



DCPS School Budget Public Hearing

Tuesday, October 29, 2019

On October 29, 2019 Chancellor Lewis Ferebee held the District of Columbia Public Schools Fiscal Year 2021 Public Budget Hearing to collect input from community members on the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Thirty-one community members including parents, teachers, Local School Advisory Teams (LSAT)s members, local representatives from Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and State Board of Education, and students testified. The public provided thoughtful comments on a variety of topics ranging from building modernizations and ensuring great schools in every neighborhood to special education staffing and ensuring a long-term funding plan for technology hardware and teacher development.

Below is a list of the most common topics or themes that DCPS administrators heard from residents:

Topics/Themes Captured	Public Comments (Summarized)
Technology	Ensure there is a long-term plan that provides dedicated funding for technology upgrades, maintenance, and repairs. This includes computers, smartboards, and properly trained IT professionals and teachers. It is an equity issue to close the digital divide that students have access to quality technology instruction at school to learn computer skills, access curriculum, take exams, and compete in the 21 st Century World.
Special Education and English Learner Staffing	There are not enough special education staff members to fulfill the higher number of hours in student Individualized Education Program, (IEPs.) Often schools are unable to plan properly for the arrival of special education students so staffing and resources are low. There are not enough staff to support English learners especially newcomers who require additional supports. Similarly, these students often enroll unexpectedly leaving the school understaffed.
Enrollment and Classroom Sizes	Many schools in Northwest, DC are overenrolled and overcrowded creating space challenges and larger class sizes. Designing new schools (Shaw Middle School) and investing in college/career and technology programing at under enrolled schools will attract new students and spread enrollment out alleviating overcrowding and be more equitable to students living in Wards 7 and 8.
Modernizations	Modernize schools that have completed Phase 1 modernization and continue to have Phases 2 and 3 pushed back or have not had those phases scheduled. Work with Department of General Services (DGS) to push these dates forward.