Raising the Flag on Quality:
Measuring Important Early Childhood Outcomes
Steering Committee Analysis and Recommendations
# Table of Contents

**Introduction**  
6

**Recommendation 1**  
12  
CLASS implementation

**Recommendation 2**  
19  
Supplemental and/or alternative measures

**Recommendation 3**  
26  
Additional information about school performance

**Recommendation 4**  
31  
Formal assessments of the PK–8 PMF

**Conclusion**  
36  
Working toward an ideal early childhood performance framework
Acknowledgements

Raising the Flag on Quality: Measuring Important Early Childhood Outcomes Committee:
- **Tasia Bhegani**, Early Childhood Director, Friendship PCS
- **Chavaughn Brown**, Chief of Research and Innovation, AppleTree Institute For Education Innovation
- **Abby Carlson**, Director of Research & Impact, AppleTree Institute For Education Innovation
- **Abraham Clayman**, Principal, KIPP DC: LEAP Academy
- **Edmund Han**, Managing Director, Data & Analytics, KIPP DC
- **Stacie Kossoy**, Managing Director of Early Childhood Education, KIPP DC
- **Lisa Luceno**, Director of Early Childhood Strategy, Briya PCS
- **Jack McCarthy**, President and CEO, AppleTree Institute For Education Innovation
- **Jamie Miles**, Chief of Schools, AppleTree Schools
- **Chris Pencikowski**, Founder/Head of Schools, Lee Montessori
- **Regina Rodriguez-Garcia**, Executive Director, Shining Stars Montessori
- **Vielka Scott-Marcus**, Chief Academic Officer, Friendship PCS
- **Charis Sharp**, Executive Director, Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS
- **Ivy Valant**, Assistant Principal, Perry Street Preparatory PCS
- **Gilbert Wang**, Director of Technology and Operations, AppleTree Institute For Education Innovation

Early Learning Experts:
- **Elliot Regenstein**, Foresight Law + Policy
- **Kathy Hirsh-Pasek**, Temple University
- **Jacqueline Cosentino**, National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector

Project Facilitators:
- **Ashley Libetti**, Associate Partner, Bellwether Education Partners
- **Sara Mead**, Former Partner, Bellwether Education Partners
- **Natasha Parrilla**, Director of Communications & Early Learning Initiatives, AppleTree Institute For Education Innovation
- **Katie Rouse**, Senior Associate Partner, Bellwether Education Partners
In Memory of …

Jacqueline Mary Cossentino
1964–2019

Dr. Jackie Cossentino, co-founder and Executive Director of the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector, was a visionary, light and pioneer in the public Montessori movement. With will and determination she built an organization that has impacted thousands, as she worked tirelessly and brilliantly to make strong Montessori education visible and accessible to all families. We were honored to have Jackie lend her expertise to our project.
Raising the Flag on Quality: Measuring Important Early Childhood Outcomes
Steering Committee Analysis and Recommendations
Introduction:
Raising the Flag on Quality: Measuring Important Early Childhood Outcomes

Steering Committee Analysis and Recommendations
In 2019, the D.C. Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) oversaw a portfolio of over 60 local education agencies (LEAs) running 123 charter schools serving more than 43,000 students.¹ The DC PCSB employs a variety of accountability levers, including the Performance Management Framework (PMF), to ensure these schools provide high-quality education. The PMF is a tool designed to monitor and publicly report a school's performance using a set of standards and metrics thought to be indicative of quality (see below, Sidebar: Calculating a School’s PMF Score for more information about how the PMF is calculated).

Sidebar: Calculating a School’s PMF Score

A school’s PMF score is based on its performance using a combination of standards that are specific to its grade range and student population. The PMF score is calculated using categories, measures, and metrics. Categories are umbrella terms that signify a priority area for that school. The categories that affect prekindergarten grades are Student Outcomes and School Environment. Measures are the groups of tools that comprise a school’s score in each category. Early childhood charter schools, for example, have attendance as a measure in their School Environment category. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an evidence-based, observational instrument designed to assess the quality of adult–child interactions. Metrics are the calculation or formula for a given measure; there may be one or more metrics per measure. Attendance, for example, is measured using one metric (in-seat attendance), while CLASS is measured using three metrics (one metric for each of the domains of CLASS). Schools receive a number of “points” on each metric based on where their performance falls between a “floor” on a given metric and a higher “target.” The number of points schools receive is proportional to their “distance” between the floor and target. The points a school receives on each metric roll up to a total score, which determines the school’s tier. There are 100 possible points in the PMF. Schools that are Tier 1 received between 65 and 100 percent of all possible points; Tier 2 schools received between 35.0 and 64.9 percent of possible points; and Tier 3 schools received less than 34.9 percent of possible points.

Sidebar: Calculating a School’s PMF Score

Washington, D.C., makes substantial investments in early childhood education: It is the only jurisdiction in the country that provides near-universal prekindergarten (pre-k or PK) for both 3- and 4-year-olds, at per-pupil spending levels higher than those found in any other state-funded pre-k program. Under D.C.’s unique school governance and diverse delivery pre-k models, pre-k is delivered by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), over 37 charter LEAs, and community-based organizations. More than half of D.C.’s pre-k students are served in public charter schools, and the combination of the District’s generous pre-k funding and the autonomy established by D.C.’s charter school law provides an unparalleled opportunity for innovation in service of high-quality early learning for the District’s students, the majority of whom come from low-income backgrounds. Given this, the DC PCSB plays an important role in overseeing quality of pre-k in the District of Columbia, ensuring that taxpayer investments in pre-k charters result in outcomes for children, and fostering conditions that enable charter early childhood programs to innovate.

¹ https://dcpcs.egnyte.com/dl/7ywmvFSXjH/
The PMF plays an integral role in determining a school's trajectory. The DC PCSB assesses schools using the PMF every year. Parents and families often use that score to inform their school choice rankings, and the DC PCSB uses results from the PMF as a factor in school closure, renewal, and expansion decisions.

