



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Family and Public Engagement

# Maximizing Corporate and Community Partnerships at the School and District Level

*Nichole Hill*  
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*Office of Family and Public Engagement*



## Objectives

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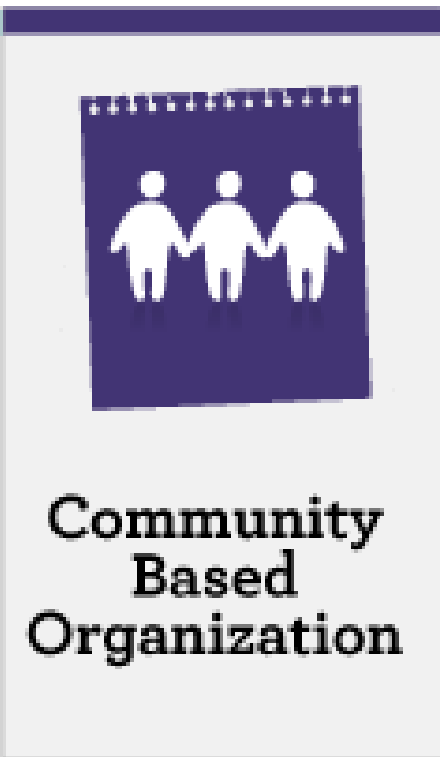
- Provide an **overview of the key steps** to implementing the Adopt-a-School Program
- **Share best practices and lessons learned** from DCPS' pilot year of this work

# Agenda

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|-------------------------------------|------------|
| I. Introduction to DCPS             | 5 minutes  |
| II. Adopt-a-School Program Overview | 5 minutes  |
| III. Implementation Process         | 50 minutes |
| IV. Outcomes and Questions          | 10 minutes |

# Role Call



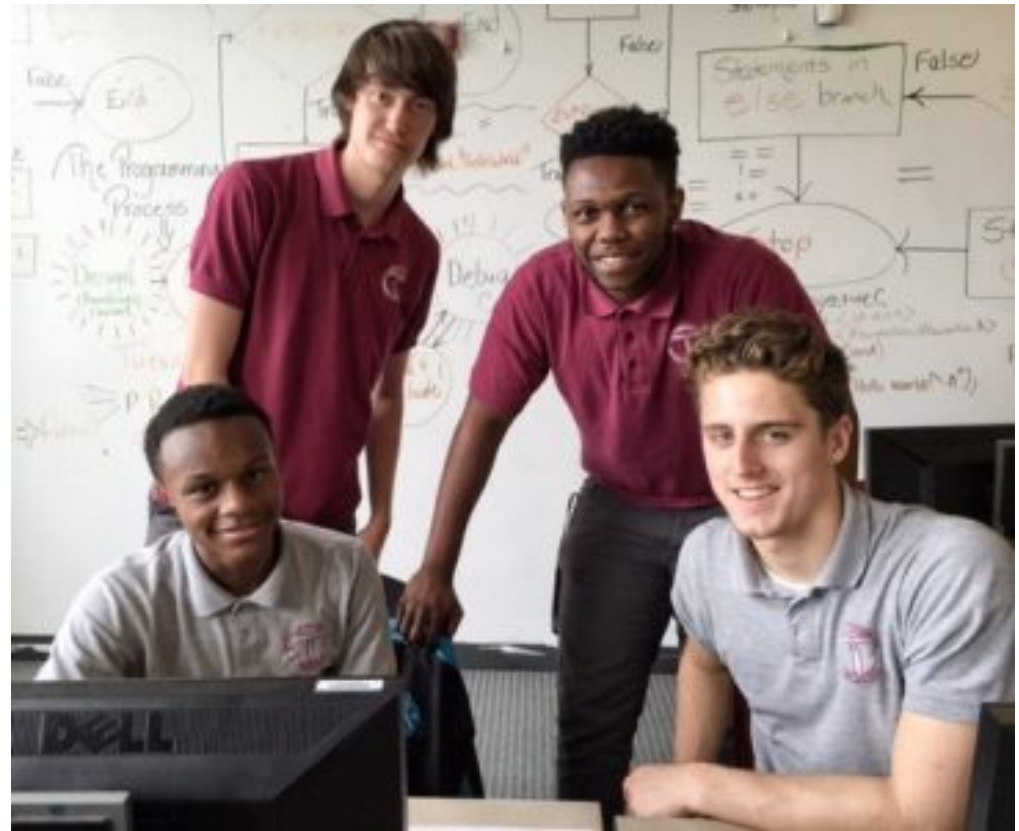
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## We are DCPS!

