

DC PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

2013 School Leader PMF Survey Results

Ashok Oli

1/10/2014



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

PMF School Leader Survey Results

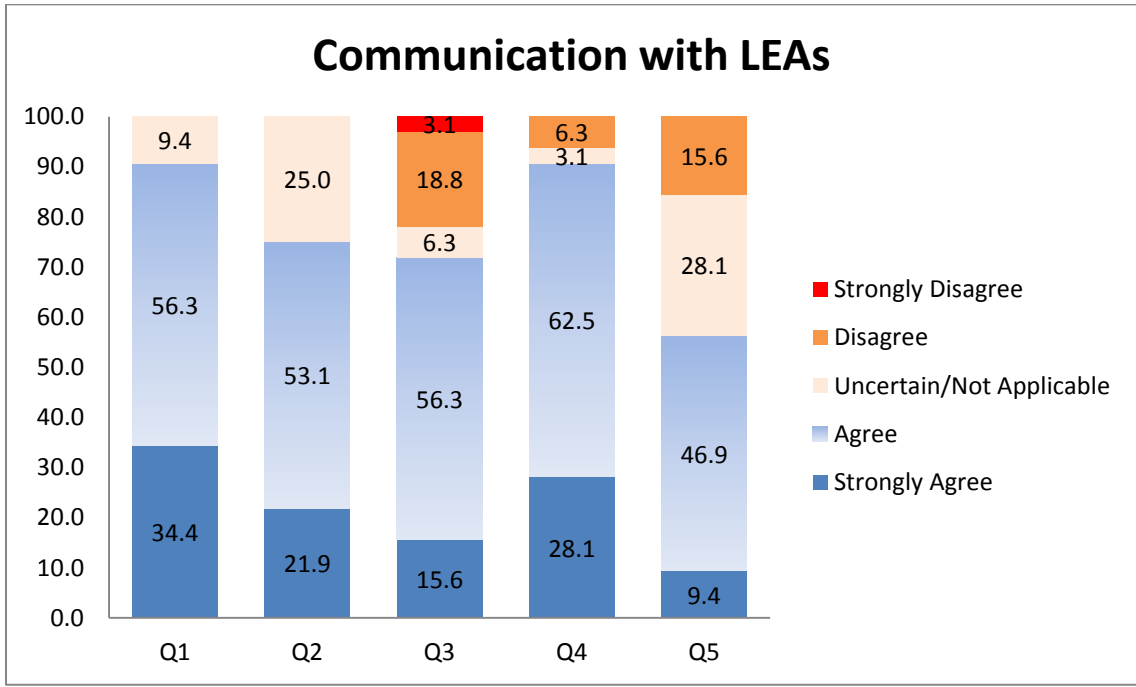
1. Requests for assistance from the PMF Project Manager and Data Analyst were answered in a timely manner.

2. There were adequate opportunities for school leaders to offer feedback on the content of the PMF through emails with the PMF staff, School Advisory Committee, wiki, one-on-one feedback meetings, and comment sheets at training and information sessions.

3. The PMF wiki and Tuesday Bulletin have been an effective means of communication for circulating information about the PMF.

4. Information about deadlines, updates, and changes to the PMF were communicated to school leaders in a timely manner.

5. Support materials such as the PMF Guidelines, FAQs, User Guide, were effective.



All numbers inside the bars and on the Y axis are percentages

6. I have a strong knowledge on how the data elements that are collected in Proactive (i.e., attendance, truancy, dropout rate) affect the PMF score.

