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PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HEARING

BEFORE A

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

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PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2004

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10:05 a.m., in room SD–138, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mike DeWine (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators DeWine, Landrieu, and Durbin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE DE WINE

Senator DEWINE. Good morning. The subcommittee will come to order.

Today, we will hear some good news about the success of public charter schools here in the District of Columbia. There are 43 charter schools, serving about 12,000 students, in our Nation's Capital. Starting in 1995, it has been one of the fastest growing charter school movements in the country. In fact, about 15 percent of all public school children in the District now attend public charter schools.

To provide a bit of background, charter schools are non-sectarian public schools that are free from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. The charter establishing each school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, programs, goals, student served, methods of assessment and ways to measure success.

The length of time for which charters are granted varies, but most are for 3 to 5 years. At the end of the term, the entity granting the charter may renew the school's contract. Charter schools are accountable to their sponsor, usually a State or a local school board, to produce positive academic results and adhere to the charter contract. That is the basic concept.

Forty-one States and the District of Columbia have passed public charter school laws, often in response to the demands of parents. Parents can send their children to public charter schools that focus on fine or performing arts, foreign language immersion, math, science and technology, or college-prep liberal arts. There are also charter boarding schools, charter schools for students who have dropped out of traditional schools, and charter schools for children with disabilities.

This subcommittee has been very supportive of the District's charter school movement. When Senator Landrieu chaired this subcommittee 2 years ago, she worked very hard to provide $17 million

in Federal funds for a credit enhancement fund to allow charter schools to borrow money to construct and renovate facilities. This was in recognition that the number one challenge for charter schools is finding and renovating appropriate classroom space. This subcommittee continued to support charter schools by providing $13 million in last year's D.C. appropriations bill to expand the number of charter schools here in the city.

Today, our first panel will discuss challenges facing charter schools as they expand in the District of Columbia. The witnesses on our second panel are all founders and directors of innovative charter schools in the District. They will share some exciting success stories about their schools, as well as the individual issues and challenges facing their respective schools.

Witnesses today will be limited to 5 minutes for their oral remarks in order to leave time for questions and answers. Copies of all written statements will be placed in the record in their entirety.

Let me again recognize Senator Landrieu for her great work on this committee, but especially thank her and applaud her for all the hard work she has done for charter schools nationally, and particularly here in the District of Columbia. She has been a champion for charter schools since their inception and she continues to lead the charge for increased funding and support for these innovative schools.

Mary, thank you for your very hard work and let me now turn to you for your comments.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate those comments and, of course, acknowledge the work that we have done together along with many other members of both the House and the Senate to improve public school choices for residents in the District, to help this school district to serve as a model in many ways for the Nation, and our continued work together to improve public education in our home States as well as across the country.

Today, I am pleased, Mr. Chairman, that you have agreed to hold this hearing today on charter schools, which are independent public schools designed and operated by educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs and others. They are sponsored by designated local or State organizations who monitor their quality and effectiveness, but allow them to operate with greater flexibility than is available within the traditional system.

The basic premise upon which most, but not all charter schools are founded is increased autonomy in return for accountability. As many of you may know, this week is National Charter School Week, so it is appropriate that this hearing be held in our Nation's Capital. During this time, we take time to reflect and celebrate one of the fastest-growing, innovative forces in education policy today, the charter school.

In 1991, Minnesota passed the first charter school law, with California following suit in 1992. In the 12 years since, 42 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws for the creation of charter schools. This morning as we gathered for this hearing, over 600,000 students are on their way to 2,996 charter schools throughout the Nation.

I am proud to say that cities such as Washington, DC, and, Mr. Chairman, your city of Dayton, Ohio, have enrolled upwards of 17 percent of all their school-age children in charter schools, showing their openness to innovation and improvement in the public school system.

The demand for these schools remains high, with more than 70 percent of charter schools having waiting lists that, if combined, could fill at least 900 more schools.

There is no question that the charter school movement has served as a catalyst for change within our public school system. The question is why? What are charter schools able to offer to students and parents that traditional public schools are not? Are charter schools everything they promised to be? What impact will the growth of charter schools have on the public education system as we know it today and what are the lessons learned to date?

What are the real and perceived barriers preventing future growth of the charter school movement, and can charter schools be used not only to increase student performance, parental satisfaction and public accountability, but can they also be used as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization, attracting new residents to cities throughout our country? These are but a few questions that I hope we will be able to begin to answer today.

While the evidence is not yet conclusive as to whether the charter school movement as a whole is increasing student performance, early reports are very promising. Although charter schools are typically but not always educating students with the greatest need, objective surveys and reports show that the academic progress among charter school students are outpacing those of cohorts in traditional public schools.

Those successes include gains in reading and math performance, test scores that are sometimes higher, and State and neighborhood schools with parental involvement, higher attendance and fewer disciplinary problems. Again, this is not across the board, but there are promising results that show some extremely promising outcomes in some of our charter schools.

In addition, charter schools have demonstrated that it is possible to combine fiscal responsibility and corporate management techniques while providing a high-quality education. Many charter schools are using strategies such as performance-based pay, professional development and advancement opportunities to attract and retain a high-quality teaching force, which is a challenge across the board.

Our reason for holding this hearing this morning is to highlight the successes of charter schools and to examine the challenges they face, to be clear about some of the failures and why, and to understand, if there are failures, what is causing them and what are the consequences of failure.

There is no more appropriate place to hold this hearing today than in our Nation's Capital. I am proud to report that the District of Columbia, along with other innovative techniques to improve schools and school choice for parents, is a leader in the national school movement for charter schools.

I will submit the rest of this, Mr. Chairman, for the record to save some time, but I would like to acknowledge the work that this

committee and Congress has done with local leaders in setting up a credit enhancement program; a direct loan fund establishing stable per-pupil facility allotments, which is critical to the start-up of charter schools; and a new initiative underway in the District called CityBuild Charters, which will add to the strength of the charter school movement, and perhaps will begin to identify neighborhoods that are prime or near-term for neighborhood revitalization to provide a good choice of education for potential residents in the District of Columbia.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I am thankful for all those who came today to participate in our hearing and am looking forward to hearing again what are the lessons learned, how do we move forward, what can we do to improve options and to improve the entire public school system in the District of Columbia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

As many of you know, this week is National Charter School Week. During this time, we, as a Nation, take the time to reflect on and celebrate one of the fastest growing innovative forces in education policy, the charter school. In 1991, Minnesota passed the first charter school law, with California following suit in 1992. In the 12 years since, 42 States and the District of Columbia have enacted laws allowing for the creation of charter schools. This morning, over 600,000 students are on their way to 2,996 charter schools. Cities such as Washington, DC and Dayton, Ohio are enrolling upwards of 17 percent of all of their school age children in charter schools. And the demand for these schools remains high, with more than 75 percent of charter schools having waiting lists that if combined could fill at least 900 more schools.

There is no question that the charter school movement has served as a catalyst for change from within our public school system, the question is why? What are charter schools able to offer to students and parents that the traditional public schools are not? Are charter schools everything they promise to be? What impact will the growth of charter schools have on the public education system as we know it today? What are the lessons learned to date? What are the real and perceived barriers preventing future growth? Can charter schools be used not only increase student performance, parental satisfaction, and public accountability, but can they also be used as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization? These are but a few of the questions that I hope we will be able to begin to answer today.

Before we begin, we must first answer the most basic of questions, what is a charter school? The simple answer is this. Charter schools are independent public schools designed and operated by educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs, and others. They are sponsored by designated local or State educational organizations, who monitor their quality and effectiveness but allow them to operate with greater flexibility than is available within the traditional system. The basic premise upon which most charter schools are founded is increased autonomy in return for accountability.

Studies show that the primary reason for the rapid growth in the number of charter schools was the unmet desire of education reformers to find a way to "step out of the box" that had become our public school system. In fact, nearly two-thirds of newly created charter schools reported that their reason for becoming a charter school was to realize an alternative vision of schooling, and an additional one-quarter of newly created schools were founded because of the need to serve a special target population of students. Perhaps even more intriguing, more than one-third of pre-existing public schools report that they converted to charter status in order to gain autonomy from district and State regulations. Increased autonomy and structural flexibility results in charter schools being able to embrace innovation and customize educational options to the needs of the students they serve.

What makes this movement work, however, is that this freedom is not without a price. In exchange for greater flexibility, charter schools are held accountable for both academic results and fiscal practices by several groups: the sponsor that grants

them, the parents who choose them, and the public that funds them. Under the terms of their charter, charter schools are expected to meet annual performance goals usually tied to the improvement of student achievement. Unlike a traditional public school, if a charter school is not performing, they face immediate and grave consequences, including closure. To date, more than 200 failed or failing public charter schools have been closed on fiscal, educational and organizational grounds.

While the evidence is not yet conclusive as to whether the charter school movement as a whole is increasing student performance, early reports are very promising. Although charter schools are typically, but not always, educating students with the greatest need objective surveys and reports show that the academic progress among charter schools students outpacing that of their cohorts in traditional public schools. Those successes included gains in reading and math performances; test scores higher than district, State and neighborhood schools; increased parental involvement; and higher attendance and fewer disciplinary problems.

But the benefits of charter schools go beyond just student performance. An unexpected beneficiary of the charter school movement has been low income and minority youth, many of whom would otherwise be trapped in a failing school. Almost 40 percent of students attending charter schools in the United States are eligible for free and reduced price lunch. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 27.3 percent of the students in charter schools were Black (compared to 16.9 percent in traditional Public schools); 20.8 percent were of Hispanic origin (compared to 14.9 percent); and 2.3 percent were Native Americans (compared to 1.2 percent).

Charter schools also provide greater diversity amongst their teachers. This racial diversity has the advantage of the teacher being able to understand better the background and the culture of minority children and therefore helping them to achieve better academic results. The NCES (1999–2000) reports that 15.5 percent of teachers in charter schools are Black (compared to 8.9 percent in traditional public schools); 8.1 percent are Hispanics (compared to 5.2 percent).

In addition, charter schools have demonstrated that it is possible to combine fiscal responsibility and corporate management techniques while providing a high quality education. Many charter schools use strategies such as performance based pay, professional development and advancement opportunities to attract and retain a high quality teaching force. On average, the class and school sizes are smaller than the traditional public schools. And yet, the average per-pupil cost in charter schools is $4,507 versus the average traditional schools cost of more than $7,000 per pupil (NCES). Are charter schools really doing more with less?

Finally, perhaps one of the greatest assets of the charter school movement is customization of educational opportunities to the needs of our young people. Many charter schools provide students with an opportunity to become bilingual, develop art and music skills, master technology or focus on science and math. This type of customization is not only important in a global economy that will reward such skills but critical in serving the needs of a highly diverse student population. What the charter school movement recognizes, and the traditional public schools have also begun to acknowledge, is that every child is different and so too, is their way of learning.

In addition, charter schools have demonstrated that it is possible to combine fiscal responsibility and corporate management techniques with providing a high quality education. Many charter schools use strategies such as performance based pay, professional development and advancement opportunities to attract and retain a high quality teaching force. On average, the class and school sizes are smaller than the traditional public schools. And yet, the average per-pupil cost in charter schools is $4,507 versus the average traditional schools cost of more than $7,000 per pupil (NCES). Are charter schools really doing more with less?

Our reason for holding this hearing this morning is to highlight the success of charter schools and to examine the challenges they face. There is no more appropriate place to hold this hearing than here, in our Nation's capital. I am proud to report that the District of Columbia has become a leader in the national movement for innovation in education by vigorously implementing charter school law. As a result, they have the highest per capita enrollment in charter schools in the United States. With over 14,000 students attending 39 schools, the District of Columbia has demonstrated the power charter schools can have in improving parental satisfaction and student achievement.

Since the beginning of the charter school movement in the District of Columbia, the Federal Government has been a strong and aggressive partner, working to establish the support network, through legislation and funding, to promote charter schools. In fact, the legislation to create charter schools, The School Reform Act of 1995, which established the framework for the current chartering boards, was initi-

ated through Congressional action. In addition, this D.C. subcommittee has created several resources to support charter schools, particularly focusing on the challenge of acquiring adequate facilities and comprehensive technical support for start ups. These include the Credit Enhancement Program, Direct Loan Fund, and a relatively stable per-pupil facilities allotment. And finally, the U.S. Department of Education operates the Federal Credit Enhancement Program. Recently, ED released $37 million in grants, of which the District was competitively awarded $5 million. I intend to submit the full legislative history of charter schools in the District of Columbia for the record.

The main focus of this hearing is not the past, but the future. What are the real successes of the D.C. charter schools? What is the process for identifying schools that are failing and closing them down? What is the process of identifying and rewarding charter schools that have been successful? What are the real and perceived barriers to future growth of charter schools here in the district? Can charter schools be used, as is contemplated by City Build Charters, be used to further neighborhood revitalization? Again, I hope this hearing will allow us to begin to answer some of these important questions.

Today we are thankful to have representatives from the two authorities in the District which charter new charter schools—the D.C. School Board represented by their President Peggy Cooper Cafritz; and the Public Charter School Board represented by the Chairman Tom Loughlin. In addition, the first panel has nationally recognized expert Dr. Joe Nathan, here from Minneapolis and the Center for School Change to discuss the best practices in national trends. Also, we are pleased to welcome Ariana Quiñones in one of her first acts as the Director of the newly formed Public Charter School Association.

The second panel is made up of three of the best and brightest founders of charter schools in the District.

Maya Angelou Public Charter School and the See Forever Foundation founded 5 years ago by David Domenici and James Forman, Jr. See Forever was designed as a holistic program for teens involved in the juvenile justice system. Court-involved teens told Mr. Domenici and Mr. Forman that they wanted to earn money, learn marketable skills, and gain responsibility. When they returned to school, they also wanted to attend small classes with teachers who cared about them, and they wanted help making hard decisions.

Opened in 1997 as a comprehensive program for a small number of teens, as the Maya Angelou Public Charter School 1998, in 2000, See Forever moved into a newly-renovated campus in the historic Odd Fellows Building at the corner of 9th and T Street NW, which houses all of our programs.

See Forever students take part in our activities year round, for up to 10 hours per day during the traditional school year, and for 6 to 8 hours per day during the summer. They attend class at The Maya Angelou Public Charter School, work part-time at one of our two student-run businesses—Untouchable Taste Catering and the Student Technology Center, and participate in activities ranging from internships to summer programs to team-building exercises.

The SEED Foundation was founded in 1997 by Eric Adler and Rajiv Vinnakota to establish urban boarding schools that prepare children, both academically and socially, for success in college and in the professional world beyond. The SEED Foundation opened its first school, The SEED Public Charter School of Washington, DC, in 1998, to provide urban children with an intensive college preparatory boarding education. The SEED School serves 305 students in grades 7 through 12 whose challenging circumstances might otherwise prevent them from fulfilling their academic and social potential.

For some children, only a 24-hour-a-day school program can provide the security and stability they need to succeed. With the belief that an integrated program can accomplish more than services pieced together from day and after-school programs, The SEED School set out to provide its students with consistent, holistic services. The result is a boarding school program that provides a comprehensive solution for the challenges facing many inner-city youth. The School provides students with comfortable accommodations, three nutritious meals a days, opportunities for physical exercise, two school psychologists, college and career counselors and an elaborate network of support consisting of parents, teachers, boarding instructors, counselors and boarding community coordinators.

Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School (TMA) serves at-risk, low-income high school students in Southeast Washington, DC. President & Chief Executive Officer Joshua M. Kern initiated the effort that led to the creation of Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School (TMA) while serving as a teacher at Frank W. Ballou High School in Southeast Washington, DC, as a participant in the D.C. Street Law clinical program at Georgetown University Law Center.

As the first law-related charter high school in the District of Columbia, Thurgood Marshall Academy's mission is to prepare students to succeed in college and to actively engage in our democratic society. TMA helps students develop their own voices by teaching them the skills lawyers have—the ability to solve complex problems, think critically, and advocate persuasively for themselves and their communities. These skills are important in and transferable to college and work settings. The school offers a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum integrated with youth development programs tailored to the individual needs of each student, with the aim of helping these students reach their full potential academically and, eventually, as members of the workforce.

Senator DEWINE. Senator Landrieu, thank you very much.

Senator Durbin.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR RICHARD J. DURBIN

Senator DURBIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Landrieu, for your interest in this subject. I am going to monitor this hearing, though I won't be able to stay for the entire hearing.

For reasons I cannot explain, the District of Columbia has become my second constituency, by choice, I suppose, since I came here 40 years ago as a student and have spent a major part of my life in the District of Columbia. I have always tried to defer to the judgment and authority of the people of the District of Columbia to decide their fate. Some of my colleagues don't feel that way; they think that they know best for the District of Columbia.

This committee and the members have really tried to improve the quality of life in the District of Columbia, and certainly we start with education, as we find in virtually every city in our great Nation. I think the charter school movement is a good one. We have it in Illinois and many other States. It was controversial to start with, but I think there are times when we have to look for new ideas in education. But we have to hold them to the same levels of accountability as public schools. That is the only fair way to judge. In this situation, we have to determine whether charter schools are, in fact, moving the kids who attend in the right direction.

There is a self-selection process in charter schools, which means that parents and students who are likely to go there first, and those that care less are likely to stay behind, perhaps in a public school that is not performing. So it may not be easy to compare the two.

I am heartened by the fact that the teacher standards required in the District of Columbia for charter schools are the same as public schools. I think that makes sense. When we had this same issue before us when it came to the voucher system for other private schools, the Senate Appropriations Committee expressly voted not to hold teachers in the voucher private schools to the same standards of education and training as we do in the public and charter schools in the District of Columbia.

That may be a noble experiment, but it is not one that we are ready to sign up for for the rest of America. In fact, we are going in the opposite direction. We are saying we want higher and higher standards for teachers in public schools across America and have created an exception here.

I am anxious to hear the results, and I know we have some great witnesses before us. I will be popping in and out of here during the course of the hearing, and I thank you for calling this, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DEWINE. Very good. Thank you very much.

Let me introduce our first panel, and I would ask them to come now as I am introducing them.

Mr. Thomas Loughlin is the Chairman of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board. Accompanying him is Ms. Josephine Baker, Executive Director of the Board. Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz is the Chairman of the District of Columbia Public School Board. Ms. Ariana Quiñones is the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Association. Dr. Joseph Nathan is the Director of the Center for School Change at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute.

We thank you all very much for being with us, and we will start from my left to right and we will start with Mr. Loughlin.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS LOUGHLIN, CHAIR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. LOUGHLIN. Thank you. Good morning. I would like to thank you, Chairman DeWine and Senators Landrieu and Durbin, for holding these hearings and for all the really excellent support that we have gotten in our charter school community from this committee.

While I am here, I would also like to acknowledge and thank our elected representative, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, who has taken on many occasions the opportunity to assist our charter schools and the charter school community, in general. The effort of what has taken place here on Capitol Hill has had just a tremendous positive impact on the growth of charter schools in the District and on the children in the District of Columbia.

A little bit of historical context. Our board was formed in 1997 and our first charter schools opened in the fall of 1998, with just slightly over 2,000 students. To fast-forward to today, we are at 22 charter schools. Our board has approved 22 charters, on 25 campuses. We have 10,000 students in those schools, and this fall that population will increase to 12,000.

Combined with the Board of Ed's charter schools, there are approximately 13,000 students now, and there will be approximately 17,000 charter school students in the fall. So that will represent roughly 23 percent of the public school population in the District.

The schools that we have chartered—and it has been noted here from the dais—have had tremendous community impacts in the neighborhoods of the District of Columbia. We can see the transformative effects that the schools have from the standpoint of cleaning up, fixing up and being catalysts within neighborhoods and communities.

At the same time, the schools are offering some excellent educational options to the children and to the families of the District of Columbia, some of which were noted by Chairman DeWine—the Nation's only urban boarding school, vocational programs, programs for drop-outs, programs geared toward English language learners.

The performance of the charter schools is encouraging, as Senator Landrieu pointed out. I would say at the elementary schools and at the middle schools, we have seen some strong signs of academic progress. The high school levels have been more challenging; it has been a more difficult path. The students in many cases are coming in years behind grade level.

On the other hand, we have had tremendous success with retaining those children in the high schools and seeing them all the way through to graduation, and then having really terrific college acceptance rates for these children. So that has been a great success story at the high school level.

Our board is very focused on maintaining rigorous standards for new charter school applications. We believe in chartering high-quality programs. A couple of years ago, we had a handful of applications and we didn't charter any schools because we didn't think that they were up to the appropriate standards.

In the most recent cycle, we received 11 applications and we chartered 6 of those. We have received, I believe, 90 applications to date; we have chartered 29. So we are very focused on chartering schools that we believe will be successful, and then on the monitoring processes and working with those schools to see that they will be successful.

While we are very pleased with the growth of the charter school programs and the quality of those programs, we believe there are still some significant issues that will need to be addressed to see greater growth in charter schools in the city. I would like to speak to the facilities issue and have Ms. Baker here speak to the No Child Left Behind standards.

On the facilities front, the charter schools have really been struggling for a long time, and you have heard us all on this committee talk about this for quite a while. The committee has been very supportive. We have certainly received some funding there. I always want more, so I will characterize it as frittering around the edges.

There are a lot of new schools opening up that need facilities. It is a very, very tight commercial real estate market here, the most competitive in the country, as I understand it. Our facilities allowance has grown nicely over the course of time. Our view is that the funding formula for facilities is flawed, and we think it is going to create some problems going forward. So I think this is a good time to step back and look at how the facilities are funded for the charter schools.

Right now, it is tied to the DCPS capital budget on a per-pupil basis. I have probably oversimplified it there a little bit, but generally speaking that is how it works. So as DCPS needs more money to renovate schools, transformation schools, et cetera, they float more bonds and then the per-pupil number goes up and the charter schools receive a rolling average of that for facilities. But over the course of time, those funding needs may subside.

The funding formula isn't really tied to the school's economic realities and the commercial real estate market. We have one school that is paying more than double its facilities allowance for its space. So we think that, definitely, facilities funding needs some study and a more sustainable manner of funding. It would be appropriate.

As I noted, the commercial real estate market being very competitive, the amount of facilities that are available has become an issue. It is very difficult for schools to secure facilities. We have a school that has been notified by its landlord that it will have to vacate its facilities at the end of June. They are searching now for another facility to open up for next fall, but there are not that many suitable facilities available for these schools.

We have been anxious to see some more of the city's inventory, some more of DCPS' inventory freed up. We have had some progress in working with DCPS in that regard. And, of course, we would like to see that accelerate. We would certainly like to see some more facilities made available.

The paradigm right now for charter schools is scrimp and save for a few years, build up equity of $1 or $2 million out of their operating budget, and then be in a position to float bonds. That is a very difficult way to secure sustainable facilities.

The only other point before I ask Ms. Baker to pick up on No Child Left Behind is the charter school law in terms of other factors that can impact the growth and success of charter schools going forward.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Senator DEWINE. Mr. Loughlin, you are about 2 minutes over.

