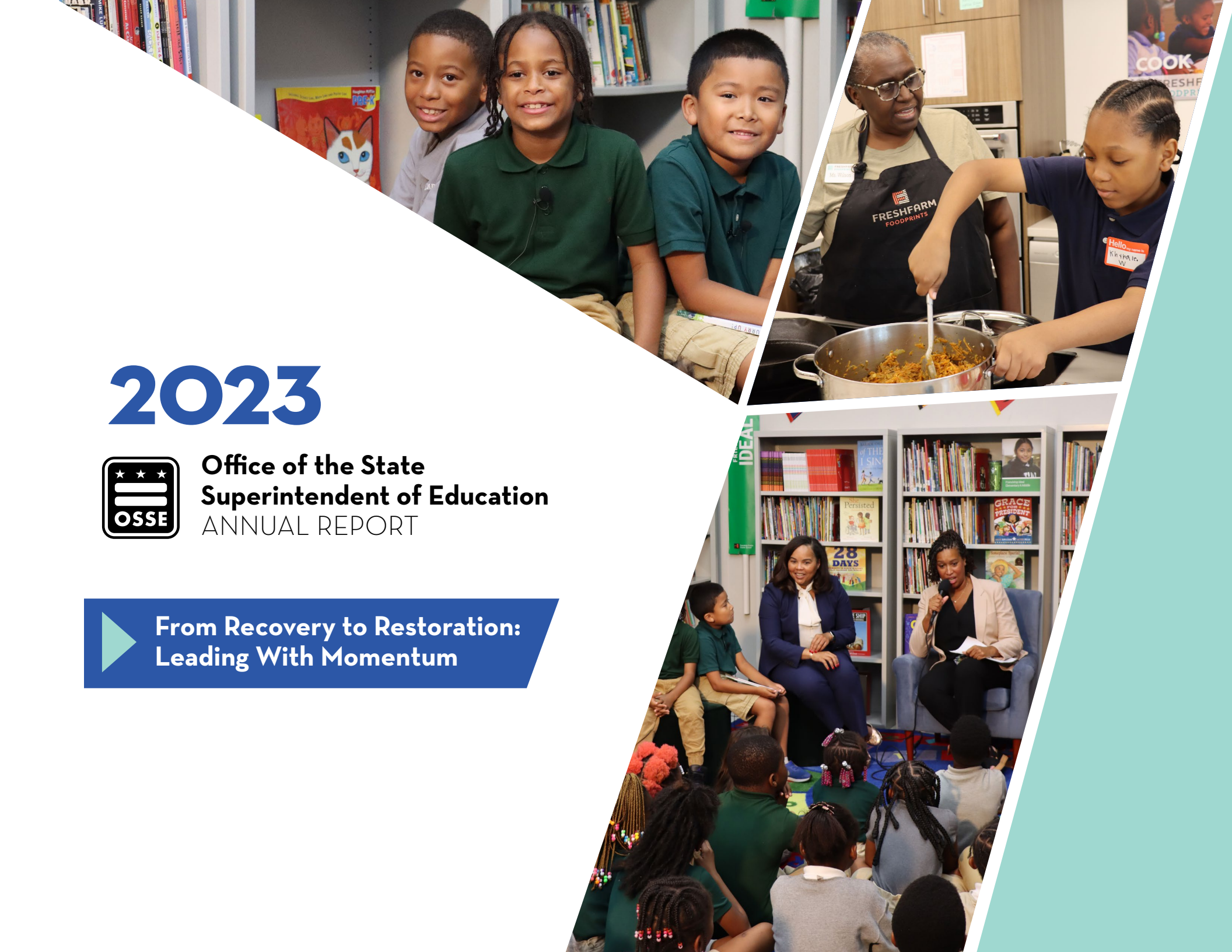


2023



**Office of the State
Superintendent of Education**
ANNUAL REPORT

**From Recovery to Restoration:
Leading With Momentum**





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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Dear Washingtonians,

The pursuit of educational equity and excellence has always been a cornerstone of my Administration and our shared vision for the District of Columbia. Guided by a dynamic 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, “From Recovery to Restoration,” the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has a critical role to play in leading transformative developments that mirror mine and our education stakeholders’ collective dedication to bolstering a world-class education system.

At the beginning of my third-term as Mayor of my hometown in early 2023, I challenged our city and its leaders to be bold in and innovative in our continued comeback. Importantly, OSSE’s 2023 annual report vividly illustrates what bold action for our students looks like: striving to make DC the nation’s premier place for early childhood educators; expanding eligibility for child care subsidies; reimagining the high school experience; and creating new teacher pipelines, among many other initiatives.

For DC to be equitable and resilient where our young learners are concerned, we must work on guaranteeing a robust future and persist in putting all of our students on pathways to success. Wholly supporting our learners from birth through adulthood not only benefits those in the classroom but also enriches the entire community and our next generation of leaders. I am proud as I reflect on the achievements collectively made for DC students in 2023.

As we reflect on all we accomplished for our learners in the past year, it fuels my determination to aim for even bigger and better things in 2024. The collaborative efforts of our community, educators, stakeholders, and leaders have laid a strong foundation for the future. Together, let us continue to push the boundaries of educational excellence and create an environment where every student thrives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Muriel Bowser".

Muriel Bowser
Mayor



Dear DC Community,

I am thrilled to share with you the highlights of the past year through the 2023 annual report for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Our journey in 2023 was steered by OSSE’s dynamic 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, “From Recovery to Restoration,” and you will witness the plan’s impact and influence through the accomplishments detailed in the following pages.

The annual report, titled “From Recovery to Restoration: Leading With Momentum,” not only chronicles the significant strides we’ve made for learners of all ages in DC but also emphasizes how we are strategically positioned to leverage this momentum for sustained progress in the years to come.

In 2023, we celebrated historic milestones, including the release of updated social studies standards for the first time in nearly two decades. We proudly became the first jurisdiction in the country to adopt statewide menstrual health standards for all students, irrespective of gender, and inaugurated the permanent home of our Advanced Technical Center, DC’s first centralized career and technical education hub for high school students. DC public and public charter schools set an enrollment record for the second consecutive year, surpassing 98,000 students in unaudited 2023-24 school year enrollment. Our high-impact tutoring initiative is on track to exceed our goal of reaching 10,000 students by the fall of 2024, marking a significant step toward enhancing educational outcomes for students historically underserved. We also made substantial progress in achieving pay parity for educators, distributing well over \$100 million of dollars to charter school and early childhood teachers to align birth through grade 12 educator salaries across the DC educational landscape.

These accomplishments, realized through a steadfast commitment to equity and with the robust support of our staff and many partners, underscore the District’s unwavering dedication to every student. They also reflect our resolute determination to persist in advancing educational excellence.

I take great pride in the achievements of OSSE in 2023 and am confident that our collaborative efforts with educators, students, families, community-based organizations, and sister agencies position us for continued success in 2024 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christina Grant
State Superintendent of Education

VISION:

WHAT WE'RE WORKING TOWARD

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.

MISSION:

HOW WE'LL GET THERE

As DC's state education agency, we will set high standards, build educator and system capacity to meet those standards, expand educational opportunities for all learners with a focus on those underserved and hold everyone - including ourselves - accountable for results.

2023 BY THE NUMBERS



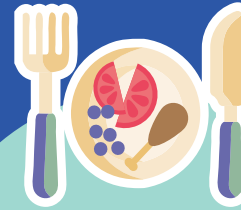
98,663[^]

students enrolled in DC public and public charter schools in the 2023-24 school year, an increase of **2,120 students**, or **2.2 percent**, from last year.*



More than 4,050 early childhood educators received more than **\$41.7 million in Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity funds**.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PAY EQUITY FUND



More than **19.3 million meals** were provided to DC children and families with support from OSSE in fiscal year 2023 (FY23).

