

District of Columbia Public Schools Family Engagement Landscape Assessment

ENDEAVOR
GROUP

Prepared for:



October 2009

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Seven in ten D.C. residents believe the city's public schools are performing inadequately, with the lack of parental involvement still cited as the biggest problem.

- The Washington Post
January 2008¹

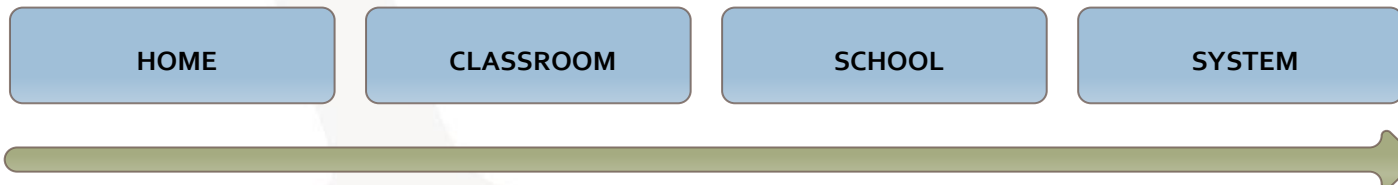


In Washington, D.C., parent involvement is cited as the “biggest issue in public schools.”

- Westat Research
On behalf of the Walton Family Foundation
Fall 2008

¹ This Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone January 3-8, 2008, among a random sample of 1,000 adult residents of the District of Columbia. The results have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points. Sampling, data collection, and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

- **Objectives**
 - Review existing research to confirm the correlation between increases in family engagement and improvements in student achievement.
 - Conduct an impartial landscape assessment of local and national organizations that support family engagement in K-12 traditional public schools and school systems.
 - Develop a framework for supporting family engagement in D.C. based on an understanding of the local landscape and national best practices.
 - Recommend specific local initiatives that have a high potential to increase student achievement.
- **Definitions**
 - “Parent” and “Family” are often used interchangeably. Unless quoting directly from a third party source, we use the term “Family,” recognizing that many members of a family can be involved in a child’s education.
- **Methodology**
 - The Endeavor Group conducted extensive secondary research as well as in-person and telephone interviews with over 100 families, principals, teachers, local and national education experts, nonprofit leaders, government officials and community members. The firm also coordinated five parent focus groups that engaged more than 140 DCPS parents from all 8 wards.
- **Categories and Type of Family Engagement**
 - Family engagement happens at the home, classroom, school and system levels. This report focuses on classroom, school and system-level engagement.
 - “System” engagement includes DCPS and governing bodies (i.e., City Council, Board of Education, the Mayor’s office).
 - We assessed different types of functional interventions, including parent training, community organizing and advocacy.



- **The Endeavor Group would like to thank the following people who generously contributed their time and insight for this report:**

Jeanne Allen, Center for Education Reform

Ben Austin, LA Parents Union

Emily Barton, DC Teach for America

Amy Black, Teach for All

Rae Belisle, EdVoice

Margot Berkey & Iris Toyer, Parents United for the DC Public Schools

Suzanne Bouffard, FINE: Family Involvement Network of Educators (Harvard)

Robert Cane & Ariana Quiñones-Miranda, FOCUS

Robin Carey, OSSE

Tom Carroll, Brighter Choice Foundation

David Catania, DC City Council

Hilda Crespo, Aspira Parents for Educational Excellence

Kathleen deLaski, Walton Family Foundation

Michela English, Fight for Children/Prichard Training

Joyce L. Epstein, National Network of Partnership Schools

Arnold Fege, Public Education Network

Sue Ferguson, National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

Mary Filardo, 21st Century Schools Fund

Norm Fruchter, Annenberg Foundation

Shannon Griffin, Rodell Foundation

Dr. Bryan Hassel, Public Impact

Anne T. Henderson, Annenberg Foundation

Molly Hunt, Youth Engagement Academy

Sarah Johnson, DCPS - Parent Resource Centers

Alex Johnston, ConnCAN

Kim Jones, Advocates for Justice and Education

Lori Kaplan, Latin American Youth Center

Jason King and Kathleen Rice, Turning the Page

Mary Levy, Washington Lawyers Committee

Amanda Marshall, Fair Chance

Donna Middlebrooks, A+ Denver

Parisa Norouzi, Empower DC

Lee Christian Parker, CFNCR Collaborative for Education Organizing (CEO)

Lillian Perdomo, Multicultural Community Service (DC PIRC)

Michael J. Petrilli, Policy Innovation in Education (PIE) Network

Jesse Rauch, Committee of the Whole, DC City Council

Michelle Rhee, DCPS - Office of the Chancellor

Ken Rolling, National Parents for Public Schools (PPS)

Stephanie Saroki, Philanthropy Roundtable

Bev Raimondo, Prichard: Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership

Sally Sachar, DC Children First

Joel Klein, Chancellor, New York City Public Schools

Peggy O'Brien, DCPS - Office of Family and Public Engagement

Scott Reed, PICO

Cathy Reilly, Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and Educators (SHAPPE)

Jim Robinson & Karima Woods, GWU Neighborhood College

Joe Scantlebury, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Linda Slater, Seattle Public Schools/Office of Community Engagement

Laura McGiffert Slover, DC State Board of Education

Robin Steans, Advance Illinois

Jonathan Stith, Youth Education Alliance

Donna Power Stowe, DC Education Compact

David Valladolid, Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)

Amy Vruno, Washington Interfaith Network

Karin Walser, Horton's Kids

Liz Whisnant, Principal, Horace Mann Elementary School and founder, DC Collaborative For Change

Arthur McKee & Mieka Wick, CityBridge Foundation

Joe Williams, Democrats for Education Reform

Jill Weiler, Teaching for Change/Tellin' Stories

Peter Zamora, MALDEF

Elaine Zimmerman, Parent Leadership Training Institute

- The following DCPS parents generously contributed their time and insight for this report:**

Nicole Aiken	Rosea Clark	Kim Hedgespeth	Lillian Mason	Benita Smith
Annie Alatishe	Cara Cunningham	Nelly Hernandez	Delores Maynor	Vickie Smith
Samiat Alatishe	Anthony Dailey	JoAnne Holmes	Katrina McAllister	Charlita Stewart
Elizabeth Alvacon	Rufus Davis	Mark House	Carmen McCall	Patrina Swinson
Janet Arnold	Sharaine Dunmore	Pamela House	Jordan McClellan	Thomas Tate
Charles Bailey	Carlita Durbin	Annetta Howard	Ashley McDonald	Alice Thornton
Monique Banks	Brenda Durrett	Monique Howard	Grace McMillan	Rosa Villegas
Patrice Barber	Erika Evans	Dana Humphries	Edward Miller	Deloris Walker
Shanese Barber	Vickie Evans	James Jackson	Ashley Milton	Melissa Walker
Lisa Barton	Beverly Ewing	Wanda Jackson	Barbara Morrissey	Catherine Ward
Denise Blackson	Lawrence Fells	Theodore Jefferson	Natiia Moten	Deborah Ward
Evelyn Bourn	Kaila Fells	Delonda Johnson	John Patton	Latisha Warrick
Novella Bourn	LaShawn Fields	Lyon Johnson	Denita Peary	Monica Washington
Andrene Bryan	Kay Fitzgordon	Karla Johnson	Monica Perry	Wanda Webb
Kromeklia Bryant	Anne Ford	Vanessa Johnson	Wanda Polite	Deborah Wells
India Bunter	Denise Foster	Tawanna Johnson	Artavia Price-Bey	Clarnette Wesley
Michael Burriss	Harold Foster	Miriam Jones	Niccola Reed	Dorothy West
Feather Butler	Melissa Frazier	Margo Kearney	Tamera Rhone	Beverly White
Elaine M Carter	Mary Gay	Gloria Lee	Dominique Richardson	Tiffany White
Charlene Caver	Gloria Giles	Maya Lee	Wanda Richardson	Warren Williams
Indira Johana Chavez	Melissa Godbolt	Wendy Lewis	William Robinson	Bobby Jean Wills
Annette Cherry	Yesenia Guerrero	Waynette Lovelace	Anthony Ruth	Angelo Wilson
Alma Chio	Michelle Hamilton	Natasha Lynem	Kitty Ruth	Florence Yarborough
Edith Chio	Vincent Hawkins	Kristen Mapp	Lisa Ruth	Keyda Young
		Jesus Martinez	Jewel Sims	Cathy Young

- **The following stakeholders collaborated closely with Endeavor as thought partners, parent recruiters and focus group moderators:**

Alex Ashbrook, Director, DC Hunger Solutions

Yvonne Green, Manager, Double the Numbers

Bryce Jacobs, Program Specialist, National PTA

Lori Kaplan, Executive Director, Latin American Youth Center

Jason King, Founder and President, Turning the Page

Jennifer Lockwood-Shabat, VP, Programs, Washington Area Women's Foundation

Erica Louison, Coordinator, CC Parent Information Resource Center, Multi cultural Community Services

Amanda Marshall, Founder, Fair Chance DC

Maria Nagorski, Executive Director, Fair Chance DC

Parisa Nourouzi, Co-Director, Empower DC

Ebony Ross, Capacity Building Specialist, Fair Chance DC

Patty Santucci, Board Liaison, Latin American Youth Center

Janet Stone, Director of Development and Marketing, THEARC

Herb Tillery, Executive Director, Double the Numbers

Amy Vruno, Director, Washington Interfaith Network

- **With special thanks to organizations that hosted our focus group sessions:**

Thurgood Marshall Academy

Marshall Heights Community Center

THEARC

Latin American Youth Center

- **Three decades of research overwhelmingly correlates the critical role of family engagement with increases in student achievement.**

“Parental involvement is associated with higher student achievement outcomes. These findings emerged consistently whether the outcome measures were grades, standardized test scores, or a variety of other measures, including teacher ratings.”

