



Consortium for Research on
Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation

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CREATE

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The vision of the Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) is improved student learning, development, and achievement in PK-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and other educational settings.

Message from the President

Dr. Marguerita DeSander
The George Washington University

On February 3 and 4, 2012, the CREATE Board of Directors convened its winter board meeting in Washington, DC, at the George Washington Inn. It was a very productive two-day session, as the Board engaged in a process of **organization planning and goal setting through 2015**. After engaging in a careful analysis of CREATE's vision, mission, and by-laws as well as the current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT), we came out of the winter board meeting with 10 goals that will help move our organization forward over the next three years. As part of the organizational planning, the Board was excited to **welcome our new Executive Director** from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Dr. Angela Housand, who was officially appointed during the meeting. Dr. Housand will be an outstanding addition to the CREATE Board, and has the energy and enthusiasm that will support our organization's mission and goals.

Finalizing the plans for the 2012 National Evaluation Institute (NEI) in Washington, DC was a key point on the agenda. The conference will highlight an **outstanding slate of keynote speakers**, such as Kati Haycock, Director of the Education Trust, Andy Porter, Dean of the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, and Dan Duke, Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, as well as our 2012 Jason Millman Award recipient, James Stronge, Heritage Professor, The College of William and Mary. The conference venue has changed for capacity purposes, and we are pleased to be hosting the NEI at the **Omni Shoreham Hotel** in the Woodley Park area of our capitol city, in partnership with The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

On behalf of the CREATE Board of Directors and our partners, we look forward to seeing YOU at the **October 4-6, 2012 NEI** at the Omni Shoreham Hotel and exploring the REAL problems challenging K-12 education in the areas of program evaluation, student assessment and teacher evaluation and identifying PRACTICAL solutions for success. Our **Call for Proposals** website is now ready (deadline is May 15th, 2012) to receive your submissions for presentations at our annual conference. See details at www.createconference.org

2012 NEI
October 4-6, 2012

CREATE

(CONSORTIUM FOR RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TEACHER EVALUATION)

MISSION

The vision of the Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) is improved student learning, development, and achievement in PK-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and other educational settings.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any individual or agency interested in educational evaluation, research, and practice.

CREATE is a sponsoring organization of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation

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CREATE

Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation

<http://www.createconference.org>

21st National Evaluation Institute

located in
Washington, DC

hosted by
The George Washington University
Graduate School of Education and Human Development

Conference Hotel
Omni Shoreham Hotel
2500 Calvert St. NW

1-800-THE-OMNI or online at:

<http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/WashingtonDCShoreham/MeetingFacilities/CREATE10.aspx>

The renowned *Omni Shoreham Hotel* is located on 11 acres looking out over formal gardens and Rock Creek Park, within walking distance of the National Zoo and the Woodley Park Metro Station, convenient to Georgetown and the National Mall and two miles north of the White House.

Rapidly Improving High Schools at Scale
Katie Luers and Diana Oxley, Education Northwest

An 11th grade special education student came bouncing out of her mainstream math class at Fairdale High School in Jefferson County, Kentucky. “Mrs. Brown! Mrs. Brown! I passed all three of my standards in math!” A young man came tearing into the office asking, “Can you find someone who can help me meet the standard on quadratics?” Just a year ago, Fairdale was designated as “persistently low achieving” and received a federal School Improvement Grant (SIG). Only a year later, students in this school talk about their learning in a new way. Grade 10 math proficiency has risen by 22 percent and reading proficiency by 18 percent. How did they do it?

First: Focus. At Fairdale, the district wide commitment to “guaranteed competency” means all teachers who teach the same course agree on three key standards for a six-week marking period and dedicate themselves to doing whatever it takes to get every student achieving those standards. School leaders’ support for teachers’ work is their priority. Even though the state adopted new Common Core State Standards this year, there has been no implementation dip. “Teachers feel we don’t have time to waste—we’ve got new standards, we’ve had to revamp the curriculum, and we need to make sure that every kid gets it,” says Jefferson County Public School’s Priority School Manager Linda Brown. “For students, it isn’t even about grades, so much. They’re taking responsibility for their learning in ways they never did before.”