5,110 grants and scholarships were awarded in 2023 to students pursuing higher education.



191 students from 15 schools enrolled at the Advanced Technical Center (ATC) for year two. Year one students earned 740 college credits while enrolled in high school, **saving \$570,000 in tuition costs**.



Through the end of FY23, OSSE has overseen the distribution and expenditure of approximately **\$730 million out of \$1 billion** in federal stimulus funds to support recovery in the District.



OSSE distributed more than **\$64 million** to nearly 140 public charter schools in the charter teacher pay program.



In the 2022-23 school year, OSSE funded high-impact tutoring (HIT) programs in 73 of the District's highest-need schools and 19 community-based sites, **reaching 5,137 public school students**.

* Unaudited enrollment for the 2023-24 school year.

^ Official audited results are expected to be released after publication of this annual report.

FROM RECOVERY TO RESTORATION:

A HISTORIC INVESTMENT OF FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS

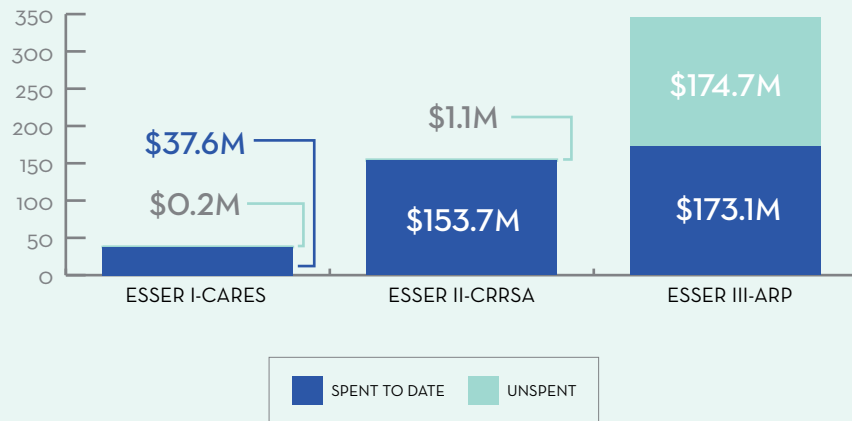
In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, OSSE received and is responsible for overseeing the management of more than \$1 billion in federal stimulus funds to support the recovery and restoration of our public education and child care sectors. The funds were granted to OSSE by US Department of Education in three rounds and support multi-year investments through Sept. 30, 2024. Most of these funds are federal dollars that pass through OSSE to local education agencies (LEAs) and early childhood providers. OSSE has greater discretion over designated state-led investments to support recovery and restoration.

Through the end of FY23, OSSE has overseen the spend down of approximately 72 percent, or \$730 million, of our multi-year federal stimulus funds.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) INVESTMENTS

The chart below depicts the total reimbursements submitted and approved by OSSE as of Dec. 15, 2023.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds

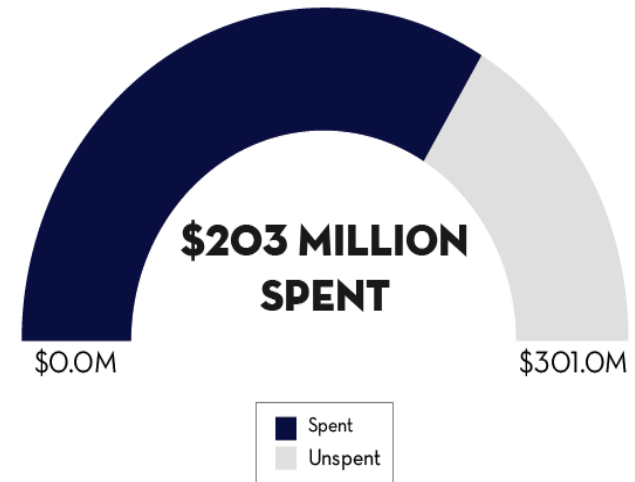


The majority (64 percent) of LEA ESSER funds spent to date have been invested in strategies to accelerate learning, such as implementing school-based HIT programs.

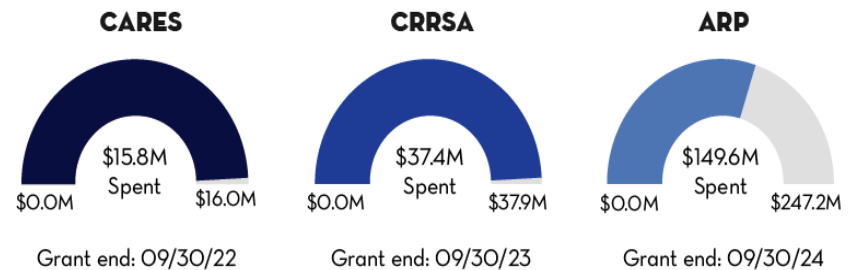
STATE-LED INVESTMENTS

The charts below and to the right depict the planned and actual spend down of OSSE's state-led investments as of Sept. 30, 2023.

