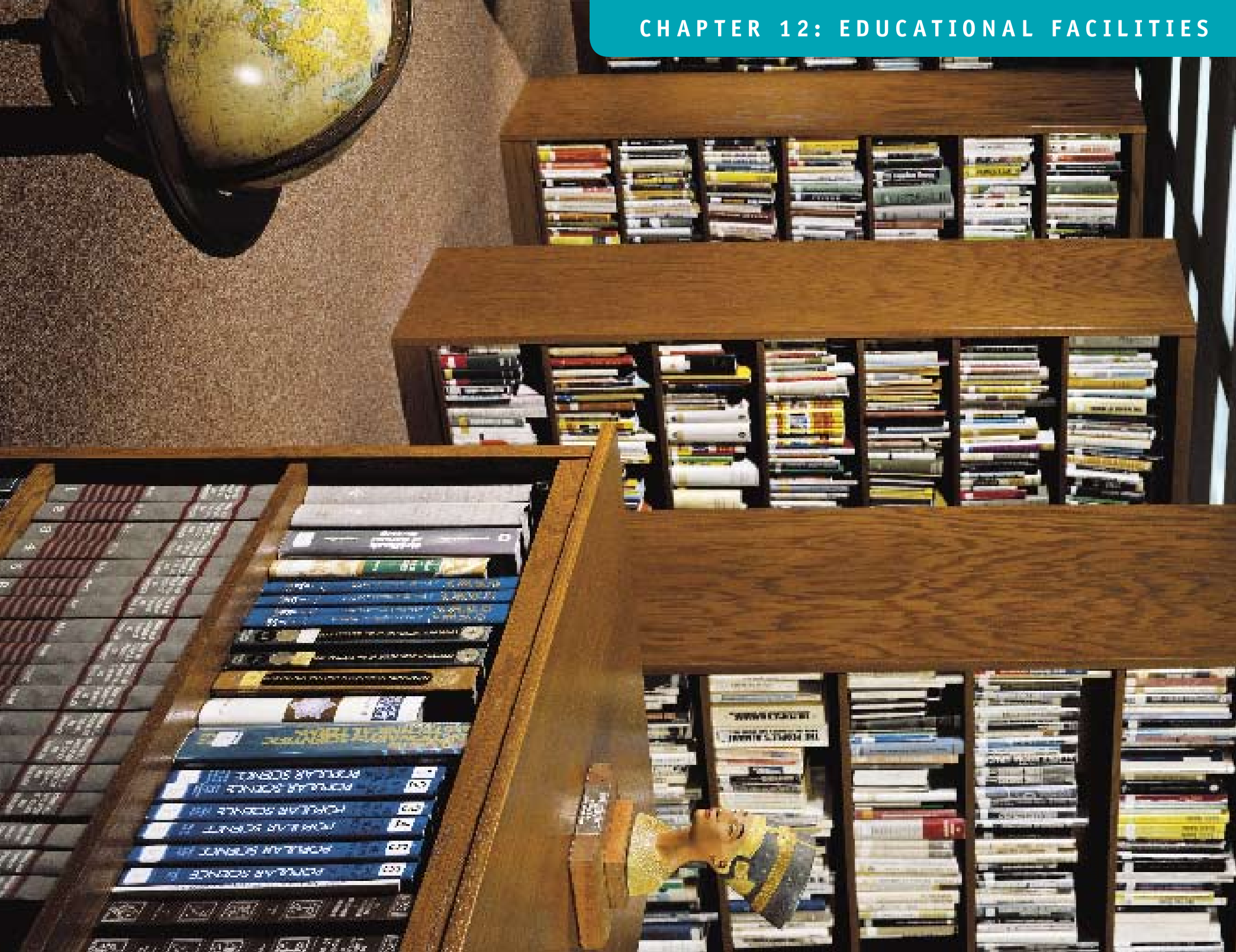
Chapter 12 Educational Facilities Element



Educational Facilities Element

Overview 1200

The Educational Facilities Element addresses the location, planning, use and design of the District's educational facilities and campuses. It includes policies and actions related to primary, secondary, and higher educational facilities. The Element focuses on the efficient use of school property, and the relationship between schools and the communities that surround them. For District public schools, it focuses on school modernization and the right-sizing of school facilities to meet existing and long-term educational needs. 1200.1

The crucial educational facilities issues facing the District of Columbia are addressed in this Element. These include:

- Modernizing the District's public schools to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment for District students
- Re-establishing quality schools that are anchors and assets for District neighborhoods
- Encouraging university satellite campuses east of the Anacostia River to provide expanded educational opportunities. 1200.2

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)—in partnership with residents, business-owners and civic organizations has committed to rebuild and re-conceive its public schools. The DCPS Master Education Plan clearly states this renewed commitment:

> *"To provide high-quality teaching and learning in every classroom in every school over the long term, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) must find sustainable solutions to critical challenges inside and outside our school system.*
>
> *First and foremost, DCPS must regain its place as the school system of choice for children and families in the District of Columbia. We must extend and strengthen our services to all of our student populations, bring young children into the system earlier, serve our special education students within their own neighborhood schools, give all students a strong foundation for learning in the fundamental skills of reading and mathematics, close achievement gaps, expand opportunities for students to excel, and develop effective strategies to keep all of our students in school through high school graduation."* 1200.3

The Educational Facilities Element incorporates the DCPS vision for a new generation of public schools. It recognizes that improving our schools is an important part of the city's goal of attracting more residents, especially households with children. As recent school construction projects in the District have shown, new schools can become catalysts for private investment and can have a tremendous effect on local growth patterns. More

The overarching goal for educational facilities is:
Transform the educational environment in the District of Columbia, providing facilities that inspire excellence in learning, create a safe and healthy environment for students, and help each individual achieve his or her fullest potential.

than any other community facility, schools define the social, economic, and physical characteristics of our neighborhoods. 1200.4

Because the emphasis of the Comprehensive Plan is on the physical environment, this Element addresses school land and buildings, rather than educational curriculum, teacher quality, school administration and other programmatic issues. Those issues are critically important, but they are addressed by the DCPS Master Education Plan and other DCPS documents. Policies in the Educational Facilities Element are intended to work in tandem with those adopted by the District of Columbia School Board as a coordinated, internally consistent strategy for educational excellence and neighborhood revitalization. 1200.5

Educational Facilities Goal 1201

The overarching goal for educational facilities in the District is:

Transform the educational environment in the District of Columbia, providing facilities that inspire excellence in learning, create a safe and healthy environment for students, and help each individual achieve his or her fullest potential. 1201.1

