

February 11, 2022

To: Chancellor Lewis D. Ferebee
Mayor Muriel Bowser

CC: Councilmember Charles Allen, Ward 6
Councilmember Vincent Gray, Ward 7
Councilmember Phil Mendelson, Chair
Councilmember at Large Robert C. White, Jr.
Councilmember at Large Christina Henderson
Councilmember at Large Elissa Silverman
Councilmember at Large Anita Bonds
State Board of Education Representative Jessica Sutter

RE: Maury Elementary's SY23 Funding Does Not Enable its Students To Succeed

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chancellor Ferebee:

On Monday, February 7, 2022, DCPS released its initial budgets for schools. We were dismayed to see that despite a projection of 38 new students for the 2022-23 school year (SY23), Maury Elementary School did not receive a budget sufficient to support even our current student population. In fact, Maury's initial budget proposes a reduction of nearly two full time professionals - 1 full time special educator and 0.82 of an ELL teacher. This is simply unacceptable and needs your immediate attention.

The Maury community is fortunate. Our students and teachers moved into a beautifully renovated school in August 2019. In 2020, Maury was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School. We have amazing teachers and staff, and our students work incredibly hard at both academics and social emotional learning. The SY23 initial budget for Maury Elementary puts all of this at risk.

This letter sets out how DCPS's SY23 budget does not meet even the minimum of what Maury Elementary's projected 547 students will need next year. It also sets out why we, the parent members of the Maury LSAT, are bewildered as to how DCPS's budget process could neglect the school in this way.

Impacts. Here are some of the impacts this initial budget will have on Maury if changes are not made:

- Maury will be forced to use the "Mayor's Recovery Funds" to keep current teachers and staff in place because there is not enough funding to cover salary increases;
- The 38 new students Maury is projected to enroll will be added to already large class sizes because there is not enough funding for additional teachers and aides;
- The four current 3rd grade classes at Maury will be forced into three 4th grade classes because there is not enough funding for an additional 4th grade teacher;
- Maury's one art teacher, one music teacher, one librarian, and one world languages teacher will have to teach all 547 students as there is no funding for additional specials teachers;

- Our overworked front office staff will – once again – have no relief. There is no budget for a second front office assistant, even as the workload has dramatically increased; and
- Maury will be able to afford only to add one behavior technician even as compounding pandemic-related behavior and socialization problems have strained Maury's existing social and behavior resources staff, and will surely continue into SY23.

Budget bewilderment. According to data on the DCPS's budget website:

- Maury's per pupil funding is the lowest amount of any elementary school in the entire District -- and it is not even close. For SY23, Maury Elementary's per pupil spending is \$10,949. The next closest school is \$11,960 per pupil, well below Mayor's proposed 2023 baseline funding of \$12,419 per pupil, and doesn't even meet the claimed per pupil funding in 2022 of \$11,730.
- Maury's at-risk percentage is higher than a number of other elementary schools that have higher – in some cases significantly higher – per pupil spending.
- Over the last four years, DCPS's per pupil funding for Maury has shrunk by 6% even as Maury's student population has consistently increased – indeed, it is projected to have grown by 24% by the start of the next school year. This rapid growth has put an increasing stress on resources, and also means that the school's new building will reach capacity next year, an issue that comes with future budget concerns that should be proactively addressed with next year's budget by the Mayor's office and DCPS

We have set out in the appendix ways in which the initial budget fails to meet DCPS's values to “put [kids'] needs first in everything we do.”

Consequences. Without an increase in its budget allocation, Maury Elementary - its students, teachers, staff, and families - will not have even the minimum funding necessary to enable *all* its students to succeed. Hardest hit will be next year's fourth graders, who will effectively lose a teacher.

In the press release announcing the budget, the Mayor stated “This is another budget that recognizes that when we invest in schools, we invest in our families and neighborhoods.” Apparently, that is not the case for the hundreds of families that have students attending Maury Elementary.