- **49,000+** students
- **160+** countries
- **200+** languages and dialects
- **4,000** teachers
- **115** schools
- **3,500** classroom aides, social workers, counselors, custodians and other support staff
- **900+** school partnerships



*McKinley Technology High School students who partnered with Accenture to create an app allowing parents to access their student's curriculum*

# School Partnerships Division

## Partnerships

- Coach schools in developing strategic partnership plans
- Manage district-wide non content partnerships
- Entry Point for new partner requests at the district level

## Adopt-a-School Program

- Develop, launch, and successfully execute partnerships via this program

## Events & Volunteers

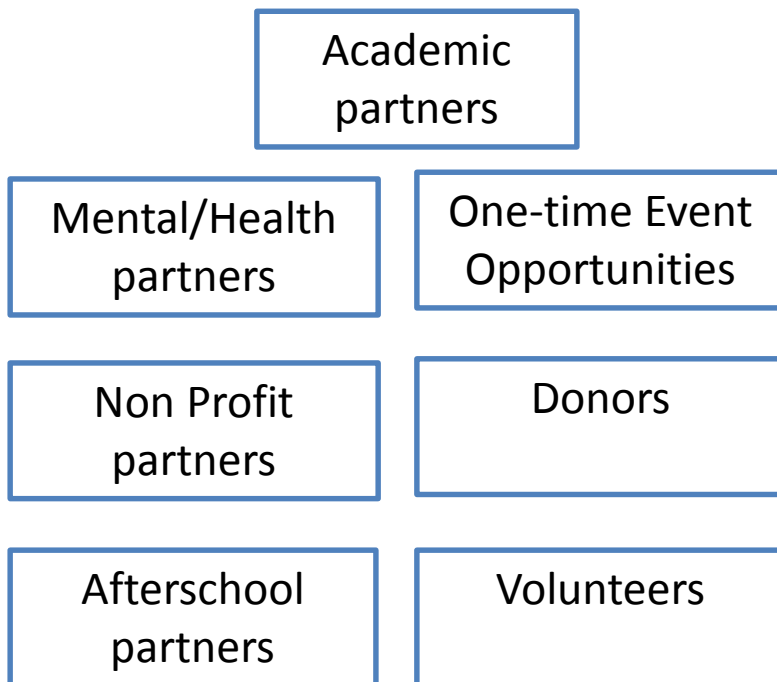
- Field support and matching requests from partners and volunteers

## Donations

- Support school/district staff to remain in compliance  
Manage large donor relationships
- Match donations made to the district with schools

## Our Challenge

We have a wide range of supporters—non-profits, corporations, and committed community members—but **how do we provide pathways of engagement for non-content partners interested in serving schools throughout the school year?**



Corporate and community groups that want to support schools but may not have a specific partnership area of expertise



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## How it Works



*Volunteers from Lightbox Energy volunteered to assist in the development, execution and judging process for the school's first Science Fair.*

### Participation requirements

- 3 engagements
- 1 donation drive
- Submission of Partnership Plan
- Identification of 1-2 program points of contact (POCs)
- Participate in periodic reporting via mid year and end of year surveys

## Year 1 Goals

Metric	Goal
Number of Adopt-a-School partnerships	25
Number of lowest 40 performing schools participating	13
Total number of partnership engagements completed	75
Total number of donation efforts completed	25
Total number of survey respondents that “agree/strongly agree that they would recommend the program to others”	80%
Total number of partnerships retained through Year 2 of the Adopt-a-School Program	50%

