



**Testimony for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Performance Oversight Hearing
Wednesday, February 26th 2020**

To: DC Council Committee on Education, Committee on Education Chairman David Grosso, Committee on Education Members, and Committee on Education Staff

From: Kerry Savage, Director of Policy at PAVE

Date: February 26, 2020

Chairman Mendelson, Councilmember Grosso, members of the Committee on Education, and staff, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kerry Savage and I am the Director of Policy at PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education). PAVE was founded in April 2016 with an all-parent governing board in order to connect, inform, and empower parent leaders to give families in DC a voice and a choice in the vision for education in our city.

At PAVE's first Parent Policy Summit in May of 2017, parents from all wards and communities came together to talk about the issues that mattered most to them and share their experiences with the education system. After hearing from each other, parents selected Great Schools in Every Ward and One Citywide Report Card as one of the two most important issues to take on in the coming year. Parents wanted access to accurate, up-to-date, and comparable information about all public schools in DC, and OSSE worked collaboratively with PAVE and other community stakeholders to ensure that parent and community voice was included in the new School Report Card development process in order to meet that goal.

OSSE's team engaged parents and community members through both in-person feedback sessions and broad canvassing efforts, totaling 4,000 pieces of feedback from families across the District. This work was supported by the State Board of Education's ESSA Task Force, including PAVE's Executive Director and a Ward 7 parent leader, Yolanda Corbett, who touted OSSE for their transparent communication and responsiveness throughout the process. By and large, this level of community engagement was unprecedented compared to other states developing a new report card.

OSSE has continued to reach out to the community for their input to refine the school report card, as evidenced by the improved visuals (a major priority parents raised in feedback sessions), more accessible language to explain the data points, and the additional information now available this year, including discussion guides for families to use in their conversations with their schools, more thorough and digestible explanations of the STAR framework ratings, school data trends, college enrollment metrics, and more.

A major point our parent leaders have always appreciated about OSSE's leadership around the report card is their transparency about what they could include, what they couldn't, and why. For example, in our initial community engagement conversations, parents raised that they wanted to see more information about teacher quality, special education supports, parent engagement, and school finances (I've included the full list of ranked priorities at the end of my testimony in Figure 1). OSSE noted that they would look into ways to better include those topics but were clear about the considerations they had in order to fulfill some of the requests. For the information they knew they could add, OSSE staff followed up with parents to find out what specifics would be most helpful. For the information that wasn't as simple to collect or publicly report, like teacher quality, school funding, or special education supports, they were transparent about the difficulties and offered a plan to find a solution with an estimated timeline. This listening, incorporation of feedback, and commitment to continuous partnership and improvement will help build trust with communities and ensure that the School Report Card – and our larger education system – is constantly evolving to better meet the needs of students and families. We look forward to continuing to work with OSSE to use parent and community voice to drive improvements of this essential tool.



Additionally, as we listened to parents about their vision for the report card, they repeatedly made clear that they saw the School Report Card as more than a list of data points or catalog of programs – that it would be one of the tools they would use to help choose the best school for their child, but, in many cases more importantly so, to inform conversations with school, district, and city leaders about what is working, where there are gaps, and what areas require targeted support and resources to improve. Parents are clamoring for accessible information that focuses on their child and respective communities, and the amount of data OSSE makes publicly available in user-friendly formats has allowed PAVE and our partners to share that information. For example, we’ve been able to provide Ward Fact Sheets (see example in the appendix) that shows the metrics that are most important to families broken down and compared by subgroup, school, and ward. Parents have already used these to drive their conversations with school and system leaders. We hope that OSSE takes steps in the future to make these types of resources available for all families in hard copies and printable PDFs to make them easy to use and share.

