TEACH +PLUS

Opportunities for Teachers,
Results for Urban Students

*Cultivating Culture:
Strategies for Retaining
Excellent Teachers in DCPS*

Introduction ....

Over the past four years, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has focused on building one of the most effective teaching forces in the country.[1] DCPS has developed several innovative approaches to reform its human capital system in an effort to provide every student with an effective teacher. These reforms include the following:

- Built and implemented a performance evaluation system (IMPACT) that identifies and rewards effective teachers
- Created a compensation system that rewards effective teachers who teach in the highest need schools
- Instituted a career ladder system Leadership Initiative for Teachers (LIFT) that provides leadership and professional growth opportunities for its most accomplished teachers.
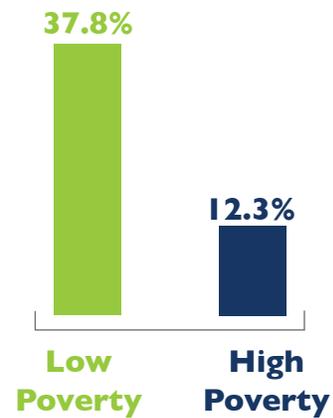
DCPS has been touted nationally as a leading district because of these reforms. One result is that the changes have transformed DCPS into an exciting place to work for effective, high-performing teachers. With this strong foundation the district is poised to continue leading the country by taking its work to the next level. To remain on the leading edge, DCPS will need to employ original and creative solutions to tackle the areas where problems still exist.

Staying in the Lead: Improving Teacher Retention

One of the key areas that DCPS can address to continue its nation-leading status is the district's rate of teacher turnover. On the surface, the numbers look solid, with at least three quarters of effective and highly effective teachers retained in each school year since 2009.[2]
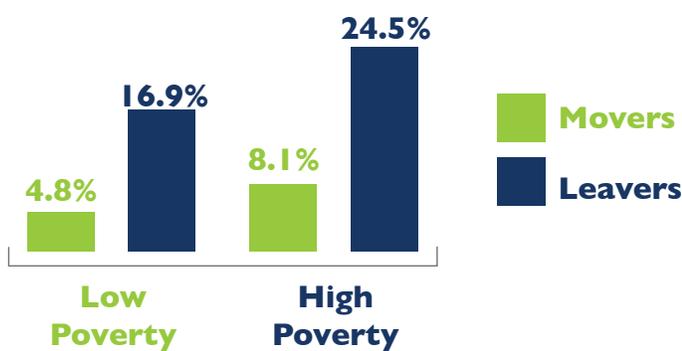
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The overall retention numbers obscure two critical pieces of data. First, despite recent improvements in the number of high-performing teachers in high-need schools, the gap between low-income students' access to outstanding teaching and that of their more affluent peers persist. At low-poverty schools, 94.6 percent of teachers were rated effective or highly-effective in 2011-12. At high-poverty schools, 85.8 percent were rated either effective or highly-effective. However, if you look only at the number of highly-effective teachers, there is a much wider gap. The data shows that low-poverty schools had more than three times as many teachers rated highly-effective (37.8 percent) as high-poverty schools (12.3 percent).[3]

Second, teachers in low-poverty and high-poverty schools are being retained at different rates. From the 2010-11 school year to the 2011-12 school year, (the most recent year for which disaggregated data is available), 78.3 percent of teachers stayed at low-poverty schools, while only 67.4 percent stayed at high-poverty schools. When that data is further disaggregated by 'movers' and 'leavers', we find that at high-poverty schools, 8.1 percent of teachers moved to another school while 24.5 percent left DCPS. At low- poverty schools, 4.8 percent moved to a different school while 16.9 percent left DCPS.[4] The data shows that DCPS still loses far too many of its most talented teachers and too few of those teachers teach at the highest-poverty and highest-needs schools.