Second: Teacher collaboration. Creating a school improvement plan is relatively easy; implementing it can be difficult. In JCPS high schools teachers shared responsibility for implementation. In order to guarantee competency, Fairdale teachers meet weekly in course-alike teams to look at student data, identify students who still need to meet standards, and plan follow up measures. “The initiative has narrowed the differences in instruction among strong teachers, middle-of-the-road teachers, and weak teachers,” says Brown. “Students are getting a much more consistent product. So, many more kids became proficient as a result of the adults working together.”

Brown says that several things coalesced to make Fairdale’s professional learning communities (PLCs) work. “Last year was the first time we had the capability to track every single kid as closely as we did. That data capability and intentional focus helped create a collaboration based on well-defined protocols and expectations. Teachers now engage in an agreed-upon cycle of looking at standards, student work, and data to meet the learning needs of every student. In addition, the intensity of trying to make improvements at the same time Kentucky was adopting new state standards proved to be a blessing in disguise. “Teachers had to revamp the entire curriculum,” says Brown. “The advantage was that they needed each other. PLCs became an essential element of doing this work.”

Third: Rapidity. Experts on dramatic improvement recommend signaling success with “quick wins”—early successes that a school can build on¹. Fairdale’s turnaround model required the principal and 50 percent of the staff to be replaced. Fortunately, the new principal had been an assistant principal and was able to use his understanding of the school culture to move the work along quickly. Teachers were able to refine and quickly assimilate the process of collaboration by going through many 6-week cycles of teaching, assessing, and re-teaching in the course of a year.

“Working on this last year gave them a leg up this year,” says Brown. “They had confidence in the approach and knew what they were going to do. The staff already understood the concept of guaranteeing competency for every student, so expanding it to new subjects wasn’t a challenge.” Focus, collaboration, and rapidity—they aren’t silver bullets, but they are practices at the core of dramatic and sustained improvements.

Oh yes, and district leadership. One lesson from the last decade of high school redesign efforts is that substantive and lasting improvement requires district stewardship². JCPS district leaders have made turning around PLA schools part of a larger, long-term strategy to scale up desired instructional practices across the district, even in schools that are not persistently low achieving. School improvement grants fuel intensive teacher collaboration on instructional improvement in PLA schools which district leaders guide and support as well as study to refine practice and bring more schools into the process. Schools retain a healthy degree of autonomy while not having to find their own way. After just one year, student scores on the Kentucky Common Core Test improved significantly, and all schools in the district have now “enrolled” in the improvement initiative.

District support included creation of a dashboard where teachers can access common formative assessments and track the results but also conditions to support teachers’ effective use of the common assessments—fewer, longer class periods and a longer common planning period each day; protocols to guide team collaboration; and leadership development. Administrators in each school have joined together in a district wide design team with guidance from Education Northwest. The design team studies PLCs through observation and surveys in order to understand what kind of collaboration translates into improved classroom instruction. Once best practices are identified, the team designs tools and materials to help broaden their implementation. For example, through classroom observation the design team was able to sharpen its understanding of rigorous and relevant instructional practices and develop materials to help teachers improve questioning strategies that build students’ higher order thinking skills. One PLC member’s evidence of the effectiveness of direct instruction seemed to contradict the approach which first led to disagreement but then to a deeper understanding of how teaching baseline knowledge is not in opposition to but actually scaffolds the more active student work of explaining, synthesizing, and critiquing.

An indication that district leadership has struck the right balance in leading versus supporting is that school practices are continually changing and improving but remain essentially on track.

