that is a positive development.

I also think, it is my understanding from Dr. Janey, that he and Mr. Gilmore are working together on a joint exit strategy, if you will, to bring that function back in house. But that does include—along with where the function resides, it also includes how to bring those costs down; how to go from I think it is 600 individual routes, how to bring that back down, because the costs, as he noted, are exorbitant.

Dr. JANEY. May I point out again the responsibility that resides within the school district itself? And this is separate from actual placement. And, as you know, we're under a number of consent decrees.

But much more fundamentally at the school level, we know that there are 20 schools that have been responsible for 30 percent of the referrals. But the good news is there are 14 schools that have had no referrals. And finding out what is being done right and what is not being done right will allow us to address it on the very front end, as opposed to bringing students back or making some modifications or making some adjustments once students have been already classified.

There are students and there are situations of which I'm sure you're aware where the problem is a function of really reading. And the preparation to teach reading to struggling readers is an enormous one, and if we are not prepared to do that, we may act by default, and a student may then be assigned to a classification in special education.

Ms. NORTON. And that, of course, would be a human tragedy, unforgivable, a human tragedy. But it happens, apparently, all across the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I only have a couple more questions. If I may just get those done. One has to do with something that was slipped into our appropriation quite inappropriately, and with my good friends who chair the committee believing that the District has signed off on them, it had to do with charter schools. Two of them caused such calamity that we were able to move quickly on those.

And the other, the third one, this is really for Ms. Patterson. We were told as far as the committee was concerned it's in the D.C.

code, and where they have no problem with the committee changing it, what was—I won't even get into how complicated it was—had to do with the leave policy. The charter schools did something that is the most verboten thing to do in the District of Columbia, go around the city council and come up here and speak to somebody on one of the committees, and ask for some kind of change in the leave policy between charter schools and the D.C. public schools. That was so bollixed up that very few people, it seems to me, in the universe understood it. We got that crossed out.

Then there was another where charter schools would get double discount credit on the sale of—if they bought a public school. We wiped that out easily.

Then there was one about the right of first refusal.

All of these were of great concern to the city, because it has to do not with schools, it has to do with the assets of the District of Columbia. We didn't get to that one. This all happened during the lame-duck session, and we had to fix what we could fix in the omnibus. But that had to do with the right of first refusal going essentially to charter schools where the council wouldn't have anything to say about it, the Mayor wouldn't have anything to say about it. Even within those there were permutations.

My understanding, from our committee, and from what we have learned from the District of Columbia, is because this change was in the city council, the city council could change it. And the committee itself was incensed, on both sides, to know that the council and the Mayor had not given permission to do this.

I'm asking you what the status of this one issue is, right of first refusal, because I do want you to know that if you change it to what the city wants, it is my judgment, based on what the appropriators said to me on both sides, that they had respected home rule, and they would have no difficulty with the District changing it. That would save me having to put something in a bill to change it. So I needed to know what your disposition is on that.

Ms. PATTERSON. It is my understanding that we have not yet changed that. I believe there have been conversations between the Mayor's office and the council on that point. But one of the things that I hoped to do this fall in the course of oversight on the charter law itself is surface any other extant issues that we probably need to address now that we have had the charter law in place for 7 or 8 years. But there has been no change yet. Thank you.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, just as long as you take care of it.

Mr. Chairman, I just have one more question. It has to do with the dropout rate. I think you, Mr. Chairman, mentioned truancy. Everybody was concerned about headlines of truancy in the District. When I inquired about it, and inquired of our committees, I found that there is no uniform way to judge truancy. So these figures about 1.8 in Prince George's versus something else in the District of Columbia—I am going to try to get on to the education authorization or its appropriation something that, even given these differences, that have to be there because these are matters of such local concern—there would be some way to compare school districts. Because these comparisons—when I found out, for example, that Prince George's and D.C. and Montgomery and Fairfax regard

different kinds of days and different kinds of excuses as truancy, I don't see how we can do No Child Left Behind without finding some way to at least know what—have some kind of language even given the fact that each district must be able to have its own truancy policy.

I'm concerned about whether No Child Left Behind will leave us with a larger dropout rate than we have. I have my own commission on black men and boys, feminist though I am. I am so concerned that while the dropout rates are serious for everybody, I don't know where the boys are in our country and in the District of Columbia.

As we understand, there is a shortfall of about $34 million in No Child Left Behind. I want to know whether or not that is going to be reflected at some point when graduation rates kick in, and you have to pass whatever tests you describe in order to graduate from high school. How are you going to keep the combination of our own, our already high dropout rate and the mandate from No Child Left Behind, resulting in greater dropout rates? What are you doing to keep these children in school?

Dr. JANEY. I will begin the discussion, or at least the response to the answer.

The very first thing I think we have to do is identify the breaks in service over pre-K to 12th. When we see the evidence of students being prepared to drop out, so to speak, that is, they have—they're over age, they have been retained in grade, there are social circumstances outside of school. They're very poor readers. That is probably one of the most common threads among all dropouts, that they are very poor readers, if they are readers at all.

We have to identify where that is occurring before it—is 9th grade or 10th grade where the bulk of the students who drop out, that is where it occurs at those two junctures. So if we're doing it early enough, there are interventions that are successful. There are some that we know that are successful within the academic community, and I think there are interventions outside in terms of the wraparound service providers. But I think the key thing is identifying early enough prior to someone making a decision to separate from a district and drop out, getting those triggers in line so that we're not behind the curve, we're in front of it, and we are able to do something 2 or 3, 4 years out.

The second big thing, I think, is being able to make good on what is in this strategic education plan, and that is to get beyond State certification and get a cohort of teachers who are nationally board certified. If we do that, we are going to really be able to deploy those best teachers and those best situations where we can really arrest the symptoms of the dropout and actually get to teaching those students and providing the support services they need, as well as their families need.

So I think we're poised to make a difference. And I would say the last point would be we will be having discussions with the board of education about altering the time by which a student is allowed to graduate from high school. If we took a survey right now, we would find out both in our charter schools, Fairfax County and DCPS, that students are prepared to graduate—some of them are prepared to graduate in 3 years, the target still being 4 years. But

others may need a 5th year, only because when they started ninth grade, they were behind already. Instead of them being keen to drop out, if you extended the year and held quality constant, we would be giving students an opportunity to make up that time within a reasonable period of time, meaning 5 years. That is not unreasonable for a student to finish, as long as they're finishing with a diploma that means something.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Let me thank this panel. We have asked you a lot of questions, but this is very, very important. And again, we look forward to working with all of you and calling all of us to cooperate together to make this work.

We will declare a 2-minute recess before we get our next panel up.

[Recess.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We are here with our second panel. I appreciate your patience. We have Mr. Jason Kamras, the national teacher of the year, from District of Columbia public schools. We have Ms. Iris Toyer, chair of Parents United for the District of Columbia Schools; and Ms. Carolyn Dallas, executive director of Youth Court.

It is our policy that we swear you in before you testify, so if you just rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Jason, we will start with you. You bring great honor to the city and to the region, and we're very, very pleased. Is this your first time before a congressional committee?

Mr. KAMRAS. It is. Yes.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Then you have to push the button in front of you. Now how does it sound?

Mr. KAMRAS. Much better.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you for being with us, and congratulations on a very well-deserved reward. And you have got a couple of students with you?

Mr. KAMRAS. I do. I'll have them introduce themselves if they want to stand up.

Ms. WATKINS. Hello. My name is Ta-Sha Watkins. I'm a ninth-grader at Banneker Senior High School.

Mr. JETER. My name is Marco Jeter. I'm a ninth-grader. I go to Cesar Chavez Public Charter School for Public Policy.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you for being with us. I know you're eager to get back to class, so we'll try to move this along. Go ahead.

STATEMENTS OF JASON KAMRAS, NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR; IRIS TOYER, CHAIR, PARENTS UNITED FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SCHOOLS; AND CAROLYN DALLAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, YOUTH COURT

STATEMENT OF JASON KAMRAS

Mr. KAMRAS. Good morning, Chairman Davis. I would like to first thank you for the opportunity to speak before this committee this morning.

And, Congresswoman Norton, let me also thank you for your extraordinary kindness that you have shown me personally, and for your tireless advocacy on behalf of the District's children.

Let me begin by saying that I'm extraordinarily proud to be a District of Columbia public school teacher. My colleagues in the District are incredibly dedicated and inspiring professionals who share their creativity, their intellect, and love with children of all ages, and they do so each and every day.

There is simply no group of people I would be prouder to represent.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with the committee how honored I am to have the opportunity to work with the children of the District of Columbia. And as you just met Ta-Sha and Marco, they're examples of the finest in our school system.

I have the distinct pleasure of working with these two amazing young adults as their seventh and eighth math teacher, and they also participated in a digital photography program that I direct at Sousa. Like all of my students, they are incredibly bright, creative, caring, and inspiring. They're the District of Columbia public schools.

Although they could not be here, I would also like to recognize Ta-Sha's mother, Ms. Johnson, and Marco's mother, Ms. Jeter. Like every parent I have encountered in my 8 years in the classroom, they are deeply and passionately committed to the success of their children. We have collaborated as educational partners, and I look forward to continuing our work for many years to come.

I have been asked by this committee to comment on the factors that led me to teach in the District, but in the interest of brevity, let me just focus on one of these factors, a program called Teach for America.

Founded by Wendy Kopp nearly 15 years ago, Teach for America is a national organization dedicated to eliminating inequity in our public schools. Specifically, the program recruits, trains, and supports highly motivated college graduates to teach rural and underserved urban and public school districts and become lifelong leaders in the effort to close the achievement gap.

Teach for America's focus on equity and its rigorous training and its support immediately attracted me. I applied in the fall of 1996, and I was accepted into the program and assigned to the Washington, DC, region. I was hired as a sixth grade mathematics teacher at John Phillips Sousa Middle School in southeast Washington. Save for 1 year, when I was at the Harvard School of Education, I have been at Sousa ever since.

Like many urban schools, Sousa faces a number of socioeconomic challenges, but these challenges do not define the school. For me, Sousa is Marco, Ta-Sha, and the hundreds of other extraordinary children who enter its doors each morning. They are why I love my job, and why I am so proud to be a teacher here in the District.

Despite the challenges that Sousa faces, my students are achieving. As evidence of this, let me share with you the results of the mathematic initiative that I recently developed and implemented at my school. Through this initiative, we doubled the amount of instructional time allocated for math instruction. We redesigned our

curriculum to emphasize a real-world context for all concepts, and we greatly expanded the use of technology in the classroom.

When I piloted this new program with my colleagues, the percentage of students going below basic, indicating little or no mastery of subject matter on our district standardized assessment, fell from approximately 80 percent to 40 percent in just 1 year. This was the largest drop in the below basic percentage that the school had ever seen, and I am now working to expand this program to the entire school.

In our effort to replicate and expand our success and in an effort to answer this committee's request for insights into how we can ensure high levels of achievement for all District children, I have reflected a great deal on our program. I have identified five key factors that I believe are most critical to our success. The first is the quality and dedication of the teachers involved in the program's implementation.

We created much of our own course material, strategically designed our lesson plans, and worked 14-hour days, tutoring before and after school and on weekends. We were and we continue to be absolutely driven. If we are to reach new heights in the District, we as teachers must be relentless in our pursuit of excellence.

We must also ensure that we have a steady pipeline of first-rate educators entering the school system. We can achieve this by recruiting aggressively, by continuing to streamline our hiring practices, and by offering financial incentives to make it feasible for educators to live in the metropolitan Washington region. In addition, we must redouble our efforts to retain high-quality educators. To do so, we must ensure that working conditions continue to improve, and we must make certain that our teachers have the opportunity to participate in robust, sustained, and job-embedded professional development.

The second factor that was critical to our success was effective school leadership. My principal was immediately receptive to my ideas about revamping the math curriculum, and was extraordinarily supportive during the implementation process. He did not feel the need to dictate; rather, he trusted me to be an instructional innovator. This freedom combined with support was integral to our success. Effective school management empowers a faculty to overcome so many of the challenges it may face. We must ensure that the District redoubles its efforts to attract and retain dynamic school leaders who love instruction, who manage collaboratively, and who are distinctive problem solvers.

The third factor that was critical to our success was outreach to parents and guardians. We made a concerted and sustained effort to involve our children's families every step of the way. As a result, we were able to develop a collaborative educational environment that enveloped our students 24 hours a day. As our school system moves forward, we must do more to support and engage parents and guardians who are, after all, the front line of education.

The fourth factor was an increase in technology resources. In specific, through grant writing I was able to acquire a mini-computer lab, an LCD projector, a document projector, and digital cameras. These technologies revolutionized my teaching. They allowed me to more effectively meet individual learning needs, and

significantly increase student motivation and engagement. As a system, we must make greater investments in the structural technology and in the training necessary for its effective use. I guarantee that such investments will result in dramatic achievement gains.

The fifth and most important factor is less tangible. It was an unyielding belief that each and every child had the capacity to achieve at the highest levels, combined with the expectation that they would do so. I simply cannot overstate how important this was and continues to be to my success in the classroom. When we as adults set the highest of standards for our children, we send a message that we care deeply about them. Students inevitably rise to the occasion. I can attest to this personally. I have had countless former students tell me how much they appreciated the high bar that I set for them in the seventh and eighth grades. They tell me how that motivated them to achieve, and how they are now in advanced math classes because they have outperformed their peers.

As a city, we must be united in believing, without question, in our children's inherent capacity for greatness, and we must continue to set the highest of expectations for them. Excellent teachers, effective school leaders, sustained parent/teacher collaborations, increased instructional technology, and high expectations will result in greater achievement, even in so-called disadvantaged districts; I can attest to this personally. We owe it to our children to provide these elements at each and every school.

Let me close by saying once more how proud I am to be a public school teacher in the District of Columbia. I believe deeply in our system, and I will continue to work tirelessly on its behalf. Its greatness lies within its students, extraordinary young people like Ta-Sha and Marco. Let us continue to be undaunted in our pursuit of excellence so that all students in the District will have the opportunity to pursue their teams.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kamras follows:]

Testimony of Jason Kamras, District of Columbia Public School Teacher and 2005 National Teacher of the Year, Before the House Committee on Government Reform (5-20-05)

Chairman Davis, I would like to first thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Committee this morning.

Let me begin by saying that I am extraordinarily proud to be a District of Columbia Public School teacher. My colleagues in the District are incredibly dedicated and inspiring professionals who share their creativity, intellect, and love with children of all ages, each and every day. There is simply no group of people I would be prouder to represent.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with the Committee how honored I am to have the opportunity to work with the children of the District of Columbia. I am privileged to have two of my former students with me this morning: Ta-Sha Watkins, a 9th grader at Banneker Senior High School, and Marco Jeter, a 9th grader at Cesar Chavez Public Charter School.

I had the distinct pleasure of working with these two amazing young adults as their 7th and 8th grade math teacher. They also participated in a digital photography program that I direct at Sousa. Like all of my students, they are incredibly bright, creative, caring, and inspiring. *They* are the District of Columbia Public Schools.

I would also like to recognize Ta-sha's mother, Ms. Johnson, and Marco's mother, Ms. Jeter. Like every parent I have ever encountered in my 8 years in the classroom, they are deeply and passionately committed to the success of their children. We have collaborated as educational partners, and I look forward to continuing our work together for years to come.

I have been asked by this Committee to comment on the factors that led me to teach in the District. There are many, but I believe the story of my path here actually begins in Sacramento, California, my childhood home. It was there that I served as a VISTA volunteer during the summer after my sophomore year in college. I supported the work of a local public school teacher who was implementing a summer enrichment program for the children of a low-income housing complex.

That was a formative summer for me as I learned some very important truths about myself that would shape the rest of my life. First, I learned that I love working with children. I was immediately captivated by my students' curiosity, creativity, insightfulness, humor, and resilience. I also learned that I love the work of teaching. I was delighted to be reading stories, manipulating tangrams, and mixing plaster of Paris.

But that summer also taught me something much broader. It provided me with a firsthand understanding of the inequities in our public education system.

I found that the reading and math skills of many of the children with whom I had the pleasure of working that summer were significantly below grade level.

It was not that my students lacked ability. On the contrary, they were extraordinarily bright. Rather, because they lived in a community with few resources and great challenges, the educational playing field was unjustly tilted against them.

Sadly, this is the case for millions of American children in low-income communities across the nation. In my view, this inequity is the greatest injustice facing our nation today, and it is at the core of why I teach.