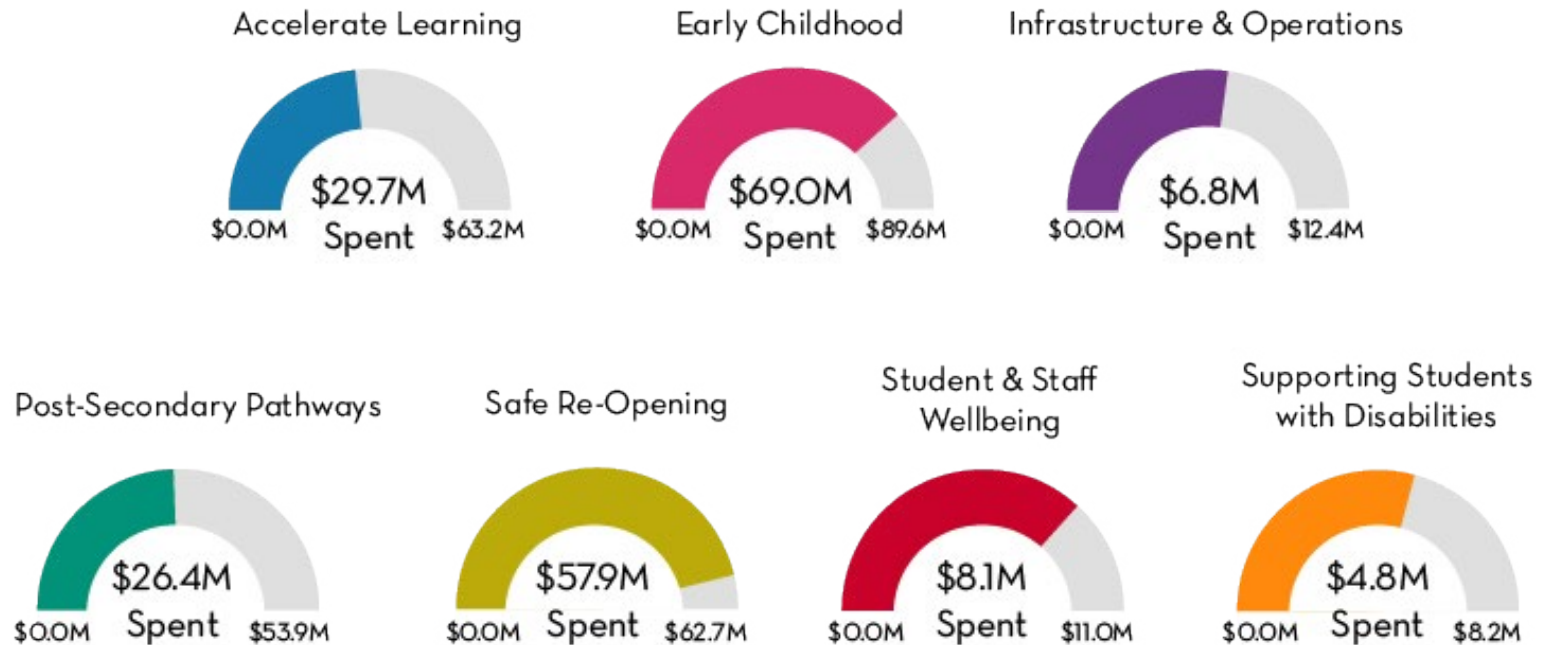
Total Spent Across State-Led Investment



Total Spent by Stimulus Law



Total Spent by State-Led Investment Area



► IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- **\$1.7 million** invested to expand scholarship funding for early childhood educators to earn a degree in early childhood education. Since launching in June 2022, more than 500 early child care educators have been accepted to the DC Leading Educators toward Advanced Degrees (DC LEAD) scholarship program (see pg. 11 for more details).
- **\$6 million** invested to accelerate student math and literacy gains through expanded teacher professional development, digital curriculum and grants to help LEAs adopt high-quality instructional resources and materials. DC is on track to train 30 percent of its K-3 teachers in the science of reading by the end of 2024 (see pg. 14 for more details).
- **\$35 million** invested to expand access to HIT, focusing on building the capacity of schools that serve large populations of economically disadvantaged students. In the 2022-23 school year, District students

who received the adequate dosage of HIT achieved their math growth goals at a rate 7 percent higher than peers who did not (see pg. 20 for more details).

- **\$19 million** invested to reimagine the high school experience and increase student engagement through new initiatives like the ATC and Advanced Internship Program. During the 2022-23 school year, students attending the ATC earned a total of 740 college credits – worth approximately \$570,000 in tuition – at no cost to students or their families (see pg. 23 for more details).

Throughout this report, initiatives and projects funded in full or in part by federal recovery dollars will feature this symbol:



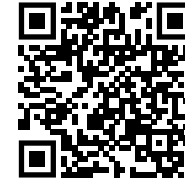


LEADING WITH MOMENTUM

In the District of Columbia, the concerted efforts toward educational recovery since the pandemic gained significant momentum, signaling a promising trajectory for the revitalization of the city's academic landscape. The collaborative initiatives between local government, educational institutions and community stakeholders played a pivotal role in fostering positive change. Increased investments in accelerating learning for students, teacher professional development, and targeted interventions for students facing learning gaps were instrumental in addressing the challenges exacerbated by the disruptions of COVID. Moreover, a continued and focused commitment to equity has driven this work, ensuring that educational recovery efforts are equitable and accessible to all students, regardless of socio-economic background. As the community rallies around a shared vision for educational excellence, this momentum not only signifies a recovery from setbacks but also sets the stage for a more resilient and forward-looking education system in Washington, DC.

OSSE'S 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN: FROM RECOVERY TO RESTORATION

As the roadmap for OSSE's work, the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan also guides reflections on our 2023 accomplishments.



SCAN TO
VIEW OUR
STRATEGIC PLAN



START EARLY

Ensure early learners have access to vibrant and quality early learning environments and are prepared for their K-12 education.

As a national leader in early childhood education, the District of Columbia continues to drive innovation for DC's youngest learners and the thousands of educators who teach and nurture them each day. OSSE is elevating the early learning workforce and making the District the best place in the country to be an early educator. We made great progress toward this goal in 2023 through new and existing work.



SETTING THE STANDARD AND RAISING THE BAR



The District of Columbia sets high standards for early childhood educators in licensed child development facilities. These standards help ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills to support children's learning and development and feel successful and supported in their roles. OSSE provides support to early childhood educators to complete required degrees and credentials at low or no cost. OSSE currently partners with the Southeast Children's Fund (SCF) and CentroNia to implement the Child Development Associate® (CDA) Training and Preparation Program, which offers in-person and hybrid training to the DC early childhood workforce at no cost. Classes are offered in English, Spanish and Amharic, and SCF and CentroNia offer ongoing support to early childhood educators to complete each step of the credential process. In FY23, more than 300 District child care educators completed CDA® coursework for free with support from OSSE.

Additionally, more than 500 early childhood educators have been accepted into the DC LEAD scholarship program which provides scholarships and incentives to DC child care educators to complete coursework toward an associate and/or bachelor's degree in early childhood education.

▶ INCREASING COMPENSATION FOR EARLY EDUCATORS

OSSE launched the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, the first program of its kind in the nation. The fund aims to create pay parity between early educators and their K-12 colleagues, and to attract, retain and support skilled, passionate, and nurturing early educators.

In FY23, OSSE distributed nearly \$42 million in Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Funds (quarterly payments of \$2,500 and \$3,500) to more than 4,044 educators. OSSE also put in place policies, systems, and infrastructure for the next phase of the program, in which child development facilities will receive funding from OSSE to sustainably and permanently increase staff pay.

Fair compensation is more than just money. Early educators who care for our youngest learners deserve to have their health cared for as well. Through HealthCare4ChildCare, an innovative partnership with DC Health Benefits Exchange Authority, OSSE subsidized health insurance premiums for child care employers who provide coverage for their staff, as well as DC residents working in child care, enabling child care workers to get health coverage at no cost to themselves. As of October 2023, 169 child care facilities, nearly 40 percent of DC's child care providers, are participating in the program to provide coverage to their employees. Nearly 1,200 early educators are covered through this program, and more than 40 percent of them did not previously have health insurance.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PAY EQUITY FUND



▶ EXPANDING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

In 2023, OSSE expanded eligibility to child care subsidies to include families earning up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level (up from 250 percent previously), meaning a family of four with income up to \$90,000 now qualifies for subsidy. As a result of this expansion, 5,200 children ages 0-13 became newly income-eligible for subsidies. In addition, OSSE increased child care subsidy payment rates to help child care businesses cover increasing costs due to inflation and attract more child care providers into the subsidy program to expand access for participating families. Finally, OSSE developed and launched an online family application portal for child care subsidies to streamline the process for families to receive subsidies.

Through substantial investments and unwavering dedication, DC is spearheading a transformative journey in early childhood education – a critical piece of DC's pandemic recovery. Fueled by monumental commitments, we are not just building momentum; we are forging a legacy of progress. Our vision is bold—to establish the nation's premier early childhood education system for educators, children and families alike.



ADVANCE EXCELLENCE

Ensure all DC students have the opportunity to excel by setting high standards, providing robust supports for educators and holding schools and school systems accountable.

Best supporting students requires a holistic approach that serves educators and school communities alike, while also setting high standards for all stakeholders in the educational ecosystem. In 2023, through the adoption of new learning standards, innovative partnerships, educator incentives for professional learning opportunities, and other unique approaches, OSSE made great strides in advancing excellence for all DC learners.



OSSE Adopts
New Social Studies
Standards for
DC Students

▶ ADOPTING NEW EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR DC STUDENTS

Learning standards prepare our students to be informed and compassionate citizens, and to meet the demands of a modern, interconnected world. In 2023, for the first time in nearly two decades, OSSE adopted updated Social Studies Standards for students in DC public and public charter schools with a unanimous vote by the DC State Board of Education (SBOE). Developed through a years-long process supported by community partners and philanthropic support, the new standards incorporate expert feedback, community input and educator insight that aim to empower DC students to become active participants in our democracy, identify and combat misinformation, and wisely and effectively shape the future of DC, the nation and the world.

