



## OFFICE OF THE STUDENT ADVOCATE

*District of Columbia Office of the Student Advocate supports students, parents, and families in their advocacy through parent education, one-on-one coaching, resource supports, and trainings in order to amplify the voices of families and communities in processes and decision-making; to provide avenues for access to resources and understanding systems; and to support power families and communities already possess.*

# A Roadmap to Understanding & Navigating the DC Public Education Landscape

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202-741-4692



student.advocate@dc.gov

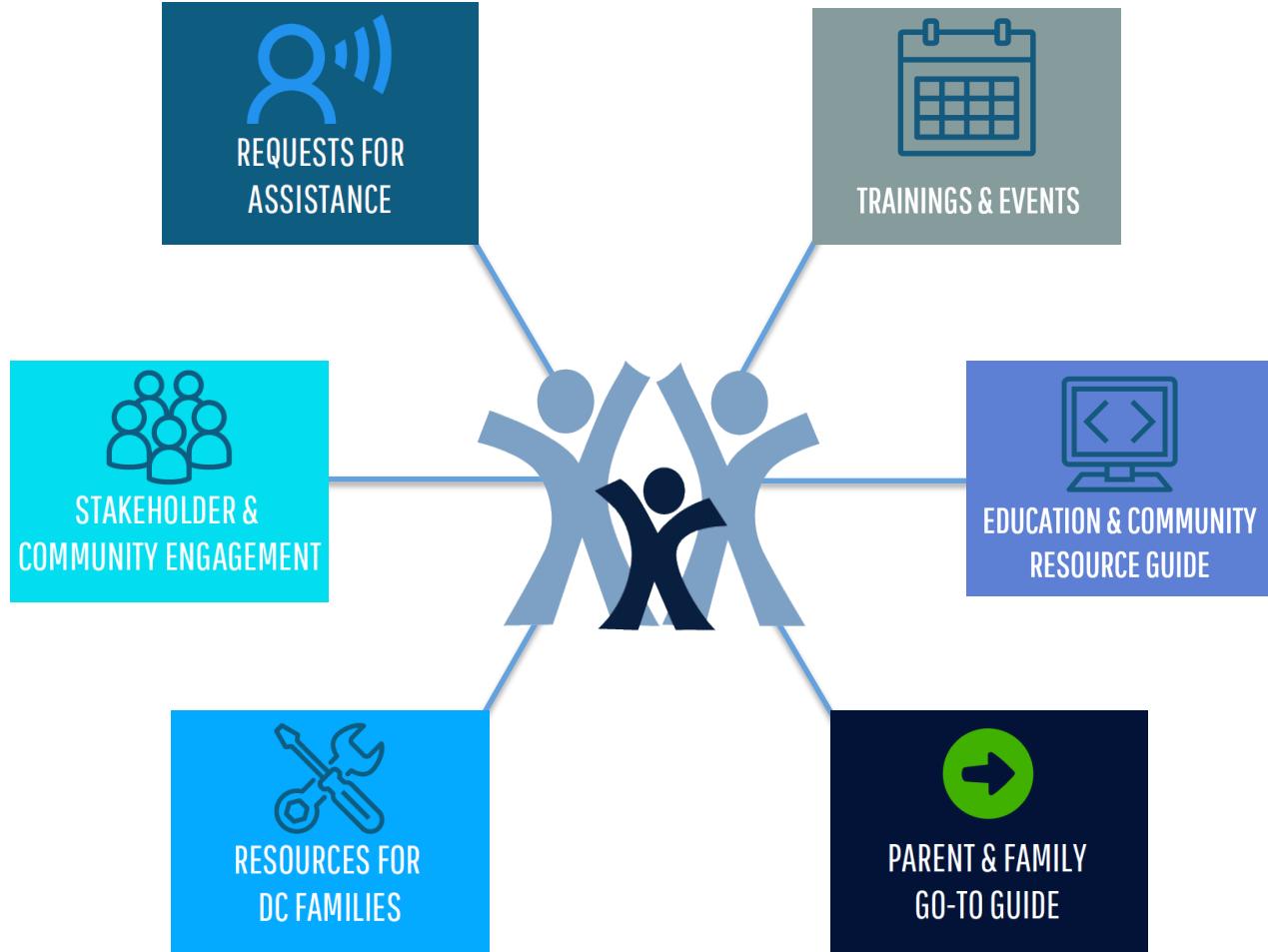


<http://studentadvocate.dc.gov>



@DC\_Advocate

# What we Do

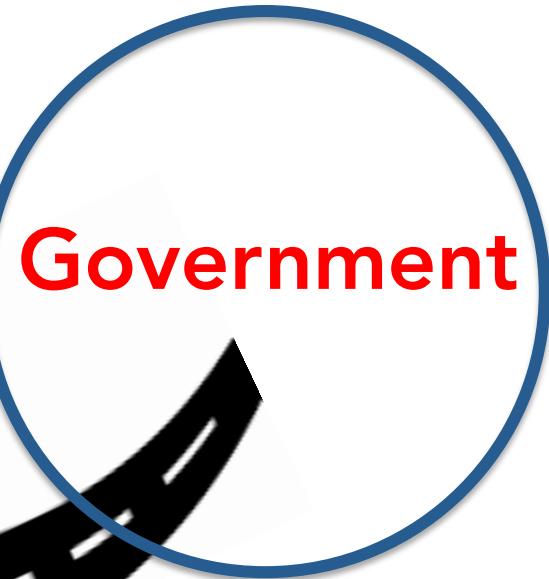


We work in partnership to equalize the balance of power between families and schools by increasing family voice, access, and power in our system of public education. We achieve this goal by ensuring families are connected to resources and supports, informed of their rights, and understand how the system works.

For more information about our office or to access our online resources, visit [studentadvocate.dc.gov](http://studentadvocate.dc.gov) or call us at 202.741.4692

# Purpose of this Presentation:

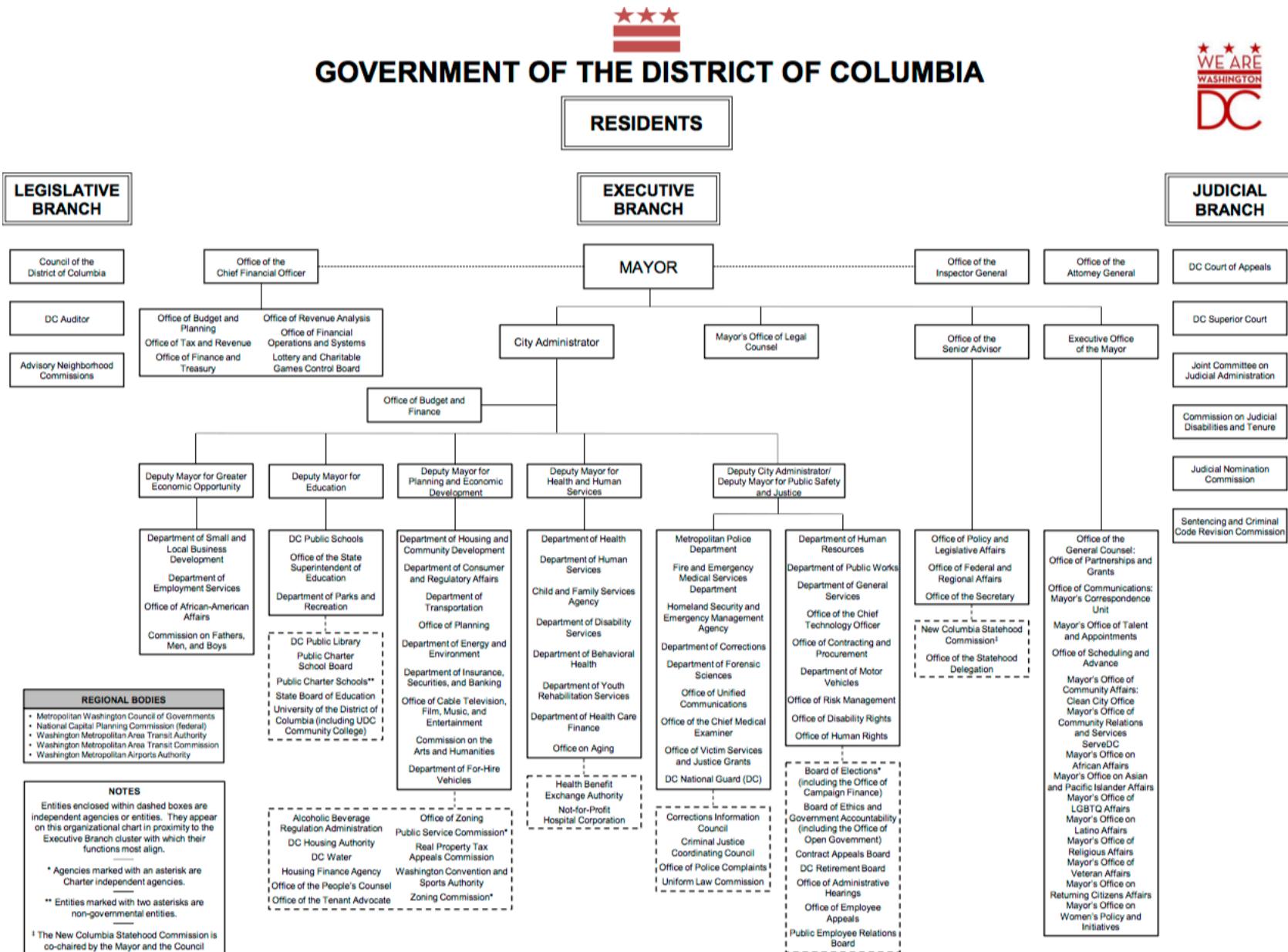
To make the process of public education and government less mysterious



