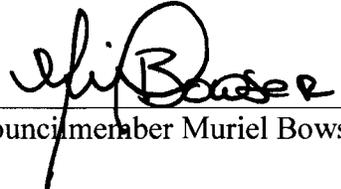


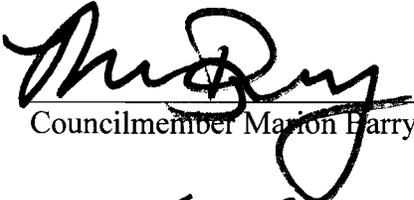
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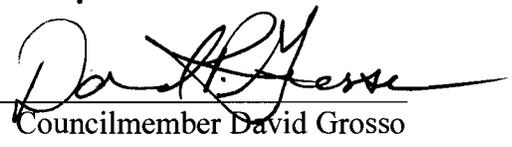
Councilmember Anita Bonds



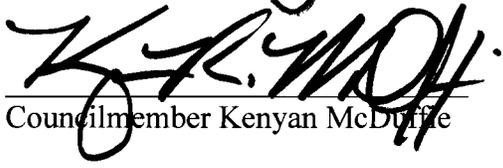
Councilmember Muriel Bowser



Councilmember Marion Barry



Councilmember David Grosso



Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember _____ introduced the following resolution, which was referred to the committee on _____.

To declare the sense of the Council that the quality of the District’s middle schools must be improved such that all District of Columbia middle school-aged students, without regard to geography, socioeconomic status, or other demographic characteristics, have proximate access to a middle school educational experience equal to that offered at present by Alice Deal Middle School; having so few high-quality middle school options accessible to all District of Columbia middle school students and parents is unsustainable and unjust; continued enrollment growth at Alice Deal will undermine its excellence; all students should be entitled to a high-quality education; and that by increasing the number of high quality middle schools will increase confidence in District of Columbia Public Schools.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

That this resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council that the High-Quality

1 Education Offered at Alice Deal Middle School Should be Replicated District-Wide and
2 Available to All Resolution of 2013.”

3 Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

4 (1) A quality middle school education is a key indicator for higher education
5 success, improved health outcomes, reduced exposure to risky behavior, and for a
6 productive adulthood;

7 (2) The capacity of a person to learn will never be greater than during
8 adolescence;

9 (3) Adolescence is a critical time for brain growth. Significant intellectual
10 processes are emerging. Adolescents are moving from concrete to abstract thinking and
11 to the beginnings of metacognition. They are developing skills in deductive reasoning,
12 problem solving, and generalizing;

13 (4) The region of the brain that influences language learning and associative
14 thinking, controlling, planning, working memory, organization, and modulating mood
15 grows more rapidly than surrounding regions before and during puberty;

16 (5) Beyond cognitive advancements, adolescence is also a critical time during
17 which adolescents undergo dramatic physical and psychosocial maturation that varies
18 widely in timing and tempo;

19 (6) Socially, the quality of relationships between early adolescents and their
20 peers and adults becomes increasingly important in middle school;

21 (7) Psychosocially, adolescents continue to deal with the life-long issues of
22 achievement and competence, while identity, autonomy, intimacy, sexuality and social
23 status emerge as other dominant concerns;

1 (8) Thus educating early adolescents is a complex and critical task;

2 (9) Aside from school, few institutions and social programs are substantially
3 devoted to adolescents. Hence, the school is the primary institution outside the family
4 within which the development of adolescents can be directed and shaped;

5 (10) Adolescents who get off to a bad start in middle school are at risk for
6 subsequent academic underachievement and problem behavior;

7 (11) The middle school education thus represents a critical juncture in the
8 intellectual and behavioral development of adolescents.

9 (12) Moreover, risky behavior patterns, such as drinking alcohol, drug abuse,
10 sexual and gang activity, and use of firearms, tend to be established early in adolescence;

11 (13) Problem behaviors are of particular concern in middle school, where a
12 contagious youth culture of academic negativism and misconduct can thwart learning and
13 disrupt the school routine;

14 (14) The prevalence of problem behaviors increases dramatically during
15 adolescence. For example, less than 10% of sixth graders have used tobacco, but about
16 30% of eighth graders and 60% of 11th graders have. While only 5% of sixth graders
17 have used alcohol, nearly 70% of eighth graders have. Further, delinquency increases 10-
18 fold from age 10 to 14 and experience with sexual intercourse increases from almost zero
19 among preadolescents to 61.6% of ninth graders;

20 (15) Dropping out, too, for most students begins in middle school, when the
21 habits that predict whether or not a student graduates are formed, making it a critical
22 “make or break” period;

1 (16) Research about dropouts has consistently shown that a host of negative
2 school-related experiences, such as repeating a grade, high absenteeism, misbehavior,
3 discipline policies, school transfer policies, and poor academic performance serve as
4 powerful precursors to the decision to formally leave school;

5 (17) The middle school grade years thus represent a window of opportunity to
6 target appropriate resources at students who have exhibited attendance problems,
7 behavior problems, drug and alcohol abuse problems, or have suffered course failure;

