

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMON LOTTERY BOARD

OCTOBER 26, 2017

3:00 - 4:30 PM

810 FIRST STREET NE ROOM#5014 (OSSE)

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Board Member (Designee)	Organization	Voting Status	Roll Call	Aug Min	AIR Request
Jennifer C. Niles	DME	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Susan Schaeffler	KIPP DC	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Claudia Lujan	DCPS	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Colin Taylor	DCPS	Voting Member	x		
Will Stoetzer	Ingenuity Prep	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Eugene Pinkard	DCPS	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Richard Pohlman	TMA PCHS	Voting Member	✓	Y	Y
Darren Woodruff	DC PCSB	Non-Voting Member	✓	N/A	N/A
Shana Young	OSSE	Non-Voting Member	✓ (phone)	N/A	N/A
Catherine Peretti	MSDC	Non-Voting Member	✓	N/A	N/A

II. Review August 2017 meeting minutes

The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

III. Seats Filled as of 8/30

Cat Peretti updated the Board on the unfilled seats analysis from immediately after the 2017 lottery presented at the May 2017 meeting. The update analyzed seats filled as of August 30th when most schools had started. Citywide we are still a few thousand short of filling the initial seats provided for the 2017 Lottery. A number of schools have surpassed the number of seats initially put in the lottery by expanding the number of seats to be filled through My School DC applicants. Rich Pohlman offered that many schools “overbook” and offer seats in the lottery to account for expected attrition from the initial lottery match. As for the expansion of seats, it may be that a school did not capture the re-enrollment or feeder students they expected, or perhaps opened a new classroom. Claudia Lujan observed that DCPS does not typically open new classrooms very close to the start of school, and will do so only when necessary, so we need a closer look at where the expansion is happening. Will Stoetzer said that for schools being over enrolled is not necessarily a problem and is a smart strategy for some schools. Susan Schaeffler said an over enrolled grade can be balancing an under enrolled grade because the school-level enrollment (rather than the grade level) is what most schools are trying to hit. She also expressed concern over how this information will affect families’ choices in the lottery. Gene Pinkard suggested that a seat opened late in the year has a domino effect overall creating churn for both schools and families.

Board members in both sectors objected to linking unfilled lottery seats to enrollment or fiscal health, because schools with unfilled lottery seats in certain grades may have still made their enrollment projection by filling seats in other grades. Further, the revenue targeted for their budget and staffing is affected by more than the number of students they enroll. Some schools budgeted expecting a 1.5% or 2% increase, and ended up receiving more after city allocations were complete. Rich Pohlman said that oversight on school health regarding budgets, ability to serve students, and the expansion of seats at charter schools is the purview of the DC Public Charter School Board. The Board would like to examine the data more, and acknowledges that it would be ideal for seats to be filled in the lottery when students have the most opportunity rather than in the post-lottery period.

IV. Programmatic Updates

1. Mid-Year Application

The new mid-year application process launched after the head count on October 5th. My School DC has communicated the process via OSSE LEA Look Forward, PCSB Wednesday Bulletin, DCPS registrar newsletter, and several other avenues to reach front office staff. The team is also doing school visits to the schools that take in the most students mid-year to walk them through and address any concerns. The hotline has received calls and submitted over 300 applications so far.

2. EdFEST

The event will be December 9, 2017 at The DC Armory from 11am to 3pm. 5,000 attendees are expected and 100% of lottery participant schools have signed up to exhibit. Mayor Bowser's visit is tentatively confirmed for the 11-noon window.

V. At-Risk Analysis

My School DC presented to the Cross Sector Collaboration Task Force over the summer on the impacts of a theoretical at-risk preference in the common lottery. The business rules used in the analysis were to apply a preference to any school participating in the lottery that enrolled less than 25% at-risk students. The preference could take the shape of a priority group, or a weighting for any student within an existing priority group. MSDC ran several mock lotteries using the total applicant pool against the enrollment file identification of at-risk students with "qualified" schools. MSDC found that the impact of an at-risk preference on school diversity was relatively low, but not absent. The reasons that the impact is low include: (1) enrollment of new students though the lottery is one small subset of a school's total enrollment and (2) the other existing preferences, such as in boundary or sibling attending, are very strong in the "qualified" schools used in the analysis. The Board also noted that an at-risk preference could compound over time though as applicant behavior changes and the siblings of these students also enroll though the lottery.

Gene Pinkard suggested that a slow impact rather than a large sea change is probably best for schools and families. Darren Woodruff serves on the committee that requested the analysis and says they are prepared to recommend a preference. The committee is still discussing whether to stay with the 25% of at-risk students at a school for participation or opening up the option of offering the preference to any school.

VI. AIR Research Request

The abstract of the research request is as follows: In this proposed study, by combining lottery application data with student enrollment information, we plan to investigate how students make their enrollment decisions when they are offered by at least one school of choice (SOC) through their lottery applications. The study will provide evidence on families' revealed preference for schools of choice. By further identifying an alternative right-to-attend school, this study adds to the literature on what comparative advantage matters in family's decision making. The results can provide helpful information for school leaders, district officials and policy makers regarding a more efficient distribution of resources when targeting the population of students which could benefit the most from the program.

The Board discussed the distinction between an OSSE research request and how it could be accomplished without OSSE data, but would be much improved. Cat Peretti and Shana Young noted the separate approval process for OSSE and the risk of the request not being approved. There is a significant difference in the volume of requests before OSSE and the Common Lottery Board, and OSSE staff must prioritize internal operational analyses and Council requests. The Board approved the request and noted they would prefer the research be done with OSSE data, but that it was not a prerequisite to approval. AIR will submit the separate request to OSSE.