Furthermore, for the last two years, PAVE parent leaders have prioritized Mental Health Supports and Trauma-Informed Training in All Schools, seeking high-quality social emotional learning programs, for all school staff to be trained in trauma-informed and restorative practices, and access to mental health professionals in all schools. Last year, OSSE increased the funding for the School Safety and Positive Climate Fund which provides training to all schools through a community of practice and targeted technical assistance to a number of schools. We hope to see this work expand so that more schools have access to these resources, and for OSSE to ensure there are no barriers to the grant application process for schools – but rather an allocation process that is centered in equity. I also want to state clearly that a child’s IEP should never prevent them from accessing mental health services at their school. I have heard from far too many parents that their child’s access is not the same, often requiring parents to jump through even more hoops to ensure students are getting what they need. We should have a coordinated process that includes families so there is no gap or delay in services.

Parents’ other priorities for stronger school-based mental health include:

- Full funding of the Department of Behavior Health school mental health expansion – of which OSSE is a critical partner to ensure quality implementation,
- Funding the base UPSFF and at-risk weight to the level recommended in DC’s 2013 Adequacy Study in the next two fiscal years (\$11,840 and 0.37 respectively),
- Produce and share a mental health landscape analysis,
- Develop best practices for working with families and communities,
- Improve coordination of service and care,
- Develop a clear accountability system, and;
- Develop a pipeline of mental health professionals in schools.

This year, PAVE parent leaders also prioritized Increased Access to Specialized School Programs (i.e STEM, dual language, Montessori, CTE programs, etc). We appreciate that OSSE has been reaching out to the community to get their feedback on their new CTE plan, one of the more in-demand programs from our parent leaders. I’ve listed our parents full list of priorities at the end of my testimony, but one issue that is most pressing for OSSE is that right now, schools lists the programs they offer on the school report card, but there is no way for parents to know if a school is truly implementing specialized school programs with fidelity. OSSE should work together with other agencies to create a common standard for each specialized school program type to build trust and ensure quality, something parents would eventually like to see included on the school report card. We hope that OSSE will work alongside other education agencies to make all these important priorities a reality.

We believe that, together, our parent leaders will reimagine an education system in DC to be created with parents, for all of our children. And we cannot do that work without partners like OSSE who also believe in the power and promise of parent voice and leadership.

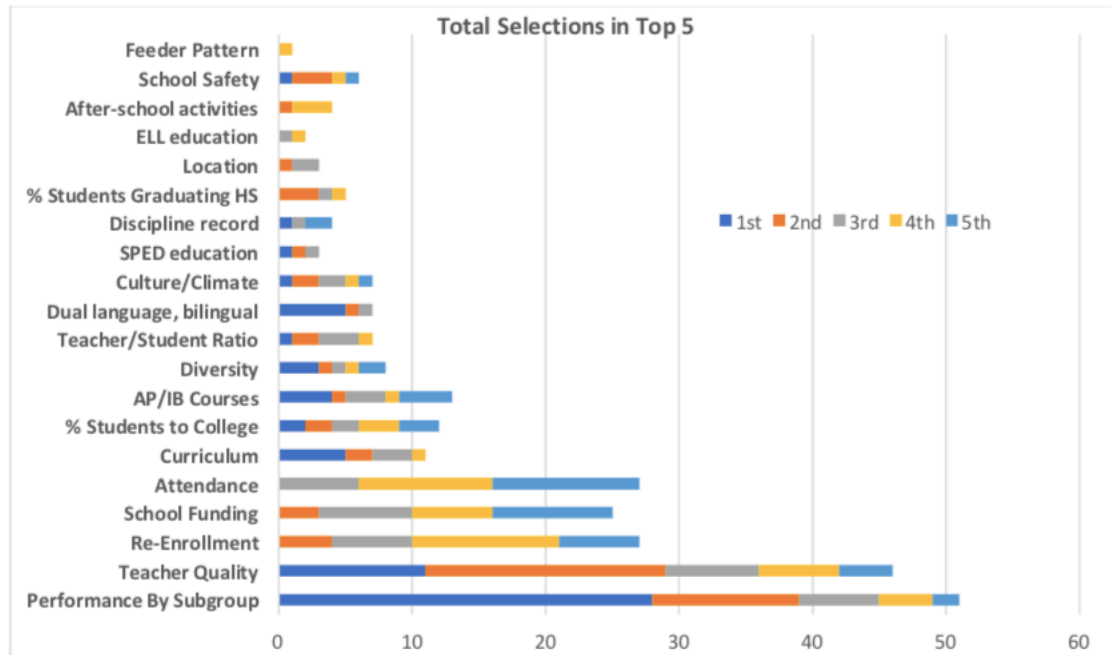
Thank you,

Kerry Savage

Appendix

Appendix A

Figure 1: Results of PAVE’s Community Survey on the Content of the School Report Card