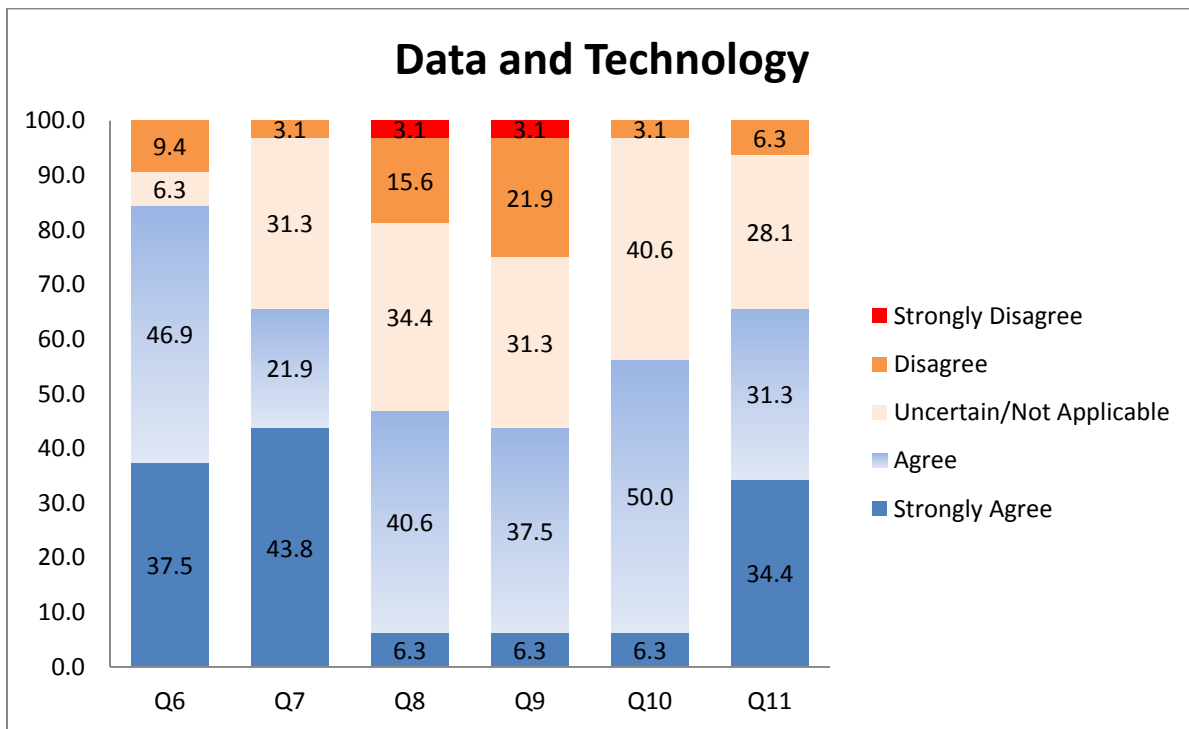
7. I preferred the staged process for data validation, as opposed to validating everything at once.

