

Form 2 Detail: FY 2026 Enhancement Request

FY 2026 Agency Budget Request

Complete a separate Form 2 for each enhancement request. Agencies are limited to three Type D & E enhancement requests.

SECTION I. OVERVIEW Required for ALL requests

ENHANCEMENT TITLE* ENHANCEMENT PRIORITY*
Accelerate DC: A New Framework for School Improvement **2** OUT OF **7**

AGENCY* AGENCY CODE*
 Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) **GDO**

AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT* POINT OF CONTACT EMAIL*
 Kate Gottfredson, Chief of Staff Kate.gottfredson@dc.gov

- REQUEST TYPE***
 Mark the one request type that best describes this enhancement. No type is preferred over any other, but the questions in **Section II: Rationale** differ by type.
- A. Restore previous reduction or one-time funding } Complete Sections I-IV. Complete Section V to be considered for evidence rating.
 - B. Increased cost to maintain existing activity
 - C. Operational improvement with strong business case

 - D. Expand high-performing existing activity } Complete Sections I-V.
 - E. Completely new activity with highly likely or proven positive outcomes

FUNDING REQUEST*
 Enter amount of Local Funds requested and indicate whether funds are one-time or recurring.

FY 2026 PERSONAL SERVICES (PS)	FY 2026 NON-PERSONAL SERVICES (NPS)	FY 2026 TOTAL REQUEST AMOUNT
\$631,123	\$4,547,000	\$5,178,123

ONE-TIME PARTIALLY RECURRING RECURRING

FUTURE COSTS*
 If recurring, enter estimated costs over next four years.

TOTAL FY 2027	TOTAL FY 2028	TOTAL FY 2029
\$5,235,887	\$5,294,683	\$5,354,196

- ENHANCEMENT SUMMARY***
 In your response:
- State the problem this enhancement is designed to address
 - Describe what the enhancement is and/or how it will work
 - Describe the impact the enhancement will have on the problem

The DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s (OSSE) vision is that DC learners of all ages and backgrounds are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue and thrive on the life path of their choice. The agency’s strategic plan serves as the blueprint for achieving that vision. One of the five pillars of OSSE’s current strategic plan is to “achieve equitable outcomes for all students.” The school improvement initiative is a cornerstone of this pillar. Under the leadership of Mayor Muriel Bowser, we are committed to strengthening our state level approach to school improvement and through this request, OSSE sets forth the steps required to bring about critical change. OSSE’s Accelerate DC roadmap aims to improve academic outcomes and close opportunity gaps in the District’s lowest-performing schools. By providing enhanced supports, oversight, and accountability to help accelerate student learning and close gaps across student groups in the District’s lowest performance schools, this initiative has the potential to significantly impact high-need students.

To date, OSSE has maintained a consistent focus on meeting federal requirements for school improvement in accordance with the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). However, the

AGENCIES: Use this form to provide details about enhancement requests in your agency’s FY 2026 budget request.

REQUIRED SECTIONS

- Sections I-IV for ALL requests.
- Section V for Type D/E requests. Types A, B, and C can complete this section to be considered for an evidence rating.
- Section VII for Type F requests.
- Section VI optional for all requests.

You must also submit a completed Form 2 Summary spreadsheet, including spend plan details for each enhancement request.

IMPORTANT: Agencies are limited to three Type D & E enhancement requests for FY 2026. If more than three Type D & E enhancements are submitted, OBPM will only consider and analyze the highest ranked.

RACIAL EQUITY BUDGET TOOL (REBT)
 The Office of Racial Equity (ORE) has developed the Racial Equity Budget Tool (REBT) to guide agencies in assessing how their budgets benefit and/or negatively impact communities based on race, specifically Black,

EDITING RESTRICTIONS: This form uses editing restrictions to ensure consistent displays of information. If needed, the restrictions can be disabled by going to the Review tab at the top of the window, clicking on Protect, then Restrict Editing, and clicking Stop Protection. If prompted for a password, click OK.

District has a subset of low-performing schools that have been challenged to improve academic outcomes over the last decade. These schools are concentrated in communities with high levels of poverty that have suffered historically from under-investment. Of the schools designated in the lowest 5% of schools in the District in 2018 in accordance with OSSE's accountability system (i.e. schools designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)), 50% were redesignated in 2022. This is because, with a few exceptions, academic performance and growth rates across many of the designated schools remain stubbornly low. Proficiency rates at our CSI schools ranged from <1% to 19.48% on ELA and math in SY22-23.