Low-Poverty Schools Have Three Times as Many Highly-Effective Teachers

37.8%

12.3%

Low Poverty **High Poverty**

More Teachers Leave High Poverty Schools in DCPS

24.5%

16.9%

8.1%

4.8%

Movers

Leavers

Low Poverty   **High Poverty**

"During the past seven years, I have worked with five different biology teachers, four math teachers and three English teachers. When these teachers left, our entire school community felt their loss. When teachers have to re-create relationships on an annual basis, the energy that could be spent on students is channeled elsewhere. In an urban school, harnessing this energy is critical to appropriately preparing students for college and careers.
— Jessica Levknecht, High School Latin Teacher

Staff Culture is Integral to Why Teachers Leave DCPS

This year the 2014 Washington, D.C. Teaching Policy Fellows have sought to understand why DCPS' teacher attrition rate is still too high. Anecdotal evidence from our and our colleagues' experiences indicates that DCPS struggles to retain its top teachers because of issues related to staff culture. What matters most in our decisions to stay or leave a school is the collegial relationships between us, our colleagues and our principal that allow us to work together productively to help our students grow academically. A case study report by TNTP notes that teachers selected factors like school leadership, workload and school culture as the top three factors for leaving DCPS schools. TNTP refers to a district's top teachers as *irreplaceables* and defines them as the teachers rated highly-effective under DCPS' IMPACT evaluation system.[5] TNTP's research also shows that "in nearly 40 percent of DCPS schools, more than one-third of teachers said they

were dissatisfied with their school's overall morale and culture" and highly-effective teachers "planned to leave DCPS schools with weak instructional cultures at nearly twice the rate of those at schools with strong instructional culture."[6]

TNTP's finding that staff culture is a major factor for why top teachers leave their schools is consistent with findings from similar research. In an analysis of survey data on conditions of work in Massachusetts, Johnson et al. find that among nine key elements of conditions of work, the three most important to teachers' plans to stay in their school are collegial relationships, principal leadership and school culture.[7] A recent study by Boyd et al. finds that their "analyses point to the importance of working conditions and particularly of administrative support in teacher retention."[8] And in their report, Building and Sustaining Talent, The Education Trust found that "two conditions consistently emerge in research as especially important to teachers: school leadership and staff cohesion."[9]

Both TNTP's and other national research confirm our own experiences of why we have seen so many of our colleagues leave our schools. A member of this year's Teaching Policy Fellows' cohort describes it this way:

> *Early on in my teaching career, I spent a few years in a school with knowledgeable, dedicated staff but with limited opportunities to build the kinds of trusting, professional relationships necessary to best leverage one another's strengths. Ultimately, I made the tough decision to leave for another school where open, frequent feedback and collaboration would be embedded in a very thoughtful approach to building and maintaining a strong staff culture.*
> *—Claire Steinbeck, Early Elementary Special Education Teacher*

Improving Staff Culture is Key to Improving Retention

Every so often, news reports extol a company's efforts at creating strong staff cultures to attract and retain top employees. These businesses understand that staff culture is critical to their success because human capital is their greatest asset. However, we often ignore the importance of staff culture when it comes to our schools. If successful business leaders understand the importance of strong, healthy staff cultures, why don't school and district leaders? Emulating successful businesses is not the only reason that school and district leaders should pay closer attention to building strong staff cultures. Research shows that building a strong staff culture is critical to retaining teachers and may have impact on student achievement growth. For example, researchers in Massachusetts found "evidence to suggest that the conditions of work are important predictors of student achievement growth in Massachusetts."[10] These findings align with findings from research of working conditions and student achievement in North Carolina.[11] To improve the retention of its top teachers and ensure those teachers are at the schools that need them most, DCPS should emulate successful businesses and take seriously the issue of staff culture.

> *I realize that it is the community that the system of individuals creates, when the right support is provided and the right vision is set, that draws me back.*
> *— Anna Salzberg, Middle School English Teacher*

Recommendations ·····················

In order to improve the retention of high-performing teachers in their schools, we recommend that DCPS take the following steps:

Recommendation 1: Increase opportunities for DCPS teachers to combine teaching and coaching responsibilities through hybrid roles.

