


**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: David A. Catania, Chairperson
Committee on Education 

DATE: January 22, 2014

SUBJECT: Report on PR 20-538, "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013"

The Committee on Education, to which PR 20-538, "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013" was referred, reports favorably thereon, and recommends approval by the Council.

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I. BACKGROUND AND NEED

The purpose of Proposed Resolution 20-538, the "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013" is to confirm the appointment of Jesus Aguirre as State Superintendent of Education for the District of Columbia for a four-year term. Jesús Aguirre is currently a resident of Ward 4.

Jesús Aguirre received his Bachelor of Arts in Biology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1990 and his MBA from Arizona State University in 2006. Mr. Aguirre has been serving as the District's Interim State Superintendent of Education since October 1, 2013. Immediately prior to this appointment, Mr. Aguirre was the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (2009-2013). As Director of the District's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Mr. Aguirre was responsible for managing a budget that included over \$34M in local funds and 543 FTEs. DPR is charged with maintaining more than 900 acres of parkland and more than 100 community facilities that include recreation centers, athletic fields, swimming

pools, and play grounds. Additionally, as the Director of DPR, Mr. Aguirre coordinated recreational programming including sports leagues, youth programs, adaptive programs for individuals with disabilities, and senior citizen activities. In response to Committee's pre-hearing questions, Mr. Aguirre said of his past role as Director of DPR:

Additionally, my success in operating an executive agency will support my efforts at OSSE. My work at the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in facilitating its transition into an organization focused on outcomes-based programming, professional development, responsive constituent services, and strategic planning ultimately allowed the agency to become nationally accredited for the first time in our 40-year history. This is especially significant as DPR is now one of only 4% of the more than 3,000 parks and recreation agencies nationally to have achieved this distinction.

Before becoming Director of DPR, Aguirre served as the Director of School Operations at the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) during the Fenty Administration (2007-2009) where he was responsible for providing operational support to approximately 120 Principals and accountable for the opening of schools; school security; the food service contract; lottery process and enrollment audit; and the day-to-day operations of schools.

Before moving to the District of Columbia with his wife, Monica Liang-Aguirre—who is a Principal at Oyster Adams—Aguirre co-founded and was the Executive Director of a public charter school in Phoenix, AZ. The Charter School he operated, Tertulia Pre-College Community, closed in 2011, when the Arizona Charter School Board declined to renew the school's charter.

Prior to running the school in Arizona, he worked for Teach for America in various positions including as a regional recruiter and the founding Executive Director of Teach for America's New York office where he was in charge of contract solicitations and negotiations, fundraising and state-level government relations. Aguirre started his education career as a middle school science teacher in Los Angeles. Aguirre has three children, two of whom attend a traditional public school and one a public charter school.

In addition, to his career working in District government, Mr. Aguirre currently serves on several boards and commissions as a Mayoral nominee. Mr. Aguirre serves as member of the Children and Youth Investment Corporation, Community Schools Advisory Committee; and the Youth Bullying Prevention Taskforce.

Pursuant to the Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007¹, which established the Office of the State Superintendent of Education as a department under the oversight of the Department of Education, commonly known as the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education; the state education agency is to be "headed by State Superintendent of Education ("State Superintendent"), who shall be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the

¹ D.C. Law 17-009

Council”² As such, Mr. Aguirre’s appointment has been submitted to the Council for its consideration during its 90-day review.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) serves as the District of Columbia’s State Education Agency . In this role, OSSE manages and distributes federal funding to education providers and exercises oversight responsibility over federal education programs and related grants administered in the District to ensure quality and compliance. OSSE develops state-level education policies and standards aligned with school, college, and workforce readiness expectations. OSSE further ensures that the District collects and reports accurate and reliable student data. OSSE is also responsible for the regulation of early childhood programs; DC-Tuition Assistant Grant program; federal child nutrition programs; the management of the District’s student transportation department; the verification of enrollment counts and student residency; management of public charter school payments; non-public tuition payments and oversight; and the oversight of the education licensure commission and the issuance of educator licenses.

In the District of Columbia, the Mayor appoints both the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools, and the State Superintendent of Education, who is responsible for regulating and overseeing certain aspects of DCPS. As such, the Mayor appoints both the individuals who operate the school system and the individuals responsible for state-level compliance matters. This produces the possibility of a conflict of interest. Under the current arrangement, the State Superintendent might be discouraged from appropriately performing his or her oversight duties.

The Committee received comments from the public during and prior to its November 22, 2013 public roundtable emphasizing the need for the new State Superintendent to promote transparency, independence, and effective monitoring and compliance with local and federal laws. Particularly, since the District of Columbia is considered a “high risk” grantee for all federal Department of Education grants and has “not yet fully implemented” all of the U.S. Department of Education’s recommendations.

During the public roundtable, the Committee raised concerns regarding Mr. Aguirre’s past experience with federal compliance and oversight at the Arizona public charter school he co-founded. Mr. Aguirre shared with the Committee when he was running the school he was not a great business leader, but has learned from that experience and subsequently earned his MBA to expand his business and administrative skills, and to ensure the District will transition from its high risk status and continue to receive federal grants. Mr. Aguirre indicated in his pre-hearing response to the Committee that “our efforts in implementing our Race to the Top grant, our waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements, and our management of federal grants, must all be re-aligned to have an agency wide focus instead of being contained in just one area of the organization.”

² D.C. Official Code §38-2601

Mr. Aguirre shared with the Committee that he believes his background and experience justify his appointment as State Superintendent. Mr. Aguirre pointed to his experience as an agency director, educator, and school leader when stating that he considered himself to be a strong candidate to lead the District's state education agency. The Committee recognizes that the position of State Superintendent of Education is an important role in the District's educational landscape, the State Superintendent must be a strong and effective leader of a large organization and is expected to bring a coherent vision to the position; one that outlines a collaborative and innovative approach to increasing student achievement, while exercising accountability over local education agencies.

Given that the Committee recognizes that the Mayor should be afforded significant deference with respect to filling appointments to executive agencies with qualified individuals of his or her choosing, the Committee recommends approval of Mr. Aguirre's confirmation.

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| November 1, 2013 | PR 20-538, "State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013" is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor. |
| November 5, 2013 | PR 20-538 is referred to the Committee on Education. |
| November 15, 2013 | Notice of Intent to act on PR 20-538 is published in the <i>District of Columbia Register</i> . |
| November 15, 2013 | Notice of a Public Roundtable is published in the <i>District of Columbia Register</i> . |
| November 22, 2013 | The Committee on Education holds a public roundtable on PR 20-538 |
| January 22, 2014 | The Committee on Education considers PR 20-538 at its January meeting. |

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Mayor has nominated Jesus Aguirre for the position of State Superintendent of Education

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee on Education held a public roundtable on PR20-538 on Friday, November 22, 2013. The testimony summarized below is from that hearing. A copy of this testimony is attached to this report.

Allison Kokkoros, Chief Academic Officer on behalf of Sonia Gutierrez, Carlos Rosario Public Charter School. Ms. Gutierrez' testimony spoke in favor of Mr. Aguirre's appointment. Ms. Gutierrez written remarks highlighted her belief that Mr. Aguirre is responsive and helpful.

Tiffany Johnson, Ward 6 Area Manager, District of Columbia Dept. of Parks & Recreation. Ms. Johnson stated that she believes Mr. Aguirre is the ideal candidate for the position of State Superintendent of Education. She testified that under Mr. Aguirre's leadership at DPR, staff received more professional development and training and engaged more with the National Recreation and Park Association.

Willie Jackson, Principal, Phelps ACE High School. Mr. Jackson testified in support of Mr. Aguirre's appointment as State Superintendent. Mr. Jackson highlighted that in Mr. Aguirre's former role as the Director of DCPS' Office of School operations he ensured schools were safe and efficient academic environments.

David Landeryou, Principal, Francis Scott Key Elementary School. Mr. Landeryou testified in support of Mr. Aguirre's appointment as the District's State Superintendent. Like Mr. Jackson, Mr. Landeryou stated that while serving "as the Director of DCPS' Office of School Operations [Mr. Aguirre] greatly supported principals like myself by ensuring the day-to-day functions of schools ran smoothly".

Judge Mary Terrell, Public Witness. Judge Terrell testified in support of Mr. Aguirre's confirmation and asked the committee to affirm his proposed resolution. Having worked with Mr. Aguirre while the interim President of the DC Children Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Judge Terrell believed Mr. Aguirre demonstrated integrity, independence, competence and management skills.

Eve Brooks, SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council. Ms. Brooks spoke in support of Mr. Aguirre's appointment as State Superintendent of Education. Ms. Brooks stated that Mr. Aguirre was responsive to the community's requests regarding the Randall Recreation Center.

Geo. Johnson, Executive Director, AFSCME Council 20. Mr. Johnson provided oral remarks in which he stated that Mr. Aguirre has a positive track record in working with unions and asked for his confirmation to be upheld. As a representative of over 2000 workers at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education Mr. Johnson, stated Mr. Aguirre is a "shining star" and he appreciates the talents Mr. Aguirre will bring to the Office of the Superintendent for Education

Ken Archer, Public Witness. Mr. Archer, Testified against the confirmation of Mr. Aguirre for State Superintendent of OSSE stating he has shown greater concern for the agency's image over compliance. In describing Mr. Aguirre's record, Mr. Archer detailed Aguirre's time as the leader of a school that failed to have its charter renewed due to poor academic progress and failure to comply with reporting and federal requirements. Additionally, Mr. Archer, indicated that overseeing the compliance of LEAs with federal laws such as those dealing with special education could be a concern. Mr. Archer stated it is critical that the State Superintendent independently monitor and enforce federal education law.