Mr. LOUGHLIN. I am sorry. I apologize. Well, I will cut out of that and——

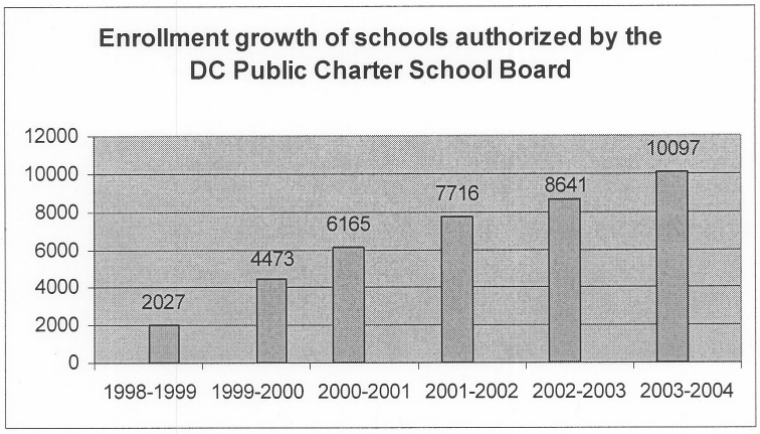
[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS LOUGHLIN

Good morning. I am Thomas Loughlin, Chair of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board. I am joined by Ms. Josephine Baker, the Executive Director. On behalf of the Board and the schools operating under our oversight, we are pleased to provide this committee an update on charter schools' current status and the challenges they currently face. Let me first begin by offering our Board's sincere appreciation for the advocacy of our elected Congressional representative, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, who has on many occasions illuminated charter schools' needs for support, particularly around adequate facilities. We are also indebted to the members of this subcommittee who have secured much needed additional funding for facilities, credit enhancement and other financing opportunities from the Federal Budget. Your efforts have made a tremendous difference to public charter schools, a few of which might not be open today if not for the lifeline provided to manage the escalating costs in the commercial real estate market.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Since the Congress passed the law to create the D.C. Public Charter School Board in 1997, the D.C. charter school movement has experienced exciting growth. The first schools authorized by the PCSB opened in 1998 with 2,027 students enrolled. Parents, students, educators and community leaders envisioned the possibilities of this innovative alternative to traditional public education and have become involved in growing numbers each year since. Currently, our Board oversees 22 charter schools, operating on 25 campuses in nearly every ward. The current audited enrollment is 10,019. The projected enrollment of schools under our authority for fall 2004 is over 12,000 students. Public charter schools operating under our Board's authority account for over 70 percent of total city-wide charter school enrollment.



With 18 percent of public school students attending charter schools, one of the highest per capita rates in the Nation, Washington, DC has become a leading provider of public school choice.

Students who were previously limited by their neighborhoods and economic circumstances now have a multitude of educational options. With the great diversity of choices among charter schools, parents and educators have come to embrace the concept that one kind of educational approach does not fit all students. Parents can now choose between programs that emphasize Math, Science, and Technology, the Arts and Humanities, Language Immersion, College Prep, Character Development, Public Policy and Civic Engagement, while others focus on the critical fundamentals of literacy and math. Schools use diverse instructional approaches including Expeditionary Learning, Family/Community Centered, and vocational instruction among many others. There are schools that cater to special needs students, dropouts, and English language learners. Many have extended hours, Saturday classes and mandatory summer preparation. One high school is the first and only urban boarding charter school, located on a state of the art college-like campus in far Southeast.

In addition to the fundamentals, students are learning analytical, communication and technology skills in elementary through high school—many skills which were not taught to previous generations of public school students, but are critical for success in this rapidly evolving global economy. We know of numerous examples of students who were several grades behind and have since reached grade level with pride and a love of learning. Many who never thought it possible are now enrolled in college, having been prepared by one of the public charter high schools. One of our high schools has maintained a 100 percent rate of college acceptance among their graduating classes. All but one of the other high schools have maintained exceptionally high percentages of graduation and college acceptance rates. As you may know, this is exceptional among public high schools in this city and nationwide.

We are extremely proud of what these dedicated teachers, administrators, parents, and community members have accomplished in a relatively short period of time. With continued growth in existing schools, and new schools opening, it is our expectation that in the very near future long waiting lists for the most popular charter schools will be lessened, and every student in the city will have access to quality, exciting public school experiences. Our Board is intensely focused on maintaining rigorous standards for new charter school applications, and holding existing schools accountable for measurable student achievement. With adequate support, we can clearly envision the important role that charter schools will play in making Washington, DC a national example of excellence and innovation in public education.

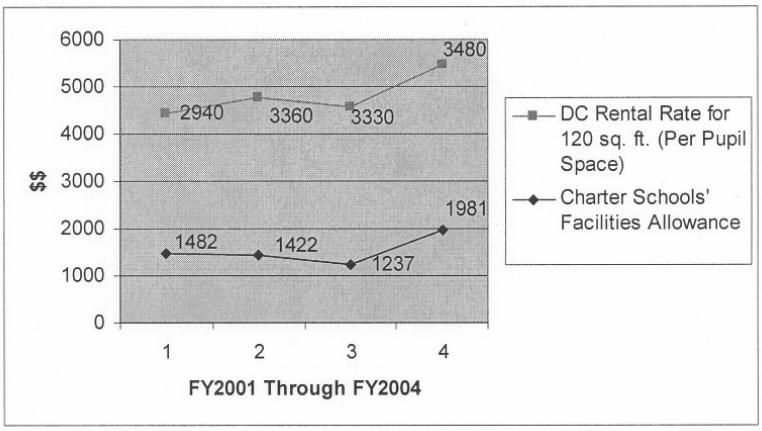
While we are extremely pleased with charter schools' achievements, there are still very serious issues that must be addressed as we plan for continued progress. The two major challenges that threaten to stall charter schools' progress are the ongoing facilities needs, and the numerous challenges associated with NCLB implementation and compliance.

OBTAINING FACILITIES IN A COMPETITIVE REAL ESTATE MARKET

Members of this committee are well aware of the fact that public charter schools must compete for facilities in a real estate market that is rapidly appreciating. The

District of Columbia has one of the tightest commercial real estate markets in the country, with the lowest commercial vacancy rate of any major city in 2003 (Colliers International). Often, schools that wish to create optimal learning spaces for their students are faced with the dilemma of having to fund renovations in a new site while they carry the rental costs in their current site. Construction costs are at their peak, as demand for real estate within the District has soared.

The graph below illustrates the difference between the D.C. Rental Rate trends and the facilities allowance, on a per pupil basis. (This uses Class C office space as a proxy for the type of space that charter schools typically seek to rent; applicable data on commercial real estate purchases are harder to locate.)



Numerous charter schools are operating under leases that were negotiated based on the expectation that the facilities funding will increase at the very least in accordance with the established yearly adjustments to the formula. One charter school pays a monthly lease of $90,000, which is nearly twice its facilities allotment. This particular school was forced out of its previous facility by commercial development interests, and had the choice of accepting the exorbitant lease or closing its school. Another school has just been notified by its landlord that it will have to vacate its facilities at the end of June. That school will likely be in a similar predicament in the coming months. While charter schools struggle with this ongoing challenge, buildings in DCPS' and the city's inventory remain unused or underutilized. The City Council has committed to assisting charter schools in accessing space in these facilities to lessen their pressure to compete in a tight real estate market.

The Congress, and this committee in particular, have responded to our concerns by appropriating additional funds associated with the recently passed voucher program. As a result of this legislation, several million dollars were made available for credit enhancements for charter schools. This funding will provide a valuable source of financing assistance to those schools that are in the position to finance a building purchase or renovate existing space. However, the majority of these funds are not direct grant support, but revolving loans. Also, because they are appropriated to specific programs like City Build, the D.C. Credit Enhancement Fund and Sallie Mae's Building Hope Initiative, they will not benefit all charter schools. Only a handful of schools will be selected for the City Build and Building Hope assistance, and only those schools positioned to finance a purchase or major renovation will apply for the Credit Enhancement dollars.

It is particularly critical that appropriations—from the District and Congressional sources—balance credit enhancement-type funding with direct grant support. Schools can benefit by dollars leveraged through credit enhancement and bond issuances—but only if they have adequate and predictable income to service their debt. The direct support of the D.C. charter schools facilities allowance is absolutely critical to the viability of charter schools in our urban setting. We were startled this spring to see the Mayor's proposed fiscal year 2005 budget freeze the charter schools' facilities allowance. After discussion with his staff, we now understand that that funding will be restored to its legislatively prescribed level. Our Board's only concern is that these Federal funds should not be misunderstood as a substitute for the local dollars that fund expected, annual adjustment to the facilities allowance.

We applaud and appreciate the committee's thoughtful appropriation of these funds, but we encourage the committee to consider local input—especially from the charter authorizing bodies responsible for overseeing these schools—when you make future investments in D.C. charter schools. We would be glad to provide information and insight into the needs of these schools.

NCLB CONCERNS

Charter schools have expressed their concern about the Teacher Quality provision of the NCLB legislation. Before NCLB, standards for teacher quality were established by the Charter Law (School Reform Act of 1995). The law required all teachers to have at least a bachelor's degree, but specifically did not require certification. Without this requirement, many charter schools were able to hire professionals with rich backgrounds, extensive professional experiences and creative approaches to teaching. Many of these individuals chose to leave lucrative careers for an opportunity to impact young lives. Now, with NCLB requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers looming, charter school teachers are being told they must immediately take the required coursework and the Praxis exam, or lose their positions. Under NCLB, States may create an alternative route to reaching Highly Qualified Teacher status through a High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation, or "HOUSE." The District of Columbia has not yet developed criteria for an alternative HOUSE standard, which would allow very experienced teachers to qualify under NCLB without undergoing the traditional certification processes. So, charter schools are essentially being forced to have their teachers complete nearly all the requirements of traditional certification—contradicting the intent of the charter law. The principles underlying the NCLB law are admirable, and this Board supports the effort to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified to serve our students. However, the timeline to comply is creating numerous challenges to schools that are small and cannot as easily compete for the small pool of teachers who meet these specific requirements. In addition to the financial burdens associated with securing adequate facilities, individual charter schools must also compete with DCPS on salary and benefits to recruit teachers. Compliance with NCLB is having a significant financial impact on charter schools.

BOARD'S NEW INITIATIVES

The Board has begun new initiatives to meet the demands of the growing charter school population. Several new charter schools will open this fall, and many charter schools have been approved to expand their current enrollment ceilings. The number of schools authorized by this Board will increase by 23 percent, and the student enrollment is expected to increase by 20 percent this fall. In anticipation of this growth, the Board will hire additional staff, increase office space and expand its technical assistance to schools in the areas of special education services, school governance, and No Child Left Behind compliance and accountability. We have invested in greater capacity to provide comprehensive data analysis, performance reporting and public accountability of the schools we have authorized. Our Board is actively engaged in strategic planning for the opportunities and challenges that will inevitably come as a greater proportion of public school students are enrolled in public charter schools.

CONCLUSION

The D.C. Public Charter School Board is heartened by the intense focus on improved public education currently being demonstrated by our local elected leaders. Members of our staff have met with key staff members in the offices of the Mayor and the City Council on specific charter school concerns and possible solutions. We are increasingly confident that new legislation and budget decisions will include this Board's input. Though much remains to be done, we are also encouraged by the increased collaboration between DCPS and charter schools, the Board of Education Charter Office and the Public Charter School Board, and between the chartering authorities and the State Education Office.

As local and national leaders work together to solve the persistent challenges of adapting public education to the changing needs of this society, this Board remains a committed partner in that process. We ask that this committee support the City Council's efforts to invest appropriately in per pupil and facilities funding for D.C. public school students. In addition to approving the basic funding for D.C. Public and Public Charter Schools, the PCSB realizes that this committee also appropriates funds for programs that its members believe will benefit the children of the District. Monies are earmarked to cultural and community organizations so that they may offer programming to D.C. public school students. These funds provide

valuable services to students, but they are often directed toward students of the DCPS system rather than all public school children in the District. Our Board urges this committee to make any such appropriations language inclusive of charter school students.

As always, we are grateful for this committee's ongoing support of this Board's work, and the efforts of our charter schools. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this input and we invite any questions you may have at this time.

Ms. BAKER. I can wait if that is your preference.

Senator DEWINE. Well, Ms. Baker, do you have some things to add to this?

Ms. BAKER. I was going to talk a little bit about No Child Left Behind.

Senator DEWINE. Okay. Why don't you do that now, then?

STATEMENT OF JOSEPHINE BAKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Ms. BAKER. Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you this morning. A couple of issues with No Child Left Behind, and one of them, I think, as we look at the baseline that students are supposed to meet in any given year is if you have new charters starting, there is no allowance there for them to establish some other baseline.

In other words, if, 2 years from now in the District program, the baseline is, say, 60 percent proficient and they start—and often charters do get those parents who have concerns about the lack of progress of children and they start with children who are way below. There is no way that they are going to have time to build those children up to that level.

I don't know how that can be executed, but it is something that I have talked about with those in the area of assessment and those in the area of actually working with the progressive steps that the District has put into place. We certainly have no objection to the movement of children up the ladder. I mean, that is what we are all about, but it does seem that we ought to be able to look at what does a new school have to do to establish itself. It should not in year 1 be considered, quote, "a low-performing school" simply because it just got started.

The other thing, I think, deals with teacher quality. We believe that, yes, there have to be qualified teachers, but what does that mean? I think I heard the statement that we have the same standards. No, teachers in charter schools do not have to be certified. They must have degrees. Now, the standard says they must take the praxis in order to meet the other qualifier.

I think that one of the things that we would like to look at is you have people who come into the teaching profession with tremendous skills in their area of expertise, be it math, be it science, be it government, or whatever, and many of these people are successful teachers.

We came up with some creative things in our office that might certainly work well. We sort of tried to think outside the box, and to have the praxis is one thing, which is an exam that, yes, does give you some indicators. But there are many other indicators of individuals' ability to meet the needs of students.

Certainly, you can look at the progress of the students over a period of 2 or 3 years, and if every class of students that a teacher

has made progress, and significant progress, it seems to me that this is one of the kinds of things that one could implement.

Again, we believe that the proof is in the pudding, and our pudding is accountability. And we have to see the success in students moving along a pendulum, recognizing that most of our schools start at a level of proficiency that is quite low simply because we often get the students who are least prepared to move up the pendulum.

So that is one of the things that we are very concerned about: How do we maintain these teachers, because the accountability is in the proficiency that students reach over the long term. It is not 1 year, it is not 2 years, but over a period of several years one would know whether or not a teacher is indeed showing proficiency in terms of their level of delivering educational services. So I think those are some kinds of things that we can certainly tweak there that would make a difference.

Thank you.

Senator DEWINE. Good. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF PEGGY COOPER CAFRITZ, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Good afternoon, Senator DeWine.

Senator DEWINE. Good afternoon. Thank you.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Senator Landrieu, nice to see you, and thank you for all that you do for children in the District of Columbia. I am going to skip over a lot in order to hit what I hope are some salient points.

First, I want to talk about facilities. Nine of our 15 schools are in public school facilities, and we have just reached an agreement to create a partnership with Maya Angelou Public Charter School which will put them in a shared public school facility. We have reached an agreement with Two Rivers Charter School, which is a newly opening charter school, to place them in a facility as of September and to work with them through the coming year to see if we can do a joint deal which would have them getting the funding to renovate another building which we would share, and then the public school system would rebate their rent in exchange for them having paid for the renovation of the school.

The reason for that is that charter schools can get bonding and DCPS public schools cannot, and our capital budget, as you know, has decreased precipitously over the last years and is scheduled to decrease more. So we are looking at some very creative public-private partnerships, some of which would include co-location with charter schools.

We have also, through our Facilities Department, created a charter school facilities task force which consists of representation of charter schools, not only those under the jurisdiction of our chartering authority, but the other chartering authority as well, and of the school system.

But I really urge Congress to look at school facilities in the District of Columbia as an issue that is at a crisis level, and it affects all of our students, all of them. I would even go beyond including charters and public schools. It is a huge problem and the funding is decreasing for it. So we are going to need your help in being

more expansive in public-private partnerships so that it can be done on funds that are just not generated by the public coffers. That is one of the most important things that you could do for all of us.

Another thing I want to address is governance. We need from you some more clear instruction about governance. Since I have been in office, we have closed five charter schools for fiscal malfeasance, and we have requested the CFO's office for nine audits since my term in office and we have received about two. One of them was extremely flawed, recommending that a relationship be continued where a husband is being paid $1 million for a school facility that his wife runs. There are lots of issues like that. There are some fabulous schools, but they are being tainted by the not-so-fabulous.

On the academic side, I want to make a couple of points. We have a hundred grade schools, a hundred elementary schools, and of those three of the top five charters are governed by us; that is, by the Board. So three of the top five charters are governed by us, but they lag behind public schools. Some of them are improving, but a lot of them are not.

Generally, the best managed charter schools are the best charter schools. There is definitely a correlation. I realize that charter schools need to be independent, but we need to be able to stop the bleeding earlier than we currently can. We just discovered a charter school that actually had several felons on its staff, but there is nothing we could have done before the period of examination in order to find that out. So we have got to get tougher on the schools that are not making it.

Another thing that is really important is in applying for charter schools, you have a lot of people who have seen charter schools as a jobs program for adults and have thought, oh, this would be a great idea, let's open up a charter school.

I think that we need to be more aggressive about approaching institutions such as universities or the National Science Foundation or Fannie Mae and saying, you have all of these professionals at your fingertips, some who are steeped academically and who are great sharers; work with us to create charter schools that start from a very, very sound basis so that we can get the hustler out of the charter school movement. That is something that has been an affliction in our ranks that I think we are grappling with.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I think we have to be very careful. We need to feel that it is okay, charters are strong enough. So if we are trying to make the movement better and it takes criticizing some of them, it doesn't mean that we are damning the charter school movement. I think that Congress has to be open to working with us on dealing with some of these problems very directly.

I will end there so you can ask questions, if you like, when the time comes.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PEGGY COOPER CAFRITZ

Good morning, Chairman DeWine, Ranking Member Landrieu and members of the subcommittee. I am Peggy Cooper Cafritz, president of the District of Columbia

Board of Education (Board). Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board in its capacity as a chartering authority, regarding challenges or barriers to strong charter schools and how policy makers can contribute to educational reform. We appreciate your willingness to assist us in ensuring that charter schools remain a strong and viable choice of publicly funded educational options.

Since the passage of the District of Columbia School Reform Act, the number of charter schools and students has grown precipitously. The Board now has 15 charter schools, 3 new schools to be open in the fall, and 3,646 students. Just with our current schools, we expect to grow by an additional 2,900 students in the next 5 years. It is evident that charter schools are an increasingly popular alternative to traditional public schools. With this increased demand we must ask the question whether this alternative is achieving its intended purpose to increase academic performance both in charter schools and traditional public schools and what are the challenges to achieving that goal.

We believe that student academic achievement in charter school is improving in our charter schools. At the elementary school level, the average percentage of students who test proficient (grade level) in reading and math is 47.8 percent. In our charter schools at the junior/middle school level, the average percentage of students who test proficient (grade level) in reading is 34.8 percent and in math is 33.86 percent. In our charter schools at the senior high school level, the average percentage of students who test proficient (grade level) in reading is 13.71 percent and in math is 17.68 percent. Given the dismal performance of students at the middle and high school levels, we must work together to find greater options for students at those levels. We must also fix the problems at the elementary school level. Although the above test scores are mean averages and the test scores of students who attend specialty programs for at-risk students, test score are not where we want them to be. There has been increases over time in most charter schools, but there are some charter school where progress has not been made as fast as we would have liked.

As you know, the charter schools have great autonomy in their operations and instructional approaches. Under the current regulatory structure, the only choice that is available to us is to revoke a charter when a charter school is not performing. By then it is too late. We have had to close the doors of five charter schools, which had financial and operating problems. The charter authorities need greater regulatory oversight authority to intervene, apply sanctions, and take corrective actions when there are clear indicators that a school is headed into trouble. Part of the problem has been the difficulty in defining minimum academic standards. The charter authority with the help of professional assessment organizations must tackle this problem. The No Child Left Behind Act does define failing schools. We must act before they are defined as failing.

We have addressed this problem by examining applicants more stringently and becoming more discerning in our decisions. It is clear that most of the organizations and individuals that do pursue opening charter schools require technical assistance and more rigorous administrative and academic training. Once an applicant proceeds through the application process, the applicant can obtain funds to better refine the application and assist the applicant during this period. Congress should consider supporting financially efforts to provide technical assistance to applicants before they even submit a petition to become a charter school, as is done in other States. We have found that many applicants lack the technical background to prepare a petition that contains sufficiently sound administrative and academic plans. Potential applicants would benefit from such efforts.

It is also clear that we must do a better job in aggressively pursuing those programs affiliated with universities and other educational research entities that are exploring innovative instructional strategies that will improve academic performance. We have fully used charters schools as a laboratory to try different approaches to teaching students how to read or perform math. In the District of Columbia, we are fortunate to be the home of many world class universities. We need to provide incentives to them to operate charter schools and use the resources of their institutions to help students learn.

There are approximately 12,000 students enrolled in public charter schools in the District, representing roughly 16 percent of public school students in the District. To accommodate the growth and expansion of charter schools, there must be sufficient facilities. Even before a charter can be approved, it must have identified a facility. As the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) reported in its September 2003 report, "Charter School—New charter schools across the country and in the District of Columbia face similar start-up challenges," securing a facility is one of the three greatest challenges facing new charter schools nationwide. The GAO further reported that in the District of Columbia finding space is particularly hard because of the cost of real estate and the poor condition of available buildings.

Therefore, in order to address this problem, considerable support from all stakeholders in the city, including the local and Federal governments must be marshaled.

In the District of Columbia, we have attempted to address this problem in a number of ways. First, there is a facilities allowance in the amount of $2,380 for nonresidential students and $6,426 for residential students. These funds are through locally generated revenues. However, the costs associated with renting, purchasing and renovating facilities are prohibitive since enrollment determines funding levels and therefore, in many instances, the facility allowance has proved to be inadequate. This is compounded by the fact there is a strong preference to have small classroom sizes in the charter schools, as is the preference in traditional public schools. We would welcome the Federal Government's examination of what it costs to fund facilities and supplementing the District's support of this expense.

Secondly, charter schools receive a preference for vacant buildings. Nine of the Board's 15 charter schools are housed in former DCPS facilities. We are in the process of assessing our facilities needs and will decide our current and future space requirements. As part of this effort, facilities staff of DCPS, the Public Charter Board, and charter schools have been working on a task force to generate recommendations on how to accommodate charter schools. One of the options under consideration is the co-location of charter schools in public schools with low enrollments. The benefits of co-location are considerable and far out weigh the costs to charter schools seeking to purchase or construct new schools. However, this approach also can be costly. Because the school system has been inadequately funded for its facility costs, most of the District's public school buildings have been poorly maintained. Therefore, sharing facilities with traditional public schools will require infusions of capital to renovate those facilities. The Board recently authorized DCPS to share space with the Maya Angelou PCS, which is chartered by the Public Charter Board. Other similar arrangements are under consideration. We believe that in order to implement a co-location policy, financial support will need to be obtained. The facility allowance should be adjusted to provide sufficient funding for small charters and traditional schools who agree to share facilities.