To disrupt this cycle of low performance and growth, OSSE has the opportunity as well as a mandate from the DC Council¹ to provide an infusion of strategic supports alongside increased levels of oversight to drive rapid improvement, in accordance with the latest research on improvement best practices.² OSSE has developed a new vision for school improvement that is grounded in research³ and aims to accelerate student learning outcomes while closing gaps. OSSE's new vision and framework, called **Accelerate DC**, sets clear expectations for how to drive improvement by **identifying the key levers of change** for schools and LEAs. With this enhancement request, OSSE seeks to secure additional resources to offer a competitive grant fund for schools designated for improvement to implement evidence-based strategies for that target the root causes of under-performance alongside a portfolio of new strategic planning, leadership coaching, peer-to-peer learning, continuous improvement supports combined with increased oversight by OSSE. This enhancement request also includes 4 new FTEs who would be responsible for implementing the new vision, administering the supports, conducting progress monitoring, coordinating with DC Public Schools Central Office and the Public Charter School Board, and working with teams across the agency to better align OSSE's existing resources and professional development toward supporting our designated schools.

This proposal is based upon nine months of research and interviews, spearheaded by OSSE, that encompassed a review of the school improvement literature, interviews with state education agency (SEA) staff across 28 states, and listening sessions with 60 District stakeholders ranging from school leaders to advocacy organizations to students. Grounded in research, feedback from DC stakeholders, and best practices from states including Massachusetts, Louisiana, Rhode Island, and Virginia, this new vision together with the resources to fully implement it will provide clear expectations for improving student outcomes along with an aligned system of supports and oversight that will enable OSSE and the District to close opportunity gaps and accelerate student achievement for this cohort of our highest-need schools.

¹ D.C. Act 25-379: https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/54056/Signed_Act/B25-0540-Signed_Act.pdf?Id=184215.

² ESSA Leverage Points: 50-State Report on Promising Practices for Using Evidence to Improve Student Outcomes (2018): https://results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RFA-ESSA-50-State-Report_final.pdf; School Interventions That Work: Targeted Support for Low-Performing Students (2017): <https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/SchoolInterventions.pdf>; Measures of Last Resort Linking State and Local School Improvement Assessing Strategies for State-Initiated Turnarounds (2016): <https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/crpe-measures-last-resort.pdf>; Implementing Change: Rethinking School Improvement Strategies & Funding Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (2016): <https://www.chiefsforchange.org/download-media/implementing-change/>; Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: Indicators of Effective Practice (2018): https://csti.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CST_Indictors-Effective-Practice-Four-Domains.pdf; For Equity-Oriented State Leaders: 9 Ideas for Stimulating School Improvement Under ESSA: <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/For-Equity-Oriented-State-Leaders-9-Ideas-for-Stimulating-School-Improvement-Under-ESSA.pdf>; SREB: The Three Essentials: Improving Schools Requires District Vision, District and State Support, and Principal Leadership (2010): <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Three-Essentials-to-Improving-Schools.pdf>

³ West Ed's Center for School Turnaround and Improvement. Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework (2017): <https://www.wested.org/resource/four-domains/>.

SECTION II. RATIONALE

Required for ALL requests

Will legislative support be required to implement this enhancement?*

If yes, please submit a proposed BSA subtitle using Attachment D.

YES NO

Has this enhancement request been submitted in past formulation cycles?*

If yes, in which fiscal years was it submitted? Mark all that apply.

YES NO

FY 2025 FY 2024 FY 2023 FY 2022 FY 2021

What problem facing the District will this enhancement address and why does this problem exist?*

Please provide as much detail as possible. Responses that identify and quantify specific problems will receive more favorable consideration.

The District has a subset low-performing school that has remained persistently stable over the last decade and that are concentrated in communities with high levels of poverty that have suffered historically from under-investment. Of the schools designated in the lowest 5% of schools in the District in 2018 in accordance with OSSE’s accountability system (i.e. Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools), 50 percent were redesignated in 2022. At the same time, 100% of schools designated in 2018 for failing to graduate one third or more of their students (i.e. CSI-Grad schools), were redesignated in 2022. Proficiency rates at our CSI schools ranged from <1% to 19.48% on ELA and math in SY22-23. Academic performance and growth rates across many of our designated schools remain stubbornly low. The low performance of these schools and the low expectations this cycle perpetuates can have a life-altering impact of the students they serve. We owe it to these students to provide these schools with the supports and accountability needed to help their students reach their full potential. Historical models of school improvement have suggested that schools stuck in cycles of low performance, which is often accompanied by shrinking attendance, should close and students should be placed in neighboring schools. These models are highly disruptive and do not account for root cause challenges. OSSE is not in favor of directly moving towards disruptive closures, but as a city we have not yet developed and implemented an alternative strategy for tackling the challenges faced by low-performing schools.