-William H. Jeynes
*Parental Involvement and Student Achievement:
A Meta-Analysis, 2005*

“Students whose families are involved in their learning earn better grades, enroll in higher-level programs, have higher graduation rates, and are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education.”

-Anne Henderson & Karen Mapp
*A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family
and Community Connections on Student Achievement,*
2002

“Parental effort is consistently associated with higher levels of achievement, and the magnitude of the effect of family effort is substantial. We found that schools would need to increase per-pupil spending by more than \$1,000 in order to achieve the same results that are gained with family involvement.”

-Karen Smith Conway
University of New Hampshire, 2005

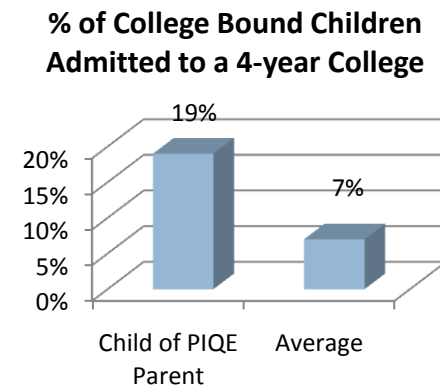
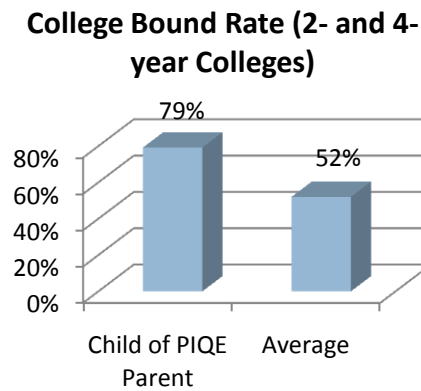
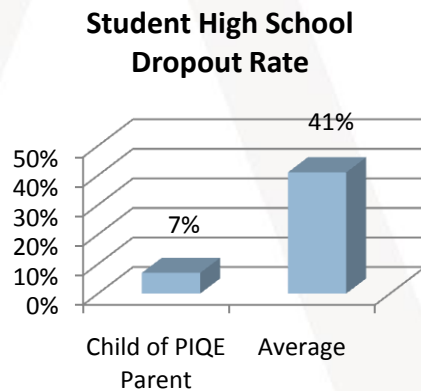
“Parent Involvement studies published between 1964 and 2000 suggests that parent involvement programs have a positive and significant effect on student achievement and that the effect has remained unchanged for three decades.”

- Chad Nye, Herb Turner, Jamie Schwartz
*Approaches to Parent Involvement for Improving
the Academic Performance of Elementary
School Age Children, 2008*

- Limited research exists that correlates the influence of specific family engagement programs with student achievement.**

 - Most nonprofit organizations lack the capacity or funding to conduct statistically significant research on the impact of family engagement on student achievement.
 - Student achievement data (i.e., grades and scores on achievement tests) is difficult to collect due to privacy concerns; even data that is available is typically self-reported.
- The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) conducted a longitudinal study that tied participant data to strong student achievement versus average achievement in San Diego County (<http://www.piqe.org/>).**

 - A survey conducted by the University of California San Diego in 2004 of 241 Latino PIQE graduates who completed the program in 1997-98-99, representing 351 students who reached the age of 18 years, reported the following findings:



“Effective programs to engage families embrace partnership. The responsibility for children’s educational development is a shared, collaborative enterprise among parents, staff and community members.”



Karen Mapp,
Harvard Graduate School of Education

“We haven’t cracked the nut [of parent engagement]. People are mobilizing to effectively impact a single issue, but no one in DC is focused on parent involvement that results in parents demanding schools of excellence that drive student outcomes.”



Stephanie Saroki,
Philanthropy Roundtable

“Parent engagement is a key issue. I don’t think you can waste another minute.”



Arthur McKee,
CityBridge Foundation

“Parents don’t know what good schools look like and many of their own schooling experiences were mediocre to poor, so they have very low expectations of schools.”



Michael Cahill, Carnegie Corporation

“I think funders should invest in the capacity of independent organizations to give parents the information, skills and support they need to help their kids. We also need to build the capacity of schools to work better with parents”



Anne Henderson, Annenberg Institute

“If we are going to be successful, we must engage parents.”



Liz Whisnant, Principal, Horace Mann ES
Founder, DC Collaborative for Change

“You must invest heavily in involving parents in reform efforts. We need more people who understand what student achievement is, and we need to use data to empower parents.”



Joel I. Klein,
Chancellor of NYC Public Schools

“It is crucial to understand that only a powerful civic base, comprised of an engaged public, will ensure the lasting success of [reform] efforts.”



Arnie Fege, Public Education Network

“Schools do not realize how vital constructive parent engagement is to their success.”



Sue Ferguson, NCPPE

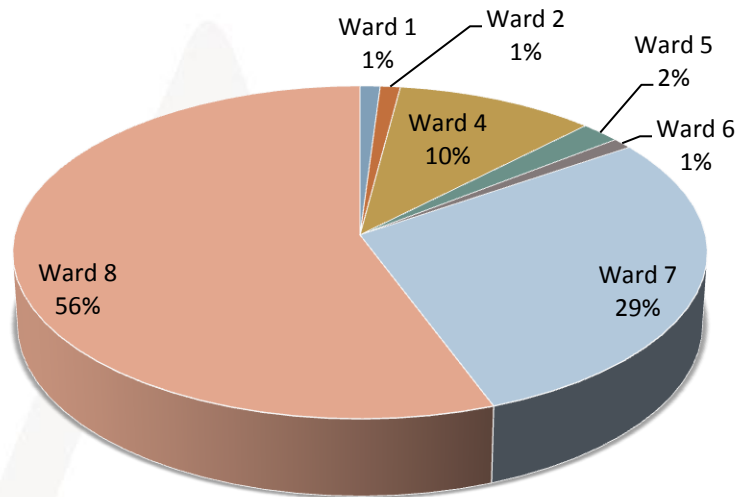
“We launched Baby College in order to get parents to be advocates for their kids. When parents do that it changes the institution.”



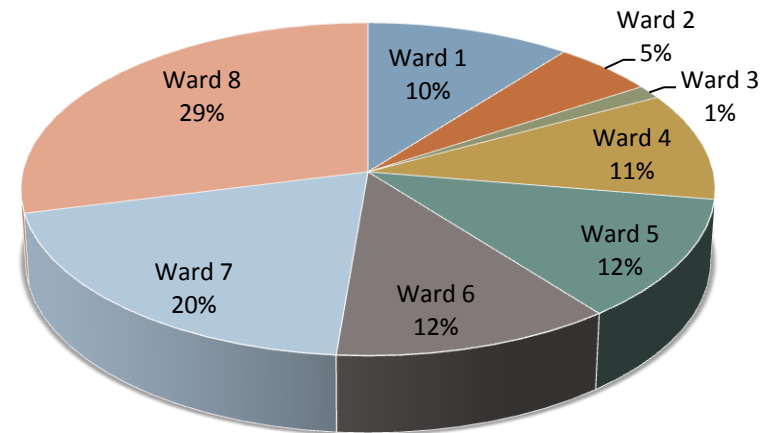
Geoffrey Canada,
Harlem’s Children’s Zone

Focus Group Participants represented 76 schools from all 8 DC Wards

Parent Participation by Ward



School Representation by Ward



SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Aiton, Amidon, Anacostia, Anne Beers, Ballou, Bancroft, Banneker, Barnard, Bell, Birney, Center City, Cesar Chavez, Charles Hart, CHOICE Academy, Douglass, DC Prep, Deal, Draper, Duke Ellington, Dunbar, Eagle Academy PCS, Eastern, Eliot-Hine, Excel Academy, Fletcher-Johnson, Friendship Collegiate, Friendship-Woodridge, Fort Lincoln, Green, Hendley, High Road Academy, Hyde, Idea PCS, Imagine Southeast PCS, JB Johnson, Jefferson, Kimball, King, KIPP, Kramer, LA Montessori Bilingual, Lafayette, LaSalle, Lincoln, Luke C Moore, Macfarland, Malcom X, Mary McLeod Bethune, MC Terrell, McKinley, Meridian PCS, Moten, New Image, Options PCS, Patterson, Plummer, Powell, Randle-Highlands, River Terrace, Ronald Brown, Roosevelt, St. Coletta, Savoy, SEED PCS, Septima Clark, Shaed, Shaw, Strong John Thomson, SWS @ Peabody, SWW, Terrell, Thomas, Thurgood Marshall, Turner at Green, Walker-Jones, Watkins, Woodson.

Family Engagement Organizations At-A-Glance

Organization	Leadership	Mission
21st Century School Fund	Mary Filardo	To build the public will and capacity to improve urban public school facilities.
Aspira	Hilda Crespo	To increase the involvement of Latino parents in their children's education by helping them learn about the intricacies of negotiating change and improving education in their communities.
Advocates for Justice in Education	Kim Jones	To motivate and educate families, and those working with families about the laws that govern special education and related services, and the consequences of institutional negligence and/or inappropriate classification of students with special needs.
DC Children First	Liz Plant	To bring together families, educators, and business and community leaders to reform education in DC. Primary work currently focuses on supporting vouchers; however their plan is to broaden agenda around choice.
DC School Reform Now	Anne Martin	To build a diverse and informed network of DC residents who will exercise their leadership to support high quality schools for all children in DCPS.
DC VOICE	Jeff Smith	To inform and mobilize the public to hold both the schools and the community accountable for providing high quality teaching and learning for all.
DCPS Parent Resource Centers	Sarah Johnson	To empower families and guardians to become more engaged and offer opportunities for families and guardians to expand their capacity to support their children's academic performance and social and emotional development.
Fight For Children	Michela English	To recognize, promote, and cultivate quality education for low-income children in D.C. Fight For Children, and to address the critical link between good health and improved academic performance.
FOCUS	Robert Cane	To promote education reform in the District of Columbia through the development of high quality public charter schools.
Multicultural Community Services	Interim Leader	To encourage, promote, and facilitate broad and inclusive civic participation.
Parent Institute for Quality Education	Jeanette Rojas	To bring schools, families, and community together as equal partners in the education of every child to provide all students with the option of and access to postsecondary education.
Parents United for DC Public Schools	Margot Berkey, Iris Toyer	To empower families and the community with information and advocacy skills to transform DC Public Schools to ensure educational success for all children.
Save Our Schools	Lee Glazer and Zein El-Amine	To re-energize public school advocacy at the grassroots and institutional levels through coalition building with like-minded groups at the local and national levels, and through public information campaigns, political activism and, when necessary, legal action.
Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and Educators (SHAPPE)	Cathy Reilly	To learn from one another and advocate for practice, policy and budget that will support the students of the DC public high schools by working cooperatively with parents, principals, teachers and students.
Tellin' Stories	Jill Weiler	To strengthen local leaders and empower families to transform their lives, their schools and their communities.
Turning the Page	Jason King	To ensure DC students receive valuable educational resources and a high-quality public education by connecting DC public schools, families and communities.
Washington Interfaith Network	Martin Trimble	To improve the quality of life for all DC's residents through grassroots political action.