8. SharePoint is the effective portal to validate PMF data. *

9. SharePoint was easy to use. *

10. The quality of printed PMF data was better than in the previous years. *

11. I found the PMF calculator to be a useful tool. *

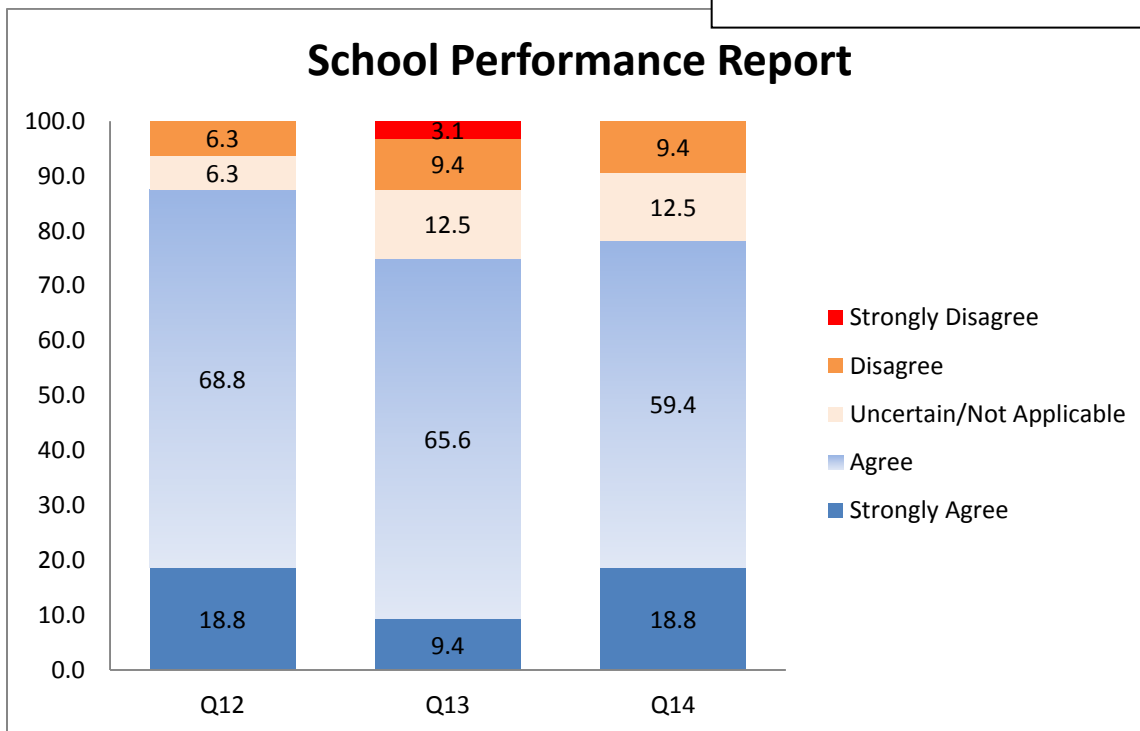


All numbers inside the bars and on the Y axis are percentages

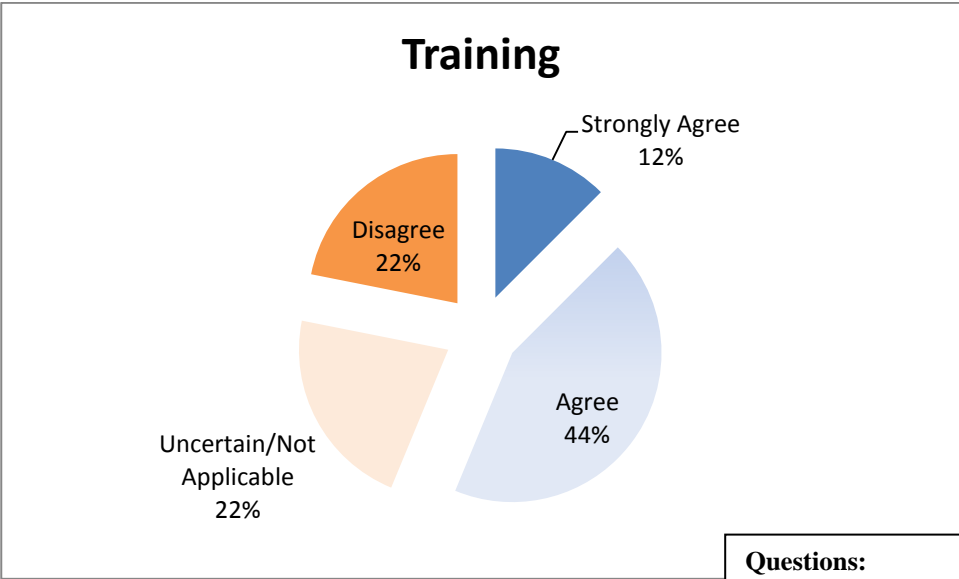
12. The front side of the PMF school performance report presents the school's profile data in a format that is clear and user-friendly.

13. The back side of the PMF school performance report presents the school's performance data in a format that is clear and user-friendly.