# Goal for the Presentation:

To create a roadmap for advocacy

# The broader context is confusing...



While the structure of the city is complex, the choices individual parents make for their child's educational journey is impacted by the structure.

*So...*

*Understanding how government works is vital. Making the system work for you and understanding how to engage with each of the key players is essential.*

## Question:

In this broader context, where do you see yourself?

Do you understand how public education fits into this equation?

*Let's take a step back...  
In DC, we have mayoral control of schools.*

But...the Mayor's control over public schools is not equal...

**§ 38–172. Mayor's authority; rulemaking.**



Mayor Muriel Bowser

**(a) The Mayor shall govern the public schools in the District of Columbia.**

The Mayor shall have authority over all curricula, operations, functions, budget, personnel, labor negotiations and collective bargaining agreements, facilities, and other education-related matters, but shall endeavor to keep teachers in place after the start of the school year and transfer teachers, if necessary, during summer break.

**(b) The Mayor may delegate any of his authority to a designee as he or she determines is warranted for efficient and sound administration and to further the purpose of DCPS to educate all students enrolled within its schools or learning centers consistent with District-wide standards of academic achievement.**

Source: § 38–172, Code of the District of Columbia, <https://beta.code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/sections/38-172.html>

*Essentially, the Mayor has control over  
DC Public Schools.*

# Mayoral Control of Public Schools:

*"School districts are traditionally controlled by a locally elected school board, which makes decisions about how schools are run, including hiring and firing the...[Chancellor of DCPS]. Mayoral control, however, is a shift in the power structure wherein mayors are given a greater degree of authority over schools."*

Source: Top 5 Things to Know About Mayoral Control of Schools, Center for American Progress,  
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/news/2013/03/22/57723/top-5-things-to-know-about-mayoral-control-of-schools/>

TABLE 1

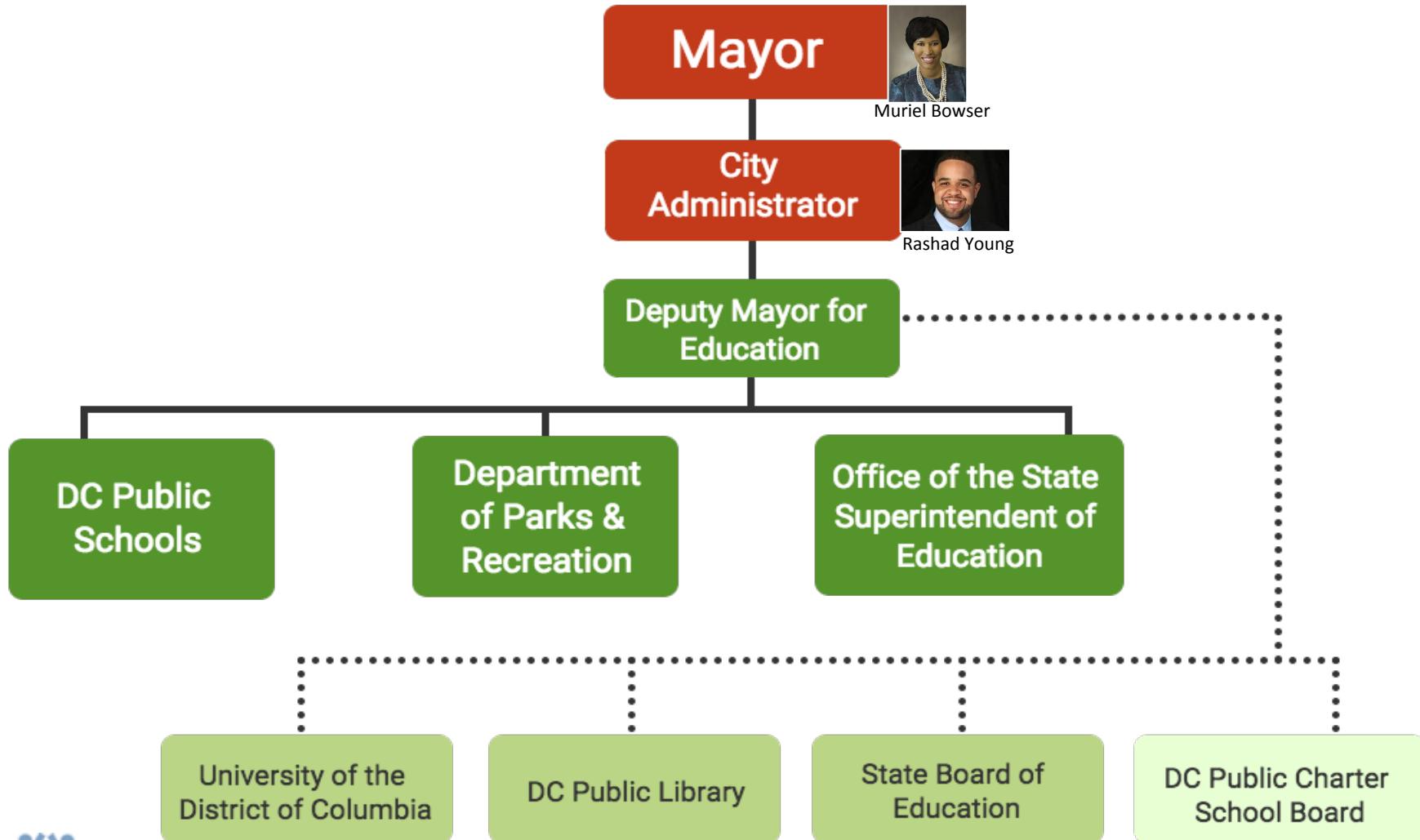
Complete and mixed models of mayoral governance: Selected city examples in 2013

District	Mayor appoints majority of board?	Mayor appoints all of board?	Mayor has full appointive power?
Complete governance			
Boston	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process
Chicago	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cleveland	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process
Hartford	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Haven	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes	No	Yes
Providence	Yes	Yes	No – nominating process and city council approval
Washington, D.C.	Full mayoral authority		
Mixed models			
Baltimore	Joint appointment with governor		
Philadelphia	Joint appointment with governor		



# Breakdown: The Public Education Governance Structure

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# The Mayor's Education Designee: Who is the Deputy Mayor for Education?



Deputy Mayor  
Paul Kihn

Deputy Mayor for Education is the Mayor's designee responsible for developing and implementing the Mayor's vision for academic excellence and creating a high quality education continuum from birth to 24 (from early childhood to K-12 to post-secondary and the workforce).

