

# SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTENING AND LEARNING TOUR

Student Voice, Secondary Students | Monday, October 4, 2021, 5:00 to 6:00 PM

Participants: Approximately 12 (representing students from North HS, West HS, Emily Griffith HS, Marie L. Greenwood, Academy of Urban Learning)

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.*

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## What is going well?

- **Teachers are very understanding of the difficulties students face while transitioning back to in-person learning, and they are helping students adapt**
- **The transition from online to in-person was very smooth**
- The reunification of West High School
- Strong teacher, student, and community relationships
- Social-emotional and mental health supports that make students feel safe at school and at home
- Inclusion of students with disabilities by teachers, staff, and peers
- The security in the school helps students and makes them feel safe
- Communications with DPS in general

## What needs improvement?

- **Harsh tardy policies that are supposed to encourage students to be on time but instead promote absenteeism**
- **Segregation within DPS due to inequitable access to schools, inadequate transportation, and other systemic issues not unique to DPS**
- **The animosity between students of different backgrounds**
- **Students need more socialization**
- All schools should offer health or health education classes
- There was no adjustment period to help students transition from online to in-person school, which has resulted in many issues, including general unhappiness
- An overwhelming amount of school work; there is no time for enjoyment or fun
- The district needs to better communicate about complex and sensitive issues, so there are no misunderstandings and students do not get hurt in the process (e.g. Tay Anderson)
- More supports to help students attend college, especially at smaller high schools
- The administration needs to listen more to students and show they care
- More student leadership programs for students to get together and improve their schools

## Advice for Dr. Marrero

- **Listen to students and have more of these types of meetings**
- **Take time to make genuine connections with people**
- **Put yourself in the kids' shoes and show empathy**
- Be nice to people with disabilities, help them, and include them in conversations
- Follow through with the things you say you are going to do
- Provide supports that will help students to be successful; all students should have access to the same resources (e.g., Emily Griffith high school offers support with SNAP, bus passes, support for refugees, and people experiencing homelessness)
- Address school policies that are too harsh on students (e.g., grading policies that don't allow students to grow)

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