
Wilson Feeder Pattern Community Working Group: Programming Committee

Participants:

Principal Neal (Deal MS)

Principal Canizales (Oyster-Adams EC)

Principal Thomas (Hearst ES)

Major Themes/Takeaways from Discussion

- Many feel that resistance to options outside of the Wilson Feeder Pattern relates to perception/PR. Families have outdated perceptions of many DCPS schools and/or don't know about many of the options that already exist within DCPS. Much of this predicated on class, race, socioeconomics
- The group emphasized that programming solutions are not a quick fix. Families of children in early elementary grades at dual-language schools like Oyster/Bancroft are considering MacFarland/Roosevelt. Not the same for 4th-8th grade families – they're going to Banneker, Walls, Ellington, Wilson, private, charter, McKinley Tech, Ron Brown, or move out of DC. It takes time for programming shifts like those at MacFarland/Roosevelt to develop and for families to have confidence in sending their children there.
- Basic school quality more important than specific programming (dual language, STEM, etc.) Safe environment, strong/consistent school leader, quality (not necessarily specialized) programming, extracurriculars (particularly at MS level), solid teachers, good test scores. Just like programming shifts, general school quality improvements also take time (longer-term proposition)
- Families are looking for alternatives to Wilson because of its size - people want smaller/manageable size schools

Potential Options Discussed

- The group recommended looking at how schools are funded so smaller schools can provide similar offerings as larger schools like Deal. For example, commit to saying all schools will have at least a base of "x" for enrichment, extracurriculars, support staff, etc.
- Expand programmatic feeder systems
 - Doing this now at Roosevelt with dual language feeders
 - Are there options for schools to connect with Ellington, like arts MS?
 - Other programmatic feeder possibilities:
 - IB – MS option for Thomson and HS for Deal (Eastern)?
 - STEM – Connection between Langley and McKinley, etc?
- Expand PK-5th grade autism programs citywide – there is demand for this
- The group felt strongly that schools should not be segregated by income and race – need to encourage Ward 3 residents to consider more district-wide.
 - Mandated diversity/inclusion? For example, require schools to enroll larger percentage of OOB students
- Focus on one thing in each ward and make it attractive
 - Have to build the programs and then have the promotional support to go with it
 - As this conversation progresses, we need to bring in any outside-Ward 3 schools