

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC OVERSIGHT HEARING**
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

**CHAIRMAN PHIL MENDELSON
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC OVERSIGHT HEARING**

on

DC Public Schools' Broken Procurement System

on

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Room 412, John A. Wilson Building
DC Council Website (www.dccouncil.gov)**

Council Chairman Phil Mendelson announces a public oversight hearing before the Committee of the Whole on *DC Public Schools' Broken Procurement System*. The hearing will be held at **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 31, 2023**.

The purpose of this oversight hearing is to receive testimony regarding 36 contracts awarded by DCPS without Council approval. In December 2022 DCPS submitted three retroactive contracts valued at over \$43 million for Council approval. The three contracts were entered into by DCPS in July through September of 2022 – but the request to approve the contracts came about six months later. Upon further Council investigation, the Committee discovered that two of those three contracts, dealing with school meals, had not been sent to the Council for review and approval since 2019. Using publicly available vendor payment data, the Committee further determined that approximately \$5 million in payments had been made under the food services contracts.

The Committee held a hearing on the food services contracts on February 10, 2023 at which DCPS testified that an additional ten contracts over \$1 million had been identified as not being sent to the Council for review. However, the Committee had identified additional contracts that DCPS failed to submit. DCPS has now identified a total of 36 contracts that were entered into without authorization. The total value of all of the contracts is in excess of \$269 million. That is over a quarter of a billion dollars spent by DCPS without the Council authorization required under the Home Rule Act.

The Committee is holding a joint hearing with the Committee on Public Works and Operations on legislation that would revoke DCPS's independent procurement authority on May 25, 2023. However, this May 31st hearing will specifically look at DCPS's systematic management failures that led to the 36 contract awards, determine how DCPS represented the contracts to the Chief Financial Officer to purportedly authorize vendor payments, and provide testimony to the Council on whether these contracts should be approved retroactively by the Council.

This hearing is limited to testimony from specified witnesses. However written statements from the public will be accepted and made a part of the official record. Testimony will be posted publicly to <http://www.chairmanmendelson.com/testimony>. Statements for the record should be submitted to cow@dccouncil.gov or left by voicemail by calling (202) 430-6948 (up to 3 minutes which will be transcribed). The record will close at 5:00pm on Wednesday, June 14, 2023.