Organization	Leadership	Mission
A+ Denver	Donna Middlebrooks	A+ Denver is a coalition of approximately 100 members that provides DPS oversight and broad-based experience from the business, civic and governmental communities. A+ Denver aided the city of Denver, Colorado in transforming its public school district into the best in the country and to make increased student achievement and public school reform a top priority in the Denver community.
ACORN	Maude Hurd	ACORN is the nation’s largest grassroots community organization of low- and moderate-income people with over 400,000 member families organized into more than 1,200 neighborhood chapters in 110 cities across the country.
Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships	Joyce Epstein	The National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), established in 1996 by Dr. Joyce Epstein and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, assists schools, districts, states, and organizations to strengthen and sustain goal-oriented programs of school, family, and community partnerships.
ConnCAN	Alex Johnston	ConnCAN is a state-level education advocacy organization that raises awareness of issues contributing to the achievement gap. ConnCAN builds consensus and empowers families and community members to get involved with decisions impacting schools and student achievement.
Connecticut Parent Leadership Training Initiative	Elaine Zimmerman	The Parent Leadership Training Initiative (PLTI) is a state-driven public-private partnership that works with local communities to provide families with the knowledge, skills and tools of civic engagement.
EdVoice	Rae Belisle	EdVoice was established by California’s leading educational philanthropists who understand that the future of California will be shaped by the quality of education the public schools deliver. Many gave generously and worked tirelessly to pass Proposition 39, changing the rules that prevented many communities from repairing old schools and building new ones.
LA Parents Union	Ben Austin	The Los Angeles Parents Union was founded by Green Dot Charter Schools founder Steve Barr to empower families to transform public schools through collective action in order to improve failing schools and help create high performing, college-preparatory public schools for every student in the Los Angeles Unified School District.
MALDEF Parent School Partnership	Araceli Simeon-Luna	MALDEF’s (The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) is a national nonprofit that promotes the civil rights of 40 million Latinos living in the US. Parent School Partnership (PSP) Program trains families in effective school engagement. Their program teaches skills to analyze and improve the performance of public schools.
National Parents for Public Schools	Anne Foster	Parents for Public Schools (PPS) is a national organization of community-based chapters working with public school families and other supporters to improve and strengthen local public schools. PPS was the first organization to adapt the Prichard model to urban schools.
Parent Institute for Quality Education	David Valladolid	PIQE’s mission is to bring schools, families, and community together as equal partners in the education of every child to provide all students with the option and access of a postsecondary education.
PICO	Scott Reid	PICO is a national network of faith-based community organizations working to create innovative solutions to problems facing urban, suburban and rural communities. Since 1972 PICO has successfully worked to increase access to health care, improve public schools, make neighborhoods safer, build affordable housing, redevelop communities and revitalize democracy.
Prichard Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership	Bev Raimondo	Prichard is a private, non-profit advocacy group that offers training programs for families to develop leadership and advocacy skills to support improved schools. Prichard’s Parent Leadership Institute (PLI) program trains families in standards-based education, skills development for effective group processes, advocacy, action planning, communications between families and teachers, and reaching under-involved families.
Stand For Children	Jonah Edelman	Stand for Children builds local and statewide networks of grassroots advocates to convince elected officials to invest in and reform children’s programs. Following specific priorities chosen by its members, SFC focuses on securing adequate funding for public schools and reforming education policies and practices to help children thrive academically, giving them the opportunities they need to become successful, productive citizens.

- **D.C.'s historical, cultural, socio-economic, and political environment has engendered an "Us vs. Them" relationship between families and their schools.**
 - DCPS has a history of authoritarian control, with class-based conflict between schools and parents.
 - Several generations of DC residents have had negative experiences in DCPS.
 - The Mayoral takeover of DCPS curricula, operations, functions, budget, personnel, labor negotiations and collective bargaining agreements, facilities, and other education-related matters has reduced channels for formal family input and alienated existing parent engagement groups.

- **Parents understand many of the factors that contribute to positive education outcomes for their children. Parents:**
 - recognize the importance of the principal's role in establishing a welcoming environment and a school that drives student achievement;
 - understand that good teachers support student success;
 - know that they have an important role to play in their children's educational outcomes.

- **Parents have a strong desire to support their children's education but need and want help to develop leadership, communication and advocacy skills. Parents:**
 - feel under-utilized as a resource;
 - recognize their own limitations in accomplishing their goals for their children;
 - understand that they need to take responsibility and display a willingness and ability to work collaboratively;
 - are desperate to understand DCPS and demand training in order to learn points of access, including the chain of command and information flow.

- **Parents want to support their children’s educational outcomes, yet many stated a primary need for life skills training prior to developing skills to engage in their children’s education.**
 - The large majority of focus group participants listed life and parenting skills as their top areas of personal need for training and support.
 - Parents expressed a secondary desire for information about DCPS policy, curriculum and test scores, and training in leadership and advocacy.
 - “They need to have a life teacher to teach you about home ownership, good credit, opening bank accounts, health classes, nutrition classes.” *DCPS Mother, July 2009, Thurgood Marshall Academy*

- **Parents are eager to engage with each other and desire infrastructure to support parent convening and collaboration.**
 - Focus groups demonstrated open sharing of ideas, advice and support among parents.
 - Parents who engage with schools are critical of those who don’t, and are looking for ways to expand engagement and to support parents in need.
 - PTAs are uneven across DCPS and do not provide a consistent infrastructure for parent collaboration.

- **Significant barriers impede principal-parent and teacher-parent communication.**
 - Cultural, economic and age differences threaten open communication.
 - Language barriers remain high within the DCPS Latino population, causing parents to feel intimidated and frustrated.
 - Approximately 30% of parent focus group participants indicated an interest in electronic forms of communication.

- **DCPS is currently developing its family engagement strategy.**
 - Chancellor Rhee and the Administration have hosted more than 100 meetings and community forums to engage families (i.e., DCCAS, 5-year action plan, effective schools framework).
 - DCPS recruited Cecilia Martin from the National Network of Partnership Schools to head its Office of Family and Public Engagement.
 - DCPS has developed a plan for enhancing parental engagement.
 - Perception exists among many parents that DCPS community meetings involve information reporting versus collective problem solving.

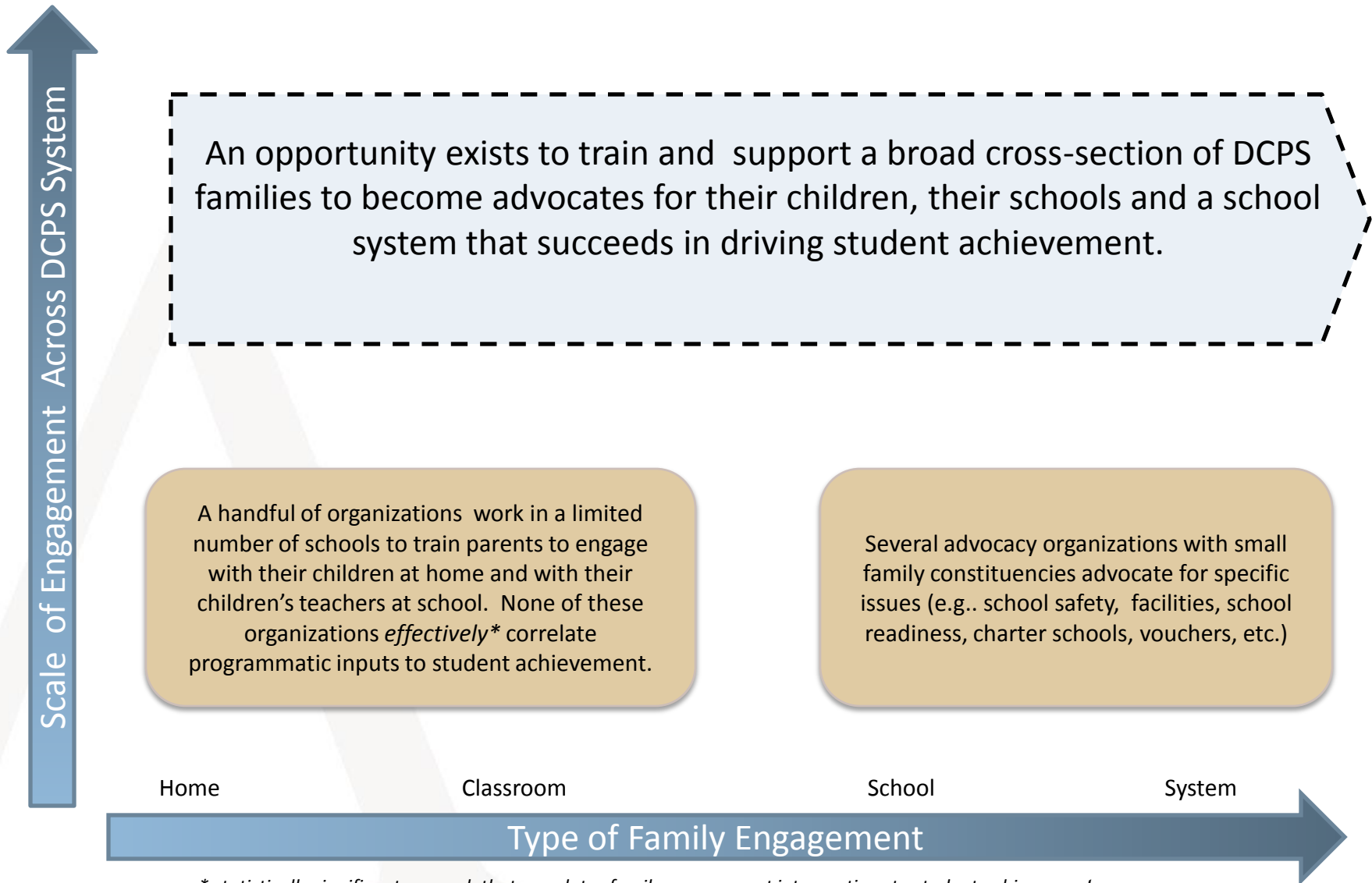
- **The three Parent Resource Centers (PRCs) are underutilized and lack programming strategy that drives student achievement.**
 - Limited numbers of parents using on-site resources.
 - The majority of programming addresses mental health issues, resume/job search, financial aid, tax preparation, health and fitness and computer skills.
 - \$2.9 million - \$3.1 million annual budget.
 - Unclear governance structure for PRC's: a community based board of directors has governed PRC's, but PRC Director Sarah Johnson reports to the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement.