## § 38–191. Department of Education; establishment; authority

“...responsible for the planning, coordination, and supervision of all public education and education-related activities under its jurisdiction, including development and support of programs to improve the delivery of educational services and opportunities, from early childhood to the post-secondary education level, including the District of Columbia Public Schools, public charter schools...”

*“Promote, coordinate, and oversee collaborative efforts among District government agencies to support education and child development as it relates to education, including coordinating the integration of programs and resources...”*

Source: § 38–191. Code of the District of Columbia, <https://beta.code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/titles/38/chapters/1B/>

# **Adding more clarity: What parents know...**

# Schools: Roles Within the Building

## Roles/Responsibilities of Teachers:

- planning/preparing lessons
- managing classroom behaviors
- assessing/evaluating student learning
- identifying difficulties and learning problems



## Roles/Responsibilities of School Administrators:

- shaping a vision of academic success for all students
- creating a climate hospitable to education
- cultivating leadership in others
- managing people, data, and processes
- improving school leadership

**But...**

**parents & families have questions  
about the unique complexities of  
our system...**

# What's the Difference: DCPS v. Public Charter Schools

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## DC Public Schools?

*The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is the traditional system of public schools in the District. DCPS is a system of neighborhood, matter-of-right schools, with some selective school options, and is required to serve all students in DC.*

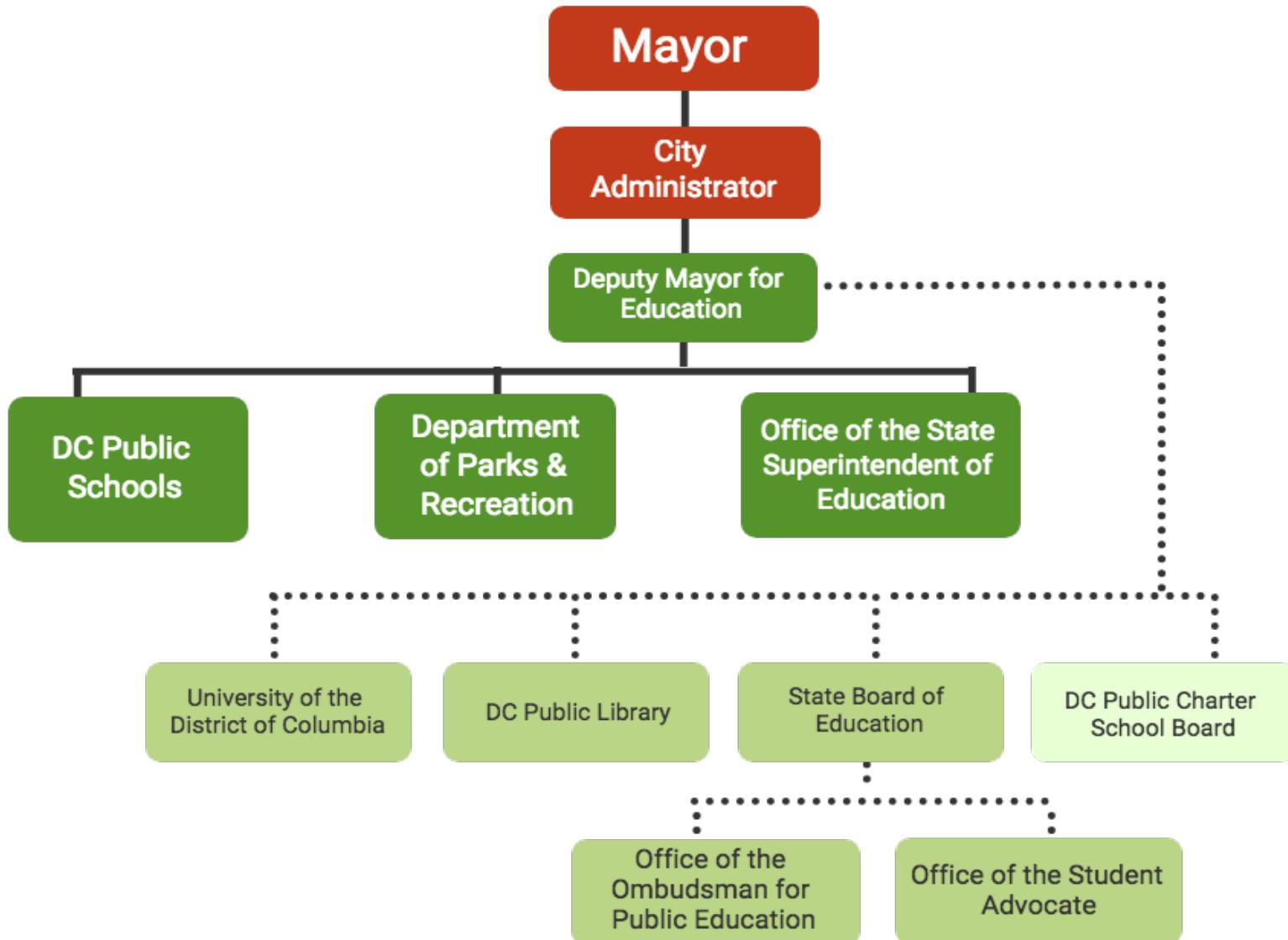
*As a DC government agency, DCPS is under direct mayoral control and is subject to DC Council performance and budget oversight.*

## Public Charter Schools?

*Charter schools are independent public schools that are free to innovate and are held accountable for student performance. They are publicly funded, tuition-free, and nonsectarian. Like traditional public schools, they are open to all DC residents and receive public funds according to how many students are enrolled.*

*A public charter school exercises exclusive control over its expenditures, administration, personnel, and instructional methods. While the DC Public Charter School Board, an independent DC government agency, is subject to some mayoral and DC Council oversight, the exclusive control individual charter LEAs have means they are not under the direct control, or oversight, of the mayor or the DC Council.*

# The Deeper Context: How It All Connects



# What are Local Education Agencies (LEAs)?

*"...a public authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools."*

Source: Definitions, U.S. Department of Education. <https://www.ed.gov/race-top/district-competition/definitions>

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DC Public Schools (DCPS)  
&  
individual public charter networks are  
(i.e. Kipp, Friendship, or DC Prep)  
local education agencies **or** school districts.

# What It All Means...

We essentially have 60 plus school districts in the District of Columbia. And... each of the school districts, or LEAs, has their own policies and procedures.



*DCPS has policies and procedures which are subject to our city regulations, code, and significant governmental oversight.*

*Public Charter Schools have the autonomy to create their own policies, with some considerations from DC Public Charter School Board or OSSE guidance.*

# A few examples...

# Local Education Agency Leadership Roles

## Using the DCPS Structure as an Example

### Roles/Responsibilities of the Chancellor

- central authority of DCPS, the traditional public school system in the district
- delegates authority of education programs the Deputy Chancellor for Social Emotional Academic Development and the Chief of Elementary Schools and Chief of Secondary Schools

### Roles/Responsibilities of the Chiefs of Schools

- both the Chief of Elementary Schools and the Chief of Secondary Schools delegate oversight of individual schools to Instructional Superintendents

### Roles of Instructional Superintendents

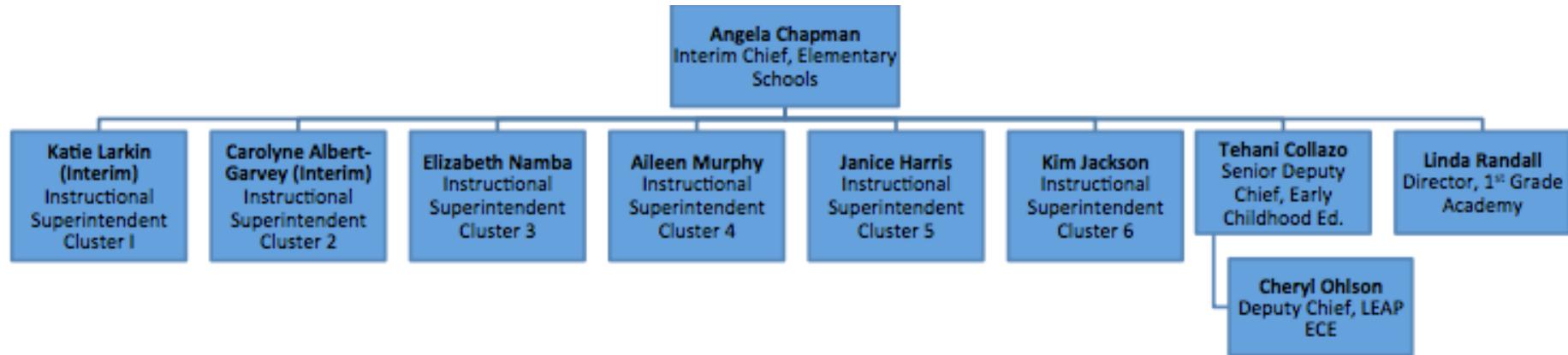
- manages clusters of individual schools



