

Testimony of Kevin Clinton

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Federal City Council

Committee of the Whole

Chair Phil Mendelson

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9:30 am

Good afternoon. My name is Kevin Clinton and I work at the Federal City Council (FC2). FC2 is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization dedicated to advancing civic life in the nation's capital. It is my pleasure to testify today on the performance of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education.

Our members, which include 250 leaders in the private, non-profit and civic sectors, are working to use their influence as employers and hiring decision-makers to help ensure that DC residents attain good jobs with proven career pathways that pay family-sustaining salaries. Given DC's current economic challenges, especially downtown, we feel urgency about the need to achieve an equitable economic recovery that ensures that DC residents benefit from that recovery.

To ensure an equitable recovery, we need data-based and sustainable solutions to boost access and outcomes to family-sustaining careers for DC residents. Last year, the DC Council recognized the importance of this focus by investing, for the first time, in the establishment of a new Education Through Employment Data System in the Deputy Mayor for Education. You recognized a need to understand better how these education and workforce stakeholder investments lead to improved economic mobility and employment opportunities for DC youth.

Over the last year DME has:

- Launched the Office of Education Through Employment Pathways (ETEP), which is leading the development of the [Education Through Employment Data System](#).
- Hired the initial staff to lead the work.
- ETEP publicly launched the work with an initial mission, vision, and information about the impact on families, schools, employers, and policymakers.
- Partnered with Mathematica to publish a [case study](#) of DC's work, noting that DC has the potential to be a leader in data equity through this effort.
- Started to recruit residents to participate in the Public Stakeholder Advisory Board, which will launch this spring.

We are excited about this work at the Federal City Council because it will provide employers with new and crucial insights into sources of local talent to help their organizations grow and succeed. While this data system will benefit all industries, I'd like to provide an example of how it will help support the construction sector organized through [DC Builds DC](#). DC Builds DC is a sector partnership consisting of over 30 companies and a dozen partners working together to build and strengthen the talent pipeline that connects DC residents to careers in construction. Companies identify their greatest challenges and work together to address them. For the construction industry, access to talent is a major issue in DC and across the country.

The Education Through Employment Data System will fill a crucial need for companies in this partnership. How will we use the data?

- DC Builds DC employers will be able to learn which education and workforce training providers are most effectively preparing DC residents for high-wage, high-demand careers in the construction industry.
- The data system will enable better alignment between employers training providers, strengthening the talent pipeline and connecting more DC residents to construction careers.
- Employers will be able to address their future talent needs with more agility, creating confidence in the supply of DC workers.

Currently, we can't draw reliable connections between the career outcomes achieved by residents and the education and training that provided their career foundation. We don't know which programs are preparing residents more effectively, or which curricula are teaching job candidates the skills they need to succeed. For employers, this information will help inform which programs they recruit from or contribute to. For the DC government, this information will be critical in helping inform which programs to support, renew and grow. This data will fill an important gap in the District's workforce system.

DC is positioned to be a leader in applying a data equity approach to creating economic progress for all residents. I appreciate the council's crucial early support for the Office of Education Through Employment Pathways and I encourage you to monitor and continue to support the effort as it moves from the planning phase towards implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.