In conclusion, improving academic performance of all students is the reason that charter school exists. We must work together to ensure that we are finding innovative programs to meet the needs of our diverse student populations. As we continue to improve the level of performance of charter schools, they will continue to grow in popularity and will generate more demand for space to house them. We are working with all our partners to meet that need. You can also help us by adequately ensuring that facility costs in DCPS are funded and help provide State support for the facility costs of charter schools. Thank you for your support of publicly funded education in the District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	NCLB Category	SCHOOL NAME	TOTAL STUDENTS	READING		
				PERCENT TESTED	PERCENT PROFICIENT	% Poverty
ES	Elementary	MANN ES	117	99.15%	96.58%	4
ES	Elementary	LAFAYETTE ES	239	100.00%	93.72%	2
ES	Elementary	JANNEY ES	233	100.00%	91.42%	5
ES	Elementary	MURCH ES	264	98.86%	86.36%	16
ES	Elementary	KEY ES	92	97.83%	84.78%	6
ES	Elementary	BURRVILLE ES	183	99.45%	84.70%	70
ES	Elementary	OYSTER ES	167	100.00%	83.23%	24
ES	Elementary	LANGDON ES	163	96.32%	82.21%	57
ES	Elementary	WEST ES	176	99.43%	81.82%	60
ES	Elementary	STODDERT ES	87	95.40%	81.61%	18
ES	Elementary	HYDE ES	70	97.14%	81.43%	18
ES	Elementary	EATON ES	241	97.51%	81.33%	8
ES	Elementary	RANDLE-HIGHLANDS ES	252	96.83%	78.17%	70
ES	Elementary	WATKINS ES	193	98.96%	74.61%	31
ES	Elementary	HEARST ES	19	100.00%	73.68%	13
ES	Elementary	SHEPHERD ES	194	97.42%	72.16%	15
ES	Elementary	HENDLEY ES	214	97.66%	71.03%	93
ES	Elementary	BROOKLAND ES	203	98.52%	70.94%	49
ES	Elementary	**HYDE LEADERSHIP PCS** *	23	100.00%	68.20%	65
ES	Elementary	ROSS ES	90	96.67%	66.67%	71
ES	Elementary	BRENT ES	153	98.69%	64.71%	33
ES	Elementary	STEVENS ES	145	97.24%	63.45%	31
ES	Elementary	WHITTIER ES	247	99.60%	62.75%	64
ES	Elementary	DREW ES	169	91.72%	62.13%	85
ES	Elementary	**EDISON-FR/CHAMBERLAIN** *	446	97.53%	61.66%	69
ES	Elementary	MAURY ES	172	100.00%	61.63%	61
ES	Elementary	BARNARD ES	169	99.41%	60.95%	77
ES (K8)	Elementary	TAKOMA ES	120	98.33%	58.33%	43
ES	Elementary	NOYES ES	122	98.36%	58.20%	80
ES (K8)	Elementary	THURGOOD MARSHALL ES	80	98.75%	57.50%	59
ES	Elementary	**ROOTS** *	28	96.43%	57.14%	95
ES	Elementary	BURROUGHS ES	126	99.21%	56.35%	51
ES (5-7)	Elementary	**KIPP** *	162	97.53%	53.70%	80
ES	Elementary	BUNKER HILL ES	220	98.64%	53.18%	49
ES	Elementary	**CHILDREN_S STUDIO SCHOOL**	25	100.00%	52.00%	90
ES	Elementary	SIMON ES	200	98.00%	52.00%	78
ES	Elementary	CLARK ES	142	94.37%	51.41%	66
ES	Elementary	DRAPER ES	173	98.27%	50.29%	86
ES	Elementary	DAVIS ES	144	98.61%	50.00%	88
ES	Elementary	ORR ES	192	97.92%	50.00%	47
ES	Elementary	TRUESDELL ES	238	97.90%	49.16%	76

ES	Elementary	PAYNE ES	173	97.11%	49.13%	78
ES	Elementary	PARK VIEW ES	162	93.21%	48.15%	77
ES (K8)	Elementary	**CAPITAL CITY PCS** *	63	100.00%	47.62%	53
ES	Elementary	AMIDON ES	217	97.70%	47.47%	72
ES	Elementary	MEYER ES	195	98.97%	47.18%	86
ES	Elementary	**ELSIE W STOKES** *	79	100.00%	46.84%	71
ES	Elementary	RUDOLPH ES	284	96.83%	46.48%	75
ES	Elementary	GARRISON ES	205	99.02%	46.34%	76
ES	Elementary	KIMBALL ES	231	99.13%	46.32%	75
ES	Elementary	BEERS ES	262	99.62%	45.42%	56
ES	Elementary	AITON ES	231	97.84%	45.02%	95
ES	Elementary	TURNER ES	289	100.00%	44.98%	65
ES	Elementary	LASALLE ES	189	98.41%	44.97%	70
ES	Elementary	CLEVELAND ES	78	98.72%	44.87%	80
ES	Elementary	SEATON ES	205	93.17%	44.39%	83
ES	Elementary	LUDLOW-TAYLOR ES	159	87.42%	44.03%	78
ES	Elementary	ADAMS ES	150	96.67%	44.00%	64
ES	Elementary	MONTGOMERY ES	166	99.40%	43.98%	74
ES	Elementary	RIVER TERRACE ES	137	99.27%	43.80%	71
ES	Elementary	SMOTHERS ES	128	99.22%	43.75%	70
ES	Elementary	THOMSON ES	159	92.45%	43.40%	61
ES	Elementary	MALCOLM X ES	301	97.34%	43.19%	89
ES	Elementary	SHADD ES	95	98.95%	43.16%	75
ES	Elementary	KING M L ES	182	99.45%	42.31%	87
ES	Elementary	**COMMUNITY ACADEMY PCS** *	192	98.96%	42.19%	60
ES	Elementary	**EDISON-FR/WOODRIDGE** *	250	89.60%	42.00%	69
ES (K8)	Elementary	HARRIS PR EC	232	94.83%	41.38%	82
ES	Elementary	EMERY ES	200	95.00%	41.00%	72
ES	Elementary	**HOWARD ROAD PCS** *	288	97.22%	40.63%	51
ES	Elementary	SLOWE ES	234	98.72%	40.60%	74
ES	Elementary	**IDEAL ACADEMY** *	42	100.00%	40.48%	58
ES	Elementary	HARRIS, C.W. ES	292	99.32%	40.41%	77
ES	Elementary	POWELL ES	141	98.58%	39.01%	81
ES	Elementary	REED LC	225	99.11%	38.67%	84
ES	Elementary	THOMAS ES	165	99.39%	38.18%	68
ES	Elementary	RAYMOND ES	241	98.76%	38.17%	81
ES	Elementary	BANCROFT ES	203	93.60%	37.44%	85
ES	Elementary	GARFIELD ES	276	98.91%	37.32%	78
ES	Elementary	BRIGHTWOOD ES	257	95.33%	36.96%	77
ES	Elementary	MINER ES	222	97.75%	36.94%	87
ES	Elementary	LECKIE ES	230	98.26%	36.52%	68
ES	Elementary	SAVOY ES	159	96.86%	36.48%	75
ES	Elementary	NALLE ES	171	100.00%	36.26%	89
ES	Elementary	PATTERSON ES	170	95.88%	35.88%	78
ES	Elementary	**TREE OF LIFE COM PCS** *	51	100.00%	35.29%	83
ES	Elementary	COOK JF ES	139	98.56%	34.53%	84
ES	Elementary	WILSON JO ES	235	94.04%	34.47%	89
ES	Elementary	WHEATLEY ES	177	97.74%	33.33%	71
ES	Elementary	BIRNEY ES	278	96.76%	33.09%	74

ES	Elementary	COOKE HD ES	216	97.69%	32.87%	83
ES	Elementary	KENILWORTH ES	204	99.51%	32.84%	82
ES	Elementary	YOUNG ES	228	98.25%	32.46%	78
ES (K8)	Elementary	MERRITT ES	156	96.79%	30.77%	61
ES (K8)	Elementary	WINSTON EC	160	98.75%	30.63%	76
ES	Elementary	HOUSTON ES	158	98.73%	30.38%	75
ES (K8)	Elementary	**SE ACADEMY SCHOLASTIC** *	229	93.89%	30.13%	100
ES	Elementary	BENNING ES	119	95.80%	29.41%	66
ES	Elementary	GREEN ES	200	98.00%	29.00%	76
ES	Elementary	KETCHAM ES	208	97.60%	27.88%	83
ES	Elementary	GIBBS ES	280	96.43%	27.86%	84
ES	Elementary	**VILLAGE PCS - ES** *	55	100.00%	27.27%	75
ES	Elementary	VAN NESS ES	140	100.00%	27.14%	81
ES	Elementary	GAGE-ECKINGTON ES	190	97.89%	26.32%	83
ES	Elementary	WALKER-JONES ES	293	98.98%	24.91%	81
ES	Elementary	TERRELL MC ES	113	100.00%	24.78%	83
ES	Elementary	TUBMAN ES	356	97.75%	24.72%	75
ES	Elementary	WEBB ES	260	95.77%	24.62%	81
ES	Elementary	BRUCE-MONROE ES	171	94.74%	23.98%	70
ES	Elementary	WILKINSON ES	121	99.17%	23.97%	73
ES	Elementary	SHAED ES	183	97.81%	22.95%	74
ES	Elementary	MCGOGNEY ES	231	98.27%	22.94%	84
ES	Elementary	BOWEN ES	170	99.41%	22.94%	84
ES	Elementary	STANTON ES	341	98.53%	22.87%	69
ES	Elementary	**MERIDIAN PCS** *	176	96.02%	22.73%	97
ES (K8)	Elementary	FLETCHER-JOHNSON EC	123	97.56%	21.14%	83
ES	Elementary	**SAIL PCS** *	78	91.03%	20.51%	88
ES	Elementary	FEREBEE-HOPE ES	133	96.99%	20.30%	87
ES	Elementary	TYLER ES	160	97.50%	20.00%	91
ES	Elementary	**ARTS & TECHNOLOGY PCS** *	296	92.57%	19.59%	95
ES	Elementary	MOTEN ES	314	98.09%	17.20%	89
ES	Elementary	PLUMMER ES	140	100.00%	8.57%	77
ES	Elementary	ROSE SCHOOL	14	57.14%	7.14%	50
MS	Secondary	HARDY MS	401	99.00%	78.30%	17
JHS	Secondary	DEAL JHS	927	99.14%	77.35%	30
MS	Secondary	STUART-HOBSON MS	388	99.23%	65.98%	40
MS (K8)	Secondary	TAKOMA ES	152	99.34%	64.47%	43
MS (K8)	Secondary	**CAPITAL CITY PCS** *	23	100.00%	60.87%	53
JHS	Secondary	JEFFERSON JHS	859	98.72%	58.79%	60
MS	Secondary	**ROOTS** *	21	100.00%	57.14%	95
MS (K8)	Secondary	THURGOOD MARSHALL ES	150	98.00%	46.00%	59
MS	Secondary	**EDISON-FR/BLOW** *	696	97.27%	45.69%	69
JHS	Secondary	FRANCIS JHS	404	96.78%	43.07%	69
MS	Secondary	**BARBARA JORDAN PCS** *	54	100.00%	40.74%	83
JHS	Secondary	**PAUL JR HIGH PCS** *	573	96.68%	40.66%	61
JHS	Secondary	BROWNE JHS	455	90.99%	39.34%	65
JHS	Secondary	HINE JHS	676	96.30%	38.17%	60
MS	Secondary	GARNET-PATTERSON MS	335	95.22%	37.61%	88

MS	Secondary	BACKUS MS	576	96.53%	36.81%	62
MS (K8)	Secondary	MERRITT ES	121	97.52%	35.54%	61
MS/SHS	Secondary	**HYDE LEADERSHIP PCS** *	387	96.64%	33.40%	65
MS (K8)	Secondary	WINSTON EC	199	93.97%	32.66%	76
MS (K8)	Secondary	**SE ACADEMY SCHOLASTIC** *	261	85.44%	32.18%	100
JHS	Secondary	SHAW JHS	533	91.37%	32.08%	60
MS	Secondary	**IDEAL ACADEMY** *	51	100.00%	31.37%	58
MS/SHS	Secondary	**THE SEED SCHOOL** *	304	69.41%	30.92%	74
JHS	Secondary	ELIOT JHS	322	93.48%	29.50%	79
MS	Secondary	EVANS MS	228	96.49%	27.63%	90
MS	Secondary	**OPTIONS PCS** *	142	100.00%	26.76%	82
MS	Secondary	MACFARLAND MS	653	87.14%	26.65%	69
MS	Secondary	HART MIDDLE SCHOOL	576	97.74%	26.22%	70
MS	Secondary	LINCOLN MS	399	90.98%	25.81%	77
MS	Secondary	RONALD H. BROWN MS	494	93.72%	24.49%	73
MS (K8)	Secondary	HARRIS PR EC	457	95.62%	24.07%	82
MS	Secondary	KRAMER MIDDLE SCHOOL	355	86.76%	22.25%	70
MS	Secondary	**SASHA BRUCE PCS** *	92	94.57%	21.74%	37
MS	Secondary	**VILLAGE PCS - MS** *	103	100.00%	19.42%	75
MS	Secondary	SOUSA MS	414	93.24%	19.32%	78
JHS	Secondary	JOHNSON JHS	644	86.65%	18.48%	77
MS (K8)	Secondary	FLETCHER-JOHNSON EC	285	94.39%	15.79%	83
JHS	Secondary	TERRELL JHS	279	97.85%	14.70%	69
SHS	Secondary	BANNEKER SHS	300	99.67%	93.33%	38
SHS	Secondary	SCHOOL WW SHS	244	100.00%	85.66%	16
SHS	Secondary	DUNBAR PRE-ENGINEERI	116	97.41%	65.52%	43
SHS	Secondary	ELLINGTON SHS	376	95.74%	47.34%	32
SHS	Secondary	WILSON SHS	1071	78.62%	39.22%	29
SHS	Secondary	WOODSON BUSINESS & F	135	94.07%	31.11%	59
SHS	Secondary	**IDEA PCS** *	186	89.78%	27.96%	64
SHS	Secondary	**WASHINGTON MATH SCIENCE**	216	79.63%	27.31%	100
SHS	Secondary	**KIMA PCS** *	56	85.71%	25.00%	NA
SHS	Secondary	**MARRIOTT HOSPITALITY** *	105	79.05%	21.90%	35
SHS	Secondary	**CESAR CHAVEZ PCS** *	203	86.21%	21.18%	65
SHS	Secondary	COOLIDGE SHS	579	82.56%	19.86%	44
SHS	Secondary	**VILLAGE PCS - HS** *	77	84.42%	19.48%	75
SHS	Secondary	MM WASHINGTON SHS	202	89.11%	18.81%	47
SHS	Secondary	EASTERN SHS	791	81.04%	17.57%	55
SHS	Secondary	**THURGOOD MARSHALL PCS** *	105	81.90%	17.14%	72
SHS	Secondary	DUNBAR SHS	739	77.67%	16.78%	44
SHS	Secondary	**EDISON-FR/WOODSON** *	1094	65.63%	15.81%	69
SHS	Secondary	SPINGARN SHS	441	76.64%	14.74%	63
SHS	Secondary	ROOSEVELT SHS	655	82.29%	12.52%	42
SHS	Secondary	CARDOZO SHS	577	87.35%	11.96%	63
SHS	Secondary	ANACOSTIA SHS	575	73.91%	11.30%	72
SHS	Secondary	WOODSON SHS	568	86.27%	11.09%	59
SHS	Secondary	BELL SHS	478	94.98%	10.46%	73
SHS	Secondary	BALLOU SHS	889	72.89%	9.22%	82

SHS	Secondary	**NEW SCHOOL PCS ***	421	65.32%	8.08%	86
SHS	Secondary	**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ***	91	82.42%	7.69%	47
SHS	Secondary	**ARE PCS ***	30	100.00%	6.67%	NA
SHS	Secondary	**MAYA ANGELOU PCS ***	82	71.95%	2.44%	70
SHS	Secondary	**JOS - ARZ ACADEMY ***	**47**	68.09%	2.13%	100
SHS	Secondary	**NEXT STEP PCS ***	**43**	27.91%	0.00%	100
ALT	Elementary	SHARPE HEALTH SCHOOL	64	85.94%	23.44%	77
ALT	Elementary	HAMILTON CENTER	31	83.87%	19.35%	80
ALT	Secondary	MAMIE D. LEE SCHOOL	74	95.95%	17.57%	79
ALT	Secondary	SPINGARN STAY SHS	8	62.50%	12.50%	27
ALT	Secondary	CHOICE ALTERNATIVE P	113	82.30%	12.39%	68
ALT	Secondary	SHARPE HEALTH SCHOOL	94	87.23%	11.70%	77
ALT	Secondary	HAMILTON CENTER	36	86.11%	11.11%	80
ALT	Elementary	MAMIE D. LEE SCHOOL	23	100.00%	8.70%	79
ALT	Elementary	MOTEN CENTER	90	95.56%	6.67%	89
ALT	Secondary	JACKIE ROBINSON SCHO	16	75.00%	6.25%	36
ALT	Secondary	CHOICE SECONDARY PRO	83	65.06%	6.02%	60
ALT	Elementary	TAFT ED PROGRAM	54	79.63%	5.56%	80
ALT	Secondary	TAFT ED PROGRAM	44	90.91%	4.55%	80
ALT	Secondary	TUITION GRANTS	1138	19.68%	4.04%	19
ALT	Secondary	LUKE C. MOORE ACADEM	169	18.34%	3.55%	36
ALT	Secondary	WASHINGTON CENTER	37	72.97%	2.70%	63
ALT	Elementary	TUITION GRANTS	372	14.25%	2.15%	19
ALT	Secondary	OAK HILL YOUTH CENTE	150	39.33%	2.00%	26
ALT	Secondary	PROSPECT LC	58	96.55%	1.72%	59
ALT	Secondary	RESIDENCE SCHOOLS	187	3.74%	0.53%	12
ALT	Secondary	BALLOU STAY SHS	47	38.30%	0.00%	16
ALT	Secondary	DC JAIL	1	0.00%	0.00%	0
ALT	Secondary	DCALA WEST	46	0.00%	0.00%	27
ALT	Secondary	ELIOT CENTER	66	75.76%	0.00%	80
ALT	Elementary	LASHAWN SCHOOL	80	0.00%	0.00%	4
ALT	Secondary	LASHAWN SCHOOL	120	0.83%	0.00%	4
ALT	Elementary	PAUL ROBESON SCHOOL	10	10.00%	0.00%	35
ALT	Secondary	PAUL ROBESON SCHOOL	6	83.33%	0.00%	35
ALT	Elementary	PROSPECT LC	41	92.68%	0.00%	59
ALT	Elementary	RESIDENCE SCHOOLS	14	0.00%	0.00%	12
ALT	Secondary	ROOSEVELT STAY	16	0.00%	0.00%	13
ALT	Secondary	Spingarn Center	18	72.22%	0.00%	83
* Preliminary Data						

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	NCLB Category	SCHOOL NAME	TOTAL STUDENTS	MATH		
				PERCENT TESTED	PERCENT PROFICIENT	% Poverty
ES	Elementary	LAFAYETTE ES	239	100.00%	94.98%	2
ES	Elementary	MANN ES	117	99.15%	94.87%	4
ES	Elementary	JANNEY ES	233	100.00%	92.70%	5
ES (5-7)	Elementary	**KIPP ***	162	97.53%	92.59%	80
ES	Elementary	KEY ES	92	96.74%	92.39%	6
ES	Elementary	MURCH ES	264	98.86%	91.67%	16
ES	Elementary	LANGDON ES	163	97.55%	89.57%	57
ES	Elementary	OYSTER ES	167	100.00%	88.62%	24
ES	Elementary	HYDE ES	70	97.14%	88.57%	18
ES	Elementary	BURRVILLE ES	183	98.91%	86.89%	70
ES	Elementary	WEST ES	176	99.43%	85.23%	60
ES	Elementary	EATON ES	241	97.93%	81.33%	8
ES	Elementary	SHEPHERD ES	194	97.42%	80.93%	15
ES	Elementary	STODDERT ES	87	95.40%	80.46%	18
ES	Elementary	WATKINS ES	193	98.96%	77.72%	31
ES	Elementary	WHITTIER ES	247	99.60%	76.92%	64
ES (K8)	Elementary	TAKOMA ES	120	98.33%	76.67%	43
ES	Elementary	CLEVELAND ES	78	98.72%	75.64%	80
ES	Elementary	RANDLE-HIGHLANDS ES	252	96.43%	75.40%	70
ES	Elementary	HEARST ES	19	100.00%	73.68%	13
ES	Elementary	BROOKLAND ES	203	98.03%	73.40%	49
ES	Elementary	BRENT ES	153	98.69%	72.55%	33
ES	Elementary	HENDLEY ES	214	98.60%	71.96%	93
ES	Elementary	DAVIS ES	144	98.61%	71.53%	88
ES	Elementary	MAURY ES	172	100.00%	69.77%	61
ES	Elementary	ORR ES	192	97.92%	69.27%	47
ES	Elementary	ROSS ES	90	96.67%	68.89%	71
ES (K8)	Elementary	THURGOOD MARSHALL ES	80	98.75%	68.75%	59
ES	Elementary	BEERS ES	262	99.62%	66.79%	56
ES	Elementary	BURROUGHS ES	126	99.21%	66.67%	51
ES	Elementary	**ROOTS ***	28	96.43%	64.29%	95
ES	Elementary	**EDISON-FR/CHAMBER ***	446	97.53%	64.13%	69
ES	Elementary	BUNKER HILL ES	220	98.64%	64.09%	49
ES	Elementary	TRUESDELL ES	238	97.90%	63.87%	76
ES	Elementary	**HYDE LEADERSHIP PCS ***	23	100.00%	63.60%	65
ES	Elementary	PAYNE ES	173	98.27%	63.58%	78
ES	Elementary	NOYES ES	122	98.36%	63.11%	80
ES	Elementary	DREW ES	169	92.31%	62.72%	85
ES	Elementary	THOMSON ES	159	93.08%	62.26%	61
ES	Elementary	DRAPER ES	173	98.27%	61.27%	86
ES	Elementary	PARK VIEW ES	162	93.83%	61.11%	77

ES	Elementary	BARNARD ES	169	97.63%	60.95%	77
ES	Elementary	RIVER TERRACE ES	137	99.27%	60.58%	71
ES	Elementary	BANCROFT ES	203	93.60%	59.61%	85
ES	Elementary	STEVENS ES	145	97.24%	59.31%	31
ES	Elementary	LASALLE ES	189	98.41%	59.26%	70
ES	Elementary	SIMON ES	200	98.00%	58.50%	78
ES	Elementary	MEYER ES	195	98.97%	57.95%	86
ES	Elementary	SHADD ES	95	98.95%	57.89%	75
ES	Elementary	MONTGOMERY ES	166	99.40%	57.83%	74
ES	Elementary	BRIGHTWOOD ES	257	95.33%	57.20%	77
ES	Elementary	RUDOLPH ES	284	96.83%	57.04%	75
ES	Elementary	MINER ES	222	97.75%	56.31%	87
ES	Elementary	**EDISON-FR/WOODRIDGE ***	250	88.80%	55.60%	69
ES	Elementary	REED LC	225	99.11%	55.56%	84
ES	Elementary	SLOWE ES	234	99.15%	55.56%	74
ES	Elementary	TURNER ES	289	100.00%	55.36%	65
ES	Elementary	THOMAS ES	165	99.39%	55.15%	68
ES	Elementary	SEATON ES	205	93.17%	55.12%	83
ES	Elementary	KING M L ES	182	98.35%	54.95%	87
ES	Elementary	KENILWORTH ES	204	97.55%	54.90%	82
ES	Elementary	RAYMOND ES	241	98.76%	54.77%	81
ES	Elementary	CLARK ES	142	94.37%	54.23%	66
ES	Elementary	COOK JF ES	139	98.56%	53.96%	84
ES	Elementary	ADAMS ES	150	96.67%	52.67%	64
ES	Elementary	AMIDON ES	217	96.77%	52.53%	72
ES	Elementary	COOKE HD ES	216	97.69%	51.39%	83
ES	Elementary	**HOWARD ROAD PCS ***	288	96.88%	51.39%	51
ES	Elementary	MALCOLM X ES	301	97.67%	50.83%	89
ES	Elementary	LECKIE ES	230	98.26%	50.43%	68
ES	Elementary	KIMBALL ES	231	99.13%	50.22%	75
ES	Elementary	EMERY ES	200	94.00%	50.00%	72
ES	Elementary	GARRISON ES	205	99.02%	49.76%	76
ES	Elementary	WILKINSON ES	121	99.17%	48.76%	73
ES	Elementary	GARFIELD ES	276	98.55%	48.55%	78
ES	Elementary	GREEN ES	200	97.50%	48.50%	76
ES (K8)	Elementary	HARRIS PR EC	232	93.97%	48.28%	82
ES	Elementary	POWELL ES	141	97.87%	47.52%	81
ES	Elementary	WILSON JO ES	235	93.62%	47.23%	89
ES	Elementary	GAGE-ECKINGTON ES	190	97.89%	46.84%	83
ES	Elementary	HOUSTON ES	158	98.73%	46.84%	75
ES	Elementary	AITON ES	231	97.40%	46.32%	95
ES	Elementary	LUDLOW-TAYLOR ES	159	86.79%	45.91%	78
ES	Elementary	**COMMUNITY ACADEMY PCS ***	192	98.96%	45.83%	60
ES	Elementary	SMOTHERS ES	128	98.44%	45.31%	70
ES	Elementary	SAVOY ES	159	96.86%	45.28%	75
ES	Elementary	HARRIS, C.W. ES	292	98.63%	45.21%	77
ES	Elementary	PATTERSON ES	170	96.47%	44.71%	78
ES	Elementary	WHEATLEY ES	177	97.74%	44.07%	71
ES	Elementary	**CHILDREN_S STUDIO SCHOOI**	25	100.00%	44.00%	90

