



PAVE DC Council At-Large Candidates Forum

October 20, 2020

**FORUM QUESTIONS**

Parent Name	Questions Asked During Forum
<p><b>Yael Meirovich,</b> CentroNia and Ward 1 Parent Leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- COVID has been extremely challenging for families in DC, where every child’s distance learning experience looks different. We know that the loss in learning as a result will not be evenly distributed, and will certainly deepen already existing disparities. Families of and students who need special education or ELL services are feeling this even more now than they were before.</li> <li>- What are your plans to ensure that the families of children suffering learning loss can receive the support needed now during distance learning and when schools reopen?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Chelly Jones,</b> DC International School and Ward 4 Parent Leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have two children who attend DCI, and my son has an IEP. While we are blessed to have a supportive and well-resourced SPED team at our current school, I know all too well the struggle when resources are limited.</li> <li>- PAVE parent leaders have worked extremely hard prioritizing and addressing gaps in the education systems that do not align with what we need to be true for every family and every child across DC. At the core of our advocacy is a fight for basic educational rights. What is the number one right that you believe all parents should have?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jaimee Hall,</b> Rocketship PCS and Ward 7 Parent Leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In-person school is coming back soon, right now, DCPS is planning to reopen next month, while the public charter school my daughter attends has extended distance learning until January. I want to see a school reopening plan and process that is as safe and equitable as possible for ALL schools and families.</li> <li>- How do you feel about continuing distance learning as an option for those parents and teachers that do not feel safe sending their children back to schools?</li> </ul>



**CHAT QUESTIONS**

Parent Name	Questions Unanswered in Chat	Candidate's Answer
Jaimee Hall	Two graduates of Cesar Chavez PCS and a first-grader at Rocketship Legacy Prep...my question is if you are not elected as the At-Large Council Member this year, how do you intend to continue working on bettering our city?	
Sharon Culver	What stance do you take on the current reopening plan for DCPS?	
Danielle Henry	What, in your opinion, is the most pressing education issue facing the District?	
Alicia Williamson	Can the candidates say specifically what they have done for DCPS (or any schools) since the pandemic started in March 2020?	
Ranee Grant	Parent Ward 7 - What ways will you address mental health and accessibility to services in Ward 7? Also how will educational access be increased for students who are dealing with trauma but don't have learning challenges which are supported with an IEP.	
Chioma Oruh	I support not reopening schools until there is an inclusive decision making process that prioritizes safety and access. There are lots of families lost in the shuffle due to the digital divide, which includes not having access to broadband internet services (hot spots are not enough), computer literacy, and parent training on how to support some young children and students with disabilities that are not likely to use computers for learning independently?	
Valerie Lewis Taylor	What are the "best practices" that parents should have already to help our students in a pandemic? And why would extending a school year help in this situation?	



Alicia Willamson	What stance do you take on the current reopening plan for DCPS?	
Shaunice Alston-Gaskins	While living in Ward 7, and working in Ward 8 with a child in a Ward 8 school, I struggle with understanding the support or concern that has not been shown for teachers who are also parents. Focusing on the infrastructure is great; however, the piece that is missing is the concern and safety of teachers who are also parents and need support. Most importantly, those who need services that support not only teachers/parents who have to consider both their safety and the safety of their children who go to another space for learning and what that means to their household. Not much support is being offered or concern being shown for teachers who are also parents. Support services are short, wifi is unbecoming, and childcare is limited.	
Lindsey Jones-Renaud	I don't see how schools can reopen and recover from COVID-19 without additional budget supports. Do you agree DCPS and DC public charter schools deserve additional funds to recover from the pandemic, if so, how much, and where in the budget will those funds come from?	
Courtney Jackson	Ward 8: As we all know education looks VERY different for preschoolers than elementary aged students. They are missing out on some of the most pivotal developmental experiences not being in school. How do you plan to close the gap they are inevitably facing?	
Andrea Tucker	Andrea Tucker Ward 8 resident. My children attend Stuart Hobson Middle School. My question is with affording housing being at the forefront of so many election promises. As a Realtor, there are not many affordable housing units in DC and they are dwindling. DC has a program call Inclusionary Zoning	



Lakisha Myrick	What plans will be brought to the table to ensure that all children get mental health services, rather than during virtual learning, in the classroom or even during summer breaks. Lots of children are impacted by some sort of trauma or loss in their lives especially at risk children, how will you make sure that the children are supported mind and body to enhance their academic success?	
Kat Zambon	It seems like the plans to reopen DCPS were made without consulting the teachers union. My daughter's teacher said that she found out about the reopening plans at the same time that we did. How can we reopen schools if the teachers aren't on board?	
Valerie Lewis Taylor	Valerie Lewis Taylor - Ward 4 PLE (Ward 5 Resident) 2 sons (Shepherd ES / Washington Latin). What COVID Testing support will you give schools for teachers, staff or students? Schools only have 3-4 janitors (many in the at-risk population) per school, and at times did not have materials including toilet paper and soap...what will be done to protect the building and community?	
Yolanda Corbett	How do we ensure that families that were facing eviction or homelessness are covered in order not to impart more trauma on families and students? We already know that there are significant housing challenges and certainly now this will be an exacerbated issue if rent continues to drive families further into debt.	
Chioma Oruh	Economic development is inextricably linked to education. Where do you all stand in the campaign to cancel rent for families struggling to keep up in the COVID economy?	
Letisha Vinson	@Monica Palacio, who would oversee the resource coordinators at schools?	