14. Overall, the data presented on the school performance report is pertinent and relevant information for stakeholders.

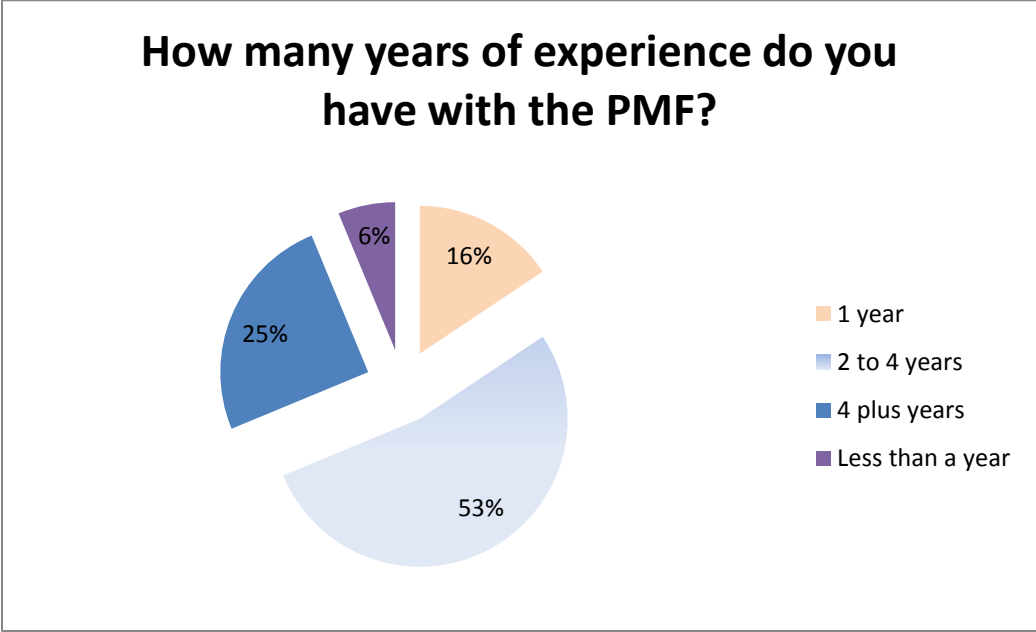


All numbers inside the bars and on the Y axis are percentages



Questions:

15. The PCSB provided enough PMF training opportunities (i.e., MGP training, webinars, PMF School Leaders training, Board training).



Total Number of responses = 32

Which of the following frameworks are applicable to your LEA?		
	Frequency	Percent
Early Childhood , Elementary/Middle	9	28.13
Elementary/Middle	6	18.75
Early Childhood , Elementary/Middle , High School	3	9.38
Elementary/Middle , High School	3	9.38
High School	3	9.38
Elementary/Middle , High School , Adult Ed	2	6.25
Early Childhood , Elementary/Middle , High School , Adult Ed	1	3.13
Adult Ed	2	6.25
Early Childhood	2	6.25
Early Childhood , Adult Ed	1	3.13

20 out of 32 respondents in part or full had early childhood or adult/ed PMF.

Explanatory Answers:

Communication with LEAs

Do you have any suggestions for other ways to gather stakeholder and school leader feedback?

- Call school leaders (including different types of school leaders. e.g., principals versus data folks) and ask them directly. You won't be able to reach out to everyone, but maybe have a mix of random selection and purposeful selection. A small number of general questions would be best for this type of feedback (e.g., what worked really well, where did you struggle the most, what 2-3 changes would make the biggest difference for next year, etc.). As another option, maybe you could get a pro-bono group (e.g., ProInspire or graduate school Capstone groups) to gather feedback.
- Hold trainings on how to use Excel to help us manipulate and understand our data better.
- As much lead time as possible when requesting feedback is helpful. Often times there are numerous people within our organization that I'd like to gather feedback from and that takes time.
- Feedback/Evaluations forms disseminated at the end of the monthly LEA data meetings that way feedback and suggestions can be given each month about compliance requirements/submissions.
- We complete an accountability plan. Any questions we have had have always been answered in a very timely fashion.

- While there were many chances for LEAs to offer feedback on the PMFs, it was not always clear how or if that feedback was being used. Some LEAs felt frustrated by sitting in many meetings for the EC PMF, disagreeing repeatedly with some of the proposals, and then reading in the Washington Post that school leaders had offered input and agreed with the policies. It was maddening to disagree week after week, but never get a chance to disagree in writing, and then be publicly told that you had agreed all along.
- Yes, we think this is important enough that email messages should be sent regarding changes and meetings. The Wiki and Tuesday Bulletin are not sufficient communication tools.

The meeting schedule for the Task Forces should be published for the year and followed. We were told that the meetings for all Task Forces would be held on the same day, but they were not, and school leaders were asked to come to the office quite a bit.

Given the difficulty with scheduling, schools who are unable to send a participant to the Task Force meetings should receive a synopsis of what was discussed as well as ballots in order to vote. This will slow down the process but ensure better and more informed participation.

