EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS
THE DENVER PLAN 2020

The Denver Plan 2020 is Denver Public Schools’ five-year strategic plan. With the vision of Every Child Succeeds, DPS has committed to five specific goals designed to close academic achievement gaps and prepare all students for success in college and careers.
PURPOSE OF THIS PRESENTATION

- Share a theory of action on how enrollment support the Denver Plan and key equity topics that should be considered moving forward
- Rationale for implementing new SchoolChoice systems
- Overview of the new systems
- Considerations for timing of SchoolChoice
- Next steps
THEORY OF ACTION FOR CHOICE & ENROLLMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE DENVER PLAN

Denver Plan 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Schools in Every Neighborhood »</td>
<td>DPS is increasing the quality of schools available in every neighborhood to ensure every student in every community throughout the district has access to great schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Foundation for Success in School »</td>
<td>DPS is focused on preparedness in early education—with an emphasis on early literacy—as the foundation for students’ entire academic experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready for College and Career »</td>
<td>DPS is inspiring, challenging and empowering our students to forge their own futures. We are preparing our students for life after grades K-12, including their readiness for both college and careers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for the Whole Child »</td>
<td>DPS is leading the nation in its support of the Whole Child—which means ensuring our students are healthy, supported, engaged, challenged, safe, and socially and emotionally intelligent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close the Opportunity Gap »</td>
<td>DPS is closing the opportunity gap by improving academic achievement for African-American and Latino students while fostering a culture of equity in our schools and on our school-support teams.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If families have great schools near their home, are informed about those schools, and can enroll in the school that is the best fit for their student

And, if schools provide **equity of access** to all students,

Then students will be more successful as a result of being in the school that is right for them.
MEANING OF EQUITY OF ACCESS

Definition:
Identify and eliminate barriers to ensure that all students are able to attend the school that gives them the best opportunity for success.

Examples of Barriers:
- Low awareness of concept of choice or ability to research schools
- Zip code whose right-to-attend school is low performing
- Lack of access to private transportation
- Housing instability that prevents participating in choice 7 months early or requires mid-year school changes
- Lower academic proficiency that would not qualify for certain programs
SUCCESS OF CHOICE IN DPS
DPS has been ranked #1 by Brookings for School Choice two straight years

DPS is recognized for the strength of our policies focused on several areas:
- Enrollment equity for all schools: district-run and charter through a unified lottery
- Transparency of data, including SPF
- Year-round placement process

Leaders in choice
The 10 highest scorers in the 2016 ECCI are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/County (public school district name)</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Score*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denver, CO (School District #1 in the County of Denver)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans, LA (Recovery School District New Orleans)**</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, NY (New York City Department of Education)</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark, NJ (Newark Public Schools District)</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, MA (Boston Public Schools)</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus, OH (Columbus City Schools)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL (Chicago Public Schools)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston, TX (Houston Independent School District)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC (District of Columbia Public Schools)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinellas County, FL (Pinellas County Schools)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PRIMARY STRATEGIES IN SUPPORT OF EQUITY OF ACCESS

Unified Enrollment

Enrollment Zones

Enhanced Transportation

Open Access Requirements

GOAL #1 Great Schools in Every Neighborhood
WHILE WE HAVE ACHIEVED SUCCESS, THERE IS MORE TO BE DONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unified Enrollment</th>
<th>Enrollment Zones</th>
<th>Enhanced Transportation</th>
<th>Open Access Requirements</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Improving access to information</td>
<td>Determining when to implement</td>
<td>Evaluating existing transportation</td>
<td>Identifying remaining barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making the choice window more accessible</td>
<td>Determining what schools should join</td>
<td>Considering future opportunities to efficiently support school choice</td>
<td>Better communicating open access to families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the burden of research</td>
<td>Better supporting housing mobility</td>
<td>Intensifying cost pressures</td>
<td>Ability to serve non-transition grade students in unique learning models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve equity through system priorities for seats</td>
<td>Balance between proximity and diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GOAL #1 Great Schools in Every Neighborhood
## KEY QUESTIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT OUR MISSION OF EQUITABLE ACCESS

**Unified Enrollment**
- Improving access to information
- Making the choice window more accessible
- Reducing the burden of research
- Achieve equity through system priorities for seats

**Enrollment Zones**
- Determining when to implement
- Determining what schools should join
- Better supporting housing mobility
- Balance between proximity and diversity

**Enhanced Transportation**
- Evaluating existing transportation
- Considering future opportunities to efficiently support school choice
- Intensifying cost pressures

**Open Access Requirements**
- Identifying remaining barriers
- Better communicating open access to families
- Ability to serve non-transition grade students in unique learning models

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**GOAL #1** Great Schools in Every Neighborhood
SOLUTION 1: IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY FOR FAMILIES

- DPS is moving to solutions successfully implemented in peer unified enrollment cities that allow families to better find, evaluate, and apply to schools online.
- DPS hosted a series of focus groups with 50+ DPS school secretaries, community partners (Padres y Jovenes, Together Colorado) and an outside research firm to hear from families what is most important to them in these tools.
- Is mobile friendly and in 10 languages
- Will use parent-friendly descriptions, not insider lingo
SOLUTION:

- SchoolMint is a national leader in helping school districts streamline and transform their student enrollment experience.
- They have implemented these solutions in leading organizations and are currently partnering with LAUSD and Chicago Public Schools on similar systems.
SOLUTION 1: GRANT FUNDING

- The generous philanthropy of the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation are funding the design and implementation of SchoolChoice 3.0.
SOLUTION 1: EVALUATING SCHOOLS
50+ data points per school on performance, programming, etc.