As a relatively young and developing agency, OSSE has not historically been positioned to take on this need, which has been largely managed by the Public Charter School Board and DCPS Central Office leadership. OSSE has executed the federal mandates of school improvement, but has not set independent and clear priorities for school improvement, established a robust suite of supports to wrap around our lowest-performing schools, or infused strategic new funding to drive progress in accordance with the latest research around drivers of school quality. We have instead focused on meeting the minimum federal requirements. However, OSSE is now well-positioned with a strong bench of leadership as well as increased credibility alongside heightened expectations⁴ to disrupt this cycle of low performance and drive rapid improvement by putting in place a stronger system of support and accountability.

In OSSE’s Strategic Plan for 2023-25, endorsed by Mayor Bowser, the agency committed to doing just that – creating a comprehensive strategy to address, support, and hold accountable our lowest performing schools. This commitment has been reinforced by the School Improvement Amendment Act of 2023⁵, passed by the DC Council in 2024 and requiring OSSE to lay out a comprehensive school improvement strategy targeting the lowest 5% of public schools with the resources needed to implement and to establish a School Support Office. The funds requested here will support the implementation of the strategy laid out in OSSE’s report, “[Accelerate DC: A Vision for School Improvement](#),” and enable the agency to

⁴ Accelerate DC: A New Vision for School Improvement (2024): <https://lms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/56504/Introduction/RC25-0259-Introduction.pdf?Id=200642>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

disrupt patterns of performance challenge, close opportunity gaps, and accelerate learning for students in the District’s highest-need schools.

How does this enhancement address this problem and its underlying causes?*

Please provide as much detail as possible. Responses that clearly demonstrate how the proposed enhancement will address the underlying causes will receive more favorable consideration. Please describe any data the agency has collected and/or any analysis the agency has conducted to understand the problem and its potential solutions.

This budget enhancement request would enable OSSE to provide critical supports combined with additional accountability for this subset of the District’s lowest-performing schools in order to drive improvement in academic outcomes and growth. These schools serve a disproportionate number of our highest need students, with the percent of economically disadvantaged students in our 2022-designated CSI schools is 75%, in comparison to the District average of 51%, and all but one are in Wards 7 and 8. These schools included Eagle Academy, which has since been closed, Anacostia High School, Ballou High School, and KIPP DC’s Inspire Academy, to name a few. Targeting OSSE’s improvement efforts on this subset of schools where OSSE already has greater authority to drive change has the potential to help close opportunity gaps and accelerate learning for students in neighborhoods and schools that have historically been underserved and offers a much more compelling and less disruptive alternative to the traditional school closure route. These models of turnaround can then serve as proof points for improvement in schools across the city, producing a much larger return on this investment than just the benefits reaped by individual schools.

Already, OSSE has established a new vision for school improvement that is grounded in the latest research⁶ and aims to accelerate student learning outcomes while closing gaps. OSSE’s new vision and framework are laid out in the report “Accelerate DC: A Vision for School Improvement,” and focus on how to deliver strategic funding alongside robust supports and increasing levels of accountability to target five key domains of school improvement: 1) transformational leadership; 2) talent development; 3) instructional excellence; 4) strong school culture and climate; and 5) organizational health. The Accelerate DC framework sets clear expectations for how to drive improvement by identifying the key levers of change that schools and LEAs should focus on, along with key practices that schools should strive to implement within each domain.

In the upcoming School Improvement Designation cycle, OSSE will release new requirements for schools that are aligned to this framework. Absent additional resources, OSSE is very limited in how it can both support and hold schools accountable for strengthening key weaknesses or gaps identified across the domains. This enhancement request would expand OSSE’s dedicated school improvement capacity from a single person to a small team of five, enabling the agency to accomplish the following:

1. Strengthen monitoring and oversight for designated schools to create greater accountability that can be combined with strategic supports
2. Enhance coordination with DCPS Central Office and the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) to ensure aligned expectations, support, and accountability for designated schools
3. Offer support on the design and implementation of school improvement plans that are grounded in the specific challenges each school faces and consistent with the latest research on evidence-based strategies
4. Provide technical assistance and guidance to schools across the five domains in the Accelerate DC framework
5. Align existing and future OSSE supports and funding streams to support designated schools

⁶ OSSE’s vision and framework is adapted from [Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework](#), which was developed by The Center on School Turnaround at WestEd. To develop this framework, the Center conducted a comprehensive review of the school improvement and turnaround literature to examine what works in both education and non-education sectors. The draft framework was further refined based upon feedback from school improvement experts across 13 states.