I appreciate the introduction of paper ballots in the EC Task Force for 13-14. It has made clearer when certain decisions are being finalized.

Do you have any additional suggestions for improvement related to communications?

- Setting out clear timelines early in the process is really helpful, since that allows us to plan out our work over the summer. Making it clear who we're supposed to contact about different topics is also helpful, since there were several times where I had a question and didn't know the appropriate PCSB contact. But most importantly, it's very frustrating when we ask legitimate questions only to have them ignored or trivialized. I'm not sure what the specific recommendation is for this point - but I will say that these interactions make it much more likely for schools to make up their own answers rather than reach out to PCSB staff when they run into problems. Consider streamlining the wiki to make it easier to navigate.
- Clearly communicate the timeline for the various stages of the project from the start, making adjustments as needed. I think the project timeline was well communicated in the initial stages of the project but fell a little bit towards the end as delays occurred.
- There are too many avenues in which deadlines, requirements, and user guides are communicated. We need 1 method of communication, submission, and support for data upload, review, feedback and submission. For example, communicating all deadlines and compliance request via epicenter would ensure that deadlines are met and support is communicated if needed to the reviewer. The current method of emails, bulletins, SharePoint, epicenter, ftp--coupled with equal amounts of request from OSSE through SLEDS, quick base, email---often makes it very difficult to communicate, keep track of every request and respond to PCSB and other stakeholders in a timely manner.
- Elementary PMF task force meetings were useful, but I feel that there was not much follow-up provided about potential changes that were discussed (i.e. changes to Gateway Measure).
- Yes, we think that decision making processes should have been slowed down in order to allow for reflection and conversation around the Early Childhood PMF Pilot without jumping in to a Board voted-upon document with incomplete information.

The elementary PMF included metrics or information that had never been introduced before (ie. student-teacher ratio; HQ Teachers). This was not discussed in advance, or if it was discussed, the communication was insufficient with LEA's.

- The main thing I would suggest is that when emailing you should consistently email the same people. It is confusing when different people get different emails. Using a specific section of the Tuesday Bulletin is very helpful, but nonetheless, you can't get around sending email.
- It would be helpful for the PMF Guidelines to contain on the Metrics and Data Sources pages (28pg-33) the full business rules for the PMF. This would significantly reduce the amount of emailed questions submitted to PCSB. For example, the re-enrollment rate metric does not include all the scenarios that would lead a student to be deemed ineligible to re-enroll. Also, the College Acceptance metric does not specify what counts as "college" or what is acceptable documentation (admissions letter, FAFSA from school, bill, etc.), 2.) It would be nice if there was a clear reporting timeline of when each data point would be submitted to LEAs, validated and sent back to PCSB, and when LEAs received a response on that validation. It seemed the validation due dates were announced piecemeal. This puts stress on LEAs as they juggle the PMF validation process and our usual school-based data functions.
- There was a lot of communication through the validation process of the various PMF data sets. That made the process a little confusing.
- I'm not totally sold on the wiki, maybe there's another way of getting to updates and notices.

Data and Technology

What improvements could be made to the collection or validation of data?

- I'm not totally sold on the wiki, maybe there's another way of getting to updates and notices. It is impossible for me to calculate the MGP, since I don't have access to the DC-CAS scores of all of the other students in DC, and I don't have the algorithm.
- PCSB should break down parts of the user guide that would be applicable to LEAs. For instance, how is re-enrollment calculated? What codes are used? How should we be entering codes to reflect our data accurately?
- The SharePoint site was effective if you had a link to the direct portion of the website you needed. It sometimes felt difficult to navigate through the site to find all of the data points. Centralizing to one folder or one tab all of the necessary tools would be useful.
- Submission via proactive and then review in SharePoint is not ideal. SharePoint is easy to use, but what is the point of proactive other than data submission/enrollment demographics if the data in proactive is inaccurate? PCSB just needs the data--we use our SIS for data analysis, identifying truant students etc. We do not rely on SharePoint or proactive to do that for us...it's for you--not us.