School Finder will launch this fall, likely early November, when SPF and other key school data is finalized for the public.
## SOLUTION 2: ELIMINATE REQUIRED “PROOF” PAPERWORK TO PARTICIPATE IN CHOICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Previous Years</th>
<th>Upcoming Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Families new to DPS, ~7,000 applicants per year, needed to provide proof of address and proof of birth to submit a choice form</td>
<td>Proof documents will be delayed until registration, when there is a longer window available and more community resources to help</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Background
The barriers were created by DPS’s internal processes, but those are being adapted to support the new tools.

### Rationale for Change
With the current political dynamics, FRL applications are down this year, potentially due to fear of government action. This change eliminates any barriers related to “proof papers”
SOLUTION 3: SHIFT CHOICE TO FEBRUARY

Proposed Timelines:
- Open Choice window February 1
- Close Choice window February 28
- Release results to families in early April in 2018, instead of mid-March historically
- In future years, results would be ready in late March, only a week off of prior years

Primary Rationale:
- Better engage with harder-to-serve families with this later window
- Reduce burden on schools recruiting in the fall / December
- Create distance from key school decisions that may impact a family’s choice

Key Considerations for Change:
- Determine workarounds for school planning implications
- Potential for some families to choose private schools due to deposit due dates
- Communicating to partners to adjust their plans (CMO’s, DPP, etc.)
- Minimizing impact to down-stream data partners
### GOAL #1  Great Schools in Every Neighborhood

**Unified Enrollment**
- Improving access to information
- Making the choice window more accessible
- Reducing the burden of research
- Achieving equity through system priorities for seats

**Enrollment Zones**
- Determining when to implement
- Determining what schools should join
- Better supporting housing mobility
- Balance between proximity and diversity

**Enhanced Transportation**
- Evaluating existing transportation
- Considering future opportunities to efficiently support school choice
- Intensifying cost pressures

**Open Access Requirements**
- Identifying remaining barriers
- Better communicating open access to families
- Ability to serve non-transition grade students in unique learning models
## Improving the Execution of Enrollment Zones

- Use 5 years of enrollment data to inform improvements
- Consider access to high-quality schools for highly mobile students
- Establishing guiding principles for the execution of enrollment zones through the Strengthening Neighborhoods Initiative

## Expanding the Use of Enrollment Zones

- Using 2017 enrollment data and long-term forecasts, identify existing school boundaries and zones with capacity risk
- Preliminary opportunities may include expanding the Far SE Enrollment Zone, creating a permanent enrollment zone for the former Gilpin boundary, and addressing the housing growth in Gateway / GVR
- Establishing guiding principles for the planning of enrollment zones through the Strengthening Neighborhoods Initiative
NEXT STEPS

- Collaborate with Strengthening Neighborhoods Initiative on future enrollment-related opportunities

- Evaluate / initiate potential enrollment zone related changes for the 2018-19 school year

- Codify enrollment processes into contractual language or other documents to ensure transparency and accountability around equity of access
PROJECT RATIONALE: CURRENT PAIN POINTS
Although comparatively better than peers, access to information is a gap.

Figure 14. Less Educated Parents Struggle to Get Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Bachelor's or more</th>
<th>High school or less</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Orleans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indianapolis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of parents

Notes: Parents were asked: “Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I was able to get the information I needed to choose the best school for my child.” The figure reports the estimated percent of parents reporting “disagree” based on a multivariate logit regression that holds constant at their mean values age, race, and the special education status of their child.
GOAL #1 Great Schools in Every Neighborhood

PROJECT RATIONALE: CURRENT PAIN POINTS
Large gaps in parents reported access to accurate information on eligibility

Figure 19. Eligibility Is a Bigger Concern for Parents With Less Education and Children With Special Needs

Notes: Parents were asked: "Please tell me if the following made things difficult for you. You can just say yes or no: Understanding which schools your child was eligible to attend." The figure reports the estimated percent of parents reporting "yes" based on a multivariate logit regression that varies parent education and special education status of their child and holds constant at their mean values parent age and race.
CHOOSE PARTICIPATION GAPS

Overall, FRL students participate at a lower rate, with a 7% gap between FRL and Non-FRL.

Choice Participation by FRL Status*

- Non-FRL: 86%
- FRL: 79%

* Based on 2017 Round 1 School Choice and 2015-16 SPF. Only Denver transition DPS students applying to K, 6th and 9th grades. Students applying to Sped programs are not included.