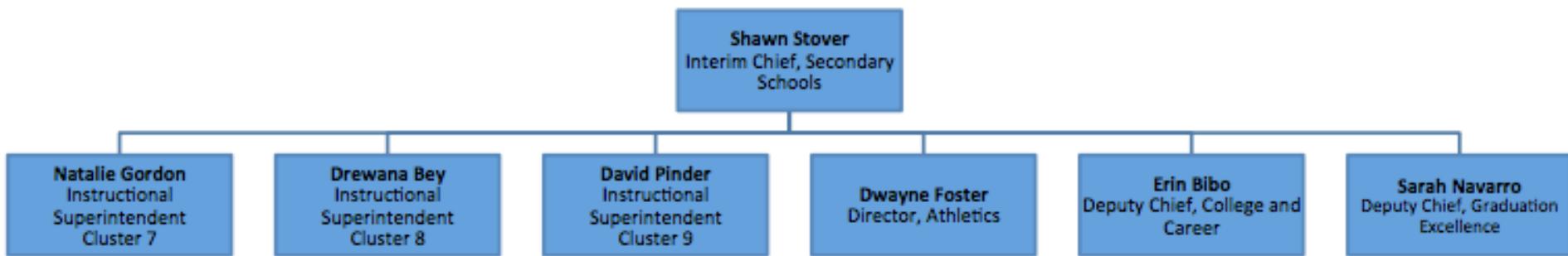
# Local Education Agency Leadership Roles

## Using the DCPS Structure as an Example

### DCPS Office of Elementary Schools



### DCPS Office of Secondary Schools



# Local Education Agency Leadership Roles

## Public Charter School Networks



*Public Charter School Networks has a different LEA structure and leadership roles. More about the organizational structures for each public charter LEA can be found on their individual website or on the DC Public Charter School Board's website (<http://www.dcpsb.org/find-a-school>)*

# The Role of DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB)

*PCSB authorizes public charter schools in DC. After the comprehensive application process and approval of a public charter school's charter, PCSB provides oversight and support to the schools it authorizes.*

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The DC Public Charter School Board is governed by a seven-member Board, nominated by the Mayor, with the advice and consent of the DC Council. The volunteer Board approves new schools, provides oversight to schools while in operation, and revokes a school's charter if they fail to meet their performance goals.

The members of the Board delegates its power to run the daily functions of PCSB to the Executive Director, Scott Pearson.





# Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

OSSE is the state education agency for the District of Columbia. OSSE sets statewide policies, provides resources and support, and exercises accountability for all public education in DC. Provides information, policy guidance, and resources on education matters to local education agencies (LEAs) and parents.



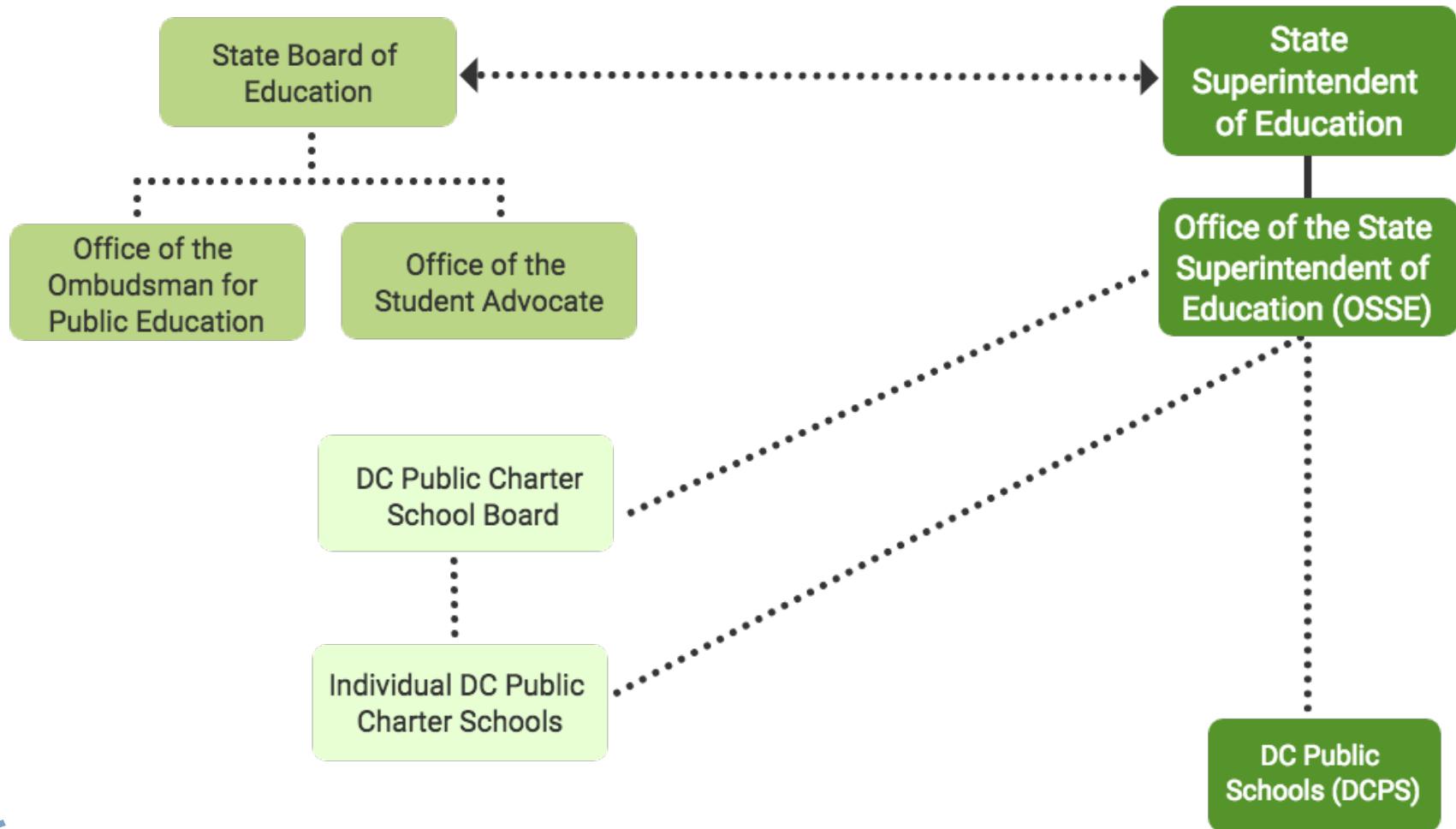
The State Superintendent of Education, Hanseul Kang, leads the work of the DC state education agency (OSSE).

