



PAVE DCPVCW Meeting with Councilmember Robert White

**Agenda:**

- **Welcome - 2 minutes**
  - Maya Martin Cadogan, PAVE Executive Director
  - Gaby Fraser, Citywide and Ward 7 PLE Board Member
- **Introductions - 2 minutes**
  - Name
  - Ward of residence
  - Where your children attend school
- **Councilmember Robert White Remarks - 2 minutes**
- **Parent Q&A - 8 minutes - See full questions below!**
  - *Leigh Sims, Ward 6 PLE Board Member - Equitable School Funding*
  - *Denise Williams, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS - School Reopening*
  - *Open chat questions*
- **Closing and Next Steps - 1 minute**

Parent Name	Question
<p><b>Leigh Sims, Ward 6 PLE Board Member - Equitable School Funding</b></p>	<p>I am a Ward 6 Parent of a budding preschooler, and a former Ward 7 and 8 DCPS and Charter School Special Education Teacher. I want the best for my children; they deserve a strong and fully funded public education. Growing up, my parents moved to communities based on the ranking of the public education there. In recent times, the District saw families moving out of DC because they appreciated the strength of the public education in these surrounding communities, including how they were funded. Even in the years before the pandemic when DC ended with a budget surplus, we underfunded our students by as much as 1500 dollars - particularly at- risk students. Now facing this pandemic, we cannot afford to leave anyone behind because of a disorganized budget or planning that did not properly consider the needs of the most marginalized communities. Does the city have a long-term goal for ensuring adequate school funding and that money invested in students DC defines as at-risk is actually spent on those students?</p>
<p><b>Denise Williams, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS - School Reopening</b></p>	<p>My name is Denise Williams. I'm a Ward 7 resident and a mother of three boys: ages 6, 3, and almost 12 weeks. I commend DCPS for sending out a survey to parents about reopening schools. The survey found that the majority of parents in Wards 5, 7 and 8 are not ready to send their children to school for in-person instruction. Instead parents in these wards favor virtual-only school. However, DCPS is planning to reopen schools in all Wards next month. Over the past few months, PAVE parent leaders have revisited what is needed for the response, recovery, and now re-opening of schools due to the ongoing Coronavirus crisis. The result was a revised Statement of Beliefs, which calls on DC officials, such as yourself, to ensure that these plans incorporate engagement with all key stakeholders, the development of comprehensive guidance for health and safety, the building of community trust, and communication with families - all of which are centered in safety and equity.</p>



	<p>As you can see, parents are prepared to partner with policymakers on the issue of school reopening and recovery from this crisis.</p> <p>This leads me, and parents like me, to see the need for building community trust in the plans to reopen schools next month. In what ways can parents be reassured that reopening next month will not expose staff, students, and families to COVID? What is your plan to include parent voices in these plans, and how can we work with you to ensure parent voices are heard on these issues?</p>
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Parent Name	Chat Questions
<p><b>Cassandra Gentry, Citywide Board member and Ward 6 PLE Board member, Inspired Teaching</b></p>	<p>How will you work with our children returning to school after being out for such an extended time? I'm really concerned about emotional and mental health supports that has increased because of the pandemic.</p> <p>I have not received any information about the school recovery. I have a grandparent that sent a child back to a setting of 5 and now he is home because another student tested positive. I don't feel we're ready.</p>
<p><b>Letisha Vinson, Ward 7 PLE Board member, KIPP DC Lead and Will Academy PCS</b></p>	<p><u>As</u> a mother, divorcee, trauma survivor, mental health advocate, and practitioner, I know both directly and indirectly the need for more mental health outlets and support. As we know, the stigma against mental illness is real and we need every effort to be aimed at reducing that stigma, especially within our community. As such, we need more mental health professionals available to students, families, and staff to aid them in their journey and teach them how to be mentally well.</p> <p>School-employed mental health professionals work with teachers to provide support and with parents to better understand students' needs and implement appropriate support. Just as physical education is part of the curriculum in schools, mental health awareness and education should be too. Our children spend most of their day at school. We need to empower them with knowledge about mental illness.</p> <p>With 50% of mental health conditions developing in children of age 14 or below, the support for this cause is growing rapidly. We need to be</p> <p>We need to be working towards a school environment where students are able to recognize when they're dealing with mental health issues and feel they can ask for help.</p> <p>Mental health education is not yet mandatory in schools. Until it is, teachers and administrators need to help shine the light on the concept of self-care. And, they need to emphasize the fact that mental health is an integral part of health.</p> <p>Especially with all that students and families have faced over the past year, we need to urgently ensure that schools have access to mental health professionals. How can we partner with you to ensure that, this year, our city funds the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) school-based mental health expansion AND reverses the \$4 million cuts to community-based providers?</p>

<p><b>Marcia Huff, Ward 7 PLE Board member, Two Rivers - Young</b></p>	<p>I want nothing more than to have my kids in school. How can we work to make sure that DCPS and charters are providing clear information on what life back in the classroom will look like?</p>
<p><b>Yolanda Corbett, Ward 7 PLE Board member, Inspired Teaching School, Rocketship Legacy Prep PCS and Washington Leadership Academy PCS</b></p>	<p>What considerations are being given towards how to help our families that have children with disabilities be able to engage effectively during virtual learning? Especially knowing that this population of students already had a significant achievement gap pre COVID.</p>
<p><b>Renee Davis, Ward 1 PLE Board member, Capital City PCS and Children's Guild DC PCS</b></p>	<p>I am a Neurodiverse mom of two Autistic Youth - Alexa age 16 has a private placement at The Children’s Guild PG in Maryland with IEP support from Capital City Public Charter School (CCPCS) along with my 12 yo Michael who is in an inclusion 6th grade setting with IEP Support from CCPCS.</p> <p>But due to their dual diagnosis - Autism spectrum and mental illness COVID has required more home based services as provided through Medicaid. If this would have been a normal day, Alexa would have interacted with more than 7 people by now to support her, including but not limited to a medical nurse at home, a dedicated aid on the bus, a 1:1 aid in the school classroom, her teachers, and her job coach, the school psychologists, and the school nurse. Due to COVID, my children's medical needs are being met through HSCSN health services for children with needs. This is a Medicaid benefit but it has provided home health nursing and Behavioral based therapy in my home.</p> <p>How can we work together with you as you create plans to support students with disabilities while they are at home - including increasing access to medical professionals and services, as well as your plans for returning to school especially transportation and health and safety?</p>