

PAVE DC Parent Voice and Choice Week 2022

Ward 7 Councilmember Gray & Staff Meeting Agenda

Welcome - 1:00 - 1:05pm

- **Kerry Savage**, Director of Policy at PAVE
- **Gaby Fraser**, Citywide and Ward 7 Board Member, Two Rivers and SEED Grandparent - Meeting Chair

Introductions - 1:05 - 1:07pm

- Name
- Ward of residence
- Where your children attend school

Councilmember Gray & Staff Remarks - 1:07 - 1:15pm

Parent Q&A - 1:15 - 1:55pm - see full questions below!

- **Stephanie Griffith Richardson**, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Organizing Captain, DC Elsie Whitlow Stokes Parent, OST Strategic Planning
- **Mabel Hernandez**, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, LAMB Parent, OST Funding
- **Tanealya Jackson**, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Thurgood Marshall Academy Parent, Mental Health Accountability
- **Yolanda Corbett**, Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Washington Leadership Academy and Rocketship Legacy Prep PARENT, Mental Health Needs Assessment
- Chat questions (as time allows)

Closing and next steps - 1:55pm - 2:00pm

Parent Name	Question
Stephanie Griffith Richardson Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Organizing Captain, Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS Parent, OST Strategic Planning	My name is Stephanie Griffith Richardson and I am a Ward 7 resident and mother of an amazing 3rd grader Langston. Even before the pandemic, my

	<p>advocacy passion was fighting for OST funding and access. I especially want to help families like mine, who find ourselves squeezed in the middle. I'm talking about those families with enough income security, that we may not qualify for assistance, but who still struggle financially to give our kids the non-academic experiences that aren't sports-related. OST brings balance to their academic journey and pushes them to be competitive in a marketplace where US Children are outpaced by far too many countries. Coupled with now that the pandemic has ravaged our economy and so many things have changed, many of my friends who were once financially secure, are out of work entirely. And kids like mine, who once took schooling for granted, were out of in-building instruction for over 18 months. My fellow parent leader, Ebbon, feels the same way.</p> <p>As you can see, one of the most pressing issues facing East of the River families transitioning back to in-person instruction is accessing OST programs. How will you work to help bring this vision to life and create a strategic plan to ensure access to in-demand programs for all kids - especially on this side of the River?</p>
<p>Mabel Hernandez Ward 7 PLE Board Member, LAMB PCS Parent, OST Funding</p>	<p>My kids are very young, just five years old, and when it comes to Summer and Winter programs; or basically anytime the school has a pause it's an issue. It's so hard to find affordable services where they can be free to learn while parents can continue working. In fact, OST isn't only difficult in off-times, it's hard to manage during the school year too! In the Fall when my family was looking for affordable extracurricular activities, I couldn't believe options were so limited considering OST programs are an essential part of a full, well-rounded education. Each year I struggle and look for those opportunities, but I can't seem to find things in my price range.</p>

	<p>This is an important issue because kids who are engaged in enrichment opportunities, whether it be music, arts, stem, whatever, are kids that are out of the dangers of the street. Kids that are in a safe nurturing space are not an easy target for getting into trouble in a big city like DC. As the Chair of the Committee on Health, I know you understand how access to these opportunities impacts both physical and mental health and safety.</p> <p>Expanding access to OST programs is a planning issue in that yes, we want to identify the best quality programs and find ways to offer them to our kids, making sure to include people at the grassroots level in that process. But ultimately we will have to pay for these initiatives. How will you work to provide at least \$25 million in recurring, local funding for OST programs which will help give dedicated funding for schools for before and after school, summer, and winter programs?</p>
<p>Tanealya Jackson Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS Parent, Mental Health Accountability</p>	<p>My name is Tanealya Jackson, I am the mom of two boys that attend Thurgood Marshall Academy and I'm a Coordinator for Leadership Council for Healthy Communities for the Pilgrim Baptist Church. In my role at Pilgrims rest, I work with the domestic violence ministry, providing support mostly for moms who are experiencing intimate partner violence. In this work, I was shocked to learn how connected the issues of abuse in the home, housing instability, and mental health are.</p> <p>According to data provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency and the Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness, by the time an unhoused child is 8 years old, 1 in 3 has a major mental disorder and unhoused children have twice the rate of learning disabilities and three times the</p>

	<p>rate of emotional and behavioral problems, all of which make them twice as likely to repeat a grade compared with housed children.</p> <p>We want to thank Councilmember Gray and his staff for working to fully fund the mental health expansion to every school. I would like to know especially for the population of unhoused students who often fall through the cracks of our system, how Councilmember Gray and his office will work with DME Kihn and DBH to create a strong accountability system so that all our students are able to access high-quality mental health resources and care.</p>
<p>Yolanda Corbett Ward 7 PLE Board Member, Washington Leadership Academy and Rocketship Legacy Prep Parent, Mental Health Needs Assessment</p>	<p>As a single mom in the District, I have to dig really hard to find city-based organizations. I educated myself and made these connections and had someone walk me through the process but others are not connected. Since others are not connected, this reflects a lack of a reliable school-based mental health system that knows and meets the needs of families and includes special ed and disabilities as much as it includes funding, support, and conversations on trauma.</p> <p>There are a number of groups to help my son with everyday needs and transitions, but that's plugging holes in a fractured system. It feels like you have to go on a treasure hunt for special education support when there should be a system put in place to help parents navigate available resources and eventually step back because we know our kids are taken care of. How will you work to make sure DC generates a comprehensive needs assessment and analysis of what services and supports exist and where there are gaps? How can we make sure that this information gets out to families?</p>

Chat Questions

Mental Health

**Letisha Vinson,
Citywide and Ward 7 PLE Board Member,
KIPP DC Parent**

We know you and Mayor Bowser have made additional investments in mental health over the past few years and that has helped us to fund the DBH expansion. Which we truly appreciate. But we want to go further and make sure every one of our children has the mental health supports they need and as parents, we know it's still not reaching all of our kids. How can you and your office put together a mental health needs assessment to determine what supports exist and what gaps still persist across all tiers of support? How does the DME coordinate with the Department of Behavioral Health? And can you bring together all of the agencies under the Mayor to ensure our SBMH programs are accounting for the increased and intensive needs of our students amidst the pandemic?

**Marcia Huff,
Ward 7 PLE Board Member and Policy Captain,
Two Rivers Parent**

How can CM Gray and the Committee better provide oversight of the SBMH services provided to schools by DBH?

**Zanso Dalili,
Ward 7 PLE Board Member,
Nalle Elementary Parent**

This is Zanso Dalili, my children are at Nalle Elementary, commenting on Mental Health. How can we better support our teachers with community services/support to help with the mental health challenges their children are coming to the classroom with? Extra bodies during this time is so important in making sure our children are supported as they heal.

OST

**Takiyah Worthy,
Ward 7 PLE Board Member,
Elsie Whitlow Stokes East End Parent**

Exactly! Marvin Gaye Rec is highly underutilized, it is so close but offers little to no programming. It is very frustrating, is this a staffing capacity issue?



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