Appendix B

From PAVE Parent Leaders’ Statement of Beliefs on Increased Access to Specialized School Programs:

Our Priorities

In order to have a system of great schools that 1) includes a diverse and expansive variety of specialized school programs and 2) offers increased access to these programs for students with the most need, we have identified a set of priorities:

1. Increase Funding in Our Schools to Provide Necessary Base-Level of Resources for All Schools, including Specialized School Programs

- **Increasing the base Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) to the recommended adequacy level based on the 2013 adequacy study (until the forthcoming DME study is available).** The 2013 study said the base UPSFF should be \$11,840 (when adjusted for inflation). The UPSFF is currently set at \$10,980 which is a gap of \$80 million. We recommend this gap be closed over two years: 4% in FY21, and 3% in FY22.
- OSSE should also support schools in getting federal funding and resources for the implementation of specialized programs within their schools.
- This investment could provide the following resources:
 - School infrastructure that is designed to support the particular requirements for a specific specialized school program (e.g. robotics labs, performance space, etc);
 - Strong partnerships with community organizations, government agencies, and the private sector to leverage community assets and connect students to content experts, mentors, and future opportunities;

- Supports for teachers and staff, including:
 - Teachers who are masters in their content area and can mentor newer teachers
 - Ongoing professional development to help teachers grow their craft
 - Schedules and structures that allow for collaborative planning time across subjects;
 - Class sizes that allow teachers to provide individualized and differentiated support
- School materials and opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse community of learners and abilities, including access to technology, experts, field trips, and evidence-based and culturally responsive curriculum.
- Safe and reliable transportation options to address barriers to students' ability to attend specialized school programs, regardless of the student's address and the school's location.

2. Create a Common Standard for Each Specialized School Program Type to Build Trust and Ensure Quality

- OSSE, DCPS, and PCSB should work with the community and experts in the field to:
 - Define key information that families want to know about specialized school programs and use this as a basis for creating a citywide set of publicly available, baseline standards for each type of specialized school program in DC.
 - Develop a verification system that includes qualitative reviews based on the above set of standards to verify fidelity to the model and quality implementation. Parent and student voice should be included in the assessment of program quality.
 - Design a clear indicator to demonstrate how a school implements a specialized school program to be included on existing parent resources, i.e. OSSE School Report Card and My School DC School Profile.
 - Develop an inclusive outreach campaign to share resources and information with families.

3. Increase Community Partnerships in Our Schools

- Community partners, such as local businesses and neighborhood institutions, all have an important role to play. To that end, the DC Council, the Mayor's office and relevant District agencies should:
 - Identify and provide incentives that aim to support community partnerships - both public and private. Such incentives should prioritize communities that are currently under-resourced. Examples can include financial incentives for businesses to locate in specific communities and develop educational partnerships to support specialized school programs.
 - Collaborate with DCPS and public charter schools to develop pipelines to recruit experts in specialized fields to support DCPS and public charter schools, with a priority focus on recruiting staff that reflect the cultural/racial composition of the school community.

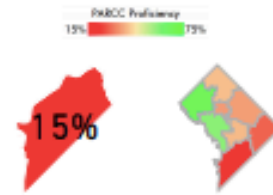
4. Pilot a Cross-sector Working Group for Family-Centered School and Specialized Program Planning, that:

- Includes both DCPS and public charter schools students and families as well as community partners.
- Collaboratively identifies and plans for equitable specialized program expansion across the city, prioritizing access to families with the greatest needs.
- Develops feeder patterns for specialized school programs so students can continue their education and can also offer an opportunity for schools to share best practices.
- Uses and builds upon practices from successful models (e.g. Ward 8 POST).
- Identifies which entity is responsible for overseeing implementation, staffing, and resources to support this process.

