

My School's Funding

Is my child's school getting the funding it needs to help all students be successful after the pandemic?

School funding is important for student success. How districts and schools decide to spend funds can make a critical difference in whether all students receive the resources and support they need to have a great learning experience—ultimately putting them on the path to a bright future.

That will be especially important next school year as many students return to a more traditional classroom environment. District leaders, school leaders, teachers, support staff, and other educators will need to assess how the pandemic affected student learning and develop a plan to ensure all students get the support they need to be academically successful.

Now more than ever, students with the greatest needs should have the most resources. As school districts across New York receive additional funding from the state and federal governments, every parent can help ensure that their child's school gets the equitable funding it needs for all students to be successful.

WHO DECIDES THE BUDGET?



The school district's leadership develops the budget plan. The School Board is responsible for voting to approve the budget.

WHEN DOES THIS HAPPEN?



School districts are working on finalizing their budgets now, including figuring out how to spend new funding from the state and federal governments.

HOW CAN I HAVE MY VOICE HEARD?



- **See how much funding your child's school is receiving and how it's being spent.** Visit [NYSchoolFunding.org](https://www.nyschoolfunding.org) to see how much money is budgeted for your child's school. You can also see how it compares to other schools in the district.
- **Work with other equity-focused parents.** There is strength in numbers. Elected officials are more likely to pay attention to an issue when they hear from many people. Talk to other parents about the budget issues that affect your school, and advocate together.
- **Make your voice heard.** Many public officials are eager to hear from their constituents. As a parent, you have an important point of view. Reach out to the district leaders, your School Board members, and elected officials with questions and to tell them what you think.

Most school districts spend about the same in the schools that serve the most low-income students compared to the schools that serve the fewest low-income students. Equal is not the same as equitable!

Visit [NYSchoolFunding.org](https://www.nyschoolfunding.org) to learn how much money your district typically budgets for your child's school and others in your district.

THREE QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK TO ADVOCATE FOR EQUITY IN SPENDING:

1 How will the district identify and support students most impacted by the pandemic?

Students of color and students from low-income backgrounds were more likely to rely on remote learning during the pandemic. As a result, many parents are now worried that their children may have fallen behind academically. In addition, more than 80 percent of parents of students in grades 9-12 are concerned about whether their child will graduate from high school. Understanding how your child's school plans to assess academic and nonacademic needs is a good first step to thinking about how they should spend resources.

Consider asking:

- How does the district plan to identify students most impacted by the pandemic?
- How will the district assess their needs and identify a unique learning plan to address them?
- What funding resources and other supports will the district make available to the schools serving students with unique needs?

2 How does the school district plan to address the unique academic and nonacademic needs of all student groups?

Some students may need additional academic and emotional support as they return to in-person instruction. Make sure that your district has a plan to support students who have been historically overlooked.

Consider asking:

- What services will be provided to Multilingual learners in our school?
- How will our school ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education, including specialized instruction, related services, and other accommodations?

- How will the school district/school identify and provide additional support to students experiencing homelessness?
- What supports will be in place for students from low-income households to achieve at a high level?
- Do all students have equitable access to advanced courses in middle and high schools?
- How does our school plan to support students' social-emotional development, especially for students who may have experienced trauma or loss during the pandemic?

3 School districts across New York will receive an additional \$8.09 billion from the federal government this year and many high-need districts will see an increase in funding from the state. Are they planning to invest these new funds equitably — making sure the students who need the most support receive the most resources?

All schools have needs, but some schools have greater needs than others. School districts should invest the influx of new resources into the schools that serve students who have been most impacted by the pandemic and those with the greatest needs.

Consider asking:

- How will the school district assess which schools have the greatest needs?
- Will the district commit to equitably investing the influx of new resources into the schools with the greatest needs (i.e., will the schools with the greatest needs receive more resources)?
- What additional support will the school district provide to help guide school-level investments?
- Will the school district commit to including student, parent, and family voice into the decision making process?

