

# Resource Realities

*A Comparative Analysis of Charter and District  
School Funding in Washington, D.C.*

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# Executive Summary

As public schools in Washington, D.C. aim to accelerate learning and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, public education advocates have pointed to the importance of equitable education resources for all students. Understanding how the District of Columbia (District) funds District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) students and D.C. public charter school students is essential to ensuring all students receive the support they need as pandemic-era federal funds expire.

In fiscal year (FY) 2025, the 12.4% increase in the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) and 3.1% increase in the charter school facilities allotment are positive developments that will help absorb higher personnel and operational costs, particularly those driven by increases to educator salaries and benefits. However, differences persist in how certain costs — such as expenses related to facilities and retirement contributions — are covered. **This report examines where funding mechanisms for DCPS and charter schools differ and where they are equitable.** In some cases, differences in how DCPS and charter schools operate rationalize differences in resource allocation. In other cases, charter schools must dip into their UPSFF dollars for expenses that DCPS schools receive alternative funding to support. The net result is that DCPS schools can allocate a greater share of their UPSFF dollars to instructional programming and student support.

Funding practices are similar between DCPS and charter schools in that all schools receive their primary funding through the UPSFF, which defines a minimum per-pupil foundation level and applies weights to provide increased funding above the foundation level to account for additional costs associated with certain grades, school programs, and student needs. While the actual amounts received may vary due to differences in student needs, the formula itself is a shared mechanism across DCPS and charter schools.

While most funding for public schools flows through the UPSFF, historically, differences in four funding areas have existed:

- Local Funding Sources Outside UPSFF
- Capital and Facilities Funding
- Teacher Pay
- Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans

From FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$7,713 more per pupil, on average, than charter schools across these four funding areas inclusive of temporary local funding provided through federal COVID-19 relief funds (Executive Summary Table 1). When those temporary funds are excluded, the per-pupil difference slightly decreases to \$7,683 per pupil, on average (Executive Summary Table 2). The difference in funding is driven mainly by capital and teacher retirement costs.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TABLE 1: TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, INCLUSIVE OF COVID-19 TEMPORARY FUNDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

DCPS Funding Streams	DCPS Total Funding	Charter Total Funding
Local Funding Outside UPSFF	\$167 million	\$62 million
Capital and Facilities Funding	\$1.8 billion	\$684 million
Teacher Pay	\$272 million	\$74 million
Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans	\$254 million	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.47 billion</b>	<b>\$820 million</b>
<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>\$12,098</b>	<b>\$4,385</b>

*Note: Charter schools do not receive any funding for retirement benefits and are not part of the DCPS pension system.*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TABLE 2: TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, EXCLUDING COVID-19 TEMPORARY FUNDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

DCPS Funding Streams	DCPS Total Funding	Charter Total Funding
Local Funding Outside UPSFF	\$119 million	\$23 million
Capital and Facilities Funding	\$1.8 billion	\$684 million
Teacher Pay	\$272 million	\$74 million
Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans	\$254 million	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2.42 billion</b>	<b>\$781 million</b>
<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>\$11,864</b>	<b>\$4,181</b>

*Note: Charter schools do not receive any funding for retirement benefits and are not part of the DCPS pension system.*

### About the Data and Calculations

For the two overall per-pupil funding calculations between DCPS and charter schools, Bellwether isolated FY22 to FY25 for the following reasons:

- FY22 is when DCPS and charter schools began to receive local funding outside of the UPSFF to aid in COVID-19 relief efforts.
- Data are available for all four of those years.

However, within each individual section below, this report analyzes different time frames due to data constraints and to accommodate adjustments for inflation. Specifically, the “Capital and Facilities Funding” and “Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans” sections are limited to FY18 to FY24, to allow all the calculations to be adjusted for inflation, providing more accurate comparisons across the fiscal years. The Teacher Pay section covers FY23 to FY26 per the resolution between DCPS and WTU to retroactively cover costs associated with teacher pay and benefits in the approved contract.

### Local Funding Sources Outside UPSFF (FY22 to FY25)

While District and charter schools receive most of their funding through the UPSFF formula, starting in FY22, both DCPS and charter schools received an influx of one-time funds, including both federal and local dollars, to address pandemic-related needs. Starting in FY23,

DCPS also began receiving local funding outside the UPSFF for certain programs unavailable to charter schools. Some of these funding sources benefit both DCPS and charter schools, while others only benefit DCPS. Bellwether’s analysis found that, from FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$105 million (\$488 per pupil, on average) more in local funding outside the UPSFF than charter schools.

### Capital and Facilities Funding (FY18 to FY24)

Differences in capital and facilities funding create a much larger and growing funding disparity, as the District funds capital projects and facilities differently for DCPS and charter schools. DCPS schools occupy District-owned buildings without the obligation to pay fair market rent or purchase costs, as charter schools often do. The District also funds major DCPS projects like construction and renovation.

Charter schools receive a per-pupil facilities allowance as part of the UPSFF for expenses related to facilities, including building acquisition, leasing, renovations, expansion, and equipment. The District was one of the first jurisdictions in the country to provide facilities funding for charter schools, and it provides one of the highest per-pupil facilities allowances for charters in the country.

Despite this support, charter schools’ facility-related costs from FY18 to FY24 exceeded the allowance by \$197 million (\$630 per pupil, on average). From FY18

to FY24, DCPS capital funding was between \$5,800 and \$10,600 per pupil. In comparison, the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance ranged between about \$3,200 to \$3,600 per pupil. Had charter schools received a facilities allowance equivalent to DCPS' capital funding levels from FY18 to FY24, they would have received an additional \$1.4 billion during that period.

### **Teacher Pay (FY23 to FY26)**

Recent investments by District policymakers in educator compensation across all schools, along with the increase in the UPSFF, will help schools manage rising personnel costs. However, unlike charter school educators, DCPS educators and other school personnel are part of the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU). As such, DCPS educators are entitled to specified negotiated salary levels and benefits and receive guaranteed raises through their contracts.

Historically, the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia (DC Council) have recognized this funding difference and provided additional payments to charter schools to promote comparable teacher salary raises. In November 2022, the WTU reached an agreement for \$347 million in bonuses and pay increases covering FY20 to FY23, including \$148 million for retroactive salary and benefits increases. Four months later, in response to this agreement, the Mayor and DC Council allocated \$73.6 million in one-time funding to charter schools for FY24, matching the base payment amount provided to DCPS for that same year. However, funding disparities still exist, with DCPS scheduled to receive \$273 million more than charter schools from FY23 to FY26 in Workforce Investments Fund and ARPA funding.

### **Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans (FY18 to FY24)**

Funding for retirement benefits presents another way compensation differs for DCPS and charter school educators. DCPS educators benefit from the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan, a pension system funded by the District and federal government. At the same time, charter schools do not receive additional

funding from the District or federal government for retirement benefits and are not part of the District's pension system. From FY18 to FY24, the District contributed a total of \$415 million (\$1,191 per pupil, on average) to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan. From FY18 to FY23, the most recent year of available data, 57 DC charter local education agencies (LEAs) provided funding for their retirement plans from their operating budgets. They contributed \$92 million (\$366 per pupil, on average) in matching retirement contributions.

### **The following six recommendations can advance funding parity across DCPS and charter schools:**

1. Prioritize flowing funding through the UPSFF to create parity between DCPS and charter schools instead of establishing new local funding streams.
2. Increase the charter per-pupil facilities allowance further to either be on par with the annual allocation for DCPS or at least address the gap between the allowance and expenses.
3. Broaden the definition of eligible staff for charter teacher pay raises to ensure parity between DCPS and charter schools.
4. Consider options for addressing gaps in retirement contributions, such as including supplemental funding or support mechanisms for charter school retirement plans.
5. Strengthen transparency in funding decisions and document the rationale where there are differences in accessibility to local funding streams.
6. Make data more accessible to enable thoughtful public dialogue and policy development and to increase transparency.

**Ensuring equitable funding across all public schools, regardless of their type, is essential for providing a quality education to all students.** Differences in funding between DCPS schools and charter schools not only shortchange charter schools but also impact the families who rely on them to meet students' educational needs.

# Introduction

In 1999, the District implemented the UPSFF as the main mechanism by which both charter schools and DCPS receive local funding.<sup>1</sup> Over the past few years, District charter school advocates have raised concerns regarding differences in funding for DCPS and charter schools.<sup>2</sup> These differences were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic when schools received significant non-formula funds, including federal relief dollars. As schools emerge from this period, there is an opportunity to assess the funding landscape moving forward, especially since these temporary funds expired in September 2024.

In fiscal year (FY) 2025, the 12.4% increase in the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) and 3.1% increase in the charter school facilities allotment are positive developments that will help absorb higher personnel and operational costs, particularly those driven by increases to educator salaries and benefits. However, differences persist in how certain costs — such as expenses related to facilities and retirement contributions — are covered. **This report examines where funding mechanisms for DCPS and charter schools differ and where they are equitable.** In some cases, differences in the way DCPS and charter schools operate rationalize differences in resource allocation. In other cases, charter schools must dip into their UPSFF dollars for expenses that DCPS schools receive alternative funding to support. The net result is that DCPS schools can allocate a greater share of their UPSFF dollars to instructional programming and student support.

Funding practices are similar between DCPS and charter schools in that all schools receive their primary funding through the UPSFF. The UPSFF defines a minimum per-pupil foundation level and applies weights to provide increased funding above the foundation level to account for additional costs associated with certain grades, school programs, and student needs. While the actual amounts received may vary due to differences in student needs, the formula itself is a shared mechanism across DCPS and charter schools.

To understand these differences, Bellwether examined publicly available data, budget documents, and public testimony, and interviewed local education leaders to assess the degree to which resources available to DCPS and charter schools vary and to understand the policy rationale for these differences. While most funding for public schools flows through the UPSFF, which applies to both DCPS and charter schools, differences in four funding areas exist:

- Local Funding Sources Outside UPSFF
- Capital and Facilities Funding
- Teacher Pay
- Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans

From FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$7,713 more per pupil than charter schools across these four funding areas inclusive of temporary local funding provided through federal COVID relief funds. When those federal temporary funds are excluded, the per-pupil difference slightly decreases to \$7,683 per pupil. The difference in funding is driven mostly by capital and teacher retirement costs.