Policies and Actions

EDU-1 K-12 School Facility Planning 1202

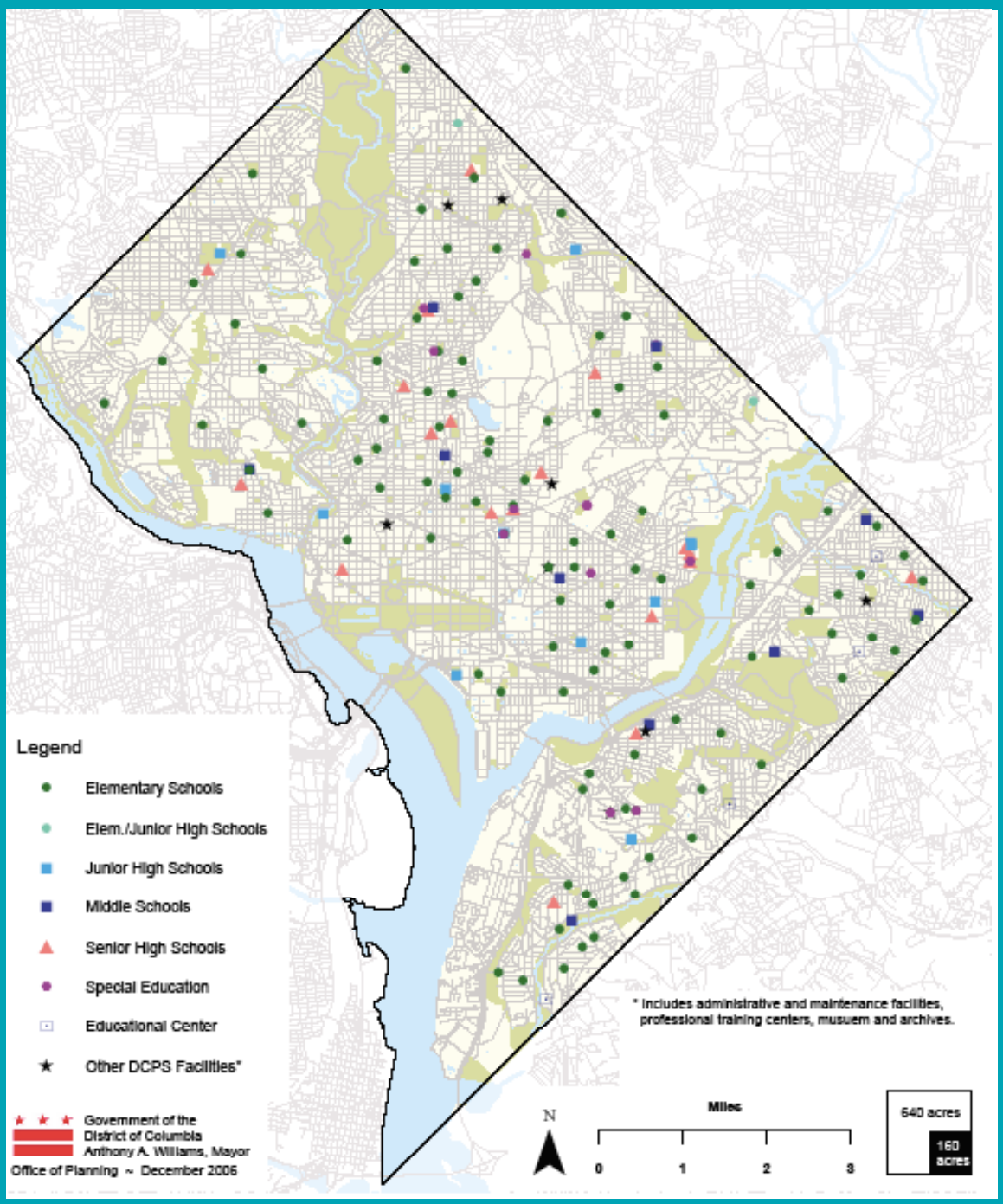
Public education in the District of Columbia is provided by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and by Public Charter schools. DCPS is a traditional local education agency with a superintendent and a Board of Education. It is responsible for educating District of Columbia children as well as planning, operating, maintaining, designing, and constructing public school facilities (see text box on 12-4). The Charters are publicly funded schools organized as non-profit corporations and managed by independent Boards of Trustees. 1202.1

In 2006, the DCPS inventory included approximately 150 active schools, serving roughly 56,000 students. District facilities also include administrative buildings, "swing schools" (used for temporarily relocation when campuses are being renovated), transportation lots and buildings, and special education facilities. Map 12.1 shows the locations of DCPS school sites. 1202.2

Many DCPS schools are in desperate need of modernization. As recently as 2002, 70 percent of its campuses were rated to be in poor physical condition by the Army Corps of Engineers. Over 80 percent of the school buildings

Map 12.1:

Location of DCPS Schools 1202.3



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Understanding the Relationship of DC Public Schools to District Government 1202.4

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is a charter independent agency within the District of Columbia government. DCPS is led by a Superintendent, who reports to an 11-member Board of Education—the official policy making body for education-related issues in the city. The Board consists of five members elected by the District, four at-large members appointed by the Mayor, and two student representatives.

Educational and facilities decisions are made by DCPS. While the District Government does not oversee the school system, it does provide DCPS with its annual capital and operating funds and thus has some influence over these decisions. Each year, the Chief Financial Officer for the District of Columbia Public Schools proposes an annual budget to the Mayor. After the budget is approved by the DC Council, it is submitted to the US Congress for federal approval. Congress passes a yearly resolution approving the District's annual operating budget and allocates the necessary funds.

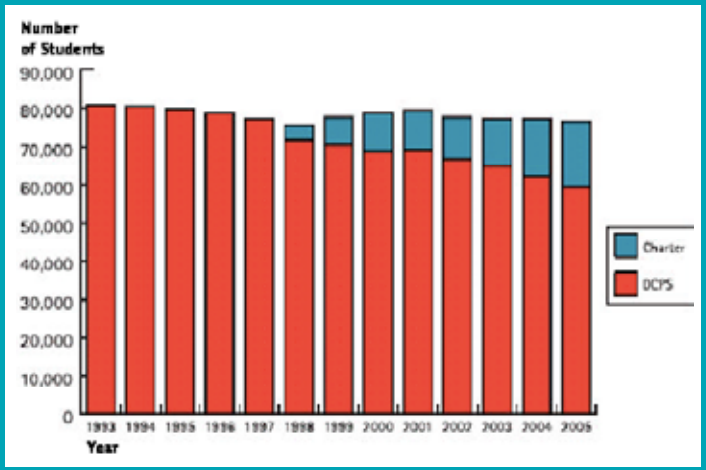
DCPS manages its own property but may not sell it. If a school or administrative building is deemed surplus (a procedure that must be completed with approval of the Board of Education), the property reverts to the District's Office of Property Management for disposal.

The Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education are also responsible for developing plans for the delivery of educational services. The Board adopts a Master Education Plan (MEP) that contains policies on topics such as school size, grade configuration, and educational curriculum. It also adopts a Master Facilities Plan (MFP), which includes recommendations for each campus and school service area based on modernization needs and enrollment projections.

are more than 55 years old, and many lack the necessary amenities and features for contemporary teaching. More than 65 schools are located on sites smaller than three acres, which is extremely confined by any standard. 1202.5

Figure 12.1:

Public School Enrollment Trends in the District 1202.10



Source: DCPS, 2006

DCPS faces the challenge of declining enrollment. Between 1970 and 1990, as the city's population fell by 20 percent and birth rates declined, enrollment plummeted from 147,000 students to 80,000 students. Forty-three schools closed. Enrollment continued to decline during the 1990s, though at a much slower rate. Between 1997 and 2005, enrollment dropped by another 11,000—this time the loss was largely driven by the growth of Public Charter schools. As Figure 12.1 shows, total enrollment in DCPS and the charter schools has been relatively stable since 1998, but the DCPS share has consistently declined. Enrollment in charter schools climbed to about 15,000 in 2005—more than 25 percent of the public school enrollment total. 1202.6

Like many urban school districts across the country, DCPS is struggling with large financial needs and increasing social needs. Poverty, disrupted families, and neighborhood violence challenge schools to do more—stay open longer, expand their services, and adopt a broader constituency. Many DCPS buildings, meanwhile, still look and operate much as they did generations ago. 1202.7

Through its Facilities Master Plan update, DCPS is evaluating all schools to "right-size" facilities to better meet the needs of existing and future students. Many schools are operating with enrollment that is far below recommended levels. Although smaller schools may sound attractive on the surface, they can lead to a more limited curriculum and reduced program offerings. The text box on the next page includes the recommended enrollment levels for elementary, middle and high schools and describes the number of under-enrolled schools. 1202.8

The District of Columbia has one of the most robust charter school programs in the country. As of the 2005-06 school year, there were 52 charter schools in the city operating on 64 campuses. The location of Public Charter Schools in the city as of 2005 is shown in Map 12.2. 1202.9

Best Sizes for Schools 1202.11

Elementary Schools: DCPS indicates that an elementary school needs at least 318 students to offer quality, cost-effective programming. That assumes two classrooms per grade level; a full complement of art, music, physical education and library services; and a student: teacher ratio of 20: 1 for grades pre-K-2 and 25: 1 for grades 3-6. The recommended elementary school size is between 300 and 500 students.

In 2005, 40 DCPS elementary schools enrolled fewer than 300 students, 20 enrolled between 200 and 250 students, and 10 enrolled fewer than 200 students. One way schools have continued to operate with lower enrollments has been to eliminate educational offerings; for example, elementary schools have cut staff for art, music, physical education and libraries. In all, DCPS is currently supporting 600 underutilized elementary-level classrooms and has about 14,000 available elementary school seats.

Middle/Junior High Schools: The recommended middle/junior high school size is between 400 and 600 students. The larger middle schools would have the capacity to provide additional course variety beyond a high-quality core program.

In 2005, DCPS had three middle or junior high schools with less than 350 students, one with less than 300 and two with fewer than 250. In all, DCPS is supporting 250 underutilized middle/junior high school classrooms and has more than 5,000 available seats.

High Schools: The recommended comprehensive high school size is been 600 and 1,200 students. DCPS operates 20 senior high schools – 10 comprehensive high schools and 10 citywide magnet high schools.

Four DCPS high schools enroll between 1,000 and 1,500 students, four enroll between 800 and 1,000, five enroll between 500 and 800, and five enroll less than 500. In all, there are more than 2,200 available high school seats in DCPS.

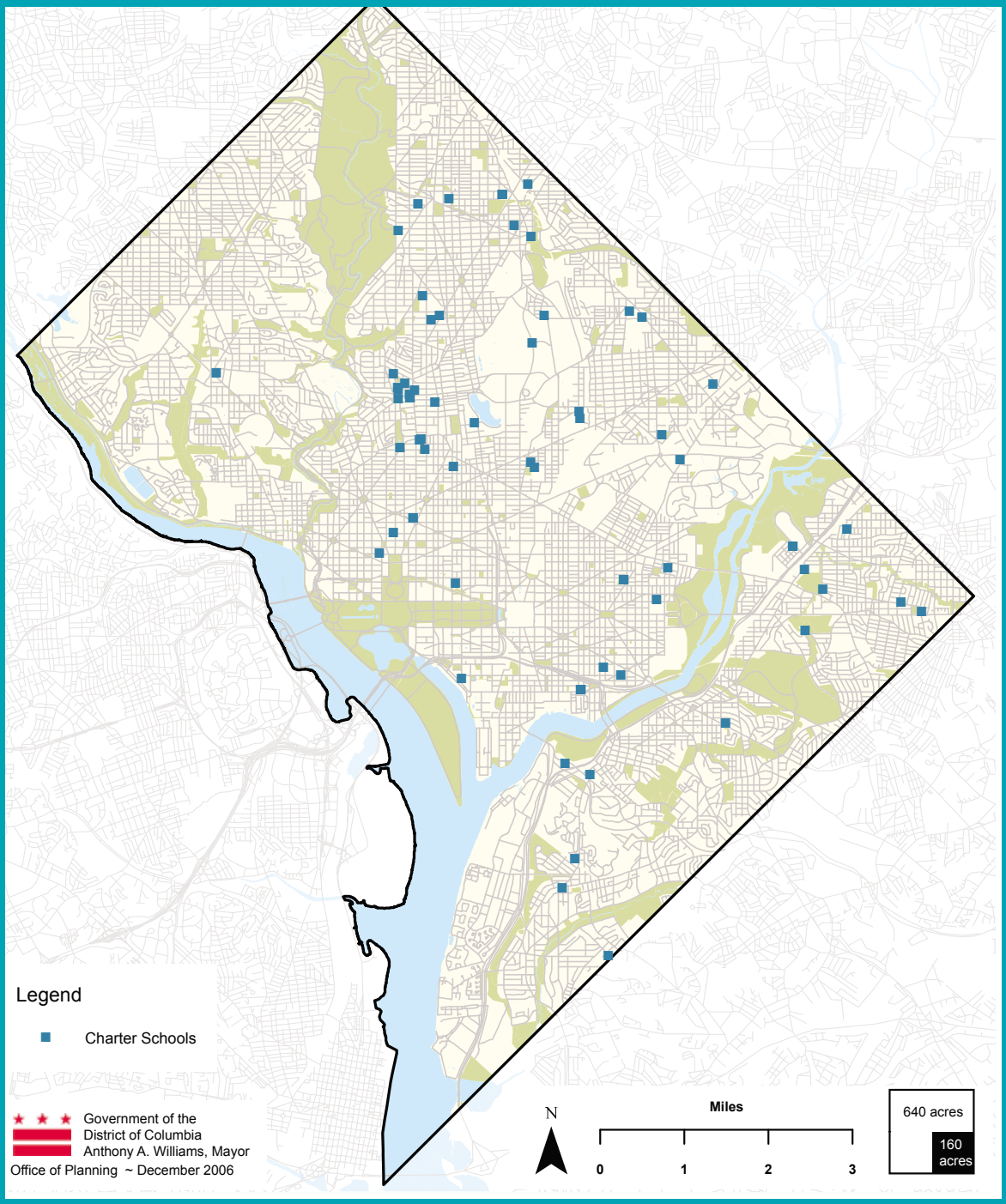
Further growth in charter school enrollment is expected in the future, creating the need for additional space and financial resources. Like the modernized DC Public Schools, charter schools have helped catalyze the revitalization of several District neighborhoods. This is particularly true for schools that have occupied and restored DCPS facilities, such as Chamberlain, Woodridge, and Thurgood Marshall Academy. 1202.12

EDU-1.1 Improving DCPS Facility Condition 1203

For many years, DCPS maintained its buildings through an annual repair and replacement program. This approach only addressed short-term needs. Buildings became inefficient and obsolete due to the lack of a more comprehensive approach to modernization. 1203.1

Map 12.2:

Location of Public Charter Schools 1202.13



Significant progress toward the modernization of the building stock has been made in the last eight years. Five elementary schools have been fully modernized. McKinley Technology High School is in its second year of operation, and Kelly Miller is now operating as a state-of-the-art middle school on the site of a formerly closed facility.

