



Equity Statement for SR22-17, Recommendations on Changes to Education Governance in the District of Columbia

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In February 2021, the D.C. State Board of Education (State Board) established an ad-hoc Board Governance Committee with the passage of SR21-2, “On the Establishment of Committees.” This committee was charged with exploring the State Board’s authority relative to citywide education governance structures and mayoral control in D.C., while comparing the authorities of State Boards in other states and school districts. The basis of this work was to make recommendations that would equitably improve the educational experiences of students, their caregivers, and educators.

The Board Governance Committee has conducted research, heard expert panel testimony, and ensured meaningful community engagement—informed by the Mayor’s Office of Racial Equity (ORE)—in the form of surveys, focus groups, and engagement sessions,¹. The outreach and engagement efforts involved upwards of 1,000 residents and explicitly targeted participants who are not often well represented in public engagement processes but reflect the rich spectrum of our city:

- Residing in Wards 5, 7, and 8;
- Non-traditional caregivers like grandparents and foster parents;
- Caregivers of students receiving special-education services;
- Families with a first language other than English; and
- Current students

As a result, the committee developed recommendations to address concerns and issues that fell into five (6) key areas of improvement:

- Data transparency and access;
- Student, caregiver, and educator voice in the education decision-making process;
- Timely resolutions to individual education issues posed by students, caregivers, and educators;
- Easily accessible information on the roles and responsibilities of all D.C. government agencies that impact education;
- Efficient and effective communication and action across all government agencies impacting education; and
- The need for checks and balances that assure higher quality, credible education data and practices

¹ The State Board’s 2021 Fall Engagement, 2022 Back-to-School Engagement, and ward-level meetings.





40 The State Board believes that implementing its recommendations will increase equity because
41 individually and collectively, the recommendations serve to address concerns and issues that
42 students, caregivers, and educators across D.C. have reached out to the State Board to improve.
43 This is especially true for families and educators who expressed having a lack of voice in the
44 education decision-making process, but also applies to building knowledge—and in essence,
45 capacity—for families to better understand the education system and ensure their immediate needs
46 are met.