OSSE also became the first jurisdiction in the country to adopt statewide Menstrual Health Education Standards for all students, regardless of gender. A comprehensive health education curriculum is essential to increasing student agency and health literacy and to creating inclusive schools. These standards, also adopted unanimously by the SBOE, provide a clear, skill-based and age-appropriate approach to this essential health topic and renew the District's commitment to comprehensive health education. The new Menstrual Health Education Standards also aim to empower DC students to become active participants in their own health while maintaining dignity and respect for their fellow students as they grow and develop.

▶ IMPROVING STUDENT LITERACY OUTCOMES

New literacy investments and initiatives are accelerating learning for DC students. OSSE invested over \$3 million in ESSER funds from the US Department of Education, as well as \$16 million in grant funds from the Comprehensive Literacy State Development grant program to expand access to evidence-based literacy trainings for educators across the District, including the Language Essential for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) program. OSSE has also committed approximately \$16.8 million to fund high-impact tutoring in literacy for approximately 7,600 students, and is currently on track to reach a total of more than 13,000 students across both math and literacy by fall 2024.

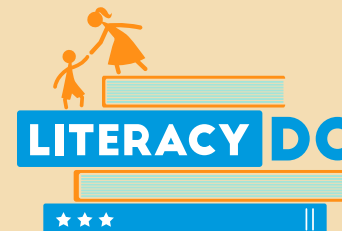
In English language arts (ELA) and literacy, OSSE implemented research-backed science of reading courses, and more than 350 educators have completed the training so far, with another 300 registered. Participants in these courses receive a \$1,000 stipend for their time and efforts, and more than 300 educators have received this incentive. Nearly 13,000 DC educators completed OSSE's dyslexia training in 2023, helping to ensure educators are equipped to support students with a variety of needs.



▶ ENSURING CLASSROOM MATERIALS SUPPORT INSTRUCTION

OSSE prioritized accelerated learning for more than 12,800 DC public and public charter school students by awarding more than \$1.7 million in grant funds to 13 LEAs. The mission: To carefully select and introduce high-quality instructional resources and materials (HQIM) to elevate learning experiences for DC students.

Research highlights that educators significantly enhance their ability to propel student learning when equipped with top-notch instructional curricula and materials. The funds went toward materials to empower educators throughout the District, enabling them to facilitate accelerated learning in ELA, math and science and ultimately guide thousands of DC students back to their grade levels, setting the stage for them to not just catch up but truly thrive in their educational journeys.



“[OSSE’s science of reading] program was extremely informative and useful. I learned about it from school leaders and was so happy to be engaged in professional development that provided theory and application that directly related to the work I do every day. It has made me a stronger teacher and allows me to fill in the gaps that curriculum doesn’t always cover when it comes to teaching reading.”

– Lien Ly Hong, a pre-K 4 teacher at DC Bilingual PCS



“While I always knew what number sense was, I never really fully understood nor appreciated its depths. Prior to DC Math Teacher Bootcamp, asking students the “why” of their calculations was staple in my instruction, but asking “why” or “what makes you say that” is not flexible enough - it still won’t reach some students. Math Bootcamp taught me that we can remove numbers from problems to create numberless word problems and facilitate students sense-making of problem solving.”

– Darren Stewart, Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS

STRENGTHENING MATH EDUCATION THROUGH HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & INCENTIVES.



New and existing standards require that our educators have the supports they need to lead effective instruction. In 2023, OSSE deployed high-quality professional learning opportunities for educators and strategically paired those opportunities with monetary incentives.

To increase DC students’ math proficiency over the next two years and beyond, OSSE has invested \$1.6 million in intensive professional development bootcamps to improve educator and LEA practices in math instruction at the elementary and secondary levels. This investment focuses on schools with the highest needs and on teachers with fewer than five years of experience. Educators receive a \$1,000 stipend for completing the math bootcamp coursework.

ADMINISTERING HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

OSSE administered the annual statewide assessments in math, ELA and science in spring 2023. More than 47,000 students – over 95 percent of those eligible for testing – participated. We are encouraged by the first post-pandemic proficiency rate increases in both math and ELA – nearly three percentage points in each.



EDUCATOR CREDENTIALING AND PREPARATION

Additionally, OSSE finalized and successfully operationalized a new credentialing option – the one-year, provisional teacher credential– that provides more flexibility for local education agencies when hiring new teachers. OSSE also expanded the options available for educators to demonstrate their general knowledge by allowing a high grade-point average to substitute for a competency exam.

In FY23, OSSE began implementing our new [Educator Preparation Provider and Subject Area Program Approval Regulations](#), which require preparation programs preparing future teachers whose primary responsibility will be teaching literacy to meet rigorous standards in the [science of reading](#).

5,134 new educator credential applications

with a processing timeline of fewer than **13 business days**



▶ MAKING DATA AVAILABLE TO DC FAMILIES

In November, OSSE introduced a revamped DC School Report Card, unveiling a user-friendly, dynamic website that seamlessly delivers comparable data at the school, LEA and city levels for all public schools in the District of Columbia. Aimed at families, educators and the community at large, the DC School Report Card paints a picture of school performance, aligning with OSSE's dedication to transparent data sharing.



Looking ahead, OSSE and SBOE launched a collaborative effort in 2023 to engage the public to gather insights on enhancing the visual appeal and format of the DC School Report Card in the years to come.

▶ CELEBRATING DC HISTORY



We celebrated DC history in both the release of our new social studies standards and in recognizing the 150th anniversary of the Charles H. Sumner School. An 1872 school building designed by prominent and prolific German architect, Adolf Cluss, the Sumner school was one of the earliest public school buildings for Black students in Washington, DC. The building, which now serves as a museum and archives, currently exists as one of the oldest intact African

American buildings in the nation, with minimal alterations constructed during the post-Civil War, Reconstruction era. It is also listed on the National Register for Historic Places. Since the Sumner School Museum and Archives was placed under the stewardship of OSSE in 2007, we have worked to elevate the Sumner Museum's profile and resources, including the expansive research library and broad collection on the history of DC Public Education dating back to 1804, when Thomas Jefferson was president.

▶ BREAKING RECORDS AND HELPING FAMILIES MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT SCHOOLS

In December, My School DC hosted EdFEST, an annual public school fair and one-stop shop for families to learn more about the District's public school options. We welcomed families back in person for the first time since before the pandemic to EdFEST. The event spanned two weekends for the first time, with a session dedicated to pre-K 3 through grade 8 and one for high school. This year's EdFEST broke records with **more than 8,000** attendees.



“I will continue to create platforms to amplify students’ voices, raise awareness, find creative solutions to our mental health crisis, and ensure equitable access for immigrant youth. This is for students. They are the Teachers of the Year.”

- 2024 DC Teacher of the Year
Beth Barkley



► NAMING THE 2024 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

In October, Mayor Bowser, State Superintendent Dr. Grant and District officials presented Beth Barkley, a high school teacher at the International Academy at Cardozo Education Campus, with the 2024 DC Teacher of the Year Award during a [surprise event](#). Ms. Barkley’s dedication earned her this prestigious honor, accompanied by a \$7,500 prize. The award, an annual recognition, is reserved for a DC public or public charter school teacher who exemplifies remarkable leadership and unwavering commitment to student achievement. As the 2024 DC Teacher of the Year, Ms. Barkley will represent DC in the Council of Chief State School Officers National Teacher of the Year program and can advocate for her students on a national level.

Ms. Barkley’s impact at Cardozo has been noteworthy. Working with English learner students in the International Academy since its inception in the 2014-15 school year, she focuses on the unique needs of newcomer students arriving in DC and has been instrumental in helping them adapt and succeed in their new educational environments. Ms. Barkley also serves as the teacher lead for the International Academy’s Family Engagement Leadership team, extending her support to students and their families.