Scott Pearson, Executive Director, District of Columbia Public Charter School Board. Mr. Pearson, testified in support of the confirmation resolution for Mr. Jesus Aguirre. Mr. Pearson stated that in the time Mr. Aguirre has served as Acting State Superintendent he has found him to be "collegial, collaborative, and eager to solve problems."

Monica Warren-Jones, Ward 6 Representative, DC State Board of Education. On behalf of the DC State Board of Education Mrs. Warren-Jones stated that the State Board does not have a recommendation either way on the confirmation of Mr. Aguirre as State Superintendent. However, the State Board of Education did provide thoughts on the qualities to look for in a State Superintendent including a candidate who is an administrator, preferably with an education background; someone who establishes and maintains a collaborative relationship with the State Board; an individual who responds to the State Board's requests in a timely fashion; is open, transparent, and inclusive; and is free and independent from the Mayor, both in the hiring and terminations process.

Mary Lord, At-Large Representative, DC State Board of Education. Provided oral remarks underscoring the importance of OSSE, and highlighted that the agency oversees large amounts of grants, and the person in charge of OSSE needs to be a strong manager with integrity. Ms. Lord also stated that the leader of OSSE should restore stability and employee morale. Additionally OSSE should conduct an investigation of the approximately \$90,000 grant OSSE paid a consulting firm, SPC , for a half-hour keynote speech; three 45-minute parent workshops; and 500 of copies of parenting books for its Parent and Family Engagement Summit.

Angela Franco, Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Submitted written testimony in support of Mr. Jesus Aguirre's appointment as State Superintendent of Education.

Chris Minnich, Council of Chief State School Officers. Mr. Minnich, Submitted written testimony recommending Mr. Jesus Aguirre be confirmed as the State Superintendent of Education.

Pandit F. Wright, President & CEO, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington. Pandit Wright provided written testimony in support of PR20-538's affirmative approval by Council.

Jesus Aguirre, Nominee. Mr. Aguirre stated that he wishes to be approved as the State Superintendent of Education. As State Superintendent, Mr. Aguirre indicated he will have standing meetings with the State Board of Education and will attend all monthly board meetings.

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

The State Superintendent of Education is appointed pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 38-2601, which establishes the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and in accordance with D.C. Official Code 1-523.01(a). The position, to which Jesus Aguirre is nominated, is approved by the Council.

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

The approval of PR 20-538 will have no fiscal impact.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

<u>Section 1</u>	States the short title of PR 20-538.
<u>Section 2</u>	Definitions.
<u>Section 3</u>	Approves the nomination for reappointment of Mr. Jesus Aguirre as State Superintendent for the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education
<u>Section 4</u>	Transmittal of the resolution.
<u>Section 5</u>	Effective date.

IX. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Following the Committee's November 22, 2013 roundtable and the closure of the hearing record, Councilmembers Wells and Grosso submitted a letter on December 17, 2013, expressing their belief that Mr. Aguirre is not the best candidate for the role of State Superintendent of Education and requesting that the Committee markup PR 20-538 so they would be able to vote against it. A copy of the letter is included to the Committee's report in Attachment III.

X. COMMITTEE ACTION

The Committee on Education met on January 22, 2014 to consider PR20-538, the "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013".

Committee Chairperson Catania began by providing a brief legislative history of PR20-538 and background information on the nominee. Chairman Catania stated that additional concerns had been raised regarding the oversight and management practices of the District's Department of Parks and Recreation under the nominee's leadership, and in light of those concerns, 2 members of the Committee, Mr. Wells and Mr. Grosso, requested a Mark-up. Mr. Catania added for the record, that according to the General Counsel's office, should the Committee not affirmatively move the approval resolution and consequently the Council as a whole did not act, the appointment would be deemed approved on February 14, 2014. He then asked for any comments from Committee members.

Councilmember Wells shared his disappointment with the nominee and the lack of a national search. Specifically, Mr. Wells stated Mr. Aguirre's leadership of a charter school that did not comply with reporting requirements, along with concerns about Mr. Aguirre's lack of responsiveness, and engagement as the head of the District's Department of Parks and Recreation, lead Mr. Wells to conclude that the District can do better.

Councilmember Grosso stated that he would not support Mr. Aguirre's appointment and stated that the responsibilities of the Superintendent are not easy and the candidate must be willing to take on the necessary oversight role in a position that can be political due to the District's education governance structure. Additionally, Mr. Grosso shared his displeasure with Mr. Aguirre's lack of oversight while he was head of DPR, the vision Mr. Aguirre has for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education as a supporting agency not an oversight agency, and that Mr. Aguirre authorized a trip for over 30 DPR employees to attend an out-of-state conference during the recent government shutdown.

Councilmember Alexander stated her belief that Aguirre, while director of Parks and Recreation, acted proactively and was responsive to the concerns of constituents. Ms. Alexander said that he worked with a challenged student population in Arizona with a goal to provide them with a quality education. Ms. Alexander also noted that the District is in need of a nominee who will work collaboratively with the State Board of Education and Mr. Aguirre has stated he will do so.

Following remarks, Committee Chairperson Catania moved the committee print at which Mr. Wells moved an amendment in nature of a substitute that disapproved the appointment of Mr. Aguirre as the State Superintendent of Education. Chairperson Catania asked for discussion on the amendment at which Councilmember Grosso discussed his support for the amendment along with the belief that Mr. Aguirre is not the appropriate person for the position. Ms. Alexander discussed her intention to vote in opposition of the amendment.

Mr. Catania stated he would not support the amendment, but not due to his confidence in Aguirre. Chariman Catania said that in light of the fact that the District's sitting mayor's 2010 campaign is the subject of an ongoing federal investigation and that the sitting mayor faces uncertain electoral prospects in the near future, the District is unlikely to attract more qualified individuals for the position. He noted that Aguirre had mentioned that he learned from his experience, and that, weighing the balance of his record he hopes that Aguirre will be responsive and attentive to the Committee. Chairperson Catania declared that Aguirre is not the best candidate, but meets the minimum qualifications.

Mr. Catania then brought discussion to a close, subsequently calling for a vote on the Amendment, which failed to achieve majority support with two members (Councilmember Grosso and Wells) voting in favor, and two members opposing (Councilmembers Alexander and Catania).

Mr. Catania then proceeded to further discussion of the underlying resolution, concluding with a motion to consider PR20-538.

Committee members voting in favor:	Councilmembers Catania, and Alexander
Committee members voting against:	None
Committee members abstaining:	Councilmembers Grosso and Wells
Committee members absent:	Councilmember Barry

Chairperson Catania then moved the committee report for PR20-538

Committee members voting in favor:	Councilmembers Catania, and Alexander
Committee members voting against:	None
Committee members abstaining:	Councilmembers Grosso and Wells
Committee members absent:	Councilmember Barry


XI. ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Resolution 20-538 as introduced.
2. Nominee's response to Committee questions.
3. Written testimony and comments.
4. Legal sufficiency determination for PR20-538
5. Committee Print for Proposed Resolution 20-538.

Attachment I:
PR20-538 As Introduced

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To: Members of the Council
From: 
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council
Date: November 7, 2013
Subject: Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Friday, November 01, 2013. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

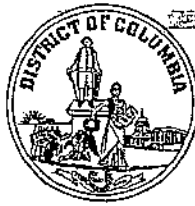
TITLE: "State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013", PR20-0538

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee on Education. This resolution will be deemed approved on February 14, 2014 without Council action.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services



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OCT -

VINCENT C. GRAY
MAYOR

NOV -1 2013

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 38-2601(b), I am pleased to nominate the following person for appointment as the State Superintendent of Education to serve a four (4) year term:

Jesús Salvador Aguirre
6818 Oregon Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20015
(Ward 4)

Enclosed, you will find biographical information detailing Mr. Aguirre's experience, together with a proposed resolution to assist the Council during the confirmation process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent C. Gray". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "V" and "G".
Vincent C. Gray



Chairman Phil Mendelson

at the request of the Mayor

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Chairman Phil Mendelson, at the request of the Mayor, introduced the following resolution,
which was referred to the Committee on _____

To confirm the Mayoral appointment of Jesús Salvador Aguirre as the State Superintendent of Education.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013."

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:

Jesús Salvador Aguirre
6818 Oregon Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20015
(Ward 4)

as the State Superintendent of Education, in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01) and section 2601(b) of the State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-176; D.C. Official Code §38-2601(b)), to serve a term of four (4) years.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, each to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Jesús Salvador Aguirre

6818 Oregon Avenue NW T: 202/621-9621
Washington DC 20015 E: jsaguirre@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Masters of Business Administration, Arizona State University
May 2006

Bachelor of Arts: Biology/Pre-Medicine, University of Texas at Austin
August 1990

EXPERIENCE

Agency Director, District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation
Washington, D.C.; December 2009 - Present

- Appointed by Mayor to manage city agency with 1000 full- and part-time employees, \$40 million operating budget, and \$58 million capital budget.
- Oversee 900 acres of parkland, 68 recreation centers, 40 aquatic facilities, and several hundred fields, playgrounds, and courts.
- Design and implement inclusive, quality, affordable recreational services for District residents, by organizing programs, activities and events, and by building and maintaining quality facilities, open spaces, and recreational amenities.

Director, Office of School Operations, District of Columbia Public Schools
Washington, D.C.; August 2007 - December 2009

- Provided operational support for over 120 school principals and instructional superintendents, ensuring that the central office operations are responsive to the needs of schools.
- Managed district-wide security services, technology support, food services, enrollment, and emergency response planning, with budgets totaling over \$60 million.

Director, Professional Development, Zaner-Bloser Publishing, Inc.
Newton, MA; June 2006 to August 2007

- Managed professional development activities for implementation of various grants as part of core and supplemental reading programs in 12 schools.
- Managed professional development staff and consultants.
- Provided direct professional development services to schools focused on literacy, character development, and school leadership.

