

THE EQUITY IMPERATIVE

COMPLETING PATHWAYS TO THE MIDDLE CLASS

EQUAL FUNDING FOR UDC

2018 BUDGET ENGAGEMENT FORUMS SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

What was a budget priority you were hoping to discuss at today's engagement forum? In which priority area does it most closely align?

I am hoping to discuss education and more specifically fair funding for public higher education in the District of Columbia and the funding needed to enable the University of the District of Columbia to better serve its students and the District community. The University of the District of Columbia has made significant reforms since 2015 including establishing a Community College program which is thriving.

ii. Why is this area important to you / your family?

I believe that the University is a fundamental element in reducing unemployment and under-employment and providing opportunities to District residents which will enable them to reach the middle class. Despite this new student center, I know that the rest of the physical infrastructure at the University is over 50 years old and the IT infrastructure is over 20 years old. Students and faculty should not face extreme cold or extreme heat due to a failing physical plant.

iii. Do you believe the District is doing a good job improving this area / could do better? How specifically?

The University has been underfunded since the Control Board's deep cuts in 1997. Successive administrations have funded minimum requests. The deep cuts, however, have limited long range planning and execution on operations and infrastructure and generated health and safety challenges with University Facilities. The District funds the University at the level of 1.1% of the available budget whereas its neighboring jurisdictions of Virginia and Maryland fund higher education at the level of 3.80% and 4.50% respectively.

iv. Would you take money from another priority area of the budget to pay for this? Which area?

I believe funding UDC is a priority that is a continuation of the commitment to education in the District. The University is a continuation of the educational pathway to the middle class, consequently, perceiving education funding as extending only to primary and secondary school defeats the efforts to create those pathways to the middle class as all economic data demonstrates that having a college degree or professional certification is a minimum requirement to workplace entry and success.

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7:30PM – 8:10PM Table Discussion Part 2: Table budget formulation

The last 25 minutes will focus on budget building. The discussion will be led by a facilitator, framing the discussion with the following questions: (Patrick Gusman)

v. In order to provide resources for the priorities you just identified; what should DC be doing less of?

Leveraging funding from the \$1.3 billion public school modernization budget and modest trims to other budgets except for public safety makes sense. With a \$13.6 billion budget, an increase to UDC would simply be a rounding error. UDC deserves a progressive increase in funding over 4 years to reach an annual budget of \$124.9 million from the current \$78.6 million and a capital infusion of \$724 million over ten years.

vi. Would you suggest raising revenues to support your priorities? If so, what area(s) do you suggest DC increases its revenues from?

No. The District must remain competitive and now is not the time to levy additional taxes. Any contemplation of future tax increases should provide a dedicated allotment to public higher education.

vii. What other suggestions do you have for Mayor Bowser as she works to put together the budget?

Make sure that the full PK-16 pipeline is available for all residents in the District. UDC is an integral part of the District's PK-16 education system and its needs should be viewed in a holistic manner with the needs of DCPS.

viii. Given your priorities, as a table, allocate \$100 in terms of the priorities you have discussed.

Given the 50 year old crumbling infrastructure and the importance of having a higher education options for all residents, UDC should have at least 1.8% of total funding to keep the District competitive with its closest neighbors in Virginia and Maryland.