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6. Build out and implement a robust strategy for implementing more rigorous interventions for schools who are persistently low-performing, even with additional resources
7. Manage the portfolio of supports described below

In addition to strengthening OSSE’s internal expertise and capacity, this enhancement request would enable OSSE to provide a new system of robust supports that would be combined with increasing levels of accountability for schools who fail to improve. These supports include the following:

1. Competitive local grant fund to implement evidence-based improvement strategies: OSSE would establish a new, multi-year competitive grant program for school improvement using local funds that would be made available to all designated schools. OSSE would set competitive grant priorities for each three-year cycle that are aligned with Accelerate DC and based on targeted areas of need, such as high-quality math curriculum and educator training, high-impact tutoring, or chronic absenteeism interventions. Schools would be required to use the funds to implement leverages funds to support evidence-based strategies aligned to identified needs.
2. Intensive support for assessing school needs, root causes, goal-setting, and continuous improvement: OSSE would secure a third-party partner to support school leaders and their teams in completing the essential steps of identifying the biggest drivers of their low performance and developing solutions to address them. Such a partner would provide facilitation and stakeholder engagement, data collection and synthesis, expertise in identifying evidence-based strategies to reach clear goals, and continuous improvement routines.
3. Leadership coaching for persistently low-performing schools: For schools who do not demonstrate adequate progress in the first three years would be required to work with a coaching partner who brings deep leadership and school improvement experience to the table. This coach would offer regular on-site coaching for the school leader, needs assessment facilitation, strategy development, and rapid evaluation cycles to support continuous improvement until the schools exits its designation status.
4. Peer learning for school leaders and teams: OSSE would host regular communities of practice for principals and school improvement teams to provide a space discussing shared challenges, soliciting peer feedback, identifying support needs, and sharing lessons learned from implementation.

These proposed supports are grounded in an extensive landscape analysis of best practices from across the country as well as a local listening tour, both of which clearly demonstrated the importance of starting with clear expectations combined with robust supports for helping schools achieve those expectations. While OSSE has proposed a supports-first approach to school improvement, schools would experience increasing requirements and accountability measures when progress does not occur. In this approach, the intensity of both supports and oversight increases for schools who do not improve.

Is this enhancement meant to sustain a project initiated with non-local funding (e.g. ARPA, federal grants, SPRs)?

YES NO

If yes, please provide a rationale for why these non-local funds are no longer available:

Click or tap here to enter text.

How can this enhancement be scaled down to be accommodated within a constrained budget?*

Scaling can occur in FY 2026 or the out-years and can be based on fewer residents served, scaled back staffing, adjusted implementation timeline, etc. Please add a new row for each scaled down scenario and rank the scaled down options in order of agency preference.

Use the text box below the table to provide additional detail. If the enhancement cannot be scaled down, please indicate so in the textbox.

RANKING	Describe each proposed approach to scale down the enhancement request and explain the expected impact with each scenario	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029

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1	School Improvement Team + Grant Fund: Fund 4 FTEs to implement the new SI vision with the competitive local grant fund to provide ~20 of the lowest-performing schools with additional resources for implementing evidence-based school improvement plans.	\$4,031,123	\$4,071,434	\$4,112,148	\$4,153,270
2	School Improvement Team + Reduced Grant Fund + Non-Grant Supports: Fund 4 FTEs to implement the new SI vision with the competitive local grant fund to support ~10 of the lowest-performing schools as well as the additional supports laid out in the section above to support the development and implementation of strong improvement plans.	\$3,477,798	\$3,512,576	\$3,547,701	\$3,583,178
3	School Improvement Team + Non-Grant Supports: Fund 4 FTEs to implement the new SI vision, excluding the competitive grant fund.	\$1,777,798	\$1,795,576	\$1,813,531	\$1,831,667
4	School Improvement Team: Fund 4 FTEs for the SI team who would implement the new school improvement vision without any of the additional grant or non-financial, vendor-provided supports.	\$631,123	\$643,745	\$656,620	\$669,752

Each of the options above proposes a different strategy for implementing a scaled down version of the new school improvement vision. This is accomplished by doing the following:

1. Cutting the strategic non-grant supports that provide valuable facilitation, data analysis, continuous improvement, goal-setting, and coaching supports that increase the likelihood of designated schools developing evidence-based improvement plans that effectively identify and address the root causes of their low performance
2. Cutting the local competitive grant fund by 50% to support only 10 schools. This grant fund is intended supplement the modest federal grant fund, which is administered on a formula basis and only to a small subset of the lowest-performing schools. A competitive local grant fund expands the overall pool of strategic resources and also creates a strong incentive for more schools to invest more deeply in the design and implementation of their school improvement plans.
3. Cutting the competitive grant fund all together to focus only on the strategic non-grant supports along with the essential work that will be undertaken by a new SI team to increase alignment to OSSE’s existing professional development and funding streams, develop and implement robust monitoring to increase accountability for designated schools, and procuring and managing the vendors to provide the non-grant supports.
4. Cutting both the grant funds and non-financial supports but building a small team to implement the new vision, focused on leveraging existing OSSE professional development and funding streams, robust monitoring, and limited direct assistant to schools for school improvement plan development and implementation.