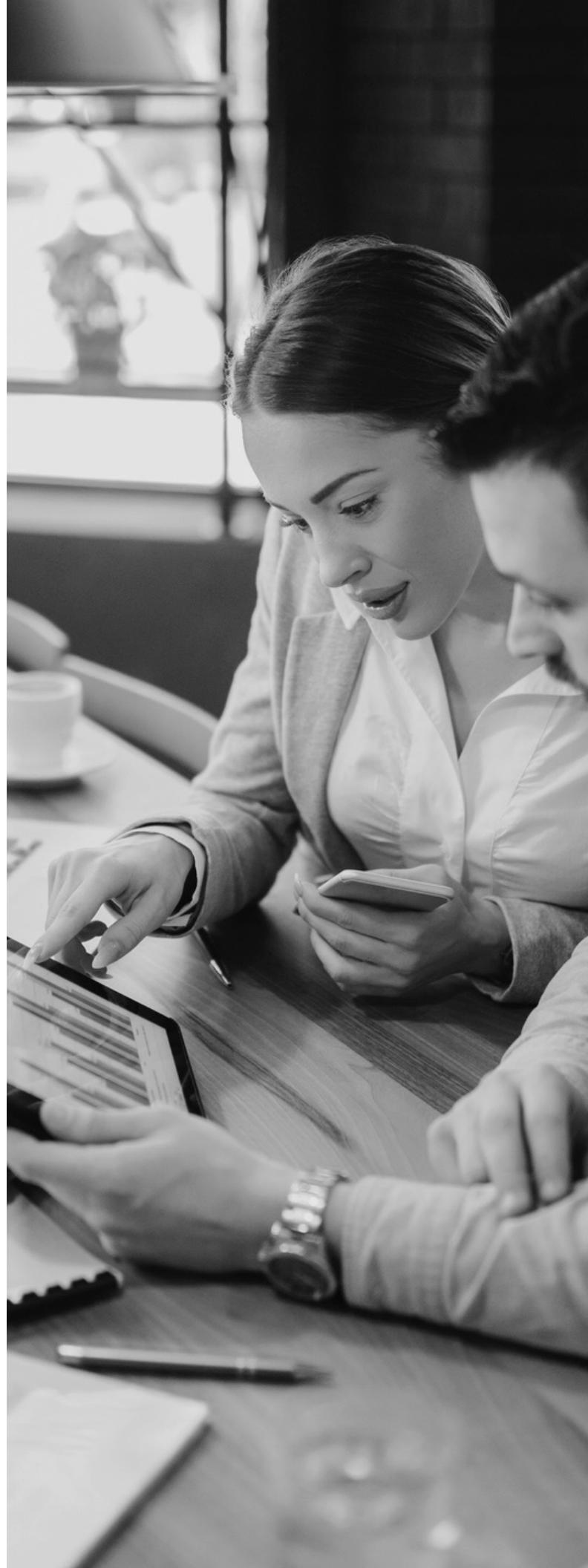
Throughout this analysis, two recurring obstacles emerged that inhibited an understanding of these funding differences: data accessibility and transparency. Key financial details often reside in less accessible formats — such as PDFs — or are only available upon request, complicating efforts to track and compare funding streams between DCPS and charter schools. To enable thoughtful public dialogue and policy development, the District should make school funding data more accessible to researchers, advocates, school leaders, and the broader public through online spreadsheet formats that document the District's rationale where funding differences between DCPS and charter schools exist.

This analysis surfaced instances where changes in teacher pay, pensions, capital funding, and other local funding policies could promote parity between DCPS and charter schools. For example, for one-time payments for charter school teacher pay increases, the DC Council should expand the definition of eligible staff for charter school pay raises to include a broader array of educational support roles, mirroring those covered under the DCPS teacher contract. District policymakers should also explore effective teacher retention strategies, including supplementing charter schools' retirement contributions to help attract and retain a stable, experienced educator workforce.

This report also calls attention to the need for greater equity in local funding streams and an increase in the per-pupil facilities allowance for charter schools to reflect their operational costs more accurately.

Finally, regular, rigorous monitoring and assessment are needed to understand the impact of funding policies and practices on students, educators, and schools.

This analysis aims to separate the signal from the noise and understand the impact of funding differences on schools' operational capabilities, resource allocation, and the educational experiences they provide. Understanding the funding DCPS schools and charter schools receive is a first step in ensuring all District students have the resources and support they need, regardless of which type of public school they attend.



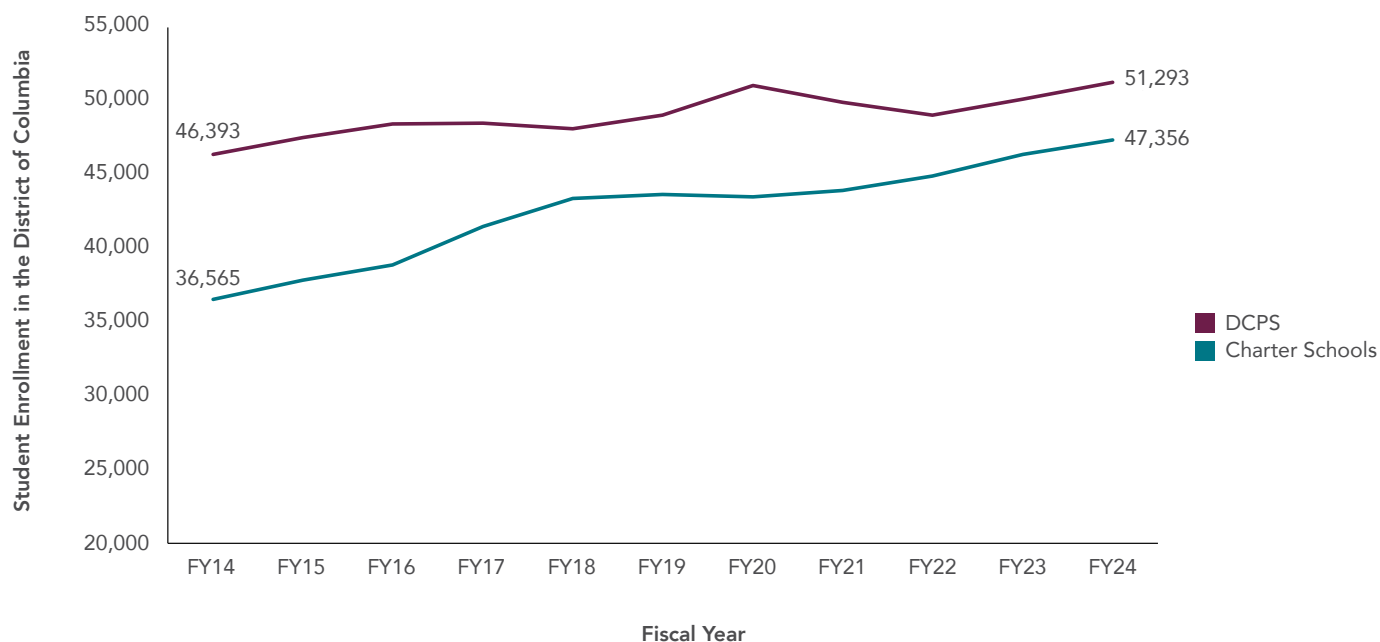
# DCPS and Charter School Enrollment Trends

The District was among the earliest jurisdictions in the U.S. to enact legislation to establish charter schools. The District’s public school system is home to 69 charter school LEAs operating alongside 117 DCPS schools.<sup>3</sup>

Together, the city’s public schools serve more than 98,000 pre-K through grade 12 students, with the student population nearly evenly split between DCPS and charter schools.<sup>4</sup> Charter schools are growing faster than DCPS, with nearly 30% growth in enrollment over the past 10 years, compared with 11% for DCPS schools in that same time frame. From FY14 to FY24, the number of charter school LEAs increased from 60, operating 106 school sites, to 69 LEAs operating 134 school sites (Figure 1).<sup>5</sup> During this same period, the number of DCPS schools increased from 111 to 117.<sup>6</sup>

The District’s charter schools also serve a slightly higher proportion of economically disadvantaged students relative to enrollment than DCPS schools (Table 1). These differences in student growth and demographics matter in the context of education funding because economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners (ELs) need additional resources and support in school.<sup>7</sup> Research shows that increased funding is linked to improved student outcomes, including significantly higher test scores, high school graduation rates, and college-going rates, particularly for low-income students.<sup>8</sup>

**FIGURE 1: DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT ENROLLMENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2014 TO 2024**



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education, “Enrollment Audit Data,” accessed September 6, 2024.



**TABLE 1: DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2024**

Student Group	DCPS	Charter Schools	Total
Total Enrollment	51,293	47,356	98,649
Students of Color (%)	83%	92%	87%
ELs (%)	16%	8%	13%
Economically Disadvantaged (%)	45%	46%	45%
Students With Disabilities (%)	16%	16%	16%

*Sources:* District of Columbia Public Schools, “[DCPS at a Glance: Enrollment](#),” 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, “[2023-24 School Year Enrollment Audit Report and Data](#),” 2024.

# How the District Funds Public Schools: Local Funding Sources

## Key Takeaway

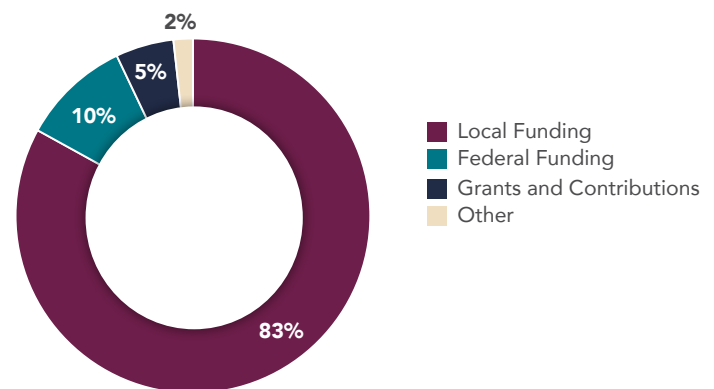
From FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$167 million in local funding outside of the UPSFF, compared with only \$62 million for charter school LEAs. This amounts to \$105 million more in local funding for DCPS, translating to \$488 more per pupil, compared with charter school LEAs.

The District funds public schools — both district and charter — through a combination of local, federal, private, grant, and other funding.<sup>9</sup> For both district and charter schools, more than 80% of revenue comes from local revenue sources (Figures 2, 3). The main source of public school funding in the District is the enrollment-based UPSFF.

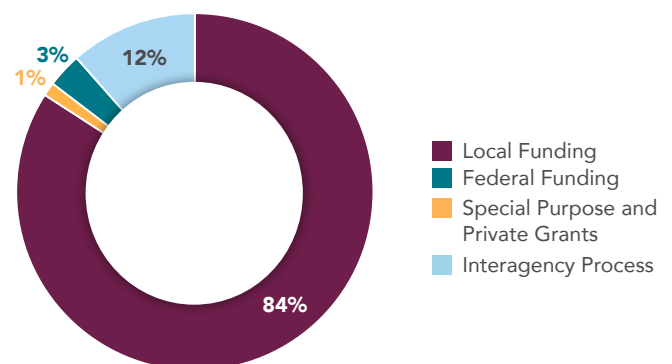
The UPSFF defines a minimum level (funding foundation level) required to adequately fund education. The foundation level for FY25 is \$14,668 per pupil.<sup>10</sup> The UPSFF then applies weights to provide increased funding above the foundation level to account for additional costs associated with certain grades, school programs, and student needs. The UPSFF multiplies weights by the foundation level to calculate additional funding.

While DCPS and charter schools receive most of their funding through the UPSFF formula, both DCPS and charter schools began receiving additional resources in FY22 from the three federal COVID-19 relief packages. Some of these funding sources benefit both DCPS and charter schools, while others only benefit DCPS (Table 2; Appendix A).

**FIGURE 2: DC CHARTER SCHOOL REVENUES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2024**



**FIGURE 3: DCPS REVENUES, FISCAL YEAR 2024**



**Note:** Totals may exceed 100 due to rounding. **Sources:** Government of the District of Columbia, "FY2024 Approved Budget and Financial Plan," accessed September 6, 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, "School Budgets," accessed September 6, 2024.