Ms. Barkley’s teaching portfolio includes Human Rights and Social Action courses, as well as facilitating intergroup dialogues and social identity workshops with students. Beyond the school walls, she collaborates with

students on initiatives for justice, such as a recent campaign advocating for mental health services and resources for immigrant students and families. Ms. Barkley and her students also orchestrated the Inspiring Voices series, shedding light on the challenges and resilience of young leaders in the immigrant community.

She is also part of United We Dream and contributes to Teaching for Change’s DC Area Educators for Social Justice People’s History Curriculum Working Group, further showcasing her commitment to creating positive change inside and outside the classroom.



▶ CELEBRATING EXCELLENT EDUCATORS

OSSE also named four 2024 DC Teacher of the Year finalists: Chad Harris, a music teacher at Stanton Elementary School; Kena Allison, a biology teacher at Washington Latin Public Charter School; Rabiah Harris, a physical science and robotics teacher at Ida B. Wells Middle School; and Aneesah Blount, a kindergarten teacher at Van Ness Elementary School.



Chad Harris has served as music teacher at Stanton Elementary School for eight years. A dedicated educator for more than 19 years, Mr. Harris is committed to creating dynamic and engaging music lessons for all students. Mr. Harris' overarching goal is to use music to bring joy to his students in Southeast DC, hoping to counteract the trauma many experience. He nurtures students' creative abilities, empowering them to make a positive impact on others. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Mr. Harris actively contributes to the DC education community. He serves as a Teacher Selection Ambassador, conducting job interviews for prospective music teachers. In his first year in DC, he was honored with the prestigious Capital Commitment Fellowship and appointed to the DC Chancellor's Teacher Cabinet. Mr. Harris was a part of the music curriculum writing team and served as the District Music Course Chair. When DC Public Schools implemented the RISE program (Rigorous Instruction Supports Equity), Mr. Harris was chosen to support the initiative. He created equity-centered professional developments with robust supports for new teachers, particularly in DC's highest-need schools. As part of the RISE program, he also mentored visual arts and music teachers.



Kena Allison teaches 11th grade Honors Biology and 12th grade AP Biology at Washington Latin Public Charter School. Ms. Allison initially moved to Washington, DC to pursue a medical degree. When she realized that her passion was not in treating the sick, but in educating young people, Ms. Allison transitioned to the high school classroom. She has taught several science classes including Health, Chemistry, Physics and Biology. To enhance her instruction, she earned a Master's in Teaching from American University. A problem solver who is ready to help students and her school community, Ms. Allison serves as a teacher, the Upper School Science Department Chair and an Instructional Coach at Washington Latin. Ms. Allison spends most of her time thinking about how to make her classes dynamic; however, she values balance in her life. Her self-care regimen includes cardio dance classes, summer beach vacations and quality time with friends and family.



Dr. Rabiah Harris hails from a little bit of everywhere in the United States, but is happy to call Washington, DC home. She currently teaches eighth grade science and serves as the science department chair at Ida B. Wells Middle School. An educator for more than 18 years, Dr. Harris has served public and charter school students across the District, Pittsburg and New Orleans, where she taught science courses and STEM electives for students in grades 6-12. She also helped support Next Generation Science Standards adoption in DC through training and course blueprint realignment. When she's not teaching and supporting science, you can find her out and about DC with her 14-year-old son.



Aneesah Blount teaches kindergarten and first grade at Van Ness Elementary School in Navy Yard where she has worked for six years. An avid learner, Ms. Blount is currently pursuing a doctorate degree from American University in Education Policy and Leadership and is writing her dissertation on the implementation of trauma-sensitive programs in elementary schools and their effects on students' safety, connection and self-regulation. At Van Ness, Ms. Blount has been featured in several videos that highlight exceptional teaching practices. She has worked with Transcend to codify and share the trauma-informed social-emotional whole child model with other schools across DC and the country. Ms. Blount has also co-facilitated professional development and coached kindergarten teachers in literacy.



▶ INCLUDING EDUCATOR VOICES

Educator voice is a critical piece of OSSE's work, and educational leaders from across the District serve on the **Superintendent's Advisory Councils**. The **Teacher Advisory Council (TAC)** and the **Principal Advisory Council (PAC)** represent a diverse group of public and public charter school teachers and school leaders who reflect the educator workforce across the city. The TAC and PAC work alongside OSSE's senior leadership, including State Superintendent Dr. Grant and division leaders, to provide them insight, feedback and advice on issues that impact students, educators, classrooms and schools across the District.



ACHIEVE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS

Allocate resources to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education every day in order to remedy historical inequities in student experience and outcomes

OSSE plays a pivotal role in guaranteeing equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities for all students. OSSE's multifaceted approach encompasses prioritizing school improvement initiatives, channeling grant funds strategically, directing them toward identified needs and measurable outcomes and ensuring optimal utilization for the benefit of students. This approach also expands learning avenues for students with the most significant needs, establishes transparent expectations for LEAs and holds them accountable for providing effective services to students with disabilities.



PROVIDING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH THE HIGHEST NEEDS



HIGH-IMPACT TUTORING

In 2023, OSSE continued to scale up its high-impact tutoring (HIT) initiative, enabling more students to access frequent, one-on-one or small group tutoring with the same tutor. OSSE funded HIT programs in 73 of the District's highest-need schools and 19 community-based sites, reaching 5,137 public school students. The program is on track to reach more than 10,000 public school students over three years.

In 2023, OSSE systemically implemented tutoring as a positive and proactive measure to accelerate learning in math and literacy – and early results show these investments are having an impact. In the 2022-23 school year, OSSE's strategic partner, CityTutor DC, found that 6 percent more students who received the adequate dosage of HIT achieved their math growth goals compared to a control group of students who received a lower dosage of HIT supports. Four percent more achieved their literacy goals compared to the control group. Among students who are designated as at-risk, the impact grows with 7 percent more who received adequate HIT dosage achieving their math and literacy growth goals compared to students who received a lower dosage of HIT supports.

Embedding high-impact math tutoring with The House, Inc. yielded larger learning gains and improved our practice and culture of teaching. The sustained, continual, and intentional time engaging students to connect tutoring experiences in a most relational way, enabled our students to try on new thinking.”

- Clinton Turner, Principal, Walker Jones Education Campus



▶ ACCELERATING ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



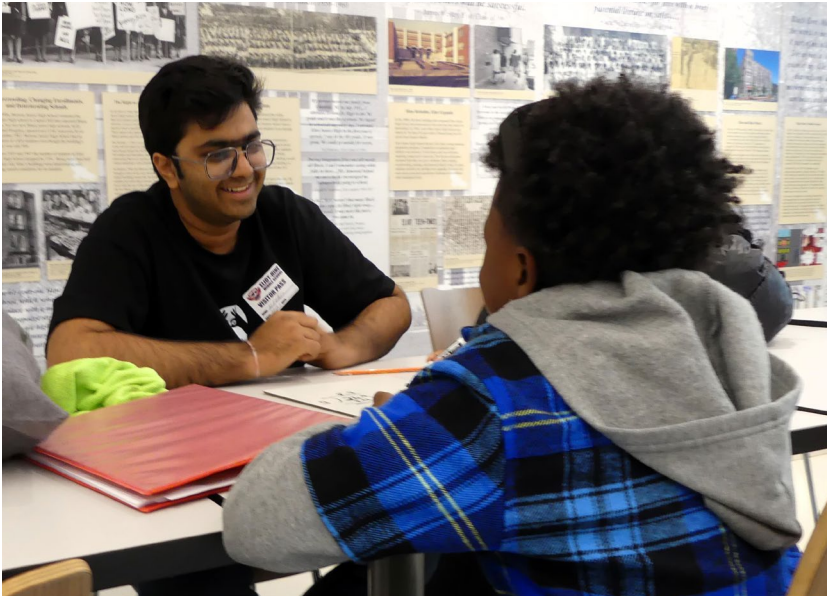
In 2023, OSSE released the District of Columbia’s first-ever Special Education Performance Report (SEPR), a comprehensive evaluation of special education programs in the District designed to help educators, families and policymakers better serve and improve academic achievement for students with disabilities. Available on the OSSE website and distributed to DC LEAs for

release to DC families, the SEPR provides an annual score for each LEA’s special education program based on federal reporting data and key student progress measures. The report also gives LEAs and families meaningful information about LEA progress toward improving outcomes for students with disabilities and helps OSSE determine the proper supports LEAs need to build educator and system capacity to serve students with disabilities.

