



Standard of Effort Report

February 2021

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Executive Summary

This document is a comparison of Fargo Public Schools general fund to the finances of four North Dakota districts. Using data from the 2020 and 2021 “School Finance Facts” and “Employee Compensation” reports published by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, peer district annual financial reports and information supplied by the districts, this report analyzes the characteristics of the most recent revenue and expenditure allocations. The following districts have been selected for comparison:

- Bismarck Public Schools
- Grand Forks Public Schools
- Minot Public Schools
- West Fargo Public Schools

The report is divided into three sections:

- Section I discusses revenue, fund balance and expenditure performance of Fargo Public Schools in relation to peer school districts in North Dakota. The general fund categories considered include overall revenue and expenditures, instructional and administrative expenditures, and support program expenditures.
- Section II highlights district spending on Special Education, including breakdowns of Special Education expenditures on a per-child count basis by program/service area.
- Section III provides a review of the English Learners program.

Section I: General Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances

Revenues

Taxable Valuation and Levies

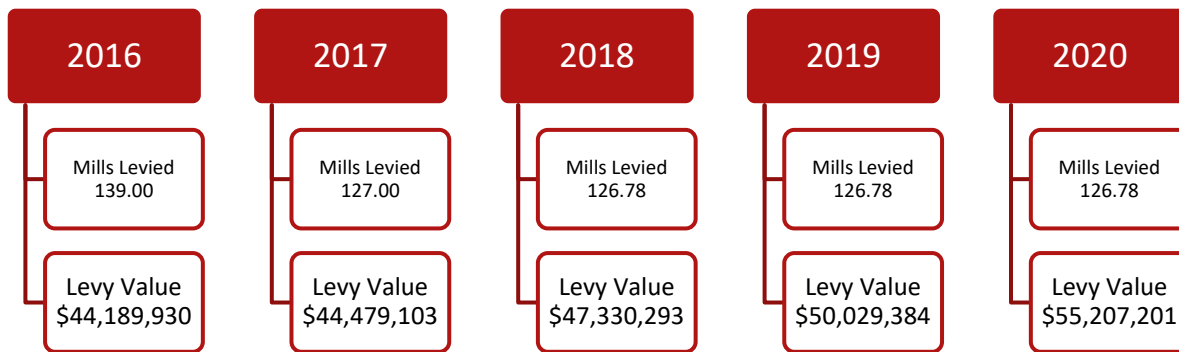
What is the Mill Levy?

The mill levy is determined each year by dividing the total amount of dollars needed by each political subdivision (city, county, schools, etc.) from the property tax by the total taxable value of the city of Fargo. This, in effect, ends up being the percentage of taxable value that is levied or assessed in property tax annually. The mill levy is a composite of several entities' tax levying powers. In Fargo, since there are three school districts involved (Fargo, West Fargo & Kindred), there are three different mill levies.

What is Taxable Value?

Taxable value refers to a percentage of the city assessor's appraisal according to a state-prescribed formula, after exemptions are removed. To calculate annual taxes for a property, the taxable value is multiplied by the mill levy.

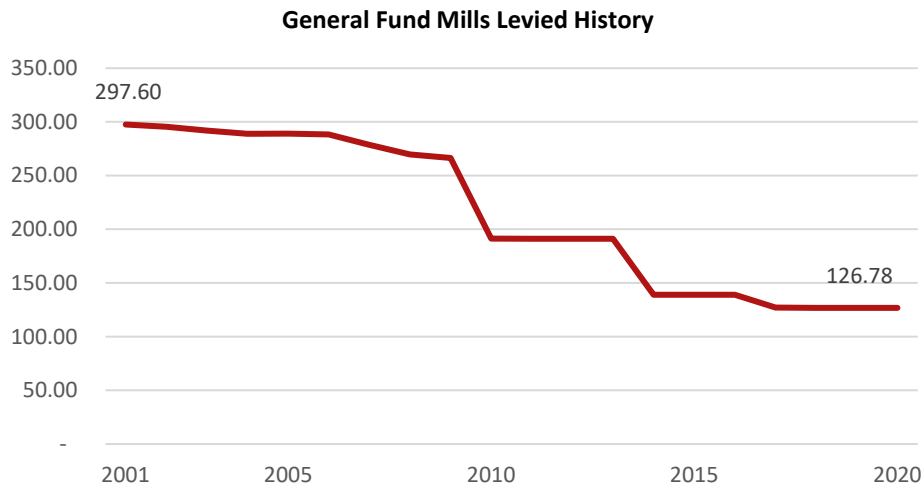
Fargo Public Schools mills levied, and value of those mills for the previous five years has been:



