

**Responses to Questions from the Public Regarding the
District of Columbia Public Education Finance Reform Commission
September 29, 2011**

Question: Why does our Commission seem unbalanced with four publicly funded charter school representatives and one District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) representative?

Response: The composition of the Commission was specified in the Request for Proposals (RFP) from the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education. The composition of the Commission was defined in a way to provide access to as much information about funding for both DC Public Schools and charters as possible, thus the representation from seven DC Government agencies, charter schools, and advocates who understand both DCPS and charter requirements with respect to operational and capital funding requirements. It should be noted that direct charter representation is actually three, not four Commissioners—Jeremy Williams (DC Public Charter School Board), Allison Kokkoros (Carlos Rosario Public Charter School), and Irasema Salcido (Cesar Chavez Public Charter School). Although CentroNia operates a charter school, Timothea Howard from CentroNia was invited to serve in her capacity as a longtime community advocate and she is aware that is the reason she was selected.

Question: Why is that when the enrollment comes around, and children are sent back to their neighborhood schools, why doesn't the money follow?

Response: The issue of student enrollment and where and how funding is allocated will be considered by the Commission in its deliberations about the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF).

Question: How can some publicly funded charter schools have two adults in the classroom and yet DCPS can struggle with one?

Response: The Commission is collecting the data it will need to make recommendations to the Mayor regarding the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF). The allocation of human resources will be among the data points the Commission will examine

Question: When will we have a talented and gifted program?

Response: Gifted and talented programming specifically is outside the purview of the Commission. However, because programming to meet student needs is relevant to issues of educational adequacy, the Commission may determine that gifted programs should be considered as part of its holistic, comprehensive approach to meeting the academic standards of the District.

Question: Why do we settle for adequate? When will we duplicate the schools that excel?

Response: The Commission is charged with studying adequacy of educational programs to meet the academic standards of the District of Columbia, including coming to consensus on a definition of the term for public education in the District.