**[C4DC](http://www.c4dcpublicschools.org/)** Democratic Primary Council Chair and At Large Candidate Forum

Questions from C4DC

Moderator: Sarah Stodder

June 5, 2018 at the Thurgood Marshall Center

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| 1 | In the wake of the recent graduation scandal, some are questioning the efficacy of what has come to be known as the “education reform”-agenda – test-based teacher and principal accountability, significant emphasis on high profile metrics such as graduation rates, intense focus on the basics of reading and math. Indeed, NAEP data suggest that student growth in the District of Columbia was at least as strong in the 10 years prior to the education reform era which started in 2007, than in the 10 years after, and our achievement gap remains as wide as ever even as our per pupil spending has increased significantly.  What do the recent graduation scandal, per student spending and NAEP results suggest to you about the state of our schools and the need or not for significant policy adjustments? | Education Reform:  Slides 3 and 4 |
| 2 | Our teacher turnover is very high – for teachers in low income schools on the order of 33%  Do you see this as a positive, the natural result of an appropriate evaluation system or a problem that should be addressed? If you see it as a problem what do you think is the root cause – poor hiring, negative school cultures, flaws in the evaluation system -- and what sorts of things would you look to school officials to do to address it? How will this affect your confirmation vote on the next chancellor if you are the Council Chair? | Teacher Turnover  Slide 5 |
| 3 | When this organization C4DC was founded, its members crafted a set of Principles to guide its work. They included that:   * Our families should not have to win a lottery or travel long distances to secure an excellent education for their children. * All of our neighborhoods should enjoy the power of strong neighborhood schools to build communities committed to learning and our children.   The Student Assignment – Boundary -- process sparked perhaps the most widespread public engagement on schools in a decade. The final report noted “the overwhelming input from parents and District residents was that families want a citywide system of neighborhood public schools that is equitably invested in and that provides predictable and fair access to high quality schools in all of the city’s communities.”  Meanwhile, our recent Chancellor’s avoidance of the lottery and frustrations over the stresses of the lottery contributed to the abrupt departures of both the Chancellor and Deputy Mayor for Education.  To what extent is the establishment or maintaining of a quality matter-of-right DCPS feeder pattern from PK through high school in every neighborhood a priority for you? And, if it is a priority, what kinds of steps would you take to support the city in achieving this goal? For example, would you consider limiting the growth of charter schools in places where there already is significant excess capacity? | Maintaining DCPS Schools of Right  Slides 6 and 7 |
| 4 | The city has shown leadership on early childhood education, but in the face of a near baby boom, PK3 and PK4 offerings have not nearly kept pace. Moreover, parents understandably would like to have options for their smallest children that are close to home.  Would you support an effort on the Council to ensure matter-of-right access to PK3 in all Title 1 DCPS matter-of-right neighborhood schools and PK4 in all DCPS matter-of-right neighborhood schools? If so, why and what do you think it would entail to implement such a change? If not, what about such a proposal disqualifies it from your support? | DCPS PreK Expansion  Slide 8 |
| 5 | In your view, do we spend too much, too little or close to the right amount on schools? Are there areas on which you would like to see funding increased? Are there areas you would like to see funds cut or efficiencies found? Given the annual controversies around school budgets, are there ways you think the process can be improved including giving families and the public a stronger sense of inclusion in and transparency of the process? | Funding  Slide 9 |
| 6 | We have focused as has the Council on oversight over DCPS. The Council also has oversight over the Education Sector which includes the charter schools. (now 66 separate Local Education Agencies) The city allocates 900 million for operating costs and 150 million for a facility allowance to the non-profit boards running the charter schools in next year’s budget. Their deliberations are not subject to FOIA as they are in several other states. The contracts made with public money are also not subject to scrutiny as evidenced in the recent City Paper article on TenSquare and the Public Charter School Board. Given the amount of public money at stake how will you exercise proper oversight over this sector? | Charter Oversight |