ES	Elementary	YOUNG ES	228	97.81%	43.42%	78
ES	Elementary	KETCHAM ES	208	97.60%	43.27%	83
ES	Elementary	**IDEAL ACADEMY** *	42	100.00%	42.86%	58
ES (K8)	Elementary	**SE ACADEMY SCHOLASTIC** *	229	93.89%	42.79%	100
ES	Elementary	**ELSIE W STOKES** *	79	100.00%	41.77%	71
ES	Elementary	TUBMAN ES	356	96.91%	41.29%	75
ES	Elementary	BENNING ES	119	96.64%	41.18%	66
ES	Elementary	STANTON ES	341	98.53%	40.76%	69
ES	Elementary	BIRNEY ES	278	96.76%	40.29%	74
ES	Elementary	NALLE ES	171	100.00%	39.77%	89
ES (K8)	Elementary	WINSTON EC	160	97.50%	38.13%	76
ES	Elementary	BRUCE-MONROE ES	171	94.74%	37.43%	70
ES	Elementary	SHAED ES	183	98.36%	37.16%	74
ES (K8)	Elementary	MERRITT ES	156	96.15%	36.54%	61
ES (K8)	Elementary	**CAPITAL CITY PCS** *	63	100.00%	36.51%	53
ES	Elementary	VAN NESS ES	140	100.00%	36.43%	81
ES	Elementary	**MERIDIAN PCS** *	176	96.59%	35.23%	97
ES	Elementary	MCGOGNEY ES	231	98.27%	34.63%	84
ES	Elementary	TYLER ES	160	97.50%	34.38%	91
ES	Elementary	GIBBS ES	280	96.43%	32.86%	84
ES	Elementary	**VILLAGE PCS - ES** *	55	100.00%	32.73%	75
ES	Elementary	BOWEN ES	170	98.82%	32.35%	84
ES	Elementary	WEBB ES	260	95.00%	31.54%	81
ES	Elementary	TERRELL MC ES	113	100.00%	29.20%	83
ES	Elementary	FEREBEE-HOPE ES	133	96.99%	27.82%	87
ES (K8)	Elementary	FLETCHER-JOHNSON EC	123	97.56%	26.83%	83
ES	Elementary	WALKER-JONES ES	293	98.29%	25.60%	81
ES	Elementary	MOTEN ES	314	97.77%	24.20%	89
ES	Elementary	**SAIL PCS**	78	92.31%	23.08%	88
ES	Elementary	**ARTS & TECHNOLOGY PCS** *	296	92.91%	22.97%	95
ES	Elementary	**TREE OF LIFE COM PCS** *	51	100.00%	21.57%	83
ES	Elementary	ROSE SCHOOL	14	71.43%	21.43%	50
ES	Elementary	PLUMMER ES	140	100.00%	19.29%	77
MS	Secondary	HARDY MS	401	99.25%	85.04%	17
JHS	Secondary	DEAL JHS	927	98.81%	84.90%	30
MS (K8)	Secondary	TAKOMA ES	152	99.34%	76.97%	43
JHS	Secondary	JEFFERSON JHS	859	98.49%	69.15%	60
MS (K8)	Secondary	**CAPITAL CITY PCS** *	23	100.00%	65.22%	53
MS	Secondary	**ROOTS** *	21	100.00%	61.90%	95
MS	Secondary	STUART-HOBSON MS	388	99.23%	59.02%	40
MS (K8)	Secondary	MERRITT ES	121	100.00%	58.68%	61
JHS	Secondary	**PAUL JH PCS** *	573	96.34%	57.94%	61
JHS	Secondary	HINE JHS	676	97.04%	53.55%	60
JHS	Secondary	ELIOT JHS	322	93.48%	47.83%	79
JHS	Secondary	FRANCIS JHS	404	96.78%	44.31%	69
JHS	Secondary	BROWNE JHS	455	92.09%	43.74%	65
MS	Secondary	**EDISON-FR/BLOW** *	696	97.27%	41.67%	69
MS (K8)	Secondary	THURGOOD MARSHALL ES	150	98.00%	41.33%	59

MS (K8)	Secondary	WINSTON EC	199	95.48%	38.69%	76
MS	Secondary	**BARBARA JORDAN PCS** *	54	100.00%	37.04%	83
MS	Secondary	LINCOLN MS	399	90.48%	34.59%	77
MS	Secondary	**OPTIONS PCS** *	142	100.00%	33.10%	82
JHS	Secondary	SHAW JHS	533	89.68%	32.65%	60
MS (K8)	Secondary	HARRIS PR EC	457	95.62%	32.60%	82
MS/SHS	Secondary	**HYDE LEADERSHIP PCS** *	387	96.38%	32.10%	65
JHS	Secondary	TERRELL JHS	279	97.13%	31.54%	69
MS	Secondary	SOUSA MS	414	93.96%	31.16%	78
MS	Secondary	RONALD H. BROWN MS	494	93.32%	29.96%	73
MS	Secondary	MACFARLAND MS	653	87.29%	29.71%	69
MS/SHS	Secondary	**THE SEED SCHOOL** *	304	69.74%	29.61%	74
MS	Secondary	BACKUS MS	576	96.01%	29.17%	62
MS	Secondary	HART MIDDLE SCHOOL	576	97.92%	27.43%	70
JHS	Secondary	JOHNSON JHS	644	87.89%	27.33%	77
MS (K8)	Secondary	**SE ACADEMY SCHOLASTIC** *	261	85.44%	26.44%	100
MS	Secondary	EVANS MS	228	96.93%	26.32%	90
MS	Secondary	GARNET-PATTERSON MS	335	95.82%	25.37%	88
MS	Secondary	KRAMER MIDDLE SCHOOL	355	86.76%	23.66%	70
MS	Secondary	**IDEAL ACADEMY** *	51	100.00%	21.57%	58
MS (K8)	Secondary	FLETCHER-JOHNSON EC	285	94.39%	18.25%	83
MS	Secondary	**VILLAGE PCS - MS** *	103	100.00%	17.48%	75
MS	Secondary	**SASHA BRUCE PCS** *	92	93.48%	17.39%	37
SHS	Secondary	BANNEKER SHS	300	99.00%	97.67%	38
SHS	Secondary	SCHOOL WW SHS	244	100.00%	91.39%	16
SHS	Secondary	DUNBAR PRE-ENGINEERI	116	94.83%	84.48%	43
SHS	Secondary	WOODSON BUSINESS & F	135	94.07%	66.67%	59
SHS	Secondary	ELLINGTON SHS	376	93.88%	51.06%	32
SHS	Secondary	**CESAR CHAVEZ PCS** *	203	87.19%	48.77%	65
SHS	Secondary	WILSON SHS	1071	78.24%	48.37%	29
SHS	Secondary	BELL SHS	478	94.14%	46.86%	73
SHS	Secondary	**KIMA PCS** *	56	87.50%	32.14%	NA
SHS	Secondary	DUNBAR SHS	739	77.81%	31.26%	44
SHS	Secondary	EASTERN SHS	791	80.40%	31.10%	55
SHS	Secondary	**EDISON-FR/WOODSON** *	1094	65.63%	29.62%	69
SHS	Secondary	**IDEA PCS** *	186	92.47%	29.57%	64
SHS	Secondary	CARDOZO SHS	577	87.18%	27.56%	63
SHS	Secondary	ROOSEVELT SHS	655	81.53%	26.87%	42
SHS	Secondary	**WASHINGTON MATH SCIENCE**	216	78.70%	26.85%	100
SHS	Secondary	COOLIDGE SHS	579	80.48%	26.77%	44
SHS	Secondary	WOODSON SHS	568	82.39%	25.70%	59
SHS	Secondary	**VILLAGE PCS - HS** *	77	88.31%	24.68%	75
SHS	Secondary	MM WASHINGTON SHS	202	88.12%	23.76%	47
SHS	Secondary	**MARRIOTT HOSPITALITY** *	105	79.05%	21.90%	35
SHS	Secondary	**THURGOOD MARSHALL PCS** *	105	81.90%	19.05%	72
SHS	Secondary	BALLOU SHS	889	73.34%	16.54%	82
SHS	Secondary	SPINGARN SHS	441	77.10%	16.33%	63
SHS	Secondary	ANACOSTIA SHS	575	70.96%	15.83%	72

SHS	Secondary	**NEW SCHOOL PCS ***	421	64.61%	13.78%	86
SHS	Secondary	**ARE PCS ***	30	90.00%	13.33%	NA
SHS	Secondary	**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ***	91	79.12%	10.99%	47
SHS	Secondary	**MAYA ANGELOU PCS ***	82	74.39%	7.32%	70
SHS	Secondary	**JOS - ARZ ACADEMY ***	47	65.96%	6.38%	100
SHS	Secondary	**NEXT STEP PCS ***	43	25.58%	2.33%	100
ALT	Secondary	MAMIE D. LEE SCHOOL	74	95.95%	20.27%	79
ALT	Elementary	HAMILTON CENTER	31	80.65%	19.35%	80
ALT	Elementary	SHARPE HEALTH SCHOOL	64	40.63%	17.19%	77
ALT	Secondary	HAMILTON CENTER	36	86.11%	11.11%	80
ALT	Secondary	CHOICE SECONDARY PRO	83	71.08%	10.84%	60
ALT	Secondary	SHARPE HEALTH SCHOOL	94	65.96%	10.64%	77
ALT	Secondary	CHOICE ALTERNATIVE P	113	83.19%	8.85%	68
ALT	Secondary	WASHINGTON CENTER	37	64.86%	8.11%	63
ALT	Elementary	MAMIE D. LEE SCHOOL	23	100.00%	4.35%	79
ALT	Secondary	LUKE C. MOORE ACADEM	169	20.71%	2.96%	36
ALT	Secondary	TUITION GRANTS	1138	19.07%	2.81%	19
ALT	Secondary	OAK HILL YOUTH CENTE	150	40.67%	2.67%	26
ALT	Elementary	TAFT ED PROGRAM	44	88.64%	2.27%	80
ALT	Secondary	BALLOU STAY SHS	47	36.17%	2.13%	16
ALT	Secondary	TAFT ED PROGRAM	54	83.33%	1.85%	80
ALT	Elementary	TUITION GRANTS	372	14.52%	1.34%	19
ALT	Secondary	DC JAIL	1	0.00%	0.00%	0
ALT	Secondary	DCALA WEST	46	0.00%	0.00%	27
ALT	Secondary	ELIOT CENTER	66	71.21%	0.00%	80
ALT	Secondary	JACKIE ROBINSON SCHO	16	75.00%	0.00%	36
ALT	Elementary	LASHAWN SCHOOL	80	0.00%	0.00%	4
ALT	Secondary	LASHAWN SCHOOL	120	0.83%	0.00%	4
ALT	Elementary	MOTEN CENTER	90	95.56%	0.00%	89
ALT	Elementary	PAUL ROBESON SCHOOL	10	10.00%	0.00%	35
ALT	Secondary	PAUL ROBESON SCHOOL	6	83.33%	0.00%	35
ALT	Secondary	PROSPECT LC	41	90.24%	0.00%	59
ALT	Elementary	PROSPECT LC	58	94.83%	0.00%	59
ALT	Secondary	RESIDENCE SCHOOLS	14	0.00%	0.00%	12
ALT	Elementary	RESIDENCE SCHOOLS	187	3.21%	0.00%	12
ALT	Secondary	ROOSEVELT STAY	16	0.00%	0.00%	13
ALT	Secondary	Spingarn Center	18	55.56%	0.00%	83
ALT	Secondary	SPINGARN STAY SHS	8	62.50%	0.00%	27
* Preliminary data						

SHS	Secondary	**NEW SCHOOL PCS ***	421	64.61%	13.78%	86
SHS	Secondary	**ARE PCS ***	30	90.00%	13.33%	NA
SHS	Secondary	**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ***	91	79.12%	10.99%	47
SHS	Secondary	**MAYA ANGELOU PCS ***	82	74.39%	7.32%	70
SHS	Secondary	**JOS - ARZ ACADEMY ***	47	65.96%	6.38%	100
SHS	Secondary	**NEXT STEP PCS ***	43	25.58%	2.33%	100
ALT	Secondary	MAMIE D. LEE SCHOOL	74	95.95%	20.27%	79
ALT	Elementary	HAMILTON CENTER	31	80.65%	19.35%	80

STATEMENT OF ARIANA QUIÑONES-MIRANDA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Senator DEWINE. Ms. Quiñones.

Ms. QUIÑONES-MIRANDA. Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and thank you and the committee for the work that you have done to support charter schools in the District.

My name is Ariana Quiñones-Miranda and I am the new Executive Director of the D.C. Public Charter School Association. I just came on board last Monday, so I don't have an office yet, but I hope to make myself and our organization a resource to you as you move forward.

I want to make three points today, and I will try to keep it brief. The first is to talk about the State education agency function, also facilities and charter school funding.

In terms of the State education agency, as we know, the District's educational system has become more complex over the past few years. It is now not just one local education agency, but we have several because of the charter schools that exist, and now we have the voucher experiment as well. I think the oversight system needs to evolve as the educational providers have evolved.

There is an issue or a potential conflict of interest in having one entity providing that oversight for the multiple providers when it is not set up to do it that way. The structure isn't set up appropriately, so I think we would support discussions around elevating the level of oversight for the CSA and separating that fully from DCPS. We have a partial separation with the State education office, and Council Member Chavous has a proposal, and the Mayor, to separate that more fully. I think that is probably a wise idea as we move forward with the expansion of the charter schools and the voucher program as well.

Part of that is the disconnect that we have between DCPS and between the Board of Ed and these other entities, and that can lead to some complications in terms of implementation of some of the actual creative ideas that Ms. Cafritz has put forward. And it has implications for facilities, for the school funding piece.

I wanted to highlight one example. In terms of No Child Left Behind, a lot of the targets that the State have to set are set by DCPS. The way that it is structured now, there is not a formal mechanism for that information and a lot of those regulations are set to kind of trickle down to the various charter schools. So if we had the one agency, we might be able to build in a more appropriate structure.

So there is an example of AMAO's, which most people have not heard of. This is the annual measurable achievement objectives. It is the equivalent, basically, of AYP, but for English language learners. Currently, the Office of Bilingual Education within DCPS is the entity that is charged with informing the schools about that.

I will say that Lisa Tobago, the director of the office, has done an excellent job of making the effort to do outreach to the charter schools. I don't know that that is happening within other divisions when information like that needs to get out. So I would hold her up as a model to say that it is possible for DCPS to do it if we are building in those structures. But if she hadn't made that outreach

effort, there really are no consequences. So the charter schools are kind of left at the mercy of some of the middle management individuals in terms of whether they are making that extra effort or not.

The next issue is in terms of facilities, I don't need to add that much. I think it is clear that the financing piece is being addressed. We can always, as has been said, use more funding. And, of course, a lot of that is in the form of revolving loans, which doesn't always help out all of the schools.

A related component is the technical assistance. We also have, thanks to City-Build and some of these other organizations, providers now that can assist the schools in preparing for the loan underwriting process and to acquire facilities loans. But then we have the third issue, which is really the access of facilities.

We know that there are a number of facilities that could be made available and it is not happening as smoothly as it could. So again in this area, we would support the proposal to create some form of entity or trust that might be able to have the oversight over the facilities for the District in one entity, and that might be able to also reduce some of the duplication of effort that is happening between different entities managing those efforts.

Related to that is also the possibility of establishing a guarantee fund for charter schools, and that is related to the issue of school funding. The District of Columbia has one of the strongest laws, so we are fortunate in that regard. But yet every year when it is budget time, charter schools become targets and the funding formulas that we have are threatened, as just happened recently where there have been attempts to decrease the facilities allotment and to decrease and modify the pre-kindergarten funding formula.

So with that level of uncertainty, it makes lenders wary of investing in charter schools in the District. So that guarantee fund might be a way to mitigate the sort of possible ups and downs of the funding formulas here in the District.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I think, overall, we just need to make sure that as we are evolving all of the entities that are part of this educational landscape are coordinating their efforts in a better way. And I hope that with the existence of the association that we will be able to play a strong role in making sure that we are all communicating and collaborating well.

Senator DEWINE. Very good. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ARIANA QUIÑONES-MIRANDA

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Ariana Quiñones-Miranda and I am the Executive Director of the new District of Columbia Public Charter School Association (DCPCSA). I began full-time on Monday, April 26, and I look forward to making myself available to work with you closely on education issues in the District.

Charter schools are public schools and an integral part of education and child development in the District. The Mayor, the City Council, the State Education Agency, the DCPS Board of Education and Superintendent, and the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board must balance the needs and resources of the various forms of educating and supporting children in this city in a way that does not pit one against another. We have families where one child attends a charter school, an-

other sibling attends a traditional public school, and conceivably a third may receive a scholarship to attend a private school. For most parents and families, the selection of a school for their child is not a political decision, yet we as leaders often make it so. As a parent, I consider the political climate because of the implications it has on whether the charter school I want my daughter to attend will be able to secure a site, stay in the same location for a reasonable period of time, and have enough funding left after lease or mortgage payments to obtain appropriate staff and instructional materials. If the charter school leaders must spend time "advocating" for things that often come automatically to traditional public schools, it will inevitably affect the quality of the educational program.

State Education Agency (SEA) Functions.—As the District's educational system becomes more complex, the current governance and oversight systems need to evolve. Although some might disagree, when DCPS was the only Local Education Agency, having it combined with the State Education Agency was not especially problematic. Now that we have traditional public schools, public charter schools, and soon, private and parochial schools all providing educational services to District families, a fully-functioning and independent SEA is extremely important. There is an inherent conflict of interest in having DCPS handle what are normally SEA functions (including Federal grants). All State level functions should be handled by one agency and should not be bifurcated as they are now. The creation of the State Education Office was a step in the right direction, but does not go far enough. All of the issues I address in one way or another highlight the need for coordination across the three sectors and an independent SEA could greatly assist in the coordination and "depoliticization" of education in the District.

This disconnect impacts various areas, from facilities, to Federal funding, to compliance and monitoring, professional development, and many others. To illustrate, one specific example is the communication across each of the sectors as it relates to compliance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB). AMAOs, or Annual Measurement Achievement Objectives, are targets set by each State for English language proficiency attainment as required by Title III. Title III of NCLB requires that limited English proficient students be assessed for English proficiency in kindergarten through grade 12. In effect, AMAOs are the equivalent to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets but are specific only to students who are limited English proficient. The reason I bring this up is that with all the attention paid to NCLB and AYP, most people, including educators, have never heard of AMAOs. And since the State sets the AMAO targets, in this case DCPS, the SEA has a role in ensuring that the charter schools are apprised of the targets and their responsibilities in ensuring that students meet them.

This could easily be an area where that information is not shared with the charter schools simply because there is not a formal mechanism built in for it to happen. However, unlike in some DCPS departments, the Director of the DCPS Office of Bilingual Education has personally made the effort to include the charter schools in her outreach efforts. Still, with the current structure, there would be no consequences if she did not make the effort; and in many cases, DCPS staff do not.

The latest version of Mayor Anthony Williams' plan to take control of the DCPS schools addresses this matter, at least at the governance level. The plan would reconstitute the Board of Education as a "true State board of education" with the power to set such State educational policies as minimum academic standards, attendance rules, and teacher certification and licensure requirements. The State Education Office, now under the control of the mayor, would become the "secretariat" of the State board and in that capacity would be charged with implementing the policies promulgated by the board. If the plan were adopted by the Council, authority over the 18 Board of Education charter schools would be given to the D.C. Public Charter School Board, which would become the sole chartering authority in the District.

While this proposal seems appropriate, we are concerned that having only one chartering authority may be a step backward for the District's charter school movement by creating a charter school monopoly. Leaving aside the question of whether the BOE should or should not be in the charter school business (many think not), having multiple chartering authorities is the hallmark of a healthy charter school movement. Around the country, those States that have more than one chartering authority have more charter schools and more vibrant charter school movements.

Facilities Access.—As you well know, the issue of charter school facilities is probably the most daunting challenge for local schools, although it need not be. With the multiple organizations and programs (Building Hope, CityBuild, Charter Schools Development Corporation, NCB Development Corporation, LISC, Raza Development Fund, etc.) that exist locally and nationally to support facilities financing, and the number of potential buildings in the District, increasing access to appropriate facili-

ties for all students is be a goal we can accomplish. While some positive steps have been taken, there is more that can be done. In order for schools to obtain facilities, there are three prerequisites: training and technical assistance to prepare school leaders to navigate the facilities acquisition process, financing opportunities, and available buildings. The organizations mentioned above are taking care of the first two prerequisites. What schools struggle with is the third. To be clear, there is not a shortage of facilities, but an imbalance in terms of the accessibility of facilities. The table below provides an overview of the numbers.

Indicator	Estimated Numbers
Number of DCPS buildings in inventory	About 190.
Number of DCPS schools in operation	About 146.
Number of DCPS underutilized schools	About 20–30.
Number of buildings in Mayor's inventory	About 20 available.
Number of charter schools	2003–2004: 37 charters on 41 campuses and 18 percent enrollment. 2004–2005: 45 charters on 50 campuses and 22 percent enrollment.
Number of charters in permanent facilities	2/3 of charter schools are not in permanent facilities.

Another important factor here is the connection between charter school facility development and community economic development. Schools are often community anchors and can be drivers for community economic development by helping to attract private money that would allow the city to renovate dilapidated buildings that blight neighborhoods. The SEED school is a perfect example. SEED renovated a burned-out shell that had been set on fire more than 20 times in the middle of one of the District's most violent neighborhoods. Today, it is a functional residential campus. The city seems to be holding out for luxury housing for some of these buildings but, in order to attract families back to the neighborhood, updated schools buildings are also needed. Making the DCPS and District buildings available for charter schools is a strategic investment. Charter schools can help turn around communities—not just by renovating neighborhood eyesores, but by spurring economic development and bringing families back.