- **Non-profits that train and support families have not scaled their programs.**
 - Several organizations work successfully in an isolated number of schools to train and provide capacity support that helps families engage more effectively.
 - Capacity and funding constraints impede the systemic impact of these programs.
 - Strong demand exists within local schools for additional family engagement programs.
 - Limited collaboration among family engagement programs negates their positive impact.

- **Local non-profits measure outputs (i.e., number of parents served) and limited qualitative outcomes (i.e., increase in attendance at parent teacher meetings), but none correlate program outcomes to student achievement (i.e., grades, graduation rates).**
 - Collecting and measuring data is time-consuming and expensive.
 - Access to student data requires permission from families, which is difficult to obtain.

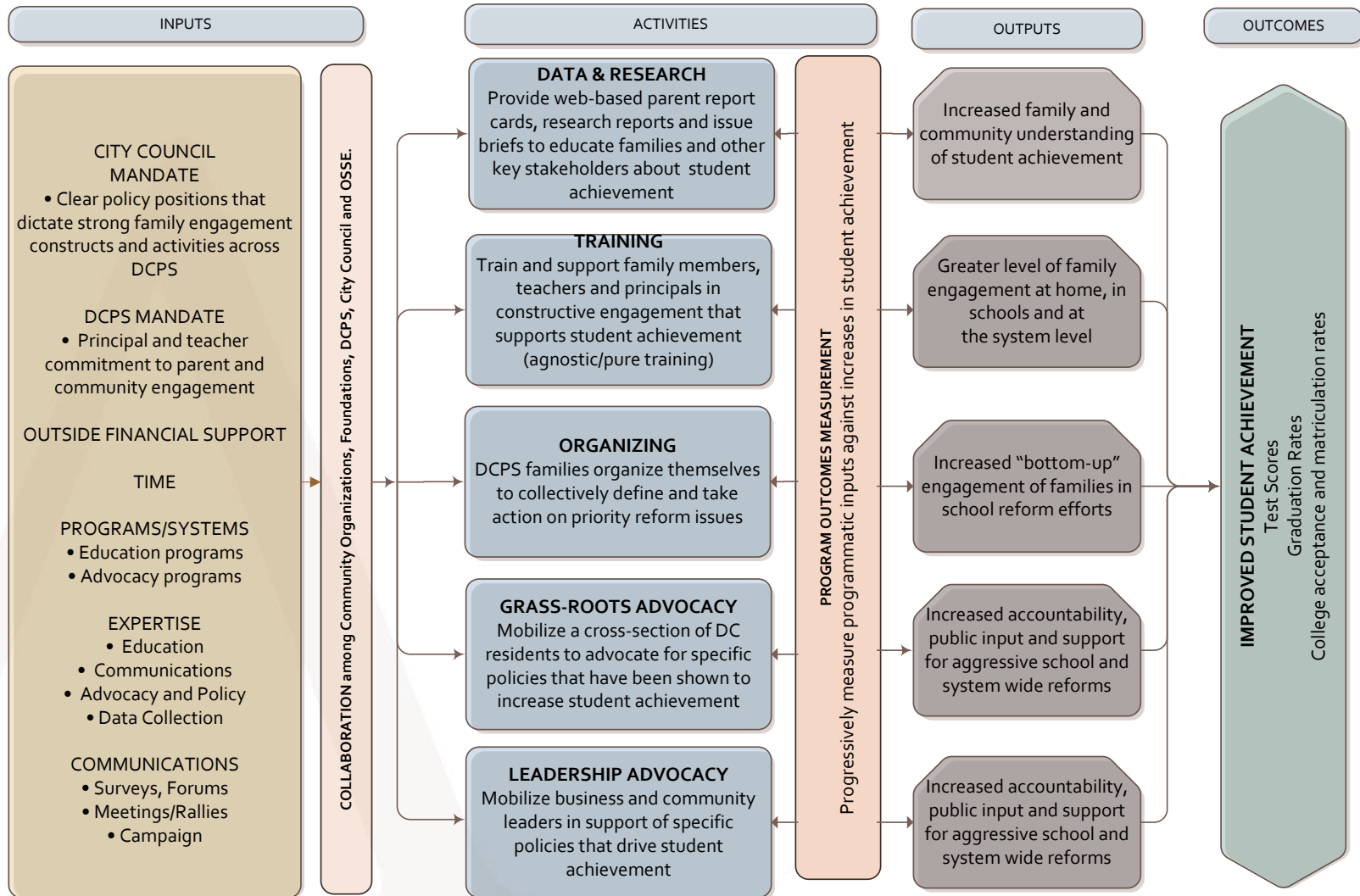
- **The DC education advocacy landscape is highly fragmented.**
 - A unified voice of advocacy for schools of excellence that drive student achievement does not exist.
 - Multiple organizations seek to coordinate the work of disparate advocacy groups.
 - Existing organizations face fierce competition for limited funding.

- **DC has limited parent organizing initiatives.**
 - DC lacks a broad industrial base, and therefore the city has limited union organizing activity.
 - Community members have not developed skills, strategies or tactics for meaningful organizing.



* statistically significant research that correlates family engagement interventions to student achievement.

- DCPS and the DC community need a more comprehensive, coordinated approach to family and community engagement that is grounded in data and focused on driving student achievement.



Training and Capacity Support

- ✓ Advocate for a strong mandate and a clear commitment on the part of the school system to train principals and teachers in constructive family and community engagement.
- ✓ Recognize that all families, regardless of income or education level, want their children to do well in school and underscore that children's educational development is a collaborative enterprise.
- ✓ Use school-based activities to break down barriers of trust and define common ground.
- ✓ Engage families in training and advocacy initiatives as teams (groups from each school).
- ✓ Link engagement efforts to student learning.
- ✓ Provide ongoing, solid support structure(s) for families (i.e., school based project team, civic support team).
- ✓ Connect capacity building programs with advocacy initiatives to rally support for system-wide reforms.

School and System Level Advocacy

- ✓ Focus advocacy efforts on a reform plan versus the people behind the plan.
- ✓ Organize around a broad agenda, but use more specific advocacy projects that speak directly to what families want for their child's school to build constituencies.
- ✓ Navigate political differences by focusing on schools that produce strong student outcomes.
- ✓ Leverage data and policy analysis to identify and expose problems.
- ✓ Combine grass-roots and grass-tops approaches.
- ✓ Identify "gate keepers" to help organize constituencies with community roots.
- ✓ Convene family forums that foster direct exchange with district officials.
- ✓ Expose families to what good schools look like.
- ✓ Link proposed reform strategies with district priorities to facilitate broad coalition effort.
- ✓ Make it easy and rewarding for families to join efforts (i.e., transportation, child care, food, entertainment).