The latest research on school improvement and models from other states indicate that the grant funds, the vendor-provided strategic supports, and the core school improvement team are all necessary ingredients to providing a strong portfolio of supports alongside increasing levels of accountability that spur designated schools to realize meaningful improvement.

SECTION II. RATIONALE (continued) *Required for ALL requests*

QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO ENHANCEMENT TYPE*

Mark the appropriate enhancement type and use the space below the table to answer the questions for that enhancement type.

IF YOUR ENHANCEMENT TYPE IS...	THEN ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS...
<input type="checkbox"/> A. Restore previous reduction or one-time funding	Why is the restoration of this reduction critical for the District at this time? What negative impact will result if this reduction is not restored? Please cite any relevant agency performance measures or other data that support your response.
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Increased cost to <u>maintain</u> existing activity	Why are costs increasing to maintain existing levels of service? What are the main cost drivers and what options have the agency already implemented or considered implementing to lower these costs? <i>Changes to the number of people served or the type of services provided should be categorized as a Type D request.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Operational improvement with a strong business case	How will this enhancement help the District save money in this or future fiscal years? How much will it save?
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Expand high-performing existing activity	Why is this program or activity considered to be high performing? How do the outputs or outcomes compare to those of similar programs within or outside of District government? Please cite any relevant agency performance measures or other data that support your response.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. Completely new activity with highly likely or proven positive outcomes	What will be the District's return on investment, as measured by how many and/or which District residents are served, or some other measure?

Responses to Questions*

This budget enhancement request would enable OSSE to provide critical supports combined with additional accountability for this subset of the District's lowest-performing schools in order to drive improvement in academic outcomes and close gaps across students groups. These schools serve a disproportionate number of our highest need students, with the percent of economically disadvantaged students in our 2022-designated CSI schools as high as 94% and averaging 75%, in comparison to the District average of 51%. All but one are in Wards 7 and 8. Thus, while targeting a relatively small number of schools, focused on the bottom 5% of performance, this investment has disproportionate benefits for economically disadvantaged students and their communities, helping these schools address the root causes of their low performance, ultimately expanding access to quality educational opportunities for these neighborhoods and students.

Thus, targeting OSSE's improvement efforts on this subset of schools where OSSE already has greater authority to drive change has the potential to help close opportunity gaps and accelerate learning for students in neighborhoods and schools that have historically been underserved and offers a more compelling and less disruptive alternative to the traditional school closure route. These models of turnaround should then serve as proof points for improvement in schools across the city, producing a much larger return on this investment than just the benefits reaped by individual schools.

SECTION III. PERFORMANCE RATIONALE & IMPACT

Required for ALL requests

PERFORMANCE IMPACT

What data will the agency collect to understand the impact of this enhancement?*

Data may include measurements of the demand or need for programs over time, monitoring the quality and/or efficiency of programs, and/or assessing the impact of the enhancement on longer term goals. Please list specific data sources that will be collected and analyzed.

OSSE collects extensive data already to analyze and understand school-level performance. Shown on the DC School Report Card, this data includes: proficiency and growth rates on statewide assessments for all students and student groups, graduation rates, discipline rates, and chronic absenteeism. Every year, OSSE develops a summative score for every school, based on the agency's accountability system, and these scores serve as the basis for school improvement designations that are made every three years. To understand the impact of this investment, OSSE will look at these student outcomes for the designated schools each year alongside leading indicators that are identified by the schools in their school improvement plans. We will evaluate whether more schools are making faster progress than they were prior to implementation of this new school improvement vision and whether that progress can be attributed to the strategies implemented through their school improvement plan. We will also collect qualitative feedback from school leaders on the value of the non-financial supports offered to support a continuous improvement that spurs stronger support offerings from OSSE.

PERFORMANCE TEAM IS HERE TO HELP!

Need help thinking through this section or identifying data sources or performance measures? Reach out to your OBPM Performance Analyst or to Chief Performance Officer Lia Katz (lia.katz@dc.gov).

What challenges or risks does the agency anticipate related to this enhancement request? What mitigation or management strategies will the agency adopt to address those challenges?

OSSE has identified the following risks and mitigation strategies for this enhancement request:

- **Poor coordination with DCPS Central Office and PCSB:** Buy-in and strong coordination with these sister agencies to ensure alignment with their own accountability processes is essential. We have identified multiple ways in which OSSE can work more effectively moving forward with both agencies to ensure that they are playing the appropriate role in OSSE's school improvement work and that our respective processes and requirements are streamlined as much as possible. These points of coordination are named publicly in the Accelerate DC report⁷, and OSSE has incorporated their feedback into the new school improvement vision.
- **Inadequate resources to realize the vision:** There are no magic bullets or short-cuts to the hard work of improving the quality of education within the lowest-performing schools in a given state or District. There is also no one-size-fits-all approach. With this enhancement request, we have sought to find the right balance of financial and non-financial supports, driven by OSSE as well as by neutral experts through third-party partners, based on our review of the school improvement research, feedback from DC stakeholders on what is needed, and a landscape analysis of other states. This request seeks to provide targeted and strategic investments that will assist school leaders in building strong plans tailored to the unique challenges of their school while also providing them with the resources to implement them successfully and the accountability to motivate them to action.