With the summer fresh in my mind, I returned to Princeton University in the fall of 1993 focused on education. As graduation approached, I learned about a program called Teach for America. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this program, let me take a moment to describe it for you. Founded by Wendy Kopp, also a Princeton alumnus, nearly 15 years ago, Teach for America is a national organization dedicated to eliminating inequity in our public schools. Specifically, the program recruits, trains, and supports highly motivated college graduates to teach in underserved urban and rural public school districts and become lifelong leaders in the effort to close the achievement gap.

Teach for America's focus on equity and its rigorous training and support immediately attracted me. I applied, and in the fall of 1996, was accepted into the program and

assigned to the Washington, DC region. In the fall of 1996, I was hired as a 6th grade mathematics teacher at John Philip Sousa Middle School in Southeast Washington. Save for one year at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, I have been there ever since.

Like many urban schools, Sousa faces a number of socioeconomic challenges. But these challenges do not define the school. For me, Sousa is Marco, Ta-sha, and the hundreds of other extraordinary children who enter its doors each morning. They are why I love my job and why I am so proud to be a teacher here in the District.

Despite the challenges that Sousa faces, my students are achieving. As evidence of this, let me share with you the results of a mathematics initiative that I recently developed and implemented at my school. Through this initiative, we doubled the amount of instructional time allocated for math instruction, redesigned our curriculum to emphasize a "real-world" context for all concepts, and greatly expanded the use of technology in the classroom. When I piloted this new program with one of my colleagues, the percentage of students scoring "Below Basic," indicating "little or no mastery of subject matter," on our district standardized assessment fell from approximately 80 percent to 40 percent *in just one year*. This was the largest drop in the Below Basic percentage that the school had ever seen. I am now working to expand this program to the entire school.

In an effort to replicate and expand our success, and in an effort to answer this Committee's request for insights into how we can ensure high levels of achievement for

all District children, I have reflected a great deal on our program. I have identified five key factors that I believe were most critical to our success.

The first of these was the quality and dedication of the teachers involved in the program's implementation. We created much of our own course material, strategically designed our lesson plans, and worked 14 hour days, tutoring before and after school, and on weekends. We were–and we continue to be–absolutely driven. If we are to reach new heights of achievement in the District, we, as teachers, must be relentless in our pursuit of excellence.

We must also ensure that we have a steady pipeline of first-rate educators *entering* the school system. We can achieve this by recruiting aggressively, by continuing to streamline our hiring practices, and by offering financial incentives to make it more feasible for educators to live in the metropolitan Washington region. In addition, we must redouble our efforts to *retain* high quality educators. To do so, we must ensure that working conditions continue to improve and we must make certain that our teachers have the opportunity to participate in robust, sustained, and job-embedded professional development.

The second factor that was critical to our success was effective school leadership. My principal was immediately receptive to my ideas about revamping the math curriculum and was extraordinarily supportive during the implementation process. He did not feel the need to dictate. Rather, he trusted me to be an instructional innovator. This freedom,

combined with support, was integral to our success. Effective school management empowers a faculty to overcome so many of the challenges it may face. We must ensure that the District redoubles its efforts to attract and retain dynamic school leaders who love instruction, who manage collaboratively, and who are instinctive problem-solvers.

The third factor was our outreach to parents and guardians. We made a concerted and sustained effort to involve our children's families every step of the way. As a result, we were able to develop a collaborative educational environment that enveloped our students twenty-four hours a day. As our school system moves forward, we must do more to support and engage parents and guardians who are, after all, the front line of education.

The fourth factor was an increase in technology resources. In specific, through grant-writing, I was able to acquire a mini-computer lab, an LCD projector, a document projector, and digital cameras. These technologies revolutionized my teaching. They allowed me to more effectively meet individual learning needs and significantly increase student motivation and engagement. As a system, we must make greater investments in instructional technology and in the training necessary for its effective use. I guarantee that such investments will result in dramatic achievement gains.

The fifth and most important factor is less tangible. It was an unyielding belief that each and every child had the capacity to achieve at the highest levels combined with the expectation that they would do so. I simply cannot overstate how important this was--and continues to be–to my success in the classroom. When we, as adults, set the highest of

standards for our children, we send the message that we care deeply about them. Students inevitably rise to the occasion. I can attest to this personally. I have had countless former students tell me how much they appreciated the high bar that I set for them in the 7th and 8th grades. They tell me how that motivated them to achieve and how they are now in advanced math classes because they have outperformed their peers. As a city, we must be united in believing, *without question*, in our children's inherent capacity for greatness and we must continue to set the highest of expectations for them.

Excellent teachers, effective school leaders, sustained parent-teacher collaborations, increased instructional technology, and high expectations *will* result in greater achievement even in so-called disadvantaged districts. I can attest to this personally. We owe it to our children to provide these elements at each and every school.

Let me close by saying once more how proud I am to be a public school teacher in the District of Columbia. I believe deeply in our system and I will continue to work tirelessly on its behalf. Its greatness lies within its students, extraordinary young people like Ta-sha and Marco. Let us continue to be undaunted in our pursuit of excellence so that *all* children in the District will have the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Toyer, thanks for being with us.

STATEMENT OF IRIS TOYER

Ms. TOYER. Good afternoon, Chairman Davis, and especially to Ms. Norton. I am Iris Toyer, chairperson of Parents United for the D.C. public schools, and, like Ms. Norton, a graduate of the school system.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I'm also a graduate of the D.C. public school system.

Ms. TOYER. Congratulations. As a local organization, I will tell you that Parents United is unparalleled in our understanding of the school budget, and that is where we focus much of our work. And because I was asked to come today as a representative of parents, I put these questions that were given to me to our mailing list of parents, and so I hope that my responses honors the responses that I received.

I will tell you that much of the good work that Dr. Janey has done working with parents, working with the other advocate organizations, has not necessarily trickled down to the entire parent population, and so much of the response is based on what parents are still feeling today. It does not take into account the standards, the teacher development, and all of the other good work that we know is going on.

Our impression is that DCPS is a system in recovery that is attempting to make a comeback from years of being mangled by elected and appointed officials at every level of government, suffering from disputes over governance, constant changes in leadership, vouchers, the proliferation of charter schools, and underfunding of the operational and capital budgets.

We know that there are many dedicated employees such as Jason that are daily, along with parents, struggling to make our schools better. I would say that what we want to point out is that the Control Board put in place its Board of Trustees, and unfortunately we found when they departed in 2001, that not much had changed. As a matter of fact, there was a lack of financial and reporting systems created by decisions made under the Control Board that has continued to cost the city millions of dollars. There was a dismantling of human resource systems and a gross underfunding of schools' needs, especially in facilities and maintenance repair. Frankly, the level of dysfunction in the wake of the Control Board was startling, and we're still dealing with it today.

On the question on what low-performance schools need to improve, I would say that I think that low-performance schools need what high-performance schools need: We want talented, well-trained teachers and principals who have high expectations for every child, support from the central administration, and a level of resources that accurately reflect the cost of educating low-income students. Parents United would frankly like to see some help from the city, the system, the Federal Government, in getting those 1,400 teachers certified. I can tell you that 4 years ago the board went through a process where they terminated hundreds of teachers who had not become certified within the prescribed amount of time. Time has once again come due, and here we are again talking about eliminating teachers. Something clearly has to be done in

that area, and we think stipends or tuition assistance would help tremendously.

I want to again acknowledge that Dr. Janey has put in place academic standards that will be implemented this fall. And I think that the system needs to take advantage of that so that parents leave in June with high expectations for our schools come September, teachers that will be trained over the summer. We all need to know about the good things that are happening.

DCPS needs to inspire its staff, parents and students. We have pockets of success that were talked about earlier. Mr. Kamras is one of them that I cite in my testimony because, frankly, lots of parents feel unconnected to their schools and not welcome.

On the bright side, Dr. Janey has talked about establishing parent centers not only in low-income neighborhoods but across the city, so those will be points of contact for every parent and community member who wants to interact with our schools. And, of course, there is the good work of the D.C. Ed Compact.

Finally, I want to talk about, just briefly, the capital plan and the budget. The question was, was it realistic and fiscally responsible? And I think the question has several underlying issues. First, the master facilities plan was created at a time when there were more students in our schools; subsequently, it needs to be revised to reflect the current enrollment, with an eye toward future needs. Having made the point, however, the capital budget is in no way sufficient to support a major capital program. I think the greater question, frankly, is does the plan support the educational needs of our system; and that is what needs to drive the facilities plan, not that we are just building buildings. We can do that day in and day out, but if what is going on in those buildings does not improve the quality of education, then we are no better off.

Frankly, there was discussion earlier about the Army Corps, and parents who have children in those beautiful buildings will tell you that the work was substandard, incomplete, not done according to schedule and at extreme cost overruns. And frankly, we can't hold that contractor accountable for the work done or not done.

The decision to use the Army Corps, again, was the consequences of the Control Board. The one school that the system is managing, the project frankly is on schedule and on budget at last check. We know that Dr. Janey is just in place, and we are concerned that their ability, frankly, to manage a massive construction program at this point in time is limited. We look for, with the Council's help and the Mayor's help, greater things to come out of the proposals that have been put forward in terms of school construction, because our buildings are literally falling down around our children's ears.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Toyer follows:]

Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools

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Statement of Iris J. Toyer
Before the Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
Friday, May 20, 2005

To Chairman Davis, members of the Committee and especially Congresswoman Norton, good morning. My name is Iris J. Toyer and I am the Chairperson of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools and a D.C. Public School system parent.

Parents United has a long history in the District of Columbia. The organization was founded in 1981 in the face of devastating teacher layoffs. Parents from all over the city came together to fight impending budget cuts. Since then we have acted as the parental conscience in education matters, advocating more effective and intelligent allocation of resources to the classroom, lower pupil/teacher ratios, effective fire inspections of the schools, the provision of school nurses and athletic trainers for every school and major athletic program, stiffer graduation requirements,and more effective teacher evaluations. We have participated on policy focused task forces on parental involvement, student enrollment, records security, and other issues.

As a local organization, Parents United is unparalleled in our understanding of the school budget. Through our communications network, we provide invaluable information to parents and interested citizens about hearings, school board meetings, events and changes within the school system. Having watched and worked with eight superintendents, dozens of school board members, city council members and hundreds of PTA presidents and other active parents, we are the city's institutional memory on public education.

The mission of Parents United is to empower parents and the community with the necessary information and advocacy skills needed to actively participate in the transformation of not only their local school but the D.C. Public School system as a whole in order to ensure educational success for all of our children.

The organization extends its thanks to the Committee for the opportunity to address you on behalf of tens of thousands of parents in the District of Columbia who support our school system and are working everyday to make it a system of which we can all be proud. After all, it is *our* children's educational outcomes that are at stake.

Because Parents United prides itself on being a strong voice for D.C. Public School parents across our city, I thought it important that my statement be reflective of that mix. To that end, I submitted the questions to parents on our mailing list and hope that my statement honors their responses as well as my own experience.

Since the focus of this hearing is on the collaborative efforts among school staff, parents, policy makers, agencies and organizations that are engaging the city's youth to improve student participation and performance, I will frame my statement around the questions that were included in the invitation.

I. What is your impression of DCPS? What resources are needed to improve low performing schools and what support is needed to help students and parents served by these schools?

DC Public Schools is a system in recovery. It is attempting to make a comeback from ten years of being mangled by elected and appointed officials at every level of government. It has suffered from disputes over governance, constant changes in leadership, vouchers, a proliferation of charter schools, underfunding of both the operational and capital budgets, and a seeming lack of concern about providing an adequate education to the children of the District of Columbia.

There are many dedicated alumni of DC Public Schools currently working in our schools attempting to provide our children the same high quality education they received many

years ago. Frankly, they do this despite the declining dollar value of the budget, the undependable budget delivery system for the annual budget, and changes of administrative focus.

It should be noted that in 1996 when the Control Board took over the city and a Chief Financial Officer was appointed, the Superintendent and Board of Education were summarily dismissed. As you know, in its place the Control Board appointed its own Emergency Board of Trustees. We found that upon their departure in 2001, not much had changed.

While the city's financial picture had improved we found:

- the lack of functional financial reporting systems created by decisions made under the Control Board regarding which accounting systems would be used by the city have cost our school system MILLIONS of dollars, and made it impossible for local schools to monitor their budgets, let alone do accurate financial predicting.
- The dismantling of human resource systems, including the failure to produce any accurate Schedule A reports led to a widespread lack of controls on all aspects of the human resource systems. It has taken YEARS to attempt to rectify portions of the disarray and DCPS is still working on repairing the damage.
- Gross underfunding of school needs especially in facilities repair and maintenance

The level of dysfunction in the wake of the Control Board was startling and is still being dealt with today.

I would suggest that low performing schools need what high performing schools require: well trained teachers and principals--both of whom have high expectations for every child; support from central administration; and the level of resources that accurately reflect the cost of educating low-income students.

Parents United would like to see financial assistance for degreed instructional staff working to become certified. Currently there are nearly 1,400 uncertified teachers. Four years ago the school system terminated hundreds of teachers who had failed to become certified in the requisite timeframe. The system proceeded to hire more teachers and

grant them provisional certification. Once again the time has come due. It is a vicious cycle from which a school district will not easily escape if action is not taken to provide financial support.

There must be acknowledgment that DC children are entitled to art, music, foreign language, science instruction with fully equipped laboratories, opportunities for contemporary career and technical education, recreational opportunities in and out of school, and experience with current educational technology. These, along with core academic subjects, must be taught in buildings that are clean and in good repair. We owe this to all children and we ought to make DCPS the internationally recognized exemplar of how the U.S. meets the needs of poor minority students.

It is important to acknowledge that shortly after his arrival, Dr. Janey's took steps to put in place high academic standards that will be implemented this fall. I know that a great deal of work is being done to provide the matching curriculum and testing instrument that will fairly assess our schools.

How can parents and students be empowered to succeed? Does DCPS do a good job engaging parents and keeping them informed?

DCPS needs to ***inspire*** its staff, parents and students. We have many pockets of success that are not recognized. We have several schools on the *Newsweek* list of 1000 top high schools, with at least one (Benjamin Banneker Academic High School) in the top 100. We have national award winning teachers such as Mr. Kamras. We have cause for optimism. We need almost evangelical zeal to take hold in our city and inspire everyone in DCPS. We have been beaten down by bad press, decades of under funding, and the literal decay of our infrastructure. We have been deprived for so long that a few new improvements will go a long way to improving morale and creating a feeling of empowerment.

Parents whose children attend DCPS however need far more information than they currently receive about such issues as: school readiness, good nutrition, how to read to children, free programs and events in the city that complement the curriculum, educational standards, standardized testing, how to work with their child's teacher to address their child's needs, afterschool programs, recreational programs, new programs that are being offered, programs for Special education students, and much more.

The school system currently provides little or no information to parents aside from forms required for enrollment and immunization requirements, and truancy policy. The result is that many parents are very unconnected from of their schools and do not feel welcome. Their interest in what happens to their children all day is viewed with suspicion. Many feel that their children may suffer consequences if parents ask too many questions about what is happening at school.

On the bright side, I believe that Dr. Janey understands that he and his team have the responsibility to change the attitudes and behaviors of school administrators and teachers toward parents. He has spoken regularly of establishing parent centers at several sites across the city. We are hopeful that they will be online during the coming school year. Meanwhile, a concerted effort is required of all community organizations (including churches, businesses that employ significant numbers of DC residents, parent organizations, and others) to reach out to parents and encourage their involvement in our schools. We believe that improving our schools and their connections with parents is the responsibility of the entire community and not just the school system.

Do you feel the DCPS capital plan and budget is realistic and fiscally responsible in meeting the goals and objectivess of DCPS Master Facility Plan.

This question has several underlying issues. First the Master Facility plan was created at a time when there were more students in our school. Consequently, it needs to be revised to reflect the current enrollment with an eye towards future needs. Having made

that point, the proposed capital budget would in no way sufficiently support a major capital program. DCPS's buildings are on average 60 – 70 years old, suffering from years of neglect and literally falling down around the children's shoulders.

I think the better question is whether the Master Facility Plan as currently proposed supports the academic needs of the students and if not, what will such a plan cost and can it be afforded?

While I would love to answer in the affirmative, I have to say that at this moment DCPS does not have the infrastructure to carry out an intensive expansion of the capital improvement plan. Less than 8 years ago, every school had an assigned building engineer who kept the boiler repaired and saw that maintenance was carried out on a schedule. Today the same engineer may serve as many as 8-10 schools. Extreme cutbacks in personnel, particularly those with the technical skills to carry out repair work, have left us without the foundation for a large-scale modernization program. Leadership in the facilities management division has gone through many changes—rivaling or exceeding the turnover in Superintendents.