Co-founder & Executive Director, Tertulia Pre-College Community Charter School
Phoenix, AZ; 1995 - 2006

- Co-founder of public K-8 dual-language Charter School.
- Ensured all programs/activities undertaken correlated with school's mission.
- Managed all aspects of organizational financial/budget plan (\$1.8 million annual budget).
- Designed and implemented fundraising plan that raised over \$200K per year.
- Managed facilities development and acquisition plan.
- Managed all human resources, contracts, public relations and student recruitment activities.
- Acted as school's technology director providing support and training for all staff and students.
- Taught one course per year including Pre-Algebra/Algebra, Spanish, and Computer Literacy.
- Continue to serve as President of Board of Directors.

Various Positions, Teach For America

Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY 1992 - 1994

- Served as Regional Recruiter for colleges and universities in Southwestern U.S.
- Founding Regional Executive Director for New York office of Teach for America spin-off organization, responsible for district contract solicitations and negotiations, fundraising, and state-level legislative affairs.
- Regional Support Director in Los Angeles, CA, initiating professional development and support for a cadre of 48 first and second year teachers.

Middle School Science Teacher, Los Angeles Unified School District

Los Angeles, CA; 1990-1992

- Developed and implemented curriculum for middle school life sciences, earth sciences and physical sciences classes in Spanish and English at Edison Junior High School in South Central Los Angeles.
- Member of Teach For America charter group of corps members selected to teach in underserved schools across the country.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Legal Counsel Division



MEMORANDUM

TO: John-Paul C. Hayworth
Manager of Federal Affairs
Office of Policy & Legislative Affairs

FROM: Janet M. Robins. *JMR*
Deputy Attorney General
Legal Counsel Division

DATE: November 1, 2013

SUBJECT: Legal Sufficiency Review of "Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013"
(AE-13-824)

This responds to your request that this Office review the above-referenced resolution (resolution) for legal sufficiency.

The resolution will, upon enactment by the Council pursuant to section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978 (Confirmation Act), effective March 3, 1979, D.C. Law 2-142, D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01 (2013 Supp.), and section 2601(b) of the State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21, 2000, D.C. Law 13-176, D.C. Official Code § 38-2601(b)(2001), confirm the appointment of Jesus Aguirre as the State Superintendent of Education.

Please note the needed revisions as indicated on the attached mark-up of the resolution. Once revised, the resolution will be legally sufficient. I have attached a certificate of legal sufficiency for your use.

Should you have questions about this memorandum, please contact either Pollie H. Goff, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Legal Counsel Division, at 724-5558, or me at 724-5524.

JMR/phg

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



Legal Counsel Division

MEMORANDUM


TO: Lolita S. Alston
Director
Office of Legislative Support

FROM: Janet M. Robins
Deputy Attorney General
Legal Counsel Division

DATE: November 1, 2013

SUBJECT: Certification of Legal Sufficiency of Resolution, the "State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013".
(AE-13-824)

This is to Certify that this Office has reviewed the above-referenced legislation and has found it to be legally sufficient. If you have any questions regarding this certification, please do not hesitate to contact me at 724-5524.


Janet M. Robins

Attachment II:
Nominee's Response to Committee
Questions



November 17, 2013

Councilmember David A. Catania
Chairman – Committee on Education
At-Large Councilmember
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20004

VIA EMAIL

RE: Responses to Preliminary Questions for Public Roundtable on PR20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013”

Dear Councilmember Catania:

Please find herein my responses to the preliminary questions you forwarded to me on November 12, 2013. I have included the full question from your letter, followed by my response in italics. If applicable, supporting documentation is attached to this letter. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these responses in connection with my confirmation roundtable scheduled for Friday, November 22, 2013.

1. Please provide us with a copy of your Financial Disclosure Statement filed with the Office of Campaign Finance. If you have not filed such a statement, then please provide answers to the following questions no. 2-6.

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

4. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the



District Government in which you or your spouse serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

5. Please provide the name of lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or your spouse in excess of \$5,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

6. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you or your spouse have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.

Please see attached Public Financial Disclosure Statement.

7. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.

None.

8. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.

National Recreation and Parks Association

9. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member, and include the term of service for each. (POM = At the Pleasure of the Mayor)

<i>Board Name</i>	<i>Term Start</i>	<i>Term End</i>	<i>Mayor's Order #</i>
<i>Commission on African American Affairs</i>	<i>4/19/2013</i>	<i>POM</i>	<i>2013-078</i>
<i>Community Schools Advisory Committee</i>	<i>2/22/2013</i>	<i>POM</i>	<i>2013-041</i>
<i>Mayor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health, and Nutrition</i>	<i>9/21/2012</i>	<i>POM</i>	<i>2012-156</i>
<i>Children & Youth Investment Corp</i>	<i>10/11/2011</i>	<i>POM</i>	<i>2011-171</i>
<i>Mayor's Bullying Prevention Task Force</i>	<i>9/20/2013</i>	<i>POM</i>	<i>2012-151</i>

In my capacity of the director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, I also served on the board of Building Bridges Across the River, Inc., the foundation that operates the Town Hall Arts and Recreation and Recreation Campus. I served from September 2012 through September 2013.

I have also served on the strategic planning committee and as co-chair of the



customer service sub-committee of the Labor Management Partnership Council since January of 2013.

10. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.

No.

11. Do you or your spouse have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as the District of Columbia's State Superintendent?

No.

12. Please provide an explanation of your knowledge of the Office of the State Superintendent's responsibilities; in addition please describe your observations of the agency, such as its strengths and weaknesses or how it could be improved.

On a broad level, as the state education agency, OSSE is responsible for setting high standards for all public schools in the District, creating a system of support and resources to assist schools in meeting those high standards, and providing oversight and accountability to ensure that all schools are indeed meeting those standards so that all students are achieving.

In the elementary and secondary education area, OSSE has responsibility for federal accountability requirements and provides grants to support student success. In conjunction with the State Board of Education, OSSE has responsibility for setting academic standards and graduation requirements, and for policies in other areas such as student residency and attendance. OSSE also conducts the annual census type student enrollment audit for all public schools and administers the annual statewide student assessment. OSSE is also responsible for issuing licenses for educators and school administrators, making recommendations on revisions to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula, and creating and maintaining a state longitudinal education data warehouse. OSSE also administers all federally sponsored nutrition programs for children such as the National School Lunch Program, manages the state athletic association, and implements health and wellness programs in schools. OSSE also supports the development of high-quality career and technical education standards and programs in the District. This area in OSSE also processes payments to charter school LEAs and provides financial support for facilities development for these organizations. This area recently succeeded in receiving a federal Race to the Top grant and in receiving an approval of a waiver from many of the federal



Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements. As we move forward, we must ensure that all aspects of this division are clearly aligned to support student success. For example, our work on the adoption and implementation of rigorous academic standards and on the development and implementation of new assessments based on those standards will continue to be key to the ongoing success of the District's reform efforts. We must also redouble our efforts on working with LEAs to continue to reduce the achievement gaps among the various subgroups of students, and grow our support for our burgeoning second language learner population.

In the area of special education, OSSE also is responsible for federal accountability to ensure students with special needs receive a high-quality education in the least restrictive environment. OSSE is also responsible for transporting children who's Individualized Education Program prescribes transportation services. OSSE also works closely with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) when schools do not have the capacity to meet the specialized needs of certain students and assists in the placement in non-public schools, evaluates and approves non-public schools that are able to educate District children on behalf of the LEAs, and makes payments to those schools. OSSE's special education divisions have seen great progress in recent years, particularly in successfully removing court oversight of our transportation division and on making significant improvements in our responsiveness and implementation of required mandates related to special education services and payments to non-public schools. Our work on supporting the transition of our students with IEPs from secondary school is a critical area of growth as we move forward. Further, we must shift our focus from accountability on processes to an accountability system driven by student outcomes.

In early childhood education, OSSE oversees the licensing of private and public early childhood education providers, issues subsidies to support our most needy residents, and evaluates the quality of publicly funded providers. This area presents a critical opportunity to build on the great work of the other divisions and other stakeholders in the District's education system. A comprehensive and strategic framework for early childhood education that creates increased capacity and access to high quality childcare and early childhood education for all residents is needed. This framework must improve quality through enhanced evaluation and licensing requirements for service providers, robust professional development and the creation of an early learning professionals pipeline. Further this comprehensive strategy must align with other human services agencies such as the Department of Mental Health (DBH), the Children and Family Services Agency (CFSA), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) to ensure our efforts are clearly aligned and we can build a system accountable for all children. Finally, this system must be aligned with our PK and K work as we want to ensure all children are entering these programs ready for success.



In post-secondary education, OSSE oversees the Education Licensure Commission, which establishes standards for postsecondary institutions in the District. OSSE also provides supports for students to encourage participation in post-secondary education such as college-readiness activities and college fairs for high school students, and provides free support for students taking Advanced Placement (AP) and Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT). Additionally, OSSE oversees the DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program and the Mayor's Scholars programs to provide funding for DC students to attend post-secondary institutions.

In the adult education area, OSSE provides support for adult learners, including GED programs and testing services, grants to adult education providers, and workforce development and training.

Finally, a key area of opportunity for OSSE is in providing robust data to all stakeholders vested in supporting student success. Primarily, we must improve data transparency and focus on informing parents and families as we support their efforts in making informed educational decisions for their children. OSSE is well positioned to establish systems to create a robust data and analysis division that can be used by all education stakeholders, as appropriate, to proactively analyze data and determine successful efforts to benefit the success of all students. My hope is to partner with our local universities to build a strong data research and analysis group.

