



ENSURING A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR *ALL* CHILDREN

VINCE GRAY'S PLAN FOR D.C. SCHOOLS

THE GRAY RECORD ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

Elevated education reform to a top priority of the entire Council. Among his first acts as Council Chairman, Vince Gray took the unprecedented step of bringing education into the Committee of the Whole – eliminating a layer of the Council's own governance structure to enable reform to move rapidly through the Council and conduct more vigorous oversight over the Executive. This move sent a message that DC's legislative body considers education to be important enough to involve every member of the Council directly. *(Council Rules, Period 17)*

Championed mayoral control of DC Public Schools. Vince Gray led the Council in passing the Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 to streamline the educational governance structure, institute reform more rapidly than in the previous structure, eliminate bureaucracy and prioritize school modernization through the creation of an independent office focused solely on school modernization.

Championed efforts to achieve parity in resources for public charter schools. Vince established a collaborative group of government officials, charter school leaders, advocates and members of the lending community to develop recommendations for equitable facilities funding. In FY11, Vince proposed membership for additional stakeholders, and broadened the group's mission to include consideration of general issues of parity. *(Statewide Commission in BSA)*

Advocated for improved financial management and greater equity between public schools and charters. In the face of chronic budget shortfalls produced by the current Administration, Vince Gray mandated within the FY2011 budget, a comprehensive, forensic audit of the school system, increased financial reporting requirements for DCPS, and launched the creation of an independent commission to review equity between public schools and public charter schools

Expanded pre-k to every three and four year old in the District of Columbia in under two years. Vince Gray led the Council in passing ground-breaking legislation to ensure that each child in the District has access to high quality pre-K education by 2014. Since the passage of the legislation in June of 2008, the Council, under Chairman Gray's leadership has expanded pre-k by over 2,000 slots in all parts of the city and is on track to add an additional 1,700 slots in the fall of 2010 alone. *(L17-202 Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Act of 2008, Law Effective July 18, 2008)*

Fought to make college more affordable to District residents. Vince Gray led the fight to pass the College Savings Program Increased Tax Benefit Act of 2008 which increased the maximum individual income tax deduction for contributions to the District of Columbia College Savings program from \$3k to \$4k. *(L17-0153 College Savings Program Increased Tax Benefit Act of 2008, Law Effective May 13, 2008)*

Worked with officials at the University of the District of Columbia to move UDC forward as a quality institution. As Chairman of the Council, Vince Gray worked closely with the President and Board of Trustees to institute major reforms at the University.

- He held a roundtable on the national search for a new university president, met personally with the final candidates and fully participated in the selection process.
- He led the Council in approving several distinguished and highly-qualified members of the Board of Trustees.
- He called for a formal study to determine the feasibility of a community college in the District of Columbia, held hearings to highlight best practices and plans for implementation, and assisted in securing separate facilities, including a new headquarters downtown and two satellite, community-based locations.
- He introduced a bill to provide UDC with authority to avoid the bureaucratic red tape in purchasing goods and services, and approved a state-of-the-art electronic procurement system to further streamline the process.
- He infused the University with funds for capital projects, including renovation of the Van Ness campus and new facilities for the Community College, and construction of a long awaited new student center.

Banned the cruel and unusual punishment of students with special needs. Gray co-introduced and led the Council in passing the Protection of Students with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008, which bans the placement of District students in schools that practice aversive treatment techniques, such as shock therapy. The Act also requires the District government to pre-screen institutions to make sure that both the environment and curriculum are appropriate, and follow-up with regular site visits to monitor student progress.

Fought for modernization of the public schools from day one. As Ward 7 Councilmember, Vince Gray helped lead the effort for greater investment in school modernization and construction with the passage of the School Modernization Use of Funds Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2007. As Chairman of the Council, Vince Gray has called for rapid modernization of our public schools and directed nearly \$2 billion in school projects. He has also called for greater transparency, greater equity, and more efficient use of funds through a comprehensive Master Facilities Plan.

Led efforts to combat childhood obesity. Vince Gray co-introduced legislation to raise nutrition standards, improve the quality of public school lunches, expand hot breakfast to all eligible students, and promote a healthier lifestyle for young residents. *(B18-0564, passed City Council on May 4, 2010)*