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APPENDIX
DETAILED REVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONS

21st Century School Fund

Mission	<p>Founded in 1994, the 21st Century School Fund (21CSF) aims to ensure that every child has the chance to learn in an educationally appropriate, healthy and safe school that serves as a community anchor and is built and maintained in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner by building the public will and capacity to improve urban public school facilities. 21CSF is a leading national voice for increased investment in the public school infrastructure, a pioneer in innovative approaches to community engagement in capital planning, creative financing and public-private partnership strategies, and a leading source for technical assistance and research on school facility planning, management, oversight, and financing.</p>
Initiatives	<p>21CSF began with a focus in the District of Columbia at a time when the school district had low standards for school facilities and no capital funds. 21CSF managed the development of the Oyster Bilingual Elementary School through a public private partnership that raised \$13 million in new public funds to build the first new DC public school in a generation and set a new standard for school facilities across the city. To help reach this higher standard, 21CSF prepared the first facility master plan in 30 years and helped secure one billion dollars in new capital funds. 21CSF launched and continues to facilitate the DC Ed Advocates, an ad hoc regular meeting space for the city’s parent and community education advocates to share information and develop shared strategies. As the city’s leading voice on school facility improvements, 21CSF works with city and school leaders on planning and research related to the future of DC’s school infrastructure; supports parent and community engagement in planning efforts; and partners with SHAPPE, Parents United and other advocates to ensure adequate oversight of and transparency in the District’s school modernization planning, implementation, and evaluation.</p> <p>In 2001, with support from the Ford Foundation, 21CSF launched the Building Educational Success Together (BEST) collaborative to work nationally with other local and national leaders working to improve educational outcomes and community vitality, particularly for children in low-income communities. Since 2001, BEST has helped define school infrastructure as a new and important focus for education policy, practice, and advocacy. It has actively informed political and educational leaders of the opportunities offered by high quality facilities and revealed the inequities and harm caused by substandard buildings. Specifically 21CSF and BEST have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a shared vision for school facilities and identified their importance to education, health, the environment, the community and public investment; published as High Performance School Buildings for All Children: A Declaration and Call to Action. • Developed model policies for facility planning, community use, management, and financing: Model Policies in Support of High Performance School Buildings for All Children. • Conducted some of the most regularly cited research studies in the field, including: Do School Facilities Affect Academic Outcomes? (2002), Facilities Information Management: A Guide for State & Local Education Agencies (2003), The Impact of Facilities on Teaching (2004) and Growth & Disparity: A Decade of US Public School Construction (2006).
Annual Budget	<p>\$800,000</p>
Major Funding	<p>Ford Foundation Convergence Partnership (Funder collaborative staffed by PolicyLink comprised of the California Endowment, Kaiser Permanente, Nemours, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation) Eugene & Agnes E Meyer Foundation Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Prince Charitable Trust Philip Graham Fund</p>

ASPIRA - APEX	
Mission	To increase the involvement of Latino parents in their children's education by helping them learn about the intricacies of negotiating change and improving education in their communities.
Initiatives	<p>The award-winning APEX Program is a model program made up of two basic components – the APEX Workshop Series and one-on-one counseling and advisement. Recruiting parents begins not only in schools, but also in churches, community centers, and social service agencies - places where hard to reach parents are more easily located. Once parents are recruited, they attend the one to two hour APEX workshops, which are conducted in convenient locations, and at times in parents’ homes. The workshops are also conducted at different times of the day and different days of the week – whatever schedule is most accommodating to parents. Childcare is also provided during the sessions. The APEX Workshop Series consists of ten workshops which address such topics as: self-esteem, school structure, helping children improve their study habits, communication skills for the home, parents' rights in the schools, group dynamics, and leadership skills. The curriculum used for the workshops comes in two easy-to-read manuals developed by the ASPIRA Association in both Spanish and English. “The APEX Workshop Series Manual” contains ten workshops which include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-Esteem 2. Why is Education Important? 3. The Home Connection 4. School Structure 5. What Does Parental Involvement Really Mean? 6. The Importance of Communication 7. Involvement With Schools 8. Organizing Parent Networks 9. Group Dynamics 10. An Effective Facilitator <p>An APEX Coordinator provides counseling and advisement for parents on an as-needed, one-on-one basis at each site. Coordinators listen and respond to parents’ concerns, and help them develop strategies to respond to problems that their children face in school. With the increased awareness of educational issues and support offered through the APEX Program, parents have a base from which to begin advocating for their children and for improving the school educational standards in their community.</p>
Annual Budget	APEX is currently redoing its curriculum to comply with NCLB regulation.
Major Funding	No current funding. State offices have received state and federal funding.
Evaluation Methods/	Participant surveys and school feedback. Parent stories.

Advocates for Justice & Education	
Mission	To motivate and educate families, and those working with families about the laws that govern special education and related services, and the consequences of institutional negligence and/or inappropriate classification of students with special needs.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent-to-Parent Leadership Institute is a 6-week training that focuses on educational advocacy, the laws supporting special education and related services, and leadership training. • The Parent Training program is a resource library and training center which offers information on the laws of special education, specific disabilities, the latest research on treatment and interventions, and adaptive technology. • Parent to Parent/Family Navigators program (in planning stages funded by Dept. of Health) The program matches parents needing support to navigate through complex social service systems with a focus on children with special health care needs, mental health needs, students transitioning into adult care systems.
Annual Budget	\$371,000 (Parent to Parent is a part of that budget)
Major Funding	D.C. Government/ OSSE US Department of Education/OSERS US Department of Education Children’s Youth Investment Trust Corp DC Bar Foundation Department of Health Public Welfare Foundation Shippy Foundation The Fradian Foundation Moriah Fund Eugene & Agnes Meyer Foundation
Evaluation Methods/ Outcomes	Goal: The Parent to Parent Leadership will provide parents with opportunities to develop leadership skill in addition to providing parents with a supportive network of peers. Outcomes: - 50 parents will participate in the Parent to Parent Leadership Institute - 9 parents will receive ongoing in-service training on the laws of public education, leadership development, and appropriate mentoring techniques. Goal : To provide parents with access to timely information on issues of importance and concern to them. <u>Outcomes:</u> - 1,200 will visit the A.J.E. website. - 1,200 individuals, parents, service providers, and advocates will receive quarterly newsletters. - 1,200 individuals, parents, service providers, and advocates will visits the resource centers

DC Children First	
Mission	To bring together families, educators, business and community leaders to reform education in DC. Primary work currently focuses on supporting vouchers. The organization plans to broaden its agenda.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored several public education campaigns to support comprehensive school reforms in the district of Columbia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy on personnel issue in DCPS Central office. • Radio ads supporting creative city leadership. • Editorials in The Washington Post. • Radio ads on union contract negotiations.
Annual Budget	\$219k
Major Funding	Joe Robert, Annual Fight Night dinner

DC Parent Resource Centers	
Mission	To empower families and guardians to become more engaged and offer opportunities for families and guardians to expand their capacity to support their children's academic performance and social and emotional development.
Initiatives	<p>Academic Scrapbook: An activity for parents and kids which teaches families how to save school work and projects for use later on in tests or other homework projects. The initiative teaches how items can be used to track student progress.</p> <p>Adult Literacy</p> <p>Anger Management</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for parents to work in Centers to boost job skills and increase knowledge in various programming areas. \$25-\$50 stipends may be provided. <p>Saturday Learning Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach parents how to teach children. Parent-child partners required; focus on math and reading; based on DCPS Learning Standards (pilot in Ward 8) <p>What Your Child Should Know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of DCPS standards for ES, JHS, HS • 2 hours (30 min questions. 10 min Q&A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - receive handouts explaining standards - resource to assist students - handout with questions to ask at parent/teacher conferences <p>School Family Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot to create teachers who are family involvement specialists. Targeted at low, mid, and high performing ES, JHS, HS in Wards 1,7,8.
Annual Budget	\$2.9m budget from City Council
Major Funding	Line item from City Council
Evaluation Methods/ Outcomes	Participant attendance and family surveys. Approximately 250 families have participated in programs since 2005

DC School Reform Now

Mission	To enact school reform in DCPS through concerned resident volunteers. Its goal is to build a diverse and informed network of DC residents who will exercise their leadership to support high quality schools for all children in DCPS.
Initiatives	Organizes DC residents to be advocates for education reform within DCPS by building a network of individuals from across the city through outreach, petitions, small and large group gatherings, and other organizing activities.
Annual Budget	\$150k
Major Funding	Flamboyant Foundation

DC VOICE

Mission	To inform and mobilize the public to hold both the schools and the community accountable for providing high quality teaching and learning for all.
Initiatives	Publishes annual 'Ready Schools Project,' which collects survey data from principals re. their schools' readiness at the beginning of the year.
Annual Budget	\$506,000

Fight For Children	
Mission	Recognizes, promotes, and cultivates quality education for low-income children in DC. Fight For Children also addresses the critical link between good health and improved academic performance.
Initiatives	<p>Making Strategic Grants. Using proceeds from Fight Night, Fight For Children supports other local non-profit organizations that provide education and healthcare services and demonstrate measurable positive results in improving the lives of children in DC. Since its founding in 1990, Fight For Children has invested in over 150 local organizations, including 22 in 2008.</p> <p>Promoting Quality Education. Fight For Children's Quality Schools initiative encourages replication of high quality programs that improve student achievement in public, charter, and independent schools in DC. As part of the program in 2008, Fight For Children awarded three DC schools each \$100,000, produced case studies of each school, and held forums to recognize the schools' effective practices. Fight For Children also publishes My School Chooser, a user-friendly guide containing programmatic descriptions and academic performance information on all DC schools to help families make the best educational choice for their children.</p> <p>Setting an Action Agenda to Improve Kids' Lives. In 2009, Fight For Children will publish an Action Agenda to Improve Kids' Lives, a research-based report that will analyze the social return on investment of the key health and educational services and programs kids in DC need to thrive. The Action Agenda will foster the implementation of high impact, proven solutions, to create stronger families with healthier, more successful young adults.</p>
Annual Budget	\$5.4m, including \$1.7m in re-grants to other nonprofit organizations
Major Funding	<p>Annie E. Casey Foundation Bailey Capital Corporation CityBridge Foundation DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education Freddie Mac Foundation J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation JE Robert Companies Sheila C. Johnson Kimsey Foundation Joseph E. Robert, Jr.</p>

