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Tonight!: Join Chrnm Mendelson & Decoding Dyslexia, 7PM, below for link

August Wilson proposed as new name for Wilson High School!; Emergency legislation needed to prevent post-pandemic school staff cuts; Addressing overcrowding with new schools...
+Calendar Events

Please circulate. Contact me at ruth4schools@yahoo.com. Follow me @[ruth4schools](https://twitter.com/ruth4schools).

Calendar Events and Upcoming Meetings

DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson--at Decoding Dyslexia, Wednesday, April 28, 7PM

Ask questions and hear about budget priorities related to education and literacy--and recently passed (but not yet funded!) legislation to prevent reading difficulties.

The meeting registration is: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/decoding-dyslexia-dc-april-meeting-featuring-phil-mendelson-tickets-150549941929>

Listening Session on New Schools--with DCPS May 17, 5:30PM

Hear and give feedback to DCPS on how to use new W3 school buildings...
For more information, see below...

Register here to join the meeting or testify. bit.ly/FoxhallMacArthur.

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Monday, May 10, 7PM

This is a chance to have a conversation with the DC Council Chair about reopening schools, school budgets, overcrowding, school oversight and governance, and other education topics (we ask that you only raise education topics).

Meeting leaders will be taking questions from the chat during the meeting, but would welcome any questions that you would like to raise ahead of time. Please send them to w3ednet@gmail.com.

The registration link for the Zoom meeting is:

<https://interactivestrategies.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZllcuyvrz4qH9YNG1JcH1fNkOOnV2asiBdY>

Chancellor proposes changing high school name to August Wilson!

Backstory: Advocates have called on DCPS and city leaders [to change the name of Woodrow Wilson HS](#). As president, Wilson worked to further segregate America and shrink the rights and standing of Black Americans. Here in DC, his determined efforts to push Blacks out of the federal civil service had a devastating effect on the city's growing Black middle class, at that time fairly unique in the country. Last fall, the Mayor announced that the name would be changed, and, in December, DCPS launched a public survey to learn the community's preference for a new name. Last week, DCPS Chancellor Ferebee announced that he will propose August Wilson for the new name, after playwright August Wilson.

I am thrilled with the decision for three reasons. First, we are changing the name! Many thanks to everyone who promoted this, but especially to Tim Hannapel and Judith Ingram for spearheading the effort! Second, in a public survey in which over 6,000 students, alumnae, parents, and residents participated, the August Wilson name was the top choice by a substantial margin. (In a 5-way race, August Wilson received 10 points more than any other name.) DCPS too often ignores community input. I am genuinely delighted that they chose to go with the clear community preference.

Third, I think the August Wilson name is a great choice. He is one of the nation's greatest playwrights, one of the nation's greatest Black playwrights, and one of the greatest popular chroniclers of the Black American experience, a central piece of American history. As our country is trying to better understand and come to terms with our history on

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of "[The Piano Lesson](#)" on its way. All of this means that a school with his name has the possibility of inspiring unusually high interest in theater and the intertwined threads of Black history, American history, and literature. The potential is great. (For more, see my twitter thread from last winter where I explained why I thought AW would be such a great choice. <https://twitter.com/Ruth4Schools/status/1341063491256463360?s=20>)

Thanks to all who have been involved in this. I know some proponents of the name change had hoped to name the school after someone from the school's history, including past principals, teachers, and significant Washingtonians. ***I will advocate to recognize the school's and neighborhood's history in a permanent display at the school. I look forward to working on this with Wilson High School, DCPS, name-change advocates, and residents.*** I look forward to the Council's vote on this!

We need emergency legislation *now* to prevent school layoffs this post-pandemic fall.

This is no year for school staff cuts.

It's a yearly ritual: DCPS publishes initial budgets in which some set of schools—disproportionately East of the River but also citywide—are required to cut staff because budgets don't keep pace with rising costs. Sometimes, the Council finds extra funds. But by then, many staff who were on the chopping block have left for new, stable jobs. Schools must spend additional time hiring and onboarding new staff. This is always a horrible, exhausting process, but for the reasons below, this year we need ***emergency legislation now to prevent the layoffs.***

Here's Why:

1. Initial and revised budgets cut school staff

Under DCPS's initial school budgets, [60 DCPS schools \(out of 117\) were slated to lose 90 positions](#). Since then, some schools have successfully petitioned DCPS to restore positions, though, in some cases, schools had to replace higher paid more qualified staff (e.g. librarians) with lower paid staff. It's unclear how many staff remain in the balance. DC Councilmembers have suggested that they intend to push more funding to schools. But meanwhile, principals and Local School Advisory Teams must spend precious time making difficult, emotional decisions about who to cut from the school staff when they need to be planning how best to support students educationally and emotionally as they return this quarter, in the summer, and especially this fall.

