



Washington Teachers' Union

Amplifying the Voice of DC Teachers

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Dear WTU member,

The mayor and DC Public Schools have finally released the ***SCHOOL BUDGET ALLOCATION OF FUNDS*** (go to <https://www.dcpsdatacenter.com/index.html>) for the upcoming school year. To view your ***SCHOOL'S FY'20 INITIAL BUDGET PDF WORKSHEET***, go to https://www.dcpsdatacenter.com/fy20_initial.html and use the drop down menu to locate your school's budget.

Below is basic background and suggestions to teachers and parents for reviewing and commenting on their schools' budgets.

Background: Budgeting rules are numerous and complex. Some – probably much -- of what you need to know will have to come from your principal. Principals are ultimately responsible for school budget decisions, but both the school budget and the school plan are supposed to be team products by the LSAT. LSAT chairs must sign off on the budgets submitted by principals but sign-off only indicates that the LSAT was consulted, not that the chair necessarily agrees.

The budget worksheets state that except for assistant principals and office staff, all staff positions are required and most of the NPS dollars are also required or necessary, e.g., custodial supplies, special programs such as 9th Grade Academy. Some positions, mostly classroom teachers, custodians, and after-school and some special program staff can be changed, with justification, by petition, but the three-day window between budget release and petition deadline – all while schools were closed for winter break – has expired. All most LSATs can work with this next week is whatever office and fractional assistant principal positions are there, Title I funds (within federal constraints) plus supplies, materials and administrative premium. A few will have Stabilization funds, which is partial triage for budget cuts from projected enrollment decrease.

The much-publicized DCPS increase in technology funding is not a part of local school budgets; it will be funded and handled in central office accounts.

Changes from last year:

- Average cost for almost all staff positions has increased significantly.
- Security costs have been moved into local school budgets.
- ELL teachers are allocated at 1 per 17 ELL students, rather than 1 per 22.
- A small amount of extra funding is included in budgets of schools with a one-star Report Card rating.
- Funding to keep high school computer labs open before and after school has been eliminated.

Reviewing Your School's Budget Allocation

First, download the School Budget Development Guide, which has definitions, explanations, and numerous rules. https://www.dcpsdatacenter.com/assets/docs/fy20_budget_guide.pdf.

Then, look at your school's Comprehensive School Plan, the current version of which is posted at <https://dcps.dc.gov/snapshots>. Your local school budget is supposed to enable your school to carry it out. Compare them.

- Are the allocated positions and other dollars what you need to carry out the plan?
- Are any of them irrelevant to the plan? If so, can you exchange them for resources you need?
- What do your principal and experienced LSAT members see as the most important concerns?
- Other questions:
- DCPS has scheduling requirements for different levels and different programs. https://dck12-my.sharepoint.com/personal/kimberly_barrett_k12_dc_gov/Documents/2019-20%20DCPS%20Master%20Scheduling%20Guidance/Master_Scheduling_Guidance_S_Y2019-20_FINAL_1-29-19.pdf. Can your school comply with them with the staff allocated in the budget?
- The LEAP program (in-school professional development) requires time from assistant principals and often half-time teacher assignment. See <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/leap-teacher-professional-development>. If you have assistant principals, do they have time for all their other duties? If one or more teachers are supposed to do LEAP functions half-time, how are their classes being covered the other half of the time?
- Do compliance with scheduling requirements and LEAP force your school to have teachers teaching out of their certification area?
- DCPS has Discipline Staffing Guidance for compliance with DCPS regulations and DC law, including recommendations to hire numerous staff who are not allocated in your budget – deans of students, behavior techs and in-school suspension coordinators. Can your school possibly do this?

I hope this information is helpful. [CLICK HERE](#) to let us know if you will be able to testify at the upcoming Council hearing on the DCPS budget on March 29th at 10 am. Teachers and parents are encouraged attend and testify at this hearing about budget challenges in their schools.

I urge educators and parents to support their school by calling and writing the Mayor, DC Councilmember, and the Chancellor, and by testifying at the upcoming Council hearing on DCPS and its budget. March 29, 2019, 10 am, Wilson Building (1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW). To testify, sign up at 202 724-8061 or <http://bit.do/educationhearings>.

In Unity,



Elizabeth Davis
WTU President