The timing is right for working out a solution. DCPS has more buildings in its inventory than it did in 1996 when there were no charter schools and it has a significant number of underutilized buildings. Since then, DCPS has lost 18 percent of its enrollment to charter schools and this trend is likely to continue. Additionally, the city has vacant buildings and the administration seems willing to talk about the charter facilities issue. In fact, Councilmember Chavous is proposing that the Mayor have control over facilities through the creation of a facilities trust or entity that would oversee facilities in the District. We think that the idea of giving control of the facilities to a neutral party is the right solution. While it would require capital up front, I believe it may save money by eliminating the duplication of efforts among the various entities currently playing this role. And by structuring and staffing it appropriately, it can eliminate issues of perceived competition between traditional public and public charter schools.

Charter School Funding.—While the District has one of the strongest charter schools laws, especially in terms of per pupil funding and the facilities allotment; each year as the District attempts to approve its budget, charter schools are a target and the funding provisions are threatened. Whether it's tinkering with the funding formulas or proposed reductions in allocations, this level of unpredictability makes it extremely difficult to plan school services from year to year. Particularly challenging are recent proposed decreases to the facilities allowance. Any change to the allocations and formulas will make it extremely difficult for schools to negotiate and secure financing for facilities as lenders are not comfortable working in an environment with this kind of unpredictability.

Stabilizing this funding stream is important to lenders. If we are unable to guarantee that the funding levels will not decline, the establishment of a District of Columbia School Facility Guarantee Program would help to partially offset the risks. This program would guarantee some portion (if not all) of the mortgage and would serve as a credit enhancement for charter schools seeking financing. The guarantee level might be equivalent to the average/projected negative variances in the funding stream. The administration may find this attractive, because ONLY in the event of a default on a guaranteed loan would cash need to go out the door. Such a credit enhancement would strengthen the charter schools loan application and reduce the risk to the lender—yielding lower interest costs to the school, resulting in increased

available finding for programs. Lower interest rates also increase the school's purchasing power to acquire an underutilized DCPS building.

Lastly, there is a need to align the processes and formulas that are used in the budget process so that the administration can more effectively allocate the limited resources available. One example of this misalignment is that DCPS funding is calculated on prior year student enrollment while charter school funding is calculated on current year student enrollment. While there were reasons for having two different calculation procedures, it may be time to revisit that determination. That one variable allows for some students to be counted twice and could be a potential area for savings that would mitigate the need for proposals such as the recent ones to reduce the facilities allotment and the Pre-K multiplier. Based on the Mayor's estimate of the number of students in DCPS and charter schools, the average payment to DCPS for students who are actually enrolled in charter schools has been somewhere in the range of $9 million per year in the last 3 years, and in the next academic year, it could be as high as $20 million as 3,200 students enroll in new charter schools.

Thank you for your time and attention to these issues.

STATEMENT OF JOE NATHAN, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR SCHOOL CHANGE, HUMPHREY INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Senator DEWINE. Dr. Nathan.

Mr. NATHAN. Mr. Chairman, I ask that you have one of these books and I don't know if you have that.

Good morning, and thank you. Recognizing that a picture is sometimes worth 10,000 words, I am going to show a few pictures this morning, both verbal and hopefully in color. It is an honor to be here and I want to thank you both for your work on this important issue.

I have been involved as a public educator for the last 33 years. My wife has been a public school teacher for the last 25. We have three children, all of whom have attended urban public schools in Minnesota. Both our older son and daughter are now working for the St. Paul public schools. I believe deeply in public education, and I believe deeply that one of the most exciting things that has happened in the last 35 years in public education is the charter school movement.

In the next 4 minutes, I want to deal with four issues. First, why was the charter movement started? Why did a group of us sit down in 1988, draw some ideas on a napkin, and then why did legislators throughout the country decide this was a good idea?

We did a survey which is summarized in the testimony. We surveyed 50 State legislators and legislative aides from around the United States in 1996 and they said the two most important reasons for the charter movement were, first, so that we would expand opportunities for young people who are not doing especially well in the current system. No doubt, there are some people doing very, very well in district public schools, but there are unfortunately too many who are not. Legislators said overwhelmingly meeting those needs was number one.

No. 2, they said they are very concerned about the number of frustrated educators, and so legislators said over and over they wanted to provide new professional opportunities. So that was 1991 when the first law was passed, and I had the honor to help write that law and testify in 22 States about the charter idea.

What has happened since then? Briefly, as you noted, Mr. Chairman, more than 40 States have now adopted charter legislation. I was just in Washington State 2 weeks ago where the most recent law was adopted.

Who is going to charter schools? As the testimony provided to you shows, according to Federal figures, it is exactly what we hoped. This is increasingly an option for low-income youngsters and students of color, precisely the youngsters who are overall—and this varies, but overall they are not doing as well as other students in the district public schools.

It is clear and obvious throughout the country, in Minnesota, in Ohio, in Louisiana, and so on, that it is the youngsters who are not doing so well who are going en masse to the charters, and this is a very important issue. Low-income youngsters and students of color are overrepresented in charter schools.

How is this happening? I turn now very briefly to the document that, by the way, was provided with some Federal funds. Almost 45,000 people have downloaded this document since it was produced several years ago and it is a celebration of outstanding district schools and outstanding charter schools. I am going to point to only three.

On page 37, there is a picture of the first charter in the United States, started by a young woman in St. Paul, Minnesota, who decided she wanted to do a better job with youngsters who were not succeeding. She did not have any facilities funds; she didn't have any start-up funds. This was 1991; no Federal funds at that point.

So she went to the Democratic mayor of St. Paul and he arranged for her to have a city recreation center which was being underutilized. This is one of the principal things that has happened. You and your colleagues on a bipartisan basis have encouraged and stimulated the creativity that is so much a part of this country at its best, and this is a classic example. The first charter in the United States was in a city recreation center.

If you skip ahead just for a moment to page 47, in Arizona another pair of young women decided that they would work with the Boys and Girls Club in Mesa, Arizona. This is the charter school that consistently shows among the highest improvements of student achievement of low-income youngsters and students of color. This is a charter that shares space in a Boys and Girls Club.

If you move to the next page—and we are going quickly here because I want to honor the Chair's request to be concise—on page 49 you see the first charter in the United States to be run as a workers cooperative. This literally has inverted the traditional structure of public education. It is the teachers who set the salary. It is the teachers who set the working conditions. It is the teachers who are responsible. This has been recognized by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as an extraordinary place, and now it is being replicated throughout the United States.

Briefly, what have been the results? First, as the Chair pointed out, there are a variety of pieces of research. I don't have to tell anybody in this room that research varies, but there are many pieces of research to which I allude in my testimony showing that charter schools, even though they receive less money per pupil and they have all kind of facilities issues that the districts don't have to deal with, the charter schools are improving student achievement more rapidly than comparable schools. That is very, very important. It is not unanimous, it is not always that way, but in many cases it is.

Secondly—and I can give you more examples in questions—there are all kinds of examples of charter schools stimulating improvement in the larger system, and that is really critical. I will, in the interest of time, not tell you any stories about that, but I would be delighted to if you want to hear more—very clear examples alluded to in the testimony of stimulating. The work that you are doing in Congress is helping to make that happen. It isn't just about creating thousands of charters. It is helping to stimulate, to use the best ideas about district and charter schools to cross-fertilize.

Finally, I think that there are some lessons and the most important lesson I want to share with you today is not about money. What you have done as leaders to say to people throughout the United States in your States that it is a valuable, important part of public education is the single most important thing you can say.

PREPARED STATEMENT

While all of us will say more money will help, unquestionably, the most important thing that United States Senators have done on a bipartisan is say to the people of the United States this is, as Victor Hugo put it, stronger than all the armies of the world, an idea whose time has come.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOE NATHAN

The Charter School Movement started with a napkin, a pencil and 5 people around a table. Today the movement involves hundreds of thousands of students, 41 States, the District of Columbia, and one of the most remarkable education reform stories of the last 50 years.

This testimony attempts to help answer five questions:

—Why did legislators adopt charter legislation?

—What are the central ideas of the charter movement?

—What impact have charters had on students?

—What impact has the charter movement had on the larger district system?

—What might Congress do to help maximize the benefits of the charter idea?

WHY DID LEGISLATORS ADOPT CHARTER LEGISLATION?

In 1996, the Center for School Change surveyed 50 legislators and legislative staff in seven of the first States to adopt charter legislation: Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Louisiana, Massachusetts and Minnesota (Nathan and Powers, 1996). Top reasons for adopting charter legislation:

—Better serving previously unsuccessful students;

—Create new opportunities for educators and educational entrepreneurs;

—Expand the kinds of schools available; and

—Pressure existing system to improve.

The charter movement is sometimes equated, or regarded as similar to vouchers. For example, in January, 1992, the National Education Association declared itself "unalterably opposed to any legislative initiative that would provide Federal funds to nonpublic schools, whether it be through tuition tax credits, vouchers, private school choice programs, the establishment of new charter schools, or private school demonstration projects." (National Education Association). Interestingly, in 1996, the NEA started a program to help members start charter schools—and some teacher unions continue efforts to help create charters around the United States.

Returning to our 1996 survey of State policy-makers, we asked two questions about the link between the charter and voucher movement. We found that in NONE of the seven States did policy-leaders say the most important reason to adopt the charter idea was as a prelude to vouchers. In fact, in every State legislators were much more likely to see the charter movement as an alternative to the voucher idea. In each of the seven States, adopting charter legislation as a prelude to voucher legislation was in fact, the lowest rated major reason of seven options offered.

WHAT IS THE CHARTER IDEA?

The charter idea is based on three of the most powerful ideas in the United States:

—People ought to have a chance to carry out their best ideas;
—This is a country of responsibilities, as well as rights; and
—We believe in freedom and choice within some limits.

The charter idea responds to each of these ideas. The charter idea has seven elements:

—Charter schools are PUBLIC. They are open to all, with no admissions tests. They are non-sectarian.
—People should have a chance to create new, or convert existing schools into charter public schools.
—States will authorize more than one organization to sponsor or authorize charter schools. These may be school districts, universities, city councils, non-profit agencies, mayors or other responsible groups.
—There is an up-front waiver from most State laws about how schools operate, and from local labor-management contracts. While being expected to take State tests, and to follow Federal laws and local requirements regarding buildings, charters will be given extensive freedom about how to operate.
—The conditions in which these schools operate will be spelled out in a contract signed by the school and the sponsoring organization.
—In exchange for extensive freedom, charters will be expected to improve student achievement over a period of 3–5 years, in order to have their contract renewed.
—Charter teachers will have key opportunities, including the right to join unions, to be a part of a State-wide retirement program offered for other public school teachers, and to take a leave from their local district, without penalty, to try being a charter teacher.

WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE IMPACT OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ON STUDENTS?

It's vital to recognize that there is no single charter school curriculum or philosophy. Asking people to describe charter schools in Louisiana, the District of Columbia, or anywhere else is a bit like asking people to describe restaurants in these communities. They vary widely. Some are highly effective schools. Others are not. Having recognized this, there is very encouraging research about the charter movement.

First—what families are sending their children to charter schools? Initially, opponents like the Minnesota Education Association predicted that charters would be "elite academies" (Furrer, 1991). The reality is clear: charter public schools enroll a higher percentage of low-income students and a higher percentage of students of color than do district public schools.

Demographics of U.S. District and Charter Schools

RACE/ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS: TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	Elementary		Secondary & Combined	
	District	Charter	District	Charter
White	61.4	44.7	66.6	48.9
Black	18.1	31.0	15.0	21.8
Hispanic	15.7	19.5	13.3	22.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.6	3.3	3.9	3.1
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.2	1.5	1.2	3.5

PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH: TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	Elementary		Secondary & Combined	
	District	Charter	District	Charter
Less than 15–49 percent	61.5	58.5	71.6	56.4
50–100 percent	38.6	41.5	28.4	43.6

(U.S. Department of Education, NCES. Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 1999–2000.

Various studies show the value of charter laws and charter schools. Let's begin with the evidence about charters improving student achievement.

—A study of charter schools serving a general education population (as opposed to charters established to serve students with whom traditional schools have failed), found that "charter schools serving the general student population outperformed nearby regular public schools on math tests by 0.08 standard deviations, equivalent to a benefit of 3 percentile points for a student starting at the 50th percentile and outperformed regular public schools or reading tests by 0.04 standard deviations, or about 2 points for a student starting at the 50th percentile." (Greene, Jay et. al)

—A study of California charter schools that converted from district to charter status finds "many conversion charters are producing average test scores with populations of children historically associated with low test scores." (Loveless, p. 33)

—A 2001 study by the Colorado Department of Education found that the average score of charter school students exceeds the State average by a significant margin, and also exceeded the scores in "matched" public schools. Colorado charters' population is nearly as diverse as the State's district school enrollment. (Colorado State Department of Education)

—A study of charter students in Arizona found that charter students are making greater gains in reading, and about the same gains in math, as students in district schools. (Solomon, et. al)

—An analysis by the Center for School Change showed that charter schools in Minneapolis enroll a higher percentage of low income, limited English speaking and minority students than the district. However, a higher percentage of students made a year's worth of progress in reading, math or both at six of nine charter schools sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools, than the district average. The same analysis found the same situation for five of the seven charters sponsored by the district over the last 2 years. (CSC, 2004)

—A report released in January, 2004, by California's non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office praised that State's charter movement, and urged that it be expanded. Among the conclusions were that "charter schools are a viable reform strategy—expanding families' choices, encouraging parental involvement, increasing teacher satisfaction, enhancing principals' control over school-site decision-making and broadening the curriculum without sacrificing time spent on core subjects. (Legislative Analysts Office)

—University of Wisconsin researchers surveyed hundreds of charter school graduates in five States and the District of Columbia. Ninety-three percent said that given the choice, they would again select their charter high school. More than 80 percent rate charter school education as better than the education in the typical high school. (Center on Education and Work)

Another value of the charter movement is that it has developed some new, potentially valuable ideas other schools can use. Here are a few examples, of many that could be offered:

—Minnesota New Country School developed the idea of teacher owned schools run as a cooperatives. This is a new option in the profession, giving educators the chance to act more like some doctors and attorneys, who select their office administrators, and run institutions as they think they ought to be run. MNCS also operates a secondary school that uses project-based learning approach, in which few classes are offered. Instead, students, with their families and an advisor, develop an individual plan that helps them meet their own needs and interests, as it satisfies performance-based graduation requirements. Students are expected to make public presentations three times a year. Because the school enrolls about 120 students, grades 7–12, there are virtually no classes and no bells, and students may move freely around the school, operating much like adults. This means they work on projects for a time, and then, on their own schedule get up and go to the restroom, or spend a few minutes as they wish, before returning to work. In recognition of the value of this approach, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has given the school millions of dollars to replicate itself. (See Dirkswager.)

—A number of charters are using the idea of sharing space with social service agencies as a way to provide better service to students. Examples include the MESA Arts Academy, a highly rated Arizona charter, that shares space with a Boys and Girls Club; City Academy, the Nation's first charter, that shares space with a city recreation center; Codman Academy in Boston, that shares space with a local social service/medical center; and LEAP Academy in Camden, New Jersey, that does the same thing.

—KIPP Academy has developed a set of practices that has produced, in several settings, academic achievement significantly higher than other nearby inner city schools serving similar groups of students. (Wingert and Kantrowitz, 2003)
—Minnesota's New Vision Charter School has developed methods of dealing with disabled students that are being replicated successfully elsewhere. Impressed with NV's results, the Minnesota legislature has allocated more than $900,000 to help other schools learn from New Visions. Results have been very encouraging. (Minnesota Learning Resource Center)
—Cesar Chavez Academy in Pueblo, Colorado ranked last year as among the 10 highest achieving schools in the State, despite the fact that more than 70 percent of its students are from low-income families and more than half do not speak English in the home. Cesar Chavez has developed a mixture of emphasis on the arts and on academics that the National Council of La Raza is sharing with other charter schools throughout the country.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE CHARTER MOVEMENT ON THE LARGER DISTRICT SYSTEM?

In some places, the charter approach has helped stimulate broader improvement. Research by Eric Rofes found that in States with strong laws, that included multiple-sponsorship, the existence of a charter public school sector encouraged improvement in existing schools: "District personnel on at least five occasions in this study acknowledged, sometimes begrudgingly, that charters had served to jump-start their efforts at reforms. While they initially opposed charters and the chartering had been accomplished outside their authority, they felt that district schools ultimately had benefited from the dynamics introduced by the charter school." (Rofes, p. 19) Rofes noted, "States which had policies that provided for the chartering of new schools only through the local district showed significantly less evidence of reform efforts from the development of charter schools than did States which allowed for multiple sponsors." (Rofes, p. 19)

Major research by Caroline Hoxby, an economics professor at Harvard, agrees that competition from charter schools has helped improve district schools. (Hoxby) She concludes "Public schools do respond constructively to competition, by raising their achievement and productivity." In studying Arizona and Michigan, Hoxby writes, "Public Schools that were subjected to charter competition raised their productivity and achievement, exceeding not only their previous performance but also improving relative to other schools not subjected to charter competition. The improvements in productivity and achievement occur once charter competition reaches a critical level that happens to coincide with the enrollment at which charter schools' taking students would be easily discernible and probably start creating consequences for staff." (Hoxby, pp. 41–42)

Another example, from Dr. Kent Matheson, the former Washington State superintendent of the year, and president of the Washington State Superintendent's association, helps illustrate how competition can help improve schools. In 1998, this author was invited to debate Dr. Matheson in front of several hundred Idaho public school administrators.

Matheson stunned the audience by noting that he originally had opposed the charter idea when he moved to Flagstaff, Arizona to serve as superintendent. He initially regarded charters as: "Cutworms that would hurt the whole field of education. When planting a field, if you see cutworms, you use pesticide. That's what I wanted to do—stop the charter movement—but gradually I became a convert to the charter idea. Our state's charter law was a very strong motivating force making us want to compete." (Matheson, p. 1)

Matheson continued, describing a former State teacher of the year in his district who had been proposing a high school in cooperation with a local museum that would require all students to make presentations judged by local community and business people before graduating. The district principals resisted these ideas, and Matheson did not over-rule them. When the charter law passed, this outstanding teacher made one last attempt to convince the district her ideas made sense. When she was again rejected, she set up the proposed program as charter school. Her students were required to make presentations judged, in part, by community residents, before graduating. Matheson noted that when he and high school principals went to meetings with business groups, they began to be asked why the district was not doing what this charter school was doing. After some discussion, the high schools implemented this practice. Matheson listed several other reforms that were motivated, in part, by competition from local charter schools. (Matheson p. 2)

Another example of response to competition comes from Boston. There, in the early 1990's, the local teachers union proposed creation of new small school options within the district, which would have been similar to those that have been created

as part of the New Visions program in New York City. However, the local school board (called the School Committee) rejected this idea. Then the Massachusetts legislature passed a charter law, allowing educators and community groups to apply directly to the State for permission to create a charter school. Eighteen of the first 64 charter proposals came from Boston. Faced with the potential loss of thousands of students, some of the district's most innovative teachers, and millions of dollars, the School Committee reversed itself, and created the Boston Pilot School program. (See Nathan, 1999 for additional details) With support from the National Science Foundation, William Ouchi, a professor at the UCLA Graduate School of Management, studied 223 schools in six school districts during 2001–2002. Ouchi discovered that the schools that consistently performed best also had the most decentralized management systems and as he put it offered families "real choices among a variety of unique schools." (p. 181) As Ouchi pointed out, "there are two important aspects to school choice: one is the simple freedom to choose—to vote with your feet, so to speak—and the other is having a choice from among a wide variety of different schools." (Ouchi's emphasis, p. 183)

Ouchi strongly supports choice within schools operated by a district, as well as the chartered school approach. As he concluded, "the charter school movement is likely to grow because its underlying logic is unassailable." (p. 193)

Since 1992, the charter movement has grown from 1 to 41 States and the District of Columbia, from 1 school to almost 3,000. Clearly, this is a movement that can be well described by a quote from Victor Hugo: "Stronger than all the armies of the world is an idea whose time has come."

HOW CAN CONGRESS MAXIMIZE THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THIS MOVEMENT?

At this point, members of Congress often hear pleas for more money to be allocated in certain ways. That's not where I'll start, because while money can be important, my sense is that it is NOT the most important thing you can do.

—Help people in your State, and in the United States, understand the value of the charter movement. In speeches, in publications, on your websites, and in other ways, point out the many successes of the charter movement. Visit charters in your State. Hold hearing with charter and district officials, where they have a chance to learn from each other. Ask your State departments, universities, chambers of commerce and other groups to invite people from outstanding charter schools to speak at their meetings and conferences. Ask Universities in your State how often they invite successful charter school teacher and directors to teach courses for current or prospective teachers and administrators.

—Continue to help charter schools deal with the facility issue. A variety of studies have identified the building issue as one of the greatest challenges for the charter movement. You wisely have allocated funds to help with building purchase and loan guarantees. You may want to provide incentives for social service agencies, businesses and other groups to share space with charter and other schools.

—Continue to provide startup funds for charter schools. This has had an enormous positive impact. District schools typically receive millions of dollars to help them start new schools. Charters independent of school districts do not have anything like this, in a single State.

—Recognize and promote the idea that it is helpful for overall school improvement, to have a charter sector competing, as well as collaborating with the district system. Americans believe, for very good reasons, in opportunity, choice and freedom. We are wary of monopolies. Having a strong charter sector increases the likelihood that funds you allocate for school improvement in district schools will be better spent.

The charter idea, like so many of the best ideas in American, brings together a variety of people. People like civil rights legend Rosa Parks, the late, liberal U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone, President Bill Clinton and the former and current Presidents, named George Bush. As The New York Times noted, Parks has tried to start a charter school in Detroit. (Abdullah) In speaking to a joint session of the Minnesota legislature, Wellstone referred to the charter idea, as "that marvelous Minnesota innovation that is spreading throughout the country." (Wellstone). And each of the last three U.S. Presidents, Republican and Democrat, has endorsed the charter idea, and encouraged Congress to provide start-up and other funds to help promote this idea. Thank you for listening. Thank you for your openness and your leadership. Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you today. And thank you for recognizing, encouraging and assisting the charter school movement.

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Senator DEWINE. Thank you very much.

Senator Landrieu.

Senator LANDRIEU. I do have a couple of questions. I, first of all, appreciate the testimony of all of you, and particularly for the president of our school board to be so open to these new ideas and to be supportive of this effort, as well as many other efforts underway for the improvement of District schools. I appreciate all of the work that you all are doing.

I have a question about the screening issue, I think, President Cooper Cafritz, you brought up, because as we move forward the quality of our charter schools, I think, is very important, the ability to issue charters to groups that are most likely to succeed, although there are no guarantees, systems in place to recognize if that charter is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction pretty quickly, and to step in and have the wherewithal or the authority to close a school that is not meeting the expectations as initially established.

Now, under the independent board, I think, Mr. Loughlin and Ms. Baker, you testified that one year you all received a number of applications and didn't charter any. I guess that decision was based on the fact that the quality of the charters presented to you didn't measure up to a criteria that you all had established.

So my question is to you, Madam President. Do you all feel at the school board that you have got a tight enough screen to screen out those that are unlikely to succeed, or can that screen be tighter? Do you need us to help you tighten that or can you on your own, with the authority that you all have, tighten that screen, as well as trying to step in a little early if you sense that something is not working? Do you need us or can you do that with your current authority?

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Well, okay. First of all, in terms of chartering schools, I think that the Board has the authority not to charter schools, and it is not chartering schools that it doesn't feel should be chartered. But there are schools that have been chartered in the past, not just under us. I mean, as I said, three of the top five performing schools fall under our jurisdiction.

But charter schools, in general—the first charter school amongst elementary schools is 19th when it comes to the percentage of kids who are proficient. And that is on grade level and that is only 70 percent. At high schools and junior high schools, they are performing worse than DCPS—the other charter school board as well as our charter schools.