Clearly, OSSE has an expansive portfolio of responsibilities as we work to ensure that all of our residents have access to educational opportunities that will support their success in career and in life. As I begin to understand the full breadth of what OSSE does, it is clear that the agency has a tremendous amount of potential and that there are a great deal of staff that are absolutely dedicated to our mission of supporting high educational outcomes for all learners. Furthermore, it's clear that OSSE will continue to play a vital role in the ongoing reform efforts that the District has undertaken to fundamentally improve our education system.

However, in order for OSSE to continue to be successful and a critical partner in the ongoing reform efforts in the District, the agency must align its resources, structure and policies in a way that more clearly supports positive outcomes for our students. For example, our efforts in implementing our Race to the Top grant, our waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements, and our management of federal grants, must all be re-aligned to have an agency wide focus instead of being contained in just one area of the organization. Also, we must fundamentally improve our internal and external communication if we are truly to become partners with our customers and the other members of the District's education community.



13. Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as State Superintendent of Education.

I believe that the combination of my background and experiences, and my dedication to public service are incredibly relevant to my appointment as State Superintendent.

During my career, I have continued to develop and improve my professional skills such as management of people and projects, effective communication with many different stakeholders, and ability to lead groups of diverse individuals around a unified vision. These are skills critical to the ongoing success of OSSE as we become a high-performing state education agency.

My work in education, as a teacher, teacher trainer, school leader, and district level administrator are also relevant. I have served as a teacher in the second largest school district in the country, working with historically underserved middle school students in Los Angeles. Through this experience, I quickly realized the need to connect to my students and expose them to experiences that expanded their perspective. I have worked with schools across the country supporting new teachers, mentoring principals, and helping staff set up comprehensive reading and character education programs. I have first-hand experience in the benefits and challenges of operating a single-school Local Education Agency (LEA) as a charter school co-founder and manager. I have also developed district-wide systems of support for schools within a more traditional urban school district LEA, serving more than 120 schools. These experiences will inform a focus on creating the structures and processes for regulatory oversight needed to authentically support schools, students, and faculty.

Additionally, my success in operating an executive agency will support y efforts at OSSE. My work at the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in facilitating its transition into an organization focused on outcomes-based programming, professional development, responsive constituent services, and strategic planning ultimately allowed the agency to become nationally accredited for the first time in our 40-year history. This is especially significant as DPR is now one of only 4% of the more that 3,000 parks and recreation agencies nationally to have achieved this distinction. I also believe that my ability to work collaboratively with all levels of District government allowed me to move my former agency forward and allowed me to be one of very few cabinet members who were able to transition through two mayoral administrations. These experiences and abilities will continue to assist me as I leverage internal and external support to ensure that OSSE possesses the policies, structures, and resources that are aligned to meet the needs of all of our students.

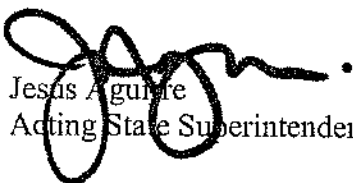


Finally, as an immigrant who grew up in a large urban environment, and went on to become the first member of my family to complete a college degree and a graduate degree, I am absolutely committed to ensuring that all of our students have the same opportunities that I had the privilege of receiving. My career as an educator and public servant has been focused on ensuring the success of groups that have been underserved, and often poorly served, by the traditional education system. This passion will continue to drive my efforts at OSSE.

Perhaps the greatest interest I have in the success of the District's school system is that my family and I are absolutely committed to public education: my children are in public school – two in DCPS and one in a charter school focused on serving children with special needs – and my wife is a dedicated and successful principal at a DCPS school.

I look forward to my confirmation hearing on Friday, November 22, 2013, where I would be happy to share more details regarding my vision for OSSE and answer any additional questions you or other members of the Committee may have.

Sincerely,



Jesus Aguirre
Acting State Superintendent of Education

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ETHICS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

PUBLIC FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Each public official subject to the District of Columbia Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Establishment and Comprehensive Ethics Reform Act of 2011 (D.C. Official Code Section 1-1162.24 (2012 Supp.)), is required to complete and submit this Public Financial Disclosure Statement (PFDS) to the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability (BEGA) annually, not later than May 15th of each year for the prior calendar year. A public official must also complete and submit a PFDS within 90 days of the end of their appointment to office, if the filer ceases to serve prior to May 15th of any year.

All questions on this PFDS should be answered for the prior calendar year. If the form is submitted as an Amendment, answer only the question to which there is a change in information. Please read the General Instructions at www.bega.dc.gov.

Prior Calendar Year for which Filing is made: 2012

ORIGINAL ☐ AMENDMENT ☒ Date of Filing: 11/13/2013

Name: Aguirre Jesus
Last First Middle

Telephone: Home: Business:

Home Address:
(Street) (City, State, Zip Code)

E-Mail Address:

Business Address:
(Street) (City, State, Zip Code)

Position for Which Filing* (See General Instructions)

Report Status (check Appropriate Box)	Date of Appointment or Candidacy (Month, Day, Year)	Final Date (if applicable) (Month, Day, Year)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Elected Official	12/2/2009	9/30/2013
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate <input type="checkbox"/> Final Report		

Position: Director Grade:

Name of Agency: Department of Recreation and Parks

Agency Address: 3149 16th Street NW Washington, DC 20010

Agency Telephone: (202) 673-7665

Position Held with the District Government During the Preceding 12 Months (If Not The Same As Above)	Title of Position and Date Held Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation
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BOARD OF ETHICS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY
441 4th STREET, NW, 830 SOUTH
WASHINGTON, DC 20001

-
1. Please list each business, whether or not transacting any business with the District of Columbia government, in or from which you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children have a beneficial interest, including, whether held in such person's own name, in trust, or in the name of a nominee, securities, stocks, stock options, bonds, or trusts, exceeding in the aggregate \$1,000, or that produced income of \$200. If none, state none.

Entity	Affiliation with Entity	Start Date	End Date	Additional Information Including Amount
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NONE

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2. Please list each business, whether or not transacting any business with the District of Columbia government, in or from which you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children received honoraria and income earned for services rendered in excess of \$200 during a calendar year, as well as the identity of any client for whom you performed a service in connection with your outside income if the client has a contract with the government of the District of Columbia or the client stands to gain a direct financial benefit from legislation that was pending before the Council during the calendar year. Include a narrative description of the nature of the service performed in connection with the official's outside income. If none, state none.

Entity	Affiliation with Entity	Start Date	End Date	Narrative Description	Additional Information Including Amount
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NONE

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3. Please list each business, whether or not transacting any business with the District of Columbia government, in or from which you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children served as an officer, director, partner, employee, consultant, contractor, volunteer, or in any other formal capacity or affiliation. If none, state none.

Entity	Affiliation with Entity	Start Date	End Date	Additional Information
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NONE

NONE

-
4. Please list each business, whether or not transacting any business with the District of Columbia government, in or from which you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children had an agreement or arrangement for a leave of absence, future employment, including date of agreement, or continuation of payment by a former employer. If none, state none.

Entity	Affiliation with Entity	Start Date	End Date	Additional Information
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NONE

-
5. Please provide each outstanding individual liability in excess of \$1,000 for borrowing by you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children. Do not include liabilities to a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, including any revolving credit and installment accounts from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts, or a member of your immediate family. If none, state none.

Name of Creditor	Type of Liability	End Date	Additional Information Including Amount
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NONE

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6. Please provide all real property located in the District (and its actual location) in which you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children, have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$1,000, or that produced income of \$200. Do not list personal residences occupied by you or your spouse, or domestic partner. If none, state none.

Location of Real Property	Purchase Date	Date Sold	Additional Information Including Amount
NONE			

-
7. Please list all professional or occupational licenses issued by the District of Columbia government held by you or your spouse, domestic partner, or dependent children. If none, state none.

License Issued	Additional Information
NONE	

-
8. Please list all gifts received you received from a prohibited source in an aggregate value of \$100 in a calendar year. If none, state none.

Name of Person Providing the Gift	Description of Gift	Date of Gift	Estimated Value	Additional Information Including Amount
NONE			\$0.00	

VERIFICATION

By signing this affidavit before a witness, I hereby swear (or affirm) that to the best of my knowledge and belief, I have not caused title to property to be placed in another person or entity for the purposes of avoiding disclosure;

I further swear (or affirm) that I have:

- Filed and paid my income and property taxes;
- Diligently safeguarded the assets of the taxpayers and the District;
- Reported known illegal activity, including attempted bribes, to the appropriate authorities;
- Not been offered or accepted any bribes;
- Not directly or indirectly received government funds through illegal or improper means;
- Not raised or received funds in violation of federal or District law; and
- Not received or been given anything of value, including a gift, favor, service, loan gratuity, discount, hospitality, political contribution, or promise of future employment, based on any understanding that my official actions or judgment or vote would be influenced.

YOU MUST SIGN THIS FORM. Read the following carefully before you sign. I understand that the making of a false statement on this form or materials submitted with this form is punishable by criminal penalties pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 22-2405 et seq. (2001). I understand that any information I give may be investigated as allowed by law or Mayoral order. I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all of my statements are true, correct, and complete.