The ideal situation is an export directly from our SIS into whatever system PCSB decides to use. It is not realistic to upload data into proactive daily, then wait for it to show up in SharePoint, then manage and analyze data in my SIS daily as well, then validate that SharePoint data is accurate.

Tim is great in supporting responding to attendance, discipline, and truancy data validation.

- It is good to have separate stages for validating scores, attendance, re-enrollment, etc. However, the big issue was that over the course of validating one element (ie attendance) the parameters would change (for example, from excused/unexcused to in-seat). This caused double work and

made it unclear how the measure would be reflected in the final form.

Data collection for the EC PMF was extremely time consuming as the metrics were not well defined in advance and did not align easily with the approved assessments in use by the schools.

There was a real learning curve to understand what and how to report and also how to record data in a way that was aligned to the PMF. For example, Pro-Active included an attendance code option of "Unknown" for absences, but the PMF data collection rejected that as a code and schools were forced to go back and re-code. Proactive and the data required for the PMF are not completely in sync.

Our school has no access to the previous year's Proactive information. We are being asked to validate based on what PCSB sends us, and we are not able to return to the primary source of information to address any questions we may have.

- One problem we had is that we requested a change to our data around ELL numbers, and even though the change was approved, it was never made in the system. I think that the data validation system could help with this. I'm imagining a system where we could data load our changes and then see a table/spreadsheet in the system that highlights our requested changes as well as a list of the requested changes. In my system those requests would then be listed with an area to see PCSB comments/approval. When a request is approved, it would then be automatically changed in the table (kind of like track changes) I know that it may not be possible to get a system with this level of seamlessness, but there must be a system that improves the process on the back end of updating the data.

For the printed data, it took many iterations of revisions to correct some of the problems. That was partially on us, but the template changed at one point (enrollment numbers changed sections) without a corresponding change in the data displayed, so that added a round of revisions. It also took quite a bit of time when the floors and targets changed on the different versions because we had to keep checking the numbers.

- We experienced some challenges with obtaining the correct password for uploading data to Tembo regarding the EC PMF.
- It would be more efficient for PMF data to be submitted in a single method. It was difficult to manage the data submission process because some of the data was emailed (to Ashok or Amanda or Tim) while other data points were updated in SharePoint. Also, it would be helpful if the data corrections/validations that were approved were then uploaded to SharePoint.
- "The quality of printed PMF data was better than in the previous years. *" -- Using the digital workbook, it is more difficult to isolate my school's report and print just my pages than it was with the old pdf files of previous years.
- We had some challenges validating some of the data due to how SharePoint was treating our various campuses and how the data was reported in the PMF.
- Part of the challenge is that not all aspects of the PMF were finalized before the rollout. It seems like some "i's" are still being dotted and some "t's" are still being crossed.
- I wish the PMF calculator had been made available earlier.

Training

If you disagree with any of the statements above, please describe how training could be improved or which additional training opportunities would have been helpful.

- I thought most of the emailed instructions were clear and helpful. The webinars, on the other hand, were rarely a good use of my time. Not sure if there was any comprehensive (or at least wide-ranging) in person training to either preview or assist with the data validation process.
- Multiple reports were generated and needed validation at the same time as the PMF---equity report, new online report card, annual report data, OSSE performance reports.it got to a point where we just validated and submitted---hard to keep track of who wanted/trained for their report.
- Please be sure to give adequate (2 weeks) notice on any training.
- Any questions we have had have always been promptly answered.
- The majority of the "training" for the data came through emails of what we needed to do.
- I did not see announcements for any of these training.

PMF Metrics

Do you have any suggestions for metrics that should be added, removed, or changed on the Elementary, Middle, or High School PMFs?

- I'll save this for PMF task force meetings.
- The ACT should be included as a measure. The graduation rate should NOT be "cohort" determined in its current manner. It alters the rate significantly for many schools and holds schools accountable for students who may not even be in the same state, yet alone the same school any longer.
- Increase the ceilings on "advanced" CAS rates. There's no reason not to reward schools who are able to achieve rates above 25% advanced.
- It's so heavily based on DC-CAS data. I am excited about the possible expansion of cohort data. Plus, it would be nice to be able to include other school assessments in the report even if they don't affect the score.
- Exploring changing or reducing the value of the 3rd grade Gateway measure.
- The re-enrollment data should include ALL students in ALL grades. This will work well for some schools in some situations and less well for others, but it would give an honest picture of how families in attendance - from Pre-K 3 to 12th grade - feel about their child's school.
- Agree on floors/targets 1 year out. Hold floors/targets constant for a set time (e.g. 3 years).

