

DCPS Student HearingMonday, October 28, 2019

On October 28, 2019 Chancellor Lewis Ferebee held the Student Budget Hearing to collect input from high school students on the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Thirty-four high school students from Opportunity Academies, Comprehensive, and Application High Schools attended. Additionally, a teacher representative from Youth Services Center read testimony from two students. Students provided thoughtful comments on a variety of topics ranging from school reputation to a need for additional courses and programs designed to prepare students for a successful path in either college or career.

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

Topics/Themes Captured	Student Comments (Summarized)
School Reputation	Students shared concerns about only bad press circulating about their schools and not all the great programs that would entice new students to enroll. Many students discussed not wanting to go to their neighborhood schools because of reputation and embarking on over 60-minute commutes to school and home each day.
Teacher Responsiveness to Trauma	Students shared that while they may have benefited from a caring adult in their school while experiencing trauma, many of their friends and classmates did not always have a teacher who was supportive. There was a call for more training and resources for teachers to care for students going through trauma as violence is an unfortunate reality for many students in their communities.
Career and Post High School Life Supports	Students want more college test prep (e.g. SAT), internship opportunities, and career specific supports. They also want to gain real-life skills, like financial literacy. Many shared plans to go to college, but also concerns about student debt.
Inclusivity and Student Safety	Students spoke and others echoed support in a need for more inclusivity in schools for special education students. Additionally, students shared concerns about safety and support for who identify as LGBTQ+.
Enrichment Programs	Students discussed a need for more enrichment programs at schools beyond the core classes so they can discover and share passions such as art, technology, or kinesthetics among others. They stated this would be energizing, therapeutic, and make them want to come to school to explore their interests alongside passionate educators or guests coming to schools.