A key component of strong staff culture is the ability of teachers to work together to improve their own practice while increasing student academic growth. Formalizing ways in which colleagues can support each other's development will go a long way towards helping to improve staff culture and teacher retention at DCPS schools. One way to do this is by creating hybrid roles

> *Engaging teachers in meaningful dialogue about practice supports and develops them. It shows them that they are valued as intelligent professionals. New and veteran teachers alike appreciate reflective conversation about their practice as a mechanism for continuous growth, collaboration, and as an incentive to stay.*
> — Corinne Rucker, Former Elementary School Teacher

that allow current teachers to take on instructional coach roles while scaling back their classroom teaching responsibilities. DCPS should offer schools the freedom and support to create clearly defined opportunities for strong classroom teachers to shift into such roles, where they are compensated, held accountable, and can grow in their ability to coach their peers. Central to this is the idea that teacher-coaches be given sufficient time to perform their coaching duties adequately while maintaining their ability to be strong teachers in their classrooms. *We have outlined additional thoughts on how this might work in Appendix A.*

A Word about the Current State of Coaching

Our proposal seeks to improve on DCPS' current coaching structure by building on a new DCPS initiative designed to give schools more freedom to design leadership positions and staff them with hybrid teachers. DCPS currently employs instructional coaches that provide coaching focused on math and literacy. Our experience under the current model is that teachers in subjects other than math and ELA (e.g. history, art, etc.) get very little or no coaching in their content area. In addition to insufficient coaching in other content areas, teachers may not get coaching they might need for specific groups of students e.g. special education and English Language Learners. Furthermore, the ratio of teacher to coach is too great for each teacher to get the support he or she needs to improve instructional practice. Often, the most effective teachers, who crave critical feedback to improve their practice, get the least access to coaching resources. Top teachers could help reduce the teacher to coach ratios, provide more targeted, individualized support for their colleagues and become experts in particular instructional approaches or content areas.

The benefits of hybrid teacher-coaches are two-fold. First, top teachers who want to have a broader impact in their school but want to also continue as classroom teachers could do so. Second, through the practice of helping other teachers, they will strengthen their own practice. With this type of growth opportunity, we believe top teachers will be more likely to stay at their schools, as will their colleagues who are receiving their coaching.

Recommendation 2: Pilot an opportunity for deep engagement by a cohort of principals and teacher leaders to help strengthen faculty communities at DCPS schools.

Teachers will more readily adapt to change, accept challenges and work as a unit when they see themselves not only as individual classroom teachers, but as members of a faculty community. A strong faculty community is characterized by a high level of trust and camaraderie between teachers

> *Providing teachers with opportunities to make improvements to the school community allows teachers to feel more invested in their work and encourages them to stay longer for the benefit of their school and students.*
> — Jessica Levknecht, High School Latin Teacher

with a unified sense of purpose and teacher involvement in the decisions about instruction in a school. DCPS must take on the responsibility for helping school leaders determine how to create such communities at their schools. One way in which the district might do this is to create a cohort-based pilot program, modeled after the successful Family Engagement Collaborative. The program will aim to unite teachers and principals in dramatically improving the faculty community at their school site by creating a space for schools to learn about and share effective faculty community building strategies. This will allow a school to determine strategies, measures and best practices to improve its culture and positively affect teacher retention. *See Appendix B for a more detailed proposal for this pilot program.*

Spotlight on Success: Stanton Elementary School

In the fall of 2010, Stanton Elementary School (Ward 8) became DC Scholars: Stanton Elementary. This new name came with a new staff, new principal, new curriculum and a hope that this time, school turnaround might work. The principal and administrative team invested time and energy into building a staff culture of "Team and Family," making Stanton a place where all staff saw themselves as members of the school community, responsible for the success of students both inside and outside of their classroom. The principal and administrative team implemented quarterly town hall-style meetings, a faculty council to share in the decision making with administrators, increased visibility and responsibility of teacher leaders, and the use of various surveys to hear feedback from staff. One result of this investment in faculty community is that DC Scholars: Stanton Elementary saw a 95 percent retention of effective and highly-effective teachers for school year 2012-13.

Recommendation 3: Engage teachers to assess the strength of staff culture at each DCPS school.

We propose that DCPS develops regular feedback cycles that engage teachers and school leaders in evaluating teaching and learning conditions. This would help promote a culture of continuous feedback and improvement. It would also create

> *Seeking and recognizing teacher voice in administrative policies can ensure that teachers are involved in and dedicated to positive changes.*
> —Caroline Kilbourn, High School Social Studies Teacher

a place of mutual understanding to foster dialogue between all members of the school faculty community, thereby improving teaching and learning outcomes for both students and adults.