FOCUS	
Mission	To promote education reform in the District of Columbia through the development of high quality public charter schools.
Initiatives	<p>FOCUS serves as the charter schools’ primary advocate and problem solver, going to bat for them to equalize funding, free up school buildings for their use, and defeat attempts to inhibit their autonomy. FOCUS helped to get D.C.’s strong public charter school law passed and over the years has successfully amended it to remove barriers to charter school success. Since its founding FOCUS has worked with the D.C. government, the Congress, the press, and the public to increase their understanding of and support for public charter schools, which now enroll approximately 36% of all D.C. public school students.</p> <p>FOCUS also is the District’s one-stop training and support center for individuals and organizations seeking to start new public charter schools. The FOCUS Startup Program provides aspiring charter school leaders with the tools and guidance necessary for creating successful charter school applications and for opening outstanding schools. Charter school founding groups apply to the program and FOCUS selects those groups that have the necessary experience and commitment to develop and open quality schools.</p> <p>Most recently, FOCUS established the DC Charter Ambassadors Network (DC CAN) to further build support for public charter schools as an education reform strategy for the District of Columbia. Through DC CAN, FOCUS is building a base of public charter school parents, leaders, trustees, and community supporters who will serve as ambassadors to the Mayor, the administration and members of the D.C. Council, many of whom appear to be unclear about the key role of the public charter schools in D.C. school reform. DC CAN works with parents and other stakeholders in three ways: <u>EDUCATING</u> – raise their awareness of and arm them with valuable information about public charter schools and education reform <u>EMPOWERING</u> – train, support, and instill confidence in them as worthy education stakeholders who will hold their public officials accountable <u>ENGAGING</u> – provide them with opportunities to speak, act, and make a difference for DC students who attend public charter schools</p>
Annual Budget	\$981,927
Major Funding	<p>Walton Family Foundation Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation C. Boyden Gray Anonymous Hon. and Mrs. Richard M. Fairbanks, III Kathryn W. Davis Foundation Mr. and Mrs. Donald Rumsfeld Mr. and Mrs. Robert Duemling Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Kogod Forrester Construction Company Mr. and Mrs. Norman Bernstein (and several other individuals/corporations)</p>

Multicultural Community Service	
Mission	To encourage, promote, and facilitate broad and inclusive civic participation.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Helpline for families to call to ask questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I choose the right school for my child? • How can I get information about Special Education Services? • What enrichment, literacy, or after-school activities are available for my child? • Parents as Partners program trains families and non-profit leaders in how to constructively advocate for student outcomes. Its curriculum is based on a program created by the National Council of La Raza. • At Parent University, a group of parents come together to discuss the systemic issues in the public school system that affect the academic achievement of their children. After several participatory sessions, on such topics as public education and academic performance, parents identify issues that have priority. In the past, they listed ineffective communication between schools and parents, including lack of timely notice of supplemental services, school safety, assistance in understanding and following the road to college, and the lack of counseling services that support, inform, and prepare youth for college.
Annual Budget	Parent Info Resource: \$345k Training: \$234k
Major Funding	[MCS is the only federally funded Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayuda Inc. • Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative • Community Foundation of the National Capital Region • Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs • US Department of Education
Evaluation Methods/Outcomes	In partnership with the Capstone Institute of Howard University, the research and data collected through this program is being evaluated and analyzed to determine the project's feasibility and adaptability to other areas throughout the US. The rigorous evaluation method employs a mixed method design and evaluation materials and procedures that are culturally responsive. Written materials are in English and Spanish and trained bilingual, culturally competent DC PIRC evaluators are on staff. Parent surveys measure parental involvement attitudes and related behaviors, ratings of parenting efficacy, and ratings of quality and usefulness of DC-PIRC services and materials.

Parents United for DC Public Schools	
Mission	To empower families and the community with information and advocacy skills to transform DC Public Schools to ensure educational success for all children.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educates and mobilizes families to get involved in school reform • Analyzes legislation and policies and presents recommendations to City Council • Sponsors community discussions
Annual Budget	None
Major Funding	None

Save Our Schools	
Mission	To re-energize public school advocacy at the grassroots and institutional levels through coalition building with like-minded groups at the local and national levels, and through public information campaigns, political activism and, when necessary, legal action.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear about current activities. • Website hasn't been updated since May 2008.
Annual Budget	Not available
Major Funding	Not available

Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and Educators (SHAPPE)	
Mission	To work cooperatively with parents, principals, teachers and students to learn from one another and advocate for practice, policy and budget that will support the students of the DCPS high schools.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosts monthly meetings in schools with guest speakers from the city, school administration and community • Publishes a newsletter • Testifies and supports testimony at city hearings and roundtables • Works closely with other groups that support high schools in academics, health, safety, budget, career tech, facilities • Consults with PTA, LSRT or other group (when available) at every school • Works with the District and DCPS on committees getting feedback and informing policy.
Annual Budget	\$10,000
Major Funding	21st Century School Fund Cafritz Foundation Community Foundation DC VOICE High School PTA's Meyer Wendling Foundation Hazen Foundation

Tellin' Stories (a project of Teaching for Change)

Mission	To strengthen local leaders and support families' power in transforming their lives, their schools and their communities.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs in five schools: Bruce Monroe, Brightwood, J Wilson, CW Harris and MLK • Tellin' Stories works with families to create and implement action plans that affect the academic achievement and environment of neighborhood schools through relationship building (creating a story quilt), weekly meetings, workshops, trainings, and grassroots organizing. • Tellin' Stories believes that for schools to provide the quality education children deserve, families, schools and communities must be involved as purposeful partners in the education process.
Annual Budget	\$225,000
Major Funding	DC Children's Youth Investment Trust Corporation Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium Columbus Foundation Community Foundation for the National Capitol Region Cafritz Foundation Horning Foundation DC Public Schools National Education Association Staples Target
Evaluation Methods/Outcomes	<p>Methods: Mid-year and end-of-the year evaluations with parents who participate in the program, teachers, principals, and community partners. Reviews indicators that impact teaching and learning that have been influenced by parents' engagement through Tellin' Stories: these include but are not limited to teacher retention, test scores, students' reading levels, improved facilities, improved staffing, school climate and parent satisfaction.</p> <p>Outcomes: Developed an approach, with community building as the foundation, that links parent engagement to improved school climate and student achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 350 parents and teachers attend at least one Tellin' Stories school-based workshop a year; approximately fifty participate in eight or more sessions. • Bruce Monroe Elementary School was one of 27 schools in the DC public schools to make Annual Yearly Progress in 2006-07. The Principal attributes the academic success to the activism of the parents through Tellin' Stories. • Last fall and spring, the parents of Bruce Monroe organized an impressive and successful advocacy campaign to stop the DCPS chancellor's plan to close their school. Seventy-seven percent of the school's parents engaged in the successful fight to keep their school open. • Over 80 parents have participated in a Cross-City Leadership Training with 12 senior leaders now planning and facilitating workshops at their own school and reporting a significant increase of parent involvement. • In the Roving Readers program twenty parents read regularly in four DC public schools. • In 2008, developed a training manual, the National Education Association created an eight minute documentary about its approach, and the organization trained 31 school and district leaders representing 7 states across the country.

Turning the Page	
Mission	To link DC public schools, families and the community so that, together, they can ensure DC students receive valuable educational resources and a high-quality public education.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Nights: fun and interactive evenings that include parent workshops, child mentoring, book giveaways, and a family dinner. Turning the Page hosts 56 Community Nights each school year through partnerships at seven DC public schools. • Parent Workshops: Facilitated parent workshops held during each Community Night emphasize the importance of parental involvement in child learning. Each 90-minute workshop introduces topics ranging from the importance of choosing age-appropriate books and reading at home, to preparing for Parent-Teacher Conferences, special education, summer learning opportunities, and understanding and supporting children’s math and science lessons. One author visit at each school each semester invites a children’s author to read to the students and then speak separately with the parents. These evenings give parents a sense of ownership over the books that they share with their children. • The Parent Leadership initiative: Provides extensive support and technical assistance to each of Turning the Page's partner school's parent-teacher organizations. At three day-long Parent Leadership training seminars each year, parents receive training in general leadership skills such as goal setting, communication, and meeting facilitation. Trainings also focus on providing parents with resources they can use to become stronger leaders within their school community. Building on the skills and knowledge they gain from Parent Leadership trainings, parents become empowered to work together to create new parent teacher organizations or to strengthen established groups. TTP supports parents also on projects that they identify as priorities at their schools. • Teacher Leadership: Turning the Page collaborates with teachers to more effectively engage the parents of students in their classrooms and successfully leverage community resources. TTP meets monthly with teachers across each of its partner schools in Leadership Groups and Professional Learning Communities.
Annual Budget	\$419,200 for family training
Major Funding	Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development The Boeing Company Cafritz Foundation Commonwealth Foundation DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities The Herb Block Foundation The Meyer Foundation The Corporation for National and Community Service The Phillip Graham Fund District of Columbia Public Schools Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation
Evaluation Methods/Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures success of programs through attendance tracking, evaluations and interviews. Looks to gauge whether parents attending Community Nights learned a new skill in a workshop, and implemented those skills in their home or at school. • Based on interviews and evaluations completed by parents participating in TTP programs for at least one year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of parents participating in Turning the Page programs read with their children more than three days a week, 55% for more than 30 minutes in each instance. Children in TTP families read for 3 ½ to 9 ½ hours each week, logging the equivalent of 26 additional school days each year through their at-home reading.

Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)	
Mission	To improve the quality of life for all DC's residents through grassroots political action and by engaging parents, community members, congregation members in public life to shape and improve their communities.
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes campaign of family and community members for school reform. • Past campaigns led to \$22m for athletic facilities and \$25m to support after-school programs. • In the early 2000s , WIN organized a widespread ready schools campaign to make emergency school facility repairs. • WIN is an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation, which is a national organization supporting local community organizing bodies.
Annual Budget	\$620k
Major Funding	Dues from member organizations/ congregations Corporate Campaign from member congregations Mott Foundation Annie Casey Foundation Heron Fund Meyer Foundation Jewish Fund for Justice Cafritz Foundation Fannie Mae Foundation Marpat Foundation

A+ Denver	
Mission	To transform the Denver public school district into the best in the country and to make increased student achievement and public school reform a top priority in the Denver community. A+ Denver is a coalition of approximately 100 members that provides DPS oversight and broad-based experience from the business, civic and governmental communities.
Annual Budget	Not available
Major Funders	Colorado Nonprofit Development Center
Approach	<p>The Student Achievement Sub-Committee: conducting a review of the DPS strategy for reform, including its premises, its challenges as well as expected reform outcomes.</p> <p>The Finances and Facilities Sub-Committee: charged with examining the capacity of DPS to implement the Denver Plan. This includes an examination of the financial condition of the district, whether physical assets match community needs and demographic trends as well as identifying any internal obstacles to full implementation of the Denver Plan.</p> <p>The Outreach Sub-Committee: helps to enhance methods of communicating facts and news about what is happening in DPS with its stakeholders. This includes information about A+ Denver, the Denver Plan, other DPS reform efforts and news on individual schools.</p>
Outcomes	Through broad-based information sharing and collaboration, the group has succeeded in bringing together a cross-section of important community stakeholders who have drawn independent conclusions regarding the need for school reforms and have become strong allies of the Superintendent's reforms.

