



Far Northeast Community Committee

“All Means All”

The work of the FNECC is very important. It has the potential to result in real changes to the quality and nature of schools in Far Northeast Denver. The larger community needs to understand our work and see the opportunity for improving the quality of education for all children.

The questions and answers listed below are just suggestions for beginning a conversation with other parents, teachers, neighbors and friends about this unique opportunity. For this process to have maximum impact, committee members need to ensure their voices reflect and represent the entire community.

Use this as a guide to start an announcement at your church group, PTSA meeting, or community setting. Bring back any ideas and thoughts to your work with the FNECC!

Have you heard about the Far Northeast Community Committee?

The FNECC is a committee organized by A+ Denver to work with the Denver Public Schools and DPS Board members to improve the quality of schools in Far Northeast.

How did you get on the committee?

I was appointed to represent our community, because I am a concerned _____ (parent, grandparent, faith leader, teacher, etc.).

Why was this committee formed?

There are too many underperforming schools in our community. Too many of our children are getting left behind. This is an opportunity to make a difference and help our schools.

Here is a map showing which Denver schools are performing and which are failing. Too many of the failing schools - marked in red and yellow - are in Far Northeast.

How will this committee make a difference?

The School District will be making decisions about how to improve our schools. We are being asked to help them make the best decisions for our community. Changes in FNE schools are coming – we are working with DPS to decide what to do.

What do you have to do?

Through ten meetings between now and November, the committee will work to give input to DPS. We will develop two major things: 1) A list of Guiding Principles and 2) Recommendations for Improving Schools:

1. Guiding Principles – Spring 2010

First we will develop a list of guiding principles that will help direct decisions about our schools. The principles reflect our beliefs and values about our children and the schools that will best meet their needs. The principles will be finalized in June.

How all the Principles will Impact Schools: In June, the DPS staff and School Board will evaluate new school recommendations in the light of the FNECC's principles. Then, in the fall, the FNECC will evaluate plans for the whole region and vote on recommendations in the fall, based on the principles.

2. Recommendations for Improving Schools – Fall 2010

In the fall, the FNECC will make actual recommendations that will be presented to the Superintendent and the Board of Education to help them in deciding what to do with our schools. The recommendations will guide:

- Actual plans for improving schools
- Strategies to ensure effective feeder patterns
- Consideration of new schools and program offerings
- High school configurations
- Solutions for school overcrowding
- Strategies to close the achievement gap
- Strategies to meet the needs of English language learners
- Everything's on the table

Has this ever been done before?

This is the first time in Denver or nationally that a community has been so deeply and substantially involved in helping to make decisions about improving schools in an entire region. This is a historic opportunity.

Why does this matter to me?

- Because your child or grandchild will have the opportunity to attend high performing schools right in your neighborhood.
- Your children will have access to great schools from preschool to high school.
- There will be less reason to leave the community to find good schools. No more driving miles every day to take your kids to schools across town because that area has stronger schools.

Why does this matter to our community?

- Since there will be less reason to leave the FNE to find good schools, we will build cohesiveness in our community.
- It will create better stability in our neighborhood, because we will stop losing kids.
- We can show that our children, teachers and principals are the smartest and most capable in the city.

What are you going to do?

- Work with district staff and community leadership on principles and options
- Present to Supt and BOE
- Provide public comment
- Help lead change in our schools

How do you know this will make a difference?

Because,

- I am being listened to by DPS staff. They are working directly with us at each meeting.
- A+ Denver, an independent group committed to improving schools in Denver, is leading and coordinating the process. Former Denver Mayor Federico Pena, who is the head of A+ Denver, committed that A+ Denver would monitor the district's response to our recommendations.
- DPS Superintendant Tom Boasberg promised me the district's decisions will be informed by the work of the committee.
- DPS School Board President Dr. Nate Easley and At-Large Members Theresa Pena and Mary Seawell are attending meetings and learning about the community's goals for their schools.
- We are all committed to improving our schools for our children.