Fargo Public Schools Mill Levy History

Since 2001, Fargo Public Schools has decreased the general fund mill levy by a total of 170.82 mills. By honoring legislative intent, 125.0 mills were decreased (75 mills in fiscal year 2010 and 50 mills in fiscal year 2014). 33.82 mills were decreased through demonstrated fiscal responsibility to relieve tax burden on property owners. Most recently, 12.0 mills were decreased due to frozen property tax revenue in fiscal 2017, with a slight reduction in mills in 2018.

Local tax revenue includes property taxes, tuition and miscellaneous levies, and other taxes received such as electric, telecommunications, mobile home, and tax credits. It is important to note that while all districts levy for property taxes, other tax revenue sources vary.



District Mill Value Comparison

The value of a mill is different for each taxing district. Bismarck has the highest per mill value and taxable value per student enrolled. The statewide average taxable valuation per enrolled student is \$44,021.

	Value of a Mill	Taxable Value Per Enrolled Student ¹	General Fund Mill Levy ²
Fargo	\$412,857	\$36,273	126.78
Minot	\$213,209	\$28,076	86.88
Grand Forks	\$242,517	\$32,487	86.00
West Fargo	\$399,042	\$35,401	77.88
Bismarck	\$491,304	\$36,860	74.10

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Average Daily Membership

Average Daily Membership (ADM) is a count of the days students are enrolled in a district and is used for state foundation aid purposes.

	ADM
Fargo	11,697.00
Grand Forks	7,848.28
Minot	7,864.08
West Fargo	11,657.49
Bismarck	14,125.32

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

¹NDDPI uses the fall 2018-2019 K-12 enrollment figures to calculate the taxable value per enrolled student.

²General Fund levy includes tuition and/or miscellaneous levies.

Property Tax Revenue

Local tax revenue includes property taxes, tuition and miscellaneous levies, and other taxes received such as electric, telecommunications, mobile home, and tax credits. While all districts levy for property taxes, other tax revenue sources vary. Fargo Public Schools has the highest tax revenue percentage and tax revenue per pupil membership.

	Total Tax Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	Tax Revenue per ADM ³
Fargo	\$51,921,668	30.3%	\$4,439
Minot	\$18,980,474	17.5%	\$2,414
Grand Forks	\$20,630,909	19.7%	\$2,629
West Fargo	\$30,569,328	21.1%	\$2,622
Bismarck	\$36,363,975	21.0%	\$2,574

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

County & Other Local Revenue

County revenue is comprised of funds received from mineral resources such as coal production and conversion revenue. Only Minot receives county revenue. Other local revenue includes tuition, transportation, interest, student and community service activities, and miscellaneous sources such as rental income. Minot has the highest county/local revenue of the districts compared, due mostly to tuition received for educating Minot Air Force Base students.

	Total County/Other Local Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	County/Other Local Revenue per ADM
Fargo	\$3,744,168	2.2%	\$320
Bismarck	\$2,496,948	1.4%	\$177
West Fargo	\$3,925,595	2.7%	\$337
Grand Forks	\$6,016,228	5.7%	\$767
Minot	\$8,489,499	7.8%	\$1,080

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

State Revenue

State aid includes per pupil, transportation, state child placement, career and technical education, and handicapped program aid. All districts received more than 60% of their total revenue from state aid, with Fargo realizing the lowest percentage.

	Total State Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	State Revenue per ADM
Fargo	\$103,628,184	60.5%	\$8,859
Grand Forks	\$66,620,222	63.6%	\$8,489
Minot	\$69,265,506	63.9%	\$8,808
West Fargo	\$101,845,236	70.4%	\$8,736
Bismarck	\$121,940,531	70.5%	\$8,633

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Federal Revenue

Most districts receive a small portion of total revenue from federal sources. The majority of this is pass-through funding from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) for programs such as Title I and IDEA-B. Grand Forks and Bismarck receive a significant portion of their federal funds through the Head Start program.

