

SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTENING AND LEARNING TOUR

Manual High School | Friday October 1, 2021, 5:00 to 7:00 PM

Participants: Approximately 27

Language: English

Below is a summary of the feedback from this listening session. It may not reflect the views of all participants and stakeholders district-wide.

What is going well?

- **Well-known history and legacy of Manual HS and its community**
- **Manual HS is an institution open to all and used by the community**
- The return of comprehensive high schools to Montbello and West
- Shift away from testing and school closings
- Social and emotional education of students (Columbine Elementary called out)
- Socially and economically diverse student population (Columbine Elementary called out)
- DPS alumni are committed to district
- Manual HS teachers invite parents/guardians to view curriculum
- Focus on developing "critical consciousness" at Manual HS

What needs improvement?

- **DPS ignores and does not have the trust of underserved school communities**
- **DPS staff may not share the superintendent's vision or values**
- **Too many barriers for community to access school-based resources**
- **A lack of genuine school/ community partnerships**
- DPS not leveraging large number of volunteers among retirees
- Resources not equally shared between schools
- The way boundary lines are drawn favor some schools over others
- FACE department is critical but underutilized and short staffed
- Difficult for Manual HS staff to function under fear of closure, colocation, or turn-around
- Insufficient district support for Med School for Manual
- Too much money is invested in Choice and Enrollment
- Per-pupil nature of budgets leads principals to compete for students rather than focus on learning
- Lack of robust arts programs in schools and a concentration in a few art schools drains "normal" schools of talented students
- Teachers do not reflect demographics of their classrooms
- Too many Black and brown children are going to charter and innovation schools

Advice for Dr. Marrero

- **Make sure your senior staff are committed to your vision, values, and philosophy**
- **Stay close to educators, students, and families by frequently visiting schools and communities**
- **Make time for self-care**
- **Enjoy your job!**
- Don't be afraid to make people uncomfortable or upset
- Trust teachers and parents over consultants
- Apologize for the past wrongs DPS inflicted on communities like Manual HS
- Retract list of small schools under consideration for consolidation/closure
- Eliminate LEAP
- Give leaders more time to turn-around a school
- Stop allowing schools to be over capacity
- Move away from punitive forms of school discipline and utilize healers applying the cultural and indigenous traditions of the students they serve

Notes: The comments with the most mentions during the meeting are listed in bold at the top of each column.

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