



SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTENING AND LEARNING TOUR

Cafecito | Wednesday September 15, 2021, 8:00 to 9:00 AM

Participants: Approximately 40 (15 in person, 25 attending virtually);

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?

- **Dedicated and caring staff and teachers with “students first” mentality**
- **Early Childhood Education (ECE) (esp. public-private partnership, Denver Preschool Program, free full-day kindergarten, high quality instruction);**
- **Recognition of the importance of equity (incl. pathway programs for teachers of color)**
- Increased social-emotional support
- Operations (incl. food services, communication and delivery of bond projects)
- Programs for high-achievers in high school (e.g., East HS)
- The support of voters for bond measures
- Understanding of the interconnectedness of school and community in coordination and planning
- Vaccination efforts in school-based clinics

What needs improvement?

- **Low educational attainment (esp. low proficiency rates in early literacy and attainment of Latinx males, in general)**
- **Institutional racism and a difficult work environment is causing great teachers and leaders (esp. those of color) to leave the district; they are often labeled as difficult or divisive**
- **Students are not empowered to advocate for themselves nor advocated for (“they have no union”)**
- Concerns about security in high schools
- DPS is losing talent because housing is too expensive
- Lack of transparency regarding COVID safety measures at schools (e.g., classroom ventilation)
- The current Human Resource systems to not appear to result in sufficient promotion of leaders of color
- The plans for improved equity and social-emotional learning are encouraging, but more action is needed
- The transition to online learning was difficult and didn't work for many students

Advice for Dr. Marrero

- **Improve choice system (incl. revision of enrollment zones, more parental support during the process, and making choice process easier and more transparent,)**
- **Provide teachers with greater support (incl. opportunities for pay and advancement, paraprofessionals in classrooms, training in social-emotional learning, and other supports for individual and small group instruction)**
- **Work to support and empower parents in the school system in general, and to promote student learning in particular**
- Promote equitable access to gifted and talented (GT) programs for multilingual learners and students of color
- Ensure exit interviews are done with teachers of color
- Find a way to implement the Black Excellence Plan and Consent Decree together using similar strategies
- Speak out on housing policy

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