

# Louisiana Believes

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School Finder Update - School Spending  
June 2020

# ATTENTION: Instructions for participants

During this meeting, participants may submit questions via the online chat feature to any of the presenters throughout the presentation.

Submitting questions via the chat allows LDOE the opportunity to not only answer your question while on the call but to also add your question and the answer to our publicly disseminated FAQ document.

Every day in Louisiana, educators are committed to making sure that all students and schools have the opportunity to grow and thrive.

By 2025, Louisiana's K-12 education system will...



ensure students are ready for the next level of study,



give all students access to the same opportunities as their peers across the country,



require comprehensive support for struggling schools and groups of students, and



provide families and communities with an accurate picture of school, center, and system performance and quality.

# Agenda

- I. Overview of School Finder Update
- II. Preview of the School Finder Update
- III. Preparing for the School Finder Update

# School Finder Update



On June 30, the Louisiana School Finder ([www.louisianaschools.com](http://www.louisianaschools.com)) will be updated to include information on school spending in compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Detailed school level per pupil spending information has been published for many years on the department's [website](#) in compliance with state law.

Now, information on a school's per pupil spending will be more easily accessible and presented in an easier to understand format within Louisiana School Finder.

# What is the new reporting requirement?

ESSA requires that, in addition to student outcome data, state and district report cards have information on how much is spent per student at every school.

Specifically, the minimum requirements for reporting financial data include:

“The per-pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds, including actual personnel expenditures and actual non-personnel expenditures of federal, state, and local funds, disaggregated by source of funds, for each local educational agency and each school in the state for the preceding fiscal year.”

Families will now be able to view data within School Finder such as total school level per pupil spending, school spending specific to the site, school share of central office expenditures, as well as how spending has changed over time and what types of spending occurs at a school.

# Why is school level spending data important?

School level spending data provides for comparisons on spending between schools within a district and across districts. This data provides insight into how resources are budgeted and may provide a better understanding of the different types of spending required to meet the unique needs of students. Lessons learned from analysis of the spending data may help school systems and schools improve budgeting methodologies which in turn benefits students.

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# Where in school finder will the data be published?



Compare  | View Favorites | 

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## ALLIGATOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten-12 

K-12 REPORT CARD GRADE

[A](#) **[B](#)** [C](#) [D](#) [F](#) [T](#)



ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE 

SCHOOL SPENDING

# Section: “How much funding does this school spend annually per student?”

## ALLIGATOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten-12 ▾

K-12 REPORT CARD GRADE

(A) (B) (C) (D) (F) (T)



ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ▾

SCHOOL SPENDING

School spending data gives insight into the cost of providing educational services at each school and allows comparisons among schools that could inform budgeting decisions to benefit students.

HOW MUCH FUNDING DOES THIS SCHOOL  
SPEND ANNUALLY PER STUDENT?

\$11,546

What does this measure?

# Section: “Where does this school get its money?”

## WHERE DOES THIS SCHOOL GET ITS MONEY?

What does this measure?

### SITE LEVEL SPENDING

Funding Type	<u>Dollar Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
State/Local	\$8,876	
Federal	\$1,014	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,890</b>	<b>86%</b>

### SITE SHARE OF CENTRAL OFFICE SPENDING

Funding Type	<u>Dollar Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
State/Local	\$1,582	
Federal	\$74	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,656</b>	<b>14%</b>
Per student spending	\$11,546	100%