Given the sway the PMF has over a school's existence, it is crucial that the PMF accurately and comprehensively measures school performance. Moreover, the unique conditions that exist in the District of Columbia create a potential opportunity for the PCSB, in partnership with charter LEAs serving early childhood grades and other stakeholders, to innovate in its own approaches to monitoring charter pre-k and early childhood program quality and to develop and demonstrate for the nation more personalized and play-based approaches to pre-k and early grade accountability that go beyond the typical input- and compliance-based approaches that dominate the early childhood field. Additionally, the field of neuroscience in child development is evolving rapidly. This reality requires flexibility if the District is to keep pace with best practice.

To that end, in January 2019, the Trust for Learning funded a group of seven charter LEAs operating early childhood grades in the District to come together to form the **Raising the Flag on Quality: Measuring Important Early Childhood Outcomes** Steering Committee. The participating LEAs all serve pre-k but otherwise represent a range of grades, models, student populations, and wards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Early Childhood Public Charter LEAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briya Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIPP DC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Montessori Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry Street Preparatory Public Charter School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shining Stars Montessori Academy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The charge of the Steering Committee was to develop a set of concrete recommendations that could be used to design an aspirational, actionable, and equitable performance management framework for early childhood charter schools that addresses key limitations of the current PK–8 PMF² and better represents a holistic, child-centered measure of early childhood school quality. The Steering Committee’s recommendations further aim to support an accountability framework that is useful to teachers, parents, and administrators and is aligned with what schools already measure for their own quality and improvement purposes so that there are not two separate and distinct measurement systems. The vision would inform the establishment of pre-k frameworks nationally based on the decade of learning in D.C. and its measures of early childhood quality. This goal is what drove the work; this was the Steering Committee’s vision for success.

---

² Note there are several PMF configurations based on the student populations and grades that a school serves. This Steering Committee focused exclusively on the four PMF configurations that affect pre-k grades: 1) early childhood schools with only pre-k grades; 2) early childhood schools with pre-k grades, ending grades K–2; 3) elementary schools with pre-k grades, ending grade 3; and 4) elementary/middle schools with pre-k grades, ending grades 4–8. We refer to these configurations throughout this brief as the PK–8 PMF.
This work is particularly important because current accountability frameworks, in D.C. and across the country, often overlook pre-k outcomes and therefore provide very little incentive for schools to invest capacity and resources into early childhood. The PMF does more than most state accountability systems to incorporate measures of pre-k quality but still does not include pre-k outcomes for schools that serve elementary-aged students.

So while these recommendations focus on the components of the PK–8 PMF that affect pre-k grades, the Steering Committee envisions a PMF in which accountability structures for pre-k are aligned with and mutually reinforce the accountability structures for higher grades.

To work toward this goal, the Steering Committee spent nearly 30 hours together over the course of six working sessions. During these sessions, the Steering Committee leveraged multiple sources of information, including desk research and analysis, engagement and interviews with external experts in early childhood program quality and measurement, and group-generated insight and content (see below, Figure A for more information about the sequence and scope of the Steering Committee’s work).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>During this session, the Steering Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | Project Kick off | • Aligned on the purpose, goals, and outcomes of this work  
• Agreed on a decision-making process  
• Provided insight on the strengths and weaknesses of the PMF from the perspective of multiple stakeholders |
| 2       | Guiding Principles and Accountability | • Identified guiding principles for an ideal performance management framework  
• Further refined our shared definition of success  
• Better understood the importance of this work, particularly given the connection between early childhood and K-12 accountability |
| 3       | Measurement Tools and Approaches | • Learned about currently available tools, opportunities to better measure early childhood program quality, and useful developments in the field  
• Processed what we learned and considered implications for our change |
| 4       | Components other than CLASS | • Analyzed and applied new information on domains and tools  
• Developed initial recommendations for what components to measure other than CLASS and how to measure them in short-, mid-, and long-term success |
| 5       | CLASS | • Learned about the best uses of and developments in CLASS  
• Analyzed and applied new information to hone our thinking about CLASS and elevate the information we need to develop our recommendations |
| 6       | Final Recommendations | • Refined initial recommendations and aligned on a final set to propose  
• Strategized how to build buy-in and support across the sector |

Figure A. Steering Committee scope and sequence

During the 10 months together, the Steering Committee came to an agreement on a vision for success. The group developed a suite of short- and mid-term recommendations and outlined a long-term vision for what an ideal PK–8 PMF would look like. Short-term recommendations are adjustments to the framework that are within the realm of what could potentially be supported by the DC PCSB currently and implemented in the next 18 months. Mid-term recommendations are revisions to the framework or actions by the DC PCSB or the field that would provide information for and set up the DC PCSB and field to pursue the Steering Committee’s long-term vision.
The Steering Committee's short- and mid-term recommendations fall into four categories:

- Improve the implementation of CLASS.
- Explore supplemental and/or alternative ways to measure school performance.
- Create opportunities for additional information about school performance on the PK–8 PMF to be shared with families and other stakeholders.
- Conduct formal assessments of the PK–8 PMF at regular intervals.

All of these short- and mid-term recommendations are designed to ultimately support the Steering Committee’s long-term vision for a pre-k performance management framework (see below, Figure B for a preview). The Steering Committee sought to be aspirational and defined its aspirations in the long-term vision but also acknowledged that these long-term aspirations cannot all be achieved in the current context. The long-term vision outlines an ideal pre-k performance management framework that, with the success of the short- and mid-term recommendations and anticipated progress in the field, could be accomplished in the next five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provides valid and reliable information for choice and transparency, accountability, and school improvement</th>
<th>Is multi-dimensional and incorporates quantitative and qualitative data</th>
<th>Is correlated with long-term student success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rewards schools that effectively serve nontraditional or high-need student populations</td>
<td>Support multiple school models and innovation</td>
<td>Is informed by the latest child development research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure B. Steering Committee’s vision for a pre-k performance management framework**

This brief outlines the Steering Committee's recommendations and long-term vision in five sections: one section for each of the four categories of recommendations, which includes context, analysis and rationale for the recommendations, and detailed information about the Steering Committee's recommendations. Additionally, the final section of this brief includes an explanation of the Steering Committee’s long-term vision for a pre-k performance management framework.
Recommendation 1: 
Improve the implementation of CLASS
Introduction and context

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an evidence-based, observational instrument designed to assess the quality of adult–child interactions. Over the past decade, many states and the federal Head Start program have adopted CLASS as a measure of quality in early childhood and pre-k programs. In the context of the PMF, CLASS is one of the tools used to measure the School Environment category for prekindergarten classrooms.³ CLASS is also included in the OSSE’s STAR framework (see below Sidebar: OSSE and STAR for more information).

