

November 27, 2023

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

On behalf of Friendship Public Charter School, I thank you for keeping attention on the quality of education in the District of Columbia's Public Schools. I am writing in response to your letter of November 15, 2023 requesting specific information as you prepare for the oversight hearing on Teacher and Principal Retention on Wednesday, November 29, 2023. This letter provides the data requested and details our successes in retaining great teachers, leaders, and support staff.

Friendship Public Charter School currently employs more than a thousand team members, with 936 full-time employees and another 100 part-time employees who staff our robust before/aftercare and Saturday programs. Friendship's staff are 47% District of Columbia residents, 88% African American and 43% teachers of record (431). The vast majority of Friendship's staff are on campuses, with 92% of team members in school buildings and 8% in our "Community Office".

Since 2018 when the SBOE raised the issue of teacher turnover and 2019 when the Committee of the Whole held one of its first hearings on principal and teacher turnover, we have paid close attention, revisiting our efforts and extending strategies to increase retention. In particular, as one of the LEA participants in the DCSBOE-initiated study conducted by Bayne LLC, we have sought to address the key factors identified by teachers leaving the profession. The number one factor identified by Bayne was "climate and culture" which included sub-factors of peer and administrator professional support, respect and recognition. Climate and culture was closely followed by external/personal reasons and role responsibilities as the second and third major factors. While the response rate for the SBOE Bayne survey was limited (less than 12%), we nonetheless felt it important to take the factors identified into consideration. As of this year, our efforts to address these and other factors have yielded a teacher retention rate of 82% at the LEA level and principal retention of 89%.

I am grateful for the opportunity to testify this week and to provide the data attached. We have answered the questions to the best of our ability in the time provided. If there is additional data we can share or questions we can answer, please let us know. Ultimately, while we are encouraged by our progress in attracting and retaining excellent educators at Friendship, we are also well aware of the degree to which we still have room to grow and improve.

Sincerely,

Pat Brantley
CEO, Friendship Public Charter School

- 1. Please list the principals who are not returning to be principal of the same school in SY 2023-2024 that they were principal of in SY 2022-2023. Please provide the principal's name, name of the school, how long the person was principal at that school, and a brief reason as to why the principal is not returning to that school.**

All principals at Friendship Public Charter School who were principals in SY2022-23 returned in the SY 2023-2024 school year.

- 2. For each of the past five school years, please provide:**
 - a. The total number of principals who did not return to be principal of the school they led the previous year.*

In total, five principals did not return over the past five years as follows.

- 2022/2023: 0 of 9 (0%)
- 2021/2022: 2 of 9 (22%)
- 2020/2021: 2 of 9 (22%)
- 2019/2020: 1 of 9 (11%)
- 2018/2019: 0 of 9 (0%)
- Average 2018 to 2023: 11%

- b. In aggregate, the reasons the principals did not return (e.g., six retired, 3 were terminated, 2 left for another school district, 4 transferred to be principals of another school, etc.)*

Of the five principals who did not return to the same principalship over the past five years, only 1 left Friendship Public Charter School with the others remaining in other school-based or Community Office leadership positions, as follows:

- 1 left to found a new school
- 2 transferred to another Friendship school-based leadership position
- 2 transferred to a Friendship Community Office academic position.

- 3. Please share the total number of schools in your LEA and the total number of schools that had principal turnover in the past five years.**

Friendship PCS has 15 total campuses on 9 school sites. Each site is led by a single principal or head of school. Over the past five years, five sites had leadership turnover:

- Armstrong Elementary and Middle (transfer from with FPCS)
- Chamberlain Elementary and Middle (internal promotion)
- Ideal Elementary and Middle (transfer from within FPCS)
- Southeast Elementary and Middle (external hire of former employee), and
- Woodridge Elementary and Middle (internal promotion).

4. Of the total number of principals that left their role in the past five years, the average (mean, median, and mode) time the principals had been principal at the school they left.

- Mean: 5.6
- Median: 5.5
- Mode: 6

5. What is the average tenure of principals in your LEA? Answer providing the mean, median, and mode as of your answer date. For principals who have been principal at more than one school, calculate the answer based on only their current school.