**TABLE 2: DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY FOR LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

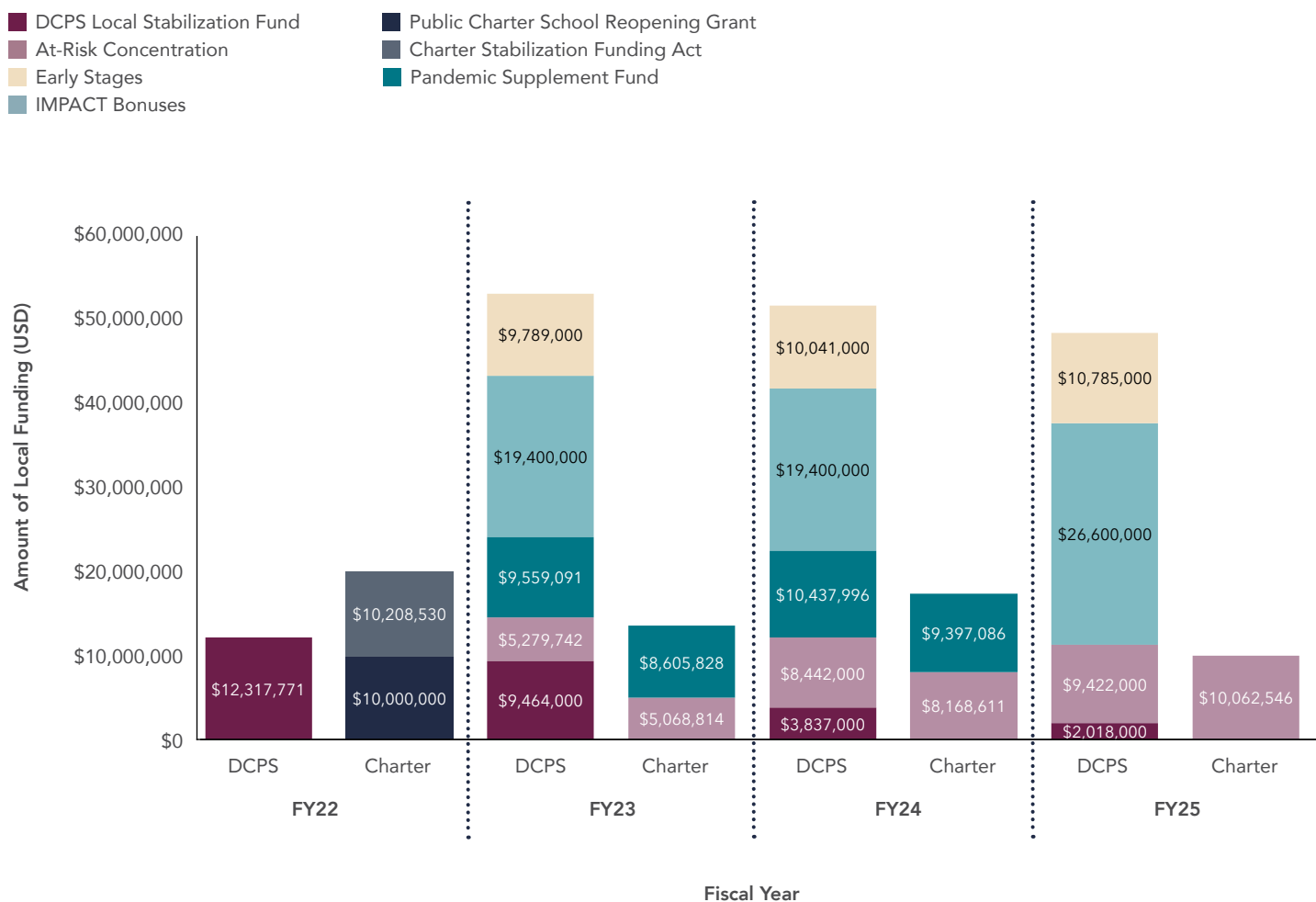
Funding Source (FY)	Total Funding	DCPS	Charter
<p><b>DCPS Local Stabilization Fund (FY22 to FY25):</b> A temporary stability fund created by Mayor Muriel Bowser in April 2021 to support DCPS schools in FY22. The purpose of the funding was to ensure that DCPS schools would receive at least the same amount of funding as the previous FY. In total, the District has allocated nearly \$28 million to the fund.</p>	\$27.6 million	✓	✗
<p><b>Charter School Stabilization Funding Act (FY22):</b> An act that granted adult, early childhood education, and residential charter schools a one-time allocation of \$10.2 million in stability funding.<sup>11</sup> The purpose of the funding was to ensure these charter schools had at least 95% of their budget from FY20.</p>	\$10.2 million	✗	✓
<p><b>Public Charter School Reopening Grant (FY22):</b> A grant that allocated \$10 million in FY22 to charter schools to support them in reopening and returning to in-person instruction.<sup>12</sup> The funding was distributed through a formula, with every charter LEA receiving \$81,967.21 per facility.<sup>13</sup></p>	\$10 million	✗	✓
<p><b>Early Stages (FY23 to FY25)<sup>14</sup>:</b> An evaluation center and DCPS program for children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years 10 months. The center identifies developmental delays and other disabilities for District children who are not in school, are home-schooled, or do not live in the District but attend a private school or child care center in the District. Once a student has gone through the evaluation process, they are offered enrollment at a DCPS school. The center does not provide identification services to students enrolled in charter schools. If a student is in the evaluation process and enrolls in a charter school, then the evaluation is halted.</p>	\$30.6 million	✓	✗
<p><b>IMPACT Bonuses (FY23 to FY24)<sup>15</sup>:</b> A performance-based compensation system for members of the WTU and the Council of School Officers who are evaluated under IMPACT, DCPS' evaluation system for school-based personnel. Only DCPS educators are part of the WTU. While charter schools have their own teacher evaluation systems, their teachers are not part of WTU and are ineligible for these funds.</p>	\$65.4 million	✓	✗
<p><b>Pandemic Supplement Fund (FY23 to FY24):</b> Funding for FY23 and FY24 to provide "stability to DCPS and charter schools as they respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and continue recovery efforts initiated with federal relief grants."<sup>16</sup> D.C. Code of the District of Columbia specifies that DCPS schools receive 52.6% of the funding while charter schools receive 47.4% of the funding.<sup>17</sup> DCPS received the funds in a lump sum and allocated it to individual schools, while the funding for charter school LEAs was allocated as a per-pupil amount.<sup>18</sup> DCPS refers to this as the "Mayor's Recovery Fund."</p>	\$38 million	✓	✓
<p><b>At-Risk Concentration (FY23 to FY25):</b> In FY23, the DC Council created two new weights providing additional funds to schools where 40% or more of the student population is designated as at-risk, and to schools where 70% or more of the student population is designated as at-risk.<sup>19</sup></p>	\$46.4 million	✓	✓

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Across these local funding streams outside of the UPSFF, DCPS schools have received more funding than charter schools. From FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$167 million in local funding outside of the UPSFF, compared with only \$62 million for charter schools (Figure 4). This amounts to \$105 million more in local funding for DCPS, translating to \$488 more per pupil, compared with charter schools (Appendix B).

This disparity is driven in large part by differences in eligibility for funding. DCPS and charter schools are both eligible for funding through the Pandemic Supplement Fund and At-Risk Concentration funding. These funding streams are allocated to charter school LEAs and DCPS in the same manner.

**FIGURE 4: DCPS VERSUS CHARTER SCHOOL LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**



**Sources:** Government of the District of Columbia, "FY2025 Approved Budget and Financial Plan," accessed September 6, 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, "FY2024 Approved Budget and Financial Plan," accessed February 9, 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, "FY2023 Approved Budget and Financial Plan," 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, "FY2022 Approved Budget and Financial Plan," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "FY22 Public Charter School Reopening Facilities Grant - Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024.

In FY22, charter school LEAs received \$10 million through the Public Charter School Reopening Grant. According to the District’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), the purpose of the grant was to help charter school LEAs “address the impact COVID-19 has had on the LEAs’ ability to provide in-person instruction.”<sup>20</sup> The funding was distributed through a grant, with all charter school LEAs receiving \$81,967.21 per facility.<sup>21</sup>

In contrast, IMPACT Bonuses and Early Stages are both recurring funding streams for programs that only pertain to the DCPS system. IMPACT Bonuses are negotiated by the WTU with the DC Council. Currently, only DCPS educators are members of the WTU, and charter school teachers are ineligible for the IMPACT Bonuses. Charter schools do have their own teacher evaluation systems, but they do not receive any additional funding from the District to provide bonuses.

Early Stages is a DCPS program that provides evaluation services to identify children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years 10 months who need special education services. The center provides evaluation for children in the District who are not enrolled in school, home-schooled, or do not live in the District but attend a private school or child care center in the District. Once a student is identified as needing services through the evaluation process, they are offered enrollment at a DCPS school.<sup>22</sup> The Early Stages program evaluation center does not currently provide evaluation services to children who are enrolled in charter schools.<sup>23</sup>

The area in which the policy rationale for differences in funding between DCPS and charters is less clear relates to the two “stabilization” funding streams first allocated by the DC Council in FY22. The DC Council allocated dollars to DCPS schools through the DCPS Local Stabilization Fund. These funds were intended to ensure stable funding to schools despite changes in enrollment and other factors. In that same FY22, charters received funding through a similar program — the Charter School Stabilization Funding Act. However, the fund was a one-time allocation limited to adult, early childhood education, and residential charter schools. The DCPS

Local Stabilization Fund was not limited to certain types of DCPS schools, and the DC Council has funded it annually from FY22 through FY25.

While the DC Council could choose to enact policies to create parallel programs or amend eligibility requirements to give charter schools access to funding analogous to the IMPACT Bonus or Early Stages programs, this analysis focuses on differences in funding allocations based on current eligibility and program design.