# OSSE's relationship to public schools

Programs that OSSE supports include:

- Adult and Family Education
- Assessment and Accountability
- Credit Flexibility – Waiver to Award Competency-Based Unit(s)
- DC ReEngagement Center
- Early Learning
  - Provides leadership and coordination to ensure that all District of Columbia children, from birth to kindergarten entrance, have access to high quality early childhood development programs and are well prepared for school.
- Educator Licensure & Accreditation
- Elementary & Secondary Education
- Grants Management and Compliance
- Higher Education Licensure Commission
- Wellness and Nutrition Services
- Postsecondary Education
  - (includes: DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG) and DC Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (DCLEAP).
- Public Charter School Financing & Support
  - Manages several federally funded programs for public charter school facility financing.
- Race to the Top
- Special Education Transportation (DOT)
- Specialized Education
  - Provides the public with access to information about special education related services, approved placements and direct on line connections to helpful documents.
- Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED)
  - The Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED) is a single, comprehensive repository of student and education-related data needed to improve education planning, management, reporting, instruction and evaluation.
- Office of Dispute Resolution

# Deeper Context: The Relationship Between SBOE & OSSE OSSE's Relationship to Schools



# The DC State Board of Education: Meet the Members of the Board



Back Row: Ruth Wattenberg (Ward 3), Joe Weedon (Ward 6), Lannette Woodruff (Ward 4), Ashley Carter (At-Large),  
Markus Batchelor (Ward 8)

Front Row: Laura Wilson Phelan (Ward 1), Jack Jacobson (Ward 2), Karen Williams (Ward 7 & Board President),  
Mark Jones (Ward 5)



&



## relationship

The State Board of Education is responsible for advising the State Superintendent of Education on educational matters, including: state standards; state policies, including those governing special, academic, vocational, charter and other schools; state objectives; and state regulations proposed by the Mayor or the State Superintendent of Education.

# The Council of the District of Columbia

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*As the central and chief policy-making body for the District of Columbia, the Council's mission is to provide strong, innovative and effective leadership for the benefit of residents across the city. The Council's central role as a legislative body is to make laws and is responsible for the oversight of multiple agencies, commissions, boards and other instruments of District government. The Council also plays a critical role in maintaining a balanced budget and the fiscal health of the District of Columbia government.*

**Source:** About the Council of the District of Columbia, <http://dccouncil.us/pages/about-the-council>



The John A. Wilson Building - the District Government Building

# The Council of the District of Columbia: Meet the Members of the Council

*The Council of the District of Columbia, which is led by the Council Chairman, has 13 members.*

## MEET THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL



**Phil Mendelson**

Represents: At Large  
Chair: Committee of the Whole  
Committee Member:  
All Committees  
Suite 504  
202.724.8032



**Brianne K. Nadeau**

Represents: Ward 1  
Chair: Committee on Human Services  
Committee Member: Government Operations; Health; Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization  
Suite 102  
202.724.8181



**Kenyan R. McDuffie**

Represents: Ward 5  
Chair: Committee on Business and Economic Development  
Committee Member: Finance and Revenue; Labor and Workforce Development; Transportation and the Environment  
Suite 506  
202.724.8028



**Anita D. Bonds**

Represents: At Large  
Chair: Committee on Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization  
Committee Member: Business and Economic Development; Education; Judiciary and Public Safety, Suite 404  
202.724.8064



**Jack Evans**

Represents: Ward 2  
Chair: Committee on Finance and Revenue  
Committee Member: Business and Economic Development; Government Operations; Transportation and the Environment  
Suite 106  
202.724.8058



**Charles Allen**

Represents: Ward 6  
Chair: Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety  
Committee Member: Business and Economic Development; Education; Transportation and the Environment  
Suite 110  
202.724.8072



**David Gross**

Represents: At Large  
Chair: Committee on Education  
Committee Member: Health; Human Services; Judiciary and Public Safety  
Suite 402  
202.724.8105



**Mary M. Cheh**

Represents: Ward 3  
Chair: Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Committee Member: Health; Judiciary and Public Safety; Labor and Workforce Development  
Suite 108  
202.724.8062



**Vincent C. Gray**

Represents: Ward 7  
Chair: Committee on Health  
Committee Member: Business and Economic Development; Finance and Revenue; Judiciary and Public Safety  
Suite 406  
202.724.8068



**Elissa Silverman**

Represents: At Large  
Chair: Committee on Labor and Workforce Development  
Committee Member: Finance and Revenue; Government Operations; Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization  
Suite 408  
202.724.7772



**Brandon T. Todd**

Represents: Ward 4  
Chair: Committee on Government Operations  
Committee Member: Health; Human Services; Transportation and the Environment  
Suite 105  
202.724.8052

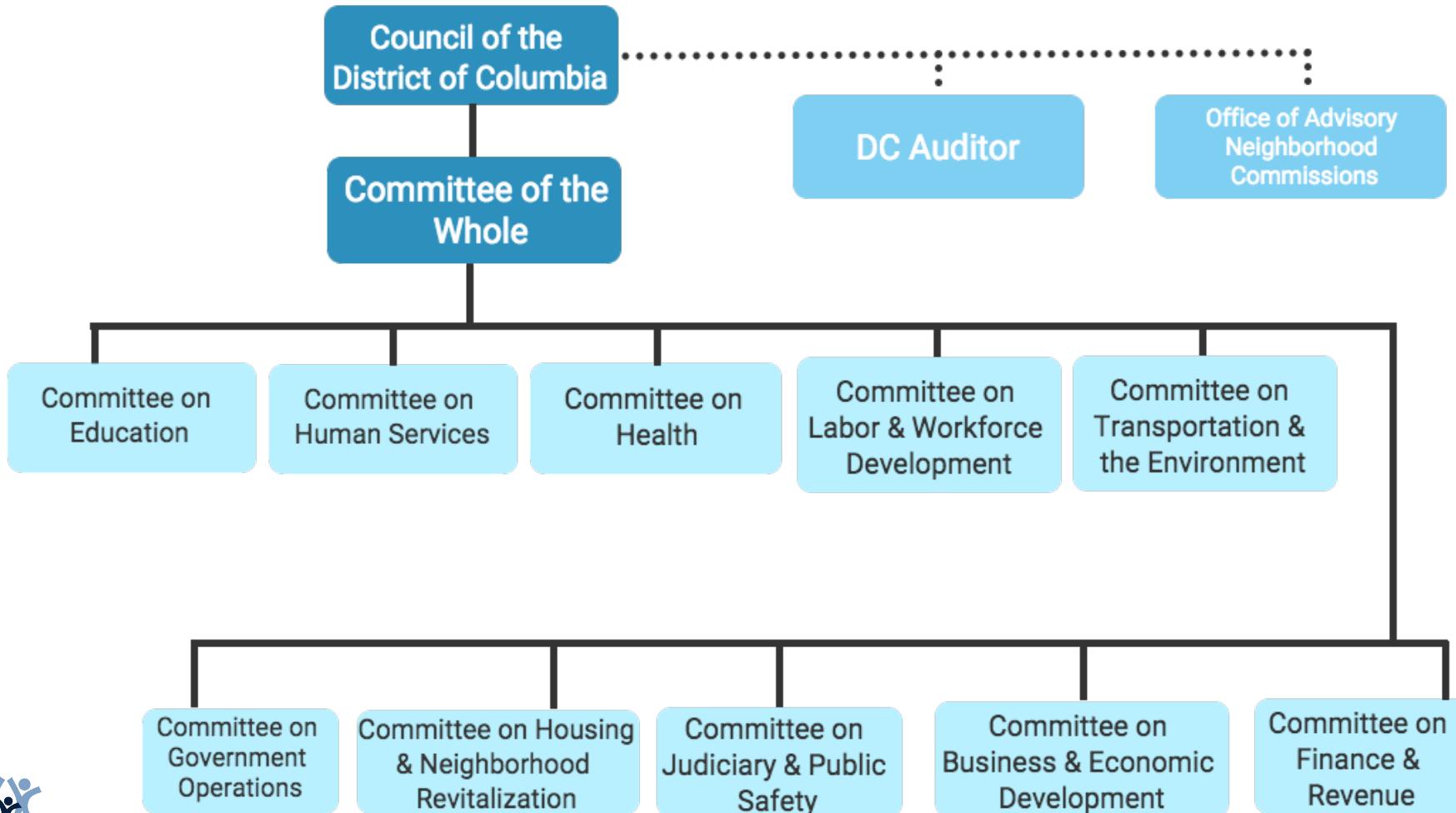


**Trayon White, Sr.**

Represents: Ward 8  
Committee Member: Education; Government Operations; Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization; Human Services; Labor and Workforce Development  
Suite 400  
202.724.8045