We have several beautiful newly built schools, the construction undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers has been substandard, incomplete, not done according to schedule and at extreme cost overruns. Furthermore, the school system could not hold this contractor accountable for work done or not done. Parents around the city can site numerous examples of shoddy work done by the Corps. The decision to use the Army Corps for DCPS construction and facilities work was again one of the unfortunate consequences of the Control Board. Currently the one school under construction with DCPS managing the project is on schedule and on budget at last check.

SCHOOL SAFETY

It is important that the Committee has a clearer picture of DCPS and our city. While there have been a number of very high profile incidents in our schools it is not true that 5

to 7 Ballou students are killed *each* year. Clearly this one year has been an anomaly. Yes, there are metal detectors in our *secondary* schools; but there are just as many if not more in the very buildings in which you work. School safety is a concern. As a member of the planning committee of the D.C. Education Compact, I listened to the nearly 150 young people who attended our two youth forums discuss their concerns with school safety.

You should also know that the city has moved forward in creating a stronger linkage between the police department and our school security. Public school advocates who have attended the planning meetings have been tremendously impressed with the Police Departments willingness to work with them, principals and community members to insure that plan is implemented in a manner that will achieve success—safe schools.

TRUANCY/RECORD KEEPING SYSTEMS

Student data systems have not operated according to norms of other districts, nor have personnel been adequately trained to use the systems, nor have the systems been activated quickly enough to respond to new mandates and new needs for information. This has resulted in poor record keeping and the production of bad data. Perhaps this will be improved under the STARS student database system that will be operational in SY 05-06 in all schools.

In closing I want to leave you with this: Leadership of the free world is an awesome responsibility. An educated citizen is the most critical component of a successful city or nation.

Chariman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Dallas.

STATEMENT OF CAROLYN DALLAS

Ms. DALLAS. Yes. Thank you for inviting me to speak today. My name is Carolyn Dallas. I am the executive director of the Time Dollar Youth Court program. I have been asked to speak about the Youth Court program, and also our relationship with the DCPS.

First of all, very briefly, the Youth Court program is a program designed for kids that get in trouble with the law. They're first-time nonviolent offenders, and they have the option of being diverted to Youth Court for 10 weeks to participate in our program. They have various sentencings they can get; they can get jury duty, community service, peer tutoring, college prep, youth development, an essay, or even an apology that they may have to do.

We basically, over the last year, we've had about 600 referrals; 400 of those referrals have come from the Police Department. Our third highest list of cases is really truancy. About a year ago we started working with Dr. Diane Powell at the Student Intervention Center to put in a truancy piece with the Youth Court. Basically what happens is that the youth that gets sentenced to Youth Court also gets sentenced to peer tutoring. And the peer tutoring works where we work with one of the Fletcher Johnson schools. Our kids go there twice a week and they tutor young people. What this does for our kids is it really helps them build their self-esteem and gives them a feeling that they're doing something that's important and valuable, and at the same time the tutee receives instruction, they receive additional support that they may not be getting in school, and they also feel that they have an older brother or an older sister that is sort of helping them out.

By the same token, another component of the program is the college prep program. A lot of the kids that come before Youth Court that are sentenced have no idea of what's going on in their lives in terms of completing school. We work with them twice a week down at the MLK Library, and there we start to begin to talk to them about, what are you interested in, are you aware that you can go to college, do you understand financial aid? And so what happens there is that, you know, students begin to feel I can succeed at something, I can achieve something.

I like to think of Youth Court as a program that gives students an opportunity to achieve in a different environment. And so we have been working with DCPS around this, and I think when I look at the challenges that are ahead of us, especially for DCPS and Youth Court, is that a lot of the kids that come to Youth Court talk about safety in schools, they talk about not being motivated, they talk about possibly being labeled and not really performing very well.

I think we have to provide an environment where kids want to go to school and stay in school. There has to be various things there that kids can do that make them feel good about being in school and want them to attend. By the same token, we have to involve the youth as solutions, too. They can't be seen as a problem; we need to invite them in to figure out how do we solve some of the problems that's going on.

And then third, I think for me, if the Youth Court could work more closely with DCPS and become advocates for some of the kids that are coming through our system, I think this would be very helpful.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Dallas follows:]

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM TESTIMONY

MAY 20, 2005

TIME DOLLAR YOUTH COURT DIVERSION PROGRAM

Organizational Background

In the District of Columbia ("District" or "DC") the juvenile justice system has long functioned as a feeder to the adult penal and correctional systems. The Department of Human Services, Youth Rehabilitation Services Administration (formerly, Youth Service Administration) reported that 52% of African American males in the District between ages 18 and 35 were either in prison, on probation or parole, or have a warrant out for their arrest. With respect to disproportionate minority contact, the District displays an egregious racial disparity of contact with 100% of youth committed to the system being of either African American or Hispanic descent. An intergenerational cycle of involvement with the justice system is becoming increasingly self-perpetuating, as evidenced by the fact that 33% of youth at Oak Hill reported that they had at least one parent currently in prison and 57% said that they had at least one parent in prison during childhood.

The road to the adult justice system begins with the first offense as a juvenile. As a rule, the first three times that a youth comes in contact with the system, the prosecutor dismisses that offense, or in local parlance "No-Papered ". By the time juveniles appear in court as "first offenders," they are already seasoned members of a peer culture built around truancy, unauthorized use of a vehicle, simple assault, and possession or sale

of narcotics -- offenses that gradually build to a level of seriousness that often results in placement at Oak Hill or similar youth detention facilities.

In addition to being faced with a system seemingly designed to capture and retain youth within it, young people in DC face another challenge. There exists a pro-substance abuse culture among youth, and that culture is especially prevalent among delinquent youth. The figures speak for themselves. In 1999, a total of 2,748 new juvenile cases were referred to the District of Columbia Superior Court, and approximately 61% of these youth tested positive for one or more illicit substances.[1] At any given time, there are approximately 2,400 youth in the District's juvenile justice system, and approximately 30% are involved with the juvenile justice system for drug-related offenses.[2] It is apparent that those youth that engage in delinquent behavior are particularly at risk for abusing drugs.

Time Dollar Youth Court Diversion Program

A historic first step in preventing youth from ever taking the first step down the road to the adult justice system and a future of substance abuse began in 1996 with the creation and launch of the Time Dollar Youth Court. The Youth Court is designed to divert youth from the formal juvenile justice system at the point of first contact and to help youth develop the skills they need to choose a different path in life and to fulfill their goals and dreams.

In 1996, a formal "Agreement between the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and the Time Dollar Institute for the Establishment of a Youth Court Diversion Program" created a "partnership for the purpose of jointly developing a diversion program which

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[1] District of Columbia Superior Court administrative data.

[2] Administrative data from Youth Services Administration and D.C. Superior Court.

provides a meaningful alternative to the traditional adjudicator format in juvenile cases."

That Agreement provided that the Youth Court...

> "...shall serve as a unique pre-petition diversion program for nonviolent first-time offenders. The Program will foster accountability, mobilize peer pressure to reduce delinquency and recidivism, promote responsibility to the community and victims of delinquent acts, and assist in the development of self-esteem and respect for the rule of law in the District of Columbia."

On June 25, 2001, Chief Judge Hamilton wrote, "In 1996, as Chief Judge of the DC Superior Court, I authorized the creation of the Youth Court as a Diversion Program to insure that we took a youth's first brush with the law seriously...The Youth Court has established itself as an important cornerstone in a system of juvenile justice that really provides justice for juveniles."[3]

Since 1996, the Youth Court has functioned as a Diversion Program that utilizes peer juries of 12- to 18-year-old teens who encourage offenders to take control of their own futures by putting a stop to problem behavior before it spirals into the revolving doors of prison and ultimate hopelessness. The Youth Court seeks to provide meaningful alternatives to the juvenile justice system for non-violent juvenile offenders and was designed to address the most urgent issues facing DC youth:

As its foundation and approach, the Time Dollar Youth Court stresses the four core values of Co-Production:

- **Assets/Equity:** We are all assets. Every human being has the capacity to be a builder and a contributor.
- **Redefining Work:** Work must be redefined to include whatever it takes to raise healthy children, preserve families, make neighborhoods safe and vibrant, care for the frail and elders, redress injustice, and make democracy work

[3] A 1999 evaluation by the UDC Institute for Public Safety and Justice noted the following: "The Time Dollar Youth Court caseload makes it one of the larger youth courts in the country...populated with older juveniles engaged in more serious offenses than is the norm nationwide...During the grant period, the Youth Court reduced recidivism from 27% to 17% for those who successfully completed the program as compared to those who did not, and created a sense of civic awareness which jurors attributed to their Youth Court experiences."

- **Reciprocity:** Giving is more powerful as a two way street. To avoid creating dependency acts of helping must trigger reciprocity – giving back by helping others. "You need me" becomes "We need each other."
- **Social Capital:** "No man is an island." Informal support systems, extended families, and social networks are held together by trust, reciprocity and civic engagement.

The Youth Court seeks to provide meaningful alternatives to the juvenile justice system for first-time non-violent offenders. It is designed to demonstrate that it is both possible and imperative to enlist youth in the co-production of a new kind of juvenile justice by reaching out to their peers in a partnership between the courts and the community to reclaim young people and to prevent them from sliding deeper into the justice system[4]. All activities of the Time Dollar Youth Court originate in the Intake Unit that forms the entry point and administrative hub of our operations. Youth appear for scheduled intake interviews three times a week accompanied by their parent or guardian. The Youth Court operates respondent and community/school based volunteer juries, whose participants undergo intense juror training. Presently hearings are held on Saturday mornings at the main courthouse at 500 Indiana Avenue. During each hearing, the jury hears the facts of the case, the charge, the police version of events, and the testimony of the respondent and his/her parent or guardian. After a dialogue and questioning period, jurors deliberate and decide on a sanction. Every offender who comes before the Youth Court is required to serve as a Youth Court juror for ten weeks. In doing so, every offender becomes part of the justice system, authorized to co-produce and co-

[4] In May 2002, the American Bar Association and Office for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention released one in a series of "Roadmap" publications designed to help the community, the bench and the bar implement change in the justice system. The publication, entitled "Youth Courts, Young People Delivering Justice," singles out the Time Dollar Youth Court as a "particularly noteworthy" innovation with this description: "The Time Dollar Youth Court in Washington, D.C. was established in an inner city context. To create a subculture in which youth would feel safe to tell peers that their behavior was wrong, the program offers rewards in the form of a local currency that can be used to purchase a computer...The Time Dollar program is the only one to move beyond service delivery to system reform."

create justice for other DC youth. This strength-based approach sends a new message of hope and opportunity to youth. It says:

> "We need you because you can powerfully send the message to other youth not to do something stupid. That is something that no other part of the system has been able to do – not judges, nor court social services, nor probation officers, nor police, nor family, nor school."

TDYC uses the time during a respondent's sentence as an opportunity to stress accountability and empower youth to take control of their futures by: (1) acknowledging the crime that they have committed, (2) accepting the consequences of their actions through service as a juror and/or community service, and (3) involving themselves in positive activities that focus on their assets and talents, thereby reducing involvement in the types of activities that will ultimately lead to interaction with the law and possibly prison. During this period youth are offered and receive the following:

- **Jury Training** – Jury training allows youth the opportunity to learn about DC laws and law enforcement, the consequences of breaking the law, how to be an effective listener, and how to understand and analyze the elements of a case.
- **Jury Duty** – Once youth have completed jury training, they are assigned to participate in jury duty, hearing cases for the next eight weeks. Youth experience the challenge of applying the law to specific circumstances, asking probing and insightful questions of respondents and families, analyzing a case and determining an appropriate sanction. Analytical and decision-making skills are acquired and honed during this process.
- **Community Service** – Youth can be assigned 10 to 90 hours of community service. This element of a Youth Court sentence addresses restorative justice and allows the respondent to make restitution by giving back to the community. Sites are chosen for their ability to provide youth with learning experiences, personal growth and skill development. An additional goal of the community service assignment is to engage the respondents in meaningful work that builds self–confidence and

increases practical and job training skills. Projects have included helping to plan a community garden, reading to elders in a nursing home, assisting in the implementation of a neighborhood "Community Day," participating in health fairs, and attending a leadership retreat sponsored by the Mayor's office.

- **Life Skills Training** – The Life Skills Training Program is a peer-reviewed, science-based model that involves the implementation of curricula designed for school- or community-based preventive interventions. Life Skills training modules include sessions on anger management, self-awareness, building self-esteem, increasing communication and decision-making skills, assertiveness, and the hazards of tobacco, drug and alcohol use. Research has shown that Life Skills can produce 59% to 75% lower levels of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use.
- **Cross Age Peer Tutoring (CAPT)** – Youth receiving this sanction experience the joy helping someone younger by tutoring an elementary school student. Self-esteem building and academic improvement are the goals of this experience. The CAPT program works with respondents who are deemed "truant" by DC Public Schools (DCPS) and involves tutoring children in the 1st – 5th grade in various subjects, including reading and math. Youth Court sees the CAPT program as an opportunity to improve the academic performance, self-esteem, attitudes toward learning and perception of the importance of education for our truant population (which encompasses approximately 30% of Youth Court referrals).
- **College Preparatory** – Youth who enroll in Youth Court's College Preparatory classes participate twice a week in an experience that helps them explore college as a potential opportunity. Computer and writing skills are stressed, and basic research skills are honed.

After completing their sanctions, youth are encouraged to continue to volunteer for jury duty. For every hour that a youth serve as a volunteer juror, they earn one Time Dollar that can be redeemed for a recycled computer or a savings bond toward college enrollment and tuition once they reach 50 hours.

Our Statistics

The Time Dollar Youth Court primarily serves the District of Columbia, with the majority of respondents hailing from Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8. Youth Court serves 44% females and 56% females with the majority of respondents being of African American descent. Recently, there has been an increase of Latino youth and white females. Presently, the Youth Court engages approximately 500 youth, along with their families and communities, each year. Of those participants, approximately 400 enter the Youth Court as respondents, and roughly 100 participate as volunteer jurors. Respondents are referred from five sources: consent decrees from the DC Courts, diversion by the Corporation Counsel and Court Social Services, Metropolitan Police Department diversions, truancy cases from the public school system, and special cases of parental diversions. The top four offenses for 2004 were: Simple Assault, Disorderly Conduct, Possession of Drugs and Truancy. There were 400 referrals coming from the Metropolitan Police Department.

Our Partners

The Time Dollar Youth Court consistently works to engage partners to ensure the success of our operations that is aimed at keeping youth out of the juvenile justice system. Our major partners consist of the DC Superior Court, the Metropolitan Police Department, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), the Department of Mental Health and soon to be the Metropolitan Boys and Girls Club.

Partnering with DCPS/Truancy

Historically, the Time Dollar Youth Court has always received referrals from DCPS for youth that skip school and are deemed truant. Those referrals would be received

throughout the year, with the majority received towards the end of the school year. Youth Court would experience frustration at trying to schedule intakes in late June for truancy offenses that had occurred in Jan or Feb. Contacting parents in late June resulted in little commitment to beginning or completing our program. Thus our success rate with truancy was very low. In Sept 04, a decision was made to "tighten up" the process by working closer with Dr. Powell and the Truancy Attendance Centers. In speaking with Dr. Powell's staff I was informed that the problem with Youth Court Intake office receiving referrals so late was the lack of a staff person that could send or fax the referrals to Youth Court. At this point, Youth Court made the decision that we would take responsibility for physically picking up the referrals every Monday from the two Attendance Centers. In speaking with Dr. Powell, another decision was made to formalize the process by entering into a Memorandum of Agreement outlining the duties and responsibilities of each party (see attached MOU). In November 04, the formal agreement was signed between the School Dept and the Time Dollar Youth Court. Referrals are picked up on Monday from both centers by a Youth Court staff person and intakes are scheduled for the following Thursday. Since the process began in October, our statistics are as follows:

Pre-referrals	231
Citations issued	85
Contacts pending	81
YC referrals	66
YC Respondents	42

Recently, DCPS was able to hire a social worker to help with the truancy issue. A meeting was held with the social worker and all parties involved in our project and the names of the 81 contacts pending were handed over for follow up. Meanwhile, there are 42 truant youth involved in the program that we are working with.

