



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 307 | Washington, DC 20004

DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2023
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated May 2023

What is the DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2023?

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) is required by [DC Code § 38-2803](#) to publish a 10-year master facilities plan that considers the facility planning needs of District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools in Washington, DC. The last Master Facilities Plan was conducted in 2018 and included innovative data analysis (e.g., 5- and 10-year school-specific enrollment projections) and detailed information about the public charter sector (e.g., expected growth plans) for the first time.

The DC Public Education Master Facilities Plan 2023 (MFP 2023) will provide up-to-date comprehensive information about the physical conditions of our current public school facilities while also analyzing future facility needs based on estimated future population and enrollment. MFP 2023 will take the current population and school enrollment contexts into account and create a 5- to 10-year plan to address public school needs in the three goals described below.

The DME has contracted a team led by Perkins Eastman that includes WXY Studio, LINK Strategic Partners, and The D.C. Policy Center to support the development of MFP 2023. The DME expects the MFP to be released in the fall of 2023.

What are the goals of the MFP?

MFP 2023 will describe the current landscape of Washington, DC's public schools (DCPS and public charter schools) and analyze future facility needs based on estimated population and estimated enrollments in 5 and 10 years.

The MFP will develop a plan to address the following three goals, while affirmatively advancing equity and excellence in public schools in Washington, DC.

1. Ensure school facilities are efficiently utilized.
2. Ensure every student is enrolled in a modern state of the art facility.
3. Ensure every student's daily experience is in a well-maintained facility.





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What is the timeline for the MFP?

Through the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2021 ([DC Law 24-20](#)) (Section 3), DC Council added a requirement for an updated 5-year Master Facilities Plan submitted before the next 10-year deadline (2028). The FY23 Budget Support Act of 2022 (Bill 24-714) moved the deadline from December 2022 to December 2023. The DME expects to complete MFP 2023 in the fall of 2023 to support the concurrent [Boundary and Student Assignment Study](#) due no later than February 2024. DC Council will review and determine whether they accept MFP 2023 or vote to have the Executive redo the plan.

How will MFP 2023 and the Student Assignment and Boundary Study 2023 be coordinated?

The DME is also required by the FY2023 Budget Support Act of 2022 (Bill 24-714) to conduct a school attendance zone boundaries update (found in Title IV, Subtitle J, and entitled the Attendance Zone Boundaries Amendment Act of 2022). This will be the first update since 2013-2014, when the District of Columbia undertook its first comprehensive review of student assignment in four decades. This subtitle requires the Mayor to complete a comprehensive review of DCPS student assignment policies in calendar year 2023 and every 10 years thereafter.

The DME is running the Master Facilities Plan study concurrently with the 2023 Boundary and Student Assignment Study (Boundary Study). Both studies will share foundational information, such as data and analyses of enrollment patterns, 5- and 10-year enrollment projections, school programmatic capacities, and building utilization. For more information about the Boundary Study, [see here](#). The DME also contracted with Perkins Eastman, WXY Studio, LINK Strategic Partners, and The D.C. Policy Center for this study.

How can members of the community get involved?

Community engagement and feedback are critical to the success of MFP 2023. Stayed tuned on DME social media (@DMEforDC on Twitter and @dmefordc on Instagram) and the [DME MFP website](#) for specific dates and updated information about the engagement opportunities described below.

- The DME will hold three rounds of virtual community town hall meetings from spring through fall of 2023 to solicit information on the vision for the plan, the landscape of Washington, DC's public school facilities, and draft recommendations.
- The DME and DCPS are committed to revising the programmatic facility capacity process for DCPS schools. The contracted team will create a standardized, transparent process based on programmatic assumptions grounded in DCPS's





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EdSpecs and developed in close consultation with school communities. DME is also working with public charter schools to develop a template that can be adapted to their programmatic needs. Stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback on the revised programmatic facility capacity process.

- The DME will be conducting continual engagement through attending existing education stakeholder meetings, and online feedback forms will be made available.

How will the MFP be used?

District policy makers and school leaders will use the MFP in the formulation of key decisions regarding the future of public school facilities in the coming 5 to 10 years. MFP 2023 will also serve as a resource to members of the community and education stakeholders as a comprehensive plan for the District's public school facilities.

I was unable to attend the May town hall meetings. How can I provide feedback and learn more?

All town hall meetings will be live streamed and recorded for those unable to participate in real time. See the DME's [website](#) to access the recordings. Outside of the meetings, residents are encouraged to provide comments and feedback by using forms that will be provided on the [DME MFP website](#). In addition, residents may also e-mail the DME at DME.planning@dc.gov with questions; please allow 2 business days for a reply.

What commitment is this MFP making to the idea of a system of by right schools in every quarter of the city? Right now, entire neighborhoods have no school of right.

The DME and subsequently the MFP support a core system of high-quality neighborhood DCPS schools of right complemented by high-quality citywide public school options. The MFP and the DME's Boundary and Student Assignment Study are closely coordinated and will identify whether there are gaps in by right school access and recommendations for how to address it.

Does goal 2 mean that if your neighborhood school is not yet modernized that you are at a disadvantage?

The MFP will summarize the District's renovation and modernization status of DCPS schools to date, the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2023-2028, and the current CIP's project goals and schedules. If a DCPS school has not yet been renovated, it will be identified as in need of modernization.





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What are programmatic capacities and how are they being updated in the MFP?