¹Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., & Darwin, M. (2008). *Turning around chronically low-performing schools: A practice guide* (NCEE #2008-4020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. ²Oxley, D., & Luers, K.W. (2010/2011). [How small schools grew up and got serious \(but didn't lose their spunk\)](#). *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(4), 62–66.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS FOR THE 2012 NATIONAL EVALUATION INSTITUTE

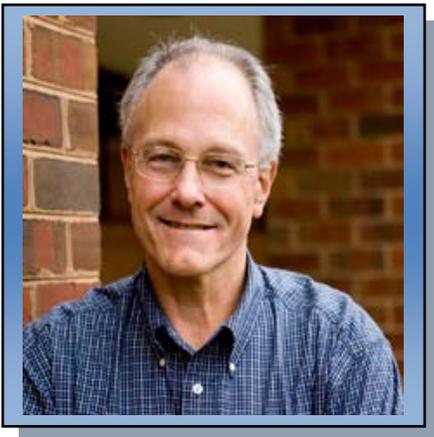
Dr. Kati Haycock

This former director of the Outreach and Student Affirmative Action programs for the nine-campus University of California system is recognized as the founder and past president of The Achievement Council, a California organization providing assistance to teachers and principals in predominantly minority schools. Kati Haycock also supported Marian Wright Edelman as executive vice president of the Children's Defense Fund, the nation's largest child advocacy organization. Haycock founded and currently serves as director of The Education Trust. She studied political science at the University of California-Santa Barbara and received a master's in education policy from UC-Berkeley.



Dr. Daniel L. Duke

Professor Daniel Duke's article, coauthored by Martha Jacobson, is entitled [Tackling the Toughest Turnaround — Low-Performing High Schools \[1\]](#) and was published in the February 2011 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. The article looks at two high schools in Texas that have reversed years of declining student achievement. Both schools are participating in the Darden-Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education.



Dr. Andrew Porter



Andrew Porter

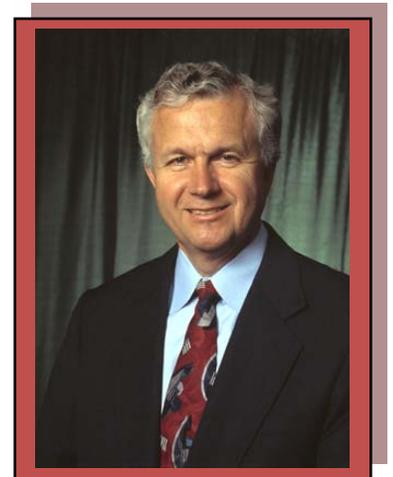
Andrew Porter is Dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania and the George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education there. He was previously the Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy and director of the Learning Sciences Institute at Vanderbilt University. He has published widely on education policy, student assessment, education indicators, research on teaching, and principal assessment. Currently, he has research support from the US Department of Education/IES (principal investigator, The Development and Validation of the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education; co-principal investigator, 21st Century Research and Development Center on Cognition and Science Education) and the National Science Foundation (co-principal investigator, Meta-Analysis Study of the Effects of Teacher Professional Development with a Math or Science Content Focus on Improving Teaching and Learning; senior researcher, How Does Induction and Continuing Professional Development Affect Middle School Mathematics Teachers' Instruction and Student Achievement?). He is an elected member and vice president of the National Academy of Education, lifetime national associate of the National Academies, and past-president of the American Educational Research Association.



Dr. James Stronge

James H. Stronge is the Heritage Professor in the Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership Area at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. His research interests include policy and practice related to teacher quality, and teacher and administrator evaluation. He has worked with numerous school districts and other educational organizations to design and implement evaluation systems for teachers, administrators, and support personnel. His work on effective teachers focuses on how to identify effective teachers and how to enhance teacher effectiveness. Dr. Stronge has presented his research at conferences such as American Educational Research Association and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, conducted workshops for national and state organizations, and worked with local school districts.

He has been a teacher, counselor, and district-level administrator. His doctorate is in the area of educational administration and planning from the University of Alabama.



