

## **Budget plan adds heavily to staffing**

### **City district's workforce to hit 6,177**

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The Rochester City School District intends to add scores of reading and special education teachers and social workers in 2017-18 but has not yet determined quite how to pay for them all, according to a budget proposal unveiled Tuesday. The \$791 million budget proposal, up 9 percent from 2016-17, fleshes out Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams' repeated pledge to create equity in funding for students across the district, making sure each building has enough reading teachers and other specialists to comply fully with state and federal regulations. It adds 144 teacher positions, including 22 administrators being reassigned to (lower-paying) teaching positions, increasing the total district workforce to 6,177 people for 27,011 students. Enrollment is actually up by 27 students from 2016-17, the first time since 2007-08 the district did not lose students from one year to the next.

Part of the teacher funding comes from a redeployment of \$4.4 million in federal poverty funding intended for academic intervention; it instead will go to reading teachers, indicating a significant rearrangement of how students at some schools get supplemental services.

The budget begins with a \$54.8 million budget gap, which includes \$15 million taken from fund balance. Projected adjustments such as \$12.5 million of additional state foundation aid and \$10 million of "operational efficiencies" whittle the gap down to \$17.9 million that the district still needs to shake loose from Albany or someplace else.

"I'm not going to reduce student services (in the budget) until I've gotten consistent 'no's from everyone at the state and local levels," Deane-Williams said. In particular, Gov. Andrew Cuomo's budget proposal includes a reimbursement rate increase for charter schools, from \$12,590 to \$15,178. That would cost Rochester another \$15 million; the district is hoping the increase does not go through. The district hopes to find savings in adjusting student and staff schedules at the building level, by returning registrars to the schools from central office.



**Rochester Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams and School Board President Van White have unveiled a \$791 million school budget proposal, up 9 percent from 2016-17.**

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