

DC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

December 17, 2013
Meeting #3

Agenda

- Welcome new members
- Preliminary report on focus group feedback
- Overview of policy brief 2: Student Assignment Policies in Other Cities/Districts
 - Small group discussions
- Preview of policy brief 3: DC's Current Patterns of Public School Enrollment
- Next steps

Goals for Today's Meeting

- Understand the methodology used to analyze feedback from focus groups
- Become familiar with the preliminary focus group findings
- Identify the pros and cons of the student assignment and choice systems of other school districts, as they might be applied in the District of Columbia
- Understand the major elements of the forthcoming analysis on current patterns of student enrollment and demographics

Focus Group Overview (as December 17th)

The Focus Groups (as of Dec 17)

- 21CSF is working with Georgetown University Psychology professor and graduate students from Georgetown and NYU, as well as ODME staff to facilitate, take notes, code and analyze focus group discussions.

Date	Location/Ward	Attendees	# of Groups
Nov 9	Tenley Library/Ward 3	17	2
Nov 13	Seaton ES/Ward 2	18	2
Nov 21	Takoma EC/Ward 4	32	4
Dec 3	DC Bilingual ES /Ward 1	34	4
Dec 5	Deanwood Rec. Center/Ward 7	14	2
Dec 12	Thurgood Marshall PCHS/Ward 8	3	1
Dec 14	Turkey Thicket Rec. Center/Ward 5	25	3
	Total	143	18
Dec 19	Logan Montessori/Ward 6	25 (projected)	4 (projected)

Why Focus Groups?

Opportunities:

- Parents and residents get a chance to speak at length about their concerns
- Formal analysis of the input
- The Advisory Committee has public input on what principles and values and a better understanding of WHY these are priorities

Limitations:

- Self-selected participants with means and motivation to participate
- Not representative of entire city

Focus Group Protocols

Part 1: Description of Student Assignment Review Process and questions from participants

Part 2: What are your experiences with student assignment and choice in DC and your issues and concerns?

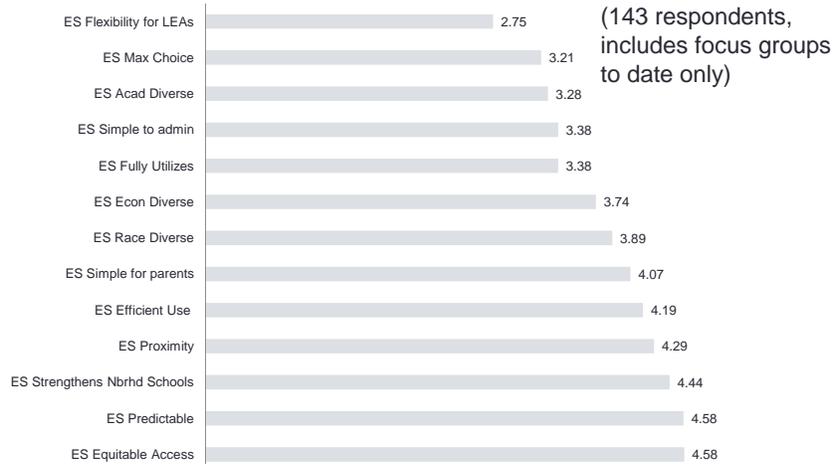
Part 3: Discussion of the principles on the rating sheet and filling out rating sheet.

Closing question: What recommendations do you have on how this process can build community in DC?

Themes of what we are hearing...

- Make program improvements in schools before changing boundaries or feeder patterns.
- ALL neighborhood schools should have high quality teachers, program and facilities—if I could send my child to my neighborhood DCPS school I would—this would be the best option.
- Don't limit my out-of boundary options.
- Don't change my boundaries or feeders, because I made decisions already to secure the schools for my children.
- I want to do what is best for the city, but I have to be responsible for securing what is best for my own child first.