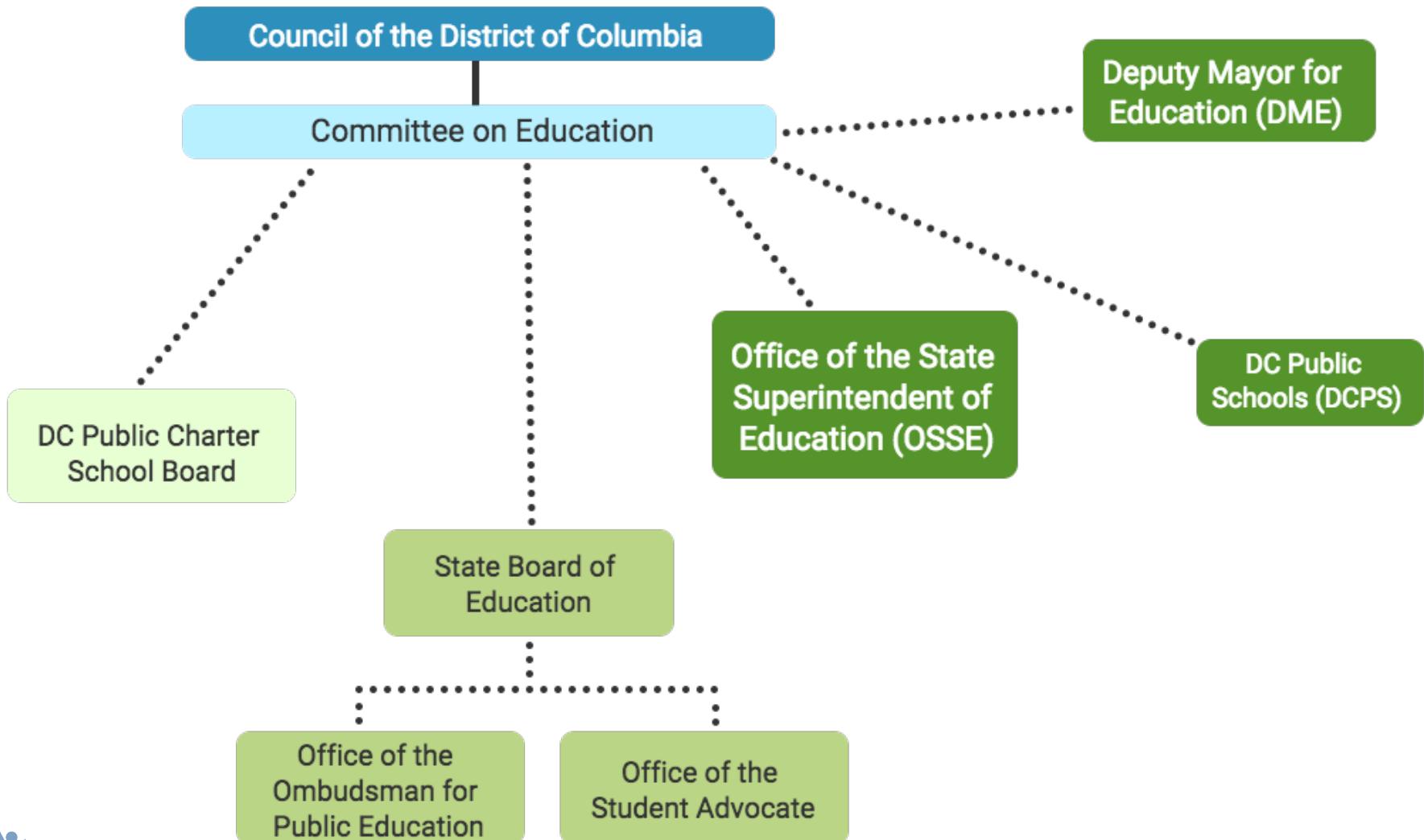
# The Council of the District of Columbia: How it Works

*Council committees review the performance of government programs and agencies to ensure they are serving their established purposes and operating under pertinent regulations and budget targets.*



# DC Council's Public Education Oversight

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# Areas of Government & The Impact on Public Education

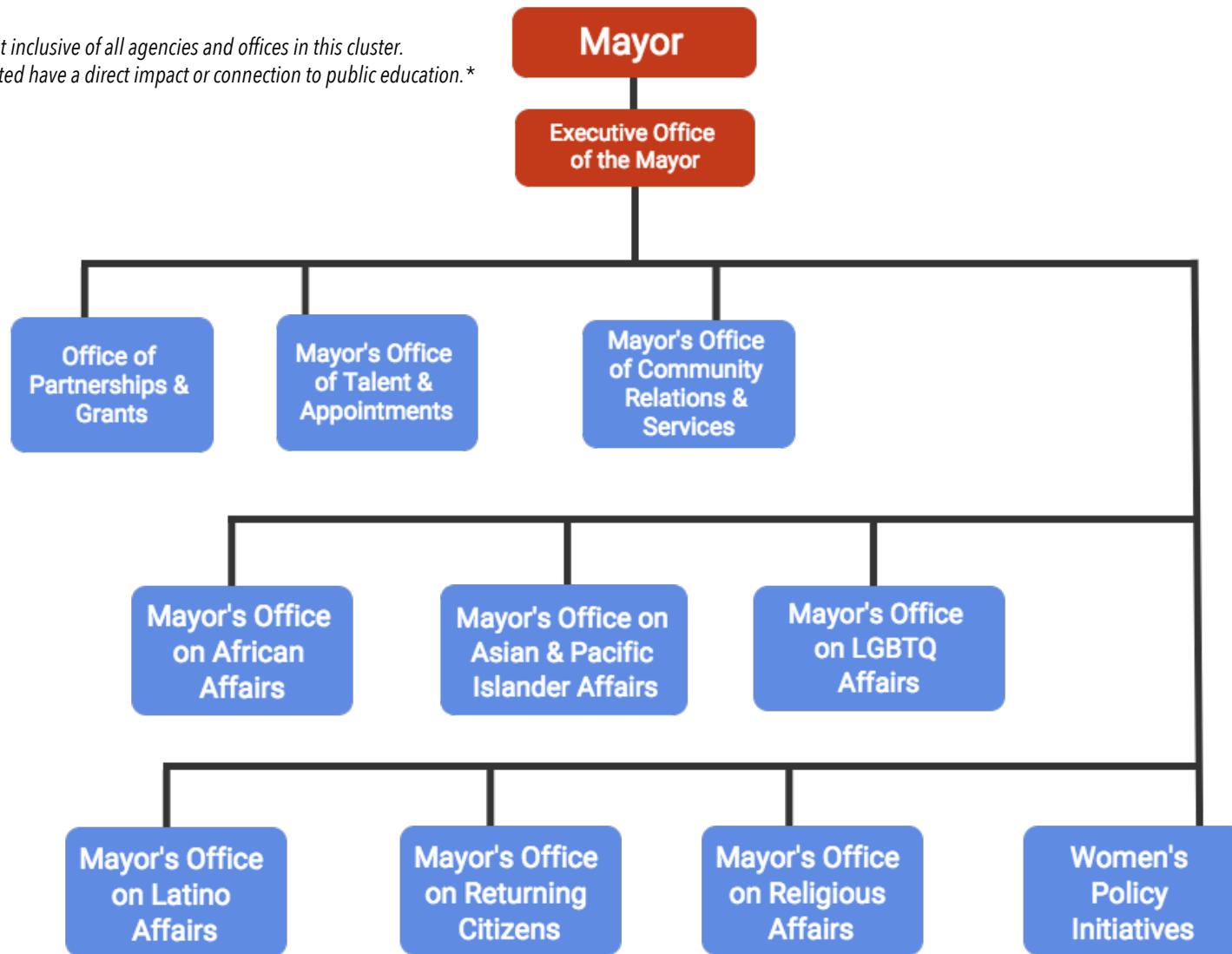
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# Executive Office of the Mayor Connection to Public Education

\*This graphic is not inclusive of all agencies and offices in this cluster.