Doctoral Student Assessments of Learning in a Closed Cohort

Tricia Browne-Ferrigno and Rodney Muth¹

University-based programs that award the Doctor of Education (EdD) degree are being revitalized through efforts by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED), a consortium of universities and colleges working together to restructure the Ed.D into a degree appropriate for practitioner scholars (Perry, 2011). CPED's goal is to achieve "better alignment between needs of P-20 schools and the scholarship and practices of university education schools" (Perry, p. 2). These programs typically reflect new scope and sequence of curricula, utilization of new knowledge bases and signature pedagogies, and incorporation of research methods appropriate for practitioner scholars (Gutherie, 2009). They are often delivered through executive, cohort-based models that are fast paced, problem oriented, and application oriented to meet the needs of full-time employed educational practitioners.

From Cohort to Generative Learning Community

Use of closed cohorts in leadership-preparation programs is recommended (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Hebert & Reynolds, 1998). A closed-cohort structure provides opportunities for aspiring and experienced leaders to learn and practice skills in group goal setting, community building, conflict resolution, and culture management; it also supports implementation of long-term developmental activities and point-counterpoint discussions (Muth, 2002).

Successful closed cohorts can become "generative learning communities" (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2008, p. 78) that evidence the same three fundamental elements of communities of practice: "a *domain* of knowledge, which defines a set of issues; a *community* of people who care about this domain; and the shared *practice* that they are developing to be effective in their domain" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 27). Generative learning communities, however, do not simply happen: They are carefully constructed, consciously nurtured over time, and maintained and transformed through collaborative efforts by all involved individuals. Thus, learner-centered approaches are recommended that require students to accept responsibility for "their own development through self-managed learning" and to be "actively involved in the development of their classmates" (Foreman & Johnston, 1999, p. 377).

Student Assessments of Cohort Learning

During their final year of coursework, EdD students participating in a CPED-affiliated program were invited to present at a regional conference four group-authored papers about their experiences as cohort members. The discussion below presents three key findings from those papers.

Persistence through peer support. Although group-development activities were integrated into the curriculum to prepare students for the required team-based dissertations, the relationship building needed to create a "culture of group survival" may have resulted from the monthly two-day meetings that required their traveling significant distances to attend (Berry, Blankenship, Bolt, & Phillips, 2009).

Because we are away from families, friends, and work environments during face-to-face sessions, we are able to reconnect with our cohort peers in ways that are not possible in traditional doctoral programs delivered through weekly on-campus classes. Through this relationship building, cohort members have begun to care about one another. . . . The support and care shown members [during challenging life events] has been touching to watch and experience. (p. 6)

Adoption of learner-centered strategies. Over time, students realized that "each member of the cohort had to become an active participant in [her or his] learning" and "assume collective responsibility for our learning" (Burke, Preston, Quillen, Roe, & Strong, 2009, p. 7). They also replicated their EdD cohort experiences by "teaching hybrid classes, using technology to design group projects in their courses, and utilizing their better understanding of student-centered learning in their classrooms" (Berry et al., 2009, p. 15).

Transformative learning. Professional reflection was integrated into all courses. The major writing assignment in the first leadership course, however, required students to reflect critically about an organizational event or situation that was significant or challenging for them personally and then discuss it through perspectives presented in courses readings. In one conference paper, students wrote,

Readings and reflective writings about our experiences have greatly increased our level of awareness. . . . Reflective thinking is the basis for transformative learning, which requires the adoption of new frames of reference that become habitual and intuitive perspectives for analyzing dilemmas, developing alternative solutions, and choosing the best option. (Hlinka, Mayo Mobelini, Stephenson, & Young, 2009 p. 14)

Recommendations

We offer two recommendations that can be applied across the board in higher education. First, faculty must learn to collaborate with one another to model the very behaviors that they expect of students. Second, not all students know how to work effectively collaboratively—but they can with guidance and support. These two points critically underscore the need for reconceptualizing learning paradigms in higher education and the role of faculty as progenitors of learning designs, rather than dispensers of information. Allowing students to take control of and assume responsibility for their own learning frees faculty to support transformative learning processes that can, as the students here illustrate, have much longer-term and much broader impact beyond an immediate doctoral program. [NOTE: References for this article appear on next page.]