# Section: “How does this school’s spending compare to other schools?”

## HOW DOES THIS SCHOOL'S SPENDING COMPARE TO OTHER SCHOOLS?

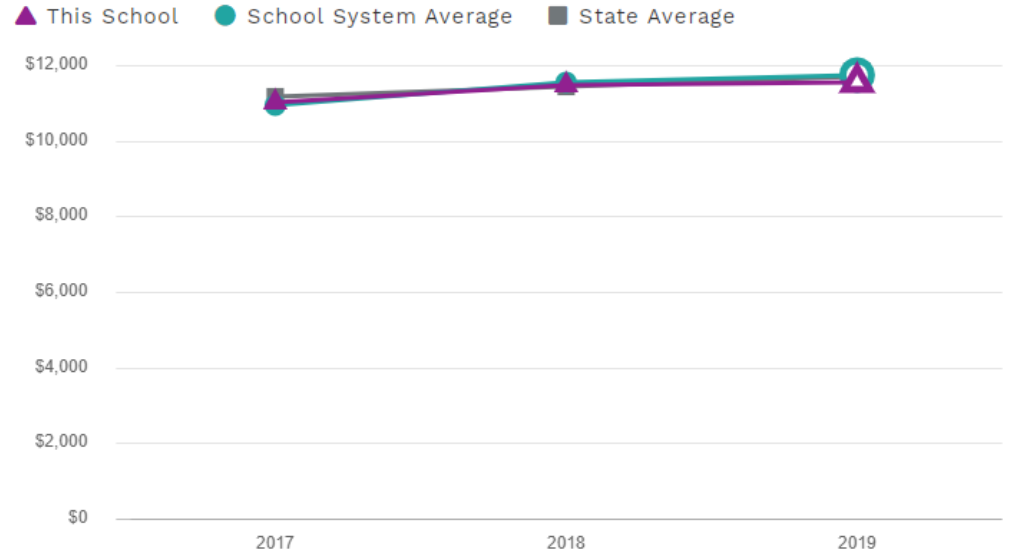
What does this measure?

	Per student spending
This School	\$11,546
School System Average	\$11,752
State Average	\$11,708

# Section: “How has this school’s spending changed over time?”

## HOW HAS THIS SCHOOL'S SPENDING CHANGED OVER TIME?

What does this measure?



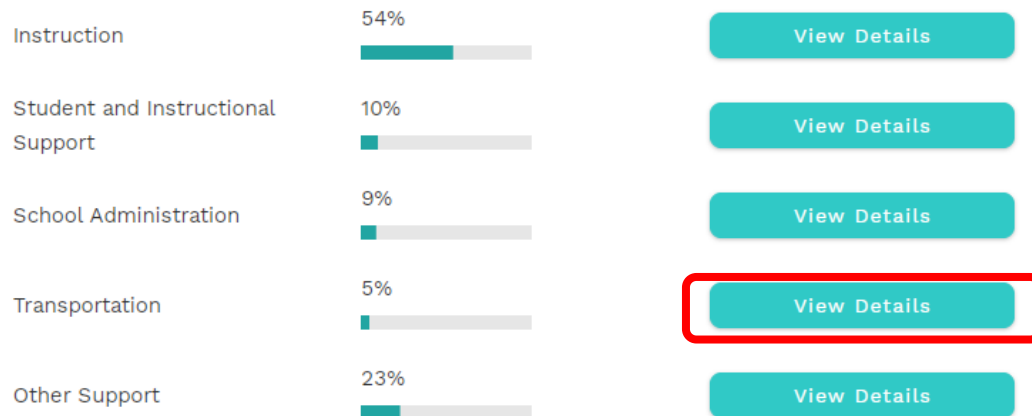
	2017	2018	2019
This School	\$11,005	\$11,473	\$11,546
School System Average	\$10,938	\$11,547	\$11,752
State Average	\$11,160	\$11,432	\$11,708

# Section: “How did this school spend its money?”

## HOW DID THIS SCHOOL SPEND ITS MONEY?

What does this measure?

### PER STUDENT SPENDING BY TYPE

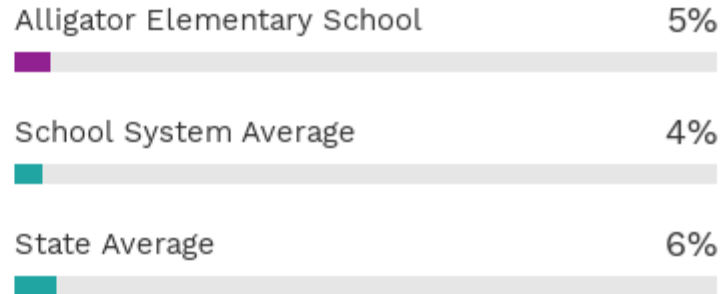


# Subsection: “View Details” for “ How did this school spend its money?”

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## TRANSPORTATION

**HOW DID THIS SCHOOL PERFORM COMPARED TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM & STATE?**



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# Taking Steps to Prepare for the Release

Leaders should take steps to prepare for the release, such as:

- Review the FAQ document provided by the LDOE
- Review the data in advance of the release
- Prepare for common questions

# Review the FAQ

The Department has created [an FAQ document](#) around the release of school spending data in the Louisiana School Finder.

