

April 2, 2024

To the Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) of Whittier Elementary School, Ida B. Wells Middle School, and Coolidge High School:

First, I would like to thank you for your collective advocacy. DC Public Schools (DCPS) values your feedback and looks forward to partnering with you in our efforts to best serve students. Please find below the district's responses to the issues raised in your outreach.

**Whittier swing site:** Whenever possible, DCPS aims to relocate schools to swing spaces near their home school. Having explored several options for Whittier, given the community concerns and [site selection factors](#), I am pleased to share that Mayor Bowser's proposed budget includes \$18 million to build learning cottages near Whittier's campus to be used as a swing site to accommodate the school's modernization. Please note that with this update, DCPS and the Department of General Services (DGS) must allot additional time for the procurement and construction of the cottages. As such, Whittier's modernized building will now deliver in Summer of 2028, meaning the school will use the learning cottages in School Year 2026-2027 and 2027-2028. Location and logistics information will be provided as it becomes available.

**Utilization at Coolidge:** To help manage potential over-utilization, we expect Coolidge to offer fewer lottery seats for School Year 2024–2025. Aligned with the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), DCPS is committed to using enrollment policy tools before requesting any major capital construction project. Additionally, the district is collaborating with school leadership on a small capital project—the expansion of the Coolidge cafeteria. Designs will be shared with the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) soon.

**Utilization at Wells:** With a projected enrollment for School Year 2024-2025 of 513, DCPS will explore possibilities to increase classroom space at Wells.

**Tracking new developments:** In collaboration with the DC Office of Planning, as part of the DME's [Boundary and Student Assignment Study](#) and work to update the district's [Master Facilities Plan](#) (MFP), the anticipated population growth based on new housing developments within the Takoma attendance area have been flagged. Once the recommendations of the Boundary and Study Assignment Study and MFP are released and approved, DCPS will develop an implementation plan and will plan to communicate with relevant schools.

**Maintenance:** We have been monitoring all three schools closely and are working diligently to prioritize and escalate critical work orders that have been open for too long. DCPS' Facilities team will continue to work with DGS on a strategy to reduce open items.

**Support for neighborhood schools:** DCPS remains committed to strengthening neighborhood schools. Please continue to work with your Community Action Team Specialist, [Quintin Floyd](#) and the [DCPS School Planning Team](#).

In partnership,



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Chancellor, DC Public Schools