▶ PROVIDING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

In 2023, OSSE announced \$6.3 million in awards to LEAs and CBOs through the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant competition. The seven awardees, located across DC, will serve 6,817 students and 2,326 of their adult family members with high-quality out-of-school time programming throughout the five-year award period.

21CCLC grant programs provide opportunities for academic enrichment including tutorial services to help students meet state and local student performance standards in core academic subjects such as reading, mathematics and science (particularly students in high-poverty areas and those who attend low-performing schools). Grantees will offer students a broad array of additional services, programs and activities, such as youth development activities; drug and violence prevention; counseling; art; music; recreational activities; technology education; and character education designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.



▶ EQUIPPING EDUCATORS WITH SKILLS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students and especially students with disabilities are more likely to succeed when they are taught by staff trained to support differentiated learning in the general education environment. OSSE is addressing this need by leveraging its special educator credential and providing robust supports to general educators to enable them to successfully educate students with disabilities in culturally competent and inclusive ways. Last year, OSSE launched the [Special Education Micro-Credential and the Special Education Endorsement Recovery Initiative \(SEERI\)](#) leveraging more than \$1 million in ESSER funds. These two new pathways enable DC educators to build foundational knowledge for serving students with disabilities and, for eligible educators, earn an add-on to their existing teacher credential. Educators can also receive up to \$1,500 in incentive pay for completing the program.

As of early December 2023, 591 educators, representing 61 LEAs have enrolled in the SPED micro-credential pathway, and 324 educators, representing 21 LEAs have enrolled in the SEERI pathway. OSSE is on track to exceed its goal of having 450 educators complete these programs by the end of FY24

“Wow!
That is all I can say about being able to participate in this amazing opportunity for my professional career. The Special Education Endorsement Recovery Initiative program allows me to learn all of the important aspects of the special education realm. I am a veteran teacher and I learned so much information about the law and following the appropriate protocols in special education. I highly recommend this program to all teachers because it is very useful and beneficial for your professional career in education.”

– Samiyyah Blanford, Teacher, C.W. Harris Elementary School

“I really enjoyed this program. I wanted more opportunities to learn as an educator and appreciated the online materials and that I could do it at my own pace. I am more committed to special education now and want to keep learning. I am happy I got paid for my time because I am already often at capacity as a teacher and this made me feel valued for my time.”

– Electra Bolotas, Teacher, Benjamin Banneker High School



BUILD FUTURES

Ensure DC learners have access to robust and sustainable pathways to a fulfilling career and life by reimagining high school and providing relevant and accessible postsecondary programming.

OSSE blazed trails in 2023, creating new dual-enrollment and Career and Technical Education programs while expanding access to successful ones that excite our students – from middle school through 12th grade.

To spark a passion for Career and Technical Education at a younger age, OSSE leveraged funds from a \$21 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant in 2023 to expand programs that encourage DC middle school students to persist through secondary school and graduate high school with a plan to be successful in college and careers. The six-year GEAR UP grant will allow OSSE and its partnering organization, the DC College Access Program (DC-CAP), to offer approximately 480 middle school students in Wards 7 and 8 workshops, coaching and an \$11,000 scholarship per year over their first two years of postsecondary education.



▶ OPENING A NEW HOME FOR THE ADVANCED TECHNICAL CENTER



The Advanced Technical Center (ATC), in its permanent home at the Penn Center, stands as a testament to our work in answering Mayor Bowser’s charge to reimagine the high school experience for our students and to forge new pathways to the middle class.

In 2023-24, the new state-of-the-art facility is offering 191 students from 15 DC public and public charter high schools a chance to access cutting-edge coursework in Cybersecurity and Nursing, learn from outstanding educators and accrue college credits at no cost to our students. In the 2022-23 school year, ATC students earned a staggering 740 college credits, valued at nearly \$625,000 in tuition. Earning college credits with no cost attached paves the way for a future with fewer financial constraints.

Opening the ATC was a strategic move toward fostering a generation armed with knowledge, skills and the tenacity to thrive. As the ATC continues to shape the future as an investment in the boundless potential of the workforce, in the prosperity of the community and in a brighter, more empowered tomorrow.



▶ BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS WITH DC FUTURES

Mayor Bowser has a guiding mantra, that every resident of the District of Columbia deserves a fair shot. A fair shot to build the life they want. A fair shot to improve their education or their skills. A fair shot to succeed. The DC Futures program connects deeply to OSSE’s mission of breaking down any barriers that stand in the way of 1,288 DC residents seeking a quality education and a better life.

DC Futures provides a scholarship and other support for DC residents seeking their first degree in a high-demand career field at any of three local universities: the University of the District of Columbia and the University of the District of Columbia Community College, Catholic University of America and Trinity Washington University. In addition to providing residents with up to \$8,000 in tuition support, the DC Futures Program also provides students with college coaching, a stipend of up to \$1,500 a year and up to \$2,000 annually in emergency funds for unanticipated expenses that can be challenging to cover, such as food, housing, healthcare and child care. In the 2022-23 academic year, 1,489 DC residents enrolled in college course with assistance through the DC Futures program and in September, we welcomed more than 400 DC Futures Scholars to the first-ever DC Futures Conference to kick off the second year of the program. Conference attendees accessed vital resources and strategies on how to address personal and financial barriers to college completion.

As the state education agency for the District of Columbia, OSSE is committed to maintaining DC’s momentum toward increasing postsecondary enrollment and eliminating barriers to education so that DC residents of all ages can access the quality education they deserve. DC Futures and OSSE’s other college access and assistance programs, such as the DC Dual Enrollment Consortium Program, the DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG) and Mayor’s Scholars, help increase the number of DC residents, particularly those farthest from opportunity, enrolled in postsecondary education and on a pathway to the middle class.

“Whatever I went through, I was able to text my [DC Futures] mentors, and they pushed me and told me that I could do it.”

– Alisa Norris, DC Futures student and Trinity Washington University graduate

“Before [DC Futures], my attention was divided between work and school to try to get the funds to pay for school. But this has allowed me to solely focus on school and then my coaches have guided me tremendously.”

– Melissa Lazo Contreras, DC Futures student and Trinity Washington University graduate

“I am so happy to be a part of the next generation of people that will come out here and do good for our community and better for their own families.”

– Leslie Perry (Orlando), DC Futures coach



▶ OFFERING REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCES WITH INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Tailored for high school juniors and seniors, OSSE’s Advanced Internship Program and Career Readiness Internships aren’t just about clocking in hours; they’re a roadmap for young minds to navigate post-high school life and carve out meaningful careers. These opportunities are not just internships; they’re gateways to a future brimming with possibilities.

What’s exciting is that these programs break the mold—no inside scoop or business connections required. They’re designed with equity at their core, ensuring that every student, regardless of their background, gets a shot at a transformative, paid internship experience.

