

K-12 Funding Workshop

Youth Civic Bridge

How the Workshop Works



1. Funding Basics

Understand how our schools are funded at the state and local levels.



2. District Dive

Investigate your specific district, focusing on the school district you represent or another one.



3. Advocacy

Practice your own advocacy with opportunity to give speeches and testimonies.

Funding Basics

The McCleary Case



2007 Lawsuit

Constitutional Challenge

The McCleary family filed a lawsuit arguing that Washington State was failing to meet its constitutional duty to provide adequate funding for public education.



2012 Ruling

State Supreme Court Decision

WA Supreme Court ruled in favor of the family:

- **Prototypical School Funding Model:** Established a formula estimating resources needed for an average school.
- **Levy Caps:** Capped how much local districts could raise, causing potential funding issues (e.g., BSD).

The Prototypical Funding Model



SYSTEM DESIGN

Core Purpose

Washington's prototypical school funding model works by defining a hypothetical "prototypical" school at each level with an assumed enrollment, then specifying the staff and resources that model school should have per set number of students



IMPLEMENTATION & IMPACT

Flexibility & Analysis

Flexibility: Districts have significant flexibility in how they spend state funding.

Discussion: What are the positive aspects of this model, and what potential problems might it create?

For example...

A school of 500 students should receive funding for 25 teachers, 1 principal, 0.8 counselors, and 0.2 nurses.

Examples of State-Funded Staff Positions Based on Theoretical School Sizes

Position	Principals
Elementary (400 students)	1.253
Middle (432 students)	1.353
High School (600 students)	1.880

Where does funding for public schools in Washington come from?

STATE REVENUE

- Majority of school funding comes from state revenue
- Washington ranks 11th among 50 states in government revenue

LOCAL LEVIES

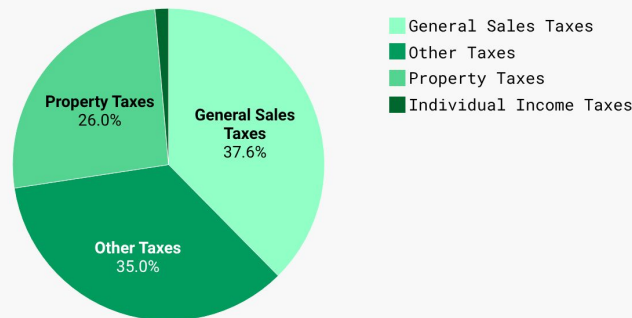
- Levies are voter-approved local property taxes
- Directly fund school development projects and basic education

FEDERAL FUNDING

- **Title I:** Directs funds to schools with low-income families
- **National School Lunch Program** (free and reduced lunch)

How Does Washington Raise Tax Revenue?

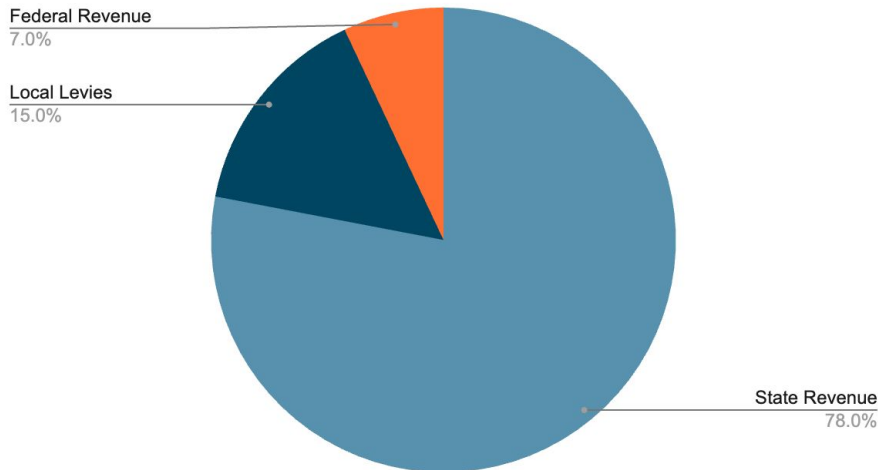
Sources of State & Local Tax Collections, Percentage of Total from Each Source, Fiscal Year 2023



"Other Taxes" include excise taxes (such as those on alcohol, tobacco, motor vehicles, utilities, and licenses), severance taxes, stock transfer taxes, estate and gift taxes, and other miscellaneous taxes.
Source: US Census Bureau, "Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances"; Tax Foundation calculations.

WA State Education Funding Sources

WA State Funding Sources



Low-Income & Rural Impact

Federal funding can account for more than 30% of low income and rural district budgets.

Income-Based Variation

Even within school districts, the percentage of federal funding changes based on income.

How did the new model change funding?



Historical Peak

2019 Peak & Decline

2019 was the year with the highest ever state funding.

Funding has gone downhill since then because of increased costs and inflation.