ELECTRONICALLY CERTIFIED

By: Aguirre, Jesus

11/13/2013

Signature

Name of Public Official

Date

Attachment III:
Written Testimony and Comments

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AGENDA**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

**COUNCILMEMBER DAVID A. CATANIA
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC ROUNDTABLE**

On

PR 20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013”

On

**Friday, November 22, 2013
1:00 pm, Hearing Room 123, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004**

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PUBLIC HEARING

WITNESS LIST

Public Witnesses

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Allison Kokkoros | Chief Academic Officer, Carlos Rosario Int’l Public Charter School |
| 2. Tiffany Johnson | Ward 6 Area Manager, District of Columbia Dept. of Parks & Recreations |
| 3. Willie Jackson | Principal, Phelps ACE High School |
| 4. David Landeryou | Principal, Francis Scott Key Elementary School |
| 5. Ed N. Davies | Executive Director, DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation |
| 6. Mary Terrell | Public Witness |
| 7. Eve Brooks | SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council |
| 8. Geo. Johnson | Executive Director, AFSCME Council 20 |
| 9. Ken Archer | Public Witness |
| 10. Scott Pearson | Executive Director, District of Columbia Public Charter School Board |
| 11. Mark Jones | Vice President, DC State Board of Education |

Nominee

Jesus Aguirre

Acting, State Superintendent of Education, OSSE

**Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
Notice of Public Roundtable**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20004

**COUNCILMEMBER DAVID A. CATANIA, CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Announces a Public Roundtable

On

PR20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013”

On

**Friday, November 22, 2013
1 p.m.
Room 123
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004**

Councilmember David A. Catania, Chairperson of the Committee on Education, announces a Public Roundtable on PR20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013” at 1 p.m. on Friday, November 22, 2013 in room 123 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW.

The purpose of this roundtable is to discuss the appointment of Jesus Salvador Aguirre to a four year term as State Superintendent of Education.

Members of the public wishing to testify should contact Jamaal Jordan at 202-724-8061 or jjordan@dccouncil.us no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 2013. Members of the public unable to testify in person may submit written testimony which will be made part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted to the Committee on Education no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, November 29, 2013.



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

December 17, 2013

Councilmember David Catania, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 404
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Catania: *David*

We are writing to formally request you to schedule a vote on the nomination of Jesus Aguirre to position of State Superintendent in the District of Columbia. We request that you hold this vote to prevent a passive confirmation of Mr. Aguirre. We do not believe that he is best suited for the role based on Mr. Aguirre's past record and experience.

Mr. Aguirre failed to properly manage and provide oversight for the charter school he founded in Arizona. More recently he has shown a lack of management skills and an unwillingness to be responsive to Council requests as the head of the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation. These poor past performances have caused great concern about how he will perform as the new Superintendent at OSSE. Furthermore, his answers during Councilmember Grosso's one-on-one meeting and his performance at the nomination hearing have not allayed those concerns.

Consequently, we are asking you to hold a vote on his confirmation so that we can be recorded as voting against his nomination. Thank you for consideration of this matter. If you would like to discuss this further, we are always available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Grosso".

David Grosso
At-Large Councilmember
Council of the District of Columbia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommy Wells".

Tommy Wells
Ward 6 Councilmember
Council of the District of Columbia

PR 20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013”

Esteemed Chairman Catania and distinguished Councilmembers, good afternoon:

My name is Sonia Gutierrez, and I am the proud president and founder of the Carlos Rosario School. As you know, I am a long time resident of Washington, DC having moved to the area from my home in Puerto Rico.

For the past 41 years I have dedicated my life to educating underserved adults in Washington, DC. I first became involved with the Latino community here in the District, because of a deep-seated desire to magnify the voices of immigrants in the city. Since then, it has been my life’s work to provide immigrants with the resources and support they need to achieve the American Dream.

I am honored to be here today to testify on behalf of my fellow Latino colega Mr. Jesus Aguirre, the first Latino to be named State Superintendent of Education. I know that Mr. Aguirre understands the transformative power of education. He is himself a life-long educator who began his career teaching under-served youth in LA. He went on to co-found one of Arizona’s first charter schools, which served low-income, largely Latino students, a labor of love. Having overseen the transformation of Carlos Rosario into a charter school in the mid-1990s, I understand the time and dedication that goes into an undertaking like this. If running a school has taught me anything, it’s that love for those we serve and the belief that through education anything is possible, can give us the strength to overcome any barrier we confront. It’s this kind of commitment, passion and experience we need in the role of superintendent.

From 2007-2009 Mr. Aguirre served as director of the office of school operations for DCPS. He demonstrated his acute ability to collaborate across programs when he worked with the chancellor to create this new division. The office was charged with providing operational support for more than 120 principals and instructional superintendents, and with managing district-wide services such as security, technology support, and emergency response planning. Mr. Aguirre understands we can’t succeed in reaching our goals in a vacuum. It is through cohesive and sustainable partnerships that we not only survive, we thrive.

Most recently Mr. Aguirre served as the Director of DC Department of Parks and Recreation where he really turned around the department through his effective leadership and clear vision. In the position he has impacted the agency by focusing on outcomes-based programs, heightening staff professional development, and putting emphasis on equal access to programming for all DC residents and visitors alike. He brought a sense of integrity and equity to the department as well as commitment to community involvement.

Mr. Aguirre is known for being present and visible in the communities he serves, and he is able to work with all populations. In my personal experience working with Mr. Aguirre I have found him to be responsive and helpful. We even had the privilege of welcoming him to the school while he was serving as director of DC DPR.

I look forward to working with such a passionate and skilled leader as Mr. Aguirre as we look to him to support our efforts to continue to train a culturally diverse, skilled workforce here in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Aguirre is a transformative life-long educator.
He is a passionate advocate for underserved youth.
And he is a proven, skilled collaborator committed to building authentic partnerships.

For these reasons I highly recommend Mr. Aguirre to the position of State Superintendent of Education for the District of Columbia.

Thank you all for your attention.

Good afternoon, my name is Tiffany Johnson and I am the Ward 6 Area Manager for the Department of Parks and Recreation. It has truly been a pleasure working with former Director Jesus Aguirre. In the last fourteen years, I've worked with DPR in a number of capacities. After completing my Masters of Public Administration in 2009, I left the agency to get more experience and professional development opportunities. Jesus's vision was initially one of the reasons that brought me back to DPR. As a leader, he embarked on changing the image of DPR. Although he has a background in education, under his leadership he took the time to listen to employees and learn our profession. He turned the agency into a national brand where you could "Move, Grow and Be Green." His leadership was innovative, invigorative and he took risks. DPR instituted mandatory in house training, professional development conferences and a leadership boot camp for staff. DC became reengaged and collaborated with our national governing body, the National Recreation and Park Association. Staff received more training opportunities under his direction collaborating locally and nationally than we have in more than a decade.

As the demographics of the District of Columbia continues to change, Jesus's vision of services has helped to address the needs of our vastly changing communities. Being the problem solver that he is, communication became more transparent throughout the agency, he was always open minded and helped to bridge the gap with community relations. His ability to work with both staff and community stakeholders increased morale amongst DPR employees, because he was always fair in the decision making process.

During his tenure he accomplished something that no DPR Director has, National Accreditation with the Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). One of the major problems that DPR has endured over the years is the lack of formal policies and procedures to guide the direction of the agency. The accreditation lasts for five years and assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and tax payers that the department has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks as delivering a high level of quality. DC became number 112 of more than 3,000 agencies to receive this distinct honor. In addition to agency accreditation Jesus's ability to understand the needs of our residents, DPR collaborated with the DC Office of Planning, AECOM Consulting firm and thirty additional government, community and private sector organizations to create a ten year Master Plan.

In closing, I believe that Jesus Aguirre is the ideal candidate for the DC State Superintendent of Education. He has extensive experience in school and district operations. He has been a fearless leader in pursuit of achieving outcomes that are best for District residents. His poise, open mind, open door policy, and get it done attitude will forever propel any organization that he has oversight of. It has been both an honor and a pleasure to give testimony on behalf of a great transformational leader.

**Testimony of
Willie Jackson
Principal of Phelps Architecture, Construction and
Engineering High School**

**Education Roundtable
on
PR 20-0538 State Superintendent of Education Jesús
Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013**

**Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
The Honorable David Catania, Chairman**

**November 22, 2013
Council Chambers, Room 123
John A. Wilson Building**

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon Chairman Catania and members of the DC Council's Committee on Education. My name is Willie Jackson and I am the principal of Phelps Architecture, Construction and Engineering High School in the District of Columbia's public education system. I am pleased to be here today to testify in support of PR 20-0538 Confirmation Resolution of Mr. Jesus Aguirre as State Superintendent.

CONTINUED PROGRESS IN D.C.'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

As the principal of Eliot Hine Middle School I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Aguirre when he served as the Director of DCPS' Office of School Operations. In that role, he greatly supported principals, like myself, by ensuring that the day-to-day functions of schools ran smoothly and that our schools were safe and efficient academic environments. Mr. Aguirre supervision of school operations such as school: security, technology, food service, and annual budget/enrollment functions enabled me to better focus on school climate, engaging parents and the community, cultivating leaders within Eliot Hine Middle School, and most importantly, focusing on the quality of classroom instruction for the success of every learner.

In my current role as Principal of Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School, my school actively partakes in the initiatives and requisites instituted within DCPS, by our Local Education Agency, and through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education; for example we at Phelps High School insistently implement the Common Core State Standards, prepare our students to demonstrate high levels of achievement on

the DC Comprehensive Assessment Systems (DC CAS), effectively meet federal grants requirements, submit data on our school's enrollment numbers, student achievement, and graduation rates with consistency and reliability.

Moreover, it is important to note that Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School is a Career and Technical Education School established to prepare scholars for higher education and careers in the architecture, construction and engineering industries. The entire building is designed as a teaching tool, with walls serving as master lessons in bricklaying and exposed plumbing providing examples of best practices in construction. In continuing with our theme of environmental consciousness and facility construction and management, Phelps High School was the first Silver LEED School certified in Washington, D.C. In our efforts to ensure the success of our school program and to effectively graduate each of our scholars with a dual certification (both a high school diploma and a certification of completion in a specific CTE program of study) we have a focus on four domains of implementation: Academic Achievement and Rigor, Technology Initiatives, Community Support and Outreach, and College, Career, and Citizenship Readiness. As we are deliberate in our efforts to execute these initiatives, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education is an instrumental partner in supporting our academic program and vision with resources and opportunities that bolster the educational aptness of our school. Recently, this partnership has been strengthened through OSSE's promotion and approval of Phelps High School as a National Academy Foundation selection school; NAF is a proven educational model which includes industry-focused curricula and work-based learning experiences.

