

The 21st Century School Fund served as a consultant to DCPS in developing the Master Education Plan. In this role we assisted with data analysis, facilitating meetings and drafting the document. We are proud to have worked on the Plan and are eager to see it implemented in a timely and responsible fashion. However, we think it is important to comment on the Board's role in adopting the plan.

Board Policy Issues in Adopting the MEP

Many of the proposed objectives and initiatives in the plan are Dr. Janey's prerogative and under his leadership the administration can proceed in the way it sees as most effective. But there are many elements that require change to the DC Municipal Regulations and these are properly the purview of the Board of Education and should be considered within standard Board processes. For these elements of the MEP there should be open Board discussion, public hearings and formal comment periods before final adoption. These matters include:

- Extending the length of the school year and moving forward the date on which the school year starts;
- Delaying the age at which Pre-K students may start school;
- Creating alternative paths for teacher certification;
- Increasing graduation requirements;
- Requiring summer school for select students;
- Restricting student retention options;
- Opening access for out-of-boundary transfers;
- Establishing standards and curriculum;
- Re-drawing school boundaries to support fewer schools and more rational feeder patterns.

The Board should prioritize these issues so that they immediately address those required for restructuring schools: changes in school boundaries, changes in the age of students who start pre-k, changes in out-of-boundary transfer procedures, changes in the length of the school year and calendar.

This does not mean that the Board should hold up the MEP for what could be a lengthy series of public deliberations. Instead, we're suggesting that the Board look at adopting the MEP with a resolution that acknowledges the Board's responsibility to address these policy changes.