Resolution: To enhance and align quality resources in the school environment and surrounding community that ensure students can meaningfully engage in education.

PURPOSE: For the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group of the District of Columbia (JJAG) to build on Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) Report and system prevention reform efforts by uplifting the challenges expressed by school-based personnel, school-based partners, students, and families about gaps and challenges that impact school attendance.

WHEREAS: The JJAG provides active consultation to the Mayor and government agencies to ensure the provision of comprehensive delinquency prevention programs designed to reduce delinquency and status offense behaviors and meet the needs of youth through the collaboration of many local systems with which a youth may interface.

WHEREAS: The District’s Three-year Plan for Delinquency Prevention, as approved by the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) under the Title II Formula Grant Program, outlines that JJAG’s primary goal is to develop and strengthen preventative services and advise on local policy changes designed to reduce the number of youth entering the juvenile justice system.

WHEREAS: In furtherance of that goal, JJAG supported the District in applying for and winning an award of competitive federal funds from OJJDP to expand the DHS PASS program with a pilot program specifically focus on high-risk schools and students identified as chronically truant from school and at-risk for system involvement.

WHEREAS: JJAG’s role in supporting the DHS PASS expansion pilot led to identification of systemic resource challenges impacting student success and consistent attendance. Through several qualitative data collection methods, the following key challenges were identified: (1) lack of access to quality hot meals in schools, (2) lack of safe and accessible transportation to school, (3) insufficient mental health and behavioral health supports, (4) community safety concerns, and (5) school staffing challenges.

WHEREAS: The JJAG recommends the District complete equity assessments across public and charter schools to further understand and identify systemic resource challenges (e.g., meals, safety, and staffing).

WHEREAS: The assessments should be completed in partnership with the OSSE Education Research Practice Partnership, the Mayor’s Office of Racial Equity, education partners, and community members with the goal of informing future budget development and investments that address identified disparities.

THEREFORE: The JJAG recommends that the District equip the appropriate entity or entities with the resources to complete and publish the assessments referenced above within one year and work with relevant partners to create a responsive strategic plan that prioritizes investments to remedy identified disparities in education resources.