

FundEd: Mississippi Report

A Detailed Look at Mississippi's Funding Policies



Mississippi



Funding Basics

Formula Type

Mississippi has a hybrid funding formula incorporating both resource-based and student-based elements. It determines the cost of delivering education to a student with no special needs or services based on the cost of the resources, such as staff salaries and maintenance services, required to do so. This cost is then used as a base amount. The formula then accounts for the additional cost of educating specific categories of students both through resource-based allocations for particular programs and by applying multipliers to the base amount to generate supplemental funding for certain students.

Low-income students generate supplemental funding in Mississippi. Services for students with disabilities, students identified as gifted, students enrolled in career and technical education programs, and students in sparsely populated districts are funded through resource-based program-specific allocations.

Base Amount

Mississippi has a fixed base funding amount per student. For FY2018, the per-student base amount was \$5,382.

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

Local Revenue

Expected Local Share

Mississippi 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 its property values: each district is expected to contribute \$28.00 for every \$1,000 of assessed local property wealth (subject to different assessment ratios for different classes of property) for the purpose of funding its schools.

As a matter of policy, the state should not contribute less than 73% of the amount of funds calculated by the state to be necessary to educate the students within each district, regardless of its local wealth. However, in practice, the state may provide a smaller share of districts' needed funding if the legislature appropriates insufficient funding to cover the 73% requirement. Once the state calculates the total amount of funding necessary for each district, it subtracts the expected local contribution and provides the difference in the form of state education aid.

Additionally, taxpayers may claim an exemption from taxes on homesteads; the state provides a small reimbursement to the school districts to offset this exemption.

Property Tax Floors and Ceilings

Mississippi sets a floor and a ceiling for local property tax rates. School districts must impose a tax rate of at least \$28.00 for every \$1,000 of taxable property wealth and may not raise more than \$55.00 for every \$1,000 of assessed local property wealth.

However, levies to fund debt service may be imposed in excess of \$55.00 for every \$1,000 of assessed local property wealth.

Other Local Taxes for Education

School districts in Mississippi receive local revenue only from property taxes.

District Characteristics

Grade Level

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

English-Language Learner

Mississippi does not provide increased funding for English-language learners.

Poverty

Mississippi provides increased funding for students from low-income households. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.05 to the base per-pupil amount for these students.

Students are eligible for this supplemental funding if they qualify for free lunch (but not reduced-price lunch) under the National School Lunch Program.

Special Education

Mississippi funds special education using a resource-based system, determining the cost of delivering special education services in a district based on the cost of the resources, staff positions in particular, required to do so.

The state estimates the number of special education teacher units that each district will need, calculates the average salary drawn by special education teachers in each district based on personnel reports from the prior year, and then multiplies these numbers to produce the Special Education Add-On Allocation, which districts may use as they see fit.

The remainder of state special education funding is distributed through specific program-based allocations, including funding for sign-language interpreters, positive behavior specialists, extended-year instruction, the education of students with disabilities in state-approved private schools and facilities, and partial scholarships for special-needs students whose parents wish to enroll them in private school.

Gifted

Mississippi provides increased funding for gifted and talented students. It does so in a resource-based fashion, by allocating funding in an amount equal to each district's anticipated costs for salaries for teachers in gifted programs.

Annually, the state's Office of Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs provides an estimate of the teacher units needed for each district's gifted education programs to the Office of School Financial Services, which calculates the average salary drawn by gifted education teachers in each district based on personnel reports from the prior year, and then multiplies these numbers to produce the total amount of funding provided to the district for gifted education.

This funding is allocated with no use restrictions.

Career and Technical Education

Mississippi provides increased funding for career and technical education (CTE) programs. It does so through its resource-based formula by allocating funding in an amount equal to each district's anticipated costs for salaries for teachers in CTE programs.

Annually, the state's Office of Career and Technical Education provides an estimate of the teacher units needed for each district's CTE education programs to the Office of School Financial Services, which calculates the average salary drawn by CTE teachers in each district based on personnel reports from the prior year, and then multiplies these numbers to produce the total amount of funding provided to the district for CTE.

This funding is allocated with no use restrictions.

Sparsity and/or Small Size

Mississippi provides increased funding for sparse school districts. It does so through its transportation funding system.

Mississippi calculates the density for each school district by dividing the total student enrollment by the total square miles in the district, and then provides districts with a variable amount per enrolled student based on a calculated aid ratio. Per-student funding ranges from approximately \$85 to \$260 per student per year.

While all districts receive some transportation aid, student rates are highest for districts with less than 0.6 students per square mile.

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