Reduce re-enrollment for HS.

Add 5 year graduation rate for PMF for HS.
- Remove PSAT. Way too much reliance on College Board/ETS tests.
- Not at this time. I would have to think about it carefully.

- The Gateway metrics are not necessarily the best indicators of total school performance. Using cohort data only or instituting an "exit" metric might be a more accurate way to determine total school performance.
- We were disappointed with the outcome of the HS PMF Taskforce vote to sustain the weighting on the DC-CAS Growth and Proficiency metrics. We were looking forward to having our HS judged more by our academic growth than by our academic achievement as the latter shows more clearly the work that is being accomplished at MAPCS.

Are there any other changes to the content and structure of the PMF that you would suggest?

- I'll save this for PMF task force meetings Visual display can be hard to read.
- The rankings for College and Career readiness focus solely on College and not enough on the Career readiness factors outside of PSAT/SAT- what about the ACT?
- The current norm-referenced nature of PMF floor/ceilings (and inherently norm-reference MGP) makes it difficult or impossible to measure (and, just as importantly, publicize) growth in the charter sector as a whole. Even if every charter in the city was high-performing, the PMF structure would still classify many charters as Tier 3.
- More space for the school mission statement.
- We complete an accountability plan. The report format is clear and user-friendly.
- The school demographics are reflective of the 2013-2014 school year, but the academic, re-enrollment, and attendance data are reflective of the 2012-2013 school year. This can be confusing to schools and to stake holders.

Some stakeholders do not know what a "Gateway" measure means.

- There has to be a clearer way to show what the "floor" is and what the scores mean in terms of growth.
- It is very hard to find the PDF to download for 2013 PMF. Include link like in previous years to entire doc on front page of website under data. While the interactive tool is nice, not user friendly when you want to find just the 1 page for the school.
- Since schools are unique charters, it would be helpful to include information on their unique offerings.
- Not at this time. I would have to think about it carefully.
- We are looking forward to the prospect of an Alternative HS PMF.

School Performance Report

What improvements could be made to the PMF report?

- We are looking forward to the prospect of an Alternative HS PMF.
- You should provide a concise explanation about MGP for the public in your reports.
- I would have to think about it carefully.
- The online data dashboard display was difficult to read. While light colors (yellow and gray) and small italic font are beautiful from a design perspective, it does not make for a reader friendly product.

Overall Process

Please provide any additional feedback on how any processes related to the PMF could be improved for next year.

- Upload the information that needs to be validated in epicenter for PMF with a deadline for confirmation (if we agree---i.e. check this box if..). Allow us to leave comments and upload support documents if something is wrong... vs. we get an email to review in SharePoint, review, export data/type comments, email to validate, re-validate, etc.
- Each year I am surprised by how many rounds of validation we go through. Perhaps a better tracking system for appeals?
- It a lot of work. We appreciate the efforts of the PCSB staff, and they were very responsive, but there needs to be a more clear set of guidelines. We are concerned that the rules and the process change every year, so while we are attempting to align our systems to be better prepared, we are concerned that we will be in the same position to be reacting to changes in the 2013-2014 process again.
- Consider stakeholder feedback. Offer board trainings. Provide a strong rationale for weighting and floors and ceilings.
- Please continue exploring ways to align the EC and ES PMFs. Is it possible for PK-8 schools to have just one rating, rather than separate ratings for EC and ES/MS?

The EC PMF pilot process has been very long. And the current PMF does not reflect the content of the PMF that was piloted.

- THE PCSB staffs have been great to work with. The challenge as I see it is that it seems like some of the finer points are still being worked out, other than that I am satisfied with the process.
- There should not be changes to the PMF in the same year that it is applied. Schools should know the precise metrics for which they are held accountable at the start of every year.