Through this partnership it evident that OSSE is committed to ensuring that our school is equipped to provide high-quality college and career preparation for our students and I am confident that with Jesus Aguirre leading the execution and reforming of policies at OSSE the partnership between my school and his agency will continue to thrive and achieve measured success.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONFIRMATION

The quality support received from Jesús Aguirre during his tenure as Director of School Operations was valuable and greatly appreciated. As State Superintendent of Education, I look forward to his continued support in furthering the quality of the District's public education system at both the local and state level.

Councilmembers, I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Acting Superintendent Aguirre and for his confirmation today. Thank you.

**Testimony of
David Landeryou
Principal, Francis Scott Key Elementary**

**Education Roundtable
on
PR 20-0538 State Superintendent of Education Jesús
Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013**

**Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
The Honorable David Catania, Chairman**

**November 22, 2013
Council Chambers, Room 123
John A. Wilson Building**

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon Chairman Catania and members of the DC Council's Committee on Education. My name is David landeryou and I am the Principal of Key Elementary in the District of Columbia's public education system. I am pleased to be here with today to testify in support of PR20-0538 the State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013.

CONTINUED PROGRESS IN D.C.'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

At F.S Key Elementary , we have been proud to be a part of several initiatives within DCPS, our Local Education Agency, and on a State level; from participating in Common Core and the DC Comprehensive Assessment Systems (DC CAS) to meeting federal grants requirements and submitting data on our school's enrollment numbers, student achievement, and graduation rates. We are a high performing school designated as a Reward school for the 2nd year in a row. We have been a Blue Ribbon school and are known for focus on Science and technology. As the Principal of Key ES, I have had the pleasure of working with Jesús when he served as the Director of DCPS' Office of School Operations. In that role, he greatly supported principals like myself by ensuring that the day-to-day functions of schools like Key ES ran smoothly, giving us more time to focus on school instruction. In overseeing school operations, such as school security, technology, food service, and annual budget/enrollment functions, I was able to better focus on school climate, engaging parents and the community, cultivating leadership at Key and most importantly, focusing on the quality of classroom instruction.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONFIRMATION

The support received from Jesús Aguirre during his tenure as Director of School Operations was greatly appreciated, and as State Superintendent of Education, I look forward to his continued support in furthering the quality of the District's public education system across both sectors.

Councilmembers, I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Acting Superintendent Aguirre and for his confirmation today. Thank you.

Testimony of Associate Judge Mary Terrell (ret)
PR-20-0538 "State Superintendent of Education
Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013"

Friday, November 22, 2013

1:00 PM, Hearing Room 123, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004
Committee on Education
Councilmember David A. Catania, Chairman

Good Afternoon Mr. Catania and members of the Committee on Education, thank you for giving me an opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Jesus Aguirre for State Superintendent of Education. I have had the privilege to work with Mr. Aguirre while I was the interim President of the DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation and he was a Board member and the Agency Director of the District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation. I also have firsthand experience assisting staff at the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) as a community volunteer advisor on such projects as the filing of the Department of Education No Child Left Behind Waiver that allows states and the District of Columbia to get around key requirements of the sweeping education law, and policy issues such as, international education, parental engagement and alternative education guidelines.

Mr. Aguirre is exceptionally qualified for this position because he has the necessary training, background and experiences to manage the breadth and depth of the myriad of complex educational policy issues encompassed in the mandates of OSSE. He has demonstrated integrity, independence, competence and management skills under severe stressful situations while he was the director of the Department of Parks and Recreation. He is goals focused and open ended in his thinking with his attention focused on outcomes and the community's needs that I saw as we worked side by side to right side critical issues confronting the DC Children and Youth Investment Corporation. No where was his competency under stress more evident than his stellar performance of meeting the deadline of getting recreation centers and pools opened on time against tremendous odds. There were many who said it just could not be done, but he did it. He will bring that same resolve to OSSE; I support his confirmation for the position of State Superintendent of Education and request that Committee affirm his confirmation. Thank you.

Mary Terrell



**Testimony of Eve Brooks
Vice Chair of the Near SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council**

**Before the
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Public Roundtable
On
PR20-0538 “State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre
Confirmation Resolution of 2013”**

**Friday, November 22, 2013
1 p.m.**

Good Afternoon Councilmember Catania, Members of the Committee on Education, Councilmen Wells, Grosso, Alexander and Barry.

I am Eve Brooks, Vice Chair of the Near SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC), and Chair of its Community Enrichment Committee.

I am pleased to speak in support of the appointment of Mr. Jesus Aguirre as State Superintendent Schools.

The CBCC is non-profit voice for citizens of the area of ANC 6D, an area spanning two rapidly growing waterfront communities. Our organization is devoted to assuring that all residents of the area benefit from the forthcoming rapid development through improved education, recreation, housing and employment. We are particularly concerned about the needs of low-income residents and seek to build bridges between the growing middle class and the residents of public housing.

Our work with Mr. Aguirre was in his capacity of Director of DPR. In the summer of 2012, we sought Mr. Aguirre's assistance in re-activating the all but abandoned and unfunded Randall Recreation Center to serve as a youth and community center. Our community has long prioritized the need for a community center, where child and youth development and adult cultural activities might take place. Presently, our only recreation center is primarily a gym that lacks space for other vital activities.

In answering the community's request for assistance, Mr. Aguirre was consistently responsive, available and fair. At our first meeting, in the summer of 2012, he suggested that the Randall Recreation Center could seek management services from a not-for-profit through an RFP process. While no City funding was offered, Mr. Aguirre made clear that he hoped that the result of the RFP would be a strong partnership between the City government, a not-for-profit arrangement and community groups. In brief, he encouraged a prototype public/private partnership at an unused DPR facility.

The proposed RFP process was delayed for a number of months when a charter school sought the full Randall Park for long term use. When, in late spring 2013, Mayor Gray decided to maintain the site for City recreation pending the outcome of a small area planning process, Mr. Aguirre re-engaged with our organization and our coalition of developers and providers to secure interim use of the facility. Throughout the summer of 2013 he prioritized this project, encouraged his senior staff to cut red tape and thus enabled the Sasha Bruce Youthwork to become Randall's not-for-profit partner in record time. Before leaving his DPR post, Mr. Aguirre encouraged funding of ongoing services at Randall from monies held by the court-appointed receiver of the defunct Southwest House. And, Sasha Bruce Youthwork has now secured a one year grant to oversee the facility from the receiver. We are optimistic that additional funding needed for quality programming will be found.

In summary, I have repeatedly found Mr. Aguirre to be a devoted public servant, highly responsive to the community, innovative in his approach to problem-solving and most helpful in cutting red tape. His actions have been grounded in a firm understanding of child and youth development and a positive approach to change. These are strong attributes which I am sure he will bring to the position of State Superintendent of Schools.

Testimony of Ken Archer on Superintendent Confirmation

My name is Ken Archer. I am a parent of a 5-yr-old who will be entering the public school system this fall, and a contributor to local blog GreaterGreaterEducation.com.

It gives me no joy to testify against the confirmation of Mr Aguirre for the position of State Superintendent of Education. I know him to be a kind man from multiple mutual friends, and my testimony against his confirmation is in no way intended to cast aspersions on him personally.

But I feel that I must testify against his confirmation given the critical importance of the position of State Superintendent for kids like my own. I must confess that I am also quite hesitant to testify against the confirmation of a public education official given that my own child is about to enter that very system. However, if every parent made that calculation, our public schools would never improve.

The millions in federal grants that we receive from the Dept of Education are in jeopardy if our State Department of Education does not monitor and enforce compliance with federal laws tied to those grants. Given the already cozy relationship that exists structurally because the head of one LEA, DC Public Schools, appoints our State Superintendent, it's critical that our State Superintendent be truly independent.

Unfortunately, Mayor Gray, after conducting what he said would be "a nationwide search", selected someone who has a history of prioritizing image over compliance and transparency.

Mr Aguirre often points to his time as the charter holder and president of the board of directors of Tertulia Charter School in Arizona as a qualification. However, when the school's 15-year charter expired in 2010, the Arizona charter school board declined to renew it, citing poor academic progress, failure to timely submit financial audits, and failure to comply with monitoring and reporting requirements for federal money.

Mr Aguirre now seeks to lead a State Department of Education that conducts audits and enforces monitoring and reporting requirements for federal money. When a contributor for GreaterGreaterEducation contacted Mr Aguirre about this, he provided excuses, saying that his move to the East Coast deprived school officials of support, even though he chose to stay as President of the Board and as charter holder. He told our contributor that even though they were late with audits and reports, they were never found out of federal compliance on the substance of those audits and reports. He never simply took responsibility for the failures of the school of which he was president.

Will Mr Aguirre accept these excuses from heads of LEAs in Washington DC? That's the question that you should be asking yourself.

This same concern is raised by uncomfortable fact that Mr Aguirre is married to the principal of a DCPS school. It is meant as no criticism of Oyster school to point out that Oyster, like many schools, has had multiple special education lawsuits filed against it since his wife became principal. It's simply a fact. In

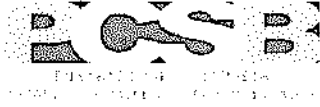
his new position, Mr Aguirre will hire the administrative staff and judges who will hear these cases and the compliance officers who will monitor Oyster for IDEA compliance. These are of course the same compliance officers who were supposed to enforce IDEA at Options Charter School. Will OSSE Special Education be aggressive in enforcing federal special education law against Oyster school?

