

Coalition for Franklin School

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COALITION URGES PUBLIC USE FOR FRANKLIN SCHOOL

The new *Coalition for Franklin School* calls on the city to retain ownership of Franklin School and renovate the building for *public* use. In response to the current RFP for commercial development, Coalition spokesperson Joe Browne, the historic building (1869) at 13th and K could easily again serve as a model school. Close to Metro, its Franklin Square site is a convenient, central location.

Too many public school buildings have been sold for private development, while at the same time public and charter schools seek appropriate classroom space in vain.

In 1869, Franklin School was the lead building in DC's public school system. Planned by Adolf Cluss, the architect who designed Eastern Market, the Sumner School, and over 90 buildings in post-Civil War Washington, **Franklin was a model school built to win support for public schools in the District.** It pioneered age-graded classrooms and curricula. Its Great Hall hosted public performances and meetings.

Franklin School could again become a showcase building, a 21st-century model school, highlighting Mayor Fenty and Chancellor Rhee's efforts to modernize DCPS. Towering over its neighborhood in 1869, the school garnered attention around the world. Congressmen and ambassadors asked for plans in order to copy DC's innovative public schools. Its historic elegance intact, but now re-designed and wired for the 21st century, Franklin could be the city's model school again, attracting national and international attention to the city and its schools.

Public funds have been found for the restoration of other historic buildings: Grant School, Eastern Market, the Old Navy Hospital, and the Court of Appeals building. Why not Franklin School? Located where DC's population is increasing, it can serve a community where more people (and children) are looking for public spaces for activities and innovative education.

The **Coalition for Franklin School** invites all citizens, community leaders, and associations to urge the Mayor and Council to commit to **public** ownership of Franklin School and to hold **public** hearings to allow the **public** to present their ideas.

www.FranklinSchoolDC.org