

#DCSchoolsRecovery Fact Sheet

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

This year's budget landscape is unprecedented as we navigate through the multiplying effects of COVID in DC. Adequate and equitable funding and support is more important than ever before. Our advocacy is most effective and powerful when we are informed and bring deep knowledge and understanding to the table. Below is information about a wide range of COVID impacts - direct and indirect - AND data and statistics about key issue areas and solutions you're asking for to demonstrate why they are effective and essential.

HOW TO USE IT:

We encourage you to read through to learn more and click on the links for details on the issues that matter most to you! This information can be used in questions for policymakers, testimonies, social media posts - wherever you want to amplify YOUR voice and lift up the needs of your community.

COVID IMPACT DATA

COVID Cases and Deaths

- As of December 16, 2020 there have been over [25,830 positive COVID-19 cases](#) and 704 people have lost their life to the virus in DC - undoubtedly leaving many more with trauma, grief, and loss.
- The majority of COVID-19 related deaths have been people of color. According to the [2019 Census data](#), 46% of DC residents are Black and 46% of DC residents are white. However, [over 74% of all lives lost from COVID-19 have been Black and only 10% of all lives lost were white.](#)

Increasing Violence

Gun Violence

- 2020 has been marked as the highest number of homicide in the District since 2008.
 - As of December 18, there have been [200 homicides this year](#). 86.5% of the homicides were a result of increased gun violence.

- 43% of homicides occurred in Southeast DC. Across the District, 29 of the homicide deaths were under the age of 19.
- The increase in homicide and gun violence has been attributed to the fact that [many of the best ideas for reducing violence have not been accessible during the pandemic](#).
 - Facilities like schools, churches, libraries, sport leagues, and recreation centers have been scaled back and closed. Programs that are specifically designed to reduce gun violence, such as summer jobs programs, violence interventions, and group behavioral therapy have either been canceled or moved online, which has significantly affected the efficacy of these programs.

Domestic Violence

- [Drops in reporting](#) indicated that many survivors were unable to seek help while spending more time at home with their abuser. Women, particularly women of color, lower-income, undocumented immigrant women, Native women, and LGBTQ people are experiencing higher rates of domestic violence.

Child Abuse

- On average, teachers and other community professionals report more than [two-thirds of child abuse cases](#). When schools closed in March, many centers reported drastic drops in the number of reports.
 - Nationwide, there were nearly 40,000 fewer cases, which is a 21% drop when compared to the number of last year's cases. Child abuse did not decrease; educators are not able to catch it during distance learning.

Housing Insecurity

- DC Council passed a law that prevents people from being evicted until the Mayor's public health emergency order ends. But from just March 17 to May, when the Council's bill went into effect, [landlords filed about 1,100 eviction complaints](#). This means many are at risk of eviction as soon as the public health emergency ends and could be facing homelessness.
- Even *before* the pandemic, [research](#) found that 11 out of every 100 renters in DC experienced an eviction filing. In Wards 7 and 8, that rate is nearly doubled with 20 out of 100 and 25 out of 100 people experiencing eviction, respectively.

Mortgage and Rent Assistance

- DC has been taking steps to support families with housing; however, housing insecurity is still a major challenge for many families both now and even more so in the future.
 - The Mayor and DC Council established [mortgage and rent deferral](#) programs that allow for missed payments to be repaid over the next year after the public health emergency.
 - In August 2020, the Mayor announced the relaunch of the [DC mortgage assistance program](#) that allows qualified borrowers a loan of up to \$5,000 monthly toward their mortgage for up to six months.
 - The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has developed the COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program (CHAP), a [\\$10.2 million program](#) funded by the federal CARES Act and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) offering rental assistance to low-income renters who are in arrears.
 - [DC rent relief program](#) lets landlords apply directly for \$10 million in government grants to cover tenants' missed rent payments during the coronavirus pandemic. The District is using money from the federal CARES Act to fund the program, which will focus on units considered affordable and small landlords with 20 or fewer units. Called "Housing Stabilization Grants," the program will help forgive tenants' missed payments between April and November.

Pervasive Racial Inequity

Racial Income Gap

- Families with more wealth are able to provide more and higher-quality educational opportunities for their children, who are, as a result, [exposed to more opportunities to attain wealth themselves](#) preventing many, predominantly Black families and families of color, from increasing their wealth.

