



Community Forum on the Future of Education December 9, 2019

At the Rennie Center's Community Forum on the Future of Education, attendees were asked to talk in small groups to share their thinking on three guiding questions:

- What programs and services do students need to succeed in school?
- What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?
- What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

The responses of each group—as recorded on chart paper—are recorded below.

What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Counseling – trauma support – mental health
- Good teachers – Excellent!
- Regular access to nursing/comp. services
- Children and FAMILIES – 1-stop shopping (food, health, school)
- Ability for schools and cities to work together
- Time – education time should be sacred
- Need a different model of a school year – longer – wrap around

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Collab. learning – child voice
- Not watered down
- Bilingual - multi-lingual
- Integrated – connected to purpose, life, next steps
- Role models – staff that look like - trained
- Community – authentic – family friendly (truly a place for families)
- History curriculum that is real

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Ridding curriculum that is not viable to life and real life – life skills, civics
 - How are they learning
 - Schools need to be welcoming and really a “hub” for neighborhoods – where children/students feel “ownership” and “voice”
 - Share good news
 - Who the teachers are – how do we give teachers a tool kit to prepare them
 - Encourage and support teachers as a field
 - Families – every child deserves someone who cares about them
 - Model that exists – supports families – adult math/literacy, family supports, child-raising skills
 - Environments – classrooms, school buildings
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- SEL support
- Translation services
- Health resources
- Inclusion learning opp.
- Arts integration
- Extracurricular activities
- Work-based learning opp.
- Enrichment and remedial
- Clinicals
- Physical activities
- Career and financial lit.
- Culturally responsive teaching

What should they learn in school that they are not currently learning?

- Financial literacy and career
- Soft skills/professionalism
- Multiple perspectives in the curriculum
- Interdisciplinary
- Social justic programming
- Arts/culture
- Leadership/character development
- Digital literacy
- Civics

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Student voice
- Cross-generational learning
- Family engagement
- Collaborative best practices
- State-of-the-art facilities
- In-class support
- Better cafeteria services (nutrition education)
- Mindfulness and self-regulation

What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Access to arts education
- Stable, qualified teachers who communicate well
- Counselors – for variety of issues
- Mentors
- College readiness programming
- Quality food, water
- Quality bathrooms
- Rigorous curriculum



What should they learn in school that they are not currently learning?

- Public speaking, communication
- On-grade level curriculum for reading and writing
- Financial capability
- Civic engagement
- Stress management
- Time management and organization
- Awareness of different learning styles/needs

Improving education in your community

- Continuity of services for students with IEPs
 - Inclusion classes are fully staffed
 - ESL classes are fully/adequately staffed
 - Up-to-date facilities that meet student basic needs, e.g., space, rooms equipped for subjects being taught
 - Access to apprenticeship/internship/jobs supports
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Sustainable full-service model school – co-principals, academic coaches, nurse, counselor, arts music – positions and programs can be funded over long term
- Human element – teachers who know their students, how to relate, know how to teach course – PEOPLE SOLVE PROBLEMS! Not just \$
- Relationships between everyone in school, sense of belonging
- By 5th grade (at the latest!) everyone knows how to read

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Think within the discipline – understand the domain and know what study a certain area
- Read! Early Ed PK-K mandatory (when phonics taught)
- Opportunities to explore the world, experience different things
- Explore different careers/fields, learn by doing
- Soft skills – executive functioning

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Participate in early college – more accessibility and affordability
 - Smaller class size, or more teachers per class
 - Teacher toolbox/skills needed to succeed
 - Principals – at least 10 years classroom exp.
 - Align district goals into the classrooms – coherence for leaders and teachers on what the goals are
 - School design
 - Discipline system – reform
 - Accountability measures – what are we doing to address a known issue?
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Mental health services
- High quality instruction
- Civic education



- Art programs
- Engaging programs – they can see themselves as agents of solving problems
- Project-based learning
- Place-based learning
- Internships/workforce opportunities
- Service learning
- A paradigm shift in schooling, esp. urban – kids are not the problem (asset-based model, schools are student-ready, not vice versa) – school can't be the only place where edu(?) is legitimized

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Social/political context (they're living it!)
- Analysis and how social/political context relates to their lives - making learning relevant/culturally relevant (i.e., environmental justice)
- Restorative justice
- Social-emotional learning – trauma-informed, anti-racist
- Students see themselves reflected in curriculum
- Develop critical consciousness – how to learn to be “disruptors” - all are symptoms of racism and classism. How can students take this out of the classroom?
- How youth can advocate for themselves – basics of advocacy

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Ways to connect students to web of services – break down walls
- Authentic parent/family engagement (meaningful) - + space and intentional time outside of discipline – funding for this/resources
- Clarity in budget process/less top-down
- Shift in what is expected of ed leaders – equity/mindsets/accountability/real change and action - intentionality
- Teacher/leader prep
- Teacher accountability to students, family, and community
- Teacher diversity