Beginning in the late 1990s, DCPS initiated the practice of comprehensive facility master planning. In 2000, it adopted a Facilities Master Plan (FMP) that established 15-year goals and long-range planning policies for modernizing District schools. The FMP was updated in 2001, 2002, and 2003 and 2006. The new FMP supports the 2006 Master Education Plan (which addresses broader operational issues) through related recommendations addressing the use of space and facilities. The District's Comprehensive Plan seeks to capture the guiding policies provided by the FMP to ensure consistency with the District Government's own land use policies and public facility plans. 1203.2

The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities reports that students attending school in new, modern facilities have been found to score five to seventeen points higher on standardized tests than students in older, substandard buildings. Recent DCPS experience at campuses such as Miner and McKinley mirrors this national experience and has shown that high-quality school facilities also strongly influence public perception, and increase the attractiveness of the modernized schools to parents and students. Modernized schools also can attract families to surrounding neighborhoods and increase private property values.1203.3

Significant progress toward the modernization of the building stock has been made in the last eight years. Five elementary schools (Oyster, Barnard, Miner, Key, and Randle Highlands) have been fully modernized. McKinley Technology High School is in its second year of operation, and Kelly Miller is now operating as a state-of-the-art middle school on the site of a formerly closed facility. The combined Bell and Lincoln Schools in Columbia Heights, and Thomson Elementary School in Shaw will soon join the inventory of modernized facilities. 1203.4

Policy EDU-1.1.1: Updated Facilities

Provide updated and modern school facilities throughout the District based on the DCPS Facilities Master Plan. 1203.5

Policy EDU-1.1.2: Facility Master Planning

Strongly support DCPS efforts to prepare long-range master facility plans so that the school modernization program is based on comprehensive system-wide assessments of facility condition, enrollment trends, long-term needs, and the District's land use plans. 1203.6

Policy EDU-1.1.3: Administrative and Maintenance Facilities

Ensure that educational facility planning accommodates the administrative, maintenance, and transportation needs of DCPS. 1203.7

Policy EDU-1.1.4: Public-Private-Partnerships

Consider public-private partnerships and proffers to improve schools as residential development is approved. Strongly discourage the practice of giving up actively used school recreational areas and/or open spaces to accommodate private development in exchange for school reconstruction. 1203.8

Action EDU-1.1.A: DCPS' Facility Master Plan Process

Actively participate in the DCPS Facilities Master Plan Update process to ensure that facility plans are coordinated with the District's neighborhood conservation and community revitalization plans. 1203.9

Action EDU-1.1.B: Developer Proffers and Partnerships for School Improvements

Establish mechanisms for developer proffers and public-private partnerships to meet school facility needs through the development process. 1203.10

EDU-1.2 Public Charter Schools 1204

The public charter schools provide another choice for District families with school age children. Of the more than 50 charter schools within the District, several have waiting lists with hundreds of students. 1204.1

The appeal of these schools stems from several sources: they are free, their curriculum is set by an independent board of trustees, and they often specialize in particular subject areas such as math, science, or performing arts. The charter schools are funded by a per pupil allowance that helps them acquire and renovate space. They can be chartered through the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board or the District's Board of Education. 1204.2

Although the Public Charter Schools operate in a wide range of facilities, their preference is usually to occupy former public schools due to the functionality of the space. This makes it essential to have clear policies on the use of surplus DCPS space. DCPS has expanded its traditional planning focus to include planning for those charter schools that indicate the need for additional space. 1204.3

Since 2002, the District of Columbia government has made several changes to the laws governing DCPS' relationship with the public charter schools. The city has modified its Code on "Public School Facilities Governing the Reuse of Surplus School Space" by designating charter schools as having "right of first offer" for the use of excess space. In 2004, the Board of Education adopted guidelines for identifying parts of DCPS school buildings that could be considered "excess to DCPS needs" and therefore suitable for use by Public Charter Schools. It also adopted guidelines for selecting public charter schools for co-location in DCPS facilities or on DCPS sites. 1204.4

The District of Columbia has one of the most robust charter school programs in the country. As of the 2005-06 school year, there were 52 charter schools in the city operating on 64 campuses.

The DCPS Board of Education has also adopted general principles acknowledging the role of charter schools in meeting the diverse needs of the city's population and emphasizing the importance of safe and secure neighborhood public school facilities, regardless of who operates them. These principles laid the groundwork for co-location standards and detailed procedures for accommodating Public Charter schools within DCPS buildings. For instance, the standards allow charters to lease floors in underutilized school buildings where certain conditions are met (such as a separate entrance and adequate visitor parking). While co-location may accommodate some of the demand for space, it is likely that space may be needed in non-school buildings as well. 1204.5

Policy EDU-1.2.1: Planning For Public Charter Schools

Incorporate the needs of the Public Charter Schools in public school facility planning. 1204.6

Policy EDU-1.2.2: Co-Location of Charter and DCPS Schools

Support DCPS and Board of Education efforts to co-locate Charter Schools within DCPS facilities. Ensure that parking, traffic, noise, and other impacts associated with increased enrollment and space utilization are addressed when co-location occurs. 1204.7

Policy EDU-1.2.3: Locating Public Charter Schools

Require that neighborhood impacts are addressed when a Public Charter or DCPS school locates in a non-school facility, such as a vacant commercial or industrial building. 1204.8