Tricia Browne-Ferrigno (tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu) is an associate professor at the University of Kentucky. Rodney Muth is an emeritus professor at the University of Colorado Denver (rodney.muth@ucdenver.edu). This article is a condensed version of the paper presented at the 2010 National Evaluation Institute sponsored by CREATE. We are indebted to the CREATE Newsletter Editor, Marco Muñoz, for his judicious editing.

(continued from previous page)

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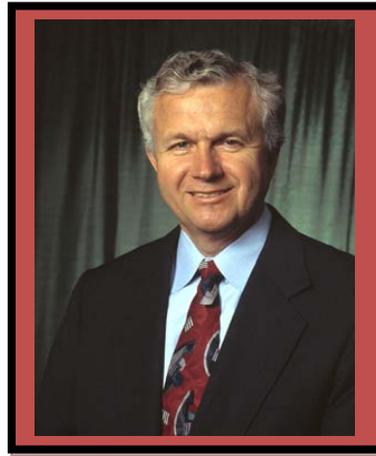
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We welcome articles associated with educational evaluation and accountability. We prioritize articles presented at the annual National Evaluation Institute. Articles should be sent in electronic format and should be approximately two pages in length (singled spaced), Times New Roman, font 12.

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Theme

***“Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation:
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The 2012 National Evaluation Institute (NEI) is the 21th annual conference of CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation). The Program Committee invites presentation proposals from researchers, K-12 practitioners, and advanced graduate students. Presentations of empirical research, action research, program evaluation, and program descriptions are appropriate for the NEI.

Presentations of commercial products/programs are not permitted.

***2012 National Evaluation Institute
October 4-6, 2012***

***Hosted By
The Graduate School of Education and
Human Development at
The George Washington University
Washington, DC***

Proposal Deadline: May 15, 2012

Notification of Acceptance: June 15, 2012

Confirmation of Attendance: June 30, 2012

Programs are going to press in August. ALL presenters must register by the June 30th deadline.

Conference Registration
21st National Evaluation Institute
October 4-6, 2012

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REGISTRATION OPTIONS	On or before August 1	After August 1	Graduate Student (Include copy of Student ID)
<u>BEST VALUE</u> Pre-Conference Workshop and NEI Conference Thursday, October 4 th Pre-Conference: 8:30 am-4:30 pm Lunch Provided, Opening Plenary Session, and Full NEI Attendance Friday and Saturday	___ \$425	___ \$450	___ \$375
Pre-Conference Workshop ONLY	___ \$325	___ \$325	___ \$250
NEI Conference & CREATE Membership ONLY Does NOT include Pre-Conference Workshop	___ \$225	___ \$250	___ \$125
<i>CREATE Membership ONLY</i>	___ \$ 75	___ \$ 75	___ \$ 60
Guest Rate Includes conference reception (Thurs.) and breakfasts (Fri. & Sat.).	___ \$ 90	___ \$ 90	N/A
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Method of Payment--Payment is due with the registration form.

- Enclosed is check no. _____ payable to "**CREATE**" (Please write registrant's name on memo line.)
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Visitor Informational Facts for Washington, DC (<http://washington.org/visiting/browse-dc/faqs>)

Flights to Washington, DC

- There are 3 DC-area airports - Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA), Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI)
- These airports service more than 60 million passengers each year, 31 million of which deplane in the DC area.
- DCA and Dulles service more than 90 domestic destinations and have 423 weekly departures to 21 international destinations.
- BWI services 61 destinations (319 flights) and has daily departures to 8 international destinations

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We encourage visitors to avoid the challenges of parking by taking advantage of Washington, DC's safe, efficient public transportation system with options such as **Metro Rail***, Metro Bus, and the DC Circulator. Visit wmata.com or dccirculator.com for travel options and itineraries. We also offer the following suggestions for visitors who wish to drive and park in the city.