We believe that a survey is the most effective tool for soliciting teacher voice and feedback in a structured and data-driven manner. A bi-annual survey would give both the central office and school leaders much needed data on staff culture in each school and better help DCPS understand why teachers leave. The data from the survey could inform school leadership on ways to retain high-performing teachers, improve overall school climate, and provide targeted professional development. This data could also be used to develop

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targeted action plans to address problem areas, provide appropriate resources to improve teachers' day-to-day experiences and increase retention.

Spotlight on Success: VAL-ED

Recently, DCPS piloted the Vanderbilt Assessment for Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) survey. VAL-ED is a 360 assessment tool that provides feedback to principals on their leadership behaviors. We welcome this step in the right direction and are pleased that DCPS has been responsive to two cohorts of Teach Plus Teaching Policy Fellows' proposals for a survey. One component of the VAL-ED assessment is culture of learning and professional behavior. This component measures whether a school leader is building "integrated communities of professional practice in the service of student academic and social learning."[12] We recommend that DCPS pay close attention to whether this component in particular, as well as the other components from the VAL-ED assessment, gives detailed enough feedback that can assist principals in addressing weaknesses in the staff culture in their buildings. We hope that DCPS will include teachers in their assessment of the usefulness of the feedback provided through the VAL-ED.

Recommendation 4: **Publicly report additional DCPS data on access to and retention of top-performing teachers.**

In order to accurately understand how current and new policies are impacting teacher retention and access to effective and highly-effective teachers, we recommend that DCPS track and publish more data on teacher retention at the school level. Specifically, DCPS should:

1. Report percentages of teachers who are effective and highly-effective (separately) at each school on the DCPS school profiles site.

2. Separate the retention percentages of effective and highly-effective teachers at each school and report both on the DCPS school profiles site.

3. Report retention percentages over multiple years using a cohort method to examine if the same effective and highly-effective teachers are staying multiple years at the same school.

Teachers, parents, and other community stakeholders need to understand how well our schools are doing in attracting and retaining top teachers. The community should know where effective and highly-effective teachers teach. Families deserve to know which schools have and retain top teachers in order to make informed decisions about where to send their children. Teachers deserve to make informed decisions about where to teach. They may want to surround themselves with like-minded colleagues so that strong collaboration can take place, and a new teacher may want to enter a building with a high percentage of effective teachers in hopes of finding a mentor. Last, and most importantly, this data will further help DCPS understand on which schools they need to focus to increase the effectiveness of existing teachers or attract additional effective teachers.

Conclusion

DCPS has much to celebrate in the policies it has implemented in the last four years to increase the caliber of its teaching force. The District's focus on human capital as the key lever in dramatically improving student outcomes has shown success. However, if DCPS hopes to meet the five goals outlined in DCPS' A Capital Commitment by 2017, [13] it will need to do even more. Improving schools' staff cultures can make a tremendous difference in achieving the important goals that lie ahead.

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End Notes ....

1. See in the press Henderson, K. (2013, April 28). Quiet but Critical School Reform. The Washington Post. http://www. washingtonpost.com/opinions/quiet-critical-school-reform-at-dc-public-schools/2013/04/26/905de740-a943-11e2-b029-8fb7e977ef71_story.html and Takahashi, P. (2014, March 21). In school reform, 'caliber of the teacher matters,' D.C. chancellor tells Nevada educators. Las Vegas Sun.

2. We used retention percentages of effective and highly effective teachers reported in the D.C. Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA) report by EdCORE for SY09-10 (89%) and SY10-11 (84.7%) and School Profiles for SY11-12 (75%). In SY 12-13, DCPS reports a district average of 83% on its School Profiles; this year is not comparable to the three previous years because DCPS raised the minimum score for a teacher to be rated effective. See EdCORE (Sept. 6, 2013). Evaluation of the DC Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA): Report No. 2: School Year 2011-2012. http://dcauditor.org/sites/default/files/DCA132013.pdf and Safe and Effective Schools. School Profiles. Retrieved August 24, 2013, from http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/scorecard.

3. EdCORE (Sept. 6, 2013). Evaluation of the DC Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA): Report No. 2: School Year 2011-2012. http://dcauditor.org/sites/default/files/DCA172013.pdf

4. Ibid

5. TNTP (2012). Keeping Irreplaceables in D.C. Public Schools: Lessons in Smart Teacher Retention. http://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_DCIrreplaceables_2012.pdf for more analysis and commentary on this issue.