Unemployment

- DC's unemployment rate in [November 2020 is 7.5%](#); however, the unemployment rates in Wards 7 and 8, areas which are both almost entirely Black, are 12.8% and 16.7%,

respectively. Nationwide, Latinx women and Black women experience the highest levels of unemployment of any racial groups.

Income Inequality

- In 2019, the top 20% of households in DC had an average income of about \$362,000, which is [26 times larger](#) than the average income for households in the bottom 20%.
- This income inequality is highly racialized as white median household income was more than three times the Black median income and 1.5 times the Latinx median income.

Cycle of Poverty

- Children who experience poverty are [more likely to drop out of school, experience irregular employment, and live in poverty as adults](#), which continues the systemic, intergenerational cycle of the racial income gap.
- [16% of all adults who live with children in DC do not have enough food.](#)

Disparate Challenges for Essential Workers

- [Black people are disproportionately represented in the essential workforce](#), which risks the health of these workers and their families. Additionally, essential workers are required to expend more resources to ensure their children are able to receive support and instruction during distance learning.
 - The costs of wifi, technology, and child care or other caregivers further complicate managing housing and food security.
 - Black women are more likely to experience the largest economic losses as the labor market further diminishes during the pandemic.

Impact on Student Mental Health

- The persistent COVID-19 impacts have led students of all ages to [experience chronic stress and trauma](#). Many may not be able to receive all of the support services they need and some are dealing with extended time in unhealthy living environments, new roles as tutors or caregivers to siblings, or even interpreters and translators - all added stressors during an already difficult time.
- From an [EmpowerK12 survey](#):
 - 77% of DC students surveyed are concerned about the health of their family.
 - One in five students have recently experienced the loss of a family member that they live with.

- 45% of students reported that their family's financial situation has become somewhat or significantly more stressful due to the pandemic.
- It is evident that students are coping with a lot of new stressors from the effects of the pandemic, but there are few outlets or sources of relief as [two-thirds of students have been unable to participate in an activity](#) that they normally do and makes them happy.

Impact on Parents/Guardians

- Overall, parents and families are stressed because of the multitude of persistent, daily challenges including, but not limited to, paying bills (and in some cases, covering increased costs due to the pandemic) putting food on the table each day, managing their children's learning and their own jobs, and addressing health concerns, which is taking an outsize toll on their [mental health](#).
 - Worsening mental health for parents occurred alongside worsening behavioral health for children in nearly 1 in 10 families, including 48% of respondents who reported loss of regular child care, 16% who reported change in insurance status, and 11% who reported worsening food security according to the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).
- Our [spring](#) and [fall](#) surveys, with 320 and 939 responses respectively, asked parents about the challenges and stressors that COVID-19 and its implications created. Many of the challenges that parents experienced in the spring have carried through to the fall:
 - In both surveys, nearly half of the parents named managing their children's education at home as a top challenge.
 - Other top challenges were job/income instability, housing and rent insecurity, and not getting good information from the city.
 - Even though many parents and families are experiencing additional challenges, the distribution of COVID-19 effects have not been spread evenly. For many families living East of the River, Spanish-speaking families, and families who receive services (including TANF, SNAP, etc.), their challenges are compounded and impact nearly every facet of their lives.

Impact on Schools

Enrollment Drops

- According to the [DC Fiscal Policy Institute](#), the city has enrolled about 500 fewer students than were enrolled during the fall in the 2019-2020 school year. Because DCPS and public charter Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are funded based on the projected number of enrolled students, the 500 fewer students will lead to a potential loss of at least \$5.6 million for the public school system. Looking ahead to one of the tightest budget years ever, the total impact of any drop in students and resulting reduction in funding - let alone learning loss - could be massive.
- Further, an [estimated 15,000 people](#) moved out of DC during the pandemic. It's possible that some of those families kept their kids enrolled this year with remote learning, but would not enroll next year. The drop in population would further diminish funding for schools and tax revenue for the District.

School Leader Stressors and Challenges

- [Pre-COVID](#), many school leaders experienced substantial job-related stress and lacked sufficient guidance and resources to respond appropriately to a variety of issues. Now with the uncertainties of COVID, [many principals and school leaders](#) named that work-life balance, the health concerns of their faculty, staff, and students, and providing a quality education for their students are the three main stressors that they are consistently experiencing.

