# Presentation to the District of Columbia State Board of Education April 21, 2010

# GreatSchools supports parent engagement in their children's school success

- We're an 11 year-old, independent non-profit organization that inspires and guides parents to become more effective champions of education in their homes and in their communities.

- Nationally, we're the leading provider of K-12 school information for parents, reaching 37 million unique visitors (including one-third of American families).

- In addition to our online tools and resources, we operate on-the-ground, local programs in two cities, including Washington, DC.

# Three principles guide our work

- *Parent-centered* – Most school quality data is published to serve multiple stakeholders, with parents usually falling among a secondary target audience. We start with the parent first, trying to make school data as accessible and understandable as possible to a parent making a decision for his/her child.

- *Cross-sector* – To the extent possible our goal is to simplify school data to allow comparisons across sectors: public, public charter, and private schools.

- *Independent* – We work with all sectors and are independent in the way we analyze school data and report it to parents.

# Fight For Children supports quality education in DC

- Fight For Children is a 20 year-old independent nonprofit organization that recognizes, promotes, and cultivates quality education for low-income children in Washington, DC.
- Produced first DC *My School Choosers*, with OSSE support for the second edition.
- Known for their Quality Schools Initiative, School Night, and highly successful Fight Night event that raises funds to support other local nonprofits providing education and healthcare services to low-income children.
- Fight For Children also addresses the critical link between good health and improved academic performance.

# Combined experience

GreatSchools (GS) and Fight For Children (FFC) are partnering to enhance the quality and quantity of information about schools in DC and better equipping parents to support their children's education.

- FFC has solid DC roots, and they are a well-known resource to area organizations and families.
- GS brings years of experience in providing school quality information for parents in both Web-based and hard copy formats.
- GS and FFC co-produced the most recent *DC School Chooser,* and shared responsibilities for fundraising and distribution.

# We provide parents with information…

- The *2010-2011 DC School Chooser* contains over 275 individual school profiles and a five-step process to help parents choose the right school.
- www.GreatSchools.org allows parents to rate, review and compare schools as well as connect with other parents.
- In the first three months of operation we have distributed:
  - 3,000 Spanish *DC School Choosers to:* parents, schools, and partner organizations such as CentroNia, Office of Latino Affairs, Spanish Education Development Center (SED) and others….
  - 15,500 English *DC School Choosers to*: parents, schools, and partner organizations such as FOCUS, Urban Family's House of Hope, United Planning Organization, East River Family Support Collaborative and others….

# … and help them understand their options

- ***Language accessible.*** The DC School Chooser program is offered in both English and Spanish, with all resources made available in each language.
- ***Providing high-touch service.*** GreatSchools DC provides direct service to parents in the form of two parent hotlines that are available Monday-Saturday, 9am-9pm. One is for Spanish-speaking families and partners, and the other is English-speaking only.
- ***Actively involved in the community.*** We work to maintain a constant presence in the community through various events including the Public Charter School Fair, the DCPS High School Fair, the Michael Walton Foundation Weekend at Kelly Miller MS, and the Carnival of Hope.
- ***Reaching many DC parents.*** In the first three months of operation, we held 35 parent workshops, received over 20 calls per week to hotlines, interacted with over 750 parents, and received over 51,800 visitors to the DC pages of the GS Web site.

# A partnership between GS and OSSE benefits all

- OSSE needs to provide simple, easy to understand information to parents in the community.

- GS brings a wealth of experience in presenting school data to parents, has the ability to be creative, and can create a suite of products in various mediums (Web-based and paper).

# NCLB Report Card defined responsibilities include:

**GreatSchools**

- Create co-branded report templates at the state, LEA and school levels
- Populate reports with required data elements
- Link to reports from relevant locations on the GreatSchools Web site
- Make linked reports in PDF format for easy printing

**OSSE**

- Provide all necessary data
- Provide all necessary review, sign offs and design element selection
- Assist in quality assurance review process
- Copy and distribute hard copies as needed

# By the end of May…

NCLB Report Cards for the 2008-2009 School Year will be produced and available online allowing OSSE to greatly increase information flowing to parents and to achieve federal compliance.

# These first NCLB Report Cards will:

- Initiate a partnership between GS and OSSE
- Meet all federal requirements
- Hit the end of May deadline
- Provide a foundation upon which to build future report cards

# GS Web page Mock of User Experience

Welcome, Rutazz | Sign out | My account

greatschools™
Involved parents. Successful kids.

SCHOOLS | ARTICLES & COMMUNITY

Search for school, district or city | DC | Search

Home | Find a School | Preschool | Elementary School | Middle School | High School

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Washington DC schools > Washington schools

## District of Columbia Public Schools

### Know your school choice options in Washington D.C.

In the District of Columbia Public Schools district (DCPS), students can attend any school (called intradistrict choice), as long as there is space. DCPS offers Montessori and Reggio Emilia programs for young children; specialized programs for elementary, middle and high school students; charter and magnet schools. High school students can apply to programs or academies that focus on such areas as engineering, performing arts or science; deadlines range from late January to late March.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind law, students attending a Title I school designated as "in need of improvement" have the right to attend a higher performing school in the district.

Know the system: Key terms

*Notice an inaccuracy?* Let us know!

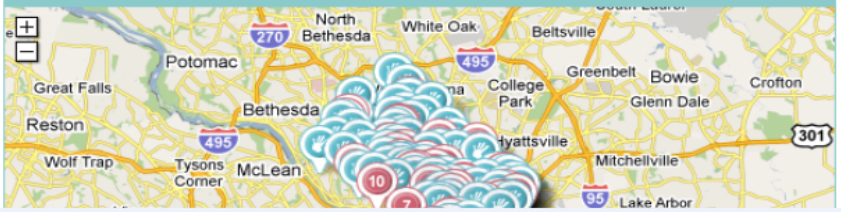
GreatSchools District Rating
Not rated due to insufficient data.
This district's rating is based on its schools' test results; 10 is best.
Learn more >
This district's stats >

825 North Capitol Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
District of Columbia
Map >
PH: (202) 442-5885
District Web site >

- Grades PK-12 & ungraded
- 57,877 students
- 175 schools

View all schools in this district >

### Browse District of Columbia Public Schools

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### 2008-2009 NCLB Report Cards

DCPS Report Card
Washington, DC Report Card

Provided by OSSE DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education

### Find a Home

Find a home nearby from more than 5 million real estate listings, homes for sale, and rental properties

Location: Washington, DC
Price: to
Location: Washington, DC
Price: to

# Future report cards have even more potential

- Future iterations of the report cards will be more innovative in how they are presented to parents.
- We will seek to integrate OSSE report cards into the GS Web site in a way that offers parents as much information as possible in a more easily accessible manner – not just a PDF file.
- DC will be able to set the standard and demonstrate leadership nationwide in what school quality transparency looks like.

# Questions?

greatschools
Involved parents. Successful kids.

FIGHT FOR CHILDREN