Remarks of Board Member Lannette Woodruff
ESSA Vote
March 22, 2017

Good Evening Superintendent Kang, State Board colleagues, District of Columbia Local Education Agencies, Building Leaders, Teachers and School Staff, Ward 4 community members, and all DC students and families. I would like to read into the public record why I have chosen to **support** the DC Every Student Succeeds Act Accountability Plan and also discuss why I believe ESSA will help us to bring about **improved academic outcomes** for **ALL** of our students.

In a perfect world, the highest levels of teaching and learning would be present in all of our schools and we would <u>not</u> be struggling with issues like **ongoing achievement gaps** **across different student populations** and with the **need for greater equity** in how we provide resources, support and recognition to our schools and educators. In a perfect world we would, all across the city, have <u>high academic achievement</u> and <u>supportive student-centered schools</u> and there would not be a need for a federally mandated accountability rubric. But we know this is not the case.

In states all across America, schools and local districts are struggling with the same challenges we have.

1. Working with students – many of whom come to us <u>far below</u> where they should be in terms of grade level knowledge and skills.

2. Building on the <u>skills and potentials of students</u> who are already learning at or beyond their current grade level.

3. Finding a means of preparing **all of our youth** for the world beyond high school.

4. <mark>**4.**</mark> And importantly, recognizing and rewarding schools that are doing <u>great work</u> with our students and **not penalizing but helping those schools that are struggling.** <mark>**This is the work of our board – improving student outcomes.**</mark>

So in order to meet our students' needs in an equitable way **we must identify the schools where there are achievement and progress gaps and learn more about the strategies that are <u>effective</u> and that contribute to <u>increased school quality and improved student outcomes.</u>** I strongly believe that this <u>cannot be done</u> without the accountability measures that have been included in this ESSA plan.

The measures that have been included in this rubric are grounded in <u>sound research</u>, have or will be piloted <u>within</u> our district schools and will serve as comprehensive indicators of:

- student academic growth, progress and achievement
- a strong, supportive school environment as indicated by high levels of student attendance and re-enrollment;
- implementation of well-rounded instructional programs and curricula;
- and transparent reporting of information <u>on every school</u> to families, educators and policy makers across the diversity of our student population

Having an accountability plan that does these things will help us to **recognize schools that have strong levels of achievement** as well as schools that are able to **successfully grow their students from struggling to successful** and - most importantly - to **scale up** the most effective practices **across every Ward in the city.** <mark>This is how we will end the achievement gaps that are limiting opportunities for too many of our children.</mark>

This next step of **identifying best practices and providing additional resources** for teaching and learning that lead to improved student outcomes in ALL of our schools is what I am most looking forward to as a result of this vote. **I look forward to working with OSSE, the Deputy Mayor for Education, and with school leaders, teachers and families across the District on improving outcomes for all students.** In my view we do not have any time to waste as we transition into this next critical stage of our work to ensure accountability and greater support for all of our schools.

I would like to thank each of my state board colleagues for their interest, engagement and contributions to the ESSA plan and I hope that they will support its approval, which will enable us to **move into a new chapter of increased school quality and academic success** for **ALL** of our students.

Thank you very much.