6. Idib

7. Johnson, S., Kraft, M. and Papay, J. (October 2012). How Context Matters in High-Need Schools: The Effects of Teachers' Working Conditions on Their Professional Satisfaction and Their Students' Achievement. Teachers College Record Volume 114.

8. Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (May 2009). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. (Working Paper No. 25) Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education. http://www.caldercenter.org/publications/upload/1001287_calderworkingpaper25.pdf

9. Almy, S. and Tooley, M. (2012). Building and Sustaining Talent. Creating Conditions in High-Poverty Schools That Support Effective Teaching and Learning. Washington, D.C.: The Education Trust. http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/Building_and_Sustaining_Talent.pdf

10. Johnson, S., Kraft, M. and Papay, J. (October 2012). How Context Matters in High-Need Schools: The Effects of Teachers' Working Conditions on Their Professional Satisfaction and Their Students' Achievement. Teachers College Record Volume 114.

11. Ladd, H (2009). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of policy relevant outcomes? (Working Paper No. 33). Washington, DC: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education. http://www.caldercenter.org/upload/Working-paper-33_FINAL.pdf

12. Discovery Education (2009). Val-Ed Handbook: Implementation and Interpretation. Silver Spring, MD: Discovery Communications, LLC.http://valed.discoveryeducation.com/pdfs/DEA.HNDBK.VALED.2_web.pdf

13. You can find the Capital Commitment on DCPS' website at http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Files/downloads/ABOUT%20DCPS/Strategic-Plan/DCPS-Capital-Commitment-Strategic-Plan-April-2012.pdf.

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Appendix A.1

The proposal seeks to ensure guaranteed release time to give teachers adequate time to perform their teaching and coaching roles effectively. We know that school budgets are limited so we have attempted to implement our proposal through adjusting master schedules. These shifts are probably easiest to implement at the middle school or perhaps high school level. Below we have created a draft middle school master schedule to provide a model of how it might accommodate hybrid teacher coach positions.

DCPS Middle School Traditional (Non-Block) Schedule for ELA Teachers

There are two teachers per content per grade level.

Each teacher teaches three, 80-minute periods of English Language Arts with approx. 25 students/class.

Grade level teachers share planning time and lunch time off for a combined total of 120 minutes of flex time/ day.

Teacher 6A

Monday - Friday			
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory		
9:05-10:25 (80)	*Planning*		
10:30-11:10 (40)	Period 1a	25 Students	
11:15-11:50 (35)	*Lunch*		
11:55-12:35 (40)	Period 1b		
12:40-2:00 (80)	Period 2	25 Students	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	25 Students	

Teacher 6B

Monday - Friday			
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory		
9:05-10:25 (80)	*Planning*		
10:30-11:10 (40)	Period 1a	25 Students	
11:15-11:50 (35)	*Lunch*		
11:55-12:35 (40)	Period 1b		
12:40-2:00 (80)	Period 2	25 Students	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	25 Students	

Teacher 7A

Monday - Friday		
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	25 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	25 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	25 Students

Teacher 7B

Monday - Friday		
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	25 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	25 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	25 Students

Teacher 8A

Monday - Friday		
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	25 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	Period 2	25 Students
11:55-12:35 (40)	*Lunch*	
12:40-2:00 (80)	Period 3	25 Students
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Planning*	

Teacher 8B

Monday - Friday		
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	25 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	Period 2	25 Students
11:55-12:35 (40)	*Lunch*	
12:40-2:00 (80)	Period 3	25 Students
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Planning*	

DCPS Middle School Traditional (Non-Block) Schedule for ELA Teachers

1 ELA Hybrid Teacher Coach (Teacher 7A)

One of the six ELA teachers becomes the Hybrid Teacher Coach (HTC) for that content area. An HTC will have one additional planning period (80 minutes) per day in order to complete his/her coaching duties. This gives the HTC 200 minutes of flex time/day (on average) to divide accordingly for responsibilities related to both roles.

Below is a mock schedule for how an HTC (Teacher 7A) might allot time for coaching duties.

Teacher 7A

Monday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Coaching* Observe Teacher 6A & Teacher 6B for 20 minutes each. 40 minutes of planning to create debrief notes, find resources, plan individualized PD, etc.	