Sidebar: OSSE and STAR

Because prekindergarten is funded as part of D.C.’s Uniform per Student Funding Formula, D.C.’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE³) administers and oversees pre-k programs in the District, including those operated by charter schools. The OSSE chooses the statewide early childhood assessment and holds the contract with the vendor for oversight. In an agreement with the DC PCSB, the OSSE shares the aggregated results for input into their PMF and agreed to use the PMF results to satisfy their early childhood reporting requirements for public charter schools serving grades pre-k only and schools serving pre-k through grade 2.

All public charter schools that offer both pre-k and at least one grade in grades 3–12 are included in the OSSE’s School Transparency and Reporting (STAR⁴) framework and receive a STAR score.

STAR is the state framework for measuring school quality that meets the requirements defined by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA⁴). The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS⁴) measures pre-k performance as part of the STAR framework. The OSSE pays for every DCPS, charter school, and community-based organization’s CLASS observations and conducts visits at each campus once per year.

Any proposed changes to components of the STAR framework, including CLASS, must be discussed with and approved by the OSSE and the federal Department of Education.

³ Note that in Montessori schools, which have multiage classroom groupings, children ages 3–5 are typically in the same classroom, so for Montessori schools CLASS observations also include kindergarten, as well as pre-k, students.
While the Steering Committee believes that CLASS provides valuable information about classroom quality, members expressed concerns with how CLASS is implemented in Washington, D.C., and the committee believes important steps should be taken immediately to improve the application of CLASS to make it more useful and informative for schools.

The Steering Committee developed recommendations to address this issue. At a high level, their recommendations fall into two broad categories:

- Test alternative ways to conduct and improve the validity and reliability of observations.
- Maximize the usefulness of CLASS as an informational and continuous improvement tool.
Analysis and rationale for recommendations

At the outset of this work, the Steering Committee identified four primary concerns with the implementation of CLASS:

- A school’s annual CLASS score is determined by a single observation, conducted on a single day out of a 180+ day school year.
- CLASS observers often have too little time and too little training to effectively cover the number and range of classrooms they must observe.
- Information on CLASS performance that is shared with schools as part of the PMF is not useful for driving evidence-based program improvement because of the way the observations are administered and reported back to LEAs.
- The way that the PCSB currently awards PMF “points” to schools based on CLASS performance is based on targets that may not be fully aligned with all available research on the thresholds by which CLASS predicts gains in student learning.

To better understand CLASS and its role in the PMF and to identify potential strategies to address these implementation concerns, Steering Committee members shared their own experience with CLASS observations and scores, reviewed available research on CLASS⁴, spoke with external experts (such as Dr. Bridget Hamre, chief impact officer at Teachstone, the developer of CLASS), and engaged with staff from the DC PCSB.

From this research, the Steering Committee found that best practice suggests that, to maximize reliability of CLASS when used in an evaluative framework for a school, the following standards should be in place:

- Training and calibration between observers must be consistently updated.
- CLASS observations should be conducted over multiple visits.
- Observations should occur at a time during the year that is representative of the average performance of the school during that year (i.e., not during the very beginning or very end of the school year).
- Timing and methods for conducting observations should be comparable across schools (e.g., duration of observations, number of observations, number of cycles, and time point in year).

Additionally, best practice suggests that, to maximize the usefulness of CLASS, certain activities should be prioritized:

- Build CLASS buy-in and knowledge among stakeholders (e.g., ensure that school leaders and other stakeholders understand what they can — and cannot — infer about a school's quality from a CLASS score; provide observer notes with CLASS scores).
- Share qualitative and quantitative data and feedback (e.g., CLASS observer notes) with school leaders to support their ability to learn from and make improvement adjustments based on their CLASS score.

In the review of the research, the Steering Committee analyzed the evidence on the relationship between CLASS performance and child outcomes.⁵ Multiple studies indicate that an Emotional Support score of 5, a Classroom Organization score of 5, and an Instructional Support score of between 3.00 and 3.25 are a “threshold” above which programs produce greater gains in student learning outcomes.

This suggests that systems that rate or seek to improve the quality of early childhood programs should be designed to prioritize moving programs to these threshold levels and should reward those that reach or exceed them while also incentivizing further improvement above the thresholds.

The Steering Committee’s review of the current state of the PMF, however, suggests that the DC PCSB’s current approach to CLASS may not be fully aligned with that research. The DC PCSB currently uses a “floors and targets” approach to incorporate CLASS into the PMF (see Sidebar: Calculating a School’s PMF Score for more information on how a school’s PMF score is calculated). The PCSB sets separate floors and targets for each of the three CLASS domains. The DC PCSB has not yet set PMF floors and targets for CLASS for the current school year, but the research-based thresholds referenced above fall at the midpoint between the floors and targets used in the 2018–19 school year, meaning that a school whose CLASS scores were just at the research-based thresholds in 2018–19 would receive 50 percent of available PMF points for CLASS.

Floors and targets provide a reasonable approach to integrating data from a variety of quantitative metrics that are scored on different scales and have varying performance distributions into a single, common metric of school performance, but they may be less appropriate for a measure such as CLASS, where there is discontinuity in the relationship between a school’s or classroom’s performance and children’s learning outcomes above or below a certain threshold. Given the weight of these measures in the current PMF, this approach is a cause of major concern for the Steering Committee.

Finally, through this research phase, the Steering Committee learned that Teachstone is in the process of developing an additional tool and supplementary materials to complement the existing CLASS tool. These updates are still in development and are not yet available for public use, but as they become available, the OSSE and PCSB may wish to consider integrating them into the STAR and PMF frameworks in the future to provide a more holistic picture of school performance. Partnering with Teachstone to test these tools through pilots, research partnerships, and other initiatives can inform the next phase of improvements to the PMF and other early childhood quality monitoring efforts (see Sidebar: Use of CLASS in Louisiana’s Unified Rating System).

