



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 307 | Washington, DC 20004

March 22, 2023

Dear LEA Leaders,

Today, Mayor Bowser presented her [Fiscal Year 2024 \(FY 24\) budget proposal](#) to the Council. This is a particularly challenging budget year as we face the ramp-down in federal pandemic recovery funding, lower [revenue forecasts and increasing costs](#). After the Office of the Chief Financial Officer released their February revenue estimate, the District was facing a \$1.7 billion deficit. To reach a balanced budget, the District has had to make some tough decisions including significant reductions to ensure we are prioritizing the most effective and impactful investments with our more constrained dollars. I am writing today to share some of the ways we are sustaining our deep commitment to and investments in our public education system in this upcoming budget.

As you know, in February, Mayor Bowser [announced](#) two key investments in our public schools, which are reflected in the proposed budget:

- A **5.05% increase to the uniform per student funding formula (UPSFF) foundation level** for FY 24, which will represent another historic increase in public education funding, bringing our foundation level funding to \$13,046. Charter schools will also see a **3.1% increase in facilities allotment**, per the law, to recognize rising costs.
- **\$19.8 million for the Mayor's Recovery Fund** to support DCPS and the public charter school sector. This is the second installment of the two-year fund to provide additional stability to schools. Just as in Fiscal Year 2023, funding will be provided to schools based on student enrollment.

Our teachers are the bedrock of our schools and sit at the core of all our learning acceleration efforts. As I have shared previously, the Mayor is deeply committed to ensuring DC is a premier place for teachers to work and live. Given that, the District settled an historic contract with the Washington Teachers Union for teachers within DCPS, and will also provide funds on top of the UPSFF for charter school teachers to receive compensation increases. This funding is currently in the Workforce Investment Account budget, and will be granted out through OSSE to charter LEAs to provide teachers with:

- A **12.5% go-forward pay increase starting in FY 24**, to match the 12.5% increase for DC Public School (DCPS) teachers. Starting in FY 25, these salary increases across both sectors will be reflected in the UPSFF.
- A **7.6% retroactive payment**, to cover a 3.5% teacher salary increase in School Year 2021-22 and a 4.0% increase in School Year 2022-23, to reflect the WTU COLA increases for two of the four negotiated years. These funds will be delivered to teachers



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in a one-time lump sum payment (roughly estimated at \$5,000 per charter teacher, with actuals varying based on individual salaries).

We are committed to ensuring teachers in DC are rewarded for their hard work and dedication to helping our students gain academic momentum and recover from the pandemic. These investments will allow our teachers to receive higher salaries, in recognition of their work. To receive the retroactive and go forward funding, charter LEAs must publish their teacher pay scales and complete data reporting on teacher retention, vacancies, and effectiveness. **We will share additional details on the mechanics of this funding in the coming weeks.**

In addition to our direct dollars into public schools, we are also making investments in critical resources that support our youth, including:

- **\$5 million** to begin planning and implementing “My Afterschool DC,” an online central hub for parents to access afterschool opportunities for their children within the District;
- **\$3.0 million** for summer recreation activities and accelerated learning opportunities for students recovering from the impacts of the pandemic;
- **\$1.6 million** to create an education-to-workforce data system so that we all have a shared picture of how students are progressing from early childhood through the workforce;
- **\$1.6 million** to stand up a District-run teacher apprenticeship program as we strive to support DC students in becoming DC teachers in both sectors;
- **\$400,000** to create 360 additional summer camp slots across sports and aquatics programs for children and youth with disabilities, and additional prioritization within OST grant funding for seats to serve special need populations; and
- Raising the **eligibility for the childcare subsidy** from 250% of the federal poverty line to 300% of the federal poverty line

Finally, amidst this difficult budget cycle, we are sustaining our commitment to important programs that we know effectively support students and families, like high-impact tutoring, school-based mental health, the Safe Passage Safe Blocks program, Recreation for ALL, the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program, and reimagining high school initiatives through OSSE.

As I have shared before, I am deeply proud of the work of our education system. Together, we have made real progress toward creating a city in which all families want their children and grandchildren to grow up and attend school, and where young people thrive in high-quality schools surrounded by caring, supportive adults and graduate prepared for success in life. Thanks to your leadership and the work of educators in your buildings, we are strong and getting stronger, although we know we have so much more work to do. **In a challenging budget year, where city government is taking \$373 million in reductions, these investments reflect our recognition of the critical importance of our District’s schools and educators and our confidence that we can accomplish ambitious and necessary work together on behalf of our students in the years ahead.**



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As always, I deeply value our ongoing city-wide conversation and your ongoing feedback. My office and I will be hosting an LEA Leader call on **Wednesday, March 29, at 11:00 a.m.**, to discuss the Mayor's budget, hear from you, and answer questions you may have.

I am grateful for your continued efforts to support our students and families.

Sincerely,

Paul Kihn
Deputy Mayor for Education