Focusing narrowly on differences in stabilization funding, in FY22, DCPS received \$2 million more in funding than charter schools. However, because eligibility for the Charter School Stabilization Funding Act was more restrictive than for DCPS’ stabilization funding, the charter school funding amount was \$730 more per pupil. From FY23 to FY25, DCPS schools received \$15 million more through the DCPS Local Stabilization Fund, a difference of \$867 per pupil (Table 3). While this difference may be significant for schools that either did or did not receive funding, the disparity may also be temporary. The DCPS Local Stabilization Fund was supposed to expire after FY24, but the DC Council continued to fund it in FY25, albeit at a much lower level; the DC Council may consider to no longer fund it in FY26. (The funding was meant to be a one-time funding stream in FY22 and the DC Council has continued to fund it.)<sup>24</sup>

Another important contextual factor relevant to pandemic-related relief funding is that, unlike DCPS, charter schools are nonprofit organizations and were eligible for the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The PPP was an early pandemic relief program to enable nonprofits and businesses to preserve jobs even as they were affected by closures and loss of business.<sup>25</sup> District policymakers may have channeled additional local funding into DCPS schools because they were not eligible for PPP aid.<sup>26</sup> Even factoring in the \$25 million charter schools received in PPP funding, DCPS schools still received \$80 million more in local funding between FY22 and FY25, or \$355 per pupil.<sup>27</sup>

**TABLE 3: DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL STABILIZATION FUNDING, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

DCPS	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund – Total	\$12,318,000	\$9,464,000	\$3,837,000	\$2,018,000
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund – Per Pupil	\$819	\$806	\$728	\$3,086
Number of DCPS Schools	37	28	15	3
Number of Students	15,041	11,736	5,273	654
Charter Schools	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Charter Stabilization Funding Act – Total	\$10,208,530	\$0	\$0	\$0
Charter Stabilization Funding Act – Per Pupil	\$1,536	\$0	\$0	\$0
Number of Charter School LEAs	16	0	0	0
Number of Students	6,645	0	0	0
Difference in Funding	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
<b>Total Difference Between Charter LEAs and DCPS</b>	<b>\$1,929,470</b>	<b>(\$9,464,000)</b>	<b>(\$3,837,000)</b>	<b>(\$2,018,000)</b>
Per-Pupil Difference Between Charter LEAs and DCPS	\$730	(\$806)	(\$728)	(\$3,086)

**Note:** For more detailed explanation on the calculation, see Appendix A. **Sources:** Government of the District of Columbia, “FY2025 Approved Budget and Financial Plan,” accessed September 9, 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, “FY2024 Approved Budget and Financial Plan,” accessed February 9, 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, “FY2023 Approved Budget and Financial Plan,” 2024; Government of the District of Columbia, “FY2022 Approved Budget and Financial Plan,” 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, “DC Public Schools Budgets,” 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, “Code of the District of Columbia,” 2024.

# How the District Funds Capital and Facilities: A \$1 Billion Difference

## Key Takeaway

From FY18 to FY24, DCPS capital funding was between \$5,900 and \$10,600 per pupil. In comparison, the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance ranged between about \$3,200 to \$3,700 per pupil. If charter schools had received a facilities allowance at equivalent levels to DCPS during this period, they would have received an additional \$1.4 billion.

Beyond differences in local funding, Bellwether's analysis found that differences in capital and facilities funding create a much larger and growing funding disparity between DCPS schools and charter schools. The District employs distinct approaches to fund capital projects and facilities for DCPS and charter schools. As a result of these different approaches, charter schools allocate funds for certain facilities-related expenses that DCPS schools can instead fully dedicate to operational and instructional needs.

DCPS schools occupy buildings owned by the District and do not incur rent expenses. DCPS schools are responsible for paying for their own maintenance costs, such as custodial services and utilities, through their UPSFF dollars. The District funds major capital projects, which are managed by the Department of General Services (DGS), such as construction and renovation in the city's capital budget, financed through general obligation municipal bonds. The District's approved capital funding can also include districtwide building updates, such as HVAC system replacements, window replacements, and IT updates.<sup>28</sup> In contrast, when charter schools make these types of updates, they must pay for them through their operating budgets. For instance, in FY22, the District allocated \$13 million to DGS for updating HVAC systems across DCPS schools,<sup>29</sup> while 12 charter school LEAs for which the data were available spent approximately \$2 million from their operating budgets for similar updates.<sup>30</sup>

This analysis does not include an accounting of the value of the rent DCPS does not have to pay because DCPS schools occupy District-owned buildings without the obligation to pay fair market rent or purchase costs, a question that may warrant further study. A preliminary analysis using FY21 rent expenditure data from the Federal City Council<sup>31</sup> and FY21 data from EdSight<sup>32</sup> about DCPS closed schools found that what charter school LEAs pay per square foot to rent DCPS buildings ranged from \$1 to \$38.

Charter schools receive a per-pupil facilities allowance from the District as part of the UPSFF for expenses related to facilities, including building acquisition, leasing, renovations, expansion, and equipment.<sup>33</sup> The District was one of the first in the country to provide facilities funding for charter schools,<sup>34</sup> and it provides one of the highest charter per-pupil facilities allowances in the country.<sup>35</sup>

The DC Council sets the amount of the allowance, including any increases to account for inflation over time. From 1999 to 2008, the District calculated the annual per-pupil facilities allotment by matching the Capital Budget's DCPS allocation.<sup>36</sup> From FY09 to FY14, the DC Council set the per-pupil facilities allowance at \$3,000 per pupil, and then raised it to \$3,072 for FY15 and FY16.<sup>37</sup>

From FY17 to FY21, the DC Council increased the allowance by 2.2% annually.<sup>38</sup> In lieu of an increase in per-pupil facilities allowance in FY22, the DC Council provided the one-time \$10 million facilities grant to provide charter schools with facilities expenses related to the return of students to in-person learning.<sup>39</sup> The DC Council then increased the allowance growth rate to 3.1% annually starting in FY23.

Despite these increases, the amount of the charter per-pupil facilities allowance has not kept pace with inflation. In nominal terms, the allowance rose by 13% from FY18 to FY24 (Table 4). However, after adjusting for inflation, it effectively decreased by 9%, reducing the per-pupil facilities allotment’s purchasing power over time.

Two comparisons are useful for understanding the discrepancy in funding available to support both capital investment and facilities costs between DCPS schools and charter schools.<sup>40</sup> First, is a rough comparison of the amount of per-pupil capital funding approved for

DCPS schools with the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance to show absolute differences in access to resources between the two sectors. This is not an exact comparison, but it is still useful given that, prior to 2009, the District had used the DCPS capital budget as a baseline for calculating the per-pupil facilities allowance.<sup>41</sup> Second, is an examination of charter schools’ occupancy expenditures compared with the funding they receive through the per-pupil facilities allowance to show whether the allowance is adequate to cover the costs it is intended to support.

From FY18 to FY24, the DCPS approved capital funding was between \$5,800 and \$10,600 per pupil (Appendix C). In comparison, the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance ranged between about \$3,200 to \$3,600 per pupil (Table 5). When adjusted for inflation, capital and facilities funding differences increase (Table 6). Had charter schools received a facilities allowance equivalent to DCPS’ capital funding levels from FY18 to FY24, they would have received an additional \$1.4 billion (\$1.6 billion after adjusting for inflation) (Appendix D).

**TABLE 4: CHARTER SCHOOL PER-PUPIL FACILITIES ALLOWANCE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Growth (%)
Unadjusted	\$3,193	\$3,263	\$3,335	\$3,408	\$3,408	\$3,513	\$3,622	13%
Inflation-Adjusted	\$3,984	\$3,988	\$4,014	\$4,009	\$3,741	\$3,629	\$3,622	-9%

**Note:** Charter schools in the District of Columbia receive resident and nonresident per-pupil facilities allowances. This analysis used the nonresident per-pupil funding allowance because more than 99% of students who attend charter schools are classified as nonresidents. **Source:** Council of the District of Columbia, “Code of the District of Columbia,” 2024.



**TABLE 5: UNADJUSTED DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL PER-PUPIL CAPITAL AND FACILITIES FUNDING, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

Funding Type	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
DCPS Capital Per-Pupil Funding	\$5,997	\$7,105	\$7,261	\$6,278	\$5,874	\$7,740	\$10,622
Charter Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$3,193	\$3,263	\$3,335	\$3,408	\$3,408	\$3,513	\$3,622

**TABLE 6: INFLATION-ADJUSTED DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOL PER-PUPIL CAPITAL AND FACILITIES FUNDING, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

Funding Type	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
DCPS Capital Per-Pupil Funding	\$7,482	\$8,684	\$8,739	\$7,386	\$6,448	\$7,995	\$10,622
Charter Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$3,984	\$3,988	\$4,014	\$4,009	\$3,741	\$3,629	\$3,622

*Sources:* Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, “Budget and Financial Plans,” accessed February 9, 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, “Code of the District of Columbia,” 2024.

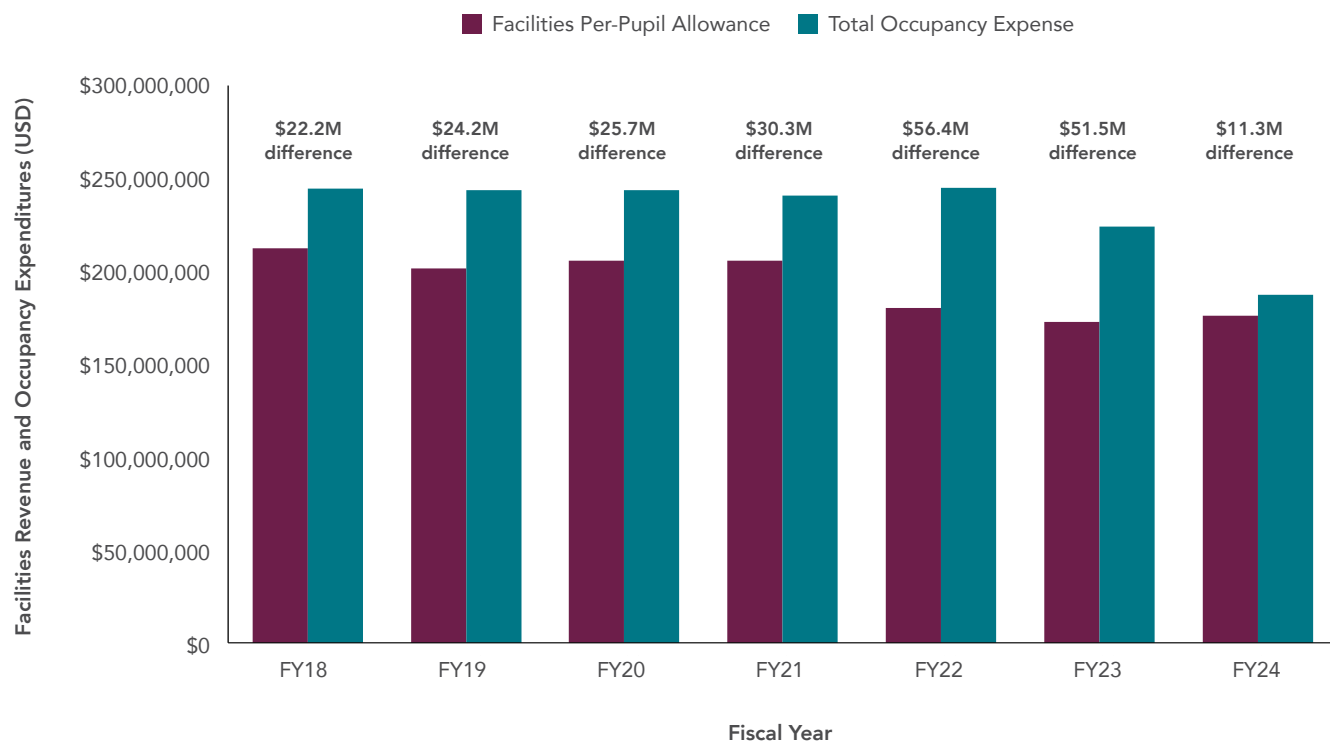
### Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance Does Not Cover Charter School Occupancy Expenses

Even with substantial differences in access to capital funding between DCPS and charter schools, it is important to understand whether the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance meets the needs of the charter sector. In other words, are there differences in capital and facilities needs between DCPS and the District’s charter schools that validate the difference in funding levels? To assess whether the charter per-pupil facilities allowance is adequate to meet charter schools’ needs, this analysis compared facilities allowance funding amounts to charter schools’ occupancy expenses, adjusted for inflation to compare across years.