Years as principal (years with LEA)

- Mean: 4.2
- Median: 4
- Mode: 5.3

6. Please list each of your schools, the principal of that school as of your answer date, and how long that principal has been principal of that school as of your answer date. If the principal is newly hired or designated, the answer to how long is zero.

Friendship Site	Principal	How Long As Principal At School	Total Years in School Leadership (Years at FPCS)
Armstrong	Joseph Speight	1.25	14.25 (12.25)
Blow Pierce	Gregory Spears	5.25	6.25 (6.25)
Chamberlain	Diamond Harris	3.5	3.5 (3.5)
Collegiate	Peggy Jones	7.25	16.25 (16.25)
Ideal	John Snowdy	3.5	8.5 (6.5)
Online	John Tracy Sloane	8.25	18.25 (8.25)
Southeast	Tracie Dow	1.5	3.5 (2.5)
Tech Prep	Kun Ye Booth	5.25	5.25 (5.25)
Woodridge	Erica Stevens	2.25	2.25 (2.25)
FPCS Mean		4.22	8.67 (7)

7. Please list the top five educator preparation programs (i.e., Relay Graduate School of Education, Teach for America, GWU Graduate School of Education) that contribute new teachers to your LEA and the average, median, and mode of the tenure of those teachers.

The top five sources of new teachers to the Friendship LEA are listed below. We are compiling information on the mean, median and mode for each and will submit within a week.

- City Teaching Alliance (formerly Urban Teachers)
- Friendship PCS Black Male Teacher Residency
- Teach for America
- Capital Teaching Residency
- Friendship Alumni

8. Please break down each responsibility your teachers are expected to carry out and how much time they are expected to devote to each responsibility over the course of a week. For example, 4 hours a week preparing for classes, 24 hours a week teaching in front of students, 1 hour a week contacting families, etc.

Key Responsibility	Average Time Over a Week
Instructional planning and preparation; record-keeping	5 hours/week
Instructional delivery	25 hours/week
School-based meetings (SSST, Sp Ed., Staff)	1 hour/week
Family engagement	1 hour/week
Professional learning and collaboration with peers	2.5 hours/week

9. Please break down each responsibility your principals are expected to carry out and how much time they are expected to devote to each responsibility over the course of a week. For example, 10 hours a week observing educators, 2 hours a week meeting families, etc.

Key Responsibility	Average Time Over a Week
Support instructional quality and delivery (e.g. teacher observation and feedback, instructional planning meetings, curriculum implementation, Provides opportunities for teacher and staff development, etc.)	20 hours/week

Lead instructional leadership team meetings (e.g. analyzing and action planning around data, and instructional walkthroughs, and school operation management, etc.)	2 hours/week
Support school operational quality (e.g. school safety, budget, events, master schedule implementation, and non-instructional time management, etc.).	4 hours/week
Communicate and engage with families and community (IEP meetings, SSST meetings, parent meetings, community partnerships, and school communication, etc.)	4 hours/week
Fulfill other professional responsibilities (Organizational school leader collaboration, compliance and professional learning, leadership coaching, compliance deliverables, LEA-wide school leader meetings, etc.)	3.5 hours/week
Participate in school-sponsored events (e.g. sports events, clubs, extra curricular, Saturday school)	1.5 hour/week

10. Please list all supports all new teachers receive, how frequently, and the length of time they receive those supports in total.

New Teacher Support Received	Frequency	Length of Time
New Teacher Induction (Friendship University)	Once	One week
Site Based Coaching from content lead	Bi-weekly	1 hour
Black Male Teacher Residency Coaching	Weekly	1.5 hours
Resident Teaching Fellow Coaching	Monthly	1.5 hours
Early Release Weekly (aka "ERF"; Content and Curriculum PDs)	Weekly	3 hours
Formal Goal Setting, evaluation, and feedback cycle	Tri Annually	2 hours

11. Please list all supports all new principals receive, how frequently, and the length of time they receive those supports in total.

New Principal Support Received	Frequency	Length of Time
Leadership Coach	Weekly	1.5 hours/week
School action planning and data analysis	Monthly	2 hours/week
School structure and operations	Bimonthly	1 hour/week
Hiring and staffing	Quarterly	1 hour/ quarterly
Instructional master schedule curation	Semesterly	2 hours/semester
People management and development	Ongoing	As needed