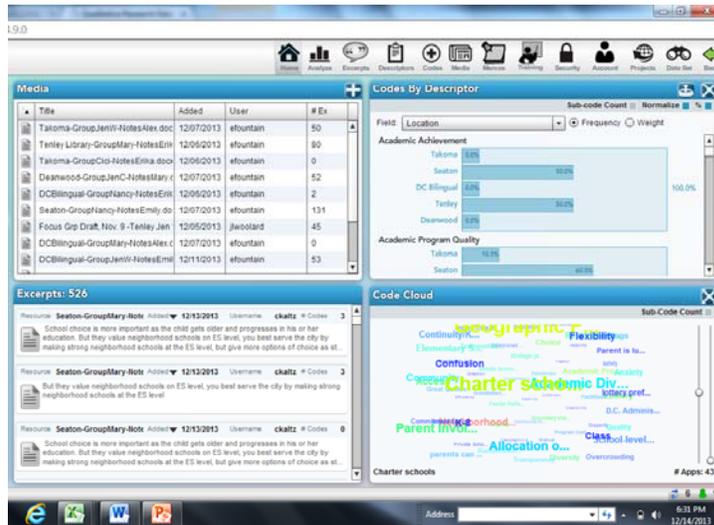
Focus Group Participant Ratings of Guiding Principles (Elementary-age Students)



Focus Group Input

- Throughout the process we will compile and analyze notes, transcripts, surveys and other public input using a software system, called "Dedoose."
- A narrative report will be provided to the Advisory Committee, focus group participants and the public.

Analyzing Focus Group Input: Dedoose Tool



Understanding Student Assignment and Choice in Other Cities

Approaches for Allocating Access to Schools

1. **Neighborhood schools (by geographic zones and student residence)**
 - Applied in neighboring counties in Virginia and Maryland
2. **Neighborhood schools with choice overlay (out-of-zone seats allocated by city-wide lottery with preferences)**
 - Applied in D.C., Seattle, Denver
3. **Neighborhood elementary schools and citywide middle and high schools with seats allocated by city-wide lottery with preferences**
 - Applied in Baltimore
4. **Assigned choice sets of schools, with seats allocated by lottery with preferences**
 - Applied in Boston
5. **City-wide lottery with preferences**
 - Applied in San Francisco, New Orleans

Small Group Activity

- Review the cities assigned to your work group
 - Group 1: Denver, San Francisco (plus traditional)
 - Group 2: Baltimore and Boston (plus traditional)
 - Group 3: New Orleans and Seattle (plus traditional)
 - Group 4: Boston and Seattle (plus traditional)
- Identify the goals and elements of student assignment approaches that your group thinks we should consider in D.C. and why.
- Prepare to report out on at least one student assignment element that you think D.C. should consider.

Seattle: By zone & residence with choice overlay

(Implemented in SY10-11)

GOALS:

- Schools of right
- Ease of navigation for families
- Predictability for families
- Increased efficiencies (reduced transportation and administrative costs)
- Some choice for families
- Racial/economic integration (since invalidated by the Supreme Court)

APPROACH:

- Assignment by residence & attendance zones (ES, MS, and HS).
 - ES and MS zones align into feeder patterns; HS zones do not.
- Some choice is available through a city-wide lottery for
 - 10% of the seats within every neighborhood school and
 - All seats within unzoned city-wide (magnet) ES/K-8 schools.

PREFERENCES:

- Siblings
- Students living within a zone of proximity to the school

Denver: By zone & residence with choice overlay

GOALS:

- Attendance at a school close to home
- Avoidance of major streets and hazards
- Balancing of school utilization rates (managing capacity)
- Diversity of student bodies within schools
- Some school choice for families

APPROACH:

- Assignment by residence & attendance zones (ES, MS, and HS).
 - When you leave your assigned school, you lose your right to return by right
- Some choice is also available through a city-wide lottery for available seats in all DPS schools and charter schools

PREFERENCES:

- In-zone students
- Siblings
- Students attending low-performing schools under NCLB

Baltimore: By zone & residence for ES; City-wide lottery for MS/HS

GOALS:

- Great school choices (access to high quality options)
- Keep school communities at the center

APPROACH:

- ES/K-8: Assignment by residence & attendance zones
- MS/HS: by city-wide lottery
 - Preferences are given to siblings, for feeder pattern continuity, and to students living in the same quadrant of the city.