Russchele Moore	Russchelle Moore(Ward 6 PLE) What ideas will you be implementing to assist children with special needs, to transition into the working world that don't plan to attend college after high school?	
Letisha Vinson	@Ed Lazere what does parent influence or involvement look like? How or when would they get involved and ensure their input is considered?	
Letisha Vinson	How can parents get a "vote" in decisions being made that they are affected by .. they/we are stakeholders.. I think surveys and panels etc are so?	
Valerie Lewis Taylor	Who will provide COVID testing for Teachers, Principals and other school staff?	
Marcia Huff	Marcia Huff (W7 PLE)--we desperately need accountability within our education system. Parents, students, teachers and the community can voice concerns, protest, etc. and we have had successes but at times it feels like the Mayor and her team will do whatever without any transparency --how can we hold leaders accountable when the mayor holds all the control?	
Cassandra Gentry	Cassandra Ward 6PLE. Until schools reopened safety how will you ensure that our children get the mental health supports they need from our schools	
Martinique Robb	but our children our behind and being left out because of the.virus and trying to be online. things being cut and doing this at home is not working for most of us. specially autistic kids teaching them at home through online support still not enough to me it isn't.	
Letisha Vinson	I like the idea of 311 but I think info gathering is one thing, but what would the "accountability" or oversight look like?	



Letisha Vinson	how could one ensure follow-thru on what has been stated or asked? (restating previous question)	
Courtney Jackson	QUESTION- C. JACKSON WARD 8 parent- As we all know education looks VERY different for Preschoolers than Elementary aged students. They are missing out on some of the most pivotal developmental experiences not being in school. How do you plan to close the gap they are inevitably facing?	
Martinique Robb	how if the virus sets people to be home and not getting online and getting services like we used to before the virus. and when will special needs kids with i.e.p. go back to school on certain days?	
Marcia Huff	Mr Orange I am glad you mentioned students being prepared for success after graduation including entrepreneurship—how will students be prepared when we have minimal workforce development resources (including paid jobs) for students through our schools and DOES? Having a world class education (and that isn't there either) is just not enough neither is 6 weeks of summer work.	
Chioma Oruh	Speaking of Head Start, what would you all do at Council to make sure that DCPS is accountable to the Pre-K students who are now no longer entitled to the Head Start program?	
Martinique Robb	Well my charter child and dcps child school is not opening and both have needs i.e.p???? What happens next year? How long?	
Meaghan Mountford	(Ward 4, kid at Shepherd and kid at Wash Latin). Because we are more like 2 years from a viable vaccine, what investments would you make for long-term distance learning?	



Justin Duiguid	Candidates are you in favor of mandating COVID-19 vaccines for students to return?	
Charles Anamelechi	Have you budgeted for access to testing for all schools and retraining of teachers and staff to identify signs of covid among students?	
Martinique Robb	What about outside learning in spring?	
Danielle Henry	Ward 5 CMI mom here. What about tax breaks for parents that have had to convert their homes into virtual classrooms/offices? There are expenses there.	
Maria-Jose Carrasco	My question: how do we make sure the quality of education is equitable for families who for any reason (some don't have a choice) pick online learning?	
Reggae Jones	I really want to know why the decision was made to start with elementary school children first?	
Amber Golden	Amber Golden (Ward 4) - Duke Ellington: While DCPS has to answer a number of questions about safely reopening, it seems that the Mayor is driving the return date. We are still under Mayoral control. What will you do as a council member to ensure that DCPS has the resources to distribute this to the schools to meet the reopening mandate? How will you also hold the Mayor accountable for making these decisions without our, parent & teacher, input?	
Letisha Vinson	Many keep mentioning accountability... what does that look like when done right or not?	
Letisha Vinson	What would be the plan to increase/ensure equity?	
Georgia Stewart	How do we reach those at-risk children to ensure their success?	



Nakeasha Sanders-Small	What are your specific plans to address the achievement gap, including those that existed prior to COVID?	
Nakeasha Sanders-Small	Do you support adding additional preferences to address the racial and economic imbalance in the city's highest performing schools? if not, please offer your stance and any other solutions if you deem it a worthy concern.	