I brought this chart here for you to see. Some of them are improving, and you have to take into consideration the work that Maya Angelou does. A lot of its kids are court-adjudicated. They have been in unstable situations, so you can't place the same kind of considerations, et cetera, and you have to be able to look at them individually.

What we need to be able to do is we don't have the money to get audits. We clearly cannot depend on the city to provide that, and those are very important things. We have to be able to require that all of the teachers' FBI checks be filed in some central place. That is absolutely critical. There are mechanical things like that that can be done that we don't feel we have the authority to do and we need some assistance on.

Senator LANDRIEU. We may be able to help you with that because, of course, we want to be supportive, but I just want to focus, though, on the screening issue. I believe the school board—and if you don't, tell me, but I believe the school board now has the authority that you all need to put as tight a screen as you want on new charters so that if people come to you——

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Oh, yes, and we are doing that. That is not the problem, that is absolutely not the problem.

Senator LANDRIEU. You all are doing that now and doing it well.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Oh, absolutely.

Senator LANDRIEU. But what you are saying is, in the past, perhaps some charters were issued with not as tight a screen as could be placed, and so we have a situation potentially to deal with some of the charters that may not be living up to their expectations?

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Right, and these are not just charter schools under DCPS. You know, it is a serious problem.

Senator LANDRIEU. Let me just ask, Ms. Baker, could you add something to that? Part of the process of this hearing is to get some facts, and this is very helpful because I think that screen is important in making sure that you all have the ability to put as tight a screen as possible, as well as stepping in when you think that a charter that you have given is not living up to the expectations that you all have set.

But, Ms. Baker, could you respond?

Ms. BAKER. Yes. I think, first, talking about the background checks which we know are in need of improvement, we did have a meeting with the unit in DCPS to talk about getting the FBI checks which are more expensive. The local check just says, you know, has the person committed a crime of some kind in the District of Columbia. It doesn't give you anything broader than that.

We are trying to move toward requiring a more intensive check of our existing schools, starting with the schools that come on because we know that that is a very important issue.

Around the business of financial audits, while we do not audit our schools because that is something that they must do, we do have a consultant that actually checks every school's audit, and where they do not meet the standard, they are sent back. They are not approved until we get a high standard audit from every school. We get monthly financial reports which are also looked at by an accountant to be sure that our schools are moving in the right direction financially.

So I agree that there are some areas in which we as a board or the board and staff could use a little more flexibility, having a little more authority to do what needs to be done. But we also walk that very thin beam of holding schools accountable, but also the whole charter concept of those schools having their autonomy.

So there is always a balance that we try to make to be sure that they do indeed have that autonomy, but that we hold them accountable. And we do that through a process of looking at their records on a monthly basis, as I said, with the background checks, which we think is something that is very important, making sure that we move to another level. We have a couple of schools that do the FBI checks on their own.

Senator LANDRIEU. Let me just ask a couple of things I need for the record. Do I understand that all charter schools are required to have a clean audit, or is there no requirement?

Ms. BAKER. They are supposed to have an audit. The law requires an audit. We insist that it be a clean audit, and actually the CFO a couple of years ago gave us a whole set of standards and

criteria which we have passed on. And I believe at that time Linda McKay was the executive director.

Senator LANDRIEU. So you are saying yes. But, Peggy, you say no. Okay, so one says yes and one says no, but the fact is that if the District wanted to have a certified and clean audit, you have the authority to do that. You don't need Congress to do that, I don't think.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. I think that we do need some assistance because I know that our charter school board does not have the funding. You have to have independent auditors and you need to have them on a rotating, cyclical basis, as you would in any agency that is expending public funds. It is not happening with schools on either side.

But, again, the best schools have independent audits because that is the way you operate, but it is not happening regularly. The schools send in audits, but you wouldn't sign off on them.

Senator LANDRIEU. The Chairman has been very gracious, but I have got to ask two questions, one that I had intended to ask and one that just came up. I want to clarify this for the record. I don't know if I heard this correctly.

Did someone testify that teachers in the District of Columbia only require a criminal background check in the event that they might have committed a crime in the District, but had they committed a crime outside of the District, we don't check that? Did I hear that correctly?

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Teachers in District of Columbia public schools are required now to have an FBI check, as well as the local police check, and we assume that the FBI check delves into the rest of their background. But there are some teachers still in the system who had a local police check before the rules changed 2 years ago, but who are still in the system and who just had a local police check.

In the case of the alleged child molester in one of our schools last week, he had been locally checked, but he hadn't had an FBI check, evidently, and had been in the school system prior to that. In the charter schools, it is handled by the charter schools. We want everyone to have an FBI check even if the applicant has to pay for it, even if that is the only way to afford it. But I think to protect our kids, charters and public schools, it is something we absolutely should require.

Senator LANDRIEU. Well, let me just suggest from this moment forward I would go on record as saying no group should receive a charter to start a school unless everybody associated with that charter has had a full FBI background check, and then we can worry about how to clean up the current situation, and you all have that in your authority right now to do that.

Mr. Chairman, one more thing on facilities and then I will reserve my questions for my second round.

Since we have heard this constantly at every meeting, public and private, about facilities for the charter schools—and we recognize it is a real challenge, but today we are giving approximately $2,000 per child, per charter, for facilities only, not operating. Let's assume 200 children per charter. I realize some charters have less, I realize some charters have more, but an average of 200 children.

That works out to be, if my math is correct, $400,000 a year for facilities.

Four hundred thousand dollars a year can bond a serious amount of money in terms of debt service. So a chartering entity presents an idea, assuming everyone has been background-checked, great plan, great energy, and you want to give the charter. You give the charter. They have 200 kids. You get $400,000 a year.

What is stopping them, because we would like to fix it, from going to a bank, laying down the charter, laying down the 200 children and borrowing the money necessary either to buy a new facility, build a simple but functioning facility, or renovate an existing public building, assuming it has been given at a minimal, dollar-a-year kind of lease, use that money to renovate and find a home for themselves that works for themselves and the kids? What is stopping us from accomplishing that, because that is what we are trying to help you to get to?

Mr. LOUGHLIN. One of the key issues the schools face is building up some equity so that they can go out and leverage that amount of money. And the question is is there enough equity funding, credit enhancement funding, revolving loan funds, et cetera.

Senator LANDRIEU. But you don't need to build equity. If you have a charter with 200 children and you have got $400,000 a year guaranteed to come in, what is preventing a bank or an entity from loaning you money to buy or lease or renovate a building?

And if we haven't, Mr. Chairman, we certainly can provide some sort of increased guarantee, but we have a revolving loan fund that is direct and indirect, and have increased it every year. So I am confused and I would like to not be confused at the end of this hearing.

Mr. LOUGHLIN. Well, as I understand it, the banks are reasonably conservative. So if you take a charter school that wants to engage in a $5 million project, the bank will say we will lend 80 percent of that, $4 million. The school is faced with raising the $1 million either through their own funds, through fundraising, or through some of the facilities that have been made available through this committee and through the city.

Senator LANDRIEU. Well, I would like to receive some testimony from some of the bankers, not at this meeting, Mr. Chairman, but perhaps in writing. I realize that when you go to borrow money for a home, you usually put up 75 or 80 percent and you have to put up a down payment. But there is no reason that the banking community in the District of Columbia, particularly with the help of Congress and the school board and other authorities, can't establish a new and different way to lend money for the establishment of schools, which are not houses, you know, and they are not commercial businesses—they are an entity to themselves—100 percent financing based on a guaranteed stream of revenue.

I know that is one problem I would like to correct for facilities, and the other—and I am not going to ask this question, but I will come back to what has been established within the District to free up public buildings, not just schools that are underutilized and empty, of which there are any number of the neighborhood that I live in, but other public buildings that the public has already paid for. Taxpayers have already paid for these buildings; no sense in

not putting these buildings to good use, whether they were recreational centers or schools or libraries that are no longer functioning or any number of public buildings that could be used, with the proper renovation, of course, and proper environmental studies for a safe and adequate place for children.

But I will come back to that. The chairman has been very gracious.

Senator DEWINE. Dr. Nathan, in your book you talk about this concept of shared facilities, which is a intriguing concept. Do you want to elaborate a little bit about this and tell us how this has worked in the District?

Mr. NATHAN. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. Actually, we have done this in cooperation with Knowledge Works Foundation in Ohio, in Cincinnati, which has been a very strong supporter of this effort. And you just heard some examples of what it is so important, first, because educators often say with considerable justification that working effectively with youngsters and families is a real challenge, and I agree.

So one of the things that is happening, for example, in Cincinnati, is that there is a school that has partnered with the social service agency called Families Forward and they have provided free space in the school. And this is a school that has produced dramatic achievement gains, in part because they have additional assistance from the social service agency at no additional cost to the taxpayers.

But we describe in here a number of examples. I mentioned the Mesa, Arizona, example. Senator Landrieu just referred to other public buildings. In many parts of the United States, there are buildings that are underutilized and this seems to me to be one of the central ideas——

Senator DEWINE. We have them all over the country.

Mr. NATHAN. Yes, sir.

Senator DEWINE. I mean, they are just all over the country, underutilized buildings and facilities.

Mr. NATHAN. Yes, sir, and just a brief comment. In transitioning from this question to Senator Landrieu's question about facilities, you are right to be frustrated. At the same time, we are working with a number of people who are starting new charter schools and you don't know when you come into the D.C. Charter Board or the Minnesota Charter Board or whatever how many kids you are going to have. You hope to have 200. So the central issue about facilities, in my opinion, is in the first year or two when you just don't know.

So that is why, Mr. Chairman and Senator, your points about shared facilities, No. 1, and, No. 2, identifying public buildings that are underutilized, I think are absolutely right on, because we can have buildings that could be incubators. And for the first year or two, maybe two or three different schools and social service agencies could be sharing the space. So I think that these two issues come together precisely as you have suggested.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Can I add something?

Senator DEWINE. Sure.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. People know that charters are there. They are sitting ducks, so you have the city's charter school investment

fund. Take a school like Options, 178 kids. They own a facility for almost $500,000 a year, so Options comes to us and says, we have to expand in order to be able to afford the rent.

All of these real estate agents know charters have to have space and they have to have it by tomorrow, so let's gouge them and charge them $500,000 or $600,000 a year. And then there is no way that they can leverage that amount of money they have coming in every year so that they can do a longer term.

What we really need to push is charter school ownership of their facilities and stop the city, which is also holding old schools that could be given to charters which haven't been given to charters. So it is not just the school system; it is the city.

Senator DEWINE. Senator Landrieu.

Senator LANDRIEU. To follow up on the facilities, do we have a comprehensive list of school buildings that are either controlled by the school board, or when you say there are buildings that the city controls, is it two different groups of buildings, some that are controlled by the city and evidently the school board gave them to the city?

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. Under prior superintendents, a number of buildings were given back to the city because the schools said we no longer have use for them, and when schools are excess, they go back to the city.

Senator LANDRIEU. How many are on that list? Does anybody know?

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. There must still be about seven surplus buildings on that list.

Ms. BAKER. I don't think it is seven.

Ms. COOPER CAFRITZ. But there is another building that we are keeping and sending to the charter school task force so that we can make sure that it goes to a charter school, because otherwise it wouldn't.

Senator LANDRIEU. Does anybody have an idea—maybe, Ms. Baker, you could testify on this because it seems like we could—one of the great accomplishments of this hearing, Mr. Chairman, would be if we could explore with you all, the experts, a streamlined system for facilities. That might help not just the charter schools, but it might also help the traditional public schools, as well as the city as it struggles for redevelopment in some of these areas.

As you know, public buildings, no matter what they are used for, whether it is a school or a new shopping center or some sort of new community center, can be catalysts for revitalization of an area. So it is in everyone's interest—the city, the schools, the community generally—for these buildings that are underutilized and vacant and sometimes quite a nuisance to the people who happen to live around them or the businesses that are trying to function around these buildings—is there a way that you all have thought of that you could testify to this morning, and if not could you submit some of those ideas to us, because maybe we could help to create with the city a more streamlined process?

Ms. Baker.

Ms. BAKER. I think that one of the concerns for the buildings—first of all, I don't think there are seven. I have been attending the

meeting of the task force which was basically dealing with co-location. However, in the process, for instance, we now know that Bruce has been moved into the surplus of the mayor's list.

However, the big problem for a number of these buildings is the amount of work that it will take to make the buildings habitable, millions of dollars in some instances. I understand that Bruce needs a new roof; it needs window repair. So it is not something that anyone can go into without millions of dollars being spent just to get it ready.

So some of the buildings, while they are there now and are empty and are considered surplus, are going to take a considerable amount of money in order to make them habitable, which again is another problem that, yes, you have to go through the credit enhancement. And you can get some funding, but there is a considerable amount of money that will be needed for that. So that is another issue that is of great concern when you start talking about surplus buildings. They are not all just ready to step into.

Senator LANDRIEU. And a mere $4.5 million or even 6 or 7 million dollars won't do. Sometimes, it is a $20 million price tag, or sometimes more than that?

Ms. BAKER. I know that at the Thurgood Marshall Building out in Southeast, I understand, the actual costs are tremendous. They are going for it simply because that is an area that has great need and they have their eyes set there and they are going to do it. But in many instances, if you are talking about a school that is just starting, you are talking about that $400,000, but that $400,000 is not immediately available because a school has to pay a lease. It has got to pay rent when it starts up.

When it is approved and it is getting ready to open, a bank is not as interested in—they want to see, yes, you are a new school, you are going to open, but let's see whether you know how to do this. So it is going to take a couple of years before a bank will say, yes, we——

Senator LANDRIEU. We need to create venture capital funding. You create venture capital funding. I mean, investors look at a product that is not even on the market and say, we just look at the plan, we look at the inventor and we believe it is going to take off. And they lend the money and they put it down sometimes before the first product has been created.

Ms. BAKER. Well, they have been hesitant to do that with charters.

Senator LANDRIEU. And then there is a mezzanine level of financing and then there is sort of an expansion level of financing, and it is the way the business community operates. We have got to figure out a way to develop that same sort of system within public schools. I am certain that it is existing somewhere because the movement has grown.

Let me just stop—I don't want to take all the time, obviously—and go back. The chairman has some additional questions.

Senator DEWINE. Well, I am finished, actually, and I want to thank our panel. We do need to get to the other panel, but I want to thank you all very, very much. This has been very, very helpful and we have learned a lot this morning.

Ms. BAKER. We thank you.

STATEMENT OF DAVID DOMENICI, CO-FOUNDER, MAYA ANGELOU PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, DC

Senator DEWINE. Thank you.

Let me ask our second panel to come up. I will introduce you as you are coming up.

Mr. Eric Adler is the co-founder and managing director of the SEED School. Mr. Josh Kern is the president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall Academy. Mr. David Domenici is the co-founder and executive director of the See Forever Foundation. Thank you all for joining us.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Chairman, as these gentlemen are taking their places, I just want to say a general thank you for the extraordinary work that each of you has done against great odds, and I think for all the right reasons, to create options and to strengthen our entire school system.

I want to just restate for the record that while the focus here is on charter schools, I hope everyone in this room is here because we want to create a stronger public system of education in the Nation and recognize that charter schools are one of the tools, not the only tool, maybe not even the best tool, although this Senator thinks it is pretty good. It may be the best tool, but I am not 100 percent convinced, but a clearly a good tool to strengthen education options for children. So I just wanted to say that as you all begin.

Senator DEWINE. Very good.

Well, we welcome our second panel. We thank you very much. We have your written statements which will be made a part of the record, and if you could keep your oral statements to 5 minutes, then that will give us an opportunity to ask you some questions.

Mr. Domenici, why don't we start with you.

Mr. DOMENICI. Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. It is great to be with Eric and Josh. I think they are both going to talk a bit about the schools they work at and about what makes a successful school. I am going to talk a little bit less about these topics and instead focus on two items as briefly as I can: first, how and why we got started, and how I believe our purpose for starting remains relevant today, particularly as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. Second, I want to just briefly touch upon the partnership that we recently announced us with DCPS that is going to enable us to collaboratively open a second campus.

When James and I founded the school, we believed, and still do, that it is the public's moral responsibility to provide high-quality education to all students. It is a basic right. In 1995, our background at the Public Defender's Service teaching, volunteering and working in city government led us to reach a brutal but honest, truthful fact that the promise of Brown and the promise of the civil rights movement was not happening here in the District of Columbia, at least not for our kids. Our kids were those who had been arrested, who had dropped out of school, who were on probation.

So we started a pizza delivery restaurant that served as a job training program, and for 2 years worked as attorneys and pizza makers with a team of court-involved kids. We were desperate in a good sense, the best sense, for change, for hope and for the future.

Almost immediately, we knew that we needed to work with students full-time during the day and really work on academics, because although making pizzas all night long was a lot better than being on the street, it wasn't going to be enough to help our kids develop the skills they needed to become the successful adults we knew they could be.

So in 1997, we quit or jobs to start a school. That first year, we were not a charter; we were a free, alternative, non-degree-granting program, like the freedom schools. We didn't have any public support, nor any stamp of approval. We did have a belief and a passion, and it was the public charter school law and the belief of Nelson Smith, Joe Baker and others involved in the public charter school start-up years that enabled us to transform a pizza restaurant and some ideas about how young people should be treated into a comprehensive school and youth development program.

Today, we serve 100 students. We are very small. We are in school from 9:00 until 7:15 daily. All students participate in mandatory after-school classes, dinner, and an hour of one-on-one tutoring nightly. Over 250 people volunteer at our school each week. We have comprehensive mental health services on-site with a psychologist and social worker. We have 15 students who live in our residential homes, thanks to the SEED School. We run two small student-based businesses so that all students have a chance to learn job skills and earn and save money as a part of their school day. We run a mandatory 6-week summer program for all kids.

We do this because our kids need it and they deserve it, but we have to raise funding beyond our basic charter school support in order for us to provide these sorts of programs to our students—lots of it. It has been a huge investment, as have the efforts at SEED and Thurgood Marshall and many of the other public charter schools here.

But it has been worth it. Almost 50 percent of our students now have special needs. Nearly that many report only marginally attending school before coming to us, and over 30 percent have had some prior involvement in the court system. At our school, they go from attending school 50 percent of the time to 90 percent of the time. They improve their GPAs from a low D to about a B. They increase their SAT scores by over 15 percent, on average, and over 70 percent of them are now going on to college. But it is not that simple. Our kids' Stanford 9 scores are not improving, and we are struggling with that and we are trying to figure out how to address that.

Our school, the SEED School and Thurgood Marshall aren't all the answer, even if we grow and expand. Today, our students and nearly all students attending public schools in the District of Columbia attend segregated, poor schools. In DCPS today, there are 2,455 students attending the 12th grade. Of those, 121 are white. Of those white students, 116 attend three schools—Wilson, School Without Walls and Duke Ellington. In fact, 88 of them attend Wilson. This means that 5 white students attend all the rest of the public high schools in the District of Columbia.

The numbers in the public charter schools would be just the same. There are no white students at Oak Hill, and there never have been in the 6 years since I have been working in the city. Par-

ticipation in public education along class lines would mirror these statistics almost identically.

You asked us to come here and talk about best practices, but let's be honest. We are talking about best practices within a system that has been abandoned by whites and abandoned by upper-and middle-class blacks. Some good charters with incredibly dedicated staff like ours will not fix this system, not alone at least. We may be able to offer an ever-expanding network of good schools and we may be able to bring in resources that the traditional schools cannot.

We can bring innovation, the sort you are hearing about today, and we can push and nudge the larger system toward new ideas through basic, good old competition. But the public system here in the District of Columbia is a segregated system for poor, mostly isolated young people of color. That is true of charters and that is true of traditional public schools. That is tragic and it is tolerable, and no one seems to want to talk about that or what this public disengagement has cost our kids and our city. Our school is about reengagement and reinvestment, and that is costly personally and fiscally. It is about not letting our schools become separate and unequal.

The capital infrastructure of the schools in the District is crumbling, and we can talk about this in more details with questions. But you have to look at this honestly. What will it cost to create high-quality physical structures for the kids in the city? The private markets cannot do this alone in charters, DCPS spaces and everywhere else.

The three of us at this table have raised millions of private sector dollars to support our school facilities needs, but that can't be the long-term systemwide solution. Municipalities build schools, but believe me, old school buildings in need of massive repair with some excess classrooms are not the full answer to our overall facilities problems—part, but not all of it. It will require significant investment of public and private resources, but more so the acknowledgement by all of us that our kids, our District kids, deserve it, regardless of their race or background.

The reality that we couldn't do this alone and that we needed to create some real momentum around change and innovation and improvement is what led us to want to partner with DCPS to open our second campus. The focus of the campus will be to primarily work with students who have attended some of the larger public high schools east of the Anacostia, who have had attendance problems, have stopped going to school, who have lots of trouble staying in and succeeding at school.

If all goes well, in a couple of years this campus will be serving 150 teens who need the sort of programming and support we all believe in and provide. The success of the partnership will enable us to jointly open additional campuses, where we can again create learning environments where students who have not been successful in traditional public schools can grow and reach their potential.

In the bigger picture, if we are successful, members of our staff will be working collaboratively with staff from traditional public schools and other charters, will learn from each other, will hold each other to high standards, will study together, and will grow to-

gether in service of our students. Together, we will create schools and create a movement here, the movement we have never seen in the District since the 1960s where folks like Eric and Josh and Donald Hense and Irasema Salcido and Kent Amos and Ariana from public charter schools and others can work with staff and the leadership of DCPS, the city and you all on Capitol Hill.

We will create a system where parents will not have to tolerate the sort of inadequate education that children have been getting, because they will understand how to advocate for change and they will understand and have the strength to demand better of all of us. And we will collectively respond with options and real opportunities, which cost real big dollars.

Our partnership with DCPS may look like just another facilities deal to many, but after 18 months of negotiation and months of delays, I can tell you that is not what it is to us. We could have bought and renovated a building in the time it has taken us to get this deal done. It is a part of our commitment to bring people together for our children and our future. It is part of our commitment to fulfill the mandate of Brown v. Board of Education.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I understand you may have more specific questions about the partnership. I am available to answer them or answer any other questions you might have about our history, our school, our funding needs or our results.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID DOMENICI

Thank you for the opportunity to testify here this morning. My name is David Domenici, and I am the Co-founder, along with James Forman, Jr., of the Maya Angelou Public Charter School.

It is great to be here with Eric Adler and Josh Kern, as well. I believe that they will each talk a bit about the schools they work at and more generally about what makes a successful school. I will talk a bit less about these topics, and instead focus on two items:

—First, how and why we got started, and how I believe our purpose for starting remains relevant today, particularly as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education.

—And second, the groundbreaking partnership that we recently announced with DCPS, which will enable us to collaboratively open a second campus this fall.

James and I founded this school because we believed—and still do—that it is the public's moral responsibility to provide a high quality education to all students. It is a basic right. In 1995, our combined background at the Public Defender's Service, teaching, working and volunteering with students in the District of Columbia, Philadelphia and New York, and working in city government, led us to reach the honest, hurtful truth: the promise of Brown, and the promise of the Civil Rights movement was not happening here in the District of Columbia—not for our kids, at least.

Our kids were kids who had been arrested, who had dropped out of school, who were on probation. Kids in streets and in the wrong system, not the systems many of us believe can lead students to opportunity and success.

So we started a pizza delivery restaurant and for 2 years we worked both as attorneys and pizza makers with a team of court-involved kids. We were desperate—in a good sense. For change, for hope, for the future. Almost immediately we knew we needed to work with students full-time, during the day, and to really work on academics, and that although making pizzas all night long was better than being on the street, it was not going to be enough to help our kids develop the skills they need to be successful adults.