Finally, even since Mr Aguirre began as State Superintendent 8 weeks ago, he has shown a greater concern for image over compliance. On November 8, the Washington Post reported that OSSE gave a \$90,000 no-bid contract to a Chicago firm with whom the OSSE Chief of Staff had worked when he lived in Chicago - to give a couple speeches, lead several discussion groups, and provide booklets at a Parent Summit. Immediately after that article, after 5 weeks on the job, Mr Aguirre held his first meeting with the staff of Elementary and Secondary Education to inform them that they are not permitted to speak to the press unless they have his personal permission.

Mr Aguirre has only had one other meeting with the staff of Elementary and Secondary Education, this week, in his 8th week on the job. Mr Aguirre spent his first week on the job at a conference on parks. He has attended in his 8 weeks far more public events than his predecessors did.

That is not the first 8 weeks of a State Superintendent who will raise the bar on transparency, independence, monitoring and compliance.

Mr Chairman, the position State Superintendent of Education is so critical, particularly at this juncture of school reform at which we are trying to set, monitor and enforce common policies across dozens of LEAs, and to show the federal government that our State Department of Education can independently monitor and enforce federal education law. It's for that reason that I strongly urge you to vote against confirmation of Mr Aguirre for State Superintendent.



**Testimony of Scott Pearson
Executive Director, DC Public Charter School Board**

**Education Roundtable on PR 20-0538
State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre
Confirmation Resolution of 2013**

**Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on Education
The Honorable David Catania, Chairman
November 22, 2013
Council Chambers, Room 123
John A. Wilson Building**

Good afternoon Chairman Catania and members of the Committee on Education. I am Scott Pearson, Executive Director of the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB), and I appreciate the opportunity testify today in support of the PR 20-0538 the State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013.

As we all know, the District's public education system has substantially grown, adding over 10,000 students in the past four years. This year the share of students educated by charter schools inched up from 43% to 44% while their overall quality continues to rise. Good schools are part of the foundation for the District's renewed growth and we are proud of the role charter have played in this recovery.

Councilmembers, I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Acting Superintendent Aguirre and for the State Superintendent of Education Confirmation Resolution.



**District of Columbia State Board of Education
DCSBOE**



**DC State Board of Education
State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of 2013
Council of the District of Columbia, Room 123
November 22, 2013 @ 1:00pm**

Testimony of Mark Jones, Vice President

Good morning Chairman Catania and honorable members of the Council of the District of Columbia. My name is Mark Jones and I am the Vice President of the DC State Board of Education. On behalf of the entire State Board, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you as you consider the confirmation of State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre. I am joined by my colleague, Monica Warren-Jones, the Ward 6 representative to the State Board.

My testimony will address two (2) items. First, I wish to share a list of characteristics that the State Board would look for in a State Superintendent. Second, I will share some of the challenges we have faced while trying to be an effective advocate for children and their educational opportunities as a way to shine a light on how a qualified candidate can help remedy these problems.

We believe that stable state leadership is critical to continuing education reform efforts in the District of Columbia. While the State Board was established to provide broad policy recommendations as well as approve many key state-level policies, such as the learning standards that all students must meet, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is responsible for policy implementation. This necessitates a close working relationship between OSSE and the State Board of Education. Regardless of the outcome of today's confirmation process, this State Board will continue to advocate for quality and equity, which includes advocating for stability and excellence in state education leadership.

Allow me to share the State Board's thoughts on the qualities to look for in a State Superintendent. A State Superintendent should:

- Be a professional administrator, preferably with an education background;
- Be firm about establishing and maintaining a collaborative working relationship and partnership with the State Board;
- Be responsive to the State Board's needs and requests in a timely fashion;
- Be open, transparent, and inclusive, ensuring that the State Board participates in working groups and is invited to public announcements and other events;
- Be subject to a public evaluation, ideally by the State Board, based on pre-determined criteria; and
- Be free and independent from the Mayor, both in the hiring and termination processes. In many states, if not most, the State Board has a role in this process.

While the State Board does not wish to make a recommendation on the confirmation of State Superintendent Aguirre at this time, we are hopeful that he has the experience and attitude to be a

November 27, 2013

The Honorable David Catania, Councilman At-Large
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 404
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Councilmember Catania,

I am writing to offer my strong support of the appointment of Jesus Aguirre to State Superintendent of Education for the District of Columbia. Mr. Aguirre's prior experience in education leadership roles, both in Phoenix and the District of Columbia, make him an excellent choice to direct the Mayor's office for education.

Mr. Aguirre has been very accessible and supportive of the Chamber's initiatives to help grow and develop the city's small business community. He understands the importance of coordinating with key organizations in the city that foster a solid relationship between the District's leadership and the residents.

I am confident Mr. Aguirre will work passionately with and for District residents to determine which education programs and policies warrant support, amendment, or dissolution. I look forward to continuing a strong collaboration with Mr. Aguirre and the Hispanic business community to create effective policies that will move the city forward in the future.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Angela Franco
President & CEO



November 21, 2013

Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: State Superintendent of Education Jesus Aguirre Confirmation

Dear Council Members,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre's confirmation. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials (chiefs) who head all 50 state departments of elementary and secondary education and those of the District of Columbia, Department of Defense and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. As the Executive Director of CCSSO, I am honored to work with Superintendent Aguirre and would welcome the opportunity to continue to collaborate with him to represent the District of Columbia.

Leadership on education is becoming increasingly important and crucial with the monumental changes taking place in our nation's education system. In Superintendent Aguirre's tenure, we have already witnessed him embrace the substantive policy considerations involved in raising expectations for all students in D.C. to college and career readiness. Superintendent Aguirre joined the full membership of CCSSO at our most recent member meeting on November 14-16 in Richmond, Virginia and fully engaged in conversations with other state leaders and demonstrated he will be a vocal advocate for all students within the District of Columbia.

Superintendent Aguirre brings a wealth of experience in education and a previous tenure that gives him a solid footing and understanding of all the challenges the District of Columbia faces. He is a passionate, committed educator dedicated to improving the educational opportunities for the students in the District of Columbia.

I am pleased to strongly recommend Mr. Jesús Aguirre for confirmation as the State Superintendent of Education in the District of Columbia. The students, educators and citizens of the District of Columbia are fortunate to have selected Superintendent Aguirre to lead the District of Columbia's educational future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Minnich", is written over a horizontal line.

Chris Minnich
Executive Director
Council of Chief State School Officers



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER WASHINGTON**

November 21, 2013

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David A. Catania, Chairperson
Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on Education
Notice of Public Roundtable
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Chairperson Catania:

I am unfortunately unable to give in-person testimony in conjunction with Mr. Aguirre's appointment as State Superintendent of Education, therefore I'm hereby writing to do so.

As President & CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington I have had extensive interaction with Mr. Aguirre in his role as Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

From the very beginning of his tenure Mr. Aguirre was responsive to matters affecting the youth we jointly serve, going out of his way to attend Club events in person even if they were outside of normal working hours, as out of school time programming often is. This gave him the ability to know first-hand what kind of impact my organization was making and to more effectively address any issues that might require his attention. He was also on hand to celebrate successes, and he was a welcome face of the District Government at top-flight events such as the NBA/Under Armour gym renovations at our Club in theARC.

We established an open and ongoing relationship around the Jelleff Community Center after the City purchased the property, with DPR maintaining the facility and BGCGW contracted to continue the programming of the former Club. Mr. Aguirre was always interested in ideas for improvement of services within fiscal and other guidelines; brought an educator's eye and outcomes – driven perspective to his leadership; demonstrated a down to earth and unequivocal sense of caring about kids, although making it clear his constituency was the entire community.

I was pleased when Mr. Aguirre asked me to participate in the PLAY research project DPR initiated, and found it to be professionally managed, forward thinking and well-conceived.

Last, I was always appreciative of Mr. Aguirre's willingness and desire to communicate. Although busy, he never failed to return calls; he made himself available to brainstorm or otherwise problem - solve on issues that required or would benefit from his assistance; he proactively set up designated times to talk or meet so that we could share best practices and address challenges.

Mr. Aguirre was a valued colleague when he was at DPR and I hope he will continue as such with OSSE.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Pandit F. Wright
President & CEO



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
EDUCATION**



**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
DAVID A. CATANIA, CHAIRPERSON**

**PR20-0538: “STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION
JESÚS AGUIRRE CONFIRMATION RESOLUTION OF
2013”**

**TESTIMONY OF JESÚS AGUIRRE
ACTING STATE SUPERINTENDENT,
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION**

**VINCENT C. GRAY
MAYOR**

**JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004
ROOM 123**

NOVEMBER 22, 2013



Good morning Chairperson Catania, committee staff, members of the Education Committee, and members of the public who have come here today to listen or offer testimony regarding my nomination to lead the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). My name is Jesús Aguirre and I am the Acting State Superintendent at OSSE. Thank you for this opportunity to share my personal and professional background, express my interest in this appointment, and share my vision for OSSE. I hope that you find this information helpful as you consider my nomination. I also want to thank Mayor Gray, City Administrator Lew, and Deputy Mayors Smith and Otero, for their tremendous support, both while I was the Director at the Department of Parks and Recreation for the past four years, and throughout this nomination process. I also want to congratulate the State Board of Education, the Chancellor and her entire DCPS team, Public Charter School Board Executive Director Scott Pearson and his staff, the members of the Public Charter School Board, and all of the teachers, school leaders and support staff, and all of our early learning and adult education providers that are part of the District's robust school system for the hard work that they do day in and day out on behalf of our students. It is an honor to work along side of all of you.