# Adopt-a-School Year 1 Target Participants

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## Schools

- Prioritized partner facilitation with our lowest 40 performing schools

## Partners

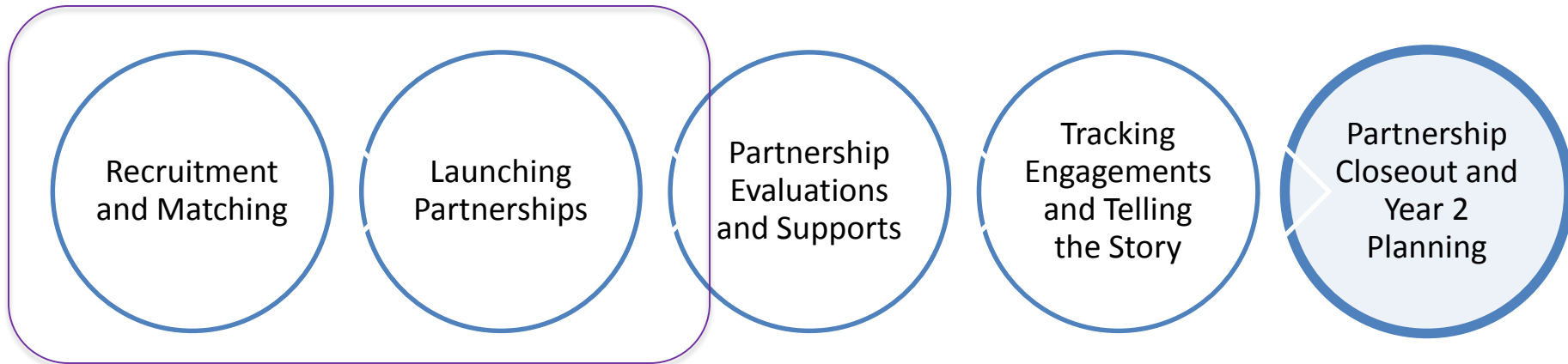
- Open to all community and corporate groups
  - *generally geared towards groups that did not run an existing student program.*
- Open to new and existing partners
- Willingness to commit to year long relationship and meet program requirements

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# Implementation Steps



## Step 1: Recruitment and Matching (Jul. – Aug.)

- School and partner recruitment
- Partner screening phone calls
- Central Office internal matching
- Secure school and partner approval
- School and partner introductions



*Partners from Young Playwrights' Theatre complete a service day for partner school Tubman Elementary School.*

## Step 2: Launching Partnerships ( Sept. – Oct.)

- Partnership launch event for schools and partners
- Introductory meetings between schools and partners
- Partnership plan mandatory submission deadline



*Leaders from Aiton Elementary School share excitement over their partnership.*



# Case Study



## Small Group Discussion (10 minutes)



Based on the case study and the steps shared earlier, what would you recommend DCPS start/stop/continue related to the way in which partnerships were made and launched in the Adopt-a-School Program?

## Step 1: Recruitment and Matching (Jul. – Aug.)

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### **BEST PRACTICES**

- 1. Be intentional:** Identify the problem you want to solve and ensure structures, participants, expectations, and narrative align to address that problem.
- 2. Be thorough:** applications can't capture everything. Screening calls are helpful tool for communicating expectations, gauging capacity and will, and picking up on nuance.
- 3. Be equitable:** avoid “first come, first served” when possible approach in favor of best fit; give schools and partners equal voice in the process to build investment

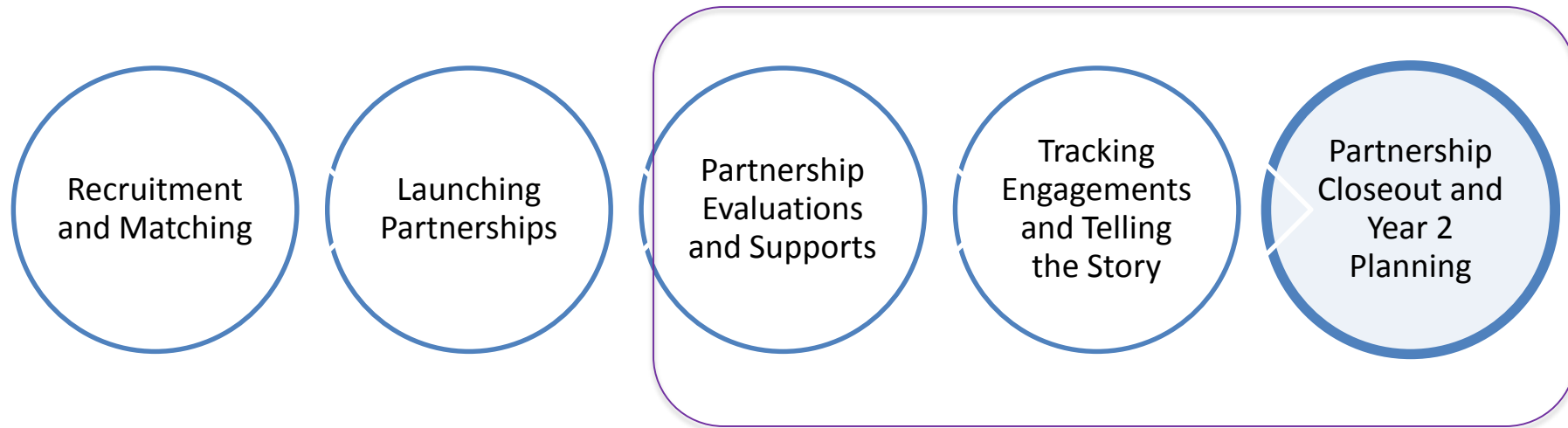
## Step 2: Launching Partnerships ( Sept. – Oct.)