	Total Federal Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	Federal Revenue per ADM
Fargo	\$11,744,065	6.9%	\$1,004
Minot	\$7,941,696	7.3%	\$1,010
West Fargo	\$8,035,398	5.6%	\$689
Grand Forks	\$10,770,719	10.3%	\$1,372
Bismarck	\$12,179,782	7.0%	\$862

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

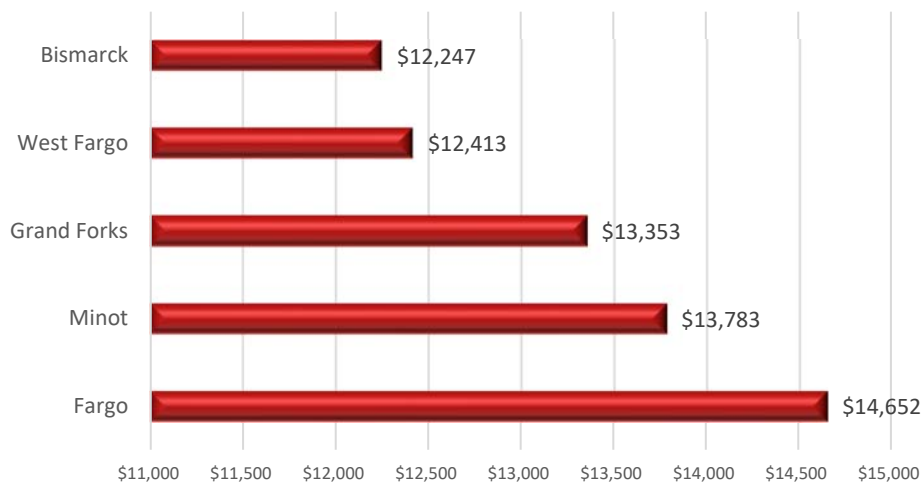
Total Revenues

Total General Fund revenue is derived from property taxes, state funding, federal grant funding, tuition, and other local/county resources. Fargo has the highest total revenue per ADM.

	Total Revenue	Revenue per ADM
Fargo	\$171,389,171	\$14,652
Grand Forks	\$104,795,363	\$13,353
Minot	\$108,389,918	\$13,783
West Fargo	\$144,706,651	\$12,413
Bismarck	\$172,997,638	\$12,247

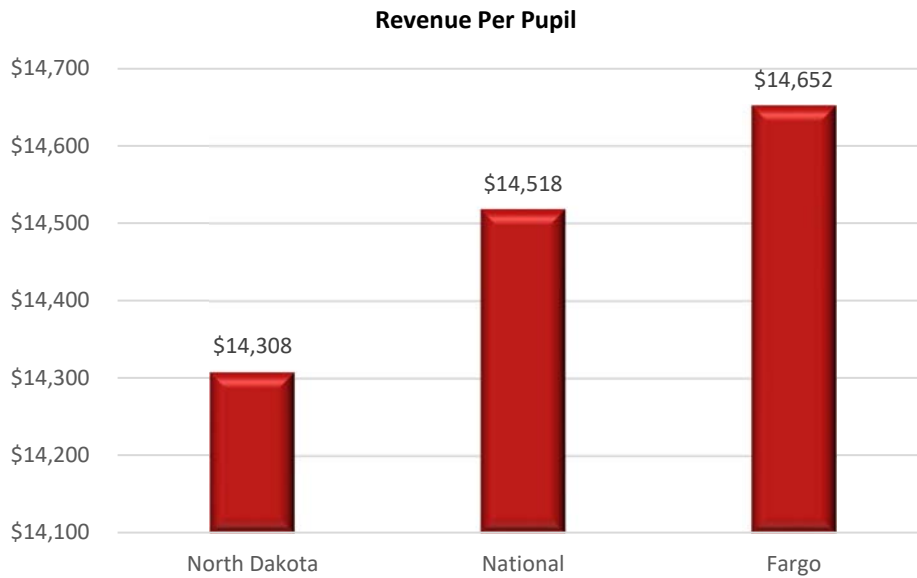
