

Funded: Iowa Report

A Detailed Look at Iowa's Funding Policies



Iowa



Funding Basics

Formula Type

Iowa has a primarily student-based funding formula. It assigns a cost to the education of a student with no special needs or services, called a base amount. It then accounts for the additional cost of educating specific categories of students by applying multipliers to that amount to generate supplemental funding for those students.

The categories of students generating supplemental funding in Iowa are low-income students, English language learners, students with disabilities, students dually enrolled in high school and community college career and technical education programs, and students receiving instruction from or in a district not their own through a sharing arrangement.

Base Amount

Iowa has a fixed base funding amount per student. For FY2016, the per-student base amount was \$6,446.

This means that an average student with no special needs or disadvantages would generally be funded at that level.

Expected Local Share

Iowa expects its school districts to raise revenue to support their public schools. The amount each district is expected to raise is based on a combination of its property values and a defined share of the amount calculated by the state to be necessary to educate students within that district.

Each district is expected to contribute both \$5.40 for every thousand dollars of taxable property valuation. Additionally, once the state provides funding for up to 87.5% of the cost per pupil, the remaining 12.5% must be covered out of local property taxes as well. Districts are limited in how much they can spend. They may not more than an authorized budget amount, which includes the district's regular program district cost as well as various supplemental amounts, budget adjustments, and revenues from sources outside the funding formula.

Student Characteristics

Grade Level

Iowa does not differentiate funding based on students' grade levels.

English Language Learner

Iowa provides increased funding for English language learners. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.22 to the base per-pupil amount for these students.

All students identified by their districts as being limited in English proficiency are eligible to receive this supplemental funding for up to five consecutive or nonconsecutive years. Because this eligibility relates to the student rather than to the district, the increased funding transfers with eligible students from district to district if they move, and students may only generate funding for a single five-year period.

Student Poverty

Iowa effectively provides increased funding for students from low-income households. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.00642 to the base per-pupil amount for certain low-income students. The state also applies a multiplier of 1.00204 to the base amount for all students enrolled in the district in order to generate additional funding for the purposes of supporting at-risk students.

The students eligible for the supplemental funding generated by the multiplier of 1.00642 is the number of students in grades 1-6 who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch (FRL) under the National School Lunch Program.

Special Education

Iowa funds special education using a multiple student weights system, providing different levels of funding for different categories of students. Students are assigned to 3 different categories based on their disabilities and the settings in which they receive special education services.

The state funding formula applies different multipliers to the per-student base amount for students in these categories. The base amount is multiplied by 1.72, 2.21, or 3.74, as appropriate to the needs outlined in the student's individual special education program. (The multipliers have been expressed this way for consistency with other states. The funding is actually provided in an amount equal to 72, 1.21, or 2.74 times the per-pupil base amount, distributed in addition to the student's own base amount funding.) The School Budget Review Committee meets biannually to modify the special education weighting plan and has the authority to adjust the multipliers used. These multipliers are applied to a district-specific base cost per pupil, which either equals or slightly exceeds the state cost per pupil.

Gifted

Iowa provides designated resources for gifted and talented students. Funding for these students is distributed as part of the per-pupil base amount and does not add to districts' total state education aid. However, the funding is intended for gifted education programs only.

The state provides a flat amount per student (\$60 in FY2016) for every student in the district. This amount is intended to provide for 75% of the costs associated with gifted and talented education, and districts are required to provide the remaining 25% (\$20 in FY2016). This funding is increased annually by the same percentage as the per-pupil base amount, of which it is a part.

Career and Technical Education

Iowa provides specific funding for career and technical education. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.7 to the base per-pupil amount for full-time-equivalent students dually enrolled in high school and community college vocational courses.

This funding is actually provided in an amount equal to .7 times the per-pupil base amount, distributed in addition to the student's own base amount funding, which is first adjusted for the student's other special characteristics. The funding is also prorated for the amount of time the student spends in such vocational courses, so a student with no other special characteristics spending one fourth of his or her time in community college vocational courses would effectively be funded at a level equal to 1.175 times the base amount.



Community Characteristics

District Poverty

Iowa does not provide increased funding based on the concentration of students from low-income households in a particular district.

Sparsity and/or Small Size

Iowa does not provide increased funding for sparse districts or small schools.

For a complete list of primary sources, please see the appropriate state page at funded.edbuild.org