---

¹ Burchinal et al. (2010); Burchinal et al. (2014); Vernon-Feagans et al. (2018).
Sidebar: Use of CLASS in Louisiana’s Unified Rating System

Louisiana employs a Unified Rating System that assesses the performance of early childhood sites based on one measure: their performance on CLASS. These ratings have considerable stakes for pre-k programs and teachers, as programs that receive ratings below a certain threshold are placed on improvement plans and may eventually lose licensure, and ratings are also used to determine the amount of Louisiana school readiness tax credits that a program and its staff qualify for. Early childhood classrooms are observed using CLASS at least once per semester. All pre-K and toddler classrooms at every publicly funded site are observed at least once per semester. Beginning with the 2019–20 school year, all infant classrooms will be observed as well. This number of observations is possible because, unlike the centralized observation structures utilized by Head Start and the OSSE, Louisiana coordinates CLASS observations through local community networks. Each local network (typically, but not always, an LEA is responsible for developing its own pool of trained CLASS observers to observe classrooms operated by schools and center-based early childhood providers within the parish (Louisiana’s equivalent of a county) or parishes covered by the network. The pool of local observers may include contractors, site-level administrators, and lead agency staff. To ensure reliability, the state audits up to 50 percent of observations and holds local networks accountable for ensuring reliable observers. If the local scores differ significantly from the state auditor’s scores, then the state scores are used as the reported score. An observer whose scores are consistently different from the state auditor’s scores loses the ability to serve as an observer for that LEA. Early evidence suggests that the local observers’ ratings are consistent with the ratings of independent researchers who observed the same classrooms. Further, Louisiana’s approach addresses a key concern of the Steering Committee: It engages school staff and stakeholders in observing indicators of quality in a way that integrates and aligns the incentives and processes between school- and state-level quality monitoring and improvement efforts.⁶

Detailed recommendations

As discussed, the Steering Committee's recommendations focus on revising the implementation and use of CLASS to align with best-in-class implementation and the current research on effective practices. To that end, the Steering Committee's recommendations around CLASS fall into two categories: 1) Explore alternative ways to conduct and improve the validity and reliability of observations and 2) maximize the usefulness of CLASS as an informational and continuous improvement tool.

The recommendations below focus exclusively on CLASS, but they are best understood alongside the other recommendations outlined in this memo, specifically those on exploring additional measures. The Steering Committee created these recommendations assuming that CLASS is going to remain a component of the PMF, at least in the short-term. Several members have reservations, however, about the limitations of CLASS and the fact that it focuses on only a subset of factors and would be interested in alternative classroom-level, observational measures. The Developmental Environmental Rating Scale, for example, is a classroom-level observational measure that is currently undergoing validation that may in the future enable it to be considered as a replacement for or alternative to CLASS observations.

Identifying additional measures that provide a more comprehensive, valid, and reliable picture of pre-k charter schools’ performance and impact on student learning (as discussed below) would also enable the PCSB to reduce the percentage of a school’s PMF score that is based on other indicators (e.g., attendance and CLASS), the limitations of which as measures of school quality are addressed elsewhere in this brief. PK-only schools would also like to reduce the percentage of their PMF scores that is based on CLASS. For these reasons, Steering Committee members believe that the PMF goals may be best served, in the long-term, by combining improvements in implementation of CLASS with adoption of new measures that more fully reflect what schools do and their impacts for children. The combination of measures included in the PMF and their weighting should be subject continuously improved, informed by both experience implementing measures in D.C. and developments in research and the broader field.

Additionally, it is crucial to note that the DC PCSB does not have the final say in how CLASS is implemented. The D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is responsible for administering CLASS (see Sidebar: OSSE and STAR for more information). However, the PCSB could choose to supplement what the OSSE does (although this would carry a financial cost) and has the autonomy to decide how it uses and interprets CLASS data in the PMF. In fact, the DC PCSB has done this already by ordering reports to be generated for all public charter school observations. While the OSSE holds the contract, the DC PCSB paid for these reports to be generated. To that end, the DC PCSB also investigated the cost and time commitment of conducting multiple observations throughout the year while still following the guidelines of not observing in the beginning or end of the year; this was ultimately put to vote by the task force and rejected by the majority of LEAs. These recommendations focus on the role that the DC PCSB could play, but moving forward with several of these recommendations will require collaboration with the OSSE as well.
Explore alternative ways to conduct observations to improve validity and reliability

In the short-term, the Steering Committee proposes six revisions that suggest the DC PCSB experiment with alternative ways to conduct and improve the validity and reliability of observations. Specifically:

- Strengthen quality control for observer training and practices:
  - Establish norms that prevent CLASS observer fatigue (e.g., no more than X observations in a day).
  - Require observers to regularly demonstrate reliability (e.g., score an 80 percent or higher on CLASS certification test in the past X months).
- To ensure observation data is comparable across schools, conduct CLASS observations for all schools between November and April.
- Increase the number of CLASS observations (presumably accompanied by other changes to increase the validity and reliability of CLASS scores, as proposed in the other recommendations in this section).

The Steering Committee recognizes that implementing all of these recommendations might increase the costs for the OSSE and PCSB to administer the CLASS but believes that weight of CLASS scores in PMF ratings that have meaningful consequences for schools merits sufficient expenditure to ensure accuracy of scores. To facilitate an increased number of CLASS observations, the group also suggested that the OSSE explore alternatives that might enable CLASS observations to be conducted in a way that is more cost-effective, less intrusive, and much more useful in terms of improving teaching and learning for schools and teachers. Potential options for further exploration include:

- Pilot a “Louisiana-style” CLASS observation arrangement (discussed in detail above).
- Pilot a video-based CLASS observation method as a potential opportunity to provide a supplemental check for reliability and validity of in-person observations, to complement in-person observations, to make observations more efficient, or to reduce observer fatigue.