EDU-1.3 Private Schools 1205

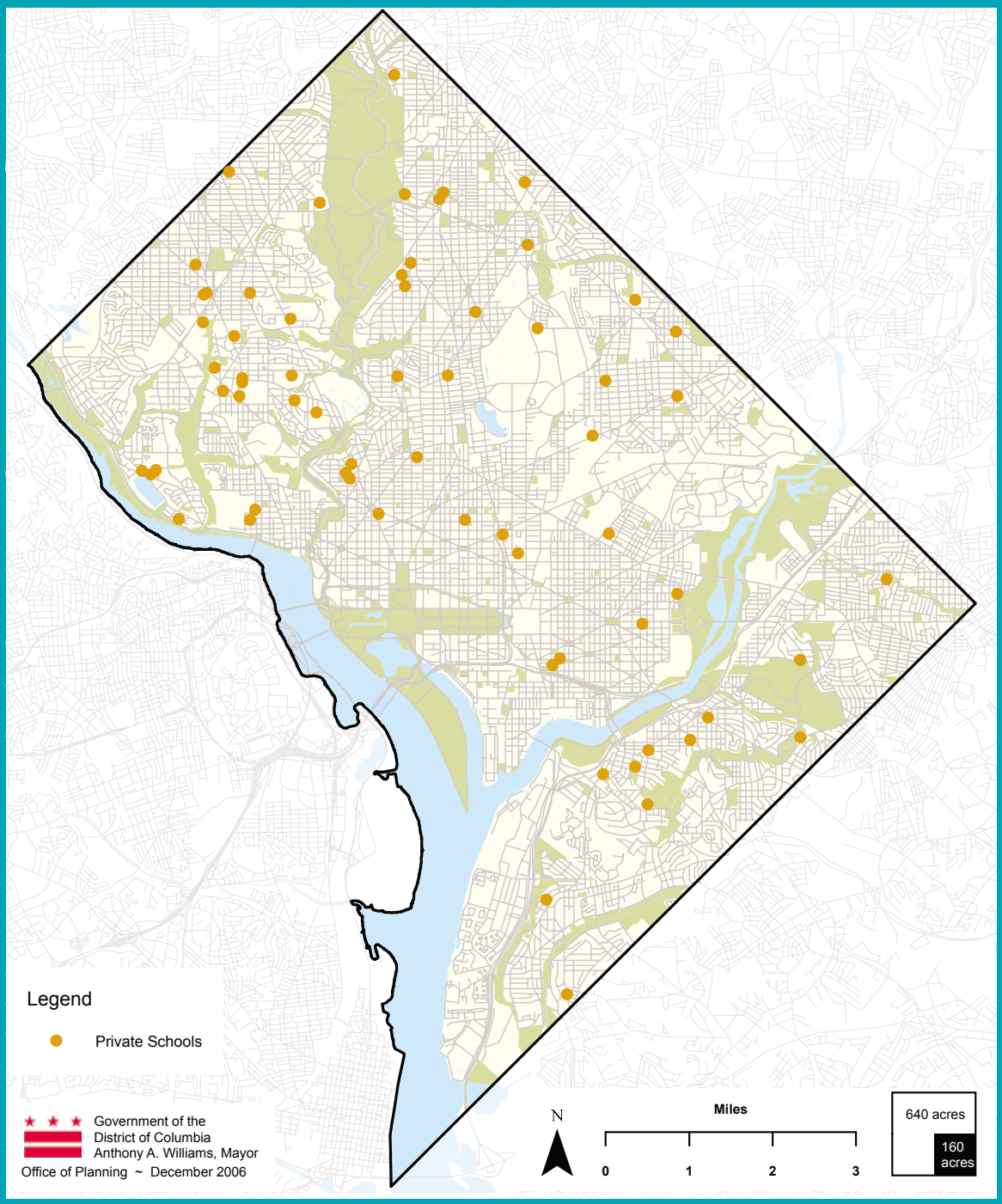
The National Center for Educational Statistics reports that there are 82 private schools in the District of Columbia. Twenty-six are affiliated with the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington (AISGW), including facilities such as Georgetown Day School and Capitol Hill Day School. Enrollment at the 26 AISGW schools has been stable over the past several years at about 11,000 students. These facilities are shown in Map 12.3. Most of the remaining schools are affiliated with churches, including 18 represented by the National Catholic Educational Association and several affiliated with other religious organizations. 1205.1

Policy EDU-1.3.1: Private Schools

Recognize private schools as an important part of Washington's educational infrastructure. Private school representatives should be encouraged to participate in citywide educational facility planning initiatives. 1205.2

Map 12.3:

Locations of Private Schools 1205.3



Attractive, well-designed, and well-sited schools communicate respect for the people that use them and contribute to a positive school climate, good discipline, and productive learning.

EDU-1.4 School Building Design and Site Planning 1206

Attractive, well-designed, and well-sited schools communicate respect for the people that use them and contribute to a positive school climate, good discipline, and productive learning. By strategically locating windows, access points, and gathering places, for example, school designers can foster student safety and security. High-quality site planning and architecture also provide an opportunity to enhance the learning experience. 1206.1

It is also important that school modernization projects are sensitive to issues that extend beyond school boundaries. Issues like the safety of children traveling to and from school, public transit accessibility, and parking and traffic must be considered. 1206.2

Policy EDU-1.4.1: Site Planning

Encourage DCPS to plan for the modernization of entire school campuses rather than just the school buildings themselves. Where school facilities are adjoined by athletic fields, playgrounds, and open space, the improvement of these areas should be included in renovation plans wherever feasible. In addition, school employee parking should not be provided at the expense of recreational space. 1206.3

Policy EDU-1.4.2: Promoting High-Quality Design

Require that the renovation or reconstruction of school facilities use high architectural and landscape design standards that are sensitive to community context as well as academic and student safety needs. 1206.4

Policy EDU-1.4.3: Safety First: Designing For Multiple Uses

Encourage school design to include appropriate measures to keep students safe, especially where multiple activities are accommodated in a single structure. 1206.5

Policy EDU-1.4.4: Eco-Friendly Design

Strongly support the use of green building, energy efficiency, and low-impact development methods in school construction and rehabilitation. 1206.6

Policy EDU-1.4.5: Pedestrian and Transit Access to Schools

Increase coordination between DDOT and DCPS to improve the safety of students walking to and from school through design and transportation improvements. In addition, new school buildings should be designed to foster safe and attractive pedestrian access. At the high school level, encourage the routing of bus lines to provide easy access to campuses, thereby minimizing the need for students to drive to school. 1206.7

Policy EDU-1.4.6: Neighborhood Schools

Strongly support the goal of making one's neighborhood school the "school of choice" so that children do not have to travel long distances to schools across town. 1206.8

EDU-1.5 Planning For the Long-Term Future 1207

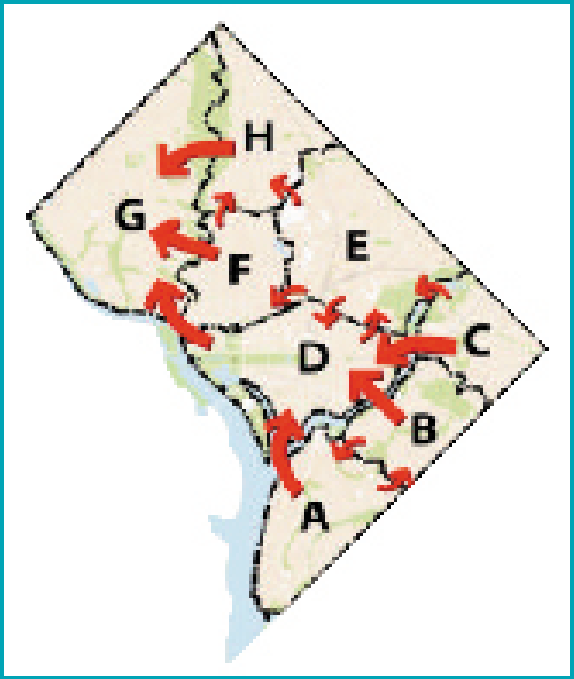
An important long-range planning objective is to align DCPS enrollment projections with the Comprehensive Plan demographic forecasts. The Comprehensive Plan can aid DCPS by identifying the specific schools that may be most impacted by new development, and therefore most in need of future expansion. 1207.1

In the District of Columbia, the relationship between new housing construction and school planning is complex. The city's policies allow students to travel to schools in other parts of the city, leading to significant out-of-boundary enrollment at many facilities. Figure 12.2 shows the daily migration of students from their homes to out–of-boundary schools often located many miles away. Another complicating factor in projecting enrollment is the large percentage of students attending charters and private schools, rather than the neighborhood DCPS school. 1207.2

Moreover, the Comprehensive Plan cannot predict who will actually occupy new housing units and whether they will be singles or families with children. In addition, increases in enrollment may take place in stable neighborhoods as the existing housing stock changes hands—even though very little new construction is occurring. 1207.4

Figure 12.2:

Daily Migration of Students from Home to Out of Boundary Schools 1207.3



The width of the arrows indicates the relative number of students who travel from one DCPS Planning Area to another to attend school. The letters indicate the eight DCPS Planning Areas.