Boston: Assigned choice sets with lottery

(Implementation starting in SY2014-15)

GOALS:

- Provide families with more equitable access to high-quality schools closer to home
- Reduce transportation costs
- Increase predictability
- More directly connect elementary schools to nearby K-8s and middle schools
- Maintain diversity

APPROACH:

- ES/MS: Assigned “choice sets” of schools, with seats allocated by lottery with defined criteria and weighting
 - Each family receives a set of six or more school options that includes the schools within one mile of the home as well as at least two of the closest schools from each of four tiers of school performance.
- HS: by city-wide lottery

Preferences:

- Siblings and to students living within a walk zone

San Francisco: Citywide Lottery

(Implemented in SY2011-12)

GOALS:

- Facilitate diversity
- Reduce racial isolation
- Provide students with equitable access to opportunities
- Create robust enrollments at all schools,
- Be transparent and easy to use
- Improve predictability for families
- Support efficient use of resources

APPROACH:

- Elementary and middle school attendance areas
- Elementary to middle school feeder patterns
- City-wide application process for all new and transitioning students
- Seats assigned according to defined criteria and weighting

PREFERENCES:

- Sibling of student already attending the school
- Attending a school whose students are eligible for NCLB school choice
- Attending feeder elementary school
- Resides in census tract with average test scores in bottom 20% of city
- Resides in attendance area
- Random-number lottery

New Orleans: Citywide Lottery

GOALS:

- Infrastructure efficiencies
- Easy for families to navigate
- Equal access to excellent education
- Parental choice

APPROACH:

- The city is divided into six catchment areas, with each including approximately eight elementary schools.
- City decides on where schools are to be located and what facilities are needed.
- Optional unified city-wide lottery (72 of 88 public schools) with preference criteria.
- Transportation provided by schools.

PREFERENCES:

- Students with siblings currently enrolled in the school;
- Students residing within the school's catchment area (grades PK-8 only; applies to up to 50% of the available seats);
- Students meeting school-specific criteria; and
- All other applicants.

Small Group Assignment

- Discuss the goals and approaches of your assigned cities.
- Identify and prioritize potential goals for DC's student-assignment policy.
- Brainstorm potential approaches that you think would help achieve those goals.
- Report back. Share top 3 goals and just one approach or element of an approach that you think we should explore

Preview of Policy Brief 3

DC's Current Patterns of Public School Enrollment

Policy Brief 3: Description of enrollment patterns for 2012-13 public school students

- Access to school quality
- Racial, cultural, academic and economic diversity
- Enrollment by DCPS neighborhood schools, out-of-boundary, specialized high schools and public charter schools
- Proximity to school

Next Steps

Technical Team:

- Secure more input from parents and community, particularly from Wards 7 and 8
- Complete coding the notes/transcripts from each focus group
- Share draft summary with participants
- Prepare Focus Group Report for January meeting
- Complete Draft of Policy Brief 3: DC's Current Patterns of Public School Enrollment by January 6

Advisory Committee Members:

- Review meeting notes before public posting on www.DME.dc.gov
- Read Policy Brief 3 to be sent by January 6
- Optional conference call held on January 14 to discuss Policy Brief 3

January Meeting Goals

- Explore the cause and effect relationships described in Policy Brief 3 and current policies
- Begin formulating approaches to student assignment and choice changes that addresses problems highlighted in Policy Brief 3
- Become familiar with Boundary Planner application

Appendices

- Focus Group Participants
- Chart of Focus Group Participants by Ward
- Focus Group Participant Ratings of Guiding Principles
 - Elementary-age Students
 - Middle School-age Students
 - High School-age Students
- Student Assignment in the D.C. Region
- Student Assignment in Comparison Cities
- Policy Brief 3: DC's Current Patterns of Public School Enrollment
 - Proxies for Describing School Quality
 - Demographic Context
 - Neighborhoods, Schools, and School Choice
 - Proximity to Residence