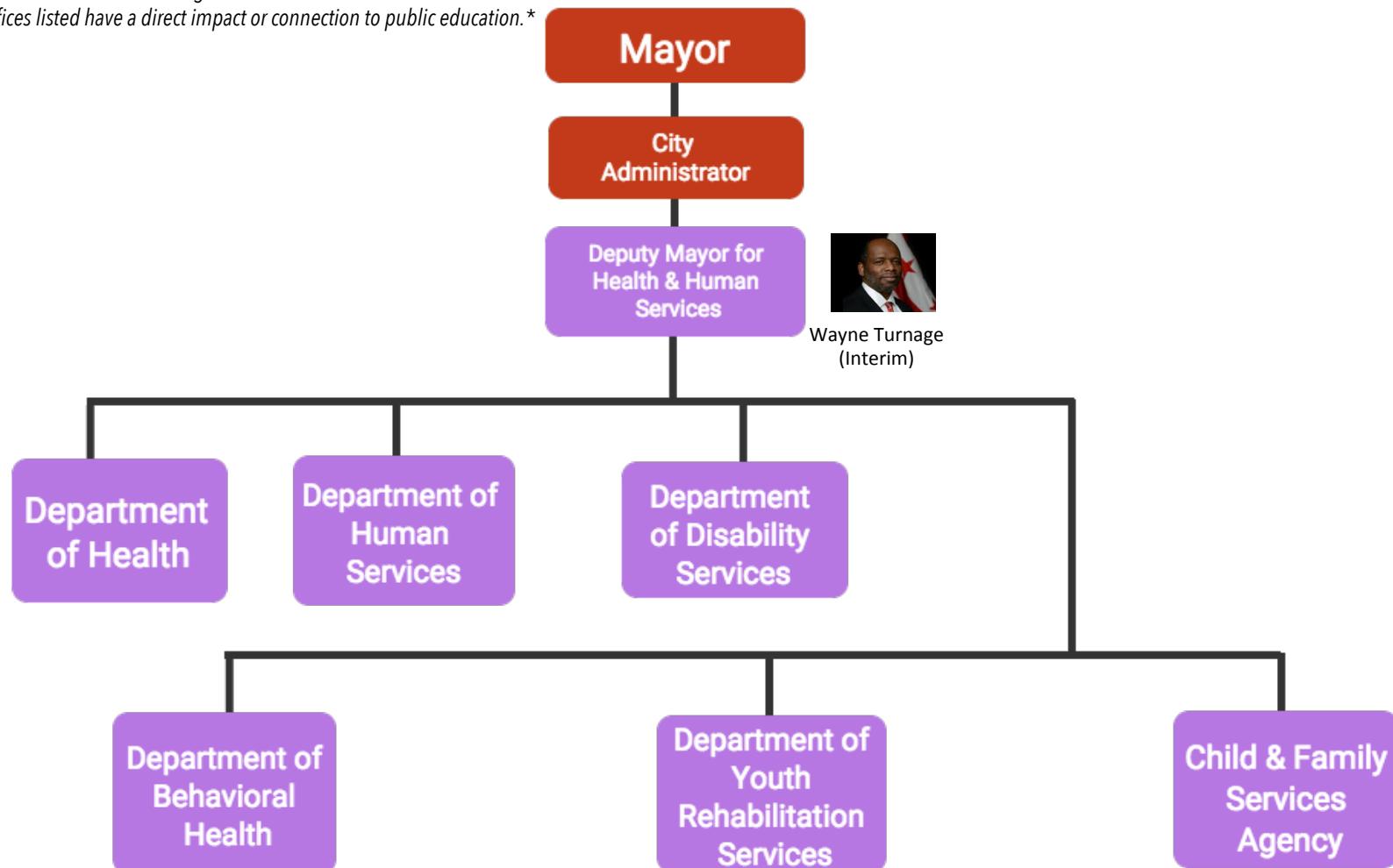
The agencies and offices listed have a direct impact or connection to public education.\*



# Health & Human Services Connection to Public Education

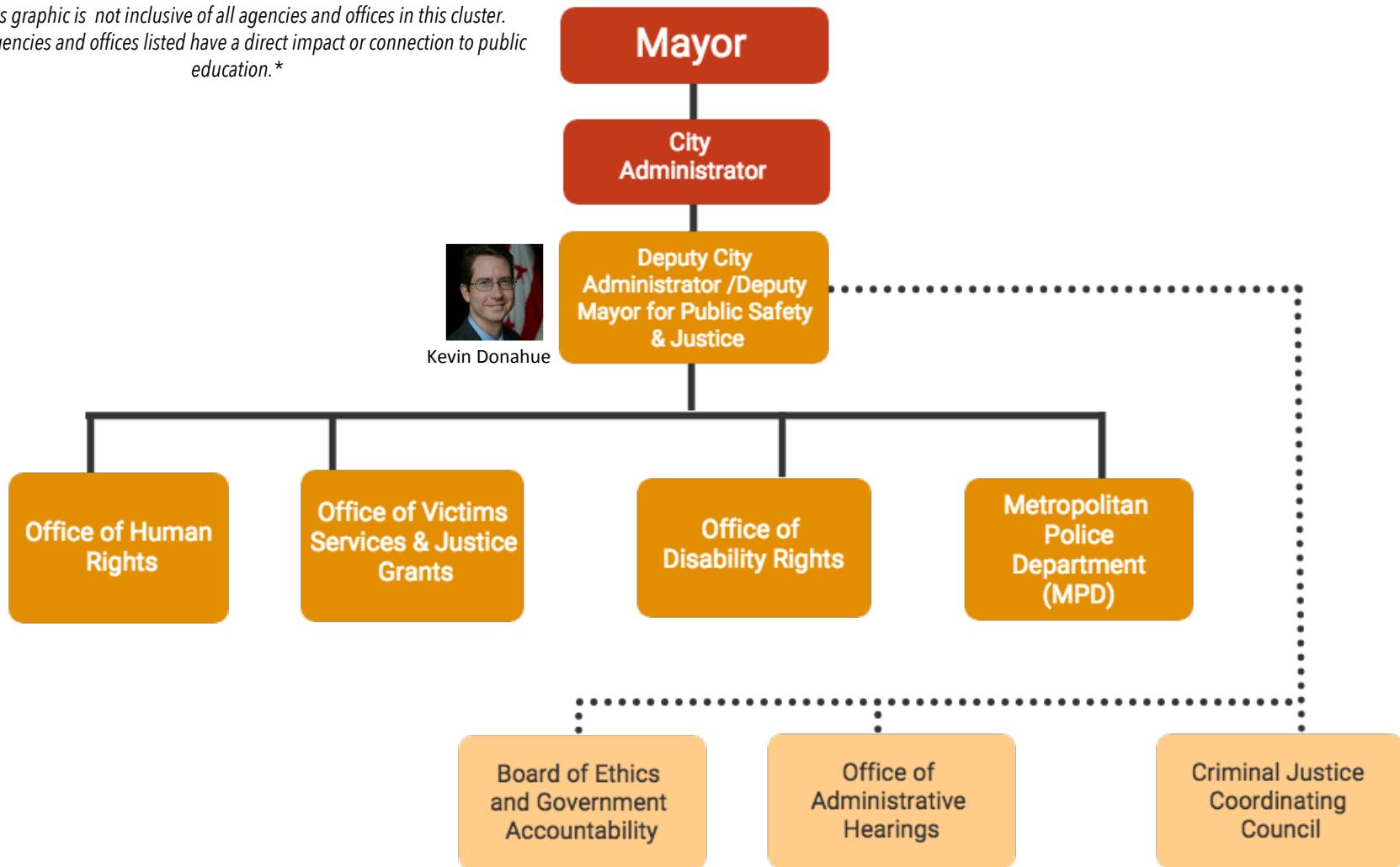
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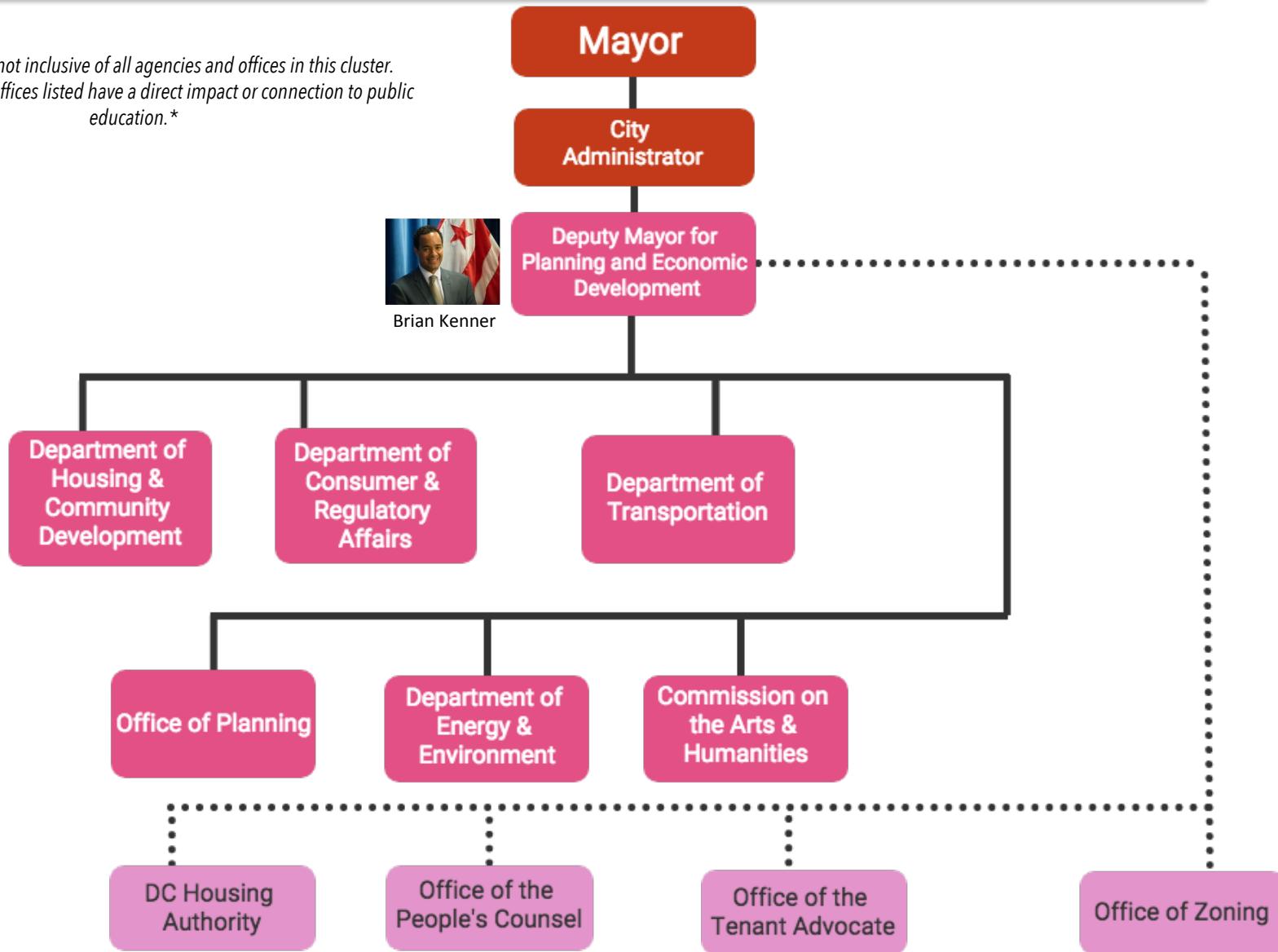
# Public Safety & Justice Connection to Public Education