ACORN	
Mission	To organize a majority constituency of low- to moderate-income people across the United States. The members of ACORN take on issues of relevance to their communities, whether those issues are discrimination, affordable housing, a quality education, or better public services. ACORN believes that low- to moderate-income people are the best advocates for their communities. ACORN's low- to moderate-income members act as leaders, spokespeople, and decision-makers within the organization.
Annual Budget	Not available
Major Funders	Not available
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community organizing: Each of the 1,200 local ACORN neighborhood chapters in 110 cities and 40 states brings neighbors together to work for stronger, safer and more just communities. • Issue campaigns: Each ACORN office carries out multiple issue campaigns. ACORN members across the country work to raise the minimum wage or enact living wage policies; eliminate predatory financial practices by mortgage lenders, payday lenders, and tax preparation companies; win the development of affordable housing and community benefits agreements; improve the quality of and funding for urban public schools; rebuild New Orleans; and pass a federal and state ACORN Working Families Agenda, including paid sick leave for all full time workers. • A recent study shows that issue campaign victories have delivered approximately \$15 billion in direct monetary benefits to our membership and constituency over the past 10 years. • Service delivery: ACORN and its allied organizations provide extensive services to our members and constituency. These include free tax preparation focusing on the Earned Income Tax Credit; screening for eligibility for federal and state benefit programs; and, through the ACORN Housing Corporation, first time homeowner mortgage counseling and foreclosure prevention assistance, and low income housing development. • Ballot initiatives: ACORN-backed ballot-initiative campaigns in 2006 helped raise the minimum wage in Ohio, Arizona, Missouri and Colorado, working with community-faith-labor coalitions on successful campaigns in each state. • Voter participation: Since 2004, ACORN has helped more than 1.7 million low- and moderate-income and minority citizens
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Chicago, ACORN fought to get certified teachers in every classroom. In order to curb youth related crime, members organized an anti-violence rally in which more than 100 members participated. As a result, city officials awarded \$12 million to ACORN to put toward new after-school and weekend programs. • ACORN has facilitated statewide education reform in Illinois, working with a coalition of community organizations, to create the Grow Your Own Teacher program. The program recruits teacher candidates from among paraprofessionals and active parents in hard-to-staff schools, and involves 587 teacher candidates, more than 50 percent of whom are African American and 25 percent Latino. GYOT has been approved for a third year of funding by the state legislature at \$3 million. • In California, ACORN is making lists of where it needs textbooks and school repairs so that it can get its fair share of the allocated money. Oakland, Calif. convinced the School District to commit to six of 10 demands to retain and recruit teachers, in which three have been implemented. Los Angeles led the effort in the newly formed Movement to Reform Education. • In Rhode Island ACORN is working with the teachers unions (RIFT and NEARI) to acquire funding for school construction and ultimately more funding for schools. • In New York City ACORN won funding for lead ACORN teachers neighborhood schools so that teachers have the support they need to do better. New York ACORN celebrated an initiative that ensures a science lab in every middle school by 2010, providing more than \$400 million in funding. • Houston voters approved an ACORN-supported \$805 million bond package for Texas' largest school district, which provides funds to build 24 new schools and renovate 134.

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and The National Network of Partnership Schools	
Mission	To assist schools, districts, states, and organizations to strengthen and sustain goal-oriented programs of school, family, and community partnerships. NNPS includes active members in over 1,100 schools, 150 school districts, 21 states, and 60 organizations.
Scope	1,100 schools, 150 school districts, 21 states, and 60 organizations.
Curriculum	<p>A critical part of the curriculum is the Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) – a committee of educators, parents, and community partners who work together to engage all families and the community in productive ways. Each school tailors its annual partnership plans and activities to meet its learning goals for students and to meet the needs and interests of its students, parents, and teachers.</p> <p>Each school's ATP conduct the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Write a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships (with activities linked to selected goals in the School Improvement Plan) •Integrate all family and community involvement activities conducted by teachers and school groups in the One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships •Recruit and recognizes other teachers, parents, community members for leadership and participation in family and community involvement activities •Implement, coordinate, publicize, and oversee the planned involvement activities •Monitor progress, assess the strengths and weaknesses of implemented involvement activities, document results, and resolve problems •Report progress to the School Council (or School Improvement Team) and to the faculty, PTA/PTO, local media, and other groups •Replace departing ATP members •Continue improving the school's program of family and community involvement <p>NNPS focuses on six types of involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Parenting: Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students; assist schools to better understand families. •Communicating: Conduct effective communications from school-to-home and from home-to-school about school programs and student progress. •Volunteering: Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students. Provide volunteer opportunities in various locations and at various times. •Learning at Home: Involve families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions. •Decision Making: Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives. •Collaborating with the Community: Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community. <p>All NNPS then complete a 1 year Action Plan and a detailed program evaluation.</p>
Approach	NNPS provides in-service education and ongoing professional development for school, district, and state leaders, and teams of educators, parents, and others to improve their programs of family involvement and community connections. Studies are being conducted on the structures and processes used to "scale up" partnership programs to all schools in a district, to improve the quality of family and community involvement, and to identify the academic and behavioral results of partnership program for students, families, and schools.
Outcomes	Longitudinal data showed that the CSR school improved its state achievement test scores in reading, writing, and math compared to matched schools in those subjects.

ConnCAN	
Mission	To raise awareness of issues contributing to the achievement gap. ConnCAN builds consensus and empowers families and community members to get involved with decisions impacting schools and student achievement.
Annual Budget	\$615k
Major Funders	Initial funding from John Sackler family, local foundations, Bank of America Foundation, Graustein Memorial Fund
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed school and district report cards so parents have an easy-to-use assessment of how well their child's public school is meeting the needs of all its students • Launched a parent empowerment initiative and produced a guide entitled "How to Make Sure Your Child is Not Left Behind." • Produced a series of issue briefs on key education topics. • Facilitates trips for parents to visit other schools in their districts to understand the disparity between their child's school and a high performing school. • Launched interactive website to inform parents, policymakers, and the public at the center of the efforts to close Connecticut's achievement gap.
Outcomes	Studies on state of public schools have resulted in increased dialog, data-driven decision making, and increased awareness of the disparity between low and high performing schools. Parent education workshops have trained 250+ parents.

Connecticut Commission on Children	
Mission	The Parent Leadership Training Initiative (PLTI) is a state-driven public-private partnership that works with local communities to provide parents with the knowledge, skills and tools of civic engagement.
Scope	16 sites in 4 states, 1,000 graduates
Curriculum	20-week course, meets 1/week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retreat • 10 weeks: empowerment • 10 weeks: practicing democracy skills • Community project
Approach	PLTI offers a comprehensive 20-week training program in civics education. It is targeted to small groups of community members who are empowered to become leaders in their communities and affect change. The course focuses on empowerment – teaching people how to be effective leaders and how to impact policy decisions at the local and state levels. Parents SEE is a 13 week leadership course for parents and grandparents. Parents SEE provides motivated family members with practical strategies for actively engaging with other parents, with educators and with community leaders in examining educational policies and practice. Participants learn what to expect from schools, how to partner with them, and how to be successful civic leaders on education issues.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant survey, focus groups, follow-up interviews, project assessments. University of New Hampshire survey (2004): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% participants reported improved outcomes • 42% reported positive changes in families • 40% reported community impact

EdVoice	
Mission	EdVoice was established by California’s leading educational philanthropists who understand that the future of California will be shaped by the quality of education the public schools deliver. Four former state Secretaries of Education have joined leaders from business, academia, and government as members of Ed Voice's Advisory Board.
Annual Budget	\$132k for grassroots activities
Major Funders	John Doerr, Eli Broad, Don Fisher
Approach	EdVoice works at both the grassroots and grasstops levels to engage politicians, philanthropists, parents, and education thought leaders in school reform. Hosts training for politicians and candidates on all aspects of education reform. Trainings include education reform experts from across the country with goal of establishing EdVoice as the “go to” for information on education reform. “Families That Can” program targets low income African American and Latino parents. Program identifies communities where parents are unhappy and trains and organizes them around specific legislative outcomes.
Outcomes	Each year, EdVoice focuses on 2 or 3 specific reforms which can be addressed by passing legislation in Sacramento. Two recent examples of successful bills EdVoice supported: •SB 1660 provides struggling schools flexibility to offer existing and prospective math, science and special education teachers compensation packages that are more competitive with what they could make in another profession. •SB 658 gives districts access to matching funds from state bond dollars in exchange for ending multi-track calendars that severely shortchange kids. And at the same time, the bill strengthens another front on overcrowding by delivering critically needed facility resources to public charter schools in low-income communities.

Los Angeles Parents Union	
Mission	To empower parents to transform public schools through collective action in order to improve failing schools and help create high performing, college-preparatory public schools for every student in the Los Angeles Unified School District.
Major Funders	Broad Foundation, Gates Foundation
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Parent University” program in which parents gain skills to communicate with teachers and administrators to advocate for their children and use organizing tools such as primers on graduation requirements and school-quality scores. • “School transformation” projects: parents collaborate with LAUSD and key stakeholders to transform their local large, failing schools into clusters of small, safe schools. • “Revolution” campaign which organizes parents to advocate for improved schools. If parents aren’t satisfied with their school and they organize at least half their parents, LAPU will guarantee a great school, either a charter, or it will work with Green Dot or high performing charter schools to open charter schools near them.” • Partnered with SEIU which provides funding and technical assistance to LAPU.

