



## What is the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF)?

All public schools in DC (DCPS and public charter schools) get a majority of their resources from local funds, with the amount determined by the UPSFF and enrollment levels. The UPSFF is used to set the total local funding allocated to DCPS and to each public charter Local Education Agency (LEA). The UPSFF accounts for the costs of:

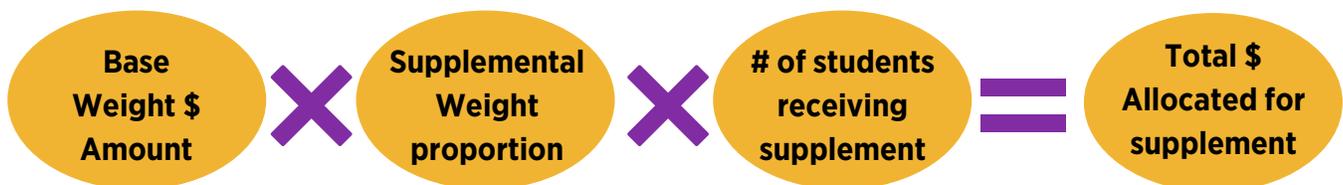
- School administration, support staff, and teachers
- Direct services provided by the school (food, technology, etc.)
- Central Office Management
- Instructional support and resources
- Operations
- Other school-based costs

**BASE PER PUPIL FUNDING:** The UPSFF starts with a **foundation level** intended to reflect the amount needed to provide general education services for every student. The DC Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes a 5.87% increase to the per-pupil base of the UPSFF - which increases the base UPSFF to \$12,419.

While DC is a leader nationwide in per student education funding, high cost of living, inflation, and supply chain issues combined with years of disinvestment in marginalized communities means that **funding does not go as far**. We invest far less compared to the average tuition for elite private schools around DC which is roughly \$48K per student. The majority of the private schools' tuition costs go directly to the students' learning, which includes teacher salaries, resources, school facilities, field trips, enrichment opportunities, and more.

**TARGETED WEIGHTS IN THE UPSFF:** The UPSFF also includes specific weights for students in **special education**, **students who are English Learners (EL)**, and **students considered "at-risk"**\* to account for the additional resources needed to serve those students well.

For both DCPS and public charter LEAs, the total local funding is based on the **UPSFF weights multiplied by the number of students in various special categories as well as specific weights for different grade levels**. Grade level weights are important because a high quality in PreK3 and 4 require smaller classes to accommodate students, thus more funding is needed. Similarly, in high school, subjects become more specialized and require more materials and more teachers to teach the classes.



\*"At-risk" is defined as a student that is experiencing homelessness or in the foster care system, qualifies for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or is at least one year older than the high school grade for which the student is enrolled.



Category	Weight in Formula	Additional Funding Per Student	% of Public School Population in DC
At-risk*	0.24	\$2,981	45.5%
Elementary EL	0.5	\$6,210	12.2%
Secondary EL	0.75	\$9,314	12.2%
Special Education**	0.97-3.49	\$12,046-\$43,342	14.6%

\*Over-age high school students will receive both the standard “at-risk” weight and the supplemental weight of 0.06 or an added \$745 per student.

\*\*Special education needs are broken up into four levels based on the extent of their need or disability. Level 4 includes students with the greatest needs and therefore the highest weight/funding.

## How Can the UPSFF Advance Equity?

 The UPSFF weights are designed to provide **more to students with greater needs**. While there has been a significant increase to the base (which means all other categories get more funding), this largely has gone toward covering an increase in teacher salaries and addressing inflation. As a result, DCPS leaders have felt the need to tap into additional funds meant for “at-risk” students to cover general needs. While public charter schools do not have the same requirement to spend at-risk funds specifically on at-risk students, they often follow the same trend due to lack of funding overall. **DC has never matched the funding levels recommended in the 2013 DC Adequacy Study (accounting for inflation)**. This underfunding shortchanges the goal of the targeted weights and the students they were designed to support.

 In the FY23 budget, DC Council voted to fund another **Education Adequacy Study** to examine the true cost and inform future funding. With adequate funding for schools, **the funding from supplemental weights can be spent on targeted supports** that help our students who need it most to succeed in school and beyond and help close the persistent opportunity gap.

 The **School Financial Transparency Amendment Act of 2020** which included much of PAVE parent leaders’ Statement of Beliefs on Transparent Citywide School Funding makes it easier for school communities to view and compare school budgets in public schools (DCPS and PCS LEAs) - including how each school spends its targeted school funding (at-risk, EL, SPED, etc.), starting in School Year 2023-2024. **With a clear picture of where the money is going, communities can help inform and ensure proper spending of school funds.**

## How Can Parents Drive Solutions?

- Testify before DC agencies at a DC Council Performance and Budget Oversight Hearing
- Reach out to your child’s school (DCPS or public charter)
- Read PAVE’s emails to stay updated on citywide education initiatives, school funding, and school budgets
- Contact PAVE [info@dcpave.org](mailto:info@dcpave.org) for more info