



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Fred Lewis (OSSE) – (202) 412-2167; Fred.Lewis@dc.gov

Bowser Administration Announces New Education Research Practice Partnership with Urban Institute

Today, the Bowser Administration announces a landmark step in DC’s commitment to and investments in quality education, with the selection by an appointed panel, of Urban Institute as the independent nonprofit partner to lead an education Research Practice Partnership for the city. Modeled after partnerships in other jurisdictions, the purpose of the education research practice partnership is to provide actionable, easily consumable, independent research to the education sector, stakeholders and the public.

“This new partnership is an important step forward for DC,” said Deputy Mayor for Education Paul Kihn. “The independent education-related research will support improvement in the District’s public schools, ultimately benefiting our students and communities.”

In 2018, the DC Council, in partnership with Mayor Bowser, enacted the District of Columbia Education Research Practice Partnership Establishment and Audit Act of 2018 ([D.C. Law 22-268](#); [D.C. Official Code § 38785.01 et seq.](#)). This legislation established a process for the District to partner with an independent, non-governmental entity to establish an education research practice partnership that would conduct education research in the District’s public and public charters schools with the goal of supporting continuous improvement and increasing student achievement and educational equity.

An advisory committee comprised of a wide range of stakeholders will determine a research agenda for the partnership; research will focus on the following broad areas: practices that increase student achievement, educational equity, and school improvement based on rigorous research methods; provide the research necessary to inform and assess instructional practices in District public schools; evaluate existing practices to determine their impact on student academic achievement and progress; and assist the District with research aimed to improve student outcomes in the District.



“Over the past five years, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has built on its efforts to provide the public clear and actionable data by releasing robust data through the DC School Report Card, and in a variety of formats, as well as analysis and annual reports that help families, educators and our partners gain a clear understanding of student achievement in DC,” said Interim State Superintendent of Education Shana Young. “This partnership, with a respected education research organization, will help us provide the public even more high-quality, meaningful data that will inform interventions and drive improvement in student and school performance.”

Independent, non-governmental entities were invited to submit proposals no later than Feb. 10, 2020. The make-up of the review panel was defined in the authorizing legislation, and made up of three executive appointments and three legislative appointments. The panel reviewed three proposals from George Washington University, BITRIC and Urban Institute – ultimately selecting Urban Institute. Urban Institute was joined in its proposal by 14 education research organizations, which together will form the DC Education Research Collaborative. Those 14 partners are: American University’s School of Education, Bellwether Education Partners, the Brookings Institution, DC Policy Center, EmpowerK12, Georgetown University, George Washington University’s Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, Howard University’s School of Education, Mathematica, Raise DC, Trinity Washington University, the University of the District of Columbia, the University of Maryland and the University of Virginia’s EdPolicyWorks.

“To close education equity gaps that have been widened by the COVID crisis, we will need rigorous data and fact-based solutions,” said Urban Institute President Sarah Rosen Wartell. “Urban is excited to partner with these 14 stellar organizations, the DC education policymaking community, and with all those who have a stake in ensuring that DC schools equitably meet the needs of all students.

The District will enter into an agreement with Urban Institute to establish the education research practice partnership. Once fully established, the education research partnership will be guided by an Advisory Committee charged with providing guidance and perspectives on research projects. The Advisory Committee will be comprised of 21 members and include representatives representing government, educators, teacher and school leader representatives and other stakeholders.