To further support this goal, the Steering Committee developed two additional mid-term recommendations focused on improving the use of CLASS. Specifically:

- Given the work that Teachstone is doing to develop an additional tool and supplementary materials to complement the existing CLASS tool, stay abreast of updates from Teachstone vis-a-vis CLASS and, when new materials become available, explore the potential of incorporating these materials into the PMF or as resources to support schools in improving classroom quality, taking into account the advantages and disadvantages for schools, the DC PCSB, the OSSE, and other stakeholders.
- Require CLASS observers who observe schools that utilize specific models (e.g., Montessori) or serve specific populations of children (e.g., students with special needs, dual language learners) to have expertise in those models or populations.
Maximize the usefulness of CLASS as an informational and continuous improvement tool

In the short-term, the Steering Committee proposes four recommendations for maximizing the usefulness of CLASS as an informational and continuous improvement tool. Specifically:

- Provide schools with CLASS observers’ notes, as well as scores, so that schools have additional context to understand their ratings and can share this feedback with coaches and teachers if they choose to do so.
- Share CLASS observation reports with schools within two weeks of observations.
- Create an appeals process specific to a school’s CLASS score to ensure accuracy of the CLASS score used in high-stakes decisions for schools. LEAs should be able to appeal their CLASS scores where there is evidence that quality control measures established by the OSSE were violated during the observation process. LEAs that have objective, validated CLASS observation scores from other sources should also be able to appeal if there is a substantial discrepancy between the OSSE’s scores and other validated scores. Year-to-year CLASS score changes larger than one standard deviation should also trigger an automatic review by the OSSE to determine if irregularities occurred in the process. Appeals should be made to the OSSE, which should have the ability to invalidate scores or require new observations in response to evidence provided during the appeal.
- Consider replacing or supplementing the current “floors and targets” scoring of CLASS with other strategies to recognize and give credit to programs for exceeding research-based thresholds (5.0 for classroom organization and emotional support and 3.00 to 3.25 for instructional support). For instance, the PCSB could provide an additional point on the PMF for each CLASS domain in which a school’s pre-k programs exceeds the research-based threshold, or it could award a share of PMF points based on the percentage of a school’s pre-k classrooms that exceed the research threshold in all domains. These are just a few potential options, and any revisions to how the PCSB assigns available points for CLASS based on a school’s CLASS score must be informed by both the research literature on CLASS and by a careful analysis of the implications of different scoring options given schools’ existing and historical CLASS data, and must be subject to continuous improvement.
Recommendation 2:
Explore supplemental and/or alternative ways to measure school performance
Introduction and context

The PMF is designed to integrate data from multiple indicators of school quality and performance into a single rating that both authorizers and parents can use to make decisions about individual charter schools. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, states are increasingly moving from accountability systems that measured schools based on a single indicator of quality — student proficiency on state assessments — to integrating multiple measures of school quality and performance. Although ESSA allows states to include measures of early childhood or pre-k program quality in school performance measures, relatively few do so.⁷ The DC PCSB’s PMF is thus unique in that it seeks to integrate measures of pre-k and early elementary quality into overall school accountability measures and, in doing so, incentivizes schools and LEAs to invest resources in and attention to pre-k. As such, it has the potential to offer a model from which other states and charter authorizers can learn.

For most charter schools in the District of Columbia, PMF scores are calculated based on performance in several categories: Student Progress; Student Achievement; College and Career Readiness or, in PK–8, “Gateway”; and School Environment. The specific combination and weights of these categories, however, depends on the grades that the school serves. The PMF calculation for schools that end at grade 3 and above includes all three categories; for schools that end at grades K–2, the PMF calculation includes only the Student Progress and School Environment categories. The PMF calculation for schools that only serve prekindergarten students (known as PK-only schools) includes School Environment and a different category called Student Outcomes. All other schools that serve prekindergarten students, regardless of which grade they end at, are also required to use the Student Outcomes category, but those measures are for display only: While they are included on their public School Quality Report school profiles, they are not incorporated into the PMF score.

For the PK grades, School Environment is measured using CLASS, attendance, and re-enrollment. Student Outcomes is measured by prekindergarten student performance on ELA and math student-level assessments selected by the school out of a bank of approved assessments. Schools may also decide to administer a social emotional assessment to prekindergarten students, but doing so is optional.

⁷ Regenstein, op cit.
The Steering Committee believes that the current PMF structure, measures, and business rules used to assess School Environment and Student Outcomes for schools serving pre-k students are valuable but could better reflect the holistic quality of how schools are serving early childhood students.⁸

The Steering Committee developed recommendations to address these concerns. At a high level, their recommendations fall into two categories:

- Actively seek out and engage in opportunities to complement or replace existing tools with tools that more fully reflect student progress in key domains.
- Ensure business rules and score calculations related to Student Outcomes and School Environment categories and measures remove disincentives for practices that are aligned with quality but are not recognized in the current PMF.

⁸ Note that the Steering Committee had concerns about the use of CLASS in the PMF, which is a measure that affects a school’s School Environment category score. There is a separate recommendation section dedicated to the use of CLASS in the PMF.
Analysis and rationale for recommendations

At the outset of this work, the Steering Committee identified three issues with the tools and business rules used to measure school performance:

- The PMF is missing measures of domains that are important for students’ development and long-term school and life success (e.g., executive function, culture and climate).
- Current instruments used to measure performance on School Environment and Student Outcomes do not reflect all dimensions of early childhood program quality that matter to schools and parents.
- The floors and targets and calculation formulas for certain measures likely create an inaccurate picture of the school’s overall performance that is used for high-stakes accountability.

To better understand the Student Outcomes and School Environment categories of the PMF and to identify potential strategies to improve on the current approach, the Steering Committee reviewed research on the landscape of measurement tools, spoke with external experts, and engaged with staff from the DC PCSB. The Steering Committee also worked closely together to develop, based on their own experiences and the experiences of others at their schools, a long-term vision for their ideal PMF.

One of the primary goals of this research was to identify performance management structures and measurement tools being used by researchers, early childhood quality-monitoring entities, or other authorizers to evaluate the quality of early childhood programs at the child, classroom, or school level. Through this research, the Steering Committee looked for a measurement tool or performance management structure that aligned with its long-term vision for an early childhood performance management framework (see the final section, Working toward an ideal early childhood performance management framework, for more information about the Steering Committee’s long-term vision). Specifically, the Steering Committee hoped to identify one or more multidimensional, valid, and reliable measurement tools that are informed by child development research, that are correlated with long-term student success, and that can be used for accountability purposes, either individually or in combination with other tools.

The consensus from this research was that the measurement tools currently used in the Student Outcomes category of the PMF represent the best available in the field at this point in time but that the need for “better” measurement tools is urgent and important.