Focus Group Participants

146 people participated

- 77% were parents
- Nearly half of the participants had PK3-PK4 students
- Most parents were DCPS parents

The focus groups were racially diverse but did not reflect the racial make-up of the public schools

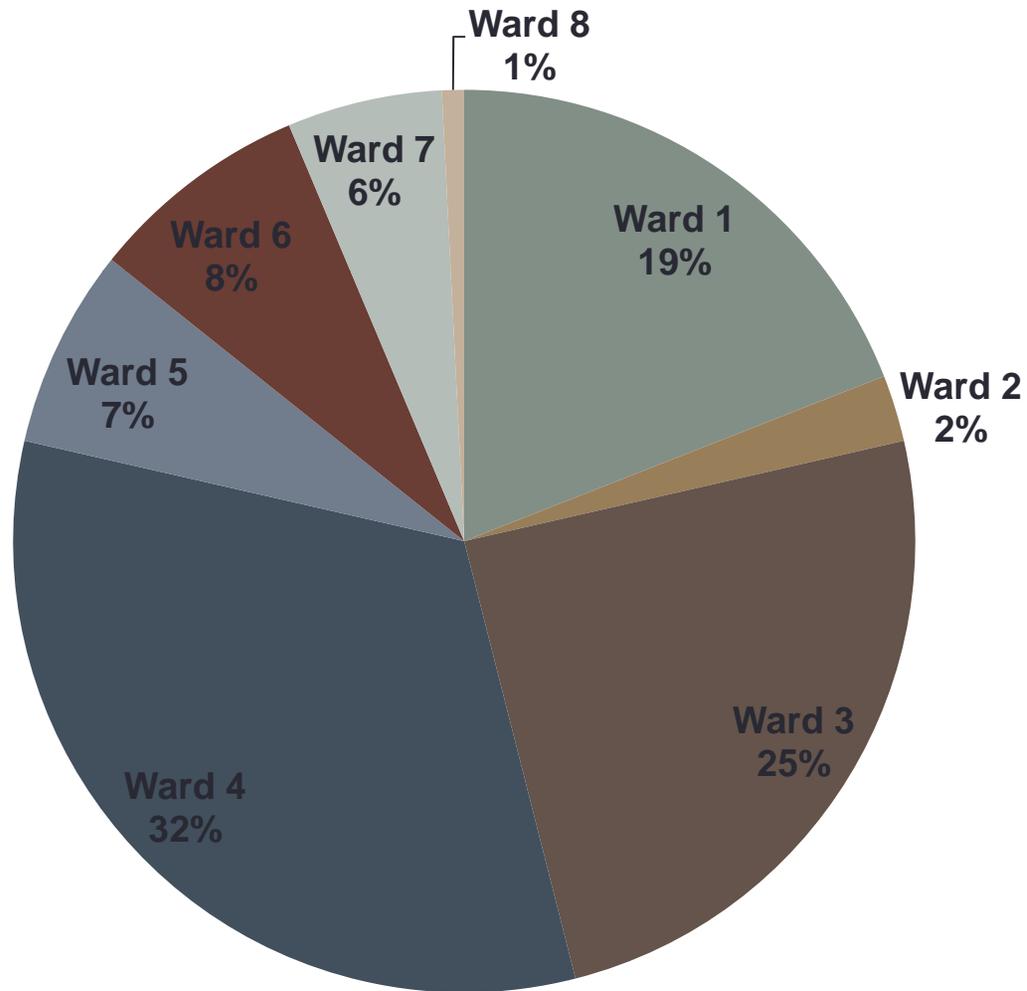
- 26 (18%) described themselves as Black; 73 (50%) as White; only three Hispanic and about 2 dozen in other categories or not responding. There were a few parents with international perspectives-- French, Haitian, Turkish, and Hispanic.

