



**Testimony of
Clara Hess, Chief Operating Officer
DC Public Charter School Board**

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

**Small Business Enterprises Utilization Hearing
Committee on Business, Consumer, Regulatory Affairs
Councilmember Vincent Orange, Chairman**

December 10, 2014

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Clara Hess, and I am the Chief Operating Officer for the

DC Public Charter School Board, or PCSB.

PCSB is an independent agency that serves as DC's authorizer of public charter schools. PCSB's goal is to provide Washington DC students and their families with choices for quality public school education. PCSB achieves this through a comprehensive application review process, effective oversight, meaningful support and active involvement of parents, school leaders, the community and policy makers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about PCSB's FY14 and FY15 budget, and our progress towards meeting our goals for certified small business enterprises, or CSBE's.

PCSB's expendable budget for FY14 was \$244,073.78. This is the difference of our *Appropriated Operating Budget* – total as reported by the OCFO in the Annual Operating Budget and Capital Plan less PCSB's Budget *Exclusions* – allowable reductions, such as salaries, fringe benefits, telephone services and office leases. This left us with,

as the law requires, a goal of \$122,036.89 or one-half of our expendable budget, to be spent at CSBE's.

In FY14, PCSB spent \$110,156.08 with SBE's; with \$93,164.37 spent with certified SBE's, leaving us \$28,872.52 short, or 76% to goal.

PCSB is committed to reaching its goal of spending 50% of our expendable budget with CSBE's in FY15. In FY14, we made progress towards this goal and improved over FY13, but fell short for two primary reasons. One, we worked with a vendor for a contract of \$17,000, but later discovered that they, although a small business enterprise located in the District, were not a registered CSBE.

And two, PCSB was also in need of a number of services, such as expert resources for qualitative site reviews of schools, building advanced dashboards for our innovative Performance Management Framework, forensic accounting and other academic technology

software that could not be effectively provided by small, local businesses at this time.

We will continue to make progress in this fiscal year. Our expendable budget for FY2015 is \$877,802, with a goal for SBE spending of \$438,901.

We are working to meet our FY15 goal by taking three affirmative steps. First, we have made reaching the 50% goal a procurement priority and will procure goods and services from the District of Columbia Supply Schedule as often as practicable. Second, in tightening our internal procedures, we will ensure that all PCSB departments consult DSLBD's list of CSBE's when considering vendors. Finally, we will inform our current local vendors who are not CSBEs of the certification process, and encourage them to register.

By implementing these changes, we are hopeful we will meet our CSBE spending target in FY15.

Thank you again for the invitation to testify. I am happy to answer any questions you have.