The Steering Committee’s review of the literature and best practice revealed that no existing measurement tool or performance management structure currently meets all of these priorities. There was a strong consensus that this is an opportunity for research to practice partnerships as part of a medium-term improvement plan. A likely reason for the lack of measurement tools or PMF structures is the “outlier” status of Washington, D.C., in terms of providing funding for public preschool and prekindergarten at a robust level. As a quality leader in terms of funding and quality outcomes, D.C. provides a diversified data set and unparalleled opportunity for early childhood researchers to develop, pilot, and evaluate more useful measurement instruments intended to guide teaching and learning and program monitoring.
The Steering Committee found, however, that there are dozens of measurement tools in development that will measure child-, classroom-, or school-level early childhood quality across multiple domains. Several examples were consistently elevated by experts and in the literature as promising (noted below, in Figure C). While these tools have not yet been fully validated or are not widely available, they are promising options to consider in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Promising Measurement Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Toybox</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental Environmental Rating Scale</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minnesota Executive Function Scale</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quick Language Interactive Screener</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Education Essentials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research-Based Early Maths Assessment -Short Forms</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Indicates if the measure has predictive validity. **

Figure C. Examples of promising measurement tools

Additionally, this research suggested that there are other performance domains that are crucial for children’s development but that are not currently included in the PMF. Executive function, in particular, repeatedly came up as an important facet of a young child’s learning and development for which validated and reliable measures exist. The Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS) is a measure of executive function that has been nationally normed for children 2 years and older, based on data from more than 70,000 individual assessments. Reflection Sciences, which developed the MEFS based on research on early childhood executive function conducted by founders Stephanie Carlson and Phil Zelazo, is currently working with or developing partnerships with several school districts across the country to deliver the MEFS. Wayzata School District in Minnesota, for example, is using the MEFS to assess 40 percent of 4-year-olds in the district’s early education programs.
Detailed recommendations

The Steering Committee’s recommendations are designed to ensure that the School Environment and Student Outcomes categories of the PMF better reflect a school’s quality and impact on young children’s development and learning. These recommendations may also be incorporated in other states’, districts’, or charter authorizers’ early childhood accountability systems and performance management frameworks. To that end, the Steering Committee’s recommendations around School Environment and Student Outcome measures fall into two categories:

- Actively seek out and engage in opportunities to complement or replace existing tools with higher-quality options as part of a research-to-practice, continuous improvement approach to periodically revising the performance management framework — especially for early childhood.
- Analyze the effect of certain changes to business rules and calculations on schools’ PMF scores.

The recommendations below explore supplemental and/or alternative ways to measure school performance on the PMF but intentionally exclude the CLASS measure of School Environment because recommendations related to CLASS are discussed in a separate section of this brief. Please note that the two sets of recommendations intersect and are best reviewed alongside each other.

**Actively seek out and engage in opportunities to complement or replace existing tools with higher-quality options**

The Steering Committee developed several short-term recommendations designed to encourage innovation with measurement tools among early childhood charter schools in the District and the DC PCSB. Specifically, through the PK–8 Task Force, the Steering Committee suggests that the DC PCSB conduct regular landscape scans of potential additions or alternatives to existing measurement tools, including, but not limited to, tools that measure student learning in math, language and literacy, social emotional learning, and executive function and that measure classroom environment and school culture and climate.

Further, the Steering Committee recommends specific opportunities to act on promising findings from this Steering Committee:

- Submit the validated measurement tools discussed during the meetings of this Steering Committee (noted with asterisks in Figure C) to the Early Childhood Approved Assessment List.
- Establish a formal pilot among the OSSE, DC PCSB, and early childhood charter schools with the goal of including a valid and reliable executive function measure in the PMF.
- The Steering Committee will commit to participating in the pilot of a school culture and climate measure currently underway between the OSSE and Georgetown University. At the end of the pilot, there should be formal discussions between the DC PCSB and early childhood charter schools about the potential of including a culture and climate measure in the PMF and establishing a pilot to do so, taking lessons from the EEE pilot where appropriate.
- Write a memo to developers outlining the Steering Committee’s priorities and ideals for a measurement tool and expressing the Steering Committee’s willingness to pilot.
- If these efforts identify measurement tools that provide valid and reliable measures of schools’ contributions to children’s learning in domains important for long-term school and life success or that can provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of school quality than existing measures alone, the DC PCSB should begin formal conversations to incorporate these measures into the PMF and commensurately reduce the weighting of existing measures.
Analyze the effect of certain changes to business rules and calculations on schools' PMF scores

Translating the various measures that are included in any performance framework into a single score for school accountability purposes is a complex, technical undertaking that involves weighing various trade-offs. The Steering Committee identified several potential opportunities for improvement in the way that PMF scores are currently calculated for schools serving early childhood grades. Based on these considerations, it recommends that the DC PCSB explore the potential impacts of several possible courses of action, including:

- Revising how student outcome measures for math and reading for PK-only schools are scored to enable schools to earn the full possible points without achieving 100 percent proficiency (this recommendation only applies to PK-only schools).
- Including PK student outcomes in PMF scoring for schools serving grades above pre-k to incentivize increased attention to pre-k grades (this recommendation only applies to PK–above schools).
- Exploring whether it is possible for data collected across the multiple, different pre-k assessments chosen by different schools to be evaluated in a comparable way. This would require consultation with tool developers and external psychometricians and/or econometricians.
- Analyzing relationships between student-level attendance in pre-k and student outcome data to inform how attendance is measured and included in the PMF.⁹
- Exploring whether it is possible to include measures of school or student growth, along with snapshot measures, in Student Outcomes and School Environment categories.

Because of the complex technical considerations and trade-offs involved in all of these options, the Steering Committee is not recommending any of them at this time. Rather, it recommends that the PCBS conduct the necessary analyses to determine how such options might affect the PMF ratings of different schools and/or whether these options might provide a more accurate and comparable assessment of performance.