Teacher 7B

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	30 Students

Teacher 7A

Tuesday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Coaching* Observe Teacher 8A & Teacher 8B for 20 minutes each. 40 minutes of planning to create debrief notes, find resources, plan individualized PD, etc.	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Planning*	

Teacher 7B

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	30 Students

Teacher 7A

Wednesday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Coaching* *Observe Teacher 7A for 20 minutes 60 minutes of planning to create debrief notes, find resources, plan individualized PD, etc*	

Teacher 7B

Wednesday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-12:35 (40)	Period 2	30 Students
12:40-2:00 (80)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	30 Students

Teacher 7A

Thursday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Coaching* *Debrief Observation Meeting with Teacher 6A for 30 minutes (any time from 11:15-11:50)* *Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Planning*	

Teacher 7B

Thursday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-12:35 (40)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	30 Students
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	

Teacher 7A

Friday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Coaching* *Debrief Observation Meeting with Teacher 7B for 30 minutes (10:30-11:00)* *Debrief Observation Meeting with Teacher 6B for 30 minutes (any time from 11:15-11:50)* *Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	*Coaching* *Debrief Observation Meeting with Teachers 8A and 8B for 30 minutes each* *Planning*	

Teacher 7B

Friday

Time	Activity	Students
8:30-9:00 (30)	Advisory	
9:05-10:25 (80)	Period 1	30 Students
10:30-11:50 (80)	*Planning*	
11:55-1:15 (80)	Period 2	30 Students
1:20-2:00 (40)	*Lunch*	
2:05-3:25 (80)	Period 3	30 Students

Action Steps for Faculty Community Collaborative

The Faculty Community Collaborative aims to unite teachers and principals in dramatically improving the faculty community at their school site. By establishing a cohort of interested teachers and their principals, DCPS will be able to pilot some of the strategies, measures and best practices that have worked in other schools.

Step I: Identify schools

The Faculty Community Collaborative would work with schools that have the capacity to craft their school's faculty community from the ground up. Such schools may include:

1. Schools experiencing leadership changes
2. Schools who have been consolidated
3. Schools with a significant percentage of new teachers
4. Schools that have small academies within their school, such as 9th grade academies

Step II: Articulate roles and responsibilities

We imagine that each school will be represented in the collaborative by their principal and two teacher leaders. Principals and teacher leaders would attend the first two of a series of professional development sessions together to lay a foundation for their work at the school level. While the principal would be invited to all of the remaining professional development sessions, teacher leaders would be required to attend. Teacher leaders would bring back documentation of their efforts to build faculty community for feedback and celebration during the sessions. The chart below provides more details about the scope of the professional development.

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Date	Session Focus	Description
May	Introduction to Faculty Community	• Participants will learn about the goals of the program • Participants begin to analyze individual school's strengths and weaknesses in regard to faculty community • Introduction to surveys
August	Writing a Vision	• Participants will work collaboratively to develop a vision for their school year • Participants will decide on how they will introduce their vision and how they will involve their staff in tuning the vision
September	Feedback	• Participants will reflect on how feedback is currently used at their school • Participants develop an appropriate and sustainable feedback system to meet their unique instructional needs • Participants revisit use of survey—school-wide, departmental, grade-level
November	Maintaining Shared Ownership	• Participants will learn about effective ways to delegate responsibility and involve staff at large in-school initiatives
Februrary	Shared Ownership pt. 2	• Check in on staff involvement with school initiatives and survey data
April	Teacher Voice	• Participants will plan for one event (or more!) to solicit teacher input for scheduling, next year's initiatives, etc. • Participants plan for final survey administration
May	Planning for Next Year	• Participants will spend the session analyzing the final round of survey data finding celebrations and areas of growth • Feedback and data base building for the success of future cohorts plus alumni

Step III: Disseminate Successful Practices to Build Strong Faculty Communities at all Schools

Finally, we hope that the resources created by leaders and teachers within the Faculty Community Collaborative (e.g. vision statements, staff surveys, models for successful events targeting teacher input) can be gathered into a toolbox of "ready to go" strategies and documents for leaders at non-participating schools to duplicate, much like the Educator Portal collects resources for teachers.