Participants were highly educated

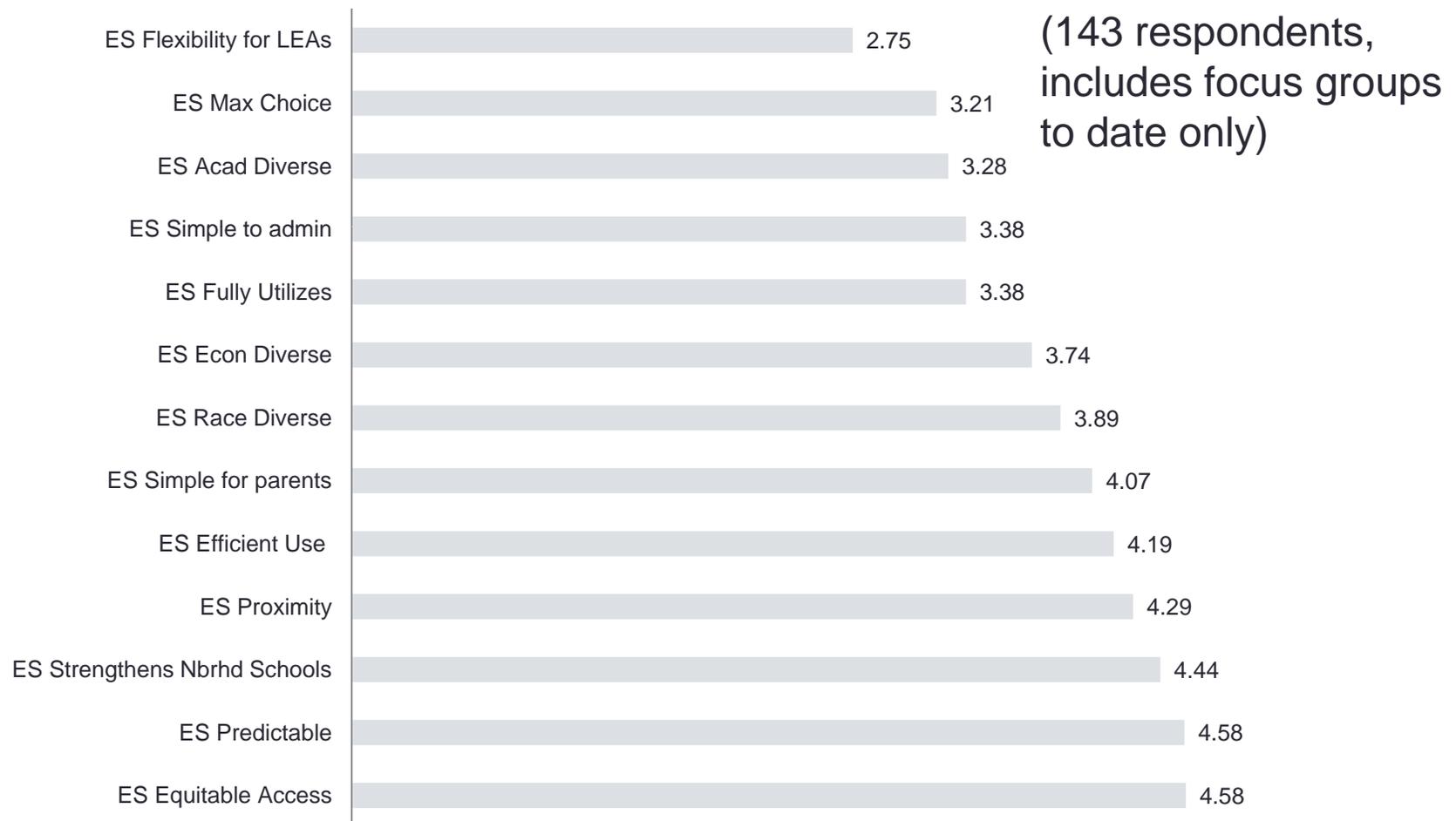
- Of 122 participants, all but 4 had a college degree and 95 (78%) had graduate degrees.

