



Coalition for DC Public Schools and Communities
<http://www.c4dcpublicschools.org/>

Mayor Muriel Bowser
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington DC, 20004

August 11, 2016

Dear Mayor Bowser,

DCPS's new chancellor will deeply affect the lives of thousands of DC citizens and have a profound influence on the survival and robust growth of our municipal DC public school infrastructure. The public education advocacy groups meeting in each ward have developed criteria we believe are most appropriate for the chancellor selection. These requirements are consistent with the aspirations of other school districts around the country and should represent a minimum threshold for any candidate.

It is a difficult job with a strong mandate to improve educational outcomes for all DCPS students and to close DC's persistent achievement gap. We want an experienced and well qualified person with the talent and commitment to work with their government and citizen partners for many years. With DCPS's interim team providing continuity, we believe the Mayor and Council should insist on a thorough search until the right candidate is identified. There is no reason to rush to an announcement in October of 2016 as stated in the Chancellor Search FAQ's.

We have identified the following qualities as most important for our new chancellor:

1. Experience as a professional educator and administrator

- Experience at different leadership levels within a school system, preferably as a superintendent in a comparably-sized urban and racially diverse school system with a majority minority enrollment, robust populations of low income at risk students, English language learners and special education students.
- Demonstrated ability in partnering with the public in long range education planning and then thoughtful implementation.
- Extended experience as a teacher with a strong instructional background
- A Master's degree in school leadership, education or a related field is required. A doctoral degree in education research or a related field is preferred.

2. Tenacity in advocating for current and future DCPS families

- A record of strong support for a system of publicly managed neighborhood, by-right, schools; someone who understands their importance in supporting strong families and building vital communities in every ward of our city.
- A commitment to invest in DCPS public schools rather than closing them given the high number of DCPS schools already closed, especially in wards east of the river where a changing DCPS no longer has adequate space to serve those families in quality schools close to home.
- A long term personal commitment to the DCPS system of schools, and to articulating and carrying out a vision with consistent and research based programming.

- Someone who will advocate for the necessary resources both from the city and the business and philanthropic communities to ensure that all DCPS schools are fully funded to meet the needs of their students and all DCPS students are educated in well-maintained, modernized 21st Century buildings.

3. Commitment to healthy and productive relationships with principals, teachers, communities, parents and students

- A track record of support for principals, teachers and all employees, with the ability to maintain productive relationships with the relevant unions in the school system.
- The ability to engage with the public and a demonstrated commitment to authentic partnerships with communities, administrators, teachers, parents and students to strengthen our schools.
- Someone who sees himself/herself as a public servant with integrity, who will reflect on and evaluate their work on an ongoing basis and who will see transparency as a sign of strength and a path to progress.

4. Management skills encompassing core school business functions

- Our new chancellor should have demonstrated experience in managing an administrative team that focuses on all functional aspects of a large school system, including annual and long term budgeting, personnel management, contracting and procurement, food services, facility maintenance and modernization.

5. Demonstrated support for a well-rounded education for every student:

- This includes knowledge of effective, positive intervention programs instead of harsh punishments that discourage young people from attending school. It means rich exposure to the arts, sciences, sports, language instruction and career and technical education as well as before and after-school programming.
- This will require a commitment to additional accountability measures beyond test scores and graduation rates.

Sincerely,

Ward 1 Education Collaborative
 Ward 2 Education Network
 Ward 3/Wilson Feeder Education Network
 Ward 4 Education Alliance
 Ward Five Council on Education
 Capitol Hill Public Schools Parent Organization
 Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators

Ward 7 Education Council
 Ward 8 Education Council
 Education Town Hall
 Teaching for Change
 21st Century School Fund
 DC Fiscal Policy Institute
 Washington Teachers Union
 Washington Lawyers Committee

Cc:

Deputy Mayor for Education Jennifer Niles
 DC City Council Chairman Phil Mendelson
 DC Education Chairman David Grosso

Members of the Council Education Committee
 DC Rising Leadership Committee