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## District's HIV curriculum needs to be expanded

*Re: "Report card on D.C.'s AIDS response critical of schools," Dec. 12*

Just last week, *The Examiner* reminded us of the increasing problem of HIV/AIDS in the nation's capital. Mayor [Adrian] Fenty's HIV/AIDS point person, Dr. Shannon Hader, recently recognized the problem as "a modern epidemic" But now we must turn words into action.

Earlier this month, City Year, Comcast and Metro TeenAIDS sponsored a town hall meeting to call attention to the city's youth HIV/AIDS crisis. The forum featured D.C. Council members Vince Gray, David Catania and Harry Thomas, AIDS education advocates, and 500 D.C. high school students speaking candidly about the disease and the city's plans to curb it. But that's just a starting point.

Thanks to the support of Comcast, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and others, the HOPE Initiative — a joint project of City Year and Metro TeenAIDS — is reaching 100 percent of D.C. Public Schools 10th-graders with a CDC-approved HIV-prevention curriculum. But we need the D.C. government to join the effort to sustain and expand this vital program so that all of

our city's young people are getting the critical information they deserve.

It is imperative to the future of our city that the D.C. government work with community and private sector partners to aggressively implement preventative measures that research shows can combat this rapidly growing epidemic.

*Chris Murphy,  
Executive director, City Year  
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