The findings show that charter schools consistently spend more on facilities than the per-pupil allowance provides.<sup>42</sup> From FY18 to FY24, charter schools cumulatively spent \$197 million more on occupancy expenses than they received through the per-pupil facilities allowance (Appendix E). When adjusted for inflation, this funding difference grows to \$222 million (Figure 5).

This gap has largely widened over time, with an exception for FY24. Adjusting for inflation, charter schools incurred \$22 million more in expenses than revenues designated for facilities in FY18, escalating to \$56 million more in FY22. Charter schools tap their general operating budgets to pay for these expenses and used 2% to 4% of their general operating funds from FY18 to FY24.<sup>43</sup>

**FIGURE 5: INFLATION-ADJUSTED TOTAL DIFFERENCE IN CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**



*Sources:* Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, “Budget and Financial Plans,” accessed February 9, 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, “Financial Analysis Reports,” 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, “School Budgets,” 2024.

Funding differences between FY18 and FY24 mean that charter schools spent, on average, \$630 more per pupil on occupancy expenses than they received through the per-pupil facilities allowance. When adjusted for inflation, this average difference grows to \$708 per pupil (Table 7). In terms of real dollars, the per-pupil funding gap more than doubled during this period on an annual basis (with the exception of FY24), from \$511 per pupil in FY18 to \$1,101 per pupil in FY24. The per pupil difference reached its lowest level in FY24 at \$238.

One reason charter schools may spend more on facilities than they receive through the per-pupil facilities allowance is that they rent buildings that are not outfitted for school use. In those instances, charter schools will often make landlord-approved renovations known as leasehold improvements and will pay off the debt over time.<sup>44</sup> While nearly one-third of charter schools in the District operate out of former DCPS facilities, during the 2022-23 school year (SY), 49 of the 69 charter school LEAs (71%) reported expenses for leased buildings.<sup>45</sup>

These funding differences place charter schools at a disadvantage. Not only are charter schools required to pay for things that DCPS schools are not required to fund out of their school budgets, but they are also using more of their operating funds to cover costs when the per-pupil facilities allowance is inadequate. This leaves the District’s charter schools with fewer resources to spend on teacher salaries and benefits, extracurricular activities, and student support.

**TABLE 7: INFLATION-ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE IN CHARTER SCHOOL PER-PUPIL FACILITIES REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Seven-Year Average
Per-Pupil Facilities Revenue	\$4,151	\$4,158	\$4,166	\$4,121	\$3,883	\$3,717	\$3,716	\$3,981
Per-Pupil Occupancy Expense	\$4,662	\$4,712	\$4,757	\$4,811	\$5,138	\$4,827	\$3,954	\$4,689
<b>Per-Pupil Difference</b>	<b>(\$511)</b>	<b>(\$554)</b>	<b>(\$591)</b>	<b>(\$690)</b>	<b>(\$1,256)</b>	<b>(\$1,110)</b>	<b>(\$238)</b>	<b>(\$708)</b>

**Note:** The per-pupil facilities revenue is higher than the per-pupil facilities allowance in Tables 4-6 because it includes the resident per-pupil facilities allowance. See Appendix F for more information. **Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, “Budget and Financial Plans,” accessed September 6, 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, “Financial Analysis Reports,” 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, “School Budgets,” 2024.

# Teacher Pay, Pensions, and Retirement Plans: The District's Dual System

## Key Takeaway

While District policymakers have made recent investments in educator compensation across all schools, structural differences in funding mechanisms and union affiliations lead to inequities that impact educators' salaries and benefits. In November 2022, the WTU and District reached a tentative agreement for a \$447 million contract that included salary increases, bonuses, additional pay, and benefits for DCPS educators. Of that, the District was responsible for paying DCPS \$347 million. Four months after resolving the WTU contract, the Mayor and DC Council allocated \$73.6 million in one-time funding for charter school LEAs so they could raise the salaries for their teachers. This is an overall funding difference of \$273 million, or \$1,309 more per pupil for DCPS.

**This analysis also explored three additional areas where there are funding differences that may create disparities between charter schools and DCPS: teacher pay, pensions, and the interagency process.**

In the District, DCPS educators, including teachers, counselors, social workers, therapists, and other school personnel, are part of the WTU.<sup>46</sup> As WTU members, DCPS educators are entitled to specified negotiated salary levels and benefits and receive guaranteed raises through their contracts. In contrast, charter school educators are not part of the WTU and do not automatically receive the same salary increases and benefits.

Historically, the Mayor and DC Council have recognized this funding difference and provided additional payments to charter schools to promote comparable teacher salary raises. For example, in late 2017, the Mayor and DC Council provided charter schools with a one-time additional payment to cover retroactive pay increases equivalent to those received by DCPS teachers.<sup>47</sup>

The November 2022 WTU contract was from FY20 and FY23, and covered 5,600 DCPS personnel including teachers, social workers, therapists, and coaches, and included a 12.5% salary increase.<sup>48</sup> Of the 12.5% total,

the contract retroactively applied 8.5% for the three years in which no contract was in place. The agreement also provided WTU members with bonuses and additional pay for FY23, requiring a total of \$347 million to be paid from FY23 to FY26. The District made these investments using its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding and Workforce Investments Fund (Table 8).<sup>49</sup> This additional DCPS funding averages \$1,662 per pupil.

Four months after resolving the WTU contract, the Mayor and DC Council allocated \$73.6 million in one-time funding — nearly the same FY24 base payment amount as DCPS — for charter schools for FY24, which amounts to \$1,554 per pupil. According to OSSE guidance, the purpose of the funding was to increase charter school teacher salaries for SY22-23 retroactively at 7.6% and increase the SY23-24 teacher salaries by 12.5% compared with SY19-20.<sup>50</sup> Charter school advocates noted that most charter school LEAs had already provided pay raises for teachers during the period the WTU contract covered. Therefore, this payment only provided charter schools with two years' worth of funding for back pay, while DCPS received four years.

Another concern charter school leaders raised was the disparity in funding amounts. The WTU contract from FY23 to FY26 totals \$347 million in costs that the District

had to cover, an overall \$273 million funding difference, or about \$1,309 more per pupil, between what charter schools and DCPS received. Of the overall WTU contract, \$71 million was allocated for DCPS one-time bonuses, additional pay, and benefits. These funding streams were not extended to charter school LEAs and totaled \$347 more in per-pupil funding for DCPS.

Yet another concern expressed was the narrow definition of “teachers” specified for charter school parity funding. The DC Council’s allocation was based on a federal definition of “teachers,” which excludes several roles such as student support professionals, social workers, counselors, coaches,

special education and program coordinators, and any other noninstructional personnel covered under the WTU contract.<sup>51</sup> This narrow definition means that charter schools will not receive additional funding for salary raises for staff who do not fit under the federal definition. Furthermore, to receive the funding, charter LEA leaders must submit signed assurances to OSSE that they provide all “teachers” with pay raises of at least 12.5%.<sup>52</sup> If a charter LEA has any remaining funds after they have provided all of their “teachers” with the mandated pay raises, then they can make “direct payments to school-based educators and support staff” if they submit a spending plan to OSSE detailing how the funding will benefit those staff.<sup>53</sup>

**TABLE 8: DCPS WTU CONTRACT COSTS, FISCAL YEAR 2023 TO 2026**

WTU Contract Category	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	Total
Base Salary Increases	\$126 million	\$74 million	\$84 million	\$94 million	\$378 million
4% Bonus in FY23	\$23 million	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23 million
Additional Pay	\$17 million	\$6 million	\$6 million	\$6 million	\$35 million
Benefits	\$4 million	\$3 million	\$3 million	\$3 million	\$13 million
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$171 million</b>	<b>\$82 million</b>	<b>\$93 million</b>	<b>\$103 million</b>	<b>\$449 million</b>
Local Portion of Total Cost	\$170 million	\$82 million	\$93 million	\$103 million	\$447 million
Funding Available in DCPS FY23 Budget and Financial Plan	\$22 million	\$24 million	\$26 million	\$28 million	\$100 million
Cost Funded by Workforce Investments Fund and ARPA (Local portion – funding in DCPS budget)	\$148 million	\$58 million	\$66 million	\$75 million	\$347 million
Additional ARPA and Workforce Investments Fund Per-Pupil Funding	\$2,954	\$1,125	\$1,235*	\$1,393*	\$1,662*

**Note:** Total may not equal FY23 to FY26 numbers in the table due to rounding. \*Projected DCPS enrollment for FY25 was used to get an approximate per-pupil amount for FY25 and FY26. **Source:** Council of the District of Columbia, “[Compensation and Working Conditions Agreement between the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Washington Teachers’ Union, Local #6 of the American Federal of Teachers Approval Resolution of 2023](#),” accessed February 9, 2024.

## Key Takeaway

DCPS educators participate in the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan, a pension plan funded by the District and the federal government. From FY18 to FY24, the District contributed a total of \$415 million to the Teachers' Retirement System, which averaged \$1,190 per pupil. Adjusted for inflation, the total contribution increases to \$475 million and \$1,362 per pupil. Charter school teachers are not eligible to participate in the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan. Instead, charter schools offer their staff defined contribution 403(b) or 401(k) retirement plans, which they fund from their operating budgets.

Beyond teacher pay, the pension system for District educators presents another way in which compensation differs for DCPS educators and those working in its charter schools. The District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan is a defined benefit pension program administered by the District of Columbia Retirement Board and includes current and former DCPS educators.<sup>54</sup> The plan is funded by the District and the federal government. DCPS does not provide any funding to the pension plan, nor does it receive any additional revenues to support pension costs.

Charter schools do not receive any additional funding from the District for retirement benefits and instead offer their staff defined contribution 403(b) or 401(k) retirement plans. Unlike the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan that the District and federal government funds, charter schools make contributions to their employees' retirement plans from their operating budgets. This structural difference in funding retirement benefits not only adds a cost to charter schools' operating budgets that DCPS does not incur, but it may also have long-term implications for attracting and retaining skilled educators.

*Note: the two different retirement systems are not an apples-to-apples comparison because of the differences in both the funding and benefits structures in pensions compared with 403(b) or 401(k) plans. However, it does provide another example of costs that charter school LEAs incur and fund from their operating budgets, while DCPS does not. Although charter schools could choose not to offer a retirement match, doing so would likely impede their ability to attract and retain high-quality teachers.*

In FY22, the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan included 11,871 participants, encompassing active teachers, retirees, and those with deferred benefits. The plan is generally well-funded in large part because of the Police Officers, Firefighters, and Teachers Retirement Benefit Replacement Plan Act of 1998, under which the federal government assumed much of the District's unfunded pension liability for employee service before July 1, 1997.<sup>55</sup> In other words, since 1998, the federal government has funded the pension obligation for service credit accrued by DCPS educators before July 1, 1997. From FY18 to FY22, the federal government contributed an average of \$312 million annually to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan, or \$6,310 per pupil (Appendix F). When adjusted for inflation, this grows to an average annual contribution of \$359 million or \$7,262 per pupil.