\*This graphic is not inclusive of all agencies and offices in this cluster.  
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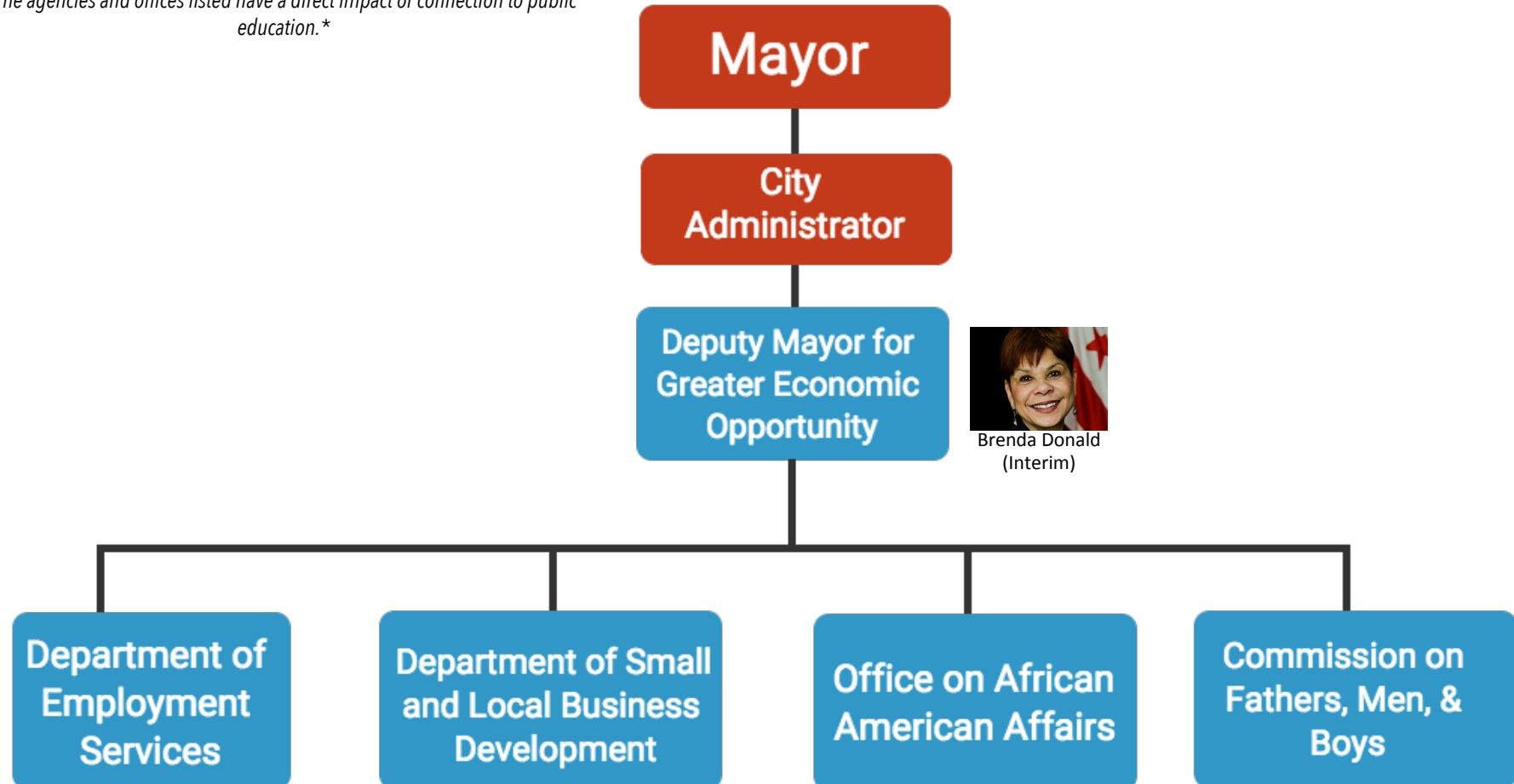
# Housing & Economic Development Connection to Public Education

*\*This graphic is not inclusive of all agencies and offices in this cluster.  
The agencies and offices listed have a direct impact or connection to public education.\**



# Greater Economic Opportunity Connection to Public Education

\*This graphic is not inclusive of all agencies and offices in this cluster.  
The agencies and offices listed have a direct impact or connection to public education.\*



Let us help you with  
navigating public  
schools in the  
District of  
Columbia...



Call us at 202.741.4692  
Check out our resources online at  
[studentadvocate.dc.gov](http://studentadvocate.dc.gov)