With over 1,200 students already getting real world experience. OSSE’s commitment to empowering the next generation is crystal clear. The Advanced Internship Program stands out as the District’s pioneer in school year internships, aligning seamlessly with students’ career and technical education paths. It’s not just a stint; it’s an immersion into their chosen

fields, offering both financial rewards and course credit. The impact is tangible. In the 2022-23 school year and the 2023 summer internships alone, students put in over 117,000 hours and earned a collective \$1.95 million.

The momentum doesn’t stop there. The Advanced Internship Program for the 2023-24 school year kicked off on Nov. 6 with a bang. OSSE orchestrated the placement of 250 students into internships, partnering with 59 host employers. It’s not just another internship cycle; it’s a continuation of a journey where students aren’t just observers; they’re active contributors to their own success stories. OSSE’s programs are here to debunk the myths that internships are about fetching coffee or reserved for a privileged few. These internships are steppingstones to careers, pathways to self-discovery, and opportunities that level the playing field for all. The future isn’t a distant concept; it’s being shaped by these young minds, one internship at a time.

▶ PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY DUAL ENROLLMENT OPPORTUNITIES



In the 2022-23 academic year, 625 students seized the opportunity to catapult themselves into higher education through OSSE's DC Dual Enrollment Consortium Program. This groundbreaking initiative empowers DC public and public charter school students in grades 10-12 to delve into college courses at prestigious DC-area institutions, all while accruing college credits at absolutely no cost. The surge in dual enrollment participation in 2023 is nothing short of phenomenal, nearly tripling the previous year's figures and establishing a record-breaking pinnacle for the program.

These students aren't merely earning credits; they're forging a path that transcends conventional educational boundaries. By engaging in this transformative program, a 10th-grade student stands to carve out a financial future that defies the norm, potentially saving \$40,000 on their college journey by the time they proudly don their graduation cap. This isn't just education; it's a financial game-changer.

▶ A 10th-grade student could save up to **\$40,000 on college costs** by the time they graduate.

“The Dual Enrollment Consortium program was an adventure for me because I had an opportunity to engage in various course options. I would recommend this program to District residents. Earn college credit for free!”

- Jonatan Castillo-Turcios, an 11th grader at Paul Public Charter School. Jonatan enrolled in courses at the University of the District of Columbia in the 2022-23 school year, earning credits he will be able to transfer to the college of his choice.



▶ INSPIRING COLLEGE DREAMS FOR DC'S MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

More than 650 bright young minds from the communities of wards 7 and 8 are set to embark on a transformative journey towards higher education, fortified by a monumental \$21 million investment. The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant, a beacon of equity and opportunity, has been bestowed upon OSSE by the US Department of Education.

Over the span of six impactful years, this grant will empower OSSE and its dedicated partner, the DC College Access Program (DC-CAP), to champion the cause of educational equity. Middle school students in wards 7 and 8 will be enveloped in a comprehensive support system, featuring workshops, personalized coaching, and a substantial \$11,000 scholarship per year throughout their crucial first two years of postsecondary education.

DC GEAR UP, a force for change, will extend its academic and socio-emotional coaching to 658 students attending eight Title I middle schools in wards 7 and 8 (grade 7 cohort). These institutions, grappling with the challenges of high rates of at-risk students and chronic absenteeism, will now become the epicenters of empowerment. Housed at DC-CAP, College and Career Ready Coaches will not only guide students toward rigorous academic pursuits but also instill vital life skills that transcend the confines of academia.

This groundbreaking program, scheduled to commence in mid-2024, is not merely an investment in education; it's a commitment to fostering a generation of resilient, well-rounded individuals poised to conquer the challenges of college and beyond.



FOSTER STUDENT AND STAFF WELL-BEING

Support the physical, mental and social-emotional health of students and staff by promoting safe, welcoming, healthy and joyful learning environments.

Healthy bodies and minds are the foundation of academic success. OSSE leverages programming, partnerships, policy and data to remove health barriers to learning so that people of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life. In 2023, OSSE adopted new Menstrual Health Education Standards for LEAs, offered educators mental health supports and suicide prevention training, hosted an institute to equip educators with the information they need to provide quality garden-based education, and leveraged grant funds to improve school climate through a variety of supports.



ADOPTING FIRST-IN-NATION MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

Following the passage of the Expanding Student Access to Period Products Act of 2022 by Council of the District of Columbia in March 2022, OSSE developed menstrual health education standards for all. These standards, adopted in March 2023 by SBOE, are intended for all students regardless of gender beginning in grade 4, ensure that students have the information, support and enabling school environment to manage menstruation with dignity, safety and comfort. OSSE also created a range of supplemental resources for schools to increase student access to period products to increase awareness and education, as well as to decrease stigma around menstruation. Our first-in-the-nation, inclusive, science-based standards are a model for other states, including state boards of education, and were featured in the Washington Post, as well as in local and national news.



▶ PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS AND SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

OSSE's Division of Health and Wellness offers suicide prevention and intervention curriculum and training to every DC public and public charter school. The Yellow Ribbon "Be ALink! Community Gate Keeper Training," for elementary schools, and the MindWise Signs of Suicide (SOS), for middle and high schools, seek to create safe schools where staff can recognize warning signs, risk and protective factors in youth, initiate conversations about suicide, and take appropriate supportive actions. Students also develop tools to identify signs of depression and suicide in themselves and their peers and understand and express their behavioral health concerns with trusted adults.

▶ Educators from 209 schools attended a suicide prevention training.

In FY23, 209 schools had at least one educator attend a training. In total, approximately 279 educators attended more than 12 Yellow Ribbon training sessions, and 264 educators participated in nine SOS training sessions. This training was supported with approximately \$90,000 in ESSER funds.

Our instructors incorporated Yellow Ribbon into their morning meetings to remind and continually teach scholars that we all have feelings and emotions every day. Sometimes the emotions can be happy and positive as well as not being sad. Even our instructors are pulling the Yellow Bear from the jar to come to us for help."

– Valerie Nicholas-Christian, Friendship Public Charter School, Chamberlain

Signs of Suicide provided us with an effective way to provide education about depression and identify students who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. The structure of the program made it easy for us to work as a team and be more effective with our time and intervention. The curriculum fits in with the health class's mental health curriculum and provides the teacher with extra support."

– Kimberly Harrington, Stuart-Hobson Middle School

▶ SUPPORTING SCHOOL STAFF TO CREATE SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The Division of Systems and Supports, K-12 awarded the Stronger Connections grant, which was funded by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, to 12 LEAs that will receive a total of \$4.5 million in grant funds. These LEAs will use the money to expand mental health supports for students in 34 schools that serve more than 14,000 students in pre-K-3-grade 12. LEAs received awards for school-based projects such as improving data systems to track all students' needs; providing social-emotional learning curriculums; professional learning for staff to improve school climate, such as trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive practices, restorative justice practices and family engagement; and creating emotional regulation spaces in school buildings.

▶ REGIONAL SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR GARDEN-BASED TEACHING

OSSE, in partnership with City Blossoms and the United States Botanic Garden, convened the 2023 Regional Garden-based Learning Summit in July. More than 50 participants, including 28 representing 21 schools, gathered in the District to create plans for the school year, learn outdoor teaching strategies, engage in activities with garden-based professionals and connect with regional peers. Participants gathered at OSSE on the first day of the summit to engage in workshops and trouble-shooting sessions to address common challenges of garden-based programming, followed by a day of hands-on experiential demonstration and activities. All participants reported greater awareness of garden-based learning programs in our region and 86 percent reported awareness of available resources to support their work. All participants also reported stronger connections with colleagues and planned to stay in touch with those they connected with at the summit. This regional summit was supported with ESSER funds.