2. DCPS is getting \$277 million in stimulus funds!

These cuts are especially foolish because the federal stimulus bill is sending hundreds of millions of dollars to school districts to help schools develop and fund programs to support students' learning as they recover from this very difficult year. The law specifically funds [“activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services... and to employ existing staff.”](#)

Thusfar, DCPS has announced that it will spend none of these funds on additional staff, including needed counselors, tutors, reading interventionist, etc.;. Instead, DCPS intends to rely totally on outside organizations to provide students with the needed support. This is a sure way to NOT build up the long-term school capacity we need.

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be resolved until August

Further, the mayor has asked for two extensions to deal with pandemic related budget issues, meaning the budget likely won't be resolved until August. Ward Education Councils, including the W3EdNet, are promoting a petition that calls for holding schools harmless from staff cuts for the coming year. This is vital to allow staff and school leaders to turn their full attention to the many issues facing them for the rest of this year the summer and school year. Please sign the petition and email your council members.

[Please sign this petition](#) to hold schools harmless from staff cuts.

Please email your Councilmembers, DCPS Chancellor, Deputy Mayor of Education, and Mayor to pass emergency legislation to hold schools harmless from staff cuts. pmendelson@dccouncil.us, chenderson@dccouncil.us, rwhite@dccouncil.us, abonds@dccouncil.us, esilverman@dccouncil.us, bnadeau@dccouncil.us, bpinto@dccouncil.us, mcch@dccouncil.us, jlewisgeorge@dccouncil.us, kmduffie@dccouncil.us, callen@dccouncil.us, vgray@dccouncil.us, twhite@dccouncil.us, paul.kihn@dc.gov, muriel.bowser@dc.gov, chancellor@k12.dc.gov

federal stimulus money but still cutting school staff.

This is not what recovery looks like.

1 DC must fund DCPS schools FULLY



DCPS will receive \$277 million in federal money and has the next 3 years to spend it. Cuts to school staff are happening even though the Mayor increased per-student funding by 3.6%. DC is flush with money, but refuses to ensure that schools are fully staffed.

2 DC must fund DCPS schools FAIRLY

The current approach for developing school budgets is unfair.

- “At risk” dollars intended to support our most vulnerable students are mismanaged and inadequate.
- Schools lose buying power every year, as their budgets are not sufficient to cover cost increases.
- Some school budget cuts are due to projected enrollment losses. However, projecting future enrollment off this year's numbers penalizes schools for an abnormal year.



3 Act Now!



Demand the Mayor FULLY and FAIRLY fund DCPS schools.

Demand the DC Council pass EMERGENCY LEGISLATION to hold school budgets harmless in order to maintain current staffing levels.
E-mail addresses for officials available here:
bit.ly/DCPSschools

Brought to you by:

Parent Leaders of Ward 1, Ward 2 Education Council, Ward 3-Wilson Feeder Education Network, Ward 4 Education Alliance, Ward 5 Education Equity Committee, Ward 6 Public Schools Parent Organization, Ward 7 Education Council, Ward 8 Education Council

Addressing overcrowding in the the W3/Wilson feeder pattern

How to use future schools...

Schools in the W3/Wilson feeder pattern have been overcrowded for well more than a decade. In all that time, no long-term or overarching plan has been put in place to address the issue. Now, while there still is no plan, the District is planning to open two new schools, both in the Foxhall area of the ward; it plans to build a new school next to the existing Old

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How should the schools be used? Current options that DCPS is considering include a new middle school that would be mainly fed by elementary schools currently in the Deal feeder pattern; by a new high school that would be fed by Hardy MS; a new elementary school that would serve 3rd-5th graders attending Stoddert, Key, and Mann; and a new elementary school that would be constructed by changing the boundaries for Key, Mann, and Stoddert.

To gather community input, DCPS has convened a Community Working Group (CWG) to consider the options and advise DCPS. The CWG is composed of the principal and one parent from each school in the Wilson feeder pattern, reps from the W3 and W2 Education Networks, several ANC's and community associations, Ward 3 Councilmember Cheh's office, Allister Chang, the newly-elected SBOE Member from ward 2 and myself, the SBOE Member from Ward 3. In addition, DCPS is soliciting input via a survey, a Community Listening Session, and meetings at affected schools. Here are the links:

Complete the Survey here: bit.ly/FoxhallMacArthurSurvey or bit.ly/FoxhallMacArthurEspanol.

Sign up here for the **Community Listening Session on May 17, 5:30-7:30.**

Register here to attend this meeting or to provide testimony. bit.ly/FoxhallMacArthur. This session will be streamed live on YouTube for anyone to watch.

Note from DCPS: *Depending on the number of individuals interested in testifying, we may not be able to accommodate all requests. For those members of the public who are not able to testify during the meeting, they are able to submit their testimony by email to dcps.planning@k12.dc.gov or by mail at 1200 First Street NE, Washington D.C. 20002.*

School meetings: Meetings have already been held at a number of schools. Coming up are Key, April 28; Bancroft, 4/29; Wilson, May 4; Shepherd, 5/3; Eaton, 5/5 and Hyde Addison 5/6.

Keep in touch