Impacts on Learning

Racial and Income-level Opportunity Gaps Widening

- White and affluent students often have more access to high-quality in-person and personalized support, and, in some cases, [are even gaining faster than before the pandemic](#).
- In just this school year, at-risk students have lost, on average, [5 months of learning in math and 4 months of learning in reading](#) compared to a 4 month and 1 month slide respectively for all students.
 - On average, 55% of students who are at-risk are 2+ grade levels behind in math, which is an increase of 8% from the previous year.
 - While at-risk students and students of color are falling behind, white students are actually gaining faster than before the pandemic in some areas. In reading,

at-risk students only grew by 58% from last school year, while, on average, white students grew by 176%.

Digital Divide and Disconnect

- The NWEA [reported](#) that, when compared to fall 2019, the number of students who took the test in fall 2020 fell by 25%, which predominantly included students of color and low-income students.
 - All assessments given during COVID-19 must be examined through a critical lens and account for the fact that many students' achievement, who are predominantly lower income and students of color, are not properly represented because of systemic economic, health, technological, or other barriers.

Early Literacy Warnings

- Early literacy is an important indicator for future academic success; those who are not reaching early targets are more likely to progress slower throughout the remainder of their time in school. In DC, the number of kindergarteners who are not hitting their early literacy targets significantly decreased by [11 percentage points, first graders decreased by 12, and second graders decreased by seven, when compared to the fall 2019 data.](#)

Early Education

- [Enrollment is down](#) in early childhood programs in DC and nationally - which was a major part of what [fueled DC's growth](#) and not just in academics - but also the maternal workforce and population. When free universal PreK passed, [more families](#) with young children chose to stay in the city in order to take advantage of the free option and [11% more women were able to return to work.](#)

Higher Education

- Nationwide, across all types of institutions, undergraduate enrollment has [decreased by 2.5% this year.](#)
- Across all types of colleges, [enrollment for low-income high school graduates decreased by 29.2%](#), while at community colleges, the drop for low-income students was 37.1%.
- A recent [analysis](#) of FAFSA data found that students from families with incomes under \$75,000 are two times twice as likely to say they “canceled all plans” to take classes this fall as students from families with incomes over \$100,000.
- Another [national report](#) found that only 13% of college dropouts ever return, and even fewer graduate.

Special Education

- In math, students with an IEP, on average, have [experienced a 43% decline](#) in their expected growth from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020. In reading, students with an IEP have increased by 7%; however, the reading levels have a clear racial disparity. On average, a Black student with disabilities has experienced a drop of 33% in their expected growth. White students with disabilities have experienced an increase of 28% in their expected reading growth.
- Children with an IEP are not only falling behind academically, but they are [at risk of missing developmental milestones](#) and losing the necessary skills for an independent life.
 - Even though all accommodations and supports are required by law, many students aren't receiving what they need.
 - Occupational therapists and other specialists are not able to effectively provide services to children virtually, and parents of students with special needs do not feel equipped to help teachers and specialists fulfill their children's IEP.

SOLUTIONS IMPACT DATA

Out of School Time (OST) Programs

Education Outcomes

- After school and summer programs are linked to increased engagement in class, social emotional skills, and self-esteem--all factors that drive improved academic performance.
- A lack of summer enrichment during elementary school years can account for about [two-thirds of the achievement gap](#) between lower and higher income students.
- Early summer education loss results in [consequences later in life](#), such as whether students drop-out of high school, and whether they attend college.
- [Disadvantaged youth fall significantly behind](#) in reading during the summer, in comparison to their growth during the school year.

Benefits for Working Parents

- Parents concerned about their children's after-school care miss an average of [eight days of work per year](#).

