

Funded: Rhode Island Report

A Detailed Look at Rhode Island's Funding Policies



Rhode Island



Funding Basics

Formula Type

Rhode Island 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 both through program-specific allocations and by applying multipliers to the base amount to generate supplemental funding for certain students.

Low-income students generate supplemental funding in Rhode Island. Services for students enrolled in career and technical education programs and highly disabled students are funded through program-specific allocations.

Base Amount

Rhode Island has a fixed base funding amount per student. For FY2015, the per-student base amount was \$8,966.

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

Expected Local Share

Rhode Island expects school districts to contribute revenue to their public schools. The amount each district is expected to raise is based on a combination of its property values and its students' level of financial need.

Once the state calculates the total amount of funding necessary for core instruction in each district, it calculates the share of the amount that will be covered by state aid. This is accomplished through a multi-step formula that considers local property values, property values statewide, and the percentage of district students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program. After the state calculates this share, the rest of the district's necessary funding is expected to be covered by local tax revenue.

Student Characteristics

Grade Level

Rhode Island does not differentiate funding based on students' grade levels.

English Language Learner

Rhode Island does not provide increased funding for English language learners.

Student Poverty

Rhode Island provides increased funding for students from low-income households. It does so by applying a multiplier of 1.4 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 (FRL) under the National School Lunch Program.

Special Education

Rhode Island does not, in most cases, provide funding in addition to the per-student base amount for special education, and state funds are set aside only for extremely high-cost or atypical special-needs students.

The state's per-student base amount is based on average education expenditures across several northeastern states and is intended to cover a portion of special education expenses. However, the state does provide separate funds to defray especially high special education costs (effectively, those exceeding 5 times the base amount) and fully supports the Hospital School at Hasbro Children's Hospital.

Gifted

Rhode Island does not provide additional resources for gifted and talented students.

Career and Technical Education

Rhode Island provides specific funding for career and technical education (CTE) programs through a grant for certain program start-up and maintenance costs.

The Career and Technical Fund supports the initial investment requirements needed to transform existing or create new comprehensive career and technical programs and career pathways in critical emerging industries and to offset the higher than average costs associated with highly specialized programs.



Community Characteristics

District Poverty

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

However, the percentage of students in grades PK-6 is considered in the calculation of the state's share of the district's overall funding formula. (See "Expected Local Share" for a description of this calculation.)

Sparsity and/or Small Size

Rhode Island 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