Proposed Changes

House Bill 2049 (2025)

Creates the **Equitable School Funding Workgroup**.

Tasked to analyze the current Prototypical School Funding Model and review other potential models to advise the State Legislature.



Time to Act

Research Opportunities

Now is the perfect time to act and explore critical research areas:

- How other states fund schools (pros and cons).
- Why certain funding models fit specific states better.

Different Funding Models

Explore the different funding models that other states employ:

- California (Local Control Funding Formula)
- Florida (FEFP formula)
- Texas (Foundation School Program)
- New York (Foundation Aid)
- Massachusetts (Chapter 70)
- Minnesota (General Education Revenue)
- Ohio (Foundation funding model)
- Colorado (Base-plus-adjustments model)

Research these different state's models and share differences between Washington's Prototypical model and also 2 pros and 2 cons.

Case Study 1: Suquamish (Chief Kitsap) Tribal School District

Chief Kitsap Academy

78 Students; 60% Economically Disadvantaged

Very small class sizes provide focused support. Tribal communities historically faced low graduation rates before State-Tribal Education Compacts.

Questions for Further Research

- Does the school qualify for Title I funding?
- Does the school solely rely on state funding, meaning no funding from levies? (*Requires research beyond standard K-12 funding sites)

Where Does School Money Come From?



WA K-12 Funding Model

Use AI tools to break down how Washington funds its 295 school districts.



k12funding.org

Explore the WA K12 Funding Tracker to see the data.



Funding Flow

Learn how State, Local, and Federal funding reaches the classroom.

Special Cases & Formulas

See how the formula treats unique needs:

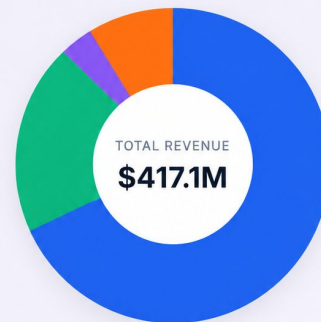
- **Special Education:** Tailored support for diverse learning requirements.
- **MSOC:** Funding for materials, supplies, and operating costs.
- **Transportation:** Ensuring every student can reach their school.

Do it yourself!

- 1 Open k12funding.org
- 2 Select the school district you come from (or a random one) on the top right selector
- 3 Enter the **District Overview** Section.

Explore the various statistics that are on the website and be ready to give a very short report on the school district.

Where Does School Money Come From?



State Revenue 68%
Basic ed, special ed, transportation, and more \$285.0M

Local Levies 20%
Extracurricular programs, student support services, classroom materials, and staff positions not fully funded by the state \$81.7M

Federal Revenue 3%
Services for low-income students, multilingual/English learners, educator training, and more \$13.2M

Other Revenue 9%
Investment earnings, fees, donations, and miscellaneous revenue sources \$37.2M

Board Meeting Comment

- **Find out your time limit:** Multiply the minutes by 150 to get your target word count.
- **Brainstorm:** Choose a school funding topic you are genuinely passionate about.
- **Keep it concise:** Create 2-3 short, impactful points you want to deliver.
- **Include a Call to Action:** End with a clear request for the board members.
- **Refine & practice:** Get feedback from peers and practice speaking your speech out loud.

Legislative Testimony

Note: This option is a bit more difficult.

- **Intro:** State your position clearly. Mention the specific Bill you support or oppose (e.g., Bill 2049).
- **Personal Story:** Collect diverse perspectives and share persuasive, real-life stories from those directly impacted.
- **Evidence:** Back up your stories with solid data, using the provided resources to dig deeper.
- **Call to Action:** Leverage your evidence to draft a direct proposal or amendment recommendation.

Other Forms of Civic Engagement



Meet Officials & Superintendents: Meet officials and superintendents! Their job is to meet people like you and hear your voice!



Write Letters: Write letters to your representatives to make your opinions known.



Join Youth Advisory Councils: Join Youth Advisory Councils for your state district to represent your peers.



Launch a Cause or Project: Create an organization or project that aims to support a cause that you are passionate about.



Join a Debate Club: Join your school's debate club (provides first-hand experience researching and debating policy with others).

Do it yourself!

Spend 10 minutes preparing a short 2 minute speech (300 words) on what you learned today and also how the school funding crisis has impacted you!

Go in this order:

- 1. Introduction (Name, School, Grade...)**
- 2. How K-12 Funding has impacted you**
- 3. What you're going to take away from this mini workshop**
- 4. Closing remarks**

Resources

For more detailed info on funding:

- <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/legislative-priorities/understanding-public-school-funding#topic1>
- <https://taxfoundation.org/location/washington/>
- <https://opportunityinstitute.org/blog/post/washington-wealth-state-budget-millionaires-tax/>
- <https://educationvoters.org/local-levy-faq/>
- <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/school-apportionment/district-allocation-state-resources-portal>

Thank you for listening!