While the federal government covers the pension liability for service credit accrued by DCPS educators before July 1, 1997, the District must cover costs for employees who started their service after that date. Under the Code of the District of Columbia, the District is required to appropriate funds equal to or exceeding the actuarially determined contribution (ADC) as the District's annual contribution to the retirement plan.<sup>56</sup> This requirement helps ensure the fund maintains sufficient assets to pay benefits for all participants over time.<sup>57</sup> For FY24, the ADC after adjustment was 7.9% of the DCPS payroll, equal to about \$50 million (Table 9).<sup>58</sup> From FY18 to FY24, the District contributed a total of \$415 million to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan, which averaged 11% of total payroll and \$1,190 per pupil. Adjusted for inflation, the total contribution increases to \$475 million and \$1,361 per pupil (Table 10).

**TABLE 9: UNADJUSTED ACTUARILY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (ADC) FOR DCPS TEACHERS, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Seven-Year Average
ADC After Adjustment	\$59 million	\$53.3 million	\$58.9 million	\$70.5 million	\$75.1 million	\$47.8 million	\$50.2 million	\$59.3 million
ADC Percent of Payroll	12.5%	11.4%	12%	13.1%	13.1%	7.7%	7.9%	10.9%
<b>Per-Pupil Calculation</b>	<b>\$1,226</b>	<b>\$1,087</b>	<b>\$1,154</b>	<b>\$1,413</b>	<b>\$1,531</b>	<b>\$954</b>	<b>\$979</b>	<b>\$1,190</b>

**TABLE 10: INFLATION-ADJUSTED ACTUARILY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (ADC) FOR DCPS TEACHERS, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Seven-Year Average
ADC After Adjustment	\$73.7 million	\$65.2 million	\$70.9 million	\$82.9 million	\$82.4 million	\$49.4 million	\$50.2 million	\$67.8 million
<b>Per-Pupil Calculation</b>	<b>\$1,530</b>	<b>\$1,329</b>	<b>\$1,389</b>	<b>\$1,662</b>	<b>\$1,680</b>	<b>\$986</b>	<b>\$979</b>	<b>\$1,362</b>

*Sources:* District of Columbia Retirement Board, "Report on the Actuarial Valuations of the Teachers' Retirement Plan and Police Officers & Firefighters' Retirement Plan," accessed September 23, 2024; District of Columbia Retirement Board, "Actuarial Valuations," 2024.

In contrast to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan, in which all DCPS educators participate, the District's charter school LEAs offer 403(b) or 401(k) retirement plans, which charter school teachers can opt into. This analysis examined individual charter LEA fiscal audits from FY18 to FY23, which is the most current year available, and found that 57 of the 69 charter school LEAs provided data on their retirement plans and matching contributions.

From FY18 to FY23, charter schools contributed a total of \$92 million to these plans, averaging \$15.4 million annually and \$366 per pupil (Table 11).<sup>59</sup> Adjusted for inflation, charters provided \$103 million in matching contributions in total, at an adjusted annual per-pupil average of \$410 (Table 12).

Of note, this analysis does not compare the DCPS pension per-pupil calculations with the charter matching contributions because DCPS pension monies are *additional* monies that benefit DCPS educators. This is not the case for charter LEAs, which must pay matching contributions from their existing operating budgets. From Bellwether's sample, charter LEAs used, on average, 1.3% to 1.6% of their operating budgets to cover the retirement matching contributions.

**TABLE 11: UNADJUSTED CHARTER SCHOOL RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION TOTAL AND PERCENT OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2023**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Six-Year Average
Employer 403(b) or 401(k) Match Contribution	\$11.8 million	\$12.3 million	\$13.4 million	\$19 million	\$19.4 million	\$16.5 million	\$15.4 million
Employer Match % of Salaries and Benefits	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.9%	2.5%	1.9%	2.3%
<b>Per-Pupil Calculation</b>	<b>\$295</b>	<b>\$302</b>	<b>\$328</b>	<b>\$459</b>	<b>\$457</b>	<b>\$355</b>	<b>\$366</b>

**TABLE 12: INFLATION-ADJUSTED CHARTER SCHOOL RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION TOTAL AND PERCENT OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2023**

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Six-Year Average
Employer 403(b) or 401(k) Match Contribution	\$14.3 million	\$14.6 million	\$15.6 million	\$21.6 million	\$20.6 million	\$16.5 million	\$17.2 million
<b>Per-Pupil Calculation</b>	<b>\$356</b>	<b>\$357</b>	<b>\$383</b>	<b>\$523</b>	<b>\$486</b>	<b>\$416</b>	<b>\$410</b>

Sources: DC Public Charter School Board, "School Fiscal Audits," accessed September 6, 2024.



# Understanding the Interagency Process and Cost Implications

The interagency process, a key component of the District’s budgeting and resource allocation, has different implications for DCPS and charter schools. This process allows District agencies to provide resources and services to schools, with DCPS benefiting from in-kind and/or reduced-price services from other District agencies (Sidebar). Even though DCPS and charter schools receive the same amount of funding through the UPSFF, the interagency process may allow DCPS schools to avoid using UPSFF funds to cover as many costs as charter schools. Data limitations prevented an analysis of the impact of this process, but line-item analyses of available data suggested possible disparities in costs for similar services. Specifically, this analysis examined the itemized occupancy expenses in the FY22 fiscal audits and found that 52 charter school LEAs reported spending on utilities and 61 charter school LEAs reported spending on telecommunications. In FY22, 61 charter LEAs spent \$5.9 million on telecommunications, while DCPS received similar services valued at \$5.5 million through the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (Tables 13, 14).<sup>60</sup> Similarly, while DCPS spent \$23 million in utilities provided by the Office of Fixed Resource Management, 52 charter LEAs spent \$14 million on these services.<sup>61</sup>

What is more surprising is what was not apparent in available interagency reporting. For example, from research and interviews, Bellwether learned that the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia provides legal services to DCPS through this process.<sup>62</sup> However, intra-district budgeting documents for the District’s Office of the Attorney General from FY18 to FY24 did not appear to include line items that described that agreement.<sup>63</sup> While it is possible that agencies may not report all interagency process transactions in the same way, the variability in reporting creates a lack of transparency regarding which services DCPS schools are accessing through this process and the value of those services. The District could provide guidance or create explainer documents about the interagency process to increase public transparency.

## SIDEBAR

### What Is the Interagency Process (Formerly Intra-District Funding)?

Before FY23, the District used a process called intra-district funding to track payments for negotiated services provided by one District agency (seller) to another District agency (buyer). Through this process, the buying agency would spend its own budget to purchase services from a seller agency. The seller District agency records this expenditure as an intra-district fund. Beginning in FY23, the District eliminated intra-district budgeting and replaced it with an interagency process, which enables the District agency providing the services (seller agency) to directly charge an interagency project cost against the budget of the agency receiving the services (buyer agency).<sup>64</sup>

**TABLE 13: DCPS TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITIES INTRA-DISTRICT, FISCAL YEAR 2022**

	Total Funding	Per Pupil
Telecommunications	\$5.5 million	\$112
Utilities	\$23.7 million	\$484

**TABLE 14: CHARTER SCHOOL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITIES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022**

	Total Funding	Per Pupil
Telecommunications	\$5.9 million	\$142
Utilities	\$13.9 million	\$390

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia, “GA0\_FY22 Attachment II – Intra-Districts,” accessed February 9, 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, “School Fiscal Audits,” accessed February 9, 2024.

# Putting It All Together: What Is the Overall Per-Pupil Funding Difference?

There are different ways to sum these funding differences and determine the DCPS and charter school per-pupil differential. Given that some of the funding streams analyzed were one-time funds or only occurred in some of the years that were analyzed, only FY22 to FY25 were included and two different per-pupil calculations were completed for DCPS and charter schools. The first per-pupil calculation includes the one-time local funding outside of the UPSFF — DCPS Local Stabilization Fund, Charter Stabilization Funding, Public Charter School Reopening Grant, and Pandemic Supplement Fund (Appendix G). Due to the temporary nature of those monies, the second per-pupil calculation excludes them (Appendix H).

For the per-pupil calculation for both DCPS and charter schools, this analysis sums all the funding streams from FY22 to FY25 and then divides it by the total student enrollment for that same period. This calculation was done given the variability and restricted eligibility for some of the funding streams, which could inflate the per-pupil calculation in favor of either DCPS schools or charter schools. Inclusive of all the funding across the four categories examined for this analysis, from FY22 to FY25, DCPS received \$12,098 in per-pupil funding, compared with \$4,385 for charter school LEAs. This is a funding difference of \$7,713 per pupil (Table 15; Appendices I, J). When excluding the temporary local funding outside of the UPSFF, the funding gap between DCPS and charter schools slightly decreases to \$7,683 per pupil (Table 16). The main drivers of the funding differences for both calculations are the DCPS pensions and the difference in capital and facilities funding.

**TABLE 15: TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, INCLUSIVE OF COVID-19 TEMPORARY FUNDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

DCPS Funding Streams	DCPS Total Funding	Charter Total Funding
Local Funding Outside UPSFF	\$167 million	\$62 million
Capital and Facilities Funding	\$1.8 billion	\$684 million
Teacher Pay	\$272 million	\$74 million
Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans	\$254 million	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.47 billion</b>	<b>\$820 million</b>
<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>\$12,098</b>	<b>\$4,385</b>

**TABLE 16: TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, EXCLUDING COVID-19 TEMPORARY FUNDS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025**

DCPS Funding Streams	DCPS Total Funding	Charter Total Funding
Local Funding Outside UPSFF	\$119 million	\$23 million
Capital and Facilities Funding	\$1.8 billion	\$684 million
Teacher Pay	\$272 million	\$74 million
Teacher Pensions and Retirement Plans	\$254 million	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.42 billion</b>	<b>\$781 million</b>
<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>\$11,864</b>	<b>\$4,181</b>

**Note:** Charter schools do not receive any funding for retirement benefits and are not part of the DCPS pension system.

# What Policymakers Can Do to Support DCPS and Charter School Funding Parity

While the District has made efforts to address funding differences between DCPS schools and charter schools, such as one-time funding for teacher salaries, significant gaps remain. Some of the funding differences, such as local funding outside of the UPSFF, are more clear-cut in terms of potential remedies. Other funding differences, like capital funding, teacher pay, and retirement, are more complex and require more thought from education and political leaders on how to address them. The following six recommendations can advance parity across DCPS and charter schools:

## **1. Prioritize flowing funding through the UPSFF to create parity between DCPS and charter schools instead of establishing new local funding streams.**

If there are future instances of one-time funds, the District should regularly monitor how much additional funding DCPS receives outside of the formula and consider allocating a similar amount to charter schools through an additional line item.

## **2. Increase the charter per-pupil facilities allowance.**

Given the capital funding disparities between DCPS and charter schools, the DC Council should consider increasing the per-pupil facilities allowance to either be on par with the annual allocation for DCPS or to at least better address differences in how much charter schools spend on facilities versus how much they receive through the per-pupil allowance.

## **3. Broaden the definition of eligible staff for charter teacher pay raises to ensure parity between DCPS and charter schools.**

If the District intends to provide funding to enable charter schools to match compensation increases provided to DCPS personnel when the District provides outside UPSFF funding, then the definition of eligibility for increases should include the same or comparable roles. This expanded definition would better ensure parity between DCPS and charter schools, not just in teacher salaries but across key educational support positions.