⁹ Average daily attendance (ADA) is the percent of enrolled students who attend school each day, on average, including excused absences. \( ADA = \frac{\text{total # of days present} + \text{# excused absences total}}{\text{total # days enrolled}}. \) In-seat attendance (ISA) is a similar calculation but does not count excused absences in the numerator. \( ISA = \frac{\text{total # of days present}}{\text{total # days enrolled}}. \)
Recommendation 3: Create opportunities for additional information about school performance on the PK–8 PMF to be shared with families and other stakeholders
Introduction and context

The DC PCSB uses the PMF to annually evaluate the performance of charter schools in its portfolio. The DC PCSB communicates the findings of those evaluations to teachers, schools, families, and the public via the School Quality Report.

The School Quality Report is a compilation of school-level performance profiles. Each school performance profile has five sections of information about the school:

1. School tiers and scores over the past five years
2. Overview of school operations (e.g., grades served, year opened, leadership)
3. Student demographics, which includes total enrollment, disaggregated by racial/ethnic subgroups and English learner, economically disadvantaged, special education, and at-risk populations
4. A note from the school, which is a narrative where the school can provide additional contextual information, such as its mission, program model, or accomplishments
5. The school’s performance over the previous year, including detailed information on the school’s scores on the measures in each category, its total score, and the corresponding tier

The purpose of the School Quality Report and individual school profiles is to communicate information to families and other stakeholders about the overall performance of D.C.’s charter sector and school-specific performance and to inform school choice decisions.

The Steering Committee believes that the current School Quality Report and school profiles¹⁰ are valuable in communicating important information. At the same time, the Steering Committee is concerned that the school profiles do not capture the full context of the school, particularly for pre-k. Moreover, because the different assessments used by PK-only schools to measure Student Outcomes are not familiar to parents and the public, it is difficult for these audiences to interpret schools’ results on these measures.

To address these concerns, the Steering Committee developed recommendations in two categories:

- Include the option for providing additional context in the School Quality Report school profiles (beyond what is currently shared).
- Create additional opportunities for families and stakeholders to learn about the ways in which charter schools are held accountable for their performance and how to interpret the information shared about school performance.

¹⁰ Note that Steering Committee members’ perspectives are based on the School Quality Report and school profiles up to the 2018–19 school year. The DC PCSB updated the format and layout of the School Quality Report and school profiles for the 2019–20 school year. Based on information available as of November 2019, the updated school profiles would not include the Steering Committee’s recommended changes to the school profiles.
Analysis and rationale for recommendations

The Steering Committee identified several issues with the current structure and components of the School Quality Report and school profiles:

- The school profiles are missing contextual information that is necessary to accurately interpret a school’s scores. Specifically:
  - Schools’ attendance scores should be understood in the context that prekindergarten attendance is not compulsory in the District.
  - The distribution of child performance on self-selected prekindergarten student assessments is not consistent across types of assessments.

- Schools lack adequate space or opportunities on the school profiles to provide context on school performance and to highlight key features to help families and stakeholders better understand what the school offers.
Detailed recommendations

The Steering Committee’s recommendations are designed to ensure that the School Quality Report and student profiles provide families and stakeholders with the information and context they need to interpret a school’s PMF score and draw conclusions about a school’s performance. Specifically, the Steering Committee recommends:

- Providing an opportunity to include additional context about schools’ early childhood programs in the School Quality Report school profiles.

Include additional context about schools’ early childhood programs in the School Quality Report school profiles

- Include additional context in the School Quality Report school profiles to provide information to families and other stakeholders on the self-selected child assessment measures used for pre-k, what these assessments measure, and distribution and interpretation of assessment scores across different schools.
- Include additional context in the School Quality Report school profiles that notes that attendance is not compulsory in the District for prekindergarten grades.
- Provide parents and other users clearer and more consistent guidance on the meaning of each Tier level.
- Provide opportunities to include other optional contextual information about a school’s early childhood programs in the School Quality Report school profiles to help families and other stakeholders make informed decisions and conclusions about schools, such as additional descriptive information about a school’s educational philosophy and approach (e.g., Montessori), discipline policies, specialized programming, availability of wraparound and support services (e.g., mental health), and affiliations. This information can help parents and other stakeholders better understand how schools serve children in the grades that do not participate in statewide testing.
Recommendation 4:
Conduct formal assessments of the PK–8 PMF at regular intervals
Introduction and context

Over the course of the Steering Committee’s work, it became clear that the early childhood assessment and measurement tool landscape is changing. In the current landscape, the tools do not allow the Steering Committee to operationalize its long-term vision for the PK–8 PMF. But those tools will exist in the future — which presents an incredible opportunity for the Steering Committee, the DC PCSB, and others interested in better measuring early childhood program quality.

Since the development of the first PMF, the DC PCSB has recognized the continually evolving state of the field and has had the courage and vision to thoughtfully iterate on the PMF to adapt to those changes. The dynamic nature of the PMF demonstrates the DC PCSB’s commitment to the necessary and essential work of continuous improvement.

The DC PCSB has several structures and systems currently in place to improve the PK–8 PMF. The DC PCSB conducts analyses of school-level and sector-wide data at least annually, and more frequently as required, to determine if any revisions to business rules or floors and targets need to be made. If so, the DC PCSB carefully develops a set of proposed changes, taking into account the effect those changes will have on schools, and shares and discusses the proposed changes with the field via PK–8 Task Force meetings. Stakeholders are able to submit public comments on those changes, which the DC PCSB takes into account. There are also opportunities for schools to suggest their own changes to the PK–8 PMF. Schools can submit, for example, new student-level assessments for prekindergarten to be added to the approved bank of assessments that schools can use for their self-selected Student Outcome measures.

The DC PCSB has also made more substantial revisions to its performance management structures — such as the development of the Alternative Accountability Framework — and is starting a process to more fundamentally rethink the PMF for all schools.