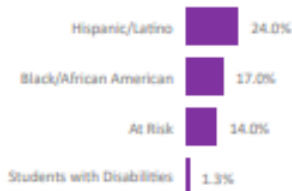


WARD 8

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW



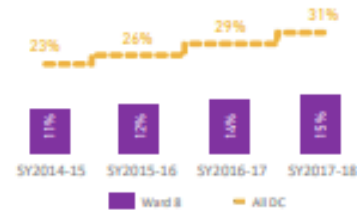
ELA Proficiency by Student Group in Ward 8



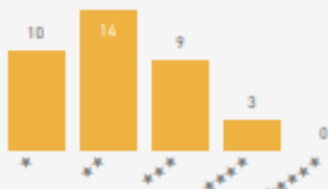
Math Proficiency by Student Group in Ward 8



PARCC ELA and Math Combined Proficiency in 2018...and Over Time



Number of Schools by STAR Rating in Ward 8



Top 5 Schools on STAR	STAR Overall
KIPP DC - Heights	66
Thurgood Marshall	65
Center City - Congress Hts	64
Friendship - Tech Prep HS	57
ECA	51

Outcomes for Special Populations: At-Risk, Students with Disabilities, English Learners

Metric	At-Risk		Students with Disabilities		English Learners	
	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC
90% Attendance	63	68	61	69		85
AP/IB Participation	29	50	3	18		60
AP/IB Performance	10	16		9		40
ELA GtP (Growth to Proficiency)	49	52	42	47		59
ELA MGP (Median Growth Percentile)	47	51	35	42		59
Grad Rate 4-year	65	76	42	63		67
In-Seat Attendance	89	91	88	90		94
Math GtP (Growth to Proficiency)	39	42	39	43		45
Math MGP (Median Growth Percentile)	45	48	43	46		53
Re-enrollment	77	81	78	84		87
SAT College and Career Ready Benchmark	9	12	0	2		5

▲ Above DC Average ▼ Below DC Average

Outcomes by Student Race:

Metric	All Students		Black		Latinx		White		Asian	
	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC	Ward	All DC
90% Attendance	67	76	66	74		84		93		93
AP/IB Participation	32	55	32	52		78		97		94
AP/IB Performance	8	22	8	15		42		82		70
ELA GtP (Growth to Proficiency)	49	55	49	53		60		63		68
ELA MGP (Median Growth Percentile)	47	54	47	52		60		68		71
Grad Rate 4-year	69	81	69	81		79		97		93
In-Seat Attendance	90	92	90	92		93		95		96
Math GtP (Growth to Proficiency)	38	42	39	41		45		48		56
Math MGP (Median Growth Percentile)	45	50	45	48		53		61		61
Re-enrollment	78	83	78	82		89		88		89
SAT College and Career Ready Benchmark	9	20	9	15		25		84		78