Source: DCPS, 2003

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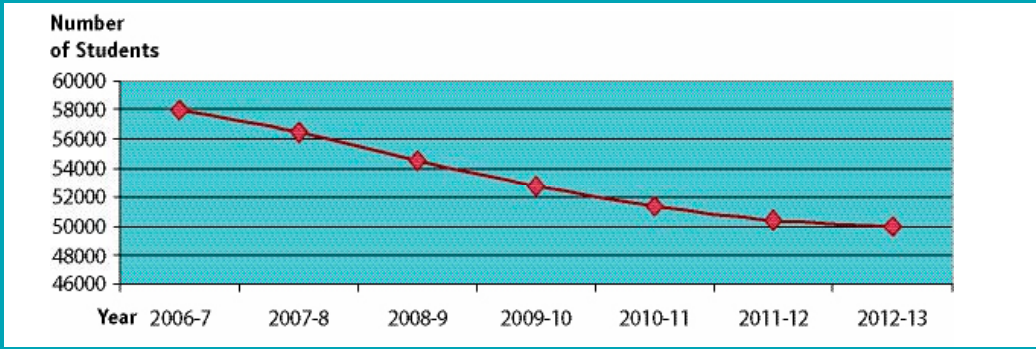
Figure 12.3:

DCPS Enrollment Projections, 2006-2013(excluding charters) 1207.5



Source: DCPS, 2006

The reality is that some schools will continue to see declining enrollment, while others will see increases. For schools facing decline, it will be an ongoing struggle to provide diverse programs and attract quality teachers. For schools facing growth, measures will be needed to expand facilities and avoid overcrowding.

At this point in time, DCPS official projections indicate declining enrollment over the next seven years. Their forecasts assume continued out-migration of families with school age children, and continued low birth rates. Total public school enrollment (including the charter schools) is expected to drop by 2,000 students between 2006 and 2013. When the charter schools are subtracted out, the decline is even steeper. As Figure 12.3 indicates, attendance at DCPS facilities is expected to drop from 58,000 in 2006 to 50,000 in 2012. Public Charter schools are projected to pick up about two-thirds of this reduction. 1207.6

DCPS is in the process of updating these forecasts, in part to reflect new assumptions about growth and demographics. The reality is that even if only 10 percent of the new homes projected for the District between now and 2025 included one school-aged child, there could be 5,000 new students. If the District can successfully rebuild its educational infrastructure and begin attracting families back to the city, the decline in enrollment could be reversed. Such uncertainty about the future suggests that the District approach the disposition of surplus public school facilities with great caution. Once a facility is gone, it is gone. Given the high cost and limited supply of land, the District should retain as many of its assets as possible, even if they are used for other uses in the short or mid-term. 1207.7

The reality is that some schools will continue to see declining enrollment, while others will see increases. For schools facing decline, it will be an ongoing struggle to provide diverse programs and attract quality teachers. For schools facing growth, measures will be needed to expand facilities and avoid overcrowding. As spatial mismatches between growth and capacity occur, boundary adjustments and grade realignments will be needed to distribute students more evenly. 1207.8

In the short-term, DCPS is already planning to consolidate school facilities and will be eliminating one million square feet of space by July 2007 and an additional two million square feet by July 2008. Recent modifications to District regulations make it clear that DCPS will retain surplus buildings to provide opportunities for Public Charter schools. The updated Facilities Master Plan provides additional direction on the use of excess space, responding to the priorities set by the 2006 Master Education Plan. One factor to be considered in the disposition of school land is that some of the school grounds were formally owned and maintained by the federal government. When their jurisdiction was transferred to District in 1973, the transfers were typically made for "recreational" purposes. Such use constraints must be considered as school properties are re-purposed. 1207.9

Policy EDU-1.5.1: Retention of Public Schools

Retain public school buildings in public ownership to the maximum extent feasible. This will put the District in a better position to respond to future demographic shifts, address long-term needs for public education

and special education, and maintain the need for "swing space" which temporarily accommodates students during construction or renovation projects. 1207.10

Policy EDU-1.5.2: Reuse of School Surplus Space

Consistent with the DC Municipal Regulations, use the following priorities to determine the future use of schools that are deemed surplus and turned over to the DC Office of Property Management:

a. First priority should be re-use for direct educational purposes, including Public Charter schools.

b. Second priority should be for other District agency facilities that strengthen families, such as day care and early childhood development centers, job training , libraries, recreation centers, or health care.

c. Third priority should be for other uses that provide a public benefit (such as District government administrative offices or affordable housing). 1207.11

Policy EDU-1.5.3: Long-Term Leases

Strongly encourage long-term leases instead of sales so that underutilized school sites and buildings can be retained in public ownership. This approach is necessary due the limited availability of District-owned land for public facility uses, and the need to retain such land to deliver quality public services and anticipate long-term changes in enrollment. 1207.12

Policy EDU-1.5.4: Preserving Sites Near Transit

Preserve school sites located near Metrorail and other locations well served by transit for educational use. 1207.13

Policy EDU-1.5.5: Adaptive Re-Use

In the event that surplus DCPS facilities are converted to non-school uses, require the new uses to be sensitive to neighborhood context and to mitigate impacts on parking, traffic, noise, and other quality of life factors. Provide for public review of potential new uses, and ensure that any issues related to prior jurisdiction over the site by the federal government are addressed. 1207.14

See also the Land Use Element for additional policies on the reuse of public school land.

EDU-2 Schools as Community Anchors 1208

Schools are powerful indicators of community values and aspirations. In addition to supporting the academic needs of local students, they can reflect the social, educational, recreational, and personal needs of the broader community. Historically, the District's schools have been anchors for the community at large, serving as neighborhood gathering places. 1208.1

In addition to supporting the academic needs of local students, schools can reflect the social, educational, recreational, and personal needs of the broader community. Historically, the District's schools have been anchors for the community at large, serving as neighborhood gathering places.

DCPS is accommodating "wrap-around" services at these 14 schools, with the objective of making them models for future projects around the city. Wrap-around services include family counseling and parenting programs, career education, mental health therapy and after-school enrichment programs.