Fortunately, you have the power and the opportunity to alleviate this situation, hold true to your commitments to adequately fund all of the District's schools, fulfill the values and mission of DCPS, and meet the needs of the 547 children who will be enrolled at Maury Elementary next school year. We respectfully request that you adjust Maury's initial budget to adequately reflect the needs of our school and our children.

Kenyon S. Weaver
 Ross Kyle
 Richard Parker
 Alison Schwartz
 D'Ann Lettieri

The parent members of the Maury Elementary LSAT

APPENDIX

According to the DCPS budget website:

With regard to the initial budget and past budgets:

- Maury Elementary's SY23 budget allocation is \$5,988,891.
- The DCPS FY23 budget worksheets claim that "This is an increase of \$220,359 compared to the FY22 submitted budget." (Note: according to the dcpsbudget.org website Maury Elementary's SY22 budget allocation (submitted budget) was \$5,880,376 and with additional funding it was \$6,074,882. Thus from what we can tell, this is either an increase of only \$108,515, or it is a decrease of \$85,991 - but not an increase of the advertised \$220,359)
- The entirety of the DCPS stated increase of \$220,359 is equal to the Mayor's Recovery Funds contributed to Maury, meaning that it is only for stabilizing the budget to *avoid losing staff even while increasing enrollment*.
- While there is a nominal increase of \$220,359, the reality is that almost all of this "increase" will be taken up with a standard increase in staff salaries.

Eliminations/reductions:

- The SY23 budget eliminated one special education teacher.
- The SY23 budget reduced the ELL teacher from 1.0 to 0.18, thus reducing the ELL allowance by 0.82.

Enrollment:

- Maury is projected to have an increase of 38 students from SY22 to SY23.
- Maury has gained students for years and in SY23 will hit its maximum capacity.

Socialization / behavior needs:

- With the initial budget offered by DCPS, in order to maintain all existing staff, the only additional staff Maury Elementary can add is one behavior technician.
- This year has shown that one behavior technician will be needed in light of the pandemic's ongoing effects on school students and their socialization. Maury would benefit from *more* additional behavior technicians and additional school support services such as psychologists.

Per pupil spending:

- A review of per pupil spending shows Maury at the very bottom at \$10,949.
- The next school is Watkins at \$11,960.
- Hyde-Addison, which has a similar at risk percentage as Maury, has a per pupil spending of \$13,793.

School	\$ per pupil (per DCPS)	Ward	FY 23 Enrollment	Change in Enrollment	# At Risk	% At Risk
Military Road ES	\$ 42,179.00	4	66	-7	18	27.3%

LaSalle-Backus ES	\$	25,378.00	4	267	15	130	48.7%
King, M.L. ES	\$	24,461.00	8	218	-52	183	83.9%
Malcom X ES	\$	23,623.00	8	199	-34	162	81.4%
Patterson ES	\$	23,520.00	8	271	-43	239	88.2%
Smothers ES	\$	23,364.00	7	210	-24	157	74.8%
Plummer ES	\$	23,308.00	7	221	-18	177	80.1%
Moten ES	\$	22,759.00	8	211	-27	189	89.6%
Drew ES	\$	21,915.00	7	192	-31	150	78.1%
Burroughs	\$	21,704.00	5	233	-46	99	42.5%
Bunker Hill ES	\$	21,651.00	5	210	-21	96	45.7%
Raymond ES	\$	21,564.00	4	394	-79	209	53.0%
Aiton ES	\$	21,481.00	7	204	-22	177	86.8%
CW Harris ES	\$	21,335.00	7	238	6	186	78.2%
Houston ES	\$	21,103.00	7	280	-2	197	70.4%
Stanton ES	\$	20,890.00	8	317	-73	288	90.9%
HD Cooke ES	\$	20,834.00	1	366	-44	181	49.5%
Truesdell ES	\$	20,731.00	4	444	-45	254	57.2%
Simon ES	\$	20,641.00	8	229	-7	168	73.4%
Seaton ES	\$	20,438.00	6	345	-19	133	38.6%
Langley ES	\$	20,300.00	5	312	-5	165	52.9%
Hendley ES	\$	20,071.00	8	290	-20	265	91.4%
Cleveland ES	\$	20,051.00	1	277	-23	129	46.6%
Whittier ES	\$	20,013.00	4	346	-32	194	56.1%
Noyes ES	\$	19,867.00	5	264	40	184	69.7%