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Peer Tutoring

The second initiative that Youth Couth has with DCPS is our Peer Tutoring Program. Youth Court respondents and volunteers tutor elementary school children at the Fletcher Johnson School twice a week on Tuesday and Thursdays. We work with children signed up for the After Care Program and have been doing so since Jan 04. This has been a very successful initiative for our youth the tutors, as well as the tutees. Children in the After Care Program receive homework assistance, a focused remedial activity, a character building activity and a snack during the 2-hour period. Teachers report that overall school attendance has improved and behavior has improved because the children enjoy participating in the program. Children enjoy the extra attention that they may not receive during the day, or just extra attention that they may need in general. Our youth that tutor are also being mentors and learning how to coach small children which has had a very positive effect on the children and a positive effect on the tutors in that someone value their talents and abilities. This has been very valuable in building the self esteem of youth that come before Youth Court. Increased self-esteem enables youth to perform and function better in school.

College Prep

Another component of the Peer Tutoring Program is College Prep. Respondents gather on Monday and Wednesday at the MLK Library to research and explore the possibility

of attending college. The program begins with the youth exploring and identifying their interest and activities that they excel at. Next, they are trained on the ECO system at the library that registers them to receive information on financial aid and colleges of their choice. The staff also helps the youth write a personal statement for their application. Information on SAT and ACT testing taking is discussed as well as some remedial work. Youth walk away with a sense of what colleges exit for their interest, understand the environment of a particular college, and a sense of hope that they can attend college. When questioned about their academic advisors at DCPS many reply that they don't know who their advisors are, and they are not involved in any type of college prep work with anyone.

Working with DCPS: The Challenge

According to research data, truancy is the first indicator that there is a problem with school and one of the more prevalent indicators of a youth headed towards the juvenile justice system. With truancy being the 4th highest offense of Youth Court, this indicates that there is a problem and Youth Court is working to address that problem with the District of Columbia Public School system.

Creating a Safe Environment - DCPS needs to assure all children in the District that schools are safe havens. Many children appearing before Youth Court speak candidly amongst themselves about their fears and not feeling safe at school or while traveling to school. Conversations are also overhead regarding the need to travel in a group to school in order to feel safe. If members of your particular group are not attending school that day (to walk with you) youth will often not attend. Two weeks ago, there was a case at Youth Court dealing with this particular issue, the mother forced her son

to attend school, the son was jumped by another youth from a neighboring community and her son was arrested. Schools and the surrounding environment need to be declared "violent free zones" and youth need to buy into this concept.

Involving Youth In Solutions- "Buying into" violent free zones should involve all members of the school community including youth. Along with violent free zones, schools need to create environments where children will want to be. Alternatives to violence need to be discussed, created, and implemented such as mediation teams, and conflict resolution groups that help youth learn how to deal with conflicts before they escalate into fights and suspensions.

Advocating for Truant Youth - In our partnership role with DCPS, it would be helpful to establish a relationship where a Youth Court Staff person could advocate for truant youth especially in cases where youth are having conflicts with teachers, or parents are feelings helpless and unable to communicate with teachers. Many times youth appear before Youth Court suspended for numerous days with little knowledge of how they will make up the work. This creates an environment of failure for the youth. Youth Court advocates could help with many of these issues.

Thinking Outside the Box- the issues and challenges facing our youth today are numerous, with the media, and drugs having a great influence. Schools need to be aware of these challenges and work to create and implement programs that can help youth be successful in school. Suspensions and expulsions should be the last resort with more in service programs and services for youth that are troubled.

The creation of the Time Dollar Youth Court Diversion Program provides an opportunity for DCPS youth to turn a negative event into a positive meaningful experience and to

experience success in ways that may not happen at school. Working together, DCPS and the Time Dollar Youth Court can provide a supportive environment that can enable truants to succeed.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, thank you all for your testimony. You give a different perspective than the insiders who have been up here trying to work at it for a long time.

Mr. Kamras, let me start with you. How many of your Princeton classmates are teaching in public schools today? What percent?

Mr. KAMRAS. Honestly, I don't know.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Pretty small, isn't it?

Mr. KAMRAS. I would imagine so.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, we appreciate the dedication and the academic rigors that you had to go through to graduate and try to bring those standards back to public school systems; because it is really expectations, and once systems have low expectations, they meet them, they try to meet those expectations.

I think in many ways what you're doing is you're changing the world a person or a few kids at a time, which is probably the more successful way to do it. We have all these broad programs and we found out that at the end of the day it comes down to targeting a neighborhood or a family or something like that; you can be more successful than doing it on a very broad basis. And I think your efforts are what has brought you Teacher of the Year, and I appreciate it very much.

Mr. KAMRAS. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. What has been your observation—if you could ask what we could do from our level to help the school system the most, what would it be? Just say one or two things from a Federal perspective. Remember, the city is spending more per student than we are in any other areas around the capital. I mean, money is always—don't just say money; what else is it?

Mr. KAMRAS. Well, aside from the expectations piece which—that you just mentioned, I think it's all about people, to be perfectly honest. It's about recruiting and retaining really excellent teachers and school leaders as well. I think having excellent people in schools can make up for so many other deficits, be they resource deficits or facilities deficits. By having people who are incredibly well trained, who are undaunted about what they're doing, they find a way to achieve. And so I think we need to focus more on bringing people—new teachers into the system as older teachers are retiring, and doing everything we can to retain those teachers, at the same time, school leaders, as the previous panel spoke about. Having an effective school leader who manages well and who is efficient and who is always looking to problem solve makes an extraordinary difference; it changes everything that happens in a school building. And again, it can make up for not having as much money as perhaps you need to have. Again, which isn't to suggest that I wouldn't want to continue to advocate for those resources, but having effective leadership and people in the building, teachers and others who are committed to a common purpose makes an extraordinary difference.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I had a lady who spent her year between high school and college to work on my campaign in 1994. She graduated from Yale and came back to the city to teach. And after a year teaching in the system she was just burnt out and frustrated. You weren't. But a lot of good people are. They come here with the

best motives, they want to move ahead. What do we do to keep those people motivated?

Mr. KAMRAS. Well, we need to support them. We need to make sure there is real sustained professional development once they get into the system, not half a day every 3 months on the hot topic of the month.

We need to make sure that working conditions are what they need to be, and that's partly a facilities issue, but it's also partly just making sure that things run efficiently, that people are paid on time, that teachers feel involved in the policymaking that affects their work.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. You have people not paid on time at times?

Mr. KAMRAS. It has occurred. Also we want to aggregate people who are high performing so that you develop a nucleus, a critical mass in a school so that there is a shared sense of possibility. When you put a person who has very high expectations and set them out in an island where perhaps expectations aren't as high, that can be very challenging and can make one lose their focus. So by continuing to aggregate people and linking them up with great school leaders, I think you're going to find that a lot more people will stay in the school system.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Toyer, let me ask you. Your group has been very involved in the D.C. public facilities battles through lawsuits and certainly advice to this committee and everything else. It would be my vision that as we look at the General Services Administration and surplus Federal property in the city, and look at ways we can get some of that property off the Federal rolls onto D.C. tax rolls, that you do the same with schools. And in some cases you may want to swap an old school that's in a commercially viable place. You maybe make that a commercial center and return it to the tax rolls and build a new school somewhere elsewhere where we can get—where the land won't cost anything and we can take some of the profits on the property to build new schools and so on. Is that approach reasonable?

It seems to me the number of new schools being built in this city are very few, the average age of these schools is much, much older, and you have a maintenance cost that is much higher in the city than you have in suburban areas and all that. Any thoughts on that?

Ms. TOYER. Well, you know, we only have a few schools that sit on highly valued property in our downtown area.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, it wouldn't have to be downtown, it could be——

Ms. TOYER. But those that are—that come to mind easily on Capitol Hill and primarily in Georgetown are neighborhood schools. And Washington, if nothing else, values its neighborhood schools. The schools that, frankly, are less populated are in communities where there are—where, you know, the value of the land isn't as high.

You know, we recognize we have too much space and not enough children, but the education program has to drive the use of those facilities, as Dr. Janey has talked about; for example, using school

buildings for—a school building for the parent centers. He has also talked about moving out of the North Capitol office space.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. How about colocating schools with other public service areas? It could be a——

Ms. TOYER. And that is a consideration. The Council is going to hold hearings on colocation. I think that one of the—a requirement in the proposal that Chairman Cropp put forward that the board take action to look at colocation, we want to be very careful about what we talk about putting in buildings with schools, I mean——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Of course, of course.

Ms. TOYER. And we want the school communities to have a great deal of say——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. You do. But something's got to give here, you can't just do the same old, same old, the way things are. But I understand. As long as we're willing to discuss it and move forward. Everybody loves their neighborhood school, but right now we have a surplus of space. And I tell you, I can walk in a school and tell you how that school is performing by the way it looks. It can be old, but a school that takes pride in itself, it's spic and span; you can get a feel right now for the standards that school has set by physically how it is looking, not how old it is, but is it cleaned up, is there trash in the halls? It is incredible what you see in some of these areas.

We're going to have to take a look at moving some areas, rebuilding some areas over the long term in the city anyway. Some of these schools are just literally falling down and the maintenance costs are high.

Ms. TOYER. Well, we would like them to look at it like an economic development strategy. As the Mayor talks about bringing new residents into the city, we want him to bring new families into the city. And what I can tell you is that of the almost 10 new schools that have been built, every single one of them is at capacity and, frankly, bursting at the seams already. And these are many families who had not previously had their children in D.C. public schools. But they see these fabulous buildings, and it is a draw.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I've got thousands of my constituents who would love to live in the city. And that's where their life is, that's where their job is, so that's where they orient. But the school system, once they start having kids, the school systems have been discouraging from moving out. Now if we can turn that around, then you can get the complete renaissance. And we're hopeful, we certainly aren't giving up here. We've done the D.C. Tag, a lot of things that we think would help. We've done the real estate benefits for the city to help its economy grow. So we're not giving up from our perspective; there is only so much we can do institutionally on that. But we appreciate all your help on that, and the same with Ms. Dallas, but my time has expired.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And particularly for the generosity for the panel that really needed to be on the hot seat, because they have the responsibility for the schools. I really have only a few questions for this panel, which I think has done a remarkable job in each of their respective spheres.

I do appreciate, Mr. Kamras, that you brought your students, and the clear devotion you show to them and to this city. When I first heard of your award, I wasn't able to reach you, but I went to the floor of the House to speak simply on what it meant to the District to have you recognized. And a message is sent about others in our public school, the very fact that you were chosen to come here, that you have been chosen, that the addition in the newspaper about what you did, the extra mile you go, was some indication, it seems to me, of others like you in the D.C. public school system. We certainly hope you will never consider going any other place——

Mr. KAMRAS. Don't worry.

Ms. NORTON. I know you're from New York——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. He's from Sacramento, isn't he?

Ms. NORTON. I thought you were from New York. Where are you from?

Mr. KAMRAS. I was born in New York, grew up in Sacramento.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We're both right. But he's a D.C. guy now.

Mr. KAMRAS. Yes, yes.

Ms. NORTON. I know that you came out of college here on the east coast of Princeton to D.C., maybe you learned a little bit more about the city then. I would be interested in knowing—I know Teachers for America brought you here—whether you had any choice of the city you were to come to, what you think—does D.C. have its full complement of Teach for America teachers? And what has been the response of the other teachers and the young people, who are not involved precisely in your subject matter, to what you have done in—I suppose it is math and science; is it contagious in the school, or are you one guy doing an excellent job? Is everybody else kind of saying wow?

Mr. KAMRAS. Well, first of all, thank you for your very kind comments. And also I want to thank you formally for speaking at the ceremony from the District in celebration of Teacher of the Year. I do appreciate that so very much.

Why D.C.? Participants in the Teach for America program do have some control over where they go, and D.C. was one of the cities that I was most interested in working in, one, because I knew that it did need teachers, and also, I had visited the city when I was younger with my family and developed a deep love for the city. Its neighborhoods are some of the most wonderful I have ever seen, and its rich diversity and fascinating history really attracted me to the city. And I also have had something of a love for policy, so it was a natural fit for me as well.

Your second question was about Teach for America and does it have its full complement. I believe we could expand the program in the city to bring more teachers to the District; so I think there is a lot of room for growth there, as well as investment, both from the Federal Government and from the local government in supporting the program as they bring and support new teachers into the District.

And third, what has been the response? It has been incredibly positive. And I'm so proud that I have been able to take some lessons that I learned from this math initiative and then begin to expand them to the rest of the school. And so I have been able to put

together a team of people at the school who are working to really implement these ideas school-wide. And we still have much work to do, no doubt, but I'm confident that now that we're on the same page, things will really begin to turn around.

Ms. NORTON. It will be interesting to know when the new curriculum comes, whether you—who you are doing jobs with and whether there is some flexibility, given your success, when the new curriculum comes. I will be most interested to hear that.

Let me go on to Ms. Toyer. Parents United is basically the only watchdog for the system. Otherwise we're dependent upon government officials themselves. And you have often uncovered incredible evidence that we would have had no other way to get to. You're more than a watchdog, of course, you are heavily involved in technical issues that are very inside baseball, except when it comes out in the wash, which means in the way in which children respond or children develop—if I could mix my metaphors between the Washington baseball.

The chairman mentioned schools that may be on land and perhaps taking that land, using it for other purposes. And of course, you know, that might make some sense once you get into these land issues involving schools. I'm glad I'm on the Hill and not in the District. I do know that some—there are, of course, places other than downtown that people want to go. Those would be just the schools that are filled up. Everybody better understand how it works here.

One thing parents know how to do is to transfer their students from schools deep in the most troubled parts of the District to other parts of the District. So it would be interesting and a difficult thing for people who are not in the school system—I'm talking about residents of the District of Columbia to understand—is that these schools that have better reputations, often not in their neighborhood, look like they're favored in the number of students—in the number of teachers and the resources, but that's because people have voted with their feet. And the notion of that transfer policy being as liberal as it has been for decades is one of the most important things that the District has.

So, you know, if you're anywhere close to wherever there is valuable property, there is likely to be a school—whether we're talking Capitol Hill—I mean, I know about the schools on Capitol Hill. That's where I live. Some of them would be there. You mentioned Georgetown. Yet, those are the schools that district residents, regardless of where they live, prefer. I don't envy this notion this superintendent is going to have to face, what to do about schools with two kids in them while other schools are filled up. And it is always a huge, huge fight.

Let me ask you, though, about something that is very worrisome, this whole notion of parental involvement, you all, Parents United. Now parental involvement means for many folks that somehow parents are sitting in school and come to school and so forth, and it really would be very good to have happen. I must say that for most middle-class families, for example, that's really not what it means, it means that the parent is so attached to the child and what a child does in school that while the teacher might not see

the parent on any kind of frequent basis, the parent is involved with the child at home so that is reflected in the school.

When we get to truly disadvantaged children, we believe we've got to have some contact, some direct contact. Over and over again, we hear that PTAs are thinly populated with parents, and that the parents are just not there for the children, and that therefore the teachers have to pick it all up. Would you give us some insight on whether or not there are some special kinds of outreach to parents that would help to reinforce at home what beleaguered, absolutely besieged teachers often are trying—and sometimes succeeding—to do—at school?

I mean, this goes for you, too, Mr. Kamras. I mean, you have been fortunate, you haven't even been in the whole school yet. Wait until you get to the whole school. And assume that the transfer rate occurs. I'm interested in how we can reach parents without repeating the mantra over and over again, parental involvement, parental involvement; how do you make it happen?

Ms. TOYER. Well, I think it's important to define what we call parental involvement. I know if a child comes to school ready to learn, and is respectful and does what he is supposed to do and knows that, you know, they're not going to be disruptive or whatever, that is a result to me of parental involvement. So it doesn't mean that every parent, as you have indicated, is going to be in the classroom or even in the building. They may not meet that teacher the entire year, but if that teacher sees that he brings—his or her homework is prepared in class, that's a result of parental involvement.

I had a conversation recently with a very close friend of mine who went to a session at Gallaudet that the charter school people did. She teaches in a charter school, and she said they had this whole session on parent involvement. And the conversation that we had is that, you know, when you think about PTA, it is a very middle-class concept; people who go to church every Sunday or, you know, have some connection with that, who have been in Girl Scouts or some kind of community-based organization like that, membership organization, are natural joiners. If you have not had that experience over your life and you now have children and people are saying oh, you need to come to school, join the PTA, that has absolutely—it doesn't resound with you, it has no resonance.

And so I can think of a number of schools around the community, around the city, that have done very well with parent involvement because they have offered programs in the school for parents who don't necessarily feel welcome, that don't feel that they necessarily have something to offer in the classroom.

