



# Theory of Action

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The Board believes that an overarching Theory of Action should guide the District on its path of dramatically improving student achievement outcomes for all students and realizing the mission to ensure students, without exception, learn and grow at their highest levels. A theory of action is a coordinated framework for delivering high quality instruction.

The theory of action adopted by the District builds on beliefs about how students learn, the conditions that best promote learning, and the policies, management systems, and culture that further the commitment and high performance of adults to deliver quality education services to all District students.

Our Theory of Action is: **Earned Autonomy**

To meet the District's goals of student growth and achievement, the Board believes it is essential to empower educators at all levels to act and lead under a theory of action in which the school is the key unit of change, encouraging innovation, autonomy, and differentiation at each school.

The Earned Autonomy Theory of Action is centrally focused on student achievement by defining the role of the district and empowering school communities:

*Role of the District:* The District shall play a leading role in establishing and setting performance expectations, driving research and development, scaling innovation and best practices, coaching and support of school leaders, and ensuring that in all respects our actions and practices promote greater equity among our students.

*School Empowerment:* School leaders, working collaboratively with their leadership teams, teachers, parents, and communities, shall have ownership of all that happens within their buildings – a sense of efficacy and urgency, and a conviction that they are empowered to set the vision, strategies, and priorities for their school within the parameters of the district constraints.

The District is using Earned Autonomy because it provides:

- Students a common, research-based, best-practice foundation for success;
- Families a clear, simple information about a school's performance;
- Schools a clear, actionable, and supported core instructional plan and resources; and
- Leaders flexibility, empowerment, and support based on performance and demonstrated need.

Earned Autonomy is comprised of the following core components:

1. Managed Foundation: Every school begins with the managed foundation of the core instructional plan and operational requirements that are based on research-based, best-practice instruction; professional training; and legal requirements.
2. School Performance Ratings: Annual ratings determined by the District for each school based on a whole-child approach.
3. Flexibility and Empowerment: Based on a school's performance rating, schools earn autonomies from the managed foundation, allowing schools to innovate and explore alternative methods and models. In the event earned autonomies and local policy and/or regulations are in conflict, approved autonomies from the managed foundation shall prevail so long as the approved autonomies do not conflict with local, state, or federal law. If such a conflict exists, the local, state, and/or federal law shall prevail.
4. Increased Support: Recognizing that providing equal opportunity to all schools and students may require greater investment in those students and schools who are at risk of falling behind.