D.C. Student Assignment Proposal - Community Feedback Sought

The District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Education is seeking D.C. communities' feedback on the Advisory Committee on Student Assignment's Draft Proposal. The community has until July 21st to submit their concerns and suggestions. Complete a worksheet and/or submit your feedback to dme@dc.gov. Feedback can also be submitted on www.engagedc.org. The communities' feedback will help inform the final proposal that will be submitted to the Mayor in September. For more information on the student-assignment and boundary-policy change process, go to the DME's website.

New Joint-Use Policy Paper

With support from Active Living Research, the 21st Century School Fund and the Center for Cities & Schools have released a new paper, A Policy Framework for Joint Use: Enabling and Supporting Community Use of K-12 Public School Facilities. Joint use of public-school facilities is a complex but manageable approach to efficiently enhancing the services and programs available to students and supporting the community use of public schools. Building upon their 2010 paper titled Joint Use of Public Schools: A Framework for a New Social Contract, the authors provide policy guidance for harnessing the opportunities and benefits of joint use.

Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Releases Annual Report

The task force is required by law to annually release a report that assesses Chicago Public School's (CPS) implementation of long-range planning of facilities and how the school system carries out closings, consolidations, phase-outs, co-locations, and boundary changes. Illinois state representative Cynthia Soto, who is the co-chair of the task force says, "I directed our working committees to put together this analysis." "It's our responsibility to let policy makers and the public know whether CPS is making better and more equitable decisions. Based on all the public input and our research over the past 2 years, despite some progress CPS still has a long way to go to fulfill the promise of the 2011 reforms." Among the key findings of the report:

- While CPS generally met the 2011 law's technical requirements and deadlines, the 10-Year Educational Facilities Master Plan is deeply flawed, lacked broad public input, and wasn't completed until after CPS closed 49 neighborhood public schools. CPS' 10-Year Master Plan needs a major overhaul.
- While CPS justified closing 49 schools in 2013 due to an "under-utilization crisis"—too many classrooms and schools for its declining student enrollment—the school district opened 33 new charter schools with 23,368 slots since 2011. CPS' plans for scores of now-vacant school buildings should be decided by an inclusive community planning process. Any revenues generated by selling public school buildings should be
reinvested in the neediest communities' schools.

- Even though CPS had never systematically evaluated the student-level impacts of past School Actions and School Closings, tens of thousands of children were impacted in 2012-2013.
- CPS' strategy of closing and restructuring schools may be contributing to the overall decline in CPS' student enrollment. The outcomes of CPS's decisions must also be evaluated.
- The 2013 School Closings cost taxpayers over $263 million. CPS should be required to give a full and detailed accounting of the "costs" and "savings" of the 2013 School Closings.

**2014 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools**

On April 22, forty-eight schools from twenty-seven states received the honor to be named a 2014 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School. The 2014 green ribbon schools were announced by Acting Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality Mike Boots and by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. "Schools all over the country can look to today's honorees as models for creating a healthier learning environment while lowering energy bills and preparing students for success in the 21st century economy," said Acting Chair Mike Boots. "The schools and districts being honored today are taking smart, innovative steps to reduce environmental impacts and teach students the kinds of sustainable practices that they can carry with them into their homes and future careers." The 2014 list of Green Ribbon Schools includes 39 public schools and nine private schools. Learn more about the 2014 Green Ribbon Schools.

**Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project: What does a school Kitchen need?**

Over 31 million U.S. children participate in the National School Lunch Program. Aging school infrastructure and kitchen equipment present challenges to local schools in meeting student's dietary needs. "Serving Healthy School Meals", a report from the Pew Charitable Trusts and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, researches the needs of foodservice equipment and kitchen infrastructure across the country. Explore further resources how to improve our schools nutritional offerings through investments in school kitchens.

**USDA Helps Schools Update Kitchen Equipment**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is awarding $25 million in grants to help schools purchase needed kitchen equipment. For the latest round of funding, USDA will ensure that all states receive a proportional share of the funding. States will competitively award the funds to school districts to purchase needed equipment, giving priority to high-need schools where 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Download the list of funding by state for FY13 and FY14. Read the full press release.

**George Washington University Wins the Education Facilities Clearinghouse Contract**

The U.S. Department of Education awarded George Washington University a three year grant to implement and maintain an education-facilities clearinghouse in late 2013. The Education Facilities Clearinghouse (EFC) has established five priorities:

1. Helping education stakeholders increase their use of education facilities to turn around low-performing schools and close academic achievement gaps;
2. Increasing understanding of how education facilities affect community health and safety and student achievement;
3. Identifying potential cost-saving opportunities through procurement, energy efficiency, and preventative maintenance;
4. Increasing the use of education facilities and outdoor spaces such as instructional tools and community centers (e.g., outdoor classrooms, school gardens, school-based health centers); and,
5. Increasing capacity to identify hazards and conduct vulnerability assessments, and, through facility design, increasing safety against hazards.

To learn more, visit EFC's website at [www.efc.gwu.edu](http://www.efc.gwu.edu).
Searching for School Facilities Best Practice Examples

The 21st Century School Fund and the National Council on School Facilities are working on a collaborative project to advance good school-facilities practices within local school districts. Good facilities planning can bring both benefits and cost savings to local and state jurisdictions. Increasing local school officials' knowledge of the key ingredients of effective school-facilities planning will help to do this. Please share with us great examples of district-level education-facilities master plans, capital-improvement plans, educational specifications, maintenance plans, energy-management plans, and disaster/emergency-management plans. We want to ensure that all districts have these examples from which to learn when assessing their school-facilities practices. Send examples to info@21csf.org.

School Facilities News from Around the Country

- Bill Would Require NYC to Factor in Population Growth in Planning School Facilities
- NY - Annual School Building Inspections to be Cut Under New Legislation
- Pa. House OKs School Construction Payment Process
- City to put $4.4B into public school construction, adding thousands of seats
- $9 billion school construction bond moves toward November ballot
- DCPS Proposes Transforming Roosevelt High Into International Relations-Focused School
- Governor O'Malley Issues Executive Order to Study School Construction Funding in Maryland
- New Website to Detail Cost of New Public School Construction
- R.I. Senate task force calls for new way of funding school construction