The District has a history of collaborative arrangements with its school facilities. For years, our schools have hosted recreational programs, public services, and even family services such as health care. DCPS foresees many opportunities to establish mutually beneficial partnerships with District agencies and the non-profit sector in the future to help sustain schools as community anchors. This principle is strongly supported by the DCPS Facilities Master Plan and is regarded as key to improving the emotional and physical health of our neighborhoods. 1208.2

EDU-2.1 Neighborhood-Centered Schools 1209

In 2001, DCPS launched the Transformation Schools Initiative to effectively transform 14 DC Public Schools into high-performing, child-centered, family- and community-focused learning centers. The 14 schools are shown in Table 12.1. 1209.1

Table 12.1:
Transformation Schools Initiative 1209.2

School Type/Level	Schools
Elementary School	H.D. Cooke, Davis, LaSalle, Noyes, Simon, Stanton, Turner, Walker-Jones, Wilkinson
Middle/Junior High School	Taft, Evans, Kramer, R.H. Terrell
High School	Douglass, Phelps Career

DCPS is accommodating "wrap-around" services at these 14 schools, with the objective of making them models for future projects around the city. Wrap-around services include family counseling and parenting programs, career education, mental health therapy and after-school enrichment programs. Implementation of this initiative at other campuses holds great promise for the District's children and families. 1209.3

Co-locating social services in school facilities can provide a number of benefits. It reduces government land acquisition costs and development expenses. It fosters partnerships between schools, other government agencies, and local businesses. By pooling resources, co-location can reduce maintenance costs and parking requirements. It can also provide convenience for residents, who can access multiple services in a single location. 1209.4

Policy EDU-2.1.1: Collaborative Arrangements with Community Service Providers

Create partnerships between DCPS, District government, non-profits, and other institutions to promote schools as the central focus of community activities. 1209.5

Policy EDU-2.1.2: Wrap-Around Services

Where space is available, accommodate wrap-around health and human service programs within local schools to address the non-academic needs of students and families. Include affordable child care services wherever feasible. 1209.6

Policy EDU-2.1.3: Community Use

Keep school space accessible and available for neighborhood meetings, community gatherings, and other events that promote citizen engagement and public service, while maintaining the school's primary mission of educating the District's children. 1209.7

Action EDU-2.1.A: Shared Maintenance Facilities

Identify opportunities to share DCPS and District government operations, transportation, and maintenance facilities to reduce land and facility costs for both entities. 1209.8

See also the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element for policies on joint use agreements for public access to school recreation areas.

EDU-2.2 Schools in Community Planning 1210

School facility planning should be integrated with broader community planning efforts such as Small Area Plans and revitalization plans. The inclusion of schools in these plans can help promote parental involvement, improve school safety, and create connections between the school and the larger community around it. Coordinated planning also provides a means for residents to address land use, design, transportation, and physical planning issues associated with schools, and to voice opinions on the types of non-educational services that might be provided on school campuses. 1210.1

Policy EDU-2.2.1: Intergovernmental Coordination

Coordinate DCPS facility planning efforts with District agencies to ensure that school modernization produces better education facilities for District children while also improving the neighborhood. 1210.2

Policy EDU-2.2.2: Educational Facilities in Local Plans

Involve the District of Columbia Public Schools in District government land use and transportation planning activities. Local principals, faculty, students, and parents should be invited and encouraged to participate in decisions that impact school facilities and their surroundings. 1210.3

Policy EDU-2.2.3: Community Participation

Promote an open, public process when making school facility decisions, including decisions on school renovations, additions, and replacements; new schools; school closings and consolidation; the disposition of surplus schools and/or property; site selection; and school design. 1210.4

EDU-3 Colleges and Universities 1211

The District of Columbia has an extraordinary concentration of academic resources, including some of the country's finest colleges and universities. 1211.1

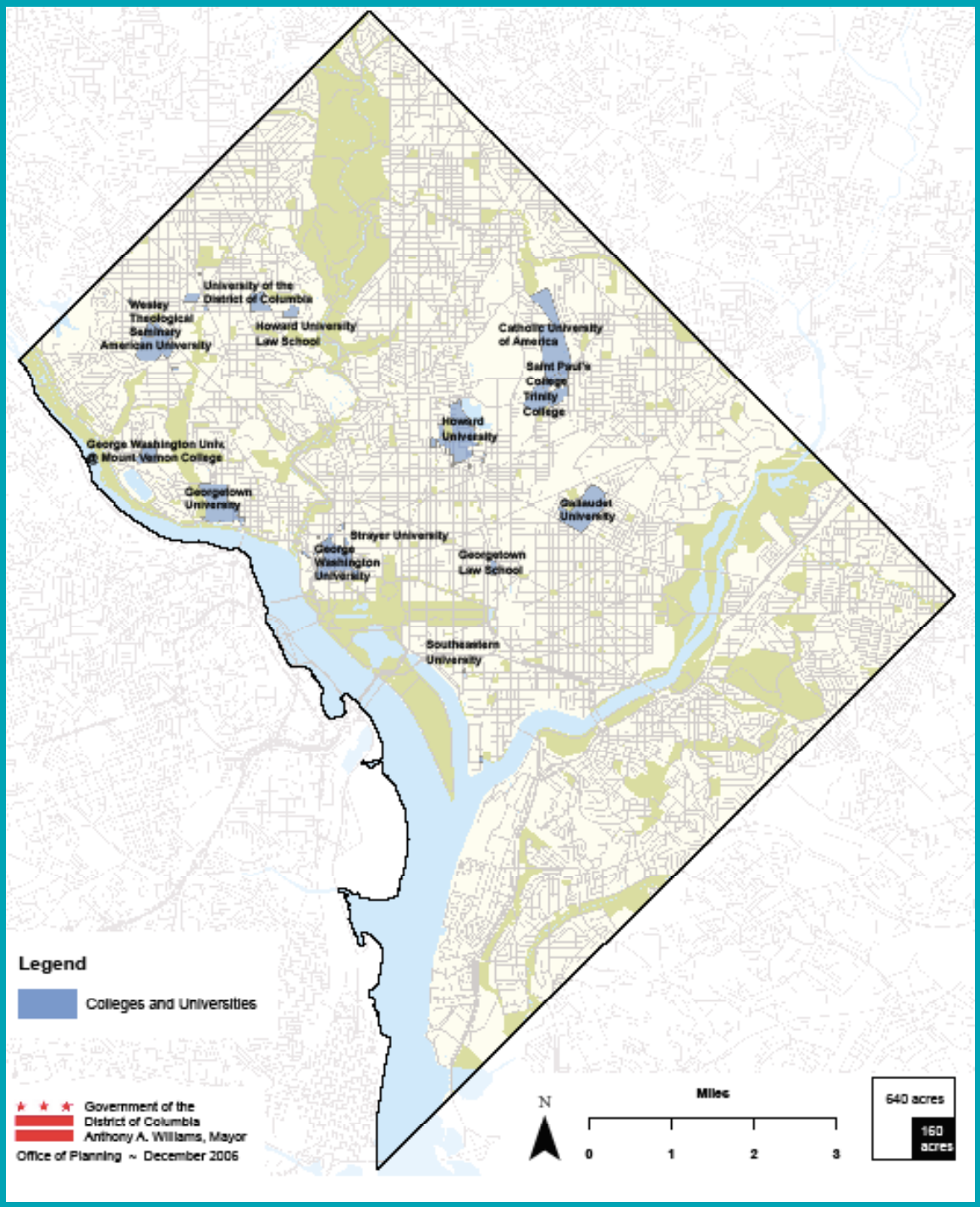
University campuses located within the District include American University, the Catholic University of America, Gallaudet University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, Howard University, Southeastern University, Trinity University, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), and the National Defense University. These institutions enroll more than 75,000 students. Map 12.4 shows their locations. 1211.2