First, I'd like to share some personal information about my family and me. I was born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States when I was very young. I am a permanent resident of the United States. I grew up in Houston, Texas, one of six children, and watched my parents build a life and business with their ingenuity and hard work. Although

neither of my parents was able to finish schooling beyond the middle school years, they instilled in our family the idea that the most direct path to success, and opportunity, was through education. In fact, my family moved almost annually: moving outward from the central urban core of Houston where school quality was low, further and further out until we ended up in a suburb of Houston where schools were higher performing. As a result of this almost annual migration in search of quality schools, I attended six different elementary schools and ultimately ended up attending high-performing middle and high schools. Because of my parents' efforts and focus, I was the first in my family to complete a college degree when I graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, and later the first to receive a graduate degree when I obtained an MBA at Arizona State University. These experiences have driven much of my commitment to education and to ensuring that every child has access to the same opportunities that I have had, but in their local communities.

My wife Monica, a D.C. public school principal, and I have three children who all attend D.C. public schools. My youngest child, Mebo Luz, is enrolled in a special education program at a D.C. charter school where she receives an academic program and related services that support her significant cognitive and physical disabilities. Our bilingual family lives in Ward 4. We love this city and look forward to continuing to raise our children here and to staying engaged in education and public service for many years to come.

After graduating from college, I taught middle school science in English and Spanish to students in South Central Los Angeles. After that, I worked for two years as a recruiter and support director for Teach for America. Then, as a 28-year old, I founded and ran a bilingual charter school with my wife in Phoenix, Arizona. We started one of the first charter schools in Arizona, and we targeted underserved and immigrant populations facing challenging socio-economic, cultural, and language barriers. The vast majority of our students were new immigrants whose native language was Spanish, and who lived in poverty.

My experiences operating a charter school give me great insight into the lives of our stakeholders and the challenges facing our school system in D.C. I spent over a decade dealing with school operations at every level: budgets; enrollment and retention challenges; changing demographics and their impact on programmatic needs; creating special needs and family support frameworks; general operations; and, perhaps most importantly, maneuvering through the school and charter board legal and regulatory systems and the reality of “state” oversight.

My public service in the District began in 2007, when I became the Director of School Operations for the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Until my appointment as Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in December 2009, I worked with the Chancellor to create and manage a new division to support school operations

across the district. I worked closely with over 120 school principals and their instructional superintendents to support the school opening process, the creation of safe environments, development of school budgets, streamline procurement procedures, navigate staffing challenges, and provide training for business managers and registrars. I created a new support structure for school leaders and assigned operations specialists to schools to provide hands-on support in solving problems as well as much-needed professional development for leaders and their staff. Our goal was to free our school leaders from the historically dysfunctional operations of the school district so that they could spend more time as instructional leaders and less time as “fire fighters.” In addition, my division successfully coordinated with other District agencies, including the then Office of Public Education and Facilities Modernization (OPEFM) to handle all school facility needs, the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to leverage local and federal dollars to support schools in increasing technology infrastructure and outcomes for students, and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and the school district’s security division to ensure schools had resources in place to establish safe learning environments.

For the past four years, I was Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). In that position, I managed a D.C. agency with five hundred full-time and over five hundred part-time employees, responsible for managing and programming over 75 facilities, hundreds of acres of parkland, and hundreds of courts, fields, and playgrounds. A few highlights of my tenure at DPR include:

- Restructuring the agency to focus our efforts on outcomes-based programming, including a new mission, new core values, a new programmatic framework, two new divisions, and consistent and clear agency performance objectives.
- Working with the D.C. Office of Planning to create a Master Plan for the agency that will determine what DPR will look like over the next 10 years. This process has included input from the public, government, and community organizations and will culminate early next year in a new plan to guide DPR's focus on programs for years to come.
- With great support from Mayor Gray and the Department of General Services (DGS), we launched "Play DC" – a transformative play space renovation and construction project that has already established a new standard for accessible and inclusive play spaces around the city that are safe, inviting, incorporate sustainable building practices, and are designed for intergenerational use and enjoyment.
- Through the hard work and dedication of DPR's great staff, the agency recently achieved national accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). This accreditation puts DPR and the District in the top 4% of all parks and recreation departments in the country, and is based on overall quality of operations, management and service to the community. It is a fantastic achievement and I congratulate DPR for putting the time and effort into creating a better organization focusing on our constituents' needs.

As State Superintendent at OSSE, I will bring the same level of focus and commitment to the task of supporting, regulating, and ensuring accountability at our schools. I will harness all the lessons I have learned and skills that I have acquired through my personal and professional experiences to meet this charge. As someone who worked for years in education – thriving on the challenges of teaching, operating a school, and supporting schools at the highest level – I look forward to working with you, the Mayor, this Committee, the OSSE staff, and all of our stakeholders, unified in our mission of providing the best education for DC residents. Having faced such challenges head on, I am sensitive to those faced by many of our communities, schools, and customers. I will always work to do my best to serve our constituents.

Although my time at OSSE so far has been brief, my team is engaged in crafting a vision for our agency: how it should function, and the role it should play moving forward. OSSE has a great team of absolutely dedicated staff that has played a significant role in the progress and improvement of our city's schools.

On a basic level, OSSE needs focus. We need to evaluate and clarify our role and ensure that all staff and stakeholders understand and accept this role. We must establish deliberate and authentic systems of support for schools and LEAs through providing high-quality technical assistance and professional development opportunities and funding best practices in policy and pedagogy. We must ensure robust accountability for our schools through the

creation and effective implementation of accountability frameworks such as our ESEA Waiver and the QRIS system for early-childhood education providers, and through increased transparency through the recently released school report cards on our Learn DC website. We must support our current and prospective post-secondary students through DC TAG and other programs; and ensure adequate access to educational opportunities for our older youth and adult learners. And, we must conduct rigorous oversight on compliance and grants management that will help us to continue to shed court oversight, address issues flagged by the Department of Education, ensure the effective and timely use of local and federal funds, and most importantly improve outcomes for students and schools.

As we continue to move forward on these goals and align these and other efforts within the agency, we must always ensure that this work truly reflects the needs of our diverse student population at every point along the educational continuum, from birth to career.

Over the next few months, I will work with the Mayor, OSSE staff, and all of our stakeholders, to better structure and align the agency to support our core work.

Specifically, I want to focus on building sustainable systems to ensure the great work of improvement and freedom from court oversight can continue. For example, as our special education systems continue to improve, as the work through our Race to the Top Challenge grant comes to an end, and as we explore the next phase of our ESEA Waiver, we must ensure that the improvements initiated through these efforts can be sustained and expanded over time.

Additionally, OSSE needs to realign our work around our schools' and our students' needs and move away from an organizational structure that is often "siloed" based on grants and federal funding streams. Programmatic and school support should drive our structure, and all divisions should focus on these programs, regardless of funding stream. Moreover, we need to ensure that we are doing the basic work of compliance and accountability better and more efficiently as we create a high-performing state education agency.

Of course, we have many new challenges and opportunities ahead. We have invested greatly in robust data systems and are now poised to better utilize these data sets to inform continued improvement through proactive analysis and research of practices that are yielding positive results with our students. This expansive collection of data will also enable us to better inform parents, students, and other community stakeholders about the performance and progress that the District and our individual schools are making. Our work around the next generation of assessments based on the Common Core State Standards, and our ongoing focus on accountability and transparency require us to double our efforts in engaging with our parents and families to ensure that they are informed about and engaged in our work on their behalf. As we continue to construct a successful educational system for the District, we must build on the success of our early learning efforts and develop and implement a comprehensive framework to improve the quality of early learning opportunities for our residents and align the existing capacity to better reflect the geographical location of the demand. Finally, we must ensure that these efforts truly support and engage all of our learners. While the recent results from both the DCCAS and NAEP show significant improvement, they also indicate that we must increase our support

for students whose primary language is not English and those who continue to live in poverty.

In closing, I am extremely optimistic and excited about the opportunities ahead. DC is well positioned to continue to lead the country in creating a successful and truly comprehensive and aligned educational system that provides information, support and choice to our families and provides schools with the support, resources and accountability to ensure that all students are ready for college and career.

Thank for your time and attention to my nomination. Chairperson Catania, I look forward to working with you, the Mayor, and this Committee to evaluate our schools, to support the great efforts being made at the institutional level, and to continue to work with all stakeholders on our collective mission to transform education in D.C. This concludes my prepared testimony. I am happy to answer any questions that you or the other Committee members may have.

Attachment IV:

Legal Sufficiency Determination for PR20-538



OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 4
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 724-8026


MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember David A. Catania

FROM: V. David Zvenyach, General Counsel

DATE: January 17, 2014

RE: Legal sufficiency determination for Proposed
Resolution 20-538, the State Superintendent of
Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation Resolution of
2014



The measure is legally and technically sufficient for Council consideration.

The proposed resolution would confirm the appointment of Mr. Jesús Salvador Aguirre as the State Superintendent of Education, established by section 2 of the State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-176; D.C. Official Code § 38-2601). If confirmed, Mr. Aguirre will be appointed to a 4-year term.

I am available if you have any questions.

VDZ

Attachment V:

Committee Print for PR20-538

1
2
3 **PR20-538**
4 Committee on Education
5 Committee Print
6 January 22, 2013
7
8
9

10 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION
11
12

13 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
14
15

16 To confirm the appointment of Mr. Jesús Salvador Aguirre as the State Superintendent of
17 Education.
18

19 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
20 resolution may be cited as the "State Superintendent of Education Jesús Aguirre Confirmation
21 Resolution of 2013".
22

23 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:
24

25 Mr. Jesús Salvador Aguirre
26 6818 Oregon Avenue N.W.
27 Washington, D.C. 20015
28 (Ward 4)
29

30 as the State Superintendent of Education, established by section 2 of the State Education Office
31 Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-176; D.C. Official Code
32 § 38-2601), and in accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March
33 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01), to serve a 4-year term.
34

35 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,
36 upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.
37

38 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.