But the field is shifting more rapidly and to a greater degree than previous iterations or current structures can keep pace with, and the Steering Committee believes that alternative approaches to revising the PK-8 PMF can help to ensure it effectively and accurately assesses and communicates the quality of early childhood charter schools. In order to maintain its standard for quality and continue to refine and improve the PK–8 PMF to move toward an ideal vision, the Steering Committee suggests that the DC PCSB have in place structures and systems to conduct regular reviews of the PK–8 PMF in its entirety.
To move toward the long-term vision for an early childhood PMF as outlined by the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee recommends that the DC PCSB take two types of actions to address its concerns:

- Develop a process to more fundamentally assess the PK–8 PMF and structures and commit to implementing this process at regular intervals going forward.
- Incorporate early childhood voices from across the field in analysis and revision discussions of the PK–8 PMF.
Analysis and rationale for recommendations

As mentioned, the Steering Committee has identified potential areas of growth around the consistency of and the degree to which the DC PCSB reviews the PK–8 PMF. Specifically:

- The majority of revisions to the PMF are around technical aspects of the PMF (e.g., separating measures in the Student Achievement category into middle and elementary grades), rather than the PMF in its entirety. Given the shifting context in the field, the Steering Committee believes that regular, comprehensive analyses of the overall structure and approach to charter school accountability are warranted.

- The DC PCSB could more consistently and actively seek out the best available research and measurement tools, practices and thinking of other early childhood quality monitoring entities, and voices of early childhood charter schools from across the District. It is clear that the DC PCSB regularly conducts analyses to inform its proposed revisions and gives any charter school the opportunity to engage in public comment on them. But revision-specific research is inherently limited in scope and does not require a thorough landscape scan, and revision-specific comments do not fully capture the feedback from the sector, suggesting the DC PCSB could be missing out on useful key themes and reactions. The Steering Committee believes both of these sources of information are crucial for ensuring the effectiveness of the PK–8 PMF.

To better understand the opportunities to address these concerns, the Steering Committee reviewed the processes through which the DC PCSB revisits and revises the PK–8 PMF, analyzed research on the landscape of measurement tools, spoke with external experts, and engaged with staff from the DC PCSB. The Steering Committee also worked closely together to develop, based on their own experiences and the experiences of others at their schools, a long-term vision for their ideal early childhood performance framework.

The Steering Committee’s review of the literature and best practice revealed that there are dozens of new measurement tools in development that will measure child-, classroom-, or school-level early childhood quality across multiple domains (specific examples of these tools are noted in Figure C) and that norms and standards for current tools are constantly being updated. There is also evidence that other authorizers and jurisdictions are doing innovative work to more holistically measure charter school performance.

Finally, in conversations with experts, the Steering Committee gained a deeper appreciation for the ways in which federal policy historically shaped the theory of action behind early childhood accountability. The effects of ESSA, in particular, suggest a need for a more careful and intentional connection between early childhood and K–12 accountability structures.
Detailed recommendations

The Steering Committee’s recommendations are designed to support the DC PCSB’s efforts to ensure that the PK–8 PMF effectively and accurately assesses and communicates the quality of early childhood charter schools. The Steering Committee developed six recommendations, which fall into two categories:

- Develop a process to more fundamentally assess the PK–8 PMF and structures and commit to implementing this process at regular intervals going forward.
- Ensure that analysis and revision discussions include voices that reflect the diversity of charter early childhood programs and experts in the field.

Develop a process to more fundamentally assess the PK–8 PMF and structures and commit to implementing this process at regular intervals going forward

The Steering Committee believes there are additional opportunities for the DC PCSB to more consistently analyze and, if necessary, revise the PK–8 PMF in ways that are more comprehensive than what is currently done. Specifically:

- Formally revisit the PK–8 PMF in its entirety (not only specific components, as is currently done via the PK–8 PMF Task Force) in the next 18 months, engaging outside experts to assess it for validity, reliability, and fairness and to ensure it is updated and revised according to the most recent child development research and the best available tools and metrics.
- Build a commitment to repeat the process in the previous recommendation every five years, formalized via a future vote on the PMF and documented in the PMF Technical Guide.
- Rethink the purpose and advantages and disadvantages of the PMF — not only the PK–8 PMF — in a formal way, including a focus specifically on whether the structure and approach are the best way to hold schools accountable and communicate information about the quality of schools to parents and families.
- Revise lessons learned from implementation of all short- and mid-term recommendations of this Steering Committee to intentionally identify implications for future revisions of the PK–8 PMF.

Ensure that analysis and revision discussions include voices that reflect the diversity of charter early childhood programs and experts in the field

The work the Steering Committee has done suggests that early childhood voices, ranging from practitioners to school leaders to outside researchers, should be actively sought out during analysis and revision discussions focused on the PK–8 PMF. The Steering Committee developed two recommendations to support that goal:

- As the DC PCSB updates the PK–8 PMF more broadly per recommendations 1 and 2 above, ensure early childhood is an intentional part of those discussions and that updates are informed by this Steering Committee and a broad range of early childhood charter schools from across the sector as well as experts in the early childhood field.
- Every five years, convene leaders of early childhood charter schools to discuss additional modifications and make recommendations to the DC PCSB.
Conclusion:

Working toward an ideal early childhood performance framework
Through the course of this work, the Steering Committee constantly drove toward one vision for success: to develop a set of concrete recommendations that could be used to design an aspirational, actionable, and equitable performance management framework for early childhood charter schools that addresses key limitations of the current early childhood frameworks and better represents a holistic, child-centered measure of early childhood school quality.

The short- and mid-term recommendations discussed in the previous sections are all in service of that goal and are intended to help the DC PCSB, the D.C. charter sector, and the broader field move toward it. The Steering Committee recognizes, however, that these recommendations are neither exhaustive nor static. New information, tools, data, or circumstances may arise that render certain recommendations ineffective or suggest not-yet-deigned recommendations are necessary.

Given that, the Steering Committee defined a long-term vision for an early childhood performance management framework that should guide any short- or long-term recommendations moving forward. Specifically, in the long-term, the Steering Committee envisions an early childhood performance management framework that:

- Provides valid and reliable information for choice, accountability, and school improvement in a way that is accessible and usable for parents, teachers, schools, and other stakeholders.
- Is multidimensional and incorporates quantitative and qualitative data.
- Is correlated with long-term student success.
- Rewards schools that effectively serve nontraditional or high-need student populations.
- Supports multiple school models and innovation.
- Is informed by the latest child development research.
- Has buy-in and support from across the sector.

Designing an early childhood performance management framework that accomplishes this long-term vision and ensures all children receive the best possible education will require continued commitment and intentional collaboration from across the sector — in the District and nationally. The work of this Steering Committee is only the beginning of the conversation.