

6 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION
7

8 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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10 To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to provide guidelines for
11 which data, metrics, and timetables need to be agreed upon for the District of Columbia
12 Public Schools to expand in-person learning and teacher instruction during a public
13 health emergency.
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15 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution
16 may be cited as the “COVID-19 DCPS Re-Opening Emergency Declaration Resolution
17 of 2020”.

18 Sec. 2. (a) When the District of Columbia Public Schools issued re-opening plans prior
19 to both Term One and Term Two of the 2020-2021 academic year, the initial announcements
20 were delayed or rescinded due to health or labor relation issues, and families, teachers, and other
21 school employees have expressed a sense of chaos due to late-breaking and frequently changing
22 plans.

23 (b) The initial announcement for Term Two involved elementary school classrooms with
24 in-person teaching and with in-person education through the remote learning systems (known as
25 CARE classrooms), but a staffing dispute led to an indefinite delay of in-person teaching
26 followed by a plan to start a set of CARE classrooms—all furthering the sense of chaos.

27 (c) Announcement of a plan with full staffing commitment at least 21 days before the
28 start of school would improve transparency about the re-opening plan and reduce uncertainty
29 about the likelihood of the plan being reversed.

30 (d) Both DC Health and the Education and Childcare Committee of the ReOpen DC
31 Advisory Group have issued recommendations related to virtual and in-person learning, yet the
32 DCPS Term 2 re-opening plan has not communicated either its specific adherence to or rationale
33 for dismissing several recommendations, including ones related to public health and related to
34 educational supports for English language learners or students with 504 or individual education
35 plans.

36 (e) The DC Health and ReOpen DC Advisory Group recommendations for virtual and in-
37 person learning relate to domains beyond education, including transportation, health, facilities,
38 and labor, yet DCPS has only indicated collaboration across a few of these areas in their re-
39 opening plans.

40 (f) The Term Two staffing plan would have drawn resources away from secondary
41 students to serve elementary students in CARE classrooms and left families, teachers, and
42 principals with unanswered questions about the suitability of teachers and staff for the roles to
43 which they would be assigned.

44 (g) While the Term Two plan prioritized in-person seats for students with specialized
45 needs or at-risk status, families, teachers, and principals expressed concerns that the staffing plan
46 and prioritization methods would not have generated the results that DCPS intended.

47 (h) The State Board of Education and members of the Council of the District of Columbia
48 have called on DCPS to use the November 2020 delayed reopening to work with families,
49 teachers, principals, and other affected staff to develop a plan that regains their confidence, but
50 DCPS has not announced a new process and has instead announced the start of a more limited
51 approach to CARE classrooms.

52 (i) The Council of the District of Columbia has the ability to define the responsibilities of
53 District agencies and promulgate personnel legislation and can use this capacity to provide
54 oversight of the initial CARE classroom educational and health metrics, require advance notice
55 of any further DCPS reopening plans, and review such plans for consistency with current expert
56 guidance.

57 (j) By requiring the submission of any further Term Two plans to the Council for a brief
58 window of review and approval, families and staff will experience more certainty about Term
59 Two plans and know that all plans have undergone an independent review by a body that
60 oversees the breadth of issues involved, including but not limited to health, education,
61 transportation, labor, and facilities.

62 Sec 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances
63 enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the
64 COVID-19 DCPS Re-Opening Emergency Act of 2020 be adopted after a single reading.

65 Sec 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.