One of the teachers told me she learned a lesson. She invited a parent to come in, and she said oh, you can help me with one of my reading groups, and the parent seemed kind of put off—and it was a fourth-grade class, so you would think that person would be able to do that. She said, in talking with her family member she discovered that one of her uncles could not read. And so to make that—to assume and make requests of people that they have a certain level of skill was offputting. Rather than that, she just asked the parent come in and sit down, help me. Just watch the children, help me keep order. And it was a comfort level that she was able

to reach with that parent that enabled the parent to feel like she was making a valuable concept.

Some schools have social workers. There is an organization here—and the name right now escapes me—it's the Telling Stories Project, and it is about bringing parents in, and the mantra is that everybody has a story to tell. So they invite parents in to focus on their own experiences. They find that their experience is like others. And they use that as a mechanism to get parents involved in the local school. They do a quilt based on their stories, I mean, there are lots of ways to do it that are not expensive that really need to be proliferated across the city, because we need parents, and clearly our schools can't do it without us.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much for that. I must say—and how can I forget his name, he was a good friend at Yale, the child great expert in early childhood development in raising the scores of the lowest performing children, all of whom came from public housing in New Haven found that putting programs that address the parents' need only in the school had the effect of drawing to the school and then to the child. In other words, here is some poor parent, a poor parent, attracting the parent to the school for the first time; that bait gets taken and somehow crosses over.

Final question, Ms. Dallas. I do want to compliment you on what you are doing. That kind of innovation, that early intervention, that kind of innovation is what everybody talks about, and we see so few examples of. In your Youth Court, where you catch somebody when they've got a small drug offense or a truancy and they go before their peers, this is very, very promising to hear of.

I'd like simply an answer to this question. One, I'd like to know where the funding comes from. Who funds you? And I'd like to know what have been the rates of success? That is to say, are there recidivism rates? How long have you been in existence? So that we know how the program works and indeed whether it works.

Ms. DALLAS. First of all, we are a 501-C(3) organization, and like most nonprofits we scramble for our money. We have some foundation funds. We have some Department of Mental Health alternative pathway funds. We have some funds from the Mayor's Office of Public Safety. And pretty much I've been with the Youth Court for about 2½ years. I think in the past they've had some DOJ money. We're trying to get some DOJ money right now.

But for me, just to speak very briefly about this, I think this program is so important that I wish that it could be a line item in somebody's budget because it is a preventative—I see it very much as a preventative intervention piece that we need to buildup and work with as they come in so that we can get them looking at their lives, their decisionmaking process and all of that.

Our success rates. Our success rates, recidivism, we've been tracking recidivism for the last year, and we're finding that 6 months out of Youth Court, the recidivism is around 11 percent. And then when they get to about a year of not being in Youth Court, it sort of jumps up to about 17 percent, which I'm told that, based on the study that was done, is still a better recidivism rate than—I think it was 30 percent that was quoted for kids that were going right into the juvenile justice system. But what we're finding is that—because parents were saying can you keep them in Youth

Court because it gives them something to do? Our group of kids don't have a lot of things to do, so we're finding if we can keep them preoccupied and involved in things, that reduces that chance of recidivism.

The other thing that we do basically, these are kids that when you mentioned about reading, you know, some of them come, they can't read. They now get a leadership roll in that they're able to be a jury foreperson. You know, we encourage them around a lot of different things in Youth Court. So we see some good successes, especially anecdotally, about kids who we see the self-esteem turned around and starting to feel like they're worthy and they are worth something and they want to go on to something different.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much. I see that we have learned the lesson of early intervention. We may not have learned the lesson of follow-through so that the students feel supported once they go forward.

Thank you very much, Ms. Dallas.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I want to thank all of you very much. This is very helpful to us as we continue our deliberations and try to work with the appropriate bodies in the District to improve the system. But all of you are making a difference, and we appreciate it. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[NOTE.—The District of Columbia Public Schools May 2005 Strategic Plan entitled, "Declaration of Education: Keeping Our Promise to the District's Children," and additional information submitted for the hearing record may be found in committee files.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

A REPORT ON

Juvenile Homicide *in the* DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2002–2004

In 2004, even as total homicides decreased 20% and overall violent crime almost 14% in the District of Columbia, juvenile homicides climbed sharply. Twenty-four youth (age 17 and younger) were killed in the District last year, compared to 13 in 2003 and 17 in 2002. These homicides included high-profile cases as well as ones that received little media attention, but they all involved a terrible loss of life and had a significant impact on families, friends, and communities. The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) has previously analyzed all homicides from 1998 through 2003 to help the Department and the city address the overall problem of lethal violence. So that MPD and its crime-reduction partners—families, neighborhoods, community and religious organizations, and government agencies—can better understand and respond to the violence that is killing too many youth in the city, the Department has conducted a summary analysis of juvenile homicides over the past three years (2002–2004).

Anthony A. Williams
Mayor

Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police

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2004 [illegible]
are su [illegible] ties a [illegible] on th [illegible] ation
of a juvenile [illegible]

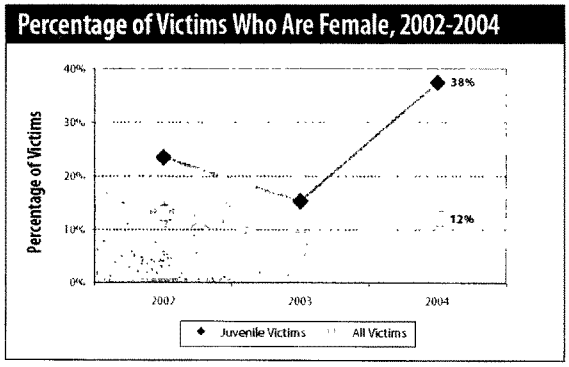
The Victims

Gender

One troubling trend is the increase in young female victims. Although far more males are murdered than females across the board, female victims represent a larger share of juvenile homicides than of all homicides. From 2002 through 2004, 28% of juvenile homicide victims were female. However, only 11% of all homicide victims—adult and juvenile—were female. This difference was even more striking in 2004, when 38% of the juvenile victims were female, as compared to 12% of all victims.

The number of female juveniles killed is growing much faster than other groups of homicide victims. Nine female juveniles were killed in 2004, more than four times the number killed in 2003 (two female juvenile homicides), and more than twice as many killed in 2002 (four homicides). In contrast, male juvenile homicides ranged from 13 in 2002 to 11 in 2003, and 15 in 2004, for a total increase of only 15%. During the same time period, the number of adult homicide victims—both male and female—dropped.

Sadly, most of the increase (64%) in homicides in 2004 is attributable to young female victims. Of the nine females juveniles murdered in 2004, five died at the hands of a family member or other caregiver. Four of these girls had not yet celebrated their second birthdays when the incident that led to their death took place. Of the four females who were not victims of "family violence," two were not believed to be the intended targets.

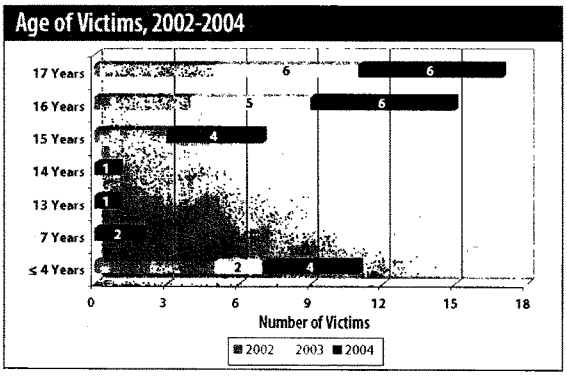


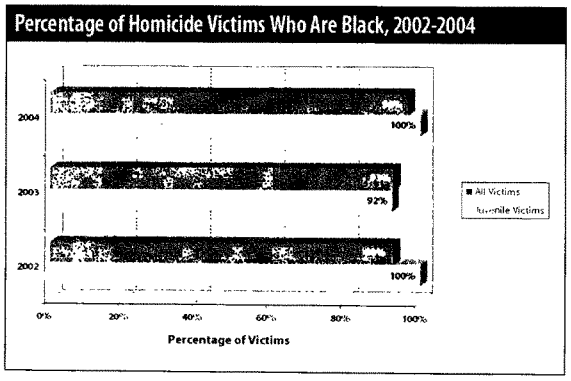
Age

Juvenile homicide victims were younger in 2004 than in 2003 and 2002. In 2002 and 2003, less than a quarter (23%) of all juvenile homicide victims were under the age of 15. However, last year one out of every three juvenile homicide victims was age 14 or younger. Eight of the 24 victims in 2004 were younger than 15, as compared to two in 2003 and five in 2002. This is partly because of the increase in female victims, who are typically younger than their male victims. Of the eight juvenile victims under the age of 15, only one was male.

Race

All 24 of the juvenile homicide victims in 2004 were black. In fact, of the 54 juvenile homicides in the past three years, only one victim—an Asian Indian male killed by his mother—was not black. This is similar to all homicides, in which more than nine out ten victims in the city are black.





The Offenders

Closed Cases

Of the 24 juvenile homicides in 2004, 16 have been solved.[1] Fourteen were closed with an arrest in 2004, one exceptionally in 2004 and one exceptionally in January 2005. This includes closures in all five of the deaths involving family violence against infants or young children. In three of these cases, the suspect is the mother of the victim; in one case, an adult caregiver; in one case, a juvenile sibling. In the other 11 homicides from 2004 that have been closed, six of the suspects are adults, and five are juveniles.

In fact, in the past two years,[2] MPD has been able to close a greater percentage of juvenile homicide cases than of all homicides. In 2003, the Department closed 12 juvenile homicides for a clearance rate of 92.3%, as compared to a 60.5% clearance rate for all homicides. The 2004 clearance rate for juvenile homicides was 66.7% (16 cases closed); for all homicides, it was 60.6%.[3]

[1]For the purposes of this report, only the first suspect arrested was counted for each closure. Subsequent arrests for the same offense are not reflected in this data.

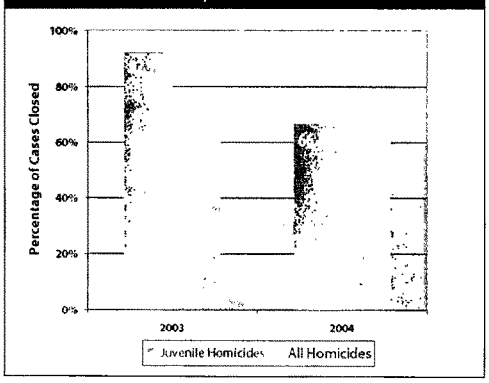
[2]Closures from 2002 are omitted from this analysis because the date of birth data from some prior year cases was incomplete or inconsistent.

[3]In accordance with Federal Bureau of Investigation guidelines, clearance rates are defined as cases closed by arrest or exceptional means during a calendar year—regardless of what year the homicide took place—as a percentage of the homicides committed during that year. One of the 16 juvenile homicide cases closed in 2004 and four of those closed in 2003 were homicides from a previous year. The 2004 juvenile homicide closed in January 2005 will count towards the 2005 homicide clearance rate.

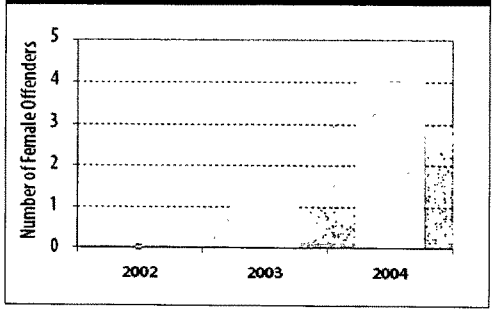
Gender

As with juvenile homicide victims, an overwhelming majority of the offenders in juvenile homicide cases are male. However, there has been a rise in the percentage of female offenders in juvenile homicide cases. All five of the female offenders in the past three years have been the victim's mother or caregiver.

Homicide Clearance Rate, 2003-2004



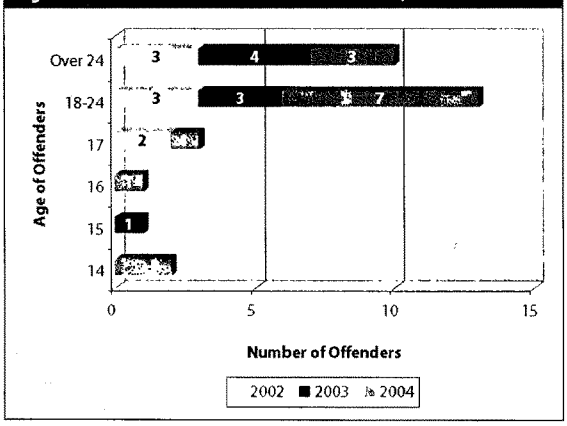
Female Offenders in Juvenile Homicides, 2002–2004



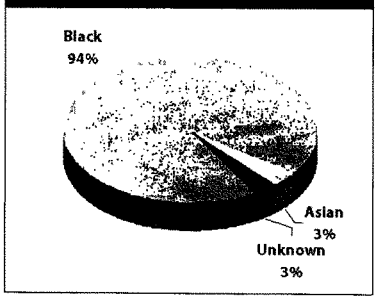
In juvenile homicide cases in the past three years, 23% of the 30 known offenders are themselves juveniles. While juveniles are still more likely to be murdered by adults, the problem of juvenile-on-juvenile violence is significant.

Of the 30 known offenders in juvenile homicide cases, 28 are black.

Age of Known Offenders in Juvenile Homicides, 2002–2004



Race/Ethnicity of Known Offenders in Juvenile Homicides, 2002-2004



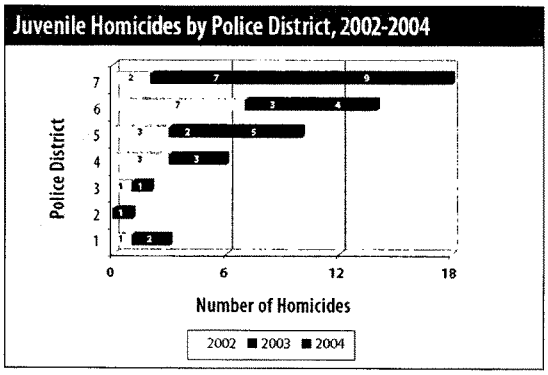
The Crime

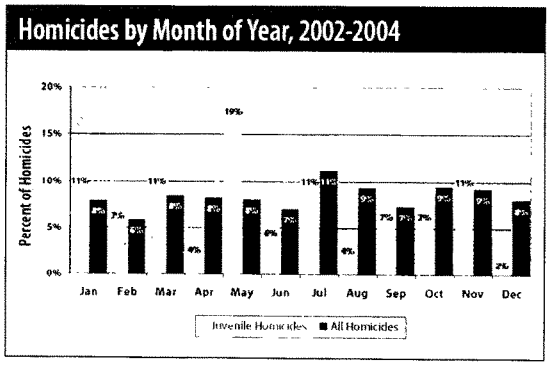
Location

Three out of every four juvenile homicides in 2004 occurred in the Fifth, Sixth, or Seventh District. The pattern for 2003 is similar, with 92% occurring in the same three police districts. Adult homicides during the past three years were also consistently highest in 5D, 6D, and 7D although the overall trend in these districts has been downward.

Month of Year

While there is no clear trend as to the time of year that juvenile (or adult) homicides occur, most juvenile homicides do take place during the school year. From 2002 through 2004, only one of every seven juvenile homicides occurred in July or August. During the same time period, more juvenile homicides were committed in May (19%) than in any other month, in sharp contrast to the pattern of overall homicides.



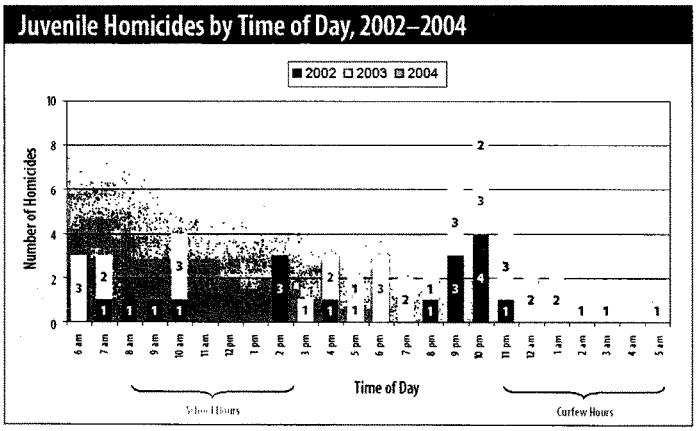


Time of Day

Though juvenile homicides occur at almost all hours of the day, 39% of them occur between 9 PM and midnight. Eight (15%) of the juveniles were killed during the city's curfew hours.[4] Of these eight, all were 15 to 17 year old males, and six were in apparent violation of the curfew law.[5]

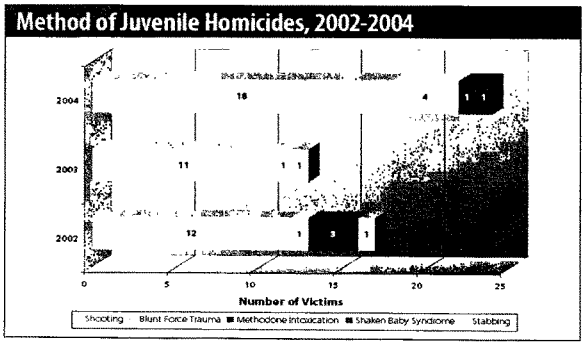
Method

As with adult homicides in DC, the vast majority of juveniles die as a result of gunshot wounds. Excluding the five young victims killed by a family member or caregiver in 2004, all but one of the 19 other juvenile victims were shot to death.



