

August 4, 2021

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

We are extremely concerned about the hearts and minds of our students as they prepare to start the new school year. Families have received little information on their students' progress toward academic outcomes, or what the district's plans are for promoting student wellness and catching kids up. We understand that Superintendent Marrero is also hearing these concerns from the community and we look forward to working with you as we all move forward.

The [2021- 22 school year budget](#) adopted by the Board in June is not transparent in how stimulus funds will be spent. At least 20 percent of the federal money directed to school districts under The American Rescue Plan must be used to provide evidence-based interventions that address learning loss. This Board has conducted virtually no public discussion during this pivotal time on how the infusion of dollars will be spent. How can the district be strategic about spending this funding if we still don't know how students are doing at each school across the city?

We know that on average, DPS families reported that their students' received 15 hours of support each week from their schools during COVID-related learning disruptions. And we know that families are anxiously awaiting plans to ensure that their students are prepared for the future.

With this in mind, we urge you to include the following topics in your upcoming Board Retreat on August 10, 2021.

1. Have a public discussion on academic outcomes that includes literacy and math proficiency scores disaggregated by race and income levels.
2. Conduct a school by school analysis of student needs for academic intervention that is grounded in racial equity. This must include strategies to support students in Special Education and to provide English Language Learners with the language skills they need to meaningfully and equally participate in school.

3. Create and report out on a tiered support system to ensure that resources are going to students who need them the most.
4. Create and make public a protocol for the smooth re-entry of students - a large percentage of whom have not taken part in typical classroom learning in over 18 months. This should include a trauma-informed approach developed and executed by every school.

Families also can benefit from being purposefully re-engaged in the ways in which they can support student learning at home. The school district must address the ongoing safety and wellness of students that includes individualized support for students. It's essential that families know what their options are for their children, so that they're empowered to ensure their individual education needs are being met.

Nearly half of families [surveyed by TEN](#) this year did not feel their children were ready to move on to the next grade level. We cannot overstate the urgency of articulating what your plan is to address each of these points, in order to ensure all students are on a clear path to academic achievement.

Sincerely,

African Leadership Group

Latino Education Coalition

Our Turn

Padres y Jóvenes Unidos

Servicios de la Raza

Stand for Children Colorado

Transform Education Now