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Mission	To promote the civil rights of 40 million Latinos living in the US. Parent School Partnership (PSP) Program trains parents in effective school engagement. A national nonprofit, MALDEF programs teach skills to analyze and improve the performance of public schools.
Scope	3,000 parents, students, and community members participate every year in 4 sites: LA, Houston, Atlanta, Chicago
Major Funders	Bank of America, JP Morgan (formerly WaMu), Marguerite Casey Foundation, BP, United Way of Greater LA, Sempra Energy, Comcast, Sodexo, Polk Bros Foundation, Toyota, Kroger, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Curriculum	Sixteen two-hour sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Parent Rights and Responsibilities •College Access •Media Relations •School and system structure •Political landscape of educational system
Approach	PSP is a national program that trains parents, school personnel, and community based organizations to lead in the educational attainment of children. Focus on increasing parents' knowledge of the educational system, augmenting parents involvement and advocacy in the schools, and deepening parents' understanding on their legal rights and responsibilities within the educational system. MALDEF also offers 'Train the Trainer' programs.

Parents for Public Schools

Mission	Parents for Public Schools (PPS) is a national organization of community-based chapters working with public school parents and other supporters to improve and strengthen local public schools. PPS was the first organization to adapt the Prichard model to urban schools.
Scope	19 PPS chapters located in 11 states
Curriculum	Runs the Prichard Parent Leadership Institute (PLI) in several locations: maximum of 30 parents at a time; 3 weekends spread over 3 months.
Approach	The National Office of PPS works with its chapters in three core areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Leadership Development for Parents – to build a powerful network of parents who are equipped with leadership skills to engage in school improvement efforts at the local, state, and national level. •Public Awareness for Parent Engagement – to build greater awareness of and support for parent engagement as a school improvement strategy. •Organizing for Action – to mobilize parents and their supporters to work to achieve equitable distribution of resources to support public education and access to high-quality public education opportunities for all students.

Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)	
Mission	To bring schools, families, and community together as equal partners in the education of every child to provide all students with the option of and access to postsecondary education.
Scope	32 sites, 475,000 graduates
Curriculum	<p>Nine sessions, meets 1/week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Building children’s self-esteem •Understanding school system •Learning strategies at home •Communicating with teachers •Preventing gangs and drugs •College preparation
Outcomes	<p>Most comprehensive evaluations of any family training organization.</p> <p>2007 independent study compared high school graduation rates for PIQE children vs. all Latino students in San Diego: PIQE: 93% San Diego: 63% California: 69% US: 53%</p>

PICO	
Mission	PICO is a national network of faith-based community organizations working to create innovative solutions to problems facing urban, suburban and rural communities. Since 1972 PICO has successfully worked to increase access to health care, improve public schools, make neighborhoods safer, build affordable housing, redevelop communities and revitalize democracy.
Major Funders	Major national foundations (Hearst, Irvine, Mott, Citigroup) and local foundations
Approach	In PICO's congregation-community model, congregations of all denominations and faiths serve as the institutional base for community organizations. Rather than bring people together simply based on common issues like housing or education, the faith-based or broad-based organizing model makes values and relationships the glue that holds organizations together.
Outcomes	<p>Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) crafted the first comprehensive small schools policy in the nation, resulting over 50 new schools and a strategy to transform the entire Oakland school system to support high quality instruction for all children. The small autonomous schools movement in Oakland is now serving as a model for school districts across the country that want to provide parents with high quality public education choices for their children, and PICO affiliates in San Jose, San Francisco and Denver have created small schools that rank at the top of their districts.</p> <p>Sacramento Area Congregations Together created the first large-scale parent engagement strategy based on teacher home visits. Better communication between home and school helps both teachers and parents do their jobs better. With support from the California Teachers Association, PICO has won state legislation and federal funding for this innovative strategy which is now being used by more than 600 schools across the country.</p> <p>Since 2005, Metro Organizations for People (MOP) in Denver has been leading a campaign to ensure that every child in the Denver Public School system receives a fair share of district funding. In 2006, MOP won support for the implementation of student-based budgeting, a strategy that ties dollars to students, not staff, and ensures that those dollars go to the school in which the student enrolls. In 2008, MOP won another victory when the Superintendent committed to begin allotting additional funds for low-income students. MOP continues its campaign to ensure equitable school funding in Denver.</p>

Prichard Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership	
Mission	A private, non-profit advocacy group that offers training programs for families to develop leadership and advocacy skills to support improved schools. Prichard's Parent Leadership Institute (PLI) program trains families in standards-based education, skills development for effective group processes, advocacy, action planning, communications between families and teachers, and reaching under-involved families.
Scope	1,500 families in KY and 1,300 families outside of KY
Curriculum	Six weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 two-day sessions • School-based project
Outcomes	Pew Charitable Trusts conducted evaluation in 1999 including surveys, participant interviews, and principal interviews. More than 95 percent of these mentioned a "better understanding of schools, greater confidence in approaching school staff and other families about addressing school needs, and a willingness to spur schools to make changes."

Stand for Children	
Mission	Stand for Children builds local and statewide networks of grassroots advocates to convince elected officials to invest in and reform children’s programs. Following specific priorities chosen by its members, SFC focuses on securing adequate funding for public schools and reforming education policies and practices to help children thrive academically, giving them the opportunities they need to become successful, productive citizens.
Scope	Stand for Children has state affiliates in the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado • Massachusetts • Oregon • Tennessee • Washington
Approach	Stand for Children builds power by training everyday people to be effective citizen leaders who join together in a unified, grassroots voice. SFC uses that power strategically to win concrete, long-lasting improvements for children, at both state and local levels. State affiliates and local Chapters mobilize members, donors, and other supporters to hold leaders accountable for prioritizing children’s needs.
Outcomes	<p>Recent Accomplishments:</p> <p>Massachusetts members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilized members and voters to help soundly defeat Question 1, a reckless ballot initiative that threatened to slash 40% of the state budget in 2008. • Prevented staffing cuts and class size increases in Worcester by convincing the City Council to increase its contribution to the school district by \$1.5 million for 2008-2009, ending a 6-year trend of school budget cuts. • Protected class sizes and programs in Lowell by convincing the City Council to reduce a proposed school district budget cut by \$800,000 for 2007-2008. <p>Oregon members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laid the groundwork for increasing teacher quality and retention by designing and establishing the Oregon New Educator Mentor Program, which is providing mentors for nearly 1,000 new K-12 teachers and principals serving 75,000 students in 2008-2009. • Helped elect a 3/5 pro-schools supermajority to the Oregon House of Representatives in 2008 by playing a key role in the successful campaigns of Brent Barton and Greg Matthews, who replaced incumbents with weak records on children’s and education issues. • Laid the groundwork for improved teacher quality in Portland Public Schools by helping secure the first positive reforms in more than 20 years in the District’s teacher hiring and transfer practices. The reforms will result in earlier teacher hiring and better teacher-school matches. <p>Tennessee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped Nashville voters soundly reject an English-Only amendment to the Metro Charter in January 2009, by 41,752 votes to 32,144. The Nashville Chapter made a significant impact, reaching over 6,000 voters with phone calls, emails, and canvassing. • Moved Tennessee’s children closer to universal access to quality pre-K education by co-leading the Tennessee Alliance for Early Education, which secured \$70 million in public funding over three years providing 800 new classrooms for 16,000 at-risk 4-year-olds. • Convinced the Nashville Metro School District to expand a dropout prevention program called "Make a Change," which provides an alternative to out-of-school suspensions and addresses root causes of behavior problems. • Reduced class sizes, updated textbooks, and secured other improvements by helping win more than \$19 million for Memphis City and Shelby County Schools; \$10.1 million dollars in Hamilton County; and \$32 million in Nashville.

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The Flamboyant Foundation is a private family foundation focused on improving educational outcomes for children in K-12 public schools in Washington, DC and Puerto Rico. Flamboyant envisions that people and organizations will work across sectors to take responsibility for strengthening communities and resolving deeply entrenched challenges that keep society from making progress. The Foundation aims to invest resources to build collaborative efforts that harness talent and ideas to improve quality and equity in K-12 public schools and strengthen K-12 education nonprofit organizations, while it acts as a responsible philanthropic organization.

Flamboyant was founded by Kristin Ehrgood and Vadim Nikitine, who for almost a decade have worked on school reform issues in Puerto Rico, the nation's third largest school district. Ms. Ehrgood and Mr. Nikitine co-founded Sapiientis, a non-profit organization that since 2003 has provided leadership training to more than 750 individuals working in public education in Puerto Rico. Ms. Ehrgood is an alum for Teach for America, where she served as a corps member in Louisiana. Nikitine is President of CCMP, an international real estate development firm. In addition to his efforts to support of education reform in Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, Mr. Nikitine is engaged in conservation efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. In December 2001, he was recognized as one of 40 people under the age of 40 having a significant and positive impact on the Caribbean. Ms. Ehrgood and Mr. Nikitine each earned the distinction of Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year in the area of Social Responsibility. Ms. Ehrgood and Mr. Nikitine met in 2001 while earning their Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

The Endeavor Group is a boutique consultancy that provides legal, policy, advocacy, communications and philanthropic services to corporate CEO's, ultra-high net worth individuals and private foundation executives. On behalf of its clients, the firm has helped to create and scale some of the world's leading research and advocacy initiatives including Debt, Aid, Trade, Africa (DATA), the Center for Global Development (CGD), Malaria No More and the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases. Endeavor has also played a central role in the launch of the Harman Center for the Arts, the Nike Foundation's "Girl Effect" initiative, the Make It Right! Project in New Orleans, and Reach Out To Asia's efforts to provide quality education to children in conflict areas.

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