**4. Consider options for addressing gaps in retirement contributions by including supplemental funding or support mechanisms for charter school retirement plans.** These measures would not only provide more parity in retirement benefits funding but also contribute to attracting and retaining quality educators in the charter sector.

## **5. Strengthen transparency in funding decisions.**

Where there are differences in accessibility to local funding streams, policymakers should be transparent about documenting the reasoning behind these differences.

## **6. Make data more accessible to enable thoughtful public dialogue and policy development, and to increase transparency.**

Key financial data and documents often reside in less accessible formats — such as PDFs — or are only available upon request, complicating efforts to track and compare funding streams between DCPS and charter schools. To enable thoughtful public dialogue and policy development and to increase transparency, the District should make school funding data more accessible through online spreadsheet formats. The Common Financial Reporting Standards established by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education will be a step in the right direction as schools are starting to fully implement the guidelines in FY24.

Ensuring equitable funding across all public schools, regardless of their type, is essential for providing quality education to all students. Differences in funding between DCPS schools and charter schools not only shortchange charter schools but also impact the families who rely on them to meet students' educational needs. ✦

# Appendix A

## LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF

The table below includes all local funding streams outside UPSFF that DCPS and charter LEAs received from FY22 to FY25. The data for the funding streams can be found in the DC Council Volume 3 Budgets. The enrollment numbers were calculated using the different eligibility requirements for the different funding streams. For the At-Risk Concentration per-pupil calculation, that is a direct allocation in the UPSFF formula. For charter schools, the Pandemic Supplement Fund was allocated on a set per-pupil amount. For the Early Stages and IMPACT Bonus funding, the overall DCPS student enrollment was used for the respective year. For the DCPS Local Stabilization Fund, the schools that received the funding from the DCPS initial school budgets were identified and cross-referenced with their respective student enrollment to calculate the per-pupil funding.

Local Funding Outside UPSFF	DCPS or Charter Funding	Total Funding	Student Enrollment Impacted by Funding	Per-Pupil Funding
<b>FY22</b>				
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund	DCPS	\$12,317,771	15,041	\$819
Charter School Stabilization Fund	Charter	\$10,208,530	6,645	\$1,536
Public Charter School Reopening Grant	Charter	\$10,000,000	44,899	\$223
<b>FY23</b>				
At-Risk Concentration	DCPS	\$5,279,742	0	\$621
Pandemic Supplement Fund	DCPS	\$9,559,091	22,923	\$417
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund	DCPS	\$9,464,000	11,736	\$806
IMPACT Bonus	DCPS	\$19,400,000	50,131	\$387
Early Stages	DCPS	\$9,789,000	50,131	\$195
At-Risk Concentration	Charter	\$5,068,814	0	\$621
Pandemic Supplement Fund	Charter	\$8,605,828	0	\$183
<b>FY24</b>				
At-Risk Concentration	DCPS	\$8,442,000	0	\$913
Pandemic Supplement Fund	DCPS	\$10,437,996	15,210	\$686
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund	DCPS	\$3,837,000	5,273	\$728
IMPACT Bonus	DCPS	\$19,400,000	51,293	\$378
Early Stages	DCPS	\$10,041,000	51,293	\$196
At-Risk Concentration	Charter	\$8,168,611	0	\$913
Pandemic Supplement Fund	Charter	\$9,397,086	0	\$196
<b>FY25</b>				
At-Risk Concentration	DCPS	\$9,422,000	0	\$1,027
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund	DCPS	\$2,018,000	654	\$3,086
IMPACT Bonus	DCPS	\$26,600,000	53,541	\$497
Early Stages	DCPS	\$10,785,000	53,541	\$201
At-Risk Concentration	Charter	\$10,062,546	0	\$1,027

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Financial Plans," accessed September 23, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "Budget Data," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024.

# Appendix B

## DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS PER-PUPIL DIFFERENCE IN LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF

To calculate the per-pupil amounts for DCPS and charter schools from FY22 to FY25, the total amount of funding they received during those fiscal years was divided by their total enrollment during that same period. To calculate the per-pupil difference, the charter school per-pupil amount was subtracted from the DCPS per-pupil amount.

Local Funding Outside UPSFF, Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025	Values
<b>DCPS</b>	
Total Funding	\$166,792,600
DCPS Enrollment	204,000
Per-Pupil Funding	\$817
<b>Charter</b>	
Total Funding	\$61,511,415
Charter Enrollment	186,871
Per-Pupil Funding	\$329
<b>DCPS and Charter School Per-Pupil Local Funding Difference Outside UPSFF, Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025</b>	
DCPS Per Pupil	\$817
Charter Per Pupil	\$329
Total Per-Pupil Funding Difference	\$488

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Financial Plans," accessed September 6, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "Budget Data," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024.

# Appendix C

## DCPS CAPITAL TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024

To calculate the DCPS capital per-pupil amount, the approved dollar amount for DCPS capital funding projects was divided by DCPS' student enrollment for the respective school year. The DCPS approved capital funding data is from the DC Council Volume 5 Budgets. The total and per-pupil calculations have been adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index and converted into constant U.S. dollars.

Unadjusted	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
DCPS Approved Capital Funding – Total	\$288,735,000	\$348,533,000	\$370,593,000	\$313,213,000	\$288,042,000	\$388,022,000	\$544,821,000
DCPS Enrollment	48,144	49,056	51,037	49,890	49,035	50,131	51,293
DCPS Approved Capital Funding – Per Pupil	\$5,997	\$7,105	\$7,261	\$6,278	\$5,874	\$7,740	\$10,622
Inflation-Adjusted	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
DCPS Approved Capital Funding – Total	\$260,235,603	\$426,012,583	\$446,000,152	\$368,464,086	\$316,175,062	\$400,820,906	\$544,821,000
DCPS Approval Capital Funding – Per Pupil	\$7,482	\$8,684	\$8,739	\$7,386	\$6,448	\$7,995	\$10,622

Sources: Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Fiscal Plans," accessed September 6, 2024.

# Appendix D

## COMPARISON OF DCPS CAPITAL FUNDING AND DCPS PER-PUPIL FACILITIES ALLOWANCE REVENUE, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024

The DCPS approved capital funding data is from the DC Council Volume 5 Budgets. The total charter school facilities allowance is from the DC Council Volume 3 Budgets. The total calculations have been adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index and converted into constant U.S. dollars.

Unadjusted	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
DCPS Approved Capital Funding – Total	\$288,735,000	\$348,533,000	\$370,593,000	\$313,213,000	\$288,042,000	\$388,022,000	\$544,821,000	\$2,541,959,000
Charter Facilities Allowance – Total	\$144,369,529	\$148,608,742	\$150,635,220	\$153,932,346	\$158,809,544	\$166,936,329	\$175,966,774	\$1,099,258,484
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$144,365,471</b>	<b>\$199,924,258</b>	<b>\$219,957,780</b>	<b>\$159,280,654</b>	<b>\$129,232,456</b>	<b>\$221,085,671</b>	<b>\$368,854,226</b>	<b>\$1,442,700,516</b>
Inflation-Adjusted	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
DCPS Approved Capital Funding – Total	\$360,235,603	\$426,012,583	\$446,000,152	\$368,464,086	\$316,175,062	\$400,820,906	\$544,821,000	\$2,862,529,392
Charter Facilities Allowance – Total	\$180,120,333	\$181,644,763	\$181,286,023	\$181,086,166	\$174,320,472	\$172,442,724	\$175,966,774	\$1,246,867,254
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$180,115,270</b>	<b>\$244,367,820</b>	<b>\$264,714,129</b>	<b>\$187,377,920</b>	<b>\$141,854,590</b>	<b>\$228,378,182</b>	<b>\$368,854,226</b>	<b>\$1,615,662,138</b>

Sources: Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, “[Budget and Fiscal Plans](#),” accessed September 23, 2024.

# Appendix E

## UNADJUSTED AND INFLATION-ADJUSTED TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL FUNDING DISPARITY BETWEEN CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES ALLOWANCE REVENUE AND OCCUPANCY EXPENSES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2024

For consistency, the charter school per-pupil facilities allowance revenues from the DC Council Volume 3 Fiscal Budgets was used. Occupancy expenses were identified from FY18 to FY22 from the DC Charter School Board's Financial Analysis Reports. The FY23 and FY24 occupancy expenses were calculated from the FY23 and FY24 DC Public Charter School Board budget.

Unadjusted – Total	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
Occupancy Expenses	\$162,158,250	\$168,424,016	\$172,031,000	\$179,689,000	\$210,181,000	\$216,776,213	\$187,264,953	\$1,296,524,432
Charter School Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$144,369,529	\$148,608,742	\$150,635,220	\$153,932,346	\$158,809,544	\$166,936,329	\$175,966,774	\$1,099,258,484
<b>Total Difference</b>	<b>\$17,788,721</b>	<b>\$19,815,274</b>	<b>\$21,395,780</b>	<b>\$25,756,654</b>	<b>\$51,371,456</b>	<b>\$49,839,884</b>	<b>\$11,298,179</b>	<b>\$197,265,948</b>
Charter School Enrollment	43,393	43,690	43,518	43,942	44,899	46,392	47,356	313,190
Inflation-Adjusted – Total	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Total
Occupancy Expenses	\$202,314,146	\$205,865,012	\$207,035,352	\$211,386,319	\$230,709,378	\$223,926,576	\$187,264,953	\$1,468,501,736
Charter School Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$180,120,333	\$181,644,763	\$181,286,023	\$181,086,166	\$174,320,472	\$172,442,724	\$175,966,774	\$1,246,867,254
<b>Total Difference</b>	<b>\$22,193,813</b>	<b>\$24,220,249</b>	<b>\$25,749,329</b>	<b>\$30,300,153</b>	<b>\$56,388,906</b>	<b>\$51,483,852</b>	<b>\$11,298,179</b>	<b>\$221,634,483</b>
Unadjusted – Per-Pupil	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Seven-Year Average
Occupancy Expenses	\$3,737	\$3,855	\$3,953	\$4,089	\$4,681	\$4,673	\$3,954	\$4,140
Charter School Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$3,327	\$3,401	\$3,461	\$3,503	\$3,537	\$3,598	\$3,716	\$3,510
<b>Total Difference</b>	<b>\$410</b>	<b>\$454</b>	<b>\$492</b>	<b>\$586</b>	<b>\$1,144</b>	<b>\$1,075</b>	<b>\$238</b>	<b>\$630</b>
Inflation-Adjusted Per-Pupil	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Seven-Year Average
Occupancy Expenses	\$4,662	\$4,712	\$4,757	\$4,811	\$5,138	\$4,827	\$3,954	\$4,689
Charter School Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$4,151	\$4,158	\$4,165	\$4,121	\$3,882	\$3,717	\$3,716	\$3,981
<b>Per-Pupil Difference</b>	<b>\$511</b>	<b>\$554</b>	<b>\$592</b>	<b>\$690</b>	<b>\$1,256</b>	<b>\$1,110</b>	<b>\$238</b>	<b>\$708</b>

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Fiscal Plans," accessed September 6, 2024; DC Public Charter School Board, "Financial Analysis Reports," 2024; "DC Public Charter School Board, "School Budgets," 2024.



