



What You Need to Know:

- Schools are funded with federal, local, and private dollars. The majority of funding comes from local sources and is determined by 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. More funding is provided for certain grade levels, students with special needs, those who are considered “at-risk”, and English Language Learners.
- Despite recent increases, DC school funding does not currently meet the level recommended in the DC Education Adequacy Study.

How is Funding Determined for Our Public Schools?

Public education is funded through a number of sources, **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 meet those students’ needs, the base UPSFF is multiplied by the additional weighted amount, increasing the total amount given to schools.

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{UPSFF} \times \text{\# of students in} \\
 &\text{each Local Education} \\
 &\text{Agency (LEA)*} \\
 &= \\
 &\text{Total Amount of \$ DC} \\
 &\text{gives each LEA.}
 \end{aligned}$$

*LEA includes DCPS

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). 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, which results 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 LEA. These federal funds may include:

- **Title I Funding:** used to help schools with high concentrations of low-income students close the achievement gap
- **Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Funding:** used to support students with disabilities

Private Funding:

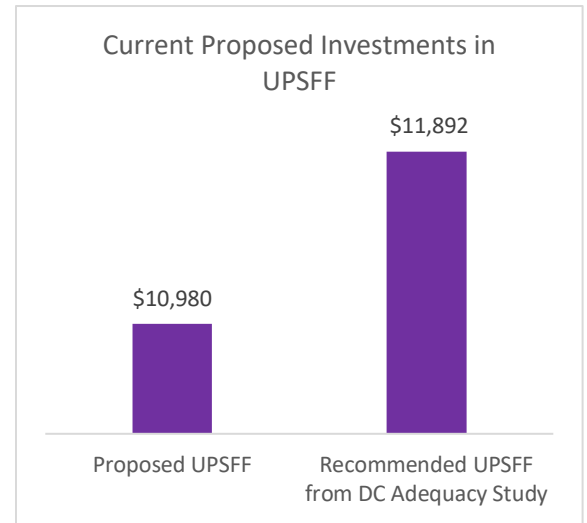
Both DCPS and public charter schools may get additional money from non-profits or parent and community groups. Yet, schools that serve disadvantaged students are less able to fundraise and receive donations from families. This only furthers the disparities in our city’s schools.



What Progress Has Been Made?

Over the past six years, DC has seen small increases in the UPSFF, the most influential of funding sources. 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 short of the level recommended by the 2013 DC Education Adequacy Study, which suggests a base rate of \$11,892 per student (when adjusted for inflation). The proposed 3% increase to the UPSFF for FY2020 adjusts the UPSFF to \$10,980. Yet, this is still \$912 short of the recommended level and is still lower than the expected rate of inflation for FY20.



*Data is current as of 5/24/2019

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.**

This year, the mayor allocated funding to support a **Uniform Per Student Funding Formula study**. We look forward to seeing an updated assessment of the needs and gaps of our current funding process, and information that can 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 stronger investments in our schools and increased transparency and accountability in how our schools are funded
- Call on the **mayor and your councilmember** to ensure school funding is allocated equitably
- Contact PAVE's **community organizing team** organizers@dcpave.org for more information

Learn More:

- ❖ Read more about this year's proposed education budget in DCFPI's FY20 Budget Toolkit: <https://bit.ly/2Hixner>
- ❖ Read the Center for American Progress' take on the role of parent organizations in school funding inequities: <https://ampr.gs/2yM7fTh>