

# DPS School Board Candidate Survey - February 2013

Response ID: 35 Data

## 1. Getting started - identification - demographics

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Please provide the name of the person completing this survey:

**First Name**

Sharla

**Last Name**

Williams

**Title**

Development Associate

**Email Address**

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## 2. State of Denver Public Schools

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1. Denver Public Schools' reform efforts at present are not on pace to meet the needs of Denver's students.

4

2. DPS is moving in the right direction with the district's current leadership.

4

3. The district's interventions in low-performing schools and the development of more high-quality traditional and charter schools (e.g. Cory and McMeen Elementary Schools, STRIVE, Denver School of the Arts, Denver School of Science and Technology, etc.) are important strategies for improving the quality of Denver's public education system.

4

4. The reforms so far are too few and moving far too slowly if we expect students now entering kindergarten to leave elementary school at grade level and prepared for middle and high school.

2

5. I support the turnaround plan in the far northeast Denver neighborhood that includes the phasing out of the old Montbello High, Rachel Noel Middle, and several elementary schools, and the opening of several new smaller schools.

1

6. I support the modified consent decree, the revised plan to serve the district's ELL students, that was recently agreed to by the Congress of Hispanic Educators, DPS, and the U.S. Department of Justice, and if appointed I will support the full implementation of the plan.

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## 3. Teaching and Learning

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7. In determining teacher employment, performance, and pay, student achievement (growth, test scores, college and career preparation) should play a significant factor (roughly 50%)

1

8. Denver teacher performance ratings as measured by growth and impact on student learning should be available to the public. This information might include the average growth scores for teachers in grades 3-10, or AP test pass rates for a high school teacher.

1

9. DPS should recruit and retain the best teachers whether they come from CU Boulder, Metro State, The New Teacher Project, Teach for America, or other comparable programs.

4

10. Teacher pay should be based primarily upon years of experience and educational attainment.

4

#### 4. School Choice

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11. Turnaround interventions for struggling schools as well as the creation/establishment of charters and other new schools are BOTH important strategies to improving student success.

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12. Denver charter schools should receive bond and mill levy funding equal to other public schools (including funding for facilities).

3

13. DPS should welcome and assist high-quality charter developers with resources (e.g. community investment funds and facilities) when they seek to locate in neighborhoods where academic performance is low. This should include allowing high-quality charters to operate in one of the district's recently closed facilities, or to co-locate in one of its underutilized facilities. Such new options deserve support even if it means nearby schools might lose enrollment.

3

14. DPS should actively support school choice for Denver families, giving them the opportunity to choose the best schools for their children.

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#### 5. Accountability and interventions for failing schools

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15. I support district and state level accountability measures that require schools to show academic growth.

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16. Schools rated Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation should receive additional funds and flexibility for TWO years to help foster progress; by then, if there is no substantial progress, dramatic intervention is appropriate.

5

17. Schools rated Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation should receive additional funds and flexibility for FOUR to SIX years to help foster progress.

3

18. After a school has been rated either Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation for three years in a row, I support a replacement strategy that might include a phase-out and/or a restart with a new operator and/or model.

1

19. DPS should support high-quality public schools (as determined by Denver's School Performance Framework) in

every neighborhood, regardless of whether the school is managed by DPS or is a public charter school.

5

## 6. School Finance

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**20. DPS must have more funding, but the most critical funding issue for K-12 public schools in Denver is to find a way for funds to go directly to schools.**

5

**21. The DPS school finance system needs to be redesigned so that 70% or more of funding follows students to their school of choice, or to programs based upon their needs. Funding should also be weighted to particular needs such as poverty.**

2

**22. DPS education spending should be more transparent and have "return on investment" measures so that parents and voters have a clearer understanding of where taxpayer money is spent and what brings the biggest return on public education investments.**

5

**23. Innovation schools should have control over nearly all of their finances and be able to choose the programs and professional development that meet the needs of their students.**

3

**24. Innovation schools, like charter schools, should be accountable for results, and their innovation status should continue only if they demonstrate good progress.**

3

## 7. School Governance

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**25. Check the position below—of the four options—that most closely reflects your own.**

2. It is the district's role to leave some decisions to school leaders but manage more than half of decisions regarding curriculum, school day, programs and staffing at the district level.

## 8. Priorities for Improving Student Achievement

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**26.**

**What do you believe are most important for DPS to raise student achievement? Rate in order of importance, with one being the highest; two, the second highest, etc.**

1. quality curriculum meeting high standards
2. district support for principals and teachers
3. community involvement
4. effective literacy and math programs
5. quality principals
6. district ensuring schools are accountable for performance
7. quality teachers
8. effective ELL programs

## 9. Priorities for K-12 education in our city

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**27. Rate in order of importance**

1. Provide better support for Denver's teachers
2. Reduce class size
3. Increase K-12 funding
4. Ensure that the high school degree is aligned with college readiness
5. Reform/revise pension system so that it is sustainable into the future
6. Expand number of new high-performing district and charter schools
7. Increase the level of accountability and intervention for low-performing schools
8. Change school finance formula and law
9. Revise collective bargaining agreements so that schools/principals have more authority to hire and fire
10. Redesign teacher evaluation and pay to retain the most effective teachers
11. Reward and hold educators responsible for student results
12. Increase on-line education options and other learning technology

**28. What do you believe is the most important role a school board member should play in ensuring all students in Denver's Public Schools receive the education they need and deserve?**

The most important role is to introduce policies and ideas that make the school district more successful and help the community realize how vital it is to support local public schools.

**Short bio - In 100 words or less, please provide some key information about yourself you wish voters to know. Our final report will include this brief bio that you provide. If you would like to email us a photo, we will do our best to include that in the report with your bio. Thank you.**

Sharla D. Williams is the Development Associate for Colorado Youth for a Change and a part time Reading Program Coordinator at Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver. She graduated with a B.S. in Psychology from Jackson State University and a Master's of Public Administration from the University of Colorado at Denver. She has worked with non-profits providing direct services to individuals in Denver metro area beginning in 2004. Sharla has spent nearly four years with Colorado Youth for a Change, providing educational services to youth in the Denver metro area.

**If you have children who do or who did attend schools in the Denver metro area, please list those schools.**

N/A.

**We welcome any comments or questions you have about this survey:**

It would be nice if you could save your answers and come back to it if you want to think about some of your answers.

**Please check "yes" if you like to be notified when our report is published and available on our website.**

Yes

**10. Thank You!**

**Send email**

Feb 04, 2013 16:06:05 Success: Email Sent to: sharlawilliams\_04@hotmail.com

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**Response Location**

<b>Country:</b>	United States
<b>Region:</b>	CO
<b>City:</b>	Denver
<b>Postal Code:</b>	80201
<b>Long &amp; Lat:</b>	Lat: 39.743698, Long:-104.979301