[4]From September through June, curfew begins at 11:00 pm Sunday through Thursday nights, and continues until 6:00 am the following day; curfew runs from 12:01 am–6:00 am on Saturday and Sunday. During the months of July and August, curfew hours are 12:01 am–6:00 am, seven days a week.

[5]Under the Juvenile Curfew Act of 1995 (DC Code 6-2181), persons under the age of 17 cannot remain in or on a street, park or other outdoor public place, in a vehicle or on the premises of any establishment within the District of Columbia during curfew hours, unless they are involved in certain exempted activities. Exempted activities include work, school, religious, civic or organized recreational activities, as well as the exercise of First Amendment rights. The law applies to all young people who are in the District during curfew hours, regardless of whether they live inside or outside the city



About This Report

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This report is also available on the Metropolitan Police Department's website

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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

June 6, 2005

Chairman Tom Davis
Committee on Government Reform
2348 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20515-4611

Dear Chairman Davis,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments for the record for the May 20, 2005 District of Columbia Public School System Oversight Hearing. Specifically, I write to provide my thoughts regarding a reduction in oversight by the Independent Chief Financial Officer of the District (OCFO) over the finances of the District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS). The Committee has heard the request made by Dr. Clifford Janey, Superintendent for the District of Columbia Public School System, that the DCPS Chief Financial Officer (CFO) report directly to the Superintendent of DCPS rather than to my office, which is the current reporting relationship for all agency CFOs within the District. The current reporting relationship is in accordance with the authority vested in the CFO by Section 424 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (Pub. L. No. 93-198), as amended by Section 302 of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-8), and clarified by section 142(a) of Public Law 104-194, approved September 9, 1996. I do not support the implementation of Dr. Janey's request.

Within the District, the current centralized OCFO reporting structure serves to ensure that an agency CFO can fulfill his or her fiduciary responsibilities to the District without being inappropriately influenced or intimidated by an agency director or by other political pressures. In addition to the leadership provided by the Mayor and the Council, this OCFO reporting model has been widely credited as one of the factors contributing to the financial successes the District has achieved. As you are aware, for the first time in the District's history, the District now enjoys an 'A' rating from all of the major rating agencies. The congressional creation of an independent District CFO has been cited as a factor in enhancing the District's credibility and viability within the financial market.

As you know, Congress has vested in the OCFO the responsibility for the fiscal integrity of the District and for ensuring that the District ends each year with a balanced budget. Executing this responsibility would be extraordinarily difficult if, as has been suggested, DCPS' finances (approximately 20% of the District's expenditures) were removed from the centralized control of the OCFO.

The OCFO is working to continue the historical financial turn-around taking place within the District and to ensure that every agency achieves its goals, including the DCPS. Despite the OCFO's centralized reporting structure, the OCFO has established a collaborative working relationship with all agency directors. For example, the OCFO actively includes agency directors in the hiring process for an agency CFO, seeks input from agency directors for evaluations of agency CFOs and that input is considered in the event that removal of an agency CFO becomes necessary. In DCPS' case, the current CFO at the DCPS was selected in coordination with the Superintendent of the DCPS. Further the Superintendent's feedback on the DCPS CFO and financial performance is frequently sought and is considered within the OCFO evaluation processes. Finally, the Superintendent's input is included during any consideration of the DCPS CFO retention or removal.

Mr. Chairman, as you noted in your opening remarks, despite the unprecedented financial turn-around of the District of Columbia, Dr. Janey and the DCPS still face many challenges including program management issues, poor infrastructure and declining enrollment. I agree with you that Dr. Janey's arrival provides an opportunity to begin anew for the DCPS and the OCFO will continue to support the successful implementation of Dr. Janey's plan – "Declaration of Education". However, I do not believe that weakening the OCFO's authority over the finances of the DCPS will facilitate the continued financial success of the District as a whole or the DCPS. Indeed, if I were to envision a time when I would support a reduction of financial oversight of the DCPS that time would not be now with so many challenges yet to be addressed.

Thank you once again for providing me an opportunity to submit my comments for the record and I would be happy to sit down with you to discuss this most important matter.

Regards,

Natwar M. Gandhi

cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
The Honorable Anthony A. Williams
The Honorable Linda W. Cropp
The Honorable Kathleen Patterson
Peggy Cooper Cafritz, Board of Education
Dr. Clifford Janey, Superintendent, DCPS
Gregory McCarthy, EOM

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May 23, 2005

Dr. Clifford B. Janey
Superintendent
District of Columbia Public Schools
825 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C., 20002

Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz
President
District of Columbia Board of Education
825 North Capitol St, NE, 9th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Dr. Janey and Ms. Cafritz:

Thank you for your recent testimony before the House Government Reform Committee on Friday, May 20, 2005. I was appreciative of the opportunity offered by Chairman Davis to participate in that hearing, but was unable to attend at the scheduled time. However, Chairman Davis has been kind enough to allow me to submit my statement and questions for your respective offices for the record. Enclosed please find a copy of my statement and questions. Both have been submitted for the record, and Chairman Davis has granted me permission to seek written responses from your offices to my submitted questions. I am advised by Chairman Davis' office that all written responses must be submitted to myself and the Government Reform Committee no later than the close of business on Monday, June 6, 2005, in order to be included in the hearing record.

I look forward to reading your responses as we all continue to work to improve the education of all children in the District of Columbia. Thank you in advance for your response to these important questions.

Sincerely,

John A. Boehner
Chairman
Committee on Education and the Workforce

cc: Chairman Tom Davis

Questions for Friday's Government Reform Hearing on D.C. Public Schools

1. As I discussed in my statement, I'd be interested in knowing whether the 65% solution might be something the D.C. schools could embrace and adopt. In the case of the District, it would mean less money going to bureaucracy, and more money for things like teacher salaries and classroom supplies. And if the answer is no – this is not something D.C. schools could adopt – then I'd be interested in hearing why.

2. I know many people in the District would like to know exactly how that additional $26 million is being spent. Can you tell me specifically what you are doing with this money, and how much of it is making it to the actual classrooms? [if they can't answer, ask them to respond in writing.]

3. According to the Archdiocese of Washington, DCPS has not provided equitable services to eligible private school students for three fiscal years (2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004). During those three fiscal years, the Archdiocese claims that more than $2 million in back funding remained unexpended by DCPS. There were also remaining funds from the 2000-2001 school year that had to be obligated before September 2004. Due to pressure from myself and the Department of Education, DCPS entered into an agreement to provide some Title I services to students at the Archdiocese schools using the 2000-2001 funds. However, it remains unclear to me how or when DCPS intends to get current in providing these services and spending these funds as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. Also, I am curious why DCPS is fighting the bypass through the Department of Education that would remove this responsibility from their shoulders.

QUESTION

As I discussed in my statement, I'd be interested in knowing whether the 65% solution might be something the DC school could embrace and adopt. In the case of the District, it would mean less money going to bureaucracy, and more money for things like teacher salaries and classroom supplies. And if the answer is no – this is not something DC schools could adopt then I'd be interested in hear why.

RESPONSE

I cannot support nor embrace the 65% solution until I learn more about the methodology and the impact it would have upon the local schools, our special education program, and the overall academic and operational reforms currently underway.

Based upon our research, we allocate almost 60% of our local budget on supporting students in the classroom; this percentage includes classroom supplies and teacher salaries. What worries me is that the definition of "classroom," taken from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), does not take into account expenditures for critical services such as librarians, counselors, nurses, attendance officers, and assessments, therapy and transportation for special education students. We have high costs in these areas because we have so many special education students.

The problem is that the school system spends its funds on much more than teacher salaries and bureaucracy. According to NCES, we spend only 2.7% on general administration and 3.0% on business services such as payroll, human services, and procurement. The rest covers principals, libraries, counseling, special education related services (e.g., speech therapy, OT/PT, social workers, psychologists), teacher training, curriculum, testing, facilities, utilities, security, transportation, and the free lunch program,

Further, when you factor in our unique role as both a State and Local Education Agency, we experience high expenditures in other categories. For example, 11% of our work force is engaged in transporting special education students to public, charter and private schools, under the direction of a court-appointed administrator. This translates into higher expenditure levels on the "non-instruction" category of "support," which is required as part of court orders and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

I do believe more classroom support is needed but not by sacrificing librarians and counselors and elements of the accountability system such as curriculum and standards, teacher training, testing and other measures needed to comply with No Child Left Behind. Moreover, it cannot come at the expense of disobeying mandated special education requirements and health/safety issues DCPS must face.

QUESTION

2. I know many people in the District would like to know exactly how that additional $26 million is being spent. Can you tell me specifically what you are doing with this money, and how much of it is making it to the actual classrooms? (If they can't answer, ask them to respond in writing).

RESPONSE

Attachment 1 provides greater detail on our intended use of funds appropriated via Congress for School Improvement. However, I commend your attention to this brief outline, which summarizes the goal of our plan:

- FY 2004 (Of $13M earmarked for School Improvement, $2.4 million was released by Congress in FY 2004 to purchase classroom libraries for grades K-12. All "libraries" were delivered in the fall of 2004).
- FY 2005 ($13M earmarked for three areas: Transformation Schools, $2M; High Performing Schools, $2M; Superintendent Discretion, $9M)
- FY 2005 ($6M earmarked for Elementary School Library facilities and reference material Enhancements)

I intend to use these resources specifically to accelerate the quality of teaching in preparation for the implementation of the new academic standards, curriculum, and aligned assessments. This will serve as the basis for a carefully structured framework for accountability.

It is important to point out that all the improvement programs outlined here focus directly on teaching and learning. Research clearly shows that for reform efforts to have a measurable impact, they must dramatically change what occurs in the classroom. The initiatives we outline here comprise a systematic framework to do just that. Implementing new standards, developing curriculum and school- and system-level assessments, training administrators and teachers, securing high quality curriculum materials, and providing the means to hold schools accountable for results — all are critical elements that must come together to achieve significant and sustainable improvements in teaching and learning.

Through the plan, all of these elements will be optimized as part of a coherent and mutually reinforcing whole. We will be able to provide all District of Columbia Public Schools students with the kind of high-quality classrooms they deserve:

- Classrooms where standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments are carefully aligned.
- Classrooms where every teacher clearly understands what is to be taught and assessed.
- Classrooms where all students learn.

In closing, to achieve long-term change in the District of Columbia Public Schools, all these efforts must be supported by effective teacher professional development. Traditional approaches have not been effective — we have ample proof that two or three days of training during the summer months will not dramatically improve classroom practices in September. To change the instructional program, teacher training must be embedded in everyday classroom practices.

The primary components that together comprise this broader view of accountability are detailed in attachment 1. This plan includes curriculum and instruction, assessments, accountability, professional development, learning resources, and prevention and early intervention.

QUESTION

3. According to the Archdiocese of Washington, DCPS has not provided equitable services to eligible private school students for three fiscal years (2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004). During those three fiscal years, the archdiocese claims that more than $2 million in back funding remained unexpended by DCPS. There were also remaining funds from the 2000-2001 school year that had to be obligated before September 2004. Due to pressure from the Department of Education, and myself, DCPS entered into an agreement to provide some Title I services to students at the Archdiocese schools using the 2000-2001 funds. However, it remains unclear to me how or when DCPS intends to get current providing these services and spending these funds as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. Also, I am curious why DCPS is fighting the bypass through the Department of Education that would remove this responsibility.

RESPONSE

Over the past year, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and Archdiocese have made tremendous progress in providing services to students and teachers expending ALL past and current entitlement funds. For the past two years, DCPS has made concerted efforts to ameliorate past inconsistencies in the delivery of equitable services to private school children, their teachers and their families. In order to make the gains envisioned, continuous collaboration has been required from officials of the non-public schools and DCPS. From June 2004 through December 2004, DCPS and the Archdiocese were convened by the Department of Education to discuss concerns of both entities and to clarify roles and responsibilities in the planning and consistent implementation of robust educational programs.

In response to your question as to why "DCPS is fighting the bypass through the Department of Education," DCPS embraces its responsibility to provide equitable services to private school children and their teachers. As you are aware, children in the District of Columbia are transient, often moving from public schools to private schools and vice versa. The education of all District of Columbia children is a duty taken seriously by the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Under the equitable services mandate of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, DCPS is required to provide instructional and support services to students, parents, teachers, and administrators to improve the academic achievement of students in non-public schools. We accomplish this through direct and computer assisted instruction, and purchase of supplemental educational materials for eligible students under Title I. Under the same title, we provide instructional materials, and facilitate training for parents, teachers and administrators. Under Title II, we provide professional development opportunities to all educational personnel inclusive of college courses, workshops, participation in local and national conferences and institutes, and through the purchase of professional material and professional memberships. Under Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students, we provide professional development for teachers and other educational personnel on various topics linked to improving services for English language learners. We also provide educational and assessment materials and facilitate intervention programs. Under Title IV Part A, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities, staff development, mediation training, truancy support, parent-centered support programs, publications, Peaceable Schools Summer Institutes and various resources are provided. Under Title V, Innovative Programs, we provide professional development, computer-assisted instruction, library materials, parent and

community involvement programs, computer hardware and software, mental health services and community service programs. In September 2003, we developed and disseminated a handbook for all private schools to help improve their understanding of the goods and services to which they are entitled. We also initiated in the spring of 2003, a Nonpublic Schools Advisory Committee (NAPSAC), to help principals become aware of services provided under the various federal grant programs and to give them an opportunity to express their concerns and problem-solve issues impacting services to their students.

School year **2003-2004** was a challenging year in moving forward, however progress was made which paved the way for smoother implementation for SY 04-05. A brief overview of some of the efforts are listed below:

a. The Archdiocese and the DCPS collaborated to implement a summer school program for the summer of 2003 to assist students in the Center City Consortium (CCC), which are twelve schools within the Archdiocese. The students were provided reinforcement in reading and math through these Title I summer school services.

b. Title I services were provided to the Archdiocese through an after school program which was designed by the CCC and agreed upon by DCPS. The after school program was one component of a comprehensive plan for CCC. (Teachers in the program were employed by the CCC during the day; they were employed by DCPS LEA to provide services for the after school program in the evening.)

c. A professional development plan was agreed upon in the comprehensive plan for CCC; however, the Archdiocese elected not to collaborate with DCPS on its implementation.

d. The services of the Non-Public Education Services, Inc. (NESI), a third party provider, were secured by LEA to provide after school and summer school services. These services were declined by the Archdiocese. NESI is a service provider used by the Department of Education in the bypass state of Virginia.

e. Although the Archdiocese declined spring and summer tutorial services from NESI, it requested student testing services to determine their students reading and math levels. Testing services, devoid a program, were not allowable under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

f. Summer school services were offered to the Archdiocese in 2004 for eligible students using the same plan that was implemented the previous summer. The Archdiocese declined the services. As advised by the Department of Education, DCPS requested the signatures of each principal who declined summer school services. DCPS did not receive the signatures.

g. DCPS consulted with the Archdiocese and offered computer assisted instruction over the summer for all its eligible students (inclusive of CCC). The Archdiocese declined the services.

h. After consultation, pull-out, computer assisted, and/or after school services were offered to the Archdiocese for the fall of 2004 for all eligible students. The Archdiocese agreed to the after school services and collaborative planning began in the summer of 2004.