CULTIVATE TEAM

Build a thriving team by ensuring staff feel welcome and connected, are able to grow continuously, and act as stewards of OSSE's vision and mission.

OSSE has made measurable progress over the years in building an office environment and culture where staff feel connected to the agency's mission and each other. In 2023, OSSE ramped up those efforts to celebrate employees' cultural heritage, recognize outstanding talent and provide opportunities for staff to learn more about the agency's work and grown in their careers.

► PRIORITIZING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING (DEIB)

We continue to grow our efforts to embed DEIB throughout the work of our agency. We implemented a new staff intranet page dedicated exclusively to DEIB with foundational definitions, cultural events, compliance trainings and cool information. This fall, the Kaiser Permanente Mobile Health Van made a special visit to our New York Avenue terminal where OSSE bus drivers, attendants and other Division of Student Transportation staff could stop by to get free blood pressure screenings, body mass index testing, diabetes tests and more.

In our annual staff survey, we heard the desire for more development opportunities and a desire to recognize and reward staff for excellent work. In response to that feedback, OSSE is leveraging its stimulus funds and existing tools to develop, reward and recognize outstanding staff performance and support retention and growth during this critical recovery period.

We held two virtual staff presentations celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month featuring multilingual learners in DC and the intersection of identity and work at OSSE. In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, staff participated in our annual [#OSSEWearsPink](#) campaign.



► PRIORITIZING RECRUITMENT AND GROWING EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES AND AWARDS

In 2023, OSSE focused on hiring smart, talented professionals who are passionate about preparing students for success in college, careers and life. Led by Human Resources, recruitment soared with the hiring of 160 new team members. In addition, 49 members of the OSSE team secured internal promotions.

This year, OSSE held its first ever OSSE Awards - the agency's annual employee-nominated awards which highlight exceptional individuals and teams who have made significant contributions to OSSE, the District and the students OSSE supports. We were thrilled to celebrate the hard work and dedication of OSSE employees.

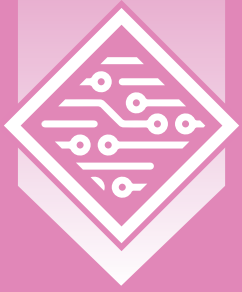
► IMPROVING INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS



Ozzy, a wood thrush and DC's state bird, is OSSE's resident communications mascot.

OSSE's Communications Team launched a Communications Toolkit for staff, featuring a brand-new suite of tools, templates and style guides. With the new toolkit, OSSE staff can explore style guides and schedule brainstorming sessions directly with the team to develop tools to better tell the story of OSSE programs to the public.

This year, OSSE launched a monthly Strategic Plan Brown Bag virtual series to give staff a chance to learn and ask questions about the latest progress of OSSE's work. In concert with OSSE's monthly virtual series, we are also sharing our progress through a new monthly strategic plan newsletter that is being sent to internal staff and external stakeholders.



REIMAGINE SYSTEMS

Improve internal systems and processes so that OSSE staff are equipped and ready to provide high-quality services to students, families, educators and schools.

Reimagining systems means ensuring OSSE has effective, efficient and sustainable internal systems and processes across the agency, from student transportation to data collection systems.

▶ STREAMLINING TRANSPORTATION PROCESSES

This year, we launched a [Transportation Request Form \(TRF\) status website](#) for LEAs to monitor their TRF submissions for extended school year during the summer and for the 2023-24 school year. We also kicked off pilot testing in October for a new Parent School Bus Hub Mobile App. Our new online user-friendly bus app will allow parents to track the location of their student's bus in real-time at any point during the scheduled transport.



▶ GOING ELECTRIC

OSSE Division of Student Transportation (OSSE DOT) has ordered 25 electric school buses that will serve students in the 2024-25 school year. This is a vital first step to reducing our carbon footprint and improving air quality in and around our schools and communities. The new electric buses will support our efforts to operate a cleaner and greener bus fleet in our community. In October 2022, OSSE was awarded \$7.6 million through the Clean School Bus Rebate Program, offered by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to replace existing school buses with zero- and low-emission models.

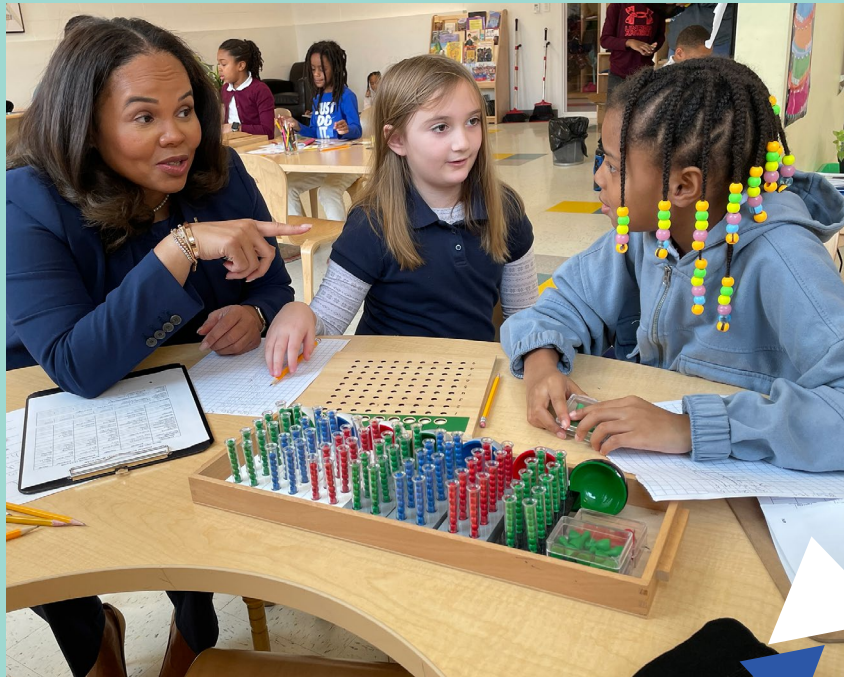
▶ STRENGTHENING AND MODERNIZING DATA SYSTEMS

OSSE was awarded a \$4 million Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grant by the US Department of Education, which will support significant modernization to our pre-K-12 and post-secondary data systems. With this modernization, OSSE will be able to follow DC students' journeys to and through post-secondary education and their interaction with the various grants and scholarships that have supported them along the way. Additionally, it will improve the interoperability of OSSE's systems with those of our public university and community college, both served by the University of the District of Columbia (UDC).

▶ COLLECTING SCHOOL COURSE CATALOG DATA



For the first time in 2023, OSSE collected school course catalogs to link student, teacher and course data, which will help the District understand which students have access to rigorous coursework and effective educators. In 2023, more than 16,000 courses were submitted to OSSE by more than 90 LEAs and non-public schools. This more granular understanding of how students experience their education will allow OSSE to ask questions and inform solutions related to access, equity and transparency across the District to support schools, families and communities. In future years, the data collection will include student-level course enrollment information.



▶ LOOKING AHEAD

As the 2023 Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s Annual Report clearly demonstrates, our students and families are at the heart of everything we do and fuel our determination for the challenges ahead. As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, let’s build on what we’ve learned, what we’ve done and the momentum we gained, fueled by the belief that the best is yet to come. We believe this annual report is not a conclusion—it’s a prologue to the remarkable chapters waiting to be written. Here’s to those next chapters.

THANK YOU

To All the Partners and Stakeholders
Who Made This Work Possible

Mayor Muriel Bowser

Deputy Mayor for Education Paul Kihn

DC Public Schools Chancellor Lewis Ferebee

DC Public Charter School Board Executive Director
Michelle Walker-Davis

DC Council

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DC Government Agency Partners

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Families

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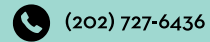
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