



What You Need to Know:

- Schools are funded with federal, local, and private dollars. The majority of funding comes from local sources, and are provided by the DC City Council using a formula called the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF).
- The UPSFF is the largest source of funding and gives money for each student depending on their needs. Funding is provided on a per student basis based on an annual "count day," and more funding is provided for certain grade levels, students with special needs or are at-risk, and English Language Learners.
- Despite recent increases, DC school funding does currently not meet the level needed found in the DC Adequacy Study.

How is Funding Determined for Our Public Schools?

Public education is funded through a number of ways, including local, federal, and private funds, with the largest amount coming from local sources.

Local Funding:

Funding is mostly determined by the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) and estimated student enrollment. **The UPSFF serves as a baseline investment intended to cover the cost of general education services. The formula also includes extra weights for certain grade levels, English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students that are considered at-risk.** To help schools to meet those students' needs, the base UPSFF is multiplied by the additional weighted amount, increasing the total amount given to schools.

In addition to the UPSFF, public schools receive funds from various District agencies for things like school resource officers, nurses, mental health counselors, and legal services. Construction and maintenance of DCPS school facilities are provided by the Department of General Services (DGS). Importantly, this is not the case for charter schools, which receive a per student facilities allowance to help cover the costs of rent, and maintenance or renovations. **Notably, in 2015, a group of nonprofits and charter schools filed a lawsuit against the District arguing that this method of funding is inequitable, resulting in an unfair financial burden for charter school facilities.**

Federal Funding:

DC schools also receive some federal funds. Most of this spending is regulated by the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE), who directs the funds to each Local Education Agency (LEA). These federal funds may include:

- **Title I:** used to help schools with high concentrations of low-income students close the achievement gap
- **Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA):** used to support students with disabilities
- **Race to the Top:** competitive grants that are used to foster innovation in schools

Private Funding:

Both DCPS and public charter schools may get additional money from non-profits or parent and community groups. Importantly, this looks very different in each of our city's schools. **Due to growing income inequality and a several schools with many families living in poverty, parents may have limited ability to fundraise for their school, resulting in a disparity in available funding.**



PAVE Parent Leaders attended Mayor Bowser's Budget Forum (discussing the citywide budget) to advocate for increase education funding.



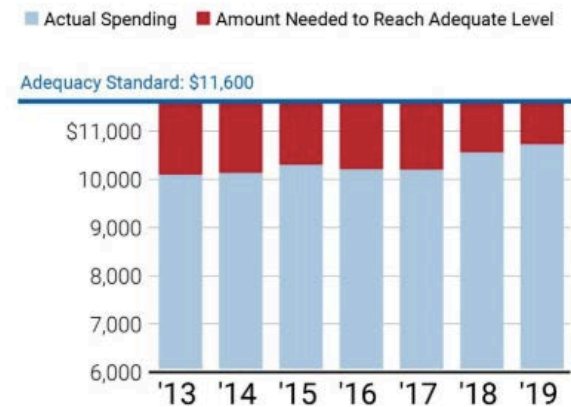
What Progress Has Been Made?

Over the past five years, DC has seen small increases in the UPSFF, the most influential of funding sources. Even so, with the extremely high cost of living in the city, these increases are not enough to truly meet the needs of all of our students and families.

Even the most significant increases fall well short of the level needed found in the 2013 DC Adequacy Study, which suggests a base rate of \$11,600 per student. For FY19, 1.9% of the increase will go towards covering the increase in teacher salary for teachers in the Washington Teachers' Union. This increase is well deserved, but a gap remains in proper funding for resources for all of our students.

The Amount of Per-Student Funding Closer to Adequacy Standard, But Consistently Lower Than Recommended

Adjusted for inflation to equal FY 2019 dollars.



Source: Fiscal Year 20013-19 Budget & Financial Plans.

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What's Next for School Funding?

With reports about the misspending of at-risk funding, difficult staff cuts at both DCPS central office and schools, and a wide gap in resources and services available for students, **DC needs significant oversight and evaluation into how schools are being funded. To get to a place where every child in every ward has the support and tools they need to succeed in school, we must make smart, strong investments in our education system.**

Looking forward, the District should provide funding for a **new Adequacy Study** to inform the needs and gaps of our current funding process, and provide parents, education advocates, and city leaders with a sound platform to make changes.

How Can Parents Help Drive Funding Decisions?

- Testify at **public hearings** to call for increased transparency and accountability in how our schools are funded
- Call on the Mayor and your Councilmember to fund a new DC Adequacy Study
- Contact PAVE's **community organizing team** organizers@dcpave.org for more information

Learn More:

- ❖ *Read more about this year's education budget in DCFPI's FY19 Budget Toolkit: <https://bit.ly/2wd4yci>*
- ❖ *Read the Center for American Progress's take on the role of school parent organizations in funding inequities: <https://ampr.gs/2yM7fTh>*