Parking is frequently available at the City Center Lot, located near the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Metro Center and many downtown attractions. Visitors will also generally find parking at the following Metro-accessible lots:

- **Union Station:** (50 Massachusetts Ave. NE)
- **Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center:** (1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW)
- **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport:** (located on Metro's Yellow & Blue Lines, off George Washington Pkwy in Arlington, VA).
- **City Center Lot:** Entrance on 9th Street NW, between New York Ave. and H Streets, NW near the Washington Convention Center.

Handicapped parking is available at these lots. DC also recognizes out-of-state handicapped stickers and plaque cards, allowing parking access at all parking meters.

Many downtown office buildings have parking garages on-site or close by. These lots generally cost \$10-20, but they may fill up. You can also refer to a map of parking garages at godcgo.com.

If you wish to park at a suburban Metro station and ride Metro into the city, you can expect to pay \$3.25-\$4.75. Rates vary by station; check wmata.com for details about the station you're traveling from. You will first need to purchase a Metro SmarTrip card to pay at the station. These cards are available at most commuter stations. The SmarTrip card costs \$5, but you must add a minimum \$5 at the initial point of purchase. All riders must have their own fare cards, but only one member of your party needs to have a SmarTrip card.

How does Metro* work?

Washington, DC is proud to have one of the world's best public transportation systems. Most visitors quickly master the Metro system and, in the process, they discover that it's a very quick, efficient and affordable way to get around the city, and many find it to be an enjoyable attraction - the trains and escalators are especially popular among kids.

Metro operates Monday through Thursday from 5 a.m. to midnight; Friday until 3 a.m.; Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 3 a.m.; and Sunday from 7 a.m. to midnight. Base fares start at \$1.75 per trip (including trips between all downtown points), but the rates are higher for visitors traveling from the suburbs and during rush hour. The maximum one-way fare is \$4.50. You can purchase a one-day ticket for \$8.30, which allows you to ride as many times as you'd like after 9:30 a.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends. To calculate the distance and fares between two stops, visit metroopensdoors.com.

There are five colored lines: **Red, Blue, Orange, Yellow and Green**, connected to each other at transfer stations in downtown and the close-in suburbs. Some stations are serviced by more than one line. Trains are clearly marked with the color of the line. Trains indicate the direction in which they are traveling with the name of the end-point of the line. During rush hour, trains usually come every 5-6 minutes. At off-peak times, trains come every 12 minutes. Late-night trains come every 15 to 20 minutes

Tickets can be purchased by cash or credit cards from vending machines located at the stations. Station managers are on hand to assist you in purchasing your tickets.

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DC's taxi cabs have recently transitioned from a zone system to a meter system. The rates for time and distance meters are as follows:

- The base fare is \$3, plus 25 cents for every one-sixth of a mile after the first sixth of a mile traveled.
- For every minute stopped in traffic or traveled under ten miles per hour, there will be a charge of 25 cents per minute.
- All other rates and surcharges, such as those for additional passengers and rush hour, will still apply.
- The maximum fare for all trips within the District is \$19.

Using the DC Circulator

The DC Circulator is a new bus service that connects downtown to Georgetown and Union Station via the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on an East-West route and the Washington Convention Center and its nearby Shaw neighborhood with the Southwest Waterfront via the National Mall on a North-South route. Additional routes travel between McPherson Square and the Woodley Park-Zoo Metro station and Union Station to the Capitol Riverfront. The Circulator also operates a seasonal loop around the National Mall between 4th Street and 17th Street.

Buses operate from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. The National Mall loop operates from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Circulator also services part of its Georgetown route from 9 p.m. to midnight from Sun.-Thurs. and until 2 a.m. on weekends. Tickets cost \$1, and transfers between routes are free of charge.



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