⁷ <https://lms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/56504/Introduction/RC25-0259-Introduction.pdf?id=200642>.

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- Lack of buy-in from school leaders:** A school improvement strategy is doomed to fail if there is not strong buy-in from the impacted school leaders on both the need to improve and the potential to do so. That is why OSSE engaged more than 60 stakeholders in our local listening tour, including the school leaders of both designated charter and DCPS schools, to hear their feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and what else they need to accelerate student outcomes. Their perspective was a key driver in the development of OSSE’s new school improvement vision.

Will any performance measures currently in the agency's performance plan be impacted by this enhancement? What new measures will be added to understand the impact of the enhancement?*

- If you are proposing a new metric, write “NEW” in the columns for FY 2024 and FY 2025.
- Identify the “measure type: will the metric measure quantity; quality; efficiency; outcome; context; or is a District wide indicator of environmental trends.
- Please provide the previous year’s data and the current year’s target for the metric. Please also provide the anticipated targets for next year in the case that (a) the enhancement is funded and (b) the enhancement is not funded.

Performance Measure	New for FY26?	Measure Type	Which direction is desired?	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Target	Anticipated FY 2026 Target	
						With enhancement funding	Without enhancement funding
Percent of low-performing schools that show overall growth in academic achievement	No	Outcome	Up is Better	TBD (data will be available in December)	80%	95%	80%

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Percent of low-performing schools that are on track to exit their status	Yes	Outcome	Up is Better	N/A	N/A	80%	30%
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SECTION IV. BUDGETING FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Required for ALL requests

Is one of the goals of this enhancement to reduce or eliminate a racial equity gap?*

YES NO

Which of the four goals in the District's [Racial Equity Action Plan \(REAP\)](#) or your agency specific REAP does this enhancement request advance?*. Check all that apply.

- 1. Improving DC Government staff understanding and commitment to achieving racial equity (e.g., training, capacity building, or use of racial equity tools)
- 2. Reducing or eliminating a known racial and ethnic inequity (domains include housing, health, economic opportunity, safety, education, neighborhood life, and civic engagement)
- 3. Enhancing opportunities to meaningfully engage DC residents in decision-making processes and strengthening partnerships
- 4. Improving DC government ability to be an equitable employer and engage in racially equitable hiring, promotion, and retention practices (e.g., building pipelines with HBCU/HSI, staff development funds, or community of practice on hiring)

What racial inequity or REAP sub-goal(s) does this enhancement request address?*

For example, health disparity, educational gap, disproportionality in housing, bolstering existing community resources, etc. Please be as specific as possible. For REAP goals, please list the specific action (e.g. 1B, see District's REAP for supporting actions).

This enhancement request helps address historical inequities in accessing educational opportunities in high-poverty neighborhoods in the District by focusing additional resources on our lowest-performing schools, which serve a disproportionate number of students living in poverty. The percent of economically disadvantaged students in our 2022-designated CSI schools was as high as 94% and averaged 75%, in comparison to the District average of 51%. All but one are in Wards 7 and 8.

What is the rationale for addressing the inequity in this way and/or with this program?*

For example, is the enhancement in response to a legislative requirement or mandate, community engagement efforts, demographic data, or something else?

The targeted approach of this school improvement strategy seeks to focus additional resources, expertise, and accountability on the schools that have been identified as lowest-performing without our statewide accountability system with the goal of expanding access to high-quality educational opportunities and, ultimately, accelerating student outcomes.

In what ways have you meaningfully involved internal and external stakeholders in the development of your agency's budget request, including staff and communities of color?*. See ORE's [Meaningful Community Engagement Guide](#).

Meaningful community engagement, including staff and communities of color, was an essential driver of OSSE's new school improvement vision. OSSE engaged more than 60 District stakeholders through listening sessions and interviews, including with: teachers and principals serving on OSSE's Superintendent Advisory Councils; principals or executive leaders of both charter and DCPS schools currently designated for improvement by OSSE, designated as Bold Performance schools by EmpowerK12, and implementing an XQ school redesign model; District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Instructional Superintendents; and LEA leaders, students, and individuals from external organizations with deep histories, commitment, and knowledge of DC's schools, teachers, and students. These interviews and focus groups highlighted the importance of providing a strong foundation of both funding and non-financial supports in the form of coaching, peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, instructional expertise, as well as strategic planning and continuous improvement guidance to assist school leaders in their improvement journeys.