What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Sequential arts pathways
- Outcome-focused teachers
- Mentorship or coaching programs (for students and for teachers)
- Special ed supports
- Extracurricular programs
- Sports
- Excellent literacy instruction
- Math intervention
- Culturally and linguistically responsive programming
- ESL programs
- Healthy food
- Social workers
- Physical activity
- Strong teacher leader development
- Community and family partnerships



What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Who they are and what they care about
- Identity
- Connections between content and life
- Career explo. on steroids
- Social emotional competencies
- Technology ed matched with workforce dev. (relevant)
- Financial lit.
- Cybersecurity (social and technical)
- Digital media lit.
- Problem-solving
- Wayfinding
- Social leadership
- Civic ed. (relevant to students)
- Consistent high-academic materials, curriculum, and intervention (SPED, ELL)
- Cultural relevance affirming schools with family
- Teacher development and leadership
- Wraparound services – social, mental, physical for students and families
- Career development, relevance, connection

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Wraparound services – well coordinated
- Parent engagement that meets parents where they are
- Teachers with time to plan and collaborate
- Consistency in implementation/strategy/leadership
- Coherence in objectives across district/state
- More autonomy for supts and school heads
- Less autonomy for supts and school heads
- More autonomy for teachers
- Less compliance-driven regulation from DESE
- Teacher accountability reform/reframe
- Include teachers in conversation
- Opportunities for teacher leadership and empowerment, agency
- More mental health programs
- Opportunities for students to progress according to own pace – competency-based

What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Social and emotional support services (esp. guidance counselors)
- Differentiated or levelled learning that speaks to different learning styles (e.g., kinetic, visual)
- Robust alternatives to exclusionary discipline
- Expanded special ed services
- ELL support services
- Wraparound services
- Physical facilities



What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Complete, accurate history of the United States
- Identity and culturally affirming content
- Access to learning a second language/language immersion
- Unique, meaningful field trips and opportunities for out-of-class learning
- Social and emotional skills

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Teacher diversity – retention and recruiting
 - Broader student-parent outreach, parental engagement, and parent support
 - Family resources and support for parents when(?) navigating system
 - College counseling and career counseling and financial counseling
 - Connecting community to schools to ensure parents know of available resources
 - Housing resources and hunger and food security
 - Positive behavioral model/positive incentives
 - Larger teacher salaries and additional support
 - Translation services
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Social-emotional
- Arts-based
- DEI
- Technology
- Guidance couns.
- Facilities – safe, clean learning environment, outdoor activity
- Food (nutritious)
- Transport
- Effective educators, cult. resp. curric., prof. learn.
- Strong school leaders
- Data systems

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- \$ financ. literacy
- Diverse history (not Euro-centric)
- Civic engagement
- Different pathways (life not linear path)
- Climate change
- Systemic inequities
- Tech skills (coding, robotics, AI)
- Creativity, design thinking, iterating
- Compassion, empathy, collaboration, self-awareness
- More family engagement

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Better info for families/students on post-sec preparedness
- Better assessment than SAT/ACT
- Transparency and support for school selection



- Stronger web of ecosystem supports (e.g., share info from school to afterschool)
 - Tip to tail: better hiring for more diverse staff, opp. for DEI training
 - More real world, PBL, internships
 - Trauma informed/responsive teaching training
 - Decrease barriers to entry and level playing field – more consistent quality
 - Health center w/ soc. wk., psych, nurse, wellness
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Wraparound services – before and after school, health services
- Behavioral health services/counseling
- Good and reliable transportation
- Healthy food
- Backpack programs for food
- Teachers - PD

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Financial literacy
- How to learn and how to manage large amounts of info/devices
- Self-advocacy
- Capacity to self-examine, regulate affect
- Developing emo. Intelligence
- Culturally relevant curriculum and sensitivity
- Critical thinking
- Self-management and leadership
- Civics and engagement

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Deep DP situated in classrooms/responsive to individual students
 - Support for teachers – mentoring programs
 - More guidance counselors – mental health, college readiness
 - More diverse educators – building more diverse pipeline
 - Pay for teachers
 - Scholarship opps and advertising them
 - More family engagement
 - Integration with work-based learning opportunities – every junior/senior in high school should do internship
 - Improved transportation
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Excellent classroom teaching
- Supportive and caring adults
- Access to healthy and safe learning environments
- Engaging work
- Tutoring and other academic enrichment – not necessary purely academic
- Good curricular materials
- Healthy food



- SEL support
- Avenue to explore creativity
- Arts, computer
- Keeping families informed
- Community connections
- Multi-language supports
- Physical education
- Really good/effective reading instruction
- Feedback systems

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Hidden ways and assumptions – more attention to self-management
- Empathy
- Healthy debate
- Financial literacy
- Basic life skills – laundry, cooking – should that(?) be learned in school
- Grade level reading skills
- Learn to LOVE reading, and learning
- Critical thinking
- Independence and knowing when and how to ask for help
- Their history

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Investing in teacher PD
- Partnership coordination – district/union
- Time for adults to collaborate
- Teacher and leaders who represent their student ethnicity and race – pipeline and persistence
- Less emphasis on the standardized tests
- Rethinking how we measure what students know and don't know
- More opportunity for student leadership and voice
- Better partnerships with families – more creativity about family engagement

What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Kinesthetic learning – hands on
- Real life examples
- Life skills - application

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Beginning job search – how to go about it
- Finances, building generational wealth
- * FINANCIAL LITERACY *
- Drivers ed
- Financial aid
- Race in American society
- Reading and fundamentals



What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Teacher-student relationships
 - School integration – inclusion
 - Seeing the whole student
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What programs and services do students need to succeed?

