Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education
Quarter 2 Report
Current Caseload

Total number of complaints represents a 13% increase compared to the same period of time in previous years:

- SY 2015-16: 106 cases in Quarter 2
- SY 2014-15: 94 cases in Quarter 2
- Total cases: Q1 and Q2 of this year: 250

(Quarter 2 is defined as November 1, 2015-January 31, 2016)
Top Complaints

- Enrollment problems
- Special education
- School choice/transfer
- Discipline

2015-16 Q2, 2014-15 school year, 2015-16 school year-to-date
Complaints by Ward

- Ward 7
- Ward 8
- Ward 5
- Ward 4
- Ward 1
- Ward 6
- Ward 3
- Ward 2
- Outside DC
- No Fixed Address

- 2015-16 Q2
- 2014-15 school year
- 2015-16 school year-to-date
Referral Sources

2015 – 16 Q2

- SBOE: 24%
- Website: 20%
- DC govt agency: 10%
- School: 7%
- Parent: 2%
- DC Council: 3%
- PTO/community org: 4%
- Other: 30%

Referral Sources by Percentage
Notable trends:
• There is an increase in discipline and special education cases compared to previous years.

Systemic issues we are currently working on:
• Discussing concerns with DCPS attendance regarding a student who was withdrawn from his out-of-boundary school by a juvenile detention center.
• Discussing concerns with DCPS regarding their 20 unexcused absences withdrawal policy.
• Part of a workgroup convened by GW Law School to propose key revisions to Chapter 25.
Community Engagement Efforts in Q2

• Moderated panel entitled “Engaging Families as Partners in Education” with the Carnegie Institution for Science; DC STEM Network on November 5, 2015.

• Invited to serve on a panel with District of Columbia Association for Special Education (“DCASE”) regarding special education to take place on February 16.

• Serving as Co-Chair of the Education Committee of the United States Ombudsman Association.
Our Goals: Meeting Our Mandate

Statute Revision Project

Revising the Ombudsman statute to fit the current needs of our office. We performed our own legal research and a survey of Ombudsman best practices to inform our proposed revisions. Some of the proposed revisions include: revising the timeline for submission of the annual report to the State Board from 90 days to 120 days; proposing minor amendments to the required data for reporting, and revising language regarding access to student records, for example.