

## Public Budget Meeting Questions and Answers

Question	Answer
How is per pupil funding calculated? What role does the Governor/State play in per pupil expenditures?	Per pupil funding is simply the District’s total revenue divided by the number of students the District is responsible for serving (including those enrolled in charters and out-of-district placements). In Camden, most of the District’s budget (more than 90 percent) comes from State aid, so the State determines the amount of aid the District receives. Other factors, including federal grants and the local tax levy, influence the total amount as well.
How many people will be impacted by budgetary changes? How is this number different from the number of positions that will be impacted?	It’s too early to tell how many people will be impacted by budgetary changes. We are working to minimize the overall number of people impacted. We do know that due to vacancies—created by retirements, resignations, and other separations—the number of positions reduced will be higher than the number of actual people impacted.
What creative revenue sources is the District exploring?	Past administrations have not taken advantage of all of the State and federal funding that is available. They have also not built strong relationships with foundations and private donors in the philanthropic community. This administration is aggressively pursuing both avenues.
How is the District renegotiating with vendors in order to help address the budget shortfall?	Each vendor contract is different, but the District is looking closely at these contracts to see where savings might be possible. For example, the 2014-15 budget reflects reduced service and maintenance contracts in our facilities department to reduce unnecessary spend.
Is the district exploring ways to encourage employees to retire?	The District will share information about retirement for those staff members who qualify and are interested. It is currently against State law to provide incentives for employees to retire.
<p>Who will make up the 30 percent of staff being cut from the central office?</p> <p>There have been a number of new hires. Will these new hires be cut?</p>	<p>Reductions in the central office will be made where positions have duplicative responsibilities and/or do not fully align to the vision set in the <i>Camden Commitment</i>.</p> <p>Generally speaking, new hires have come on board with the new organization in mind. As such, we expect most new hires to remain on the team.</p>
<p>Why are all schools not receiving capital upgrades? Schools are in need of significant repairs.</p> <p>Why is the District phone system not being upgraded?</p>	Many schools are in need of significant repairs, and the District is aggressively working with the School Development Authority and pursuing other avenues, including the Urban Hope Act, to ensure as many students as possible are in new or significantly renovated facilities. However, the harsh reality of the budget situation will place limitations on the amount of change the District can pursue at once.
<p>Student Programs:</p> <p>What improvements will the District make to vocational programming? How can is the District working to ensure that students don’t have to leave the District for vocational programming?</p>	The District has a strong commitment to career and technical education, as mentioned in the <i>Camden Commitment</i> . The District believes deeply in multiple pathways to graduation and is in the early stages of exploring how it can develop better vocational and technical programs in Camden, building on some of the great

<p>Is the district exploring a gifted and talented program?</p> <p>Is the district exploring a more cost-effective alternative to the Camelot program?</p> <p>How does the budget support the new discipline policy outlined in the recent safety plan?</p>	<p>resources and facilities that already exist.</p> <p>The District is not presently exploring a gifted and talented program for the 2014-2015 school year but we are working to ensure that, in the future, there is an adequate mix of programs that meet the needs of all students.</p> <p>The District renegotiated its contract with Camelot Education to derive greater savings, and to ensure that going forward we can offer programming that meets the diverse needs of all of our students.</p> <p>The 2014-15 budget will support comprehensive security pilots, including an increased number of cameras as well as “smart” building access technology. District-wide, we are investing in improved training and technology systems that support security and safety across all of our schools. We are also in the process of hiring an Executive Director of Safety to join our leadership team and provide critical focus and direction for additional security and safety initiatives.</p>
<p>A large amount of money is being allocated to staff training services. Who will do this work?</p>	<p>One of our highest priorities this year is to provide comprehensive and ongoing professional development opportunities to staff across the district. For example, Deputy Superintendent of School Support Sean Gallagher will spend the majority of his time focused on coaching school leaders and offering professional development opportunities for instructional staff. He will be supported in this work by the Assistant Superintendents and the broader school support team.</p>
<p>How does the budget align to the promises made in the Camden Commitment?</p>	<p>The <i>Camden Commitment</i> was the driving force behind the 2014-15 budget. As such, the budget supports the promises made in the <i>Camden Commitment</i> in myriad ways, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great school options for families and students</li> <li>• New technology and bandwidth to support 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning</li> <li>• Improved security and supports for school climate and culture</li> <li>• Increased instructional support and coaching for teachers and leaders in schools</li> <li>• Growth of our successful early childhood programs</li> </ul> <p>In some cases, we are supporting the <i>Camden Commitment</i> via new expenditures; in other cases, we have re-allocated existing dollars in support of new initiatives to ensure that all of our spending aligns to the promises we laid out in the <i>Camden Commitment</i>.</p>
<p>How did Principals and Department heads support the creation of the budget?</p>	<p>In terms of non-personnel budgets, principals developed their own earlier this year with guidance, as needed, from our Assistant Superintendents.</p> <p>In terms of staffing and personnel, prior to the unveiling of the budget, the Assistant Superintendents met with each school</p>

	principal to collect their input. Following the unveiling, the Assistant Superintendents are meeting again with each principal. In addition, given the challenges presented in the 2014-15 budget, members of the Office of Human Resources will meet every other week with principals.
Is the District cutting before/after care programs?	No, the District is not cutting before/after care programs.
There was a large increase in the amount of money set aside for community programming. What does this look like?	As discussed above, the District is investing its resources in its priorities, including family and community engagement. Community programming includes the development of a family and community engagement team, including more community advocates who will be the links between school communities and the central office and the broader community. This team will also oversee the new family and community centers that we are creating in partnership with the City.
There was a cut in adult programming. Why?	There was not a cut in adult programming: adult programming is supported by a grant that we receive annually, but which is not issued until later in the year. Therefore at this point there appears to be no funding for these programs; the budget will be revised to reflect the grant dollars when they are received.
The curricula used have been inconsistent and the change takes a toll on students. Is the new curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards?	Similar to all Districts across the country, Camden City School District is in the midst of transitioning to the Common Core State Standards. As such, all curricular materials must be reviewed and evaluated. The Deputy Superintendent of School Support is ensuring that schools have appropriate materials, and his team will be providing rigorous training to support teachers' shifting their instruction to align with the new, higher standards. All materials currently being used are aligned to Common Core State Standards.
How will the District ensure that Title funds are used appropriately?	The District's finances are reviewed annually through an external audit that examines whether funds are used appropriately. Further, on a quarterly basis, the business office and grants team meet with State and federal grant representatives to discuss how funds are being used and to plan for their future use.