Focus Group Participation by Ward

As of December 17, 2013

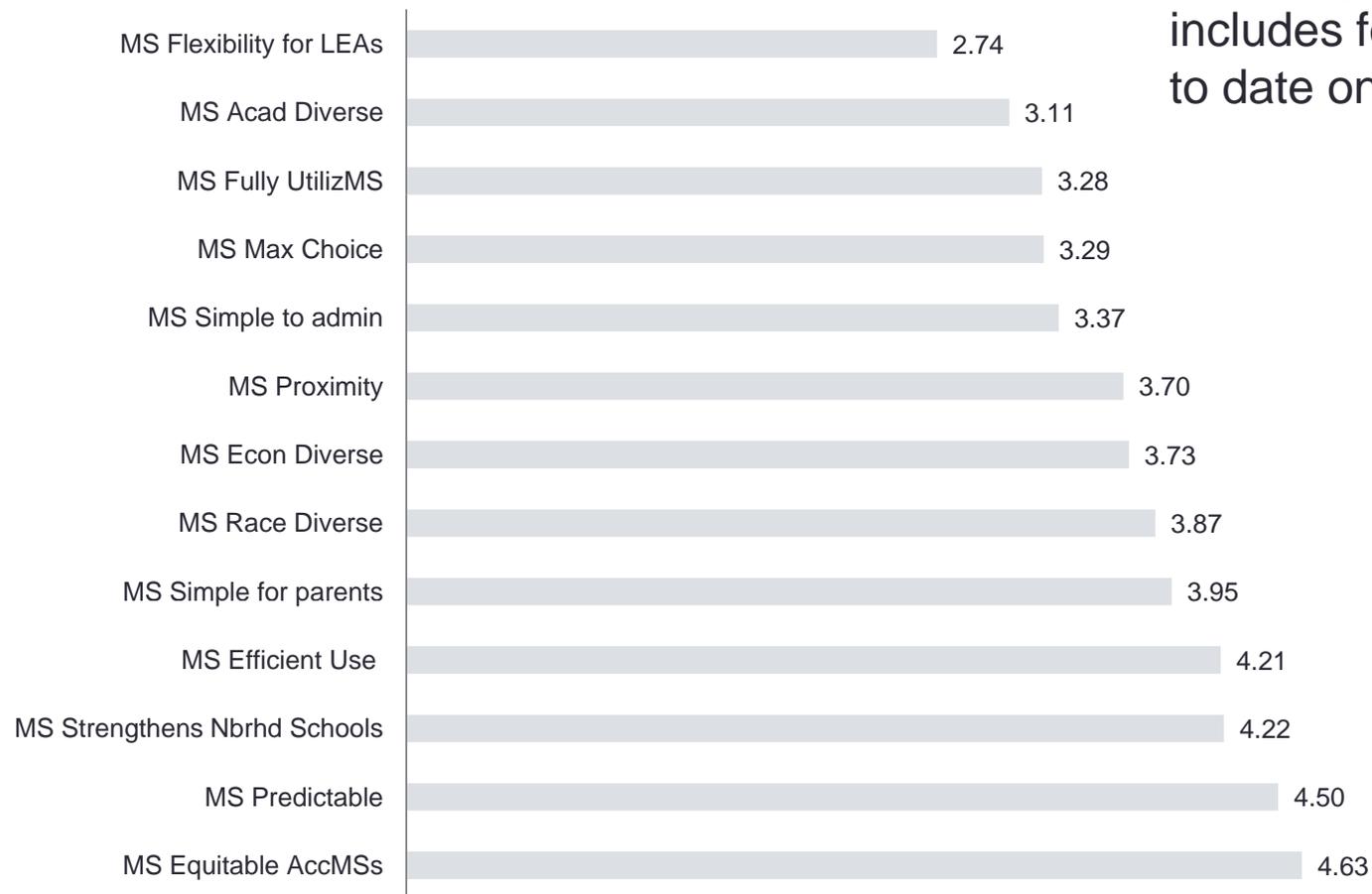


Focus Group Participant Ratings of Guiding Principles: Elementary-age Students

