

MAYORAL PROPOSAL → DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC EDUCATION REFORM AMENDMENT ACT OF 2007

CHANGES IN STRUCTURE	POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES	POSSIBLE CHALLENGES
<p>Mayor and City Council take over Board of Education powers and functions;</p> <p>Board of Education no longer exists</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mayor supervises Superintendent; changes and improvements made more quickly ▪ More resources and political attention focused on schools ▪ Only Mayor and City Council accountable for DCPS resources and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less input on policy decisions by those most affected (students, parents and community), leading to mistakes and bad decisions ▪ Mayor and City Council have limited knowledge of schools and limited time to devote to them ▪ Loss of voting rights and leadership by residents
<p>DCPS becomes city agency;</p> <p>Department of Education is created, headed by Deputy Mayor of Education;</p> <p>City Council has power to make policy and operating decisions for schools;</p> <p>City Council has power to change any item in the education budget¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better coordination among city agencies to support students ▪ Schools part of conversation on making DC family-friendly, with better recreation and library services, job training for parents, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor coordination among city agencies ▪ Only 12% of DC residents have children in the schools; not politically strong enough to make schools a priority ▪ Schools exposed to pressure of City Council politics and private interest groups ▪ Fewer checks and balances
<p>Ombudsman appointed by Mayor to deal with complaints and problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easier for public to report and solve problems within large bureaucracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problems not solved if Ombudsman decides they are not valid
<p>Schools modernized by separate agency reporting to Mayor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher level of expertise brought in to modernize schools ▪ Construction moves forward more quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added bureaucracy slows down work and makes accountability harder ▪ Schools not built properly; decisions made by people without knowledge of education ▪ Conflict of interest with developers involved in facilities decisions
<p>State Department of Education created to approve standards and accountability plan²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Board creates limited coordinated policy for both public and charter schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No effective oversight; Mayor controls state and DCPS plus federal grants oversights

This document is designed to help people understand, in plain language, the structural changes proposed by the Mayor and the possible effects of these changes. This is not meant to represent the spirit of the proposal, but the mechanics of it and the spectrum of analysis among education stakeholders. // Youth Education Alliance & Washington Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs // 2.12.07

¹ Currently the Mayor and City Council propose and approve a total amount for DCPS to spend each year; under this proposal City Council would be able to tell DCPS how much to spend on any line of their budget (ex: teachers, textbooks, food service, etc.)

² Currently the Board of Education handles both state and local responsibilities, which creates a conflict of interest because the state is supposed to oversee the local. This means that the Board of Education oversees both itself and its competition, charter schools. Under this proposal the Mayor would handle both state responsibilities and local responsibilities, which creates the same conflict of interest as before. Like the current Board of Education, the State Board of Education would be part elected and part appointed until 2009, at which point it would become all-elected.

BOARD OF EDUCATION PROPOSAL ⇄ EMERGENCY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ACT OF 2007

CHANGES IN STRUCTURE & OPERATIONS	POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES	POSSIBLE CHALLENGES
<p>Special Education: therapeutic day centers created for 135 special education students through one-time grant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds DCPS capacity to serve special education students closer to home, saves money in the long run 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programs don't provide level of service needed by students
<p>Re-negotiation of current labor contracts; Teacher's union unable to negotiate class sizes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easier to terminate teachers who are not doing their jobs ▪ Easier to reclassify or transfer employees when needed (ex: moving best teachers to lower-performing schools or innovative programs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harder to keep or attract good staff due to loss of pay, benefits, or protections ▪ Lower teacher morale due to instability and poor working conditions; employees more exposed to retaliation from supervisors ▪ Larger class sizes
<p>Groundwork laid for independent DCPS Chief Financial Officer³; Fiscal year lines up with academic year; DCPS has greater authority to buy supplies and materials; Uniform Per Student Funding Formula includes salary increases and up to date costs; DCPS keeps money not spent by end of year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less confusion and more accountability in DCPS management of money ▪ Better planning: schools have correct staffing and supplies before school starts ▪ Repairs and modernizations done faster ▪ Efficiency and cost-saving is rewarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mistakes and bad decisions in spending and tracking money ▪ Problems with DCPS fiscal year being different than city or Congressional fiscal year ▪ City does not have enough funds to cover salary increases
<p>State Department of Education created for DC state education functions with Chief State School Officer appointed by Mayor; State Department responsible for DC state education agency functions: city agency coordination, supervision of adult education and special education tuition, transportation and early intervention⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Same data, access and federal grants oversight for DPCS and charter schools ▪ More accountability and oversight with local and state functions separate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More bureaucracy ▪ DCPS sends more special education students to private schools
<p>Facilities Oversight Commission of Mayor, Board President and other high officials created to approve construction decisions and oversee progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction and repairs happen more quickly ▪ Construction decisions are responsive to parent and community input 	

In addition to the changes outlined above, the Board of Education proposal includes seven goals in academic achievement, restructuring of failing schools, teacher certification, parent involvement, and renovation of schools. This document is designed to help people understand, in plain language, the structural and operational changes proposed by the Board of Education and the possible effects of these changes. It is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of the school system's current structure or performance; it is meant to capture the spectrum of analysis among education stakeholders. // Youth Education Alliance & Washington Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs // 2.12.07

³ Currently the day to day management of DCPS money is controlled by the City's Chief Financial Officer.

⁴ Currently the Board of Education handles both state and local responsibilities, which creates a conflict of interest because the state is supposed to oversee the local. This means that the Board of Education oversees both itself and its competition, charter schools. Under this proposal the state would be independent from the local.