School system and school leadership and business managers are encouraged to review the FAQ document in advance of the release and follow up with any questions to the department not already covered in the FAQ.

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

School systems should have received a file on June 23 with the school spending data that will be published for their LEA on both the data management and EdFin secure FTP sites. The file should be titled “LEA Code\_LEA Name\_2020 School Finder Finance Data.”

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

The school level spending data are calculated using data reported by school systems and schools from the prior school year (2018-2019) in the Annual Financial Report (AFR).

The AFR spending data is then allocated through a uniform method to school level using prior year student data from the Student Information System (SIS) and salary and staffing data from the Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP).

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

Each type of expenditure, site level or site share of central office, has a specific allocation methodology to calculate the per pupil spending. For example:

## Site Level Spending

Salary and benefits (Object 100 and 200) expenses reported in Instruction (Function 1000) at the school district level in the AFR are allocated to each school within the district based on salary data by functional area reported in the Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP) data.

Purchased Property services (Object 400) expenses reported in Instruction (Function 1000) are allocated based on total student enrollment data as reported to the Student Information System (SIS).

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

## Site Level Spending

Books and Periodicals (Object 640) expenses reported in Library/Media Services (Function 2252) are allocated based on employee FTE data reported in the Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP) *plus* total student enrollment data as reported to the Student Information System (SIS).

Travel Expense Reimbursement (Object 582) expenses reported in Staff Training - Gifted and Talented Program (Function 2233) are allocated based on employee FTE data reporting in the Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP).

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

## Site Share of Central Office Spending

Business Manager/CFO/Fiscal Supervisors (Object 111) expenses reported in Business Services (Function 2510) are allocated based on total student enrollment data as reported to the Student Information System (SIS).

[Detailed allocation explanations](#) have been provided for reference.

# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

School system and school leadership and business managers are encouraged to review the data prior to release on June 30 in order to better understand the data and prepare responses to possible common questions.

Business managers will be most familiar with spending data and could review the data to identify variances and nuances. School system and school leaders should also review the spending data, especially in regards to variances, and explore the reasons behind the numbers.

Reviewing staffing costs is important when analyzing the spending data since salary and benefits costs are a substantial portion of overall educational expenditures.



# Reviewing the Data in Advance of the Release

Five important analyses to run on school spending data:

- Which schools are outliers and why?
- How does spending compare among types of schools?
- What percent of dollars are accounted for at the site level?
- What percent of dollars are accounted for centrally?
- What outcome are schools getting for the spending?

# Prepare for Common Questions

School system and school leadership and business managers are encouraged to anticipate possible questions following the release of school spending data. These questions may come from families, reporters, or advocates and other groups. Responses to questions should provide context around the data as well as answers.

Each of these stakeholder groups will have a unique perspective and questions on the spending data. A sample of anticipated questions from stakeholder groups is being shared for reference.

# Anticipating Questions from Families

- Why is my child's school's per student spending more/less than other schools in the school system? Why is it more/less than the school system or state average?
- If school spending is lower at my school than another local school, does that mean my child is receiving a worse education?
- Who makes the decision about how money is spent?
- Is my school getting the amount of money it needs to educate my child?

# Anticipating Questions from Reporters

- How is funding budgeted at the school system and school level?
- Why isn't the school system spending the same amount from school to school?
- Are there connections between a school's per student spending and the characteristics of the school (e.g. enrollment of different student groups)?
- How is the district planning to use this information to guide future funding decisions?

# Anticipating Questions from Advocates and Other Groups

- What decisions do the school system and school make that impact the per student spending amounts?
- What decisions drive central expenses?
- What is the relationship between per student spending and student outcomes?
- Is the school system budgeting and spending its funds in a fair and equitable manner?

# Communicating about School Spending Data

Once research is completed on the per pupil spending, consideration should be given to sharing this information with school system and school leadership to assist in delivering clear and uniform responses.

School system and school leaders may want to share information about this new aspect of School Finder with their communities. Options for consideration include:

- Update school system website with School Finder FAQs and link to School Finder
- Prepare summary of key points on new reporting and share in newsletters and presentations

# Questions

Questions may be sent to [SchoolFinanceHelpDesk@la.gov](mailto:SchoolFinanceHelpDesk@la.gov)