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If this budget enhancement could potentially cause unintended benefits or burdens, please detail what racial or ethnic groups might be positively or negatively impacted.* For example, the location for a new airport could disrupt traffic patterns and create noise and air pollution that impact residents in the immediate vicinity, which could worsen racial health inequities.

We do not see any potential negative impacts to students of color, given the equity-centered nature of this strategy. We do believe that there will be positive benefits, for the reasons described above.

SECTION V. EVIDENCE-BASED BUDGETING

Required for Type D & E requests. Optional for Types A, B & C.

This section is required for all Type D and E enhancement requests that would expand existing activities or launch completely new activities. This section may be completed for Type A, B and C enhancement requests to be considered for an evidence rating.

If the activities described in this enhancement are successfully implemented, what outcome(s) will improve?* OBPM expects that it will be possible for agencies to identify for almost all enhancement requests a new performance measure (Section III of this form) that aligns with the outcome measures identified in the evidence provided. If this is not feasible, please explain below.

OSSE expects that student academic outcomes will improve for the lowest-performing schools, specifically the percent of students demonstrating growth in ELA and Math on the statewide assessment, DC CAPE, for all designated schools who benefit from the new supports offered by OSSE.

What evidence supports the likelihood that this enhancement will achieve the desired outcome?*

Please describe the quantitative studies or other measures that show the outcomes of similar efforts previously undertaken in the District or in other cities (see sidebar for what OBPM will look for to review enhancements as evidence-based or supported by preliminary evidence). Provide links to cite your sources, which may include formal evaluation studies, evidence standards, or evidence clearinghouses.

OSSE has grounded its new vision for school improvement in the Council of Chief State School Officer's (CCSSO) Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems⁸. There is a strong body of evidence and research supporting a state education agency school improvement system that prioritizes high-quality planning, implementation of evidence-based interventions, coaching, strategic funding, and progress monitoring⁹. This research supports

THE LAB@DC TEAM IS HERE TO HELP!

Have questions about the evidence? Email the.lab@dc.gov (and CC your OBPM Budget Analyst). The Lab can pre-review evidence, brainstorm future evaluation ideas, offer suggestions on where to look for evidence, and help you think through the evidence you've found.

HELPFUL TIPS TO GET STARTED:

In general, evidence ratings follow the principles listed below; the quality of the evidence provided and how well it matches the enhancement may also affect the final evidence rating:

- Experimental studies (also called randomized evaluations or randomized control trials) that show that a program or intervention *caused* an outcome may receive a **STRONG/4-star** evidence rating
- Quasi-experimental studies that suggest that a program or intervention *caused* an outcome by comparing outcomes between the group receiving the enhancement and a very similar group that doesn't receive the enhancement may receive a **MODERATE/3-star** evidence rating
- Correlational studies with appropriate statistical controls may receive a **PROMISING/2-star** evidence rating
- Before-and-after comparison studies (also called pre-post comparison studies) may receive a **SOME/1-star** evidence rating

Consider the positive impact(s) this enhancement should have on District residents or government operations. These are the outcome(s) of the enhancement. Try searching [Google Scholar](#) or a similar database for relevant existing research. Government evidence clearinghouses (like [What Works Clearinghouse](#) for education and [CrimeSolutions](#) for public safety) are also good places to search according to specialized topics.

⁸ CCSSO's Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems (2021): https://ccsso.org/CCSSOPrinciplesofEffectiveSchoolImprovementSystems06212017_0.pdf

⁹ ESSA Leverage Points: 50-State Report on Promising Practices for Using Evidence <https://results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RFA-ESSA-50-State-Report-on-Promising-Practices-for-Using-Evidence.pdf>

Targeted Support for Low-Performing Students (2017): <https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/SchoolInterventions.pdf>;

Measures of Last Resort Linking State and Local School Improvement Assessing Strategies for State-Initiated Turnarounds (2016):

<https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/crpe-measures-last-resort.pdf>; Implementing Change: Rethinking School Improvement Strategies &

Funding Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (2016): <https://www.chiefsforchange.org/download-media/implementing-change/>; Four

Domains for Rapid School Improvement: Indicators of Effective Practice (2018): [https://csti.wested.org/wp-](https://csti.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CST_Indictors-Effective-Practice-Four-Domains.pdf)

[content/uploads/2018/04/CST_Indictors-Effective-Practice-Four-Domains.pdf](https://csti.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CST_Indictors-Effective-Practice-Four-Domains.pdf); For Equity-Oriented State Leaders: 9 Ideas for Stimulating

a high likelihood of success if this new vision and the corresponding supports are implemented with fidelity.