In 1997 we quit our jobs to start a school. That first year we were not a charter; we were a free, alternative, non-degree granting program. We did not have any pub-

lic support; nor any stamp of approval. But we had a belief and a passion. And it is the public charter law, and the belief of Nelson Smith, Jo Baker, and Eunice Henderson, and David Mack and others involved early on with the Charter Board, that enabled us to transform a pizza restaurant and some ideas on how young people should be treated into a comprehensive school and youth development program.

Today, our school serves 100 students. We are in school from 9 a.m. until 7:15 p.m. daily. All students participate in mandatory after-school electives, dinner, and an hour of one-on-one tutoring nightly. Over 250 people volunteer at our school each week. We have comprehensive mental health services on site with a psychologist and 3 social workers, we have 15 students who live in our residential homes, we run two small student-based businesses so that all students have a chance to learn job skills and earn and save money as a part of their school; and we run a mandatory 6-week summer program for all students. We do this because our students need it, and deserve it, and we have to raise funding beyond our basic charter support in order for us to provide these programs to our students—lots of it. It has been a huge investment, as have been the efforts at SEED and Thurgood Marshall and many public charters here.

And it has been worth it. Our student population is now nearly 50 percent students with special needs, nearly that many report only marginally attending school the year before coming to our school, and about 40 percent have had some prior involvement in the court (delinquency or abuse/neglect). At Maya Angelou they go from attending school 50 percent of the time to over 90 percent of the time; they improve their GPAs from a low D average to a B average; they increase their SAT scores by over 15 percent on average; and over 70 percent of them are now going on to college. They like school, appreciate the hard work of their teachers, and are committed to their future. The have hope and dreams.

But our school, and the SEED school and Thurgood Marshall aren't the full answer—even if and when we grow and expand. Today our students, and nearly all students attending public schools in the District, attend segregated, poor schools. In DCPS today there are 2,455 students attending the 12th grade. Of those, 121 are white, about 1,900 are black and the rest are primarily Latino and Asian/Pacific Islander. Of the white students 116 attend three schools—Wilson, Without Walls, and Duke Ellington, with 88 of them at Wilson alone. The numbers in the public charters would be just the same. Participation in public education along class lines would mirror these statistics, as well.

So we are talking about best practices within a system that has been abandoned by whites and abandoned by middle and upper class blacks. And some good charters with incredibly dedicated staff like we have will not fix this system—not alone. We may be able to offer an ever expanding network of good schools, and we may be able to bring in resources that the traditional public schools cannot for a host of reasons. We can bring innovation—the sort you are hearing about today. We can push and nudge the larger system toward new ideas and through good old basic competition.

But the public system here in the District of Columbia is a segregated system for poor, mostly isolated, young people of color. This is true of charters and traditional public schools. And that is tragic and intolerable. And no one seems to want to talk about that. Or what this public disengagement has cost our children. Our school is about reengagement and reinvestment, and that's costly, in a lot of ways. The capital infrastructure of schools in the District is crumbling and no one wants to look honestly at what it will cost us to create high quality physical structures for kids in the city—in charters, in DCPS spaces, anywhere. The three schools at this table today have raised multiple millions of private sector dollars to support our school facilities needs, but that can't be the long-term system-wide solution. But believe me, old school buildings in need of massive repair with excess classrooms aren't the full answer to our overall facilities problems, either. Part yes, but not all of it. It will require significant investment of public and private resources.

The reality that we couldn't do this alone and that we have to create some real momentum around change and innovation and improvement is what led us to want to partner with DCPS to open our second campus. The focus of the second campus will be to work primarily with students who have attended some of the larger public high schools east of the Anacostia River who have had attendance problems, have stopped going to school, or who are having lots of trouble staying in and succeeding at school. If all goes well, in a couple years, this campus will be serving 150 additional teens who need the sort of programming and supports that we believe in and provide. And if all goes well, the success of the partnership will enable us to jointly open other campuses where we can again create a learning environment where students who have not succeeded in traditional public schools can grow and reach their potential.

In the bigger picture, though, if all goes well, members of our staff will be working collaboratively with staff from traditional public schools and other charters; we will learn from each other, we will hold each other to high standards; we will study together; and we will grow together in service of our students together. And we will together create schools and create a movement where folks like Eric and Josh and Donald Hense and Irasema Salcido and Kent Amos and Ariana Quinones—the new executive director our association—from public charter schools can work with staff and leadership from DCPS, and the city, and the Hill. We will create a system where parents will not have to tolerate the sort of totally inadequate educations their children have been getting, because they will understand how to advocate for change, they will have the strength to demand better of all of us, we will collectively respond with options and real opportunities—which cost real dollars.

Our partnership with DCPS may look like just a facilities deal to many. But after 18 months of negotiations and months of delays, I can tell you that's not what it is to us—we could have bought and renovated a building given the amount of time it's taken. It is part of our commitment to bring people together for our children and their futures. It is a part of our commitment to fulfill the mandate of Brown.

I understand members may have specific questions about our partnership. I am available for them, or questions about our history, our school, our funding needs, and our results. Thank you.

Senator DEWINE. Thank you very much. Mr. Adler.

STATEMENT OF ERIC S. ADLER, FOUNDER, SEED FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. ADLER. Thank you. It is my pleasure to be here today. I want to thank the subcommittee and particularly the both of you for your support of charters in the District.

I also want to say that I am in great company on this panel, and I appreciate you guys both for your accomplishments and your camaraderie.

The SEED Foundation was established in 1997 by Rajiv Vinnakota and myself to build urban boarding schools that prepare children for college. We opened our first school, the SEED Public Charter School of Washington, DC, in 1998. As I speak to you, 305 students are living and learning on our campus in Southeast Washington.

I am here today in my capacity as the founder of the school. But more than an educator, I am really a social entrepreneur. All three of us here, that is really what we are. In getting the school open, we had to do things like develop community support, advocate for amendments to law, raise lots and lots of private money, build four buildings, float bonds, hire staff. These are all entrepreneurial activities more than educational ones. To understand successful charter schools, we need to begin to see them less in the context of just education and more in the context of entrepreneurial businesses.

The SEED School of Washington offers a comprehensive solution to previously intractable problems. For some children, only a 24-hour-a-day program can provide the security and stability they need. Our program meets all of our students' basic needs—food, clothing, shelter, supportive community, skills.

Who are our students? They are, as Dave points out, 100 percent of-color, 90 percent below the poverty line. Eighty-eight percent have a single parent or no parent; 93 percent have no parent who went to college. They enter SEED's 7th grade about three grade levels behind in their major skills, on average.

They are selected by lottery, not creaming. We believe that any child can go to top colleges, and so far in this year's senior class, our first graduating class ever, our students have earned accept-

ances to American University, Boston University, Cornell, Duke, George Washington, Georgetown, James Madison, NYU, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Spelman College, Stanford and many others. In short, we were right. Inner-city students selected at random and starting an average of 3 years behind can be prepared for America's top colleges.

We also have other indicators of student success, including what we think is an astounding 97 percent high school graduation rate for students who attend the SEED School, versus 63 percent for the general population.

I don't know that these early successes make me an expert on how to make charter schools work and I don't pretend to have broad expertise, but I do believe I know some of the factors that have been critical to SEED's success. In the interest of time, I am going to focus on just six issues.

No. 1, development of a solid operating business. At SEED, we have the SEED Foundation, a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) to manage fundraising, financing, campus development, PR and other business operations for the school. This allows the professional educators to focus on what they do best and make sure that the best functions are covered by professionals in those areas. A school is a large and complex business. A strong business foundation is required to sustain a great educational program.

Issue No. 2: facilities. Much has been said about facilities. I don't want to spend a lot of time on it in the opening statement, but I do want to make reference to a couple of things that Congress can do. One is support charter hubs or incubators where fledgling charter schools can open and share space as tenants.

The second is to create and fund a quasi-public agency to manage facilities for all public schools in the District. This could improve vastly the condition of DCPS facilities, could allow DCPS to trade unused space for operating funds, and could virtually eliminate the lack of facilities available to charter schools that threatens the movement. I will be happy to talk more about that idea under questioning.

Issue No. 3: school size and culture. Making schools small is critical to SEED's success. The current SEED School in Washington is just 300 students spread over grades 7 through 12. When we build future schools, we will always build them small enough that every teacher can know every student's name.

We also spend time and energy in the SEED School on culture-building. We look to hire school leaders and teachers who understand how to build culture. We keep the student body small and we allow time and resources to put culture-building exercises into the school calendar. In the end, students will learn more from each other than from adults. We had better pay attention to what they are teaching each other.

Issue No. 4: meeting the non-educational needs of students and families. We all know that many students are dealing with difficult issues in their lives, and so schools need to provide lots of wrap-around services, including psychological counseling, meals, recreational activities, supervised study halls, medical treatment. These all need to be available on campus. At SEED, we have taken this concept of wrap-around services to the extreme. Our students

live with us on campus and, quite frankly, this is the single greatest reason for our success.

Issue No. 5: entrepreneurialism. At SEED, we have worked hard to be entrepreneurial about gathering resources and allocating them wisely. I have already spoken to this issue earlier in my statement, so I won't dwell on it here.

Issue No. 6: student assessment and promotion. At SEED, we have done away with social promotion. In order to be promoted into the next grade, students must pass through the gate into that grade by demonstrating proficiency on a range of academic skills tests. This is effective because it matches assessment to curriculum.

PREPARED STATEMENT

In conclusion, I want to urge the subcommittee to continue to support charter schools in the District. There is real reason to believe that by increasing the number of public charter schools in the District of Columbia, we can dramatically improve public education. In my written statement for the record, I have listed seven reasons to believe that this really will make a difference.

I thank the subcommittee for having me here today and I will, of course, be pleased to answer any questions.

Senator DEWINE. Mr. Adler, thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC S. ADLER

It is my pleasure to be here today to discuss best practices in public charter schools. I hope that my statement and answers to questions will be useful to the subcommittee.

I also want to say that I am in great company on this panel. It is an honor to be considered to be in the same group with these great, innovative school leaders and I appreciate their accomplishments and camaraderie.

My organization, The SEED Foundation, was founded in 1997 by Rajiv Vinnakota and myself to establish urban boarding schools that prepare children, both academically and socially, for success in college and in the professional world beyond. The SEED Foundation opened its first school, The SEED Public Charter School of Washington, DC, in 1998, to provide urban children with an intensive college preparatory boarding education. The SEED School serves 305 students in grades 7 through 12 whose challenging circumstances might otherwise prevent them from fulfilling their academic and social potential. As I speak to you, our students are living and learning on our campus in SE Washington, east of the Anacostia River.

I am here today in my capacity as the founder of a school, but more than an educator I am really a Social Entrepreneur. When I look back over what has gone into developing the SEED School, it has had less to do with creating an educational program than with building a rather complex business. We have had to: Develop Community support, Get charter, Advocate for amendments to law to provide funding for boarding students, Raise private money, Control a site, Build the campus (175,000 sq feet of finished space), Finance the construction by floating bonds, Develop the program, Hire key staff, Recruit students, Recruit and manage the board, Oversee & support the institution, Manage PR.

These are entrepreneurial activities, more than educational ones. Really, everyone on this panel is a social entrepreneur. We are all here today because we have been skillful and lucky enough to build businesses which are successfully delivering services to students and families. If we want to understand successful charter schools, we need to begin to see them less in the context of just education and more in the context of entrepreneurial businesses.

THE SEED SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON, DC OFFERS A COMPREHENSIVE, VISIONARY SOLUTION TO PREVIOUSLY INTRACTABLE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

For some children, only a 24-hour-a-day school program can provide the security and stability they need to succeed. With the belief that an integrated program can accomplish more than services pieced together from day and after-school programs, The SEED School set out to provide its students with consistent, holistic services. The result is a boarding school program that provides a comprehensive solution for the challenges facing many inner-city youth. The School provides students with comfortable accommodations, three nutritious meals a day, opportunities for physical exercise, two school psychologists, college and career counselors and an elaborate network of support consisting of parents, teachers, boarding instructors, counselors and boarding community coordinators.

Seventh-grade students commit to a 6-year college preparatory program. Students live in dormitories, benefiting from an integrated curriculum of academic, extracurricular and life skills. They take on mentoring roles, community service and personal responsibilities. Located in the community, the School increases parental involvement and reinforces the potential of the communities served. SEED fills a critical need in Washington, DC by providing economically disadvantaged urban children with the necessary educational and social resources to prepare for college and the world beyond.

The program is structured 24 hours a day. More importantly, it meets all of our students' basic needs: food, clothing, shelter, supportive community, skills. It also meets all of their secondary needs: great special ed, psych services, parent resources. We have a great campus, more than 320 new, high speed, flat screen, networked and internet-enabled computers, an average class size of just 14 students, and a remarkably innovative 9th grade gate system which ensures that every student in our high school is actually prepared to undertake our rigorous college prep curriculum. And lastly, we offer our students lots of enrichment—student athletics, summer travel, and the chance to meet interesting speakers.

Who are our students?

—100 percent of color, 90 percent below poverty line (measured by free breakfast & lunch), 88 percent have a single parent or no parent, 93 percent have no parent who went to college, they enter SEED's 7th grade about 3 grade levels behind.

—Selected by lottery—not creaming. We believe that any child can go to top colleges. So far, in this year's senior class, our first graduating class ever, we have acceptances to the following colleges: American University, Art Institute of Philadelphia, Boston University, Charleston Southern, Clark Atlanta, Cornell University, Duke University, Elizabeth City, Elizabethtown College, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Hiram College, James Madison University, Johnson & Wales, Landmark College, Mary Baldwin, University of Maryland, Maryland College of the Arts, Marymount, University of New Orleans, New York University, Ohio Wesleyan, North Carolina A&T, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Spelman College, Stanford University, Trinity College, Virginia State University, Virginia Union, Xavier Ohio, Xavier Lousiana.

In short, we were right. Inner city students, selected at random and starting an average of 3 grade levels behind can be prepared for America's top colleges by an intense college prep boarding school. We also have other indicators of student success, including improved standardized test scores, dramatic decreases in risky and anti-social behavior, an astounding 97 percent high school graduation rate for students who attend the SEED School, as compared to 63 percent for the general D.C. population.

I don't know that these early successes make me an expert at how to make charter schools work, and I would not pretend to have sweeping expertise. But I do believe that I know some of the elements which have been important for our success at SEED, and I am pleased to have been asked to share them with you today. There are probably hundreds of issues which help determine the success or failure of a public charter school, but in the interest of time, I have chosen to focus on six issues which I think have been most critical to our success at SEED. Here are the most important issues as I see them:

ISSUE NO. 1.—DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLID OPERATING BUSINESS

At SEED, we decided which are the core functions of an education institution, and tried to remove the burden of all the other functions. That is why the SEED Foundation, the parent organization which founded the SEED School, manages the fundraising, financing, campus development, PR, and certain business functions for the

school, freeing up the professional educators to do what they do best. Furthermore, it allows us to have people with real expertise in the areas of business, finance, and real estate development take on these critically important functions and build a really robust business. A school, after all, is not merely a place which teaches children and, oh yes, handles a little bit of money, human resources, real estate, and the like. Rather, it is just the inverse. A school is a large and complex business whose product is the delivery of educational services. Only once a strong business operations foundation has been built can a great educational program be sustained.

ISSUE NO. 2.—FACILITIES

Everyone knows that facilities are a huge issue for public charter schools. Most charter schools cannot afford adequate facilities, and even if they could they tend to lack the expertise to acquire, develop, and manage and maintain a good campus. At SEED we have been very lucky that we have been able to acquire this expertise, and have had generous donors who have supported our campus development efforts. But most charters cannot do this, and it threatens the entire movement. There are several things which Congress can do to improve the situation:

—Establish a revolving loan fund. This has been done, and it will assist many charter schools in financing improvements to their campuses.

—Build charter hubs. These are buildings which include space divided up by wing or by floor so that several fledgling charter schools can rent space within them at the same time. Ideally, hubs should have some common space, such as a cafeteria or athletic facilities, which these new schools could share. Charter hubs would ensure that new public charter schools with good educational programs but little cash and business acumen—which describes most charter schools—would not be prevented from opening by their inability to find, control, renovate, and manage suitable space.

—Create and fund a quasi-public agency to manage the planning, financing, construction, and maintenance of facilities for all public schools—both DCPS and public charters—in the District. The creation of such an agency would be a most innovative and important step forward in the revitalization of public education in the District of Columbia. In addition to improving the condition of DCPS facilities, the creation of such an agency would have two other significant benefits: (1) It would allow DCPS to trade unused space for operating funds; (2) It would virtually eliminate the lack of facilities for charter schools, which currently threatens to close or limit the enrollments of most charters and makes impossible the dramatic growth of the number of students in charter schools. This is obviously a complex undertaking beyond my ability to describe in a 5-minute statement, and I will be happy to discuss it in greater detail during questioning.

ISSUE NO. 3.—SCHOOL SIZE AND CULTURE

We believe that making schools small is critical to SEED's success. The current SEED School in Washington is just 300 students spread over grades 7 through 12. While future SEED schools may be slightly larger, we will always build them small enough that every teacher can know every student's name. Large schools almost never work, because they cannot produce the proper culture. Everybody in the school community must feel a personal connection to every other person in the school in order to really be able to use school culture to produce positive outcomes for students.

We also spend time and energy in the SEED School on culture-building. We are not producing education widgets, we are raising children. If we do not proactively build the community culture, then we will have Lord of the Flies. If you have not already done so, I urge you to read A Hope in the Unseen, a book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ron Suskind. In the book, he describes what it is like to try to be an academic student at Ballou High School in SE Washington, and the story is brutal. I am not blaming the teachers or administrators at Ballou for this. They didn't choose to pack thousands of students into the school. It was handed to them that way. Under those conditions, I cannot imagine how they can possibly produce a positive peer culture. At SEED, we look to hire school leaders and teachers who understand how to build positive school culture, we keep the student body small enough to make it possible, and we allow them the time and resources to build culture-building exercises into the school calendar. In the end, students will learn more from each other than from adults. We better pay attention to what they are teaching each other.

ISSUE NO. 4.—MEETING THE NON-EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN ORDER TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR STUDENTS TO FOCUS ON SCHOOL

Too many students are dealing with difficult issues and lacking the most basic opportunities. Students who arrive at school hungry, or who have witnessed violence, or who do not have the opportunity to study or run around safely or play chess, need more than just an education. So all D.C. public schools—DCPS and public charters—need to provide lots of wrap-around services on campus. Psychological counseling, meals, opportunities to engage in recreational activities and sports (especially for untalented athletes), supervised study halls, and medical treatment all should be available at school. We have worked hard at SEED to form relationships with agencies which can help provide these services on our campus, and have raised money above and beyond our charter dollars to provide many of them directly.

At SEED, we have taken this concept of wrap-around services to the extreme. We know that students who arrive at school hungry or dirty or in unwashed clothes are unlikely to learn, and will almost surely distract students around them. Children who are abused at home, or whose siblings or mothers are abused, or who worry that they may be beaten up on the way home from school, or who have no quiet place to study, or whose moms have drug problems are not going to do well in school so long as they are going home to chaos every night. So our students live with us on campus. And quite frankly, this is the single greatest reason for our success. The marginal $14,000/student/year cost is tiny compared to the societal cost savings from the bad outcomes which may be prevented. For example, of the 40 students who started at SEED our first year, 39 are still in school. Statistically, we should have expected 20 of them to drop out. The societal net present cost of a dropout—in terms of lost taxes, increased services required, etc.—is about $500,000. So the day our first students graduate next month, we will have saved the taxpayers millions of dollars, even after taking into account the increased cost of our program. And that is before we even start counting the societal benefits of sending nearly all of our students on to college, or of avoiding many of the other statistically prevalent bad outcomes, such as teen pregnancy or drug use.

Parental involvement generally correlates with good student outcomes. At SEED we have a parent liaison person who knows every parent by name, keeps track of families as they move and have their phones disconnected, knows what is happening with family members, and maintains active relationships with families. We also offer parents resources on campus through our parent resource center, which provides workshops in literacy, job, and parenting skills, gives parents access to computers and the internet, and works with families to manage and avoid major problems, such as eviction or drug addiction. Thus, the school becomes a resource for the whole family, not just a place to go when your child is in trouble or some teacher is disrespecting your child. We also "require" parents to volunteer on campus each month so that their children see them involved, the parents know and trust the folks at school, and they become a partner.

ISSUE NO. 5.—ENTREPRENEURIALISM

At SEED, we have worked hard to be entrepreneurial about gathering resources and allocating them wisely. I have already spoken to this issue earlier in my statement, so I won't dwell on it here, except to reiterate that the public charter schools which are most effective at achieving great student outcomes are those which are most enterprising and entrepreneurial about gathering, allocating, and managing their resources.

ISSUE NO. 6.—STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND PROMOTION

At SEED, we have done away with social promotion. It wasn't easy, because our families want to see their children move through the grades from year to year. But if a SEED education is to be effective, students must be held accountable for learning skills.

We have not found the Stanford-9 to be a terribly useful tool. So, while we use it, we also have a much more important assessment tool which we call "gates." In order to be promoted into the next grade, students must pass through the "gate" into that grade, by demonstrating proficiency at a range of academic skills. Rather than having one high-stakes exam at the end of the year, teachers administer gate tests every few weeks. At the end of the year, students have compiled a portfolio of exams demonstrating proficiency in all their subjects. This is effective because it matches assessment to curriculum. Our gate system is also a particularly effective way of dealing with students who have been poorly served in the lower grades and

are arriving at SEED behind, but who need to be caught up in order to enter our college prep high school program.

CONCLUSION

I want to urge the subcommittee to continue to support charter schools in the District of Columbia. There is real reason to believe that by increasing the number of public charter schools in the District of Columbia we can dramatically improve public education. In the past few years, 15 percent of students have moved out of DCPS and into charters. There are several reasons to believe that this holds important advantages for public education in the District of Columbia:

—While some charters are weak, some are not. Some of those students have been transferred to genuinely good charter schools.

—Charter schools tend to be small. So even if the school isn't very good, at least students know that their teachers know them and are watching. Furthermore, these smaller schools tend to focus more on culture and wrap-around services, making it more likely that students will find themselves in an environment where they can focus on learning rather than other life problems.

—Charter schools are not subject to the hiring restrictions which affect DCPS. This allows greater flexibility for public charter schools to hire in the same manner as independent or private schools.

—Charter schools are in a much stronger position to raise private money than are the traditional public schools. These privately raised funds are very important.

—Because they are small but have a board about the same size as the elected Board of Education, charters generally receive much greater oversight than DCPS schools possibly could. What's more, many charter schools are created by highly mission-driven founders who feel like they "own" the place. The upshot of all this is that, even if a charter school is bad today, the odds are fairly good that this small, closely overseen, mission-driven institution will be able to fix itself over a period of 5 to 10 years. In essence, what you get with charters is a larger group of people paying attention to a smaller institution.

—By moving students out of DCPS and into charters, you decrease the number of students making up the big ship which has to be turned around. Somewhere, we reach a tipping point where the system becomes easier to manipulate and improve. We all want to see DCPS succeed, and by making them a more compact operation we increase the likelihood of that.

—Because DCPS schools generally receive students by geographic proximity whereas public charter schools must go out and actively get families to choose them, charter school families by definition must be at least passably happy with the choice they are making in order to stay. This means that charter schools are developing the skill of parent satisfaction, where traditional public schools are less inclined to be able to do so. This must make it easier to involve parents in the school, which we know is good for student outcomes.

I want to thank the subcommittee for having me here today, and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

STATEMENT OF JOSHUA KERN, CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, THURGOOD MARSHALL ACADEMY, WASHINGTON, DC

Senator DEWINE. Mr. Kern.