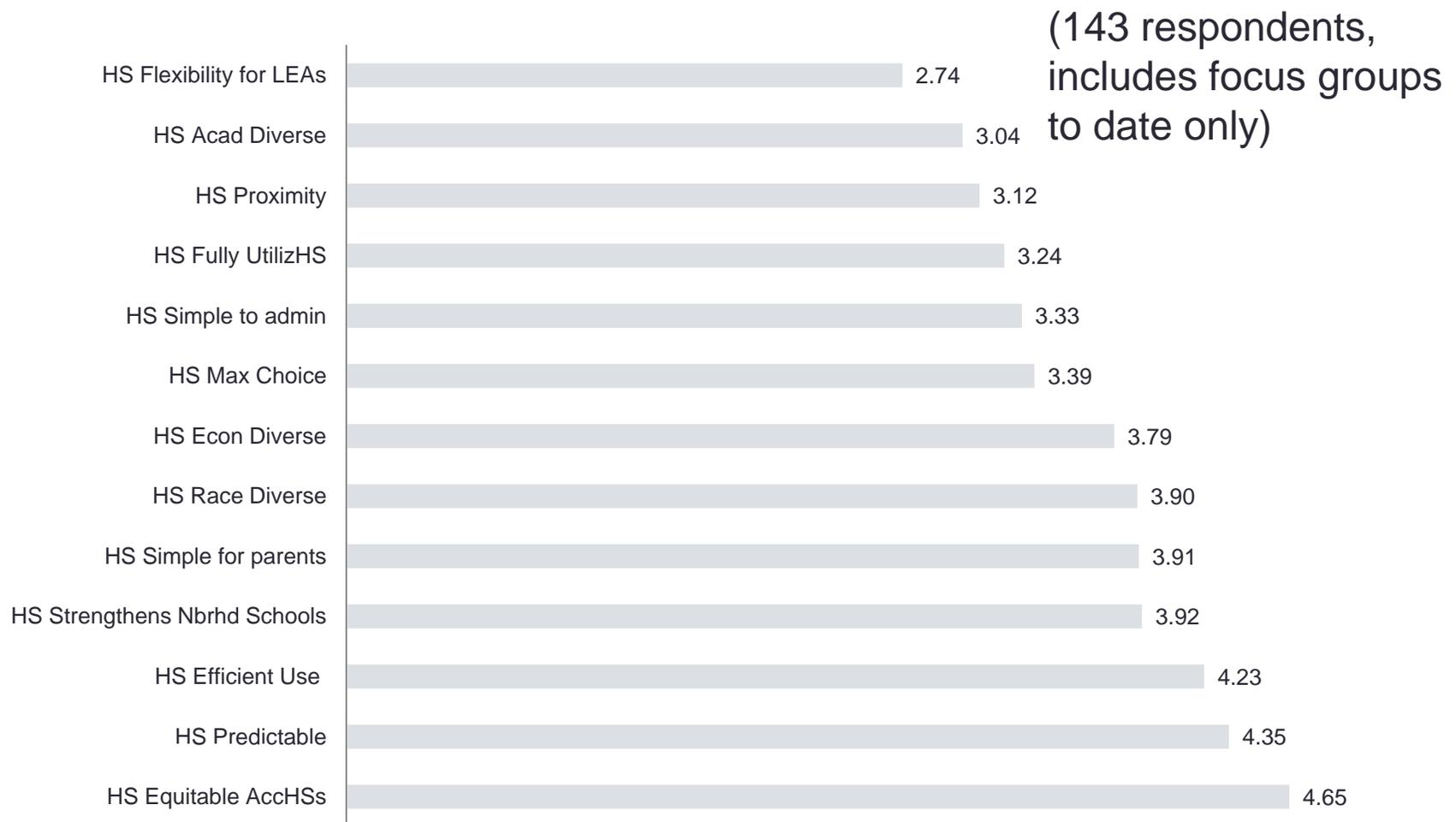


Focus Group Participant Ratings of Guiding Principles: Middle School-age Students

(143 respondents, includes focus groups to date only)