- Culturally appropriate pedagogy and materials
- Nurses, access to quality healthcare
- Psychologists, mental health counselors
- Food and nutrition
- Time to develop interests, career exploration
- Champion in their corner
- Restorative practices, teachers who are trained
- Safe home

What should students learn in school that they aren't currently learning?

- Arts
- Extracurricular activities
- Financial literacy
- Socioemotional learning
- History, ethnic studies, and people who look like them, accurate representation of history
- How to collaborate
- Civics education and media literacy
- Fact vs. opinion
- Career pathways – how to follow different professions
- More diverse curriculum

What other recommendations do you have to improve education in your community?

- Engage parents – use their expertise
 - Give youth voice in decision-making
 - Analyze who isn't getting opportunities to the most interesting and challenge coursework, etc.
 - Update building conditions
 - Make higher education more affordable and training programs
 - Make universities pay TAXES
 - Fix the charter reimbursements long term, make sure schools get \$
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After groups brainstormed their replies, they were asked to select their top five priorities and rewrite them on a new piece of chart paper. These top-five lists were shared with the full group, and attendees had a chance to cast four votes (using sticky dots) for their top priorities overall. They were able to vote more than once for the same priority or to cast one vote for four different priorities.

The charts below list the top five priorities from each group and the number of votes each one received.

Career and financial literacy	9
SEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character building • Mindfulness 	1
Culturally responsive teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple perspectives in the curriculum 	16
State-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure	11
Health services	1

SEL	5
Student voice and choice	3
Belief in <u>ALL</u> students can learn <u>AND</u> ALL students matter	8
Transferable skills and adaptivity	
Community <u>AND</u> family engagement	6

Comprehensive health, wellness, nutrition	4
Developing whole-person skills (financial literacy, SEL)	
Family/community engagement	6
Facilities/transportation (safe, brave, environment with resources)	2
Commitment to DEI (hiring, curriculum, professional learning)	3

Quality, comprehensive wraparound services	
Teacher support and learning	
High-quality school leaders	1
Authentic family engagement	12
Model schools to share best practices	

Life skills and application	4
Teacher/student relationships	1
Historically revised, culturally relevant curriculum	8
Health and wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEL support 	1
Student assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School integration 	4



Schools as a hub (1-stop shopping) Family, student, staff feel safe, want to be there, and have a voice Empath model – families can access literacy, housing, ESL, life skills, supports, services, all at the school	1
City planning – supporting kids and families To provide access and coordination to work together for families	
Comprehensive services	
Voice - School-level governance Student, teacher, parent voice Advocacy training	14
Differentiation that <u>really</u> individualizes for ALL students (training staff to see how this looks)	6

Teacher prep, development, and leadership with a focus on diversity	2
Wraparound services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social • Mental health • Physical health 	10
Career education, workforce dev. Learning that is relevant and connected	1
Consist high quality academic (incl. arts) materials, curriculum and intervention with individualization/personalization (special ed and ELL supports)	
Welcoming culturally relevant/affirming schools with family engagement	5

Supporting the whole student and family (outside of the classroom)	2
Supports for high needs students (ex: special ed, ELL) inside the classroom	3
Social and emotional supports and skill-building	3
Supporting, recruiting, compensating, and retaining diverse teachers and staff	15
21 st century skills for post-secondary education or career	2

Basic needs are met (food, shelter, heat, hot water, clothing, healthcare/mental health, socioemotional learning)	20
Pedagogy and curriculum are culturally responsive, accurate, inclusive (reflective of everyone), intersectional	7
Teacher pipeline/development	8
Family/community engagement	4
Life skills mentoring (financial literacy, digital media, civics literacy)	6

Meaningful partnerships with families	10
Excellent teachers who engage their students in learning	9
Teachers and leaders who look like their students	11
Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning	
Community commitment to wraparound supports for the whole child	3



Dismantle the racism against black and brown children	
Full-service sustainable school	1
Every child learns how to read	11
Teachers have “toolbox”/skillset to succeed at beginning of career and during	3
Relationships – strong relationships between adults and adults, adults and students, schools and community	2
Structures and accountability with aligned support	

Goal: disruption/dismantling white supremacy	1
Paradigm shift that demands cultural competence in leadership	10
Establish a distributed edu system, rather than a centralized one, with local accountability	2
Representation at all levels of edu: school boards, teachers, principals, etc.	
Curriculum renewal processes must account for the ongoing changes in the social-political contexts of students and their communities	3
Student voice comes first: i.e., student on school board has a vote. Authentic youth engagement	14

Stable, qualified, committed staff (teachers et al.)	7
Time management/stress management	
Updated/quality facilities that meet basic needs	1
Food/water – high quality, access (food security)	1
Internship/college readiness programming	