Brightwood	\$	19,864.00	4	596	28	242	40.6%
Bruce Monroe ES @ Parkview	\$	19,786.00	1	421	-64	140	33.3%
Savoy ES	\$	19,769.00	8	265	6	225	84.9%
Beers ES	\$	19,752.00	7	365	-89	205	55.9%
Marie Reed ES	\$	19,715.00	1	439	-18	121	27.6%
Garfield ES	\$	19,701.00	8	251	12	211	84.1%
Dorothy Height ES	\$	19,613.00	4	435	-17	195	44.8%
Nalle ES	\$	19,344.00	7	309	-17	224	73.5%
Ross ES	\$	19,098.00	2	171	-10	6	3.5%
Thomson ES	\$	18,914.00	2	281	-19	116	41.3%
Thomas ES	\$	18,725.00	7	287	-31	231	80.5%
Tubman ES	\$	18,523.00	1	539	-10	289	53.6%
Miner ES	\$	18,424.00	6	395	-23	252	63.8%
Payne ES	\$	18,330.00	6	308	-16	135	43.8%
Powell ES	\$	18,089.00	4	501	-13	197	39.3%
Burville ES	\$	18,070.00	7	257	-48	182	70.8%
Ketcham	\$	17,763.00	8	292	-44	239	81.8%
Randle Highland ES	\$	17,517.00	7	304	-27	176	57.9%
Garrison ES	\$	17,381.00	2	354	18	148	41.8%
JO Wilson ES	\$	16,931.00	6	431	-8	237	55.0%
Barnard ES	\$	16,795.00	4	601	-39	260	43.3%
Amidon Bowen	\$	16,369.00	6	360	25	223	61.9%
Langdon ES	\$	16,327.00	5	354	-4	194	54.8%
John Lewis ES	\$	16,224.00	4	401	46	156	38.9%

Turner	\$	16,104.00	8	514	25	414	80.5%
Tyler ES	\$	15,906.00	6	511	-36	196	38.4%
Boone ES	\$	15,397.00	8	437	3	329	75.3%
Bancroft	\$	15,318.00	1	711	49	194	27.3%
Peabody	\$	15,206.00	6	210	-9	17	8.1%
Hearst ES	\$	15,131.00	3	354	0	30	8.5%
Kimball ES	\$	14,855.00	7	427	29	335	78.5%
Capitol Hill Montessori @ Logan	\$	14,293.00	6	396	41	79	19.9%
Ludlow Taylor ES	\$	14,156.00	6	451	2	108	23.9%
Hyde-Addison ES	\$	13,792.00	2	379	-25	43	11.3%
Mann ES	\$	13,745.00	3	367	-35	9	2.5%
Van Ness ES	\$	13,369.00	6	371	-9	123	33.2%
Shepherd ES	\$	13,354.00	4	359	-7	35	9.7%
Eaton ES	\$	13,247.00	3	419	-25	32	7.6%
Stoddert ES	\$	13,052.00	3	457	4	34	7.4%
Key ES	\$	13,015.00	3	350	-10	6	1.7%
Brent ES	\$	12,888.00	6	428	-18	22	5.1%
Lafayette ES	\$	12,509.00	4	884	-58	27	3.1%
Murch	\$	12,003.00	3	622	8	36	5.1%
Janney ES	\$	11,993.00	3	678	-40	14	2.1%
Watkins ES	\$	11,960.00	6	417	-39	119	28.5%
Maury ES	\$	10,949.00	6	547	38	64	11.7%