We have moved forward more aggressively during this school year. Major efforts at providing services are listed below for school year **2004-2005**.

i. DCPS extended the George Washington University Meltzer Center contract that was initiated during the 2003-2004 school year. This initiative has provided research-based assessment, consultation, and intervention services for students at risk for school failure.

j. The Archdiocese expressed a need to provide its students with tutorial assistance after school. To accommodate the needs of the Archdiocese, DCPS arranged full presentations by Title I after school service providers for private school officials. These service providers were recommended by the Archdiocese for their ability to meet the needs of their students and teachers. Upon completion of the presentations, the Archdiocese recommended Kaplan K12 Learning Services and Failure Free Reading as the providers of their choice. DCPS took the necessary steps to put contracts in place and to ensure effective service delivery for School Year 2004-2005.

k. A contract was executed for the Christ Child Society School Counseling Program. A Parent Assistance Team program was implemented for eligible Title I students in partnership with the Christ Child Society. The school-counseling program employs social workers that intervene with students and families to decrease the risk of school failure by addressing their emotional, behavioral and social needs.

l. University partnerships were formed with Catholic University of America, Howard University and The American University. DCPS facilitated dialogues with private school officials and university representatives, proposals were submitted and approved, and professional development services tailored to the needs of Archdiocesan teachers and other education personnel are underway; some will be implemented this summer.

M DCPS conducted a citywide Federal Programs Forum for Private Schools including representatives from Archdiocesan schools at the Logan Professional Development Center. In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the LEA conducted consultations with private school officials including the Archdiocese, on the Migrant Education Program, Enhancing Education Through Technology, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Math Science Partnership, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities, and the Even Start Family Literacy Program.

n. Summer school planning is underway through an agreement among DCPS, private school officials and representatives from Kaplan K12 Learning Services and Failure Free Reading. The summer school program will be implemented for the Archdiocese from June 27 through July 22, 2005.

The Local Educational Agency is committed to providing the best educational services to all students and teachers in the District of Columbia.

Attachment 1

Aligning Standards, Curriculum and Assessments

In November 2004, District of Columbia Public Schools adopted Massachusetts' learning standards — considered by many experts to be among the best in the nation — in the critical subjects of English/language arts and mathematics. DCPS has revised the Massachusetts English/language arts and mathematics standards so that they are grade specific.

In addition, DCPS will develop or adopt new standards in science and social studies by September 2005.

Identifying the new standards is the beginning of a process to ensure the children of our city are competitive regionally and nationally. To complete the process, we must align the standards to our textbook selection, build a curriculum framework, provide professional development for our staff and prepare assessments based on the standards. As the district implements world-class standards for all students, benchmark assessments will be an effective accountability tool for schools. We also must educate parents and other community stakeholders on each set of standards by grade level and the assessments so that they may assist us in educating the children of the District of Columbia.

Finally, we must secure the resources and organizational support that will enable DCPS to provide all children with the opportunity to learn at their best.

ALLOCATION OF $29.6 MILLION TO BUILD CAPACITY FOR A DISTRICT WIDE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

1. Curriculum and Instruction

Ongoing Standards Adoption, Curriculum Development and Mapping: $0.3M

Mirroring the standards adoption process used with English/language arts and mathematics, DCPS will contract with a standards and curriculum development organization to manage and develop grade-by-grade standards in science, social studies, and four electives. This process will incorporate the best standards from around the country. It will include engaging teachers and principals in providing feedback on the standards and involving key community stakeholders. At the same time, English/ language arts and mathematics curricula will be developed and linked to textbook adoption. Curriculum development includes the development of an electronic solution for delivering lesson plans and instructional strategies to teachers.

Development of science and social studies standards will occur simultaneously, with final documents expected to be ready for Board approval by June 2005. Development of the four electives (art/music, physical education, health, and world languages) will begin in June 2005.

After the standards are adopted, we will work with a leading standards content developer to implement them uniformly and successfully throughout the DC public school system. This multi-step process begins in spring 2005 and includes:

- Developing a curriculum based on the standards for each subject, to identify what all students need learn in order to meet the standards.

- Developing curriculum frameworks for the standards, identifying specific areas for instruction.

- Creating curriculum maps, which are timelines for the scope and sequence of instruction in a given subject area. The maps make it possible to maintain content consistency across the district, avoid repetition, identify gaps, identify potential areas of integration, communicate expectations to students and parents and ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop necessary knowledge and skills. Curriculum mapping also helps identify students who need additional assistance to meet the standards so they can receive appropriate supports.

DCPS is developing curriculum maps in English/language arts and mathematics, based on our new academic standards and the accountability guidelines in the No Child Left Behind act; we will complete maps for science and social studies in summer 2005. Curriculum is mapped by quarters so that every teacher, administrator, and parent knows with precision what is to be taught and when.

Building Ownership for the Standards Among Teachers and Principals: $0.1M

Strong and informed support from principals and teachers is essential as DCPS implements new learning standards for SY 2005–06 and beyond. As instructional leaders, principals literally play a pivotal role — conveying the vision and goals for the standards to teachers, students, parents and others. Ideally, principals also convey helpful feedback back to the central office. Teachers, of course, are the people who need to make the standards work in the classroom. How well teachers use the standards and what they communicate about them to students, parents and other teachers will strongly influence the success of the implementation.

Building support within these two groups calls for a systematic strategy based on empowering principals and teachers to take ownership of the standards and use them successfully. Over six months, June through December 2005, we will work with an experienced provider to develop internal communications messages and mechanisms to address issues of importance to principals and teachers, such as questions about the new standards and what makes them different and better, confusion about the implementation process and timetable, concerns about instructional flexibility and expectations for professional development.

We will address these issues with candid and reliable two-way communications using appropriate communications tools, including:

- Eight focus groups, (four of teachers and four of principals) to determine what principals and teachers need to learn about standards and what sources of information are most useful for this purpose.

- Online survey of all principals and 7–10 percent of teachers to obtain a wider diversity of data.

- A series of coordinated communications through DCPS internal mechanisms, including a meeting (or virtual meeting) with Superintendent Clifford B. Janey, live Internet chats with key members of the Accountability and Academic Teams, a dedicated section of the DCPS Web site for news, information and discussion about the standards, and a dedicated column in the DCPS newsletter.

- Spokesperson training for key teachers and principals to help them communicate with their colleagues about the standards.

- Information sheets/brochures to disseminate timely and reliable information about the standards, the implementation process and related issues.

This work will complement the teacher and principal professional development for working with the standards that is addressed in the professional development section of this discussion.

Helping Teachers, Parents and the Community Use the Standards: $.6M

For the new learning standards to raise student achievement, teachers must be comfortable with their content and know how to use them in their classrooms.

In the same way, parents need to have a clear understanding of the content of the standards and the implementation process so they can become effective advocates — not only for their own children's learning, but also for the performance of schools throughout the system. In the same way, district government, businesses and community agencies must come together to support these new expectations for our schools and our children.

To ensure that all of these key people have what they need to use the standards effectively, we will provide them with informational materials and communications initiatives targeted to specific purposes:

- Teacher Guides will present the complete set of standards for each subject grade-by-grade, so that teachers easily can see what their students should know and be able to do, from one year to the next.

- Parent Guides will provide families with examples of the standards and test questions for each subject at different grade levels, plus guidance on how they can support their children's learning. Parent Guides and other information will be available in six languages used by DCPS students and families.

- Public service announcements and an allied general media campaign will inform parents and others about the changes being made and how families can help their children succeed in school.

- Meetings with the editorial boards of the city's newspapers, including the *Washington Post*, *Times*, *Informer*, and *Hispanic*, will update the press on the standards and what they mean to the city's schools.

- Community meetings and grassroots information campaigns will let us talk face to face with the people who can and will make a difference.

In coming months, we also will build on existing community relationships, such as DC Education Compact, the DC Parent Initiative, and the grassroots organizations trained in No Child Left Behind and school accountability through the federally-funded Parent Power Works Project, to build strong support for the standards among these vital constituencies.

Communicating With Multi-Lingual Communities ***$.2M***

Effective communications must include reaching out to the District of Columbia's large and growing population of students and families who speak Spanish and other languages as their first languages. We will include a number of multi-lingual strategies to ensure that we supporting all of these diverse local communities.

Parents as Partners Workshops ***$.1M***

Parents as Partners is an initiative to empower immigrant Latino parents to support their children's learning. Researched and endorsed by Stanford University and adapted by National Council of La Raza, the series of nine workshops provides parents with knowledge and skills to increase their school collaboration and involvement, promote academic performance, understand their responsibilities and rights under NCLB, and interpret student and school data.

During 2004-2005, four secondary-level schools with DCPS Newcomer Literacy Programs hosted Parents as Partners workshops. Although almost 70 percent of parents said they had never attended any school and only two had completed high school, as a result of the workshops all now know how to have a conference with their child's teacher or counselor, 85 percent say they know what their child

needs to do to graduate from high school, and 69 percent encourage their child to read 3-5 times per week.

The four schools that would offer the Parents as Partners workshops – Bruce Monroe, Tubman, Powell and Roosevelt – are not meeting AYP benchmarks for reading and math and have more than 150 students who are Spanish speakers and English Language Learners. The workshop series also would be offered at four schools with Newcomer Literacy Programs: Bell, Cardozo, Lincoln and MacFarland. The $130,000 cost of implementing the workshop series at these eight schools includes $15,000 per school for coordination, staff, childcare, supplies, food, and stipends to participants, plus $10,000 to train the trainers.

Textbooks that Support the Standards, Differentiated Instruction, and Learning Needs of All Students: $4.3M

To bring about lasting improvement in student achievement, standards must be fully aligned with instruction, including textbooks, other classroom resources, and professional development for teachers and principals.

This spring, we will select textbooks that support instruction to achieve our first set of standards, English/language arts and mathematics. The textbooks will guide instruction in what students need to know and be able to do to meet expectations at every grade level for both subjects.

As part of our district wide reform, we have designed a new procurement process for textbooks that is driven by the standards themselves and that incorporates recommendations from teachers, principals and other stakeholders.

To successfully implement a job-embedded staff development model, teachers will need to utilize leveled books. Leveled books are the key component in a guided reading program. These books will be written in accordance with standardized criteria for each level, and then quality checked with custom software. The books are graduated, meaning they get increasingly difficult with each succeeding level.

Textbooks that Support Standards, Differentiated Instruction & Learning

Classroom Libraries for Special Education Schools and Centers Phase II: $0.3M

For students to meet academic standards — and develop a love of learning — they must have access to a rich selection of reading and resource materials. Based on recommendations from the Council of the Great City Schools as well as current educational research, we plan to provide a library of books and online reference materials to classrooms in all Division VI special education schools and centers. Grades K through 8 would receive classroom libraries with more than

300 titles that support literacy and language arts as well as content areas of mathematics, science and social studies. Grades 6 through 12 would receive classroom reference collections. All grades would have access to the online reference suite with 115,000 entries.

Both the books and the online resource are aligned with DCPS standards and have multicultural content that reflects the diversity of the district's student population.

Our proposal includes comprehensive and sustained professional development for principals, new and veteran teachers, and library and media specialists. The plan also includes literacy awareness workshops for parents, and a home literacy support guide. Earlier in the SY 2004–05 general education classrooms received funding for classroom libraries. Therefore, the classroom libraries for special education are considered Phase II of the original funding.

2. Assessments

Benchmark Assessments: $1.8M

English/language arts and mathematics assessments based on the Massachusetts standards will be implemented in spring 2006. As required by the No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), DCPS also will implement science assessments by spring 2007.

At the same time, it is critical for DCPS to implement periodic benchmark testing to monitor student progress of students throughout the school year, identify students who need support so that help can be provided, and help tailor training for teachers and principals to meet students' needs. Benchmark assessments will include diagnostic reading and mathematics tests, as well as course-based assessments. Diagnostic tests will include screening tools for students entering the system and developmentally appropriate assessments for young children, providing real time feedback as student's progress through the curriculum. The assessments will provide prescriptive information to form the basis of individual student educational plans. Benchmark assessments also will include quarterly, semester, and end-of-course tests. Initially, we will develop tests for Algebra, Geometry, English 9, Biology, Physics, American History, and World History.

In schools that have the required technical infrastructure, assessments will be online. For other schools, the assessments will utilize local scanners and paper-and-pencil tests.

As the district implements world-class standards for all students, these benchmark assessments will be an effective accountability tool for schools. Combined with a planned curriculum management system (see Data Systems) the benchmark assessments also will be a powerful management tool for

principals and central office administrators, who will be able to compare classroom performance, performance across schools, and performance across years.

3. Accountability

Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act, all children have the opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments. Schools that receive federal funds are required to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as defined by their State Educational Agency. In 2003–2004, 68 schools met the AYP target in reading and 82 schools met AYP in mathematics; 63 schools met both the reading and mathematics AYP criteria; and 92 schools did not make AYP in either reading or mathematics. Overall, the number of schools classified as In Need of Improvement increased from 15 in 2003 to 71 in 2004 based on this criterion.

Since 2001, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has embraced a transformation model as a strategy for changing low-performing schools to high-performing schools. Under that model, 17 schools were identified as Transformation Schools and made eligible for targeted assistance in the areas of academic support, staffing, facility upgrades, and security needs.

In FY 2006, we will replace the Transformation model with an Effective Schools Initiative that is more closely aligned with NCLB standards. Under this plan, schools will be eligible for five categories of incentives or interventions:

Incentives: Schools that achieve AYP on all academic or non-academic indicators for all subgroups will receive recognition or tangible rewards. Currently 61 schools are in this category, with the large majority being elementary schools. Of the 61 incentive schools, 22 are high performing (schools that achieved adequate yearly progress under NCLB and 70% scored at or above proficient). Some of the funds identified for these schools will be dedicated to demonstration models that enable high performing schools to use their assets to improve low-performing schools. For example, funds might be used for substitute teachers so that master teachers can provide classroom-based or job embedded assistance to new teachers and/or teachers with less well developed skills.

Intervention: The intervention model has four levels that reflect the level of intervention required by the school (and the school's NCLB status). The four intervention levels are: Targeted Assistance, Needs Improvement, Corrective Action, and Restructuring. The latter three levels reflect the year 2–4 intervention levels specified under NCLB.

Beginning in 2006, we will replace the transformation model and reach more schools with additional support and resources. The research-based approach, which is based on the successful Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) model being used in Massachusetts, aligns more closely with federal standards in NCLB and increases the number of categories of incentives and intervention.

- Schools that achieve AYP on all academic or non-academic indicators will receive recognition or monetary rewards. Some of the dollars directed to these schools would fund strategies that enable these high-performing schools to assist lower-performing schools to improve their practices and outcomes.
- Schools that do not achieve AYP for one or more years will receive interventions designed to help them improve their performance. Schools would be eligible for one of four levels of intervention, based on the number of years the school has not achieved AYP, which, in turn reflects that school's status under NCLB.

Instead of trying to raise student achievement by buying a new program, textbook or computer software, this model provides principals and teachers with tools to make more systemic changes. Understanding standards, tests and curriculum and being able to use data are critical skills in improving schools. Schools that need help will be served by on-site solutions teams: distinguished educators, who will coach principals; teacher specialists, who will coach teachers in each content area; and curriculum specialists, who will work with all school staff. Where necessary, we will contract with outside educational management organizations to help turn around our lowest-performing schools.

Effective Schools Initiative: Incentive Schools

High Performing Incentive Award: $2.0M

For the current school year, 22 schools will receive high performing incentive awards. Twenty schools have achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in all academic and non-academic indicators and achieved adequate yearly progress under NCLB and 70% scored at or above proficient. The remaining two schools are high performing schools, 70% scored at or above proficient. However, these schools did not achieve adequate yearly progress for one subgroup, a large population of students with special needs.

Traditionally, budget constraints have made it necessary for us to focus on intervening with schools that are not meeting expectations rather than rewarding those that surpass their goals or improve significantly. The new $2 million incentive fund will let us provide this positive reinforcement, which will encourage

high performing schools to make their good practices even better and to model excellence for schools throughout the system.

To qualify for incentives, programs at high-performing schools must support the new standards, be built on research-driven methods, incorporate high quality professional development and technology support for standards, be driven by data, and build capacity within the school and across the system. Schools also must achieve at least 70 percent proficiency based on AYP standards and meet AYP standards for attendance and graduation. In DCPS there are 22 high performing schools and 4 significantly improved schools.

Funds for High Performing School Incentive Awards will be allocated as follows:

- **60 percent** of the available funds will be awarded to high performing schools as unrestricted grants that give the schools maximum flexibility to support and maintain best practices. Funds will be used in ways that reflect and support the unique character of each school, including parent and community involvement initiatives, before- and after-school programs, and specialized equipment and programs.

