

Louisiana

Funding Basics

Formula Type

Louisiana has a hybrid funding formula, incorporating both resource-based and student-based elements. It assigns a cost to the education of a student with no special needs or services, called a base amount, and provides increased funding to educate specific categories of students. The categories of students generating supplemental funding in Louisiana are students in certain grade levels, English-language learners, students from low-income households, students with disabilities, students identified as gifted, students enrolled in career and technical education programs, and students in small school districts. It also provides funding allocations for specific resource costs, including certain staff and operating costs.

Louisiana expects school districts to contribute revenue to the funding of public schools, with the amount of the local share based on a combination of property values, sales taxes, and revenue from other local sources, adjusted to satisfy a statewide expected local contribution. Districts are permitted to raise and keep additional local revenues for regular district operations.

Supplemental funding for students in certain grade levels, English-language learners, students from low-income households, students with disabilities, students identified as gifted, students enrolled in career and technical education programs, and students in small school districts is generated by applying multipliers to the base amount.

Base Amount

Louisiana has a fixed base funding amount per student. For FY2022, the per-student base amount was $4,015.

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

Local Revenue

Expected Local Share

Louisiana expects school districts to contribute revenue to the funding of public schools. The amount each district is expected to raise for its education costs is based on a combination of its property values, its sales tax base, and its revenue from other local sources, adjusted to satisfy a statewide expected local contribution.

Louisiana works to maintain a taxation arrangement in which the state shoulders 65% of the cost of education and local school districts absorb 35% of the cost. The state computes expected local property tax rates and sales tax rates for each district to maintain this ratio. If a community's property value sees an increase of 10% or more in one year, then the state caps the increase in locally contributed property tax revenue at 10%. Similarly, if a community's sales tax base sees an increase of 15% or more in one year, then the state caps the increase at 15%.

Once the state calculates the total amount of funding necessary to educate students within a district, it subtracts the expected local contribution and provides the difference in the form of state education aid. Additionally, the state funds a minimum of 25% of each district's necessary funding, regardless of that district's local wealth. The state also gives incentive funding to encourage districts to raise and spend more money from local sources than the expected amount.

Property Tax Floors and Ceilings

Louisiana sets a ceiling on local property tax rates, as well as a level above which voter approval is required. School districts may impose up to $5.00 for every $1,000 of assessed local property wealth, without voter approval, except for Orleans Parish, which may impose $13.00 for every $1,000 of assessed local property wealth.

In addition, if voters approve, school districts may impose a further tax of up to $70.00 for every $1,000 of assessed local property wealth.

Other Local Taxes for Education

School districts in Louisiana may receive local revenue from property taxes and sales taxes.

In addition to property taxes, local school districts in Louisiana may levy sales taxes with voter approval. The combined sales taxes imposed within any local governmental subdivision must not exceed 3%, excluding state sales taxes. However, with the approval of a majority of voters, the legislature may approve an exemption to allow a greater rate.

Student Characteristics

Grade Level

Louisiana provides different levels of funding for students in different grade levels. It does so by providing a supplemental per-pupil allocation for students in grades 7-12.

School districts in Louisiana receive an additional $59 per pupil in grades 7-12 to support the cost of secondary course choices beyond the traditional classroom.

However, if the school district does not spend the entire amount by a certain date, the original allocation will be reduced by the amount that was not spent; reallocation occurs annually in May.

English-Language Learner

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

This same multiplier is applied to the base per-pupil amount for students from low-income households. Students who are both English-language learners and from low-income households generate this supplemental funding allocation only once.

Poverty

Louisiana provides increased funding for students from low-income households by applying a multiplier of 1.22 to the base per-pupil amount for these students.

Students are eligible for this supplemental funding if they qualify for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program or if they are eligible for state food assistance or health care programs, experiencing homelessness, involved with the juvenile justice system, or in the custody of the state.

This same multiplier is applied to the base per-pupil amount for students who are English-language learners. Students who are both English-language learners and from low-income households generate this supplemental funding allocation only once.

Special Education

Louisiana funds special education using a single student weight system, providing the same amount of state funding for each student with disabilities, regardless of the severity of those disabilities. It does so by applying a multiplier of 2.5 to the per-student base amount for students with disabilities.

Louisiana also provides a High Cost Services Allocation, funded out of state and federal monies, available when a student's education plan imposes costs more than three times the average per-pupil expenditure.

Gifted

Louisiana provides increased funding for gifted and talented students by applying a multiplier of 1.6 to the base per-pupil amount for these students.

Gifted students in Louisiana are defined as those with evidence of high performance in academic and intellectual aptitude. They are evaluated for math, reading, and intellectual abilities in general, and their scores are compared with the state average, and interviews with parents and educators.

Career and Technical Education

Louisiana provides increased funding for career and technical education programs by applying a multiplier of 1.06 to the base per-pupil amount for the number of full-time-equivalent students enrolled in these programs in both the fall and spring semesters. Full-time equivalency is based on the number of credit units assigned to each course taken.

District Characteristics

Concentrated Poverty

Louisiana does not provide increased funding for districts based on the concentrations of students from low-income households that they serve. However, Louisiana does provide funding for individual students from low-income households. For more information, see "Poverty."

Sparsity and/or Small Size

Louisiana provides increased funding for small school systems by applying a multiplier to the base per-pupil amount; that multiplier can range from 1.0 to 1.2, depending on the district's enrollment.

This funding is provided to school systems with student populations of fewer than 7,500. To determine each district's specific multiplier, the total student population is subtracted from 7,500 and divided by 37,500.

Charter Funding

Funding for charter schools in Louisiana is calculated based on a formula similar to the one used to calculate funding for traditional public schools.

Like traditional public schools, charter schools are funded through a hybrid formula that considers both the characteristics of students they educate and the cost of the resources required to deliver an education to these students. Funding reflects any additional monies for students in special needs categories. In addition, charter schools will receive a per-student share of any state program-based allocations, which are distributed on a per-student basis.

Charter schools in Louisiana do not have access to revenue raised by local school districts, but they receive state funding that may be meant to replace local tax revenue. The state provides charter schools with an amount based on revenue raised by local school districts from sales and use taxes, property taxes, and earnings from state lands, excluding any local revenue dedicated to capital outlay or debt service.

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