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### **BEST PRACTICES**

- 1. Partnership launches are similar to first dates:** Partnerships benefit from time to get to know one another and tools to guide initial conversations and planning.
- 2. Stick with what you know:** Encourage partners and schools to stick with their core competencies initially and avoid creating new programming
- 3. The more help the merrier:** Best to have schools assign multiple POCs with one lead to avoid overseeing the entire partnership and ensuring things stay on course

# Implementation Steps



## Step 3: Partnership Evaluations and Support (Nov. - Jan.)



- Adopt-a-School social media spotlight campaign and newsletter
- Distributed Adopt-a-School mid-year survey
- Increased partnership supports begin in the form of one on one coaching, facilitated conversations, event planning support, and more.

Partners from P.E.N. DMV lead a college prep workshop for high school students at Washington Metropolitan High School

## Step 4: Tracking and Storytelling (Feb.- May)

- Continued partnership supports and tracking from School Partnerships Division
- Adopt-a-School social media spotlight campaign #2



## Small Group Discussion (15 minutes) – 10 talk/ 5- share



1. How would you offer the Adopt-a-School Program to more schools and partners while maintaining program quality and supports?



## Step 3: Partnership Evaluations and Support (Nov.-Jan.)

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### **BEST PRACTICES**

- 1. Measured outcomes necessitate support:** Need a dedicated staff member to provide real time coaching and hold partnerships accountable.
- 2. Define your role:** Spell out how schools and partners should engage with Central Office staff early and often.

## STEP 4: Tracking Engagements and Telling the Story

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### **Best Practices**

- 1. Share scope:** Ensure participants recognize they are apart of a larger program by regularly sharing what other partnerships accomplish
- 2. Be Cheerleader in Chief:** Help schools and partners spread the word about the positive relationships between the community and schools as often as possible.

## Step 5: Partnership Closeout and Year 2 Relaunch



- Distributed end of year survey
- Sent appreciation mailings
- Communicating partnership next steps



YPT @YPTDC · Jun 15

Honored to get a Certificate of Appreciation from @dcpspartners for our #AdoptaSchool work w/ @tubman\_dc! Thx, DCPS!



## Case Study

Our kindergarteners were master strategists as they discussed how to win the bean bag toss. #FieldDay

 You and DC Public Schools



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## Year 1 Outcomes

Metric	Goal	Actual
Total number of Adopt-a-School partnerships	25	38
Total number of 40/40* participating schools <i>*40 lowest performing schools</i>	13	19
Total number of partnership engagements completed	75	95
Total number of donation efforts completed	25	35
Total number of survey respondents that “agree/strongly agree that they would recommend the program to others”	80%	92%
Total number of partnerships retained through the Adopt-a-School Program	50%	95%* survey respondents

## Year 2 Next Steps

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- Targeted recruitment campaign
- Competitive application process
- Engagement cycles
- Partnership management training and support
- Develop tools to make reporting out and sharing stories easier
- More check ins throughout the school year
- Share more stories and success from each partnership

## Questions

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Twitter: [@dcpspartners](https://twitter.com/dcpspartners)