- **30 percent** of the funds will be used to create Demonstration Models at the high performing schools and significantly improved schools, modeling a best practice at each school that would become a resource to assist low performing schools. These funds would cover some of the costs of developing and sharing the model, including release time to master teachers to model and observe and/or release time to low performing schools to observe and practice; classroom supplies, specialized programmatic needs; employee training; and specialized equipment and technology.

- **10 percent** of the funds will be used for developing and maintaining high performing teachers by supporting professional growth. Supported programs will include creating cohorts for advanced degrees; cohorts for national board certification; and licensure incentives for teachers, assistant principals, and principals; and performance incentives to encourage and support professional learning communities through rewards for team building initiatives and innovative teamwork.

Dollar amounts of the incentive awards will be calculated using an attendance-based formula (see chart below).

Recognitions for Other Incentive Schools Award: $.5 million

The funds will be used to create Demonstration Models at the other incentive schools and significantly improved schools, modeling a best practice at each school that would become a resource to assist low performing schools. These funds would cover some of the costs of developing and sharing the model, including release time to master teachers to model and observe and/or release time to low performing schools to observe and practice; classroom supplies, specialized programmatic needs; employee training; and specialized equipment and technology.

In addition, these funds will be used for developing and maintaining high performing teachers by supporting professional growth. Supported programs will include creating cohorts for advanced degrees; cohorts for national board certification; and licensure incentives for teachers, assistant principals, and principals; and performance incentives to encourage and support professional learning communities through rewards for team building initiatives and innovative teamwork.

Effective Schools Initiative: Intervention Schools

Interventions to Assist Low-Performing Schools: $1.5M

In contrast to common short-term remedies for unsatisfactory achievement, Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) is an intensive, data-driven, results-oriented school-planning model. Developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the PIM process assists low-performing schools in raising student performance in English, language arts, and mathematics, by helping school leaders:

- Set goals to align with state and federal expectations for adequate yearly progress and improved student performance
- Analyze student assessment data to determine student strengths and weaknesses
- Identify the specific skills that students lack
- Analyze the root causes of low student performance
- Appraise current practices to determine what is and is not working
- Select new research-based strategies

- Evaluate implementation and outcomes

PIM is designed for use by school leadership teams who are rigorously trained in the model. The primary focus of the PIM model is on students' individual strengths and weaknesses rather than new programs or initiatives.

Within the PIM model, four levels of implementation are available, depending on the number of years the school has not reached AYP targets as defined by No Child Left Behind. The four levels and the associated costs are outlined below.

Targeted Assistance: Schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the first time are classified as "targeted assistance" schools and are eligible to receive additional support from the central office. Currently, 21 are schools in this category, although this number could change because NCLB targets will be raised every two years until 2014, when all schools must achieve 100 percent proficiency in reading and mathematics.

In addition, schools that need assistance providing services to specific student populations such as English Language Learners or students with disabilities will receive targeted assistance.

Consistent with the PIM model, leadership support teams will review the school's curriculum, instruction, assessment, programs and services and prescribe intervention strategies specific to the needs of the school. In addition, schools will be required to report on their progress. School leadership teams will learn how to strengthen their curriculum as the primary tool for addressing students' academic needs.

In Need of Improvement: Schools failing to meet AYP in academic or non-academic indicators in any subgroup for two consecutive years will receive substantial, effective, school-based interventions. Currently, 51 elementary, middle, junior high school, and high schools are in this category.

In addition, this group of schools may need assistance with providing services to specific student populations such as English Language Learners.

Schools in need of improvement will receive intensive training in the PIM process from on-site coaches and external audit teams. Teachers in these schools will receive job-embedded training that emphasizes the use of data to analyze students' academic needs and prescribe specific, curriculum-based strategies for each child. These strategies will be based

on detailed, curriculum guides aligned to the new DC standards and assessments.

Support teams will regularly audit schools in need of improvement to ensure that each receives targeted assistance and intervention strategies specific to its needs. All school staff will receive extensive training in curriculum mapping as the primary tool to identifying and addressing individual students' academic needs.

Corrective Action: Any school that fails to meet AYP targets in academic or non-academic indicators in any subgroup for three consecutive years will be subject to any of the following: decreased management authority, appointment of an outside advisor, extended school days or year, restructured internal organization and/or replacement of relevant staff. Currently eight DCPS schools are in this category.

Schools in corrective action will receive all the resources and training available to schools "in need of improvement" but they may receive additional coaches and training based on the recommendations of an external support team. Changes in staffing and leadership would be considered if the team concludes that the school leadership is unable to implement the PIM process.

Restructuring: Any school that does not meet AYP targets in academic or non-academic indicators in any subgroup for four or more consecutive years will be subject to any of the following: replacement of relevant staff, outsourcing of operations and leadership to successful management organizations such as the KIPP Academy, state management, and/or other alternate governance structures. Schools in this category were previously classified as "transformation schools." Currently eight schools are in this category.

These schools will receive all the resources and training available to schools in need of "corrective action" but may receive additional coaches and training based on the recommendations of an external support team. Changes in staffing and leadership will be considered if the team concludes that the school leadership is unable to implement the PIM process.

Solution Teams for Academic Support

Enabling schools and the district to work effectively requires thinking differently about building capacity. Being able to achieve performance targets at one moment in time, while meeting compliance requirements, is not the same as making sustained progress over time.

Critical to building capacity is knowing schools have the people, mechanisms, state and local support as well as a progressive accountability plan that monitors current data and aligns itself in response. Knowledgeable and experienced leadership combined with job embedded instructional support comprise the foundation for student achievement.

Each school identified, as academically unacceptable/low performing according to NCLB will be assigned a Solution Team. All Solution Teams will be trained in the Accountability System, Comprehensive School Improvement Planning, State Needs Assessment, and Coordination of Federal Entitlement Funds. Team members will assist schools with needs assessments, writing or revising school improvement plans and submitting to the state a completed quarterly implementation report.

The teams will be staffed as follows:

- Distinguished Educators on site, who coach the principal on leadership issues and ensure implementation of corrective action plan for improvement
- Teacher Specialist on site, who focuses on one content area — English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies — and coaches teachers about the content, the pedagogy and best practices
- Curriculum Specialist on site, who works with the whole school on curriculum issues

Electronic Report Card System: $0.2M

As we implement the new standards, curriculum and assessments, DCPS will revise and align all early childhood, elementary school, and secondary school student report cards. These automated report cards will provide valuable tools for communicating clear standards and expectations for each child. This tool will be an integrated component of the curriculum management system and the student information system.

Classroom and Instructional Management System: $0.7M

DCPS will adopt a content-neutral curriculum and instructional management system that provides modules for:

- student data management and reporting,
- curriculum and instructional management,
- benchmark test administration,
- instructional communication and collaboration tool, and
- on-line assignment and remediation delivery

Software will allow users to manage district, school, and classroom web sites; track administrative data including demographics, test scores, and attendance data (longitudinal); and align curriculum, track standards mastery, track instructional coverage, and establish an instructional planning system for teachers.

Cost of the system generally is estimated on a per/student basic. Our projection will be on a per/module basis, starting with a focused group and specific modules, for a ballpark cost of $2.50 – $5 per student, per module. Final cost of the system would be based on the results of a full REF process and negotiation.

4. Professional Development

Teacher and Administrator Training to Align Instruction and Assessments with Standards: $4.4M

Successfully implementing DCPS' new standards and curriculum depends on effective professional development for teachers. We will work with our standards content consultants in an ongoing process to help teachers develop the knowledge, skills and tools they need to take ownership of the standards and curriculum by:

- Making connections between the new standards and the new textbooks — identifying where each standard is covered in the textbook, instances where a standard is not covered and how to identify other resources.

- Marking connections between the new standards and the new assessments based on the standards, so that teachers have a concrete understanding of what skills and knowledge students will need to demonstrate as well as a set of tools to help students prepare for the tests.

We also will introduce teachers to the new assessments, including released test items, which we will show teachers how to use in their instruction. We anticipate this will give teachers an understanding of what students will need to demonstrate on the new assessments; give teachers some sample problems and questions to use in their classrooms; help guide assessment developers in what teachers believe are fair and vital questions; and build support for the assessment.

Research consistently demonstrates that high-quality, job-embedded professional development for teachers and principals — taking place during the school day with teachers and principals in the classroom — is an essential component of effective school change. This educational improvement plan calls for immediate and long-term support through a coaching model. The structure is site-based and is highly structured. School administration, the leadership team and district administrators focus on their understandings about teaching reading and writing for reflection and improving practice.

We anticipate that this professional development also will help teachers and instructional leaders become more confident in using the standards and assessments, which will, in turn, help them become more effective advocates for their use as we scale up this effort throughout the system.

Comprehensive Professional Development in Reading: $2.8M

Reading is the foundational skill that drives achievement in all other subjects. Research tells us that, to learn at their best, children should be able to read at grade level by third grade. Yet, too many DCPS students still struggle to read at grade level or below as late as high school. As a result, their achievement suffers in all content areas.

To help reverse this spiral and to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn to our new standards, DCPS intends to provide comprehensive professional development in reading across the curriculum to all teachers. Secondary school teachers will be the first set of teachers to participate. Elementary teachers will receive training to implement the reading textbooks. Training will align with the specifications of Reading First and with the new DCPS standards.

Training will be administered by reading specialists as well as content specialists, including university professors, in the areas of science, math, social studies, English, and world languages. The specialists will develop professional training modules related to the five content areas; they also will identify resource literature and materials for professional reading resource centers in each school.

Direct training, co-facilitated by content and reading specialists and coaches, will take place in the classroom setting where a coach demonstrates high-quality instruction. The teacher will model the strategy and receive immediate feedback from the coach. This interactive and reflective approach supports the job-embedded staff development model with the goal of being responsive to the individual needs of the child.

To support improving reading skills of all students in all content areas, teachers will learn to implement guided reading strategies (See Page 5–6; Textbooks, Leveled Books). Using small-group instruction and developmentally appropriate, leveled books and materials, teachers will reach a wide range of reading ability that exists within any grade level or age group. A child is placed in a small group with other children of similar ability and given a developmentally appropriate book to read. The teacher monitors and guides the reading of each child as needed.

University instructors in core disciplines will provide direct instruction to teachers and will monitor and support teachers in the implementation of the skills and concepts into the classroom. DCPS teachers can receive graduate credit for their work with the college instructors.

DCPS anticipates a pilot program at one vertical cluster of schools will begin in October 2005, with full implementation starting the week of January 3, 2006.

Professional Development Institute for Principals: $1.0 million

Leadership is one of the most significant factors in the academic success of a school. Principals who are effective instructional leaders bring about schools where teachers are held accountable, support staff are valued, children acknowledge their worth and achievement soars. Unfortunately, while teachers are often involved with instructional concerns, principals rarely engage in professional development activities devoted exclusively to instructional issues.

The Principal Leadership Institute will provide principals with the necessary tools needed to lead schools in a time of standards-driven reform and to offer them time to focus on the academic health of their schools.

The focus of the program is understanding how academic content relates to its relevant academic standards and how that is reflected in classroom instruction — teachers and administrators are often confused as to how standards actually affect teaching. Initially, the principals engage in a workshop, conducted by content specialists, which examines a particular aspect of a content discipline and its corresponding standard, using actual student work. Finally, the workshop addresses the fundamental components of good assessment. During the following school year, the principals meet at regular intervals to develop a strategy for supporting and guiding their teachers in strong academic instruction.

The Institute has a unique position among professional development programs: it may be the only program for principals that makes academic content the central focus of the training. It is not that principals need to learn specific academic content; it is that they need to engage in ongoing conversation about the importance of academic achievement, about understanding standards, about pedagogical strategies, and student comprehension.

Effective professional development recognizes that change occurs in definable stages and that significant time must be allowed before the outcomes of a professional development program can be determined. A variety of professional development activities will meet individual needs better than a "one-size-fits-all" approach, particularly when these activities are based on teacher self-evaluations of what is needed to improve their students' performance. Finally, professional development programs should follow initial concentrated work with continued consultation and classes.

Successful implementation of our new standards depends greatly on the instructional leadership of DCPS principals. We have identified six critical areas where principals should excel:

- Collaboration, including communications, group dynamics, coaching, parent/community relations and diversity/cultural issues
- Effective instruction, including curriculum, assessment, technology and diversity
- Leadership, including vision, change management, monitoring/evaluation, facilitation and celebration
- Operations and management, including human resources, fiscal planning, facilities, and safety and security
- Professional development, including planning, continuous improvement and collegiality
- Strategic planning, including data analysis, school improvement processes and local school improvement plans

DCPS' Principal Training Institute will provide comprehensive professional development to newly promoted principals and experienced principals who are new to the district. Instruction will be provided in full- and half-day sessions in critical knowledge areas, including Safety and Security, Intervention Services, Research for Better Teaching, Collective Bargaining, Human Resource Issues, Shared Decision Making, Conducting Learning Walkthroughs of school and evaluating the workshop model. . Two -weeklong institutes: "Skillful Teachers",

and "Skillful Administrator" will be provided. Principals will learn to create a shared vision and shared mission for their schools.

Professional Development Institute for Principals

5. Learning Resources

Library Media Centers: $12.0M

School library media centers are an important component of learning, providing instruction, resources, and services to help students and teachers become critical thinkers and enthusiastic lifelong learners. As our new standards are introduced throughout the DCPS system, we will need to ensure that students have access to the books and other learning materials that align with the new standards and extend inquiry for students at multiple levels of achievement and with diverse learning needs and styles. Currently, the availability and quality of these centers varies widely across the district: some schools have relatively well-supplied facilities while others have few resources.

Using appropriated funds from our Proposed FY06 Transitional Capital Improvement Plan meets the conditions of the $6 million in Federal Payment funds earmarked for Elementary School Library Enhancements.

An additional $1.3 million in private funding from Toyota will enable DCPS to expand its Classroom Library program even further, allowing DCPS to acquire books and other materials for centers in 38 DCPS elementary schools and 4 public charter schools in Southeast Washington, DC. The books and materials in the centers will support the new standards and curriculum and that address diverse learning needs.

6. Prevention and Early Intervention

Teacher Assistance Teams: $1.5M

Each year, thousands of students are inappropriately referred for special education services. This not only can be harmful to the students' self esteem, it also costs the district millions of dollars in evaluations and attorneys' fees. A renewed emphasis and system wide mandate for early intervention in the context of general education, including academic and behavioral supports and other services for struggling students, will enable DCPS to meet the needs of more learners, improve student achievement, and reduce the number of inappropriate special education referrals.

Teacher Assistance Teams (TATs) are committees of general educators, teachers, counselors and other school personnel who work collaboratively to meet the needs of students who are struggling academically or behaviorally. The TAT identifies interventions and supports available within the general education system, including additional instruction; behavior-based interventions, such as peer mediation, contracts or counseling; and student support services, such as school based mental health care. TATs have been shown to reduce referrals to special education, improve academic achievement and support improved student behavior. TATs also provide support for teachers, who acquire a deeper knowledge of interventions and strategies that encourage student academic achievement and behavioral progress.

Components of an effective Teacher Assistance Team program include the following:

- Teacher Assistance Team Intervention Manual, for all DCPS public and charter school staff
- Academic and Behavioral Early Intervention Training, 1 week of full-day sessions, 5–7 people per school
- Training and maintaining a cohort of approved trainers to provide in-school professional development in TAT
- Pre-Referral Intervention Manual (PRIM) that provides a "suitcase" of instructional and behavioral strategies that DCPS service providers can access
- Additional staff person in every school to provide positive behavioral interventions and supports
- "Every Child a Reader" online or telephone training and support for teachers in scientifically based reading instruction

Pre-Kindergarten Incentive Program: $2.3M

Decades of research have produced overwhelming evidence that preschool is a smart public investment. Children who attend high-quality, pre-kindergarten classrooms programs that prepare them to read and build cognitive, verbal, and social skills go on to do measurably better in school and in life. They score higher on academic achievement tests; they get better jobs; and they are less likely to become dependent on welfare or engage in criminal activity. Estimates of the return on investment in high-quality programs suggest a return of twelve dollars for every dollar spent.

Through the Preschool Incentive Program, DCPS will be able to provide comprehensive, systematic, age-appropriate standards-based early care and education to ensure that a minimum of 375 children in 24 community-based pre-kindergarten classrooms experience the same quality intellectual and social development experiences provided to pre-kindergarten children in public school settings.

The program also will incorporate measures for program accountability; improved teacher quality through on-going training, professional development, supervision, and college degree attainment; and evaluation of interventions to mediate risk factors including developmental delays, socio-economic background, home language, and mother's educational attainment.