Safety and Criminal Justice Impacts

- For every dollar invested in OST programs, [the city saves \\$2.50 in crime-related costs](#).
- The rate of violent crimes committed by youth is highest during the hours right after school, with close to 1 in 5 juvenile violent crimes taking place [between 3 and 7 p.m.](#)

Mental Health Supports and Trauma-Informed Training in All Schools

Improves Educational Outcomes

- Social and emotional learning programming has been found to improve students' achievement test scores by [11 to 17 percentile points](#).
- Students who use mental health services in school-based health centers are [two times more likely to stay in school](#) than students who did not use school-based health center services.
- Data shows that the [implementation of restorative justice programs](#) decreases incidents of disruptive behavior and decreases the number of suspensions.
- Data from before the onset of the pandemic (**NOTE:** it is highly likely that these rates are even higher as a result of the pandemic)
 - [1 in 5 children](#) have a diagnosable emotional, behavioral, or mental health disorder, and [1 in 10 children](#) have a mental health challenge that is severe enough to impair their function at home, school, or in the community.
 - [Over 50% of students](#), ages 14 and older, with emotional and behavioral disabilities drop-out of high school.

Mental Health Impacts Physical Health

- Half of all mental health conditions start by [14 years of age](#).
- Having an [Adverse Childhood Experience](#) (ACE) score of 4 (scale 0-10, low to high) [doubles the likelihood of heart disease and cancer](#).
- In 2019, about 1 in 3 DC middle school students and 1 in 5 high school students reported having seriously thought about killing themselves
- Of the 5 million students affected by mental health issues in the US, [80% of students will not receive counseling](#), therapy, medication, or treatment, at all.
- DBH notes that as many as 20% of children and adolescents may have a mental health disorder that can be identified and require treatment.
 - This means that more than 20,000 children covered by Medicaid in DC likely have a mental health disorder that can be identified and requires treatment, but

year after year, the data shows that far fewer publicly insured children in DC receive mental health services.

Mental Health and the Budget

- The Council failed to restore \$4 million of the Mayor's proposed cuts to community-based behavioral health services, \$2 million of which would have been matched by federal dollars.
 - By failing to restore these funds, the Council left millions of federal dollars on the table and effectively allowed a cut of nearly \$9 million in spending from these services given the loss of the matching federal dollars.

Stabilizing Child Care

- A child's early years are a [crucial time](#) for learning, and research shows that a secure attachment to an adult caregiver is key to healthy development. For many children, early educators provide these foundational relationships.
 - Loss of these relationships and the early learning opportunities preschool provides can exacerbate the large achievement gaps that [emerge](#) between children from low-income families and their more affluent peers.
- [Achievement gaps](#) between students in different income classes, and between students of different races and ethnicities, appear before kindergarten begins, and sometimes peak at ages 5 and 6. Thus, early childhood care and education (ECCE) has a potentially large role in shaping these gaps.
 - According to McKinsey researchers, the potential benefits to closing educational achievement gaps between students of different income classes total nearly \$70 billion annually.
- The benefits of boosting women's labor force participation through the provision of more and better child care access and affordability are potentially enormous. Women are half of the potential workforce, and [each 1% increase in the overall workforce increases total national income by 1%](#), which is about \$180 billion.

Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF)

Current UPSFF Levels

- The [2013 adequacy study](#) reported that the base UPSFF should be \$11,638 (when adjusted for inflation). However, [the UPSFF is currently set at \\$11,310](#) which is a gap of nearly \$328 per student.

- The 2013 study said the at-risk weight should be 0.37, or \$4,062 per student. The at-risk weight is currently set at 0.2256, or \$2,551 per student, which is a [gap of \\$1,511 per student](#).

How Funding Impacts Student Outcomes

- Money matters significantly in the context of the direct impact spending has on student achievement
 - Research shows that total per-pupil spending is positively associated with improved student outcomes.
 - “An increasing body of rigorous empirical evidence suggests that substantive and sustained state school finance reforms matter for improving both the level and distribution of short-term and long-term student outcomes.” [\(Baker\)](#)
 - [An increase](#) in per student spending by 10% in K-12 education increases the probability of high school graduation by 7 percentage points for all students, by roughly 10 percentage points for low-income children, and by 2.5 percentage points for non-poor children.
 - [10% increase](#) in per student spending results in 9.6% increase in adult hourly wages, and a substantial decrease in adult poverty rates
 - However, a [21.7% increase](#) in per student spending throughout K-12 education for children from low-income communities can eliminate the education attainment gap between children from low-income and middle/high income communities
- There is a direct positive relationship between teacher salaries, smaller class sizes, and other in-school resources, and student outcomes
- Consistent improvement of funding allocation across districts leads to the consistent improvement of student outcomes (i.e. graduation rates and test scores)