Programmatic capacities reflect the number of students that can be housed in each school building given the school's facility and existing educational programs. Each LEA develops their schools' programmatic capacities. The MFP will include a revised DCPS facility programmatic capacity process that is transparent to school communities and collects information across all DCPS schools on an annual basis. The underlying information will be made publicly available for each DCPS school. The MFP will also develop a programmatic capacity template that can be adapted by public charter LEAs to calculate their programmatic capacities as well. This public charter template will be included in the final report.

What assumptions are you using for the updated programmatic capacities? How will you factor in outdoor spaces, performance spaces, gyms, etc.?

The DCPS programmatic capacity assumptions will rely on DCPS's EdSpecs and consultations with DCPS central office staff. In addition, the project team will consult with school communities for feedback. Programmatic capacity includes the potential full time teaching stations in a facility. Full time teaching stations are considered "loaded" spaces, meaning they contribute to the programmatic capacity. Because class scheduling is different in elementary and secondary schools, art, music, science, and gym spaces are counted differently by grade type. Support spaces, like outdoor learning areas or resource rooms, are considered "non-loaded" spaces and do not directly impact programmatic capacity. The project team will be evaluating the square footage of "non-loaded" spaces against the DCPS EdSpecs and may make adjustments to the programmatic capacities if there are significant square footage differences between actual and expected square footage of "non-loaded" spaces. Full documentation on the final methodology will be posted.

Do you/can you look at facilities not just in terms of programming but in terms of the demographics of the student population, such as whether the school has a high number of students with IEPs/504s included for most or all of the day in the general education environment.

Typically, only self-contained or full day special education programs have a reduced per-room loading factor. With that said, the DCPS per-room loading factors will be determined in coordination with DCPS. Ultimately the DCPS capacity model needs to be aligned with DCPS and LEA's budgeted staffing/class sizes so as to not create inconsistencies.

Will we be able to give input on class size in regard to measuring programmatic capacities?

The DME and project team welcome feedback on the programmatic capacities including class sizes for specialized need students. However, the DME and project team's final programmatic





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capacities will be aligned with DCPS's budgeted staffing/class sizes so as to not create inconsistencies.

What are the specific programs that all schools need to account for regarding the schools' physical capacities? DCPS has specific criteria for each elementary, middle, and high school. They are not comparable to all public charter schools' criteria.

Each LEA is responsible for identifying the core programming for their schools. The MFP will not specify exact programs for each school. As part of this project, the project team will be developing an interactive tool for DCPS and public charter LEAs to develop their own programmatic capacities based on their educational program.

What type of factors are considered regarding safety? Safety in the classrooms, and throughout the building.

The safety and security assessment includes an evaluation of the pick and drop off areas at school, controlled point of entry, secure vestibules, security and welcome center visibility, interior and exterior sight lines, transparency, and distribution of adults in the facility for passive observation. The project team will also be confirming functionality of key life safety systems.

Will you include educational adequacy of the outdoor areas of a school?

The assessment includes an evaluation of outdoor learning areas, fields, and age-appropriate play areas.

How will the educational adequacy assessments affect the assessment of the utilization?

School facility utilization will be accounted for after the building capacities are updated. Utilization rates are determined by comparing the number of students against the facility programmatic capacity (as described elsewhere in the FAQ). The Educational Adequacy evaluation looks at the quality of the spaces.

Will you be looking at the equitable distribution of special education programming across the city?

The Boundary and Student Assignment Study will be considering programmatic pathways and we expect special education pathways will be explored in that study.



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How will you address the challenges of maintenance of ‘modern state of the art facilities’ (e.g., specific recommendations regarding funding, maintenance models)?

It is anticipated that the project team will identify recommendations for facility maintenance that align with national best practices. This will likely include funding models, preventative maintenance plans, training, and staffing models. Through data analysis, the project team will identify key systems and building assets that have historically been difficult to maintain.

Are there standards for what a "well-maintained" facility is?

The project team will be completing detailed data analysis to better understand the lived experience through an evaluation of work order data. This evaluation will take place at the system and school level to better understand key problem types, reoccurring issues, and other operational impacts. Based on the outcomes of the data evaluation, the project team will make recommendations to align building maintenance with best practices.

Does this data include adult ed?

Yes, the MFP includes adult schools.

How will school students and teachers be involved in this planning process?

The DME and project team will reach out to school communities at the start of SY2023-24 to collect staff and school community feedback. Families are encouraged to participate during the July town hall meetings. School communities will be engaged in June 2023 to provide feedback on programmatic capacities before the end of SY2022-23.

How will the MFP help schools that are modernized and are above utilization rate in providing them immediate relief in over crowding?

The MFP can explore different policy options for modernized schools that are identified as overcrowded now and in the next 5 to 10 years. This can include assessing whether the facility has space to be expanded (allowing capacity to increase) or if enrollment policies can help manage overcrowding (e.g., reducing lottery seats offered to out of boundary students or identifying potential boundary or feeder revisions to the Boundary and Student Assignment Study).



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In regard to strategies to improve capital planning, how will the recommendations be framed between DCPS and the public charter sector since the processes are so different? Will it be equitable?

DCPS schools are managed by the Department of General Services (DGS) and public charter schools are managed by the charter LEA in either private or DGS-owned buildings. DCPS capital planning is funded by the city's capital budget. Public charter schools are secured and funded separately relying on a per student facilities allowance through the locally budgeted Uniform per Student Funding Formula (\$3,513 as of FY23). Capital funding recommendations will recognize these differences.

Will the study include DC-owned facilities that aren't currently operating as schools but could be re-opened?

Yes, the MFP will consider District-owned facilities not currently operating as schools but could potentially be reopened.

Who do you contact if you have questions?

If you have any questions, please email DME.planning@dc.gov and we'll get back to you within two business days.

