

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMON LOTTERY BOARD
July 17, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order (Margie Yeager)

II. Roll Call

Member Name	Board Membership Status	Organization	Roll Call
Jennifer Niles (Margie Yeager)	Chairperson and voting member	DME	x
Donna Anthony	Voting member	DCPS	x
Christopher Rinkus	Voting member	DCPS	x
Naomi Watson	Voting member	DCPS	x
Shantelle Wright (Maya Martin)	Voting member	Achievement Prep	x
Keisha Hutchinson	Voting member	TMA	x
Susan Schaeffler	Voting member	KIPP DC	x
Darren Woodruff (Don)	Non-voting member	PCSB	x
Hanseul Kang	Non-voting member	OSSE	
Catherine Peretti	Non-voting member	My School DC	x

After the introduction of participants and new members, the Board reviewed the goals of My School DC (MSDC) and approved the minutes of the April meeting. The minutes will be published on the BEGA website where MSDC has a spot as a public board.

III. Mathematica audit – full attached to email, this is summary

Phase 1 of the audit by Mathematica found that in Year One (2014) of the lottery, My School DC was successful. The common lottery procedures were followed as stated. Mathematica was able to replicate the algorithm, apply all the available system preference, and produce the same match and waitlist results as those provided to LEAs and families. Mathematica examined a wide variety of potential failure points in the application and match process and found zero or trivial (0.1% or fewer) anomalous cases. All anomalies were explained. Mathematica offered recommendations to My School Dc to streamline future lottery administration so that anomalies or errors can be caught and corrected sooner and more efficiently. MSDC has addressed the recommendations of Mathematica, namely the automatic detection of duplicate submissions, recording manual changes to the applications at the school choice level as well as the applicant level in a master tracking document.

Phase 2 of the Mathematica audit was an evaluation of LEA enrollment practices for 2014-2015. The Mathematica audit showed that 61% of matched students enrolled in in their match or a more preferred waitlist school. The proportion of students who enroll is greater for students matched to higher ranked schools, and that pattern holds across all entry grades. Round two matches result in enrollments almost as often as round one matches. Schools vary in their proportion of matched students enrolling elsewhere.

Mathematica's recommendations included advice to schools on how to increase match acceptances, ensuring offers are extended according to assigned waitlist positions and that applications are made through MSDC.

My School DC has implemented all recommendations in year two except for explicitly discouraging ranking of schools less preferred than the by-right school. Our message to parents has been clear that they should simply select as many schools as they are interested in going to, in the order that they prefer. We will consider adding explicit instructions, but that would complicate the message.

IV. Elimination of Round 2

The Board discussed and approved of eliminating Round 2 of the lottery in Year 3. Although an equitable distribution of any remaining seats was the original reason to have a Round 2, findings suggest that those matches would have happened anyway and only 4% of school/grade combinations actually needed a lottery because there were more applicants than available seats.

The major benefit of Round 2 was schools rather than families because Round 2 rankings prevent thousands from being added to ends of waitlists (schools selections ranked below Round 2 matches are not processed). In order to keep from artificially inflating waitlists, My School DC recommends a ranked post lottery application. Other challenges such as encouraging families to apply in Round 1, getting results in a more timely fashion, and helping under enrolled schools to get out and recruit are all ameliorated with the elimination of Round 2. The post lottery application can immediately tell applicants where they are on a waitlist. Schools can advertise available seats immediately after the lottery. Allowing post lottery applicants to rank schools will still have the cleaning effect on the waitlist that Round 2 had.

The Board asked My School DC to prepare clarifying scenarios to see how different families would be affected by the elimination of Round 2 and voted to approve the change.

V. Post-Lottery Extension Discussion

The Board discussed and approved keeping the post lottery application open until the beginning of December in order to provide a central location for families to learn and apply to schools and to ensure continued use of the waitlist system. The concern that simply having an open application encourages student mobility is outweighed by the need for families new to the District. The hotline staff will counsel parents on their options and complete applications on the family's behalf.

VI. Official Actions

The Board approved elimination of Round 2 of the 2016 lottery.

The Board discussed and approved keeping the 2015 post-lottery application open until the beginning of December.

The Board approved the PCSB data request.