Which parts of your enhancement are identical to the model(s) the evidence comes from?*

As applicable, your answer should describe sameness in the target population, intervention, and availability of inputs/resources needed, etc.

While OSSE has sought to develop an approach to school improvement that is tailored to the specific needs of the DC context, each individual element is consistent with models clearly aligned with the large body of research.

The most common models and promising practices of state support include a collaborative partnership between SEAs, LEAs, and third-partner organizations. SEAs have limited internal resources to provide direct support to districts and schools to meet technical assistance requirements outlined in The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As such, a majority of states expand their capacity by partnering or contracting with external providers. In a 2019 survey of 41 SEAs, all SEAs reported that they work directly with LEAs to provide technical assistance for school improvement, and seventy-three percent of SEAs reported that they contracted with or planned to contract with individuals to provide coaching or other services to CSI schools.¹⁰ In addition to providing targeted technical assistance and expertise to LEAs and schools, partnerships with external providers can provide a neutral perspective in the school improvement process; help enhance lines of communication across schools, LEAs and the SEA; and provide frequent and ongoing face-to-face assistance and support that can bolster implementation and accountability.

Furthermore, analysis by Results for America on promising practices for using evidence to improve student outcomes finds that 14 state education agencies award school improvement funds through a competitive application process that prioritizes evidence-based practices LEAs select to implement, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, and Tennessee.¹¹ Arizona’s competitive process specifically gives preference to evidence-based plans that target root causes identified in the needs assessment. The competitive grant fund proposed here would similarly prioritize evidence-based strategies that are directly aligned to the root causes identified by schools and their LEAs in the needs assessment.

Which parts of your enhancement are different from the model(s) evaluated in the studies linked?*

Explain why deviations are necessary for success in DC.

N/A

School Improvement Under ESSA: <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/For-Equity-Oriented-State-Leaders-9-Ideas-for-Stimulating-School-Improvement-Under-ESSA.pdf>; SREB: The Three Essentials: Improving Schools Requires District Vision, District and State Support, and Principal Leadership (2010): <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Three-Essentials-to-Improving-Schools.pdf>

¹⁰ Riley, D., Meredith, J., & Butler, A. State responsibilities and opportunities for school improvement under ESSA. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers (2019): <https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/SEA%20School%20Improvement%20Under%20ESSA%20Mar%202019%20PSA%20CCSSO%20Final%203.22.19.pdf>

¹¹ ESSA Leverage Points: 50-State Report on Promising Practices for Using Evidence to Improve Student Outcomes (2018): https://results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RFA-ESSA-50-State-Report_final.pdf

Form 2 Detail: FY 2026 Enhancement Request

FY 2026 Agency Budget Request

Are you building or planning to build evidence to support this enhancement using a formal program evaluation?* YES NO

If yes, please describe or link below to the planned evaluation design, research question(s), and timeline for results.

We are interested in exploring program evaluation opportunities with the DC Education Research Collaborative, housed with the Urban Institute. However, regardless of whether we are able to partner with them on a formal program evaluation, we will conduct progress monitoring of our lowest-performing schools, collect qualitative feedback on newly implemented supports, and assess annual progress toward exiting from designation in order to continuously assess and strengthen this system of school improvement.

SECTION VI. PROJECT PLAN *Optional for All Requests*

This section is optional. However, it is recommended for Type D and E enhancement requests that would expand existing activities or launch completely new activities.

This project plan can be used to show how the agency will deliver the intended results before the end of the fiscal year. Complete as best you can, knowing the plan might evolve.

PROJECT OWNER

Who is the single person who will be most responsible for this initiative? If the project owner must be hired, specify who will own the project until that time.

NAME **Sarah Martin**
 TITLE **Senior Advisory for Recovery**
 EMAIL **sarah.martin@dc.gov**
 PHONE **202-716-8704**

BUSINESS PARTNER COORDINATION

What other agencies or stakeholders would be critical to this project’s success, and what communication have you had with them?

DCPS Central Office and PCSB are both critical to this project’s success. OSSE has been in extensive communication with both agency’s leaders as well as key members of their staff throughout the process of developing this new vision for school improvement.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Describe below anticipated implementation milestones by quarter to show how the agency will deliver the intended results. Please identify specific months or dates, if known.

PREPARATION FOR PROJECT LAUNCH (before start of fiscal year)	
FY 2025 Q4	Conduct hiring for school improvement team Design competitive grant fund
FISCAL YEAR STARTS, FUNDS DISBURSED	
FY 2026 Q1	Launch competitive grant fund and make awards Initiate procurement for new supports
FY 2026 Q2	Design more rigorous monitoring framework for persistently low-performing schools Initiate implementation of OSSE-led supports
FY 2026 Q3	Initiate implementation of vendor-led supports
FY 2026 Q4	Initiate more rigorous monitoring