



BACK TO STUDENTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is "Back 2 Students" all about?

SCS is getting resources **Back 2 Students** by providing an equitable distribution of funds and letting schools decide how the majority of money is spent, rather than Central Office.

What has changed with regard to funding?

Currently, each SCS school receives basically the same resources, despite enrollment numbers or student need. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, most of the district's resources will be divided according to the needs and number of students at every school.

In addition, in 2018-2019, leadership teams at six cohort schools will make most of the decisions about how their dollars are spent. Only a portion of their budgets will be decided by Central Office (e.g., facilities, benefits, etc.).

Why is the change necessary?

In an effort to provide equity and greater transparency, SCS decided to transition to student-based budgeting, which distributes dollars according to the needs and number of students at every school. In addition, the district believes school communities, not Central Office, know what's best for its students.

My school isn't a cohort school, so will we make budget decisions?

With proper training and oversight, all leadership teams will ultimately begin making the majority of the budget decisions at their schools, leaving only a small portion managed by the Central Office. Applications for increased spending autonomy will be made available to schools for the 2019-2020 school year.

Will cohort schools make decisions about their entire budget?

The cohort schools will make the majority of spending decisions for their budget. Some areas such as benefits, facilities, etc. will still be managed at the Central Office.

How were cohort schools chosen?

A committee of leaders at the Central Office selected the cohort schools based on a variety of factors including feeder patterns, academic needs and leadership ability. Those school leadership teams have received intense budget training for over a year in preparation for the 2018-2019 school year.

Will cohort schools (and ultimately all schools) be able to make staffing decisions?

Yes. This process will ultimately allow schools greater autonomy with regard to staffing. However, schools will not have access to specific salary amounts. All team members will be budget coded with average salary amounts for specific jobs, so school leaders will be unable to cut higher paid staffers in favor of lower cost options.

Will cohort schools (and ultimately all schools) have to get approval from Central Office for their budget decisions?

Central Office, and more specifically, the Instructional Leadership Directors, will provide support to schools to ensure their decisions are permissible according to district and state laws and policies.

Will the change mean more resources for our school?

Most schools will receive more funding under the new structure and others will receive the same or slightly less funding, depending upon the needs of its students.

My school is receiving less funding under this structure. Is that equitable?

While some schools may receive slightly less money than in previous years, that won't prevent them from maintaining high quality instruction for students.

The current funding structure limits school-level spending, often resulting in too many dollars in one area and not enough resources in another area. Student-based budgeting allows schools the flexibility needed to focus their resources where they're needed most.

Our school is high performing, so will we automatically lose resources?

No. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, each school will receive funds based on its unique student needs (e.g., gifted, mobility, low academic performance). Gifted students will be among those receiving additional funds, so there will not be a correlation between high performing schools and fewer resources.

Will teachers and parents ultimately have a voice in the budget decisions?

Yes. While the final budget decisions will lie with the principal, leadership teams will have input in designing the school improvement plan and related budget.

How will our school gain greater autonomy in budget spending?

An application process will be held during the 2018-2019 school year in preparation for 2019-2020. All schools are encouraged to apply and will be judged on a variety of factors including leadership experience, school improvement plan design, feeder pattern, etc.

How can I learn more about "Back 2 Students?"

Information is available at back2students.com and updates and trainings will be provided the coming weeks and months.