8 (18) Unfortunately, the District of Columbia’s Middle Schools do not provide a
9 quality educational experience equitably;

10 (19) Each District of Columbia Public School is assigned a classification based
11 upon school performance, student proficiency, growth, graduation rates, attendance, and
12 participation rates;

13 (20) “Priority” schools need intense support to address overall low student
14 performance, a graduation rate below 60% for two consecutive years, or for being
15 previously designated as Student Improvement Grant school;

16 (21) “Focus” schools need targeted support to address large subgroup
17 achievement gaps relative to all schools in D.C. Focus schools must develop intervention
18 plan to address specified subgroups and report twice a year on planned milestones;

19 (22) “Developing” schools have an overall index score above 25 but less than
20 45 and are not identified as Priority or Focus schools;

21 (23) “Rising” schools have an overall index score above 44 but less than 80
22 and are not identified as Priority or Focus schools;

1 (24) “Reward” schools have the highest levels of student performance
2 demonstrated by an overall index score that falls in the top 5% of all schools in the
3 District;

4 (25) Of the District’s ten middle schools, three are classified at the lowest level
5 of student performance;

6 (26) Each of the three “Priority” middle schools is located east of the Anacostia
7 River, is under-enrolled, is at least 98% African-American, and 99% of its student
8 population entitled to free and reduced price lunch;

9 (27) Two of the middle schools are classified as “developing”, one of which is
10 located east of the Anacostia River, and both of which have a student population that is
11 99% African-American and entitled to free and reduced price lunch;

12 (28) Other factors predictive of poor outcomes that some of the District’s
13 underperforming middle schools exhibit include below average community satisfaction
14 scores, and below average safety perception scores;

15 (29) Having so few high-quality middle school options accessible to all District
16 of Columbia middle school students and parents is unsustainable and unjust;

17 (30) Moreover, Wards 4 and 5 are predominated by K-8 schools that do not
18 provide the focused educational experience offered by middle schools and thus do not
19 engender universal satisfaction from those parents;

20 (31) It is unreasonable that many of the District’s poorest and minority students
21 do not have access to a high-quality middle school education;

22 (32) The poor state of the District’s middle schools cause many parents to
23 enroll their rising 6th graders in public charter, private, or parochial schools, which in turn

1 reduces the participation of parents and students in the public school system, a key
2 predictor of student and school performance;

3 (33) The District's only "Reward" middle school, Alice Deal Middle School
4 (Alice Deal), located in Ward 3, exhibits criteria incumbent to quality schools and which
5 should be replicated at each of the District's middle schools so that all District of
6 Columbia middle school-aged students have equal access to a high quality education;

7 (34) Alice Deal's Student in-seat attendance in 2012 was 96 percent, the
8 highest in the DCPS system;

9 (35) Alice Deal's Expulsion and Suspension rate in 2012 was 0 percent, the
10 lowest in the DCPS system;

11 (36) Alice Deal is perceived according to student, parents, and staff as being a
12 safe environment for learning;

13 (37) 95% of Alice Deal students reenroll;

14 (38) Alice Deal scores higher than the average DCPS school in the following
15 categories: student re-enrollment, teacher retention, community satisfaction, and parent
16 engagement;

17 (39) Alice Deal students receive an extremely challenging academic program,
18 which encompasses participation in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years
19 Program as well as music and visual arts;

20 (40) Alice Deal also offers three world languages: Spanish, French and
21 Mandarin Chinese, as well as a variety of extracurricular activities;

22 (41) Alice Deal Middle School is one of the District's most diverse schools.

1 (42) A \$71.6 million dollar modernization of Alice Deal was completed in
2 2010, almost as much as has been spent to modernize the District's other nine middle
3 schools.

4 (43) In part because of this exceptional learning environment, Alice Deal is
5 grossly overpopulated; its 2012-2013 enrolment is 1,124 students, more than double the
6 next most populous middle school;

7 (44) Enrollment at this level is unsustainable; the physical campus is strained
8 and will require annex space at a cost of \$15 million.

9 (45) The D.C. Advisory Committee on Student Assignment's forthcoming
10 report and recommendations regarding feeder patterns and boundary realignment should
11 be appended to include recommendations for the improvement of the District of
12 Columbia's Public Schools consistent with this resolution.

13 (46) It should be the goal of the District of Columbia to provide a high quality
14 middle school education proximately accessible to all middle school-aged students
15 without regard to geography, socioeconomic status, or other demographic characteristics,
16 and equal to that offered at present by Alice Deal Middle School.

17 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that the quality of the District's middle
18 schools must be improved such that all District of Columbia middle school-aged students,
19 without regard to geography, socioeconomic status, or other demographic characteristics,
20 have proximate access to an education equal to that offered at present by Alice Deal
21 Middle School.

22 Sec. 4. The Secretary of the Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a
23 copy of this resolution upon its adoption to the mayor, the Chancellor of the District of

1 Columbia Public Schools, the State Superintendent for Education, and the Deputy Mayor
2 for Education.

3 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.