Mr. KERN. Thank you, Chairman DeWine. Thank you, Senator Landrieu. Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and thank you, Senator Landrieu, for your support of our school.

I have some thoughts about some of the issues that came up in your previous panel's questioning about background checks and about facility financing. But if you don't mind, I would like to reserve those for the questions and answers so I can have an opportunity to read my statement.

Senator DEWINE. Sure.

Mr. KERN. Thank you.

It is an honor to speak to distinguished leaders on this topic so close to my heart. It is also an honor to be here on this panel with Eric Adler and David Domenici, who are heads of two outstanding charter schools in the District of Columbia, the SEED School and Maya Angelou, respectively.

Although each charter school is unique, there are common threads among the highest-performing charter schools, and indeed excellent schools in general, that we now recognize as best practices. These best practices include hiring a talented principal who effectively supports teachers, employing teachers who are masters at their craft, implementing an innovative standards-based curriculum that meets students where they are, encouraging strong parental involvement in all aspects of the school, and building a network of relationships within the community by reaching out to families, businesses, institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations and other schools. These are but a few of the ingredients essential to creating an effective school.

However, there is one best practice that successful charter schools employ that traditional public schools rarely use, an approach that lies at the heart of charter schools' success and I think an approach that you heard David and Eric speak quite profoundly about, and that is creating a model that effectively educates students from high-poverty backgrounds.

Students from high-poverty backgrounds arrive at our schools with both inspiring potential and an imposing range of deficits and disadvantages. These often include unmet emotional needs, a dearth of positive role models, a lack of basic resources outside of school, a stressful home environment that is not conducive to studying, and parents who lack time and resources to support their children's education. In addition, unlike their peers from higher-income backgrounds, our students have not been afforded the wide range of experiences that would help them shape their hopes, dreams and aspirations.

As is the case with my colleagues' schools, what makes Thurmond Marshall Academy successful is that we implement a model that addresses all our students' needs. We provide a wide range of programs that go far above and beyond those usually available at urban public schools. In effect, we function both as a school and a non-profit youth development organization.

We carefully integrate a rigorous college preparatory academic curriculum with specialized services, including but not limited to an extended school day that runs from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily, after-school academic tutoring, personalized mentoring—every student at our school has an individual mentor—Saturday programming, high-caliber college guidance activities, a full-time on-site clinical counselor, and a mandatory 5-week summer program that prepares incoming 9th graders for high school academic and behavioral expectations. Only through this full-service approach can we achieve our ambitious mission to prepare students to succeed in college and to actively engage in our democratic society.

Clearly, though, addressing the wide range of needs that students from high-poverty backgrounds face through this multi-faceted approach requires extraordinary financial and human resources. Although there are ways that public monies can be used more effectively, we shouldn't overlook the fact that funding for public education on the whole is not sufficient to meet all the needs of impoverished students.

As a result, each of our schools raise a significant amount of additional resources each year to maintain the full complement of

programming that truly impacts our students. Thurgood Marshall Academy raises approximately $4,000 per student each year to supplement guaranteed funding.

Finally, successful public charter schools have attracted and motivated individuals, foundations and companies with vast resources to reenter the world of public education, from which they have long been absent. I think it is actually one of the most exciting things that the charter school movement has done in the District of Columbia.

We have observed firsthand that when an effective model is created, the community at large is willing to invest the necessary time and money to make schools work. Yet, raising these resources is not easy. In fact, leaders spend much of our time working to attract the financial and human resources necessary to sustaining our institutions.

PREPARED STATEMENT

This is an exciting time for Thurgood Marshall Academy. Next year, we will graduate our first class and we expect all these students to matriculate to and succeed in college. Additionally, Thurgood Marshall Academy will move into its new home, the now-derelict Nichols Avenue School building across from the Anacostia Metro station. This $10 million renovation of a cornerstone property at the gateway to historic Anacostia speaks to the capacity and impact of high-performing charter schools on their students and their community.

This concludes my remarks. Thank you for your past support of our efforts and for the opportunity to speak with you today.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOSHUA KERN

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Joshua Kern, and I am the Co-founder and President of Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School, a law-related charter school in Southeast Washington, DC. It is an honor to speak to distinguished leaders on a topic so close to my heart. I'm honored, as well, to be here with Eric Adler and David Domenici, heads of two other outstanding charter schools, The SEED School and Maya Angelou, respectively.

Although each charter school is unique, there are common threads among the highest performing charter schools (and, indeed, excellent schools in general) that we now recognize as "best practices." These best practices include: hiring a talented principal who effectively supports teachers; employing teachers who are masters at their craft; implementing an innovative, standards-based curriculum that meets students where they are; encouraging strong parental involvement in all aspects of the school; and building a network of relationships within the community by reaching out to families, businesses, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other schools. These are but a few of the ingredients essential to creating an effective school.

However, there is one best practice that successful charter schools employ that traditional public schools rarely use—an approach that lies at the heart of charter schools' success—namely, creating a model that effectively educates students from high-poverty backgrounds.

Students from high poverty backgrounds arrive at our schools with both inspiring potential, and an imposing range of deficits and disadvantages. These often include: unmet emotional needs, a dearth of positive role models, a lack of basic resources outside of school, a stressful home environment that is not conducive to studying, and parents who lack time and resources to support their children's education. In addition, unlike their peers from higher-income backgrounds, our students have not been afforded the wide range of experiences that would help them shape their hopes, dreams, and aspirations.

As is the case at my colleagues' schools, what makes Thurgood Marshall Academy successful is that we implement a model that addresses all our students' needs. We provide a wide range of programs that go far "above and beyond" those usually available at urban public schools. In effect, we function both as a school and a non-profit youth development organization. We carefully integrate a rigorous, college-preparatory academic curriculum with specialized services including, but not limited to: an extended school day that runs from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; after-school academic tutoring; personalized mentoring; Saturday programming; high-caliber college guidance activities; a full-time, on-site clinical counselor; and a mandatory 5-week summer program that prepares incoming 9th-graders for high school academic and behavioral expectations. Only through this full-service approach can we achieve our ambitious mission to prepare students to succeed in college and to actively engage in our democratic society.

Clearly, though, addressing the wide range of needs that students from high-poverty backgrounds face, through this multi-faceted approach, requires extraordinary financial and human resources. Although there are ways that public monies can be used more effectively, we shouldn't overlook the fact that funding for public education on the whole is not sufficient to meet all the needs of impoverished students. As a result, each of our schools raises a significant amount of additional resources each year to maintain the full complement of programming that truly impacts our students—Thurgood Marshall Academy raises approximately $4,000 per student each year to supplement guaranteed funding.

Finally, successful public charter schools have attracted and motivated individuals, foundations, and companies with vast resources to re-enter the world of public education, from which they have long been absent. We have observed first-hand that, when an effective model is created, the community at large is willing to invest the necessary time and money to make schools work. Yet, raising these resources is not easy—in fact, we leaders spend much of our time working to attract the financial and human resources necessary to sustaining our institutions.

This is an exciting time for Thurgood Marshall Academy. Next year, we will graduate our first class, and we expect that all of these students will matriculate to and succeed in college. Additionally, Thurgood Marshall Academy will move into its new home, the now derelict Nichols Avenue School building, across from the Anacostia Metro Station. This $10 million renovation of a cornerstone property at the gateway to historic Anacostia speaks to the capacity and impact of high performing charter schools on their students and their community.

This concludes my remarks. Thank you for your past support of our efforts and for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Senator DEWINE. Mr. Kern, thank you very much. Senator Landrieu.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you all. As I said as you all sat down, I again just congratulate you for your really extraordinary, extraordinary efforts. I thank you for your leadership sincerely and, Mr. Domenici, particularly for your remarks seeming a little bit tense, and appropriately so, but to let you know and to give you encouragement that the work that you have done is, in fact, accomplishing what I think you want to accomplish, which is to challenge the current system, to ask the right questions, and by setting the great model that you have set has brought us in large measure to this point today not just in the District, but all around the country, showing a better way and providing hope that a public system, but a different kind of public system that encourages entrepreneurship, that pushes the envelope, that challenges the very debilitating notion that a large group of children just can't learn and can't succeed, is thinking out of the box and shattering these notions. So I really do want to thank all of you for what you are doing.

I do sense some frustration, which I sense also here in myself sometimes. It is just not moving quickly enough for all of us, and so part of this meeting today is to grasp what is working so that we can attempt as leaders, with the leaders in the District, to scale it up. It is all about scaling it up. It may be working for a few hun-

dred children or a few thousand children. We need to quickly get it working for millions of children in the country.

None of what we are doing is easy. If it was, it would have been done 150 years ago or 200 years ago or 50 years ago. But you all are showing us the way and I want you to be encouraged, which is why, if anyone asks, which I often get—why do you fund the SEED School, why do you directly fund Thurgood Marshall, why are you giving special attention to Mr. Domenici's school—I would like to answer that publicly.

I give support to Thurgood Marshall and SEED, and so does the chairman, and attention and support to Mr. Domenici's school because what you are doing is pretty terrific and it is working and it is showing us the way. And if we can do it for this number of kids, it is my hope that as you continue to provide competition to the public school system and the private school system, I might add, good competition and good role models, we will all get better in the process.

My question that I want each of you to answer, if you would, to the best of your knowledge—and I understand that the SEED School is a little different because you are full residential, so your costs are obviously going to be much different than schools that have even extended hours, as you do, Mr. Domenici, and also Mr. Kern.

I am sure your foundation board has to try to get close because you go ask for money in the private sector. How much is it costing you to educate, not feed and not house, but to basically educate with wrap-around services the children and the population that you are serving? And if you could try to hit an average within $1,000 or $1,500, I would appreciate it.

Mr. Domenici.

Mr. DOMENICI. Twenty-plus thousand dollars a year.

Senator LANDRIEU. Twenty-plus a year.

Mr. Kern.

Mr. KERN. Fourteen thousand a year, although we could certainly spend $20,000 a year.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Adler.

Mr. ADLER. Well, as you point out, this is a very difficult question for us because we do house them and so I am not sure which of the wrap-around services I would include in our residential program and which I wouldn't.

Senator LANDRIEU. Then don't give a number today, but could you look at that for us and submit it for the record because I think it is very helpful in this debate? And if you want to give an average, qualifying, and then submit something——

Mr. ADLER. I certainly think that if you took the costs of providing our residential faculty, our residential program—I assume dinner you would leave in there; you included dinner in that—I would be probably right in this range, in the $18,000, $19,000-a-student range, and then on top of that we have got housing costs.

Senator LANDRIEU. I think that is important to note. Now, you know, people could debate these numbers, but I will tell you from my political experience with the majority of independent, non-parochial public schools, the average of tuitions is about $15,000 to

$20,000. There might be some that are more expensive than that, but I think $15,000 to $22,000.

In parochial schools, where the tuition may only be $3,500 or $5,000 or $6,000, that tuition is subsidized pretty heavily by the church, which, of course, is their mission in the Catholic Church. Both of us being Catholic and having both attended Catholic school, and our children having attended Catholic schools, know about Catholic schools and the subsidy that occurs.

But for people to argue that you can accomplish what you all are accomplishing for $5,000 a year or $6,000 a year or $7,000 a year, which is the reality in most school districts around the country, is a hopeless case before you even start.

So I know money is not everything, but it is something, and something pretty important when it comes to educating children and providing the kind of quality education that our Constitution implies that they have a right to receive and we have an obligation to provide.

It is not going to be accomplished by $5,000 and $6,000 and $7,000 and by scholarships at $7,500. Although it is better than $3,000, it is not where it is, and one of the big issues is this fairness in financing and to really become honest with the financing of our system, as well as the management, governance and thinking outside of the box about being creative.

My next question to you, Mr. Domenici, is you said, quote, "We could have found, built and structured a building faster than the 18 months it took us to get a new facility." And I know that everybody has been as cooperative as possible with you; I hope they have because you most certainly deserve our full cooperation.

Would you mind for the record saying a few things about why it took you 18 months, even after you have proven a successful strategy? And what would you say to us to help reduce that time next time someone tries from 18 months to perhaps down to 3 months? What could you recommend?

Mr. DOMENICI. Well, I think the good news is someone had to go first.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you for going first and for being the pioneer.

Mr. DOMENICI. So I don't think it will be 18 months next time around.

Very briefly, this is a real complicated process. Particularly, I think, in disenfranchised communities, public schools are really, really something particularly dear, and whether they are vacant or not, they are particularly dear, particularly in communities where that is the one thing left standing in their neighborhood. So a lot of the conversations here about just finding space and putting kids there is not nearly as easy as it seems, because that space is a precious commodity and that place and the ownership of it is unique.

Briefly, this can be done more quickly. You have got to get the right community members at the table from the get-go. You have to have community members as a part of the process and who want to be a part of the process for change. You have to have everybody involved in that discussion. You have to make sure that the right people on the DCPS side of the table are with you.

It has been a very, very difficult political train in the city the last year. So when you are trying to work a very, very thoughtful, open process like this, the truth is you have got so many people you have got to negotiate with at different places that the one thing you end up not doing is being able to have an open, forthright negotiation with all the parties involved, because that is the one thing you can't do. And then by not doing that, you end up with a lot of information on the back end and just a lot of difficulty navigating the politics.

I wish I could be more clear, but I will do my best after this to see if I can write some very, very brief bullet points for folks. But I think it can be done now. It takes a lot of clarity of purpose, I think, on the part of both DCPS from the board side and from the superintendent's office to make this happen, and it takes a lot of clarity from local community groups and whoever is working on the school side to commit to working collaboratively to get these things done. It will happen a lot more quickly next time, I am quite sure.

Senator LANDRIEU. Does anybody else want to add? Mr. Kern, I think you all just purchased or entered into an agreement for the Nichols School?

Mr. KERN. We are about to purchase it hopefully in July. But if I could just add one thing—I think that Dave and I share this experience in common—it seems as though you have to receive the blessings of a lot of different people and organizations in order to move forward on this.

I think one thing that you might be able to help with is streamlining the process so that you don't need to go to so many different people and so many different organizations in order to get the concept and then the disposition agreement approved. Thurgood Marshall Academy, as you know, has been working for over 3 years to acquire the Nichols building and we are just finally now at the doorstep of doing so.

Senator LANDRIEU. One thing in conclusion to this—and I have so many questions, but I know the chairman has some additional ones as well. We are vigorously pursuing this incubator concept and we want to work with the mayor's office, which has given tremendous leadership, the council and the school board, who are all very interested.

While there are some advantages of an incubator, obviously, and something that I think with a fairly reasonable amount of money we could accomplish, part of the goal of a school is to service the neighborhood and the community that it is in. So the one disadvantage of an incubator is it is at one location in a region or a place, giving the schools the ability to start up. But the nature of it is that they wouldn't grow in that spot. They would then be placed around in different parts of the city.

So while an incubator is clearly something that obviously we need, I just want to not leave this hearing thinking it is the solution to our facilities and space problems because it may work in some cases, but it may not when you want to start and establish in a neighborhood and not move the children around from one part of the city to another, or the teachers or educators or support group for that matter.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Senator DEWINE. Senator Landrieu, thank you very much.

Mr. Domenici, Mr. Adler and Mr. Kern, let me thank you for your testimony. When we look at the problems in this country, I don't know that there is anything more challenging or more important than what is going on in our cities as far as education.

We are focusing today on the District of Columbia. We could be focusing on Cleveland or Dayton or Columbus or any other city. We just happen to be in the District of Columbia and this happens to be a subcommittee that has jurisdiction over the District of Columbia. And we could debate whether it is worse here or more challenging here, but the point is urban education is a huge challenge to this country and what is going on with our young people.

What the three of you are doing is just very exciting, and I think you can tell that Senator Landrieu and I are both very excited about it. This subcommittee has tried to be supportive of what the three of you are doing. We intend to continue to be supportive of what you are doing, and not just in words but with money. So we are going to continue to do that in a small way, but you are the ones who are out there doing it and we appreciate it very much.

Mr. Domenici, I was intrigued by your testimony. You have taken it from a bigger picture, I guess, and I am interested in your comments in relation to *Brown* v. *Board of Education*. You have, I guess, kind of challenged all of us to look at this from the big picture and given some statistics which we should be familiar with, but you have drawn us back to these figures.

I am interested in your statement about your partnership with the public schools. You say that this is not just a building deal, really; it is more than that. I wonder if you can elaborate on that.

Mr. DOMENICI. Yes, sir. If it was just a building deal, we would be paying more rent. It is not a building deal because the goal here was to work collaboratively with the four large high schools east of the river, traditional public high schools east of the river, and to work proactively with their guidance staff, their school leadership and other community agencies on the ground to start identifying young people who are dropping out of school, who are close to dropping out of school, who are getting kicked out everyday, the sort of young people that we are reading about at Ballou recently, and identify them before something totally tragic happens and just try to encourage them and the people who are working with them to think about going to another school, and to make that school be a place where they might want to go, not a place like the Choice Academy or other alternative schools, where ultimately you will be forced to go if enough things go badly.

So people are asking us, what is this partnership? Isn't it just a building that you are getting for a little below market? No. What it is is it is a commitment for our staff to work with the staffs of four schools so that we, this small school, can be a part of a network of high schools east of the river that can really try to address the needs of students.

Hopefully, we will be ultimately working with the SEED School and Thurgood Marshall School and Anacostia and Ballou, and there won't be any radical difference in that. We will all be working together saying what do the teenagers need east of the river and how can we help them to get into whichever one of these schools

makes the most sense and not have which school they go to be about whether they are or are not dragging $7,500 away from some other system with them, as compared to what is the right school for a young person, what is the right school for a 16-year-old who is reading at the fourth-grade level who dropped out of school last year.

If Maya Angelou Evans campus makes sense, let's see if we can't get that young person to apply and get through the lottery. If it is too late for them to be at the SEED School, then let's be finding some middle school students or sixth- or seventh-graders that need to get into the SEED School and have them go there.

So it is just a first attempt to try to break down some of these barriers that have been separating us and make everyone go focus on the young people and focus on the 16- and 17-year-olds who are floating around east of the river, not in school, not engaged, get them back in school and then get them back reengaged.

Senator LANDRIEU. Can I add something to that?

Senator DEWINE. Yes.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Domenici, on that point, there are a lot of 16- and 17-year-olds floating around in Louisiana and we have been capturing them in the right sense, in the best sense, or I should say giving them an alternative to floating around through an extraordinary program that this Congress funds, not an educational program in the traditional, but it is called Youth Challenge, with the National Guard.

In all of our States—and I am particularly proud of this because Louisiana has won the award for the outstanding program in the Nation—we have three programs that have redirected 1,000 16- and 17-year-olds floating around and gotten them into either college or full-time employment with extraordinary success. So the model that you are developing is working in many other places, and I want to commend you for it and encourage you.

Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you and I could introduce this young team to some of the National Guard leadership and they could maybe share some of their experiences. Again, children aren't forced. It is a model. They can leave any time they want. But you know what? They are not leaving, and these are kids who are smart enough to at least recognize a last chance when they see it and are grabbing that chance and doing what they need to do, even without parental support or even with parents who have tried everything and kind of given up.

Sometimes, that happens, you know. In poor families, and also in wealthy families, parents throw up their hands. They have tried everything, but sometimes the kids are just going astray. But these children seem to find in this program something that they say, this is my last opportunity, and they are having tremendous success.

So, hopefully, we can share that model, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DEWINE. Mr. Adler, who is doing something like what you are doing with the SEED School in other jurisdictions? What is comparable to what you are doing?

Mr. ADLER. We are the only public college prep urban boarding school anywhere in the country. There have been two other efforts at it. One was in New Jersey, one was in Massachusetts. They both closed. The economics of what we do are brutal; they are just bru-

tal. There isn't another word for it. They couldn't make it economically.

There have been three efforts, one of which has survived, and our goal is to now take this idea and do it again. We would like to do it again here. We would like to do it again across the country because there isn't anybody else doing it.

Senator DEWINE. Do it again, meaning what?

Mr. ADLER. Build more schools like this one.

Senator DEWINE. Replicate it.

Mr. ADLER. Replicate, so that we would produce this opportunity for more kids in the District and for kids in cities across the country.

Senator DEWINE. The reality is, as Senator Landrieu was saying, there is a funding limitation. I mean, any residential operation is going to cost so much money. That is just the way it is.

Mr. ADLER. First of all, that is absolutely right. And second of all, whether we pay for it in the form of residential education or for other kinds of really——

Senator LANDRIEU. Or residence in prison. I mean, you can either pay for it up front, residential in school, or you can pay $50,000 a year for residence in prison. So I mean for the government, I know it is very expensive, but it is maybe a lot less expensive than 25 years in prison.

Mr. ADLER. First of all, I would agree with that. Secondly, I have to say that even in a net present value sense, we are going to have a 97 percent high school graduation rate for the kids who have attended the SEED School. We know that the net present cost to society of a drop-out from high school is about $500,000.

By that calculation, the day 2 months from now when our kids graduate from the SEED School, we have returned money to the taxpayer. Yes, the taxpayer had to invest the money over the 6 years that the student was there.

Senator DEWINE. It is up-front money that is the problem.

Mr. ADLER. Right.

Senator DEWINE. I mean, that is the challenge, getting the money up front and convincing people that it should be done.

Mr. ADLER. That is exactly right.

Mr. DOMENICI. Could I just address one thing on that which I should have included, so I apologize? It related to your question about costs, and it relates again, I think, to structural things that we can all be working on that probably are not quite on Eric's list.

One of the things that we are all absorbing here, in addition to education costs, is in a certain sense we are absorbing willingly the cost of traditional social service delivery systems. We have been trying for a very long time to have someone tell us how much is the District spending on the average 15-year-old who has a certainly demographic, not even that they are incarcerated, just when you add in all the other inputs.

In a certain sense, we are building those into our schools. Candidly, we are kind of just building them in to the extent we can afford them. If you can fully afford them, you do them all. If you can only afford one of them, you hire one social worker.

But another piece of this both in this city and other cities is when you think about something that used to be called a school,

how do you bring the right resources to bear on that space, and how do you bring the Department of Mental Health there; how do you bring the Department of Employment Services, if that is appropriate; how do you bring Youth Services; how do you bring the Department of Recreation there. Charters may be well-suited to do that.

How do you bring family counseling there? Again, Kent Amos and the community academies are really doing a lot of work on this front. In one sense, yes, it makes our costs look ridiculous, but the truth is if you ask me one more time to peel this away and say how much are you paying for your teachers and your building from 9:00 to 3:00, well, my answer would not be radically different than a whole bunch of other schools, except we might have slightly different classes.

So another piece of this puzzle is how do you get the agencies and the mayors' offices of cities and urban areas to say what do we need to bring to bear so that we can start another SEED school someplace and it won't have to go raise privately, and what do we need to bring to bear the moment Maya Angelou would try to do this again, which is not have to go for four mental health staff from the private sector or otherwise, as compared to saying from the beginning the Department of Mental Health is here making sure that we have full-time social workers on staff.

Senator LANDRIEU. Well, I would say the question for the community is, having been shown success which you all are showing against the odds, extraordinary success, how do we as a community reward your success. How do we encourage you, as opposed to making your job harder?

You have shown against the odds that it can be done, so the challenge to the mayor, to the school board, to the Congress and to the community generally is how do we reward your success so that we can scale it up and make it more commonplace than an exception to the rule. I think that is hopefully what this hearing is, in part, about.

CONCLUSION OF HEARING

Senator DEWINE. Well, we thank you very much. It has been very interesting and very enlightening, and we want to continue to work with you in the future. Thank you very much.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., Tuesday, May 4, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

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