In addition to the schools listed above, many non-local universities maintain Washington, DC campuses. Thousands of students from across the country attend "Washington semester" programs at these institutions, learning about the mechanics of the federal government. Other institutions of higher learning, such as the Corcoran College of Art and Johns Hopkins University, enroll hundreds of students at campuses across Downtown. 1211.3

The University of the District of Columbia is the District's only post-secondary public educational institution. The historically black university is also the only urban land-grant institution in the nation. It offers certificate, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate level degrees that are tailored to meet the unique needs of the District. Available programs range from associate degrees in Nursing and Mortuary Science to masters degrees in Cancer Biology Prevention and Clinical Psychology. Over 50 different programs of study are offered. 1211.4

Map 12.4:

Locations of Colleges and Universities 1211.5



12

UDC serves a very diverse population that includes students from over 25 different nations. The school has an open admissions policy that is particularly beneficial for non-traditional students. It provides an important opportunity for young adults and adult learners to gain a quality education at an affordable price. 1211.6

EDU-3.1 University of the District of Columbia 1212

Continued political and financial support for UDC is essential if it is to fulfill its mission as a viable educational option and path to career advancement for District residents. Establishment of a UDC satellite campus to better serve residents' educational and training needs is an idea that has much support throughout the community. Neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River are particularly well situated for such a campus—there are no institutions of higher learning there and there are several large sites where they might be accommodated. This element recommends that an educational satellite campus be established. 1212.1

Policy EDU-3.1.1: Sustaining and Advancing UDC

Sustain, promote, and advance the University of the District of Columbia as the city's only public institution of higher learning and continuing education for District residents. 1212.2

Policy EDU-3.1.2: Strengthen Training and Career Programs

Strengthen the community college function of UDC to continue training students for the baccalaureate program, and to build practical career skills that prepare students for current and future employment in the District. 1212.3

Action EDU-3.1.A: Develop a Satellite UDC Campus East of the Anacostia River

Pursue the development of a satellite campus of the University of the District of Columbia east of the Anacostia River. 1212.4

EDU-3.2 Educational Partnerships 1213

The array of learning institutions within the District is vitally important to the city and its residents, particularly its youth. Institutions of higher learning are involved in a myriad of community and educational partnerships to improve access to education, economic opportunities for District residents, and investment in the community at-large. Partnerships between institutions of higher learning and DCPS and its students have and should continue to provide educational opportunities and advantages for our children (see example in text box at left). 1213.1

Successful Partnerships for Education: One Example 1213.2

The DC School Without Walls was established in 1971 through a cooperative effort between DCPS and the George Washington University. As the name implies, this public school uses the city as a classroom and offers an alternative to conventional instructional programs. The School Without Walls has been a great success. One recent indicator is that all 340 students who graduated from School Without Walls High School in June 2005 went on to college.

Policy EDU-3.2.1: University Partnerships

Encourage partnerships between the city's universities, anchor institutions, and K-12 schools to create additional pathways to learning for District students and young adults. 1213.3

Policy EDU-3.2.2: Corporate Citizenship

Support continued "corporate citizenship" among the city's large institutions, including its colleges, universities, hospitals, private schools, and non-profits. This should include a continued commitment to high quality architecture and design on local campuses, expanded use of "green building" methods and low impact development, and the adaptive reuse and preservation of historic buildings. 1213.4

EDU-3.3 Colleges, Universities, and Neighborhoods 1214

The growth of colleges and universities, while supported by the city, has generated concerns in some Washington neighborhoods. Most of the universities have limited land area for expansion, and are located immediately adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood concerns relate to impacts such as traffic and parking, and to broader issues about the changing character of communities where universities are located or expanding. 1214.1

The Zoning Regulations require the preparation of campus plans showing the location, height, and bulk of present and future improvements for all colleges located in residential zone districts. In addition to serving as physical site plans, the campus plans set Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits for the campus as a whole, and in some cases establish enrollment and employment caps. Campus plans are subject to approval by the Zoning Commission. 1214.2

The campus plan requirement provides a formalized process for community input on a range of growth-related issues. They are an important tool to proactively address issues that may be of concern to the neighborhood and limit campus expansion into residential areas. However, most of the city's colleges and universities are engaged in ongoing discussions with the communities around them. Frequently raised issues include the need for student housing, the loss of historic buildings, the compatibility of proposed campus structures with nearby residential areas, and the loss of taxable land associated with university growth. Campus plans have responded to these concerns in a number of ways, such as increasing building intensity on-site to avoid the need for land acquisition, development of new dormitories, and implementation of numerous programs to manage parking, traffic, noise, and other environmental impacts. 1214.3

Looking forward, the development of satellite campuses is strongly encouraged to relieve growth pressure around existing campuses. In addition to accommodating university growth, satellite campuses can

The development of satellite campuses is strongly encouraged to relieve growth pressure around existing campuses. In addition to accommodating university growth, satellite campuses can provide new job and educational opportunities for District residents and help revitalize local shopping districts.

provide new job and educational opportunities for District residents and help revitalize local shopping districts. Continued efforts to improve the campus planning process and promote an open dialogue between the colleges and the neighborhoods around should be strongly supported. 1214.4

Policy EDU-3.3.1: Satellite Campuses

Promote the development of satellite campuses to accommodate university growth, relieve growth pressure on neighborhoods adjacent to existing campuses, spur economic development and revitalization in neighborhoods lagging in market activity, and create additional lifelong learning opportunities for DC residents. 1214.5

Policy EDU-3.3.2: Balancing University Growth and Neighborhood Needs

Encourage the growth and development of local colleges and universities in a manner that recognizes the role these institutions play in contributing to the District's character, culture, economy, and is also consistent with and supports community improvement and neighborhood conservation objectives. Discourage university actions that would adversely affect the character or quality of life in surrounding residential areas. 1214.6

Policy EDU-3.3.3: Campus Plan Requirements

Continue to require campus plans for colleges and universities located in residential and mixed use zone districts. These plans should be prepared by the institutions themselves, subject to District review and approval, and should address issues raised by the surrounding communities. Each campus plan should include provisions that ensure that the institution is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other similar conditions. 1214.7

Policy EDU-3.3.4: Student Housing

Encourage the provision of on-campus student housing in order to reduce college and university impacts on the housing stock in adjacent neighborhoods. Consider measures to address the demand for student housing generated by non-District institutions with local branches. 1214.8

Policy EDU-3.3.5: Transportation Impacts of Colleges and Universities

Support ongoing efforts by colleges and universities to mitigate their traffic and parking impacts by promoting ridesharing, carpooling, shuttle service, bicycling, and other transportation demand management measures. The provision of adequate on-site parking for institutional uses also should be encouraged. 1214.9

Action EDU-3.3.A: University-Community Task Force

Establish a Task Force comprised of college and university representatives, neighborhood representatives, local businesses, and other non-university community stakeholders to address a range of physical planning issues relating to college and university growth and operation. Among other topics, the Task Force should address community concerns regarding the enforcement of campus plans and monitoring procedures, university concerns regarding enrollment and employment caps, the regulation of non-District based colleges with expanding local facilities, and possible amendments to the zoning regulations as they relate to campus plans and higher education facilities. 1214.10