Focus Group Participant Ratings of Guiding Principles: High School-age Students



Student Assignment in the D.C. Region

SY 2012–13	Alexandria City, VA	Arlington County, VA	Washington, DC	Prince George's County, MD	Montgomery County, MD	Fairfax County, VA
Area Sq. Mi.	15	26	61	481	497	391
Total Public School Students	13,114	22,624	80,854	123,833	148,840	181,536
District Students	13,114	22,624	45,835	123,833	148,779	181,536
Charter Students	0	0	35,019	included in total	61	0
District Schools	19	37	117	194	202	196
Charter Schools	0	0	101	8	1	0
Bus Transportation	K–9: 1 mi.; 10–12: 1.5 mi. (except for admin. Transfers)	ES >1 mi.; MS & HS >1.5 mi.	Some DCPS ES consolidations; charters at LEA discretion	ES >1 mi.; MS & HS >1.5 mi.	ES >1 mi.; MS >1.5 mi.; MS >2 mi.;	ES >1 mi.; MS & HS >1.5 mi.
% of General-education Students Bused	Est. 46%	66%	Est. <1%	65%	67%	61%

Student Assignment in Comparison Cities

SY 2012–13	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	SEATTLE	DENVER	BALTIMORE	BOSTON	SAN FRANCISCO	NEW ORLEANS
Student Assignment	By zone & residence with choice overlay	By zone & residence with choice overlay	By zone & residence with choice overlay	ES: By zone & residence MS/HS: City-wide lottery;	Assigned choice sets with lottery	City-wide lottery	City-wide lottery
Land Area (Sq. Mi.)	61.4	83.9	153.3	80.9	48.4	46.9	180.6
Population	632,323	620,778	634,265	621,342	625,087	815,358	369,250
% Population Under 18 (2011 est.)	17%	16%	22%	22%	17%	14%	21%
Total Public School Enrollment	80,231	49,870	84,424	84,748	63,780	52,900	42,637
School Dist. Enrollment	45,557	49,870	72,618	84,748	57,100	52,900	6,822
# of District Schools	117	95	162	171	127	102	18
Charter School Enrollment	34,674	0	11,806	-	6,680	2,894	35,815
# of Charter Schools	101	0	41	33	26	13	72
% of Students eligible for meal subsidy	77%	40%	72%	84%	75%	61% (2011–12)	82%
% of General-education Students Bused	<1%	42% (2010-11)	34%	Est. 35%	52% (2011-12)	4%	

Policy Brief 3: Proxies for Describing School Quality

How do the charter and out of boundary schools that families are attending compare to their in-boundary DCPS neighborhood school in terms of school quality using the proxy measures listed below?

	Student Performance	Teacher Preparation	Education Programming	Facility
In-Boundary School	School Index ESEA Waiver Classification	% Highly Qualified Teachers	Rigor Content Pedagogy Time	Adequacy Condition
School Attended	School Index ESEA Waiver Classification	% Highly Qualified Teachers	Rigor Content Pedagogy Time	Adequacy Condition

Policy Brief 3: Demographic Context

How do the charter and out of boundary schools that families are attending compare to their in-boundary DCPS neighborhood school in terms of diversity?

	Economic	Academic	Racial	Cultural
In-Boundary School	SNAP TANF Homeless F/R Lunch	Distribution of BB, B, P and Advanced	Diversity Index	Home language
School Attended	SNAP TANF Homeless F/R Lunch	Distribution of BB, B, P and Advanced	Diversity Index	Home language

Policy Brief 3: Neighborhoods, Schools & School Choice

- What level of choice are families exercising?
- How well is the school capacity, capture rate, and boundary population aligned?
- What are population and enrollment projections by boundary and feeder pattern?

DCPS Neighborhood School	Enrollment /Capacity 2012-13	# living in boundary	# in-boundary attending school (Capture)	Capture Rate	% of enrollees in-boundary	# of DCPS Out-of-Boundary Schools Attended	# Public Charter Schools Attended
Example:	253/479	546	148	27% (148/546)	58% (148/253)		83

Age appropriate public school students

Policy Brief #3: Proximity to Residence

How far are students traveling by grade and by ward? Are students going to the schools that are close to their residence, even if not their in-boundary school? If students are traveling far, what are they traveling to?

Student	Travel Distance	Closest DCPS School	Closest PCS School	Schools within x miles