# Appendix F

## UNADJUSTED AND INFLATION-ADJUSTED TOTAL AND PER-PUPIL ANNUAL FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TEACHERS' RETIREMENT PLAN, FISCAL YEAR 2018 TO 2022

The federal contribution to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan is from the U.S. Department of Treasury's Annual Fiscal Reports. The total and per-pupil calculations have been adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index and converted into constant U.S. dollars.

### Unadjusted Annual Federal Contribution to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	Five-Year Average
Federal Contribution – Total	\$307,746,000	\$310,185,600	\$312,555,000	\$311,531,100	\$317,260,800	\$311,855,700
Federal Contribution – Per-Pupil	\$6,392	\$6,323	\$6,124	\$6,244	\$6,470	\$6,309

### Inflation-Adjusted Annual Federal Contribution to the District of Columbia Teachers' Retirement Plan

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	Five-Year Average
Federal Contribution – Total	\$371,694,388	\$367,033,935	\$364,141,890	\$354,783,143	\$337,127,671	\$358,956,206
Federal Contribution – Per-Pupil	\$7,720	\$7,482	\$7,135	\$7,111	\$6,875	\$7,262

Sources: U.S. Department of the Treasury, "[DC Pensions](#)," accessed February 9, 2024.

# Appendix G

## CALCULATION NO. 1: ALL FUNDING STREAMS, INCLUDING TEMPORARY COVID-19 LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025

The data for DCPS Local Stabilization Fund, At-Risk Concentration Funding, Pandemic Supplement Fund, IMPACT Bonuses, and Early Stages can be found in the DC Council Volume 3 Budgets. The approved DCPS capital funding can be found in the DC Council Volume 5 Budgets. The DCPS teacher pay data can be found in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer letter. The per-pupil facilities allowance can be found in D.C. Code 38-2908. The Charter School Stabilization funding can be found in D.C. Code 38-2906.03. The Public Charter School Reopening Grant funding can be found in this OSSE notification. The one-time charter school teacher salary raise payment can be found in the OSSE guidance.

DCPS	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Total
DCPS Local Stabilization Fund	\$12,317,771	\$9,464,000	\$3,837,000	\$2,018,000	\$27,636,771
At-Risk Concentration	\$0	\$5,280,000	\$8,442,000	\$9,422,000	\$23,144,000
Pandemic Supplement Fund	\$0	\$9,559,091	\$10,437,996	\$0	\$19,997,087
IMPACT Bonuses	\$0	\$19,400,000	\$19,400,000	\$26,600,000	\$65,400,000
Early Stages	\$0	\$9,789,000	\$10,041,000	\$10,785,000	\$30,615,000
ADC	\$75,060,000	\$47,835,000	\$50,224,000	\$80,981,000	\$254,100,000
Salary Base Increase	\$0	\$126,008,000	\$73,812,000	\$84,008,000	\$283,828,000
4% Bonus	\$0	\$22,904,000	\$0	\$0	\$22,904,000
Additional Pay	\$0	\$17,315,000	\$5,823,000	\$5,823,000	\$28,961,000
Benefits	\$0	\$2,707,000	\$2,926,000	\$3,076,000	\$8,709,000
DCPS Portion of Teacher Pay	\$0	(\$22,125,000)	(\$24,062,000)	(\$26,004,000)	(\$72,191,000)
Approved Capital Funding	\$288,042,000	\$388,022,000	\$544,821,000	\$553,983,000	\$1,774,868,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$375,419,771</b>	<b>\$636,158,091</b>	<b>\$705,701,996</b>	<b>\$760,692,000</b>	<b>\$2,467,971,858</b>
DCPS Enrollment	49,035	50,131	51,293	53,541	204,000
Charter Schools	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Total
Charter School Stabilization Funding	\$10,208,530	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,208,530
At-Risk Concentration	\$0	\$5,068,814	\$8,168,611	\$10,062,546	\$23,299,971
Pandemic Supplement Fund	\$0	\$8,605,828	\$9,397,086	\$0	\$0
Public Charter School Reopening Grant	\$10,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000,000
Base Pay Increase	\$0	\$0	\$73,600,000	\$0	\$73,600,000
Nonresident Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$155,312,784	\$163,178,313	\$172,142,794	\$178,556,146	\$669,190,037
Resident Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$3,496,760	\$3,748,016	\$3,823,980	\$4,083,615	\$15,152,371
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$179,018,074</b>	<b>\$180,600,971</b>	<b>\$267,132,471</b>	<b>\$192,702,307</b>	<b>\$819,453,823</b>
Charter Enrollment	44,899	46,392	47,356	48,224	186,871

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Fiscal Plans," accessed September 6, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "Budget Data," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Compensation and Working Conditions Agreement between the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Washington Teachers' Union, Local #6 of the American Federal of Teachers Approval Resolution of 2023," 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter Teacher Salary Policy and Guidance," 2024.

# Appendix H

## CALCULATION NO. 2: FUNDING STREAMS, EXCLUDING TEMPORARY COVID-19 LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025

The funding streams that were excluded for calculation No. 2 are DCPS Local Stabilization Fund, Charter School Stabilization Funding, Public Charter School Reopening Grant, and the Pandemic Supplement Fund. The data for At-Risk Concentration Funding, IMPACT Bonuses, and Early Stages can be found in the DC Council Volume 3 Budgets. The approved DCPS capital funding can be found in the DC Council Volume 5 Budgets. The DCPS teacher pay data can be found in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer letter. The per-pupil facilities allowance can be found in D.C. Code 38-2908.

DCPS	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Total
At-Risk Concentration	N/A	\$5,280,000	\$8,442,000	\$9,442,000	\$23,144,000
IMPACT Bonuses	N/A	\$19,400,000	\$19,400,000	\$26,600,000	\$65,400,000
Early Stages	N/A	\$9,789,000	\$10,041,000	10,785,000	\$30,615,000
ADC	\$75,060,000	\$47,835,000	\$50,224,000	\$80,981,000	\$254,100,000
Salary Base Increase	N/A	\$126,008,000	\$73,812,000	\$84,008,000	\$283,828,000
4% Bonus	N/A	\$22,904,000	N/A	N/A	\$22,904,000
Additional Pay	N/A	\$17,315,000	\$5,823,000	\$5,823,000	\$28,961,000
Benefits	N/A	\$2,707,000	\$2,926,000	\$3,076,000	\$8,709,000
DCPS Portion of Teacher Pay	N/A	(\$22,125,000)	(\$24,062,000)	(\$26,004,000)	(\$72,191,000)
Approved Capital Funding	\$288,042,000	\$388,022,000	\$544,821,000	\$553,983,000	\$1,774,868,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$363,102,000</b>	<b>\$617,135,000</b>	<b>\$691,427,000</b>	<b>\$748,674,000</b>	<b>\$2,420,338,000</b>
DCPS Enrollment	49,035	50,131	51,293	53,541	204,000
Charter Schools	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Total
At-Risk Concentration	N/A	\$5,068,814	\$8,168,611	\$10,062,546	\$23,299,971
Base Pay Increase	N/A	N/A	\$73,600,000	N/A	\$73,600,000
Nonresident Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$155,312,784	\$163,178,313	\$172,142,794	\$178,556,146	\$669,190,037
Resident Per-Pupil Facilities Allowance	\$3,496,760	\$3,748,016	\$3,823,980	\$4,083,615	\$15,152,371
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$158,809,544</b>	<b>\$171,995,143</b>	<b>\$257,735,385</b>	<b>\$192,702,307</b>	<b>\$781,242,379</b>
Charter Enrollment	44,899	46,392	47,356	48,224	186,871

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Fiscal Plans," accessed September 6, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "Budget Data," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Compensation and Working Conditions Agreement between the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Washington Teachers' Union, Local #6 of the American Federal of Teachers Approval Resolution of 2023," 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter Teacher Salary Policy and Guidance," 2024.

# Appendix I

## PER-PUPIL CALCULATION NO. 1, INCLUDING TEMPORARY COVID-19 LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025

For the per-pupil calculation for both DCPS and charter schools, all the funding streams were summed up and that total was then divided by the total student enrollment from FY22 to FY25 (Appendix G). Calculations were done in this way due to the variability and restricted eligibility for some of the funding streams, which could inflate or decrease the per-pupil calculation in favor of either DCPS schools or charter schools.

Calculation No. 1: Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025	Values
<b>DCPS</b>	
Total Funding	\$2,467,971,858
DCPS Enrollment	204,000
Per-Pupil Funding	\$12,098
<b>Charter</b>	
Total Funding	\$819,453,823
Charter Enrollment	186,871
Per-Pupil Funding	\$4,385
Calculation No. 1: DCPS and Charter School Per-Pupil Funding Difference, Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025	Values
DCPS Per Pupil	\$12,098
Charter Per Pupil	\$4,385
<b>Total Per-Pupil Funding Difference</b>	<b>\$7,713</b>

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "[Budget and Fiscal Plans](#)," accessed February 9, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "[Budget Data](#)," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "[Code of the District of Columbia](#)," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "[Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations](#)," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "[Compensation and Working Conditions Agreement between the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Washington Teachers' Union, Local #6 of the American Federal of Teachers Approval Resolution of 2023](#)," 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "[Public Charter Teacher Salary Policy and Guidance](#)," 2024.

# Appendix J

## PER-PUPIL CALCULATION NO. 2, EXCLUDING TEMPORARY COVID-19 LOCAL FUNDING OUTSIDE UPSFF, FOR DCPS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FISCAL YEAR 2022 TO 2025

For the per-pupil calculation for both DCPS and charter schools, the sum of all the funding streams, except for the temporary local funding outside of the UPSFF, were divided by the total student enrollment from FY22 to FY25 (Appendix H). Calculations were done in this way due to the variability and restricted eligibility for some of the funding streams, which could inflate the per-pupil calculation in favor of either DCPS schools or charter schools.

Calculation No. 2: Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025	Values
<b>DCPS</b>	
Total Funding	\$2,420,338,000
DCPS Enrollment	204,000
Per-Pupil Funding	\$11,864
<b>Charter</b>	
Total Funding	\$781,242,379
Charter Enrollment	186,871
Per-Pupil Funding	\$4,181
<b>Calculation No. 2: DCPS and Charter School Per-Pupil Funding Difference, Fiscal Year 2022 to 2025</b>	
DCPS Per Pupil	\$11,864
Charter Per Pupil	\$4,181
<b>Total Per-Pupil Funding Difference</b>	<b>\$7,684</b>

**Sources:** Council of the District of Columbia Office of the Budget Director, "Budget and Fiscal Plans," accessed September 6, 2024; District of Columbia Public Schools, "Budget Data," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Code of the District of Columbia," 2024; District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter School Reopening Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Preliminary Allocations," 2024; Council of the District of Columbia, "Compensation and Working Conditions Agreement between the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Washington Teachers' Union, Local #6 of the American Federal of Teachers Approval Resolution of 2023," 2024; Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "Public Charter Teacher Salary Policy and Guidance," 2024.

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## About Bellwether

Bellwether is a national nonprofit that exists to transform education to ensure systemically marginalized young people achieve outcomes that lead to fulfilling lives and flourishing communities. Founded in 2010, we work hand in hand with education leaders and organizations to accelerate their impact, inform and influence policy and program design, and share what we learn along the way. For more, visit [bellwether.org](http://bellwether.org).

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