WARD 8

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW



School	School Demographics							STAR		Academics				Climate & Culture			
	At-Risk	SpEd	ELL	Black	Latinx	White	Asian	Stars	Score	ELA 4+	Math 4+	ELA MGP	Math MGP	Attd	Grad	Re-enroll	Susp
Achievement Prep - ES	66%	13%	0%	97%	2%	1%	0%	★	19	7	14			Avg		Avg	Avg
Achievement Prep - MS	61%	19%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	34	21	11	48	42	Avg		Avg	Avg
Anacostia HS	84%	35%	0%	98%	1%	0%	0%	★	3	4	1			Low		Low	Low
Ballou HS	80%	26%	0%	98%	2%	0%	0%	★	5	3	0			Low	Low	Low	Low
Boone ES	80%	14%	0%	98%	3%	0%	0%	★★	31	16	12	51	48	Avg		Avg	High
Center City - Congress Hts	55%	7%	0%	94%	1%	1%	0%	★★★★	64	30	27	59	60	Avg		Avg	Avg
Democracy - Congress Hts	75%	24%	0%	97%	2%	0%	0%	★	10	11	14	32	31	Low		Low	Low
Eagle - Congress Hts	71%	22%	0%	99%	0%	0%	0%	★	16	10	13			Low		Avg	Avg
ECA	73%	18%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	★★★	51	35	31			Avg		Low	Avg
Excel Acad EC	70%	15%	0%	98%				★★	23	20	10	45	39	Low		Low	
Friendship - Southeast ES	75%	13%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	36	19	15	42	49	Avg		High	Avg
Friendship - Tech Prep HS	68%	23%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★★	57	36	14			Avg	Avg	Avg	Avg
Friendship - Tech Prep MS	68%	25%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	31	16	9	52	42	Avg		Avg	Low
Garfield ES	85%	16%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	32	13	16	48	44	Avg		Avg	High
Hart MS	80%	24%	0%	98%	1%	0%	0%	★★	21	7	4	35	39	Avg		Avg	Low
Hendley ES	93%	16%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	27	6	9	46	59	Low		Low	Avg
Ingenuity Prep	68%	26%	0%	97%	2%	1%	0%	★★★	45	38	33	62	46	Low		Avg	Avg
Johnson MS	84%	18%	0%	97%	2%	0%	0%	★★	21	14	5	48	36	Low		Avg	Low
Ketcham ES	83%	15%	0%	96%	3%	0%	0%	★★★	49	19	45	48	69	Low		Low	Avg
King ES	86%	15%	0%	98%	2%	0%	0%	★★	25	15	20	36	54	Low		Low	Avg
KIPP DC - AIM	55%	20%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	★★★	46	27	30	47	41	Avg		High	Avg
KIPP DC - Heights	62%	18%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★★★	66	47	67	57	57	Avg		High	Avg
Kramer MS	87%	23%	0%	96%	2%	0%	0%	★	6	3	1	35	31	Low		Low	
Leckie EC	50%	11%	0%	81%	7%	5%	1%	★★	34	26	15	52	41	Avg		Low	Avg
Malcolm X ES	90%	20%	0%	99%	2%	0%	0%	★★★	42	14	11	57	60	Low		Low	Avg
Moten ES	87%	16%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★	14	7	3	46	23	Low		Low	Avg
National Collegiate	70%	19%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★	20	14	3			Low	Low	Low	Avg
Patterson ES	88%	23%	0%	98%	1%	0%	0%	★	18	8	13	38	37	Avg		Low	Avg
Rocketship - Rise	83%	17%	0%	97%	1%	0%	0%	★★★	45	25	27			Avg		Low	Avg
Savoy ES	81%	14%	0%	99%	0%	0%	0%	★★	29	12	11	42	50	Avg		Low	Avg
Simon ES	75%	12%	0%	97%	3%	0%	0%	★★★	40	15	10	52	57	Avg		Avg	Avg
Somerset	71%	20%	0%	99%	1%	0%	0%	★★	28	12	4	46	36	Avg	Avg	Avg	Low
Stanton ES	91%	14%	0%	98%	1%	0%	0%	★★	21	10	18	38	40	Avg		Avg	Avg
Thurgood Marshall	59%	18%	0%	98%	2%	0%	0%	★★★★	65	41	16			Avg	Avg	Avg	Low
Turner ES	84%	15%	0%	97%	2%	0%	0%	★★★	45	18	16	62	55	Low		Low	Avg

Highlighted schools have average ELA and Math growth greater than 60, representing top level student growth both locally and nationally.

Learn More:

Find definitions and every school's information at dcschoolreportcard.org

Visit empowerk12.org/dc-star-report-card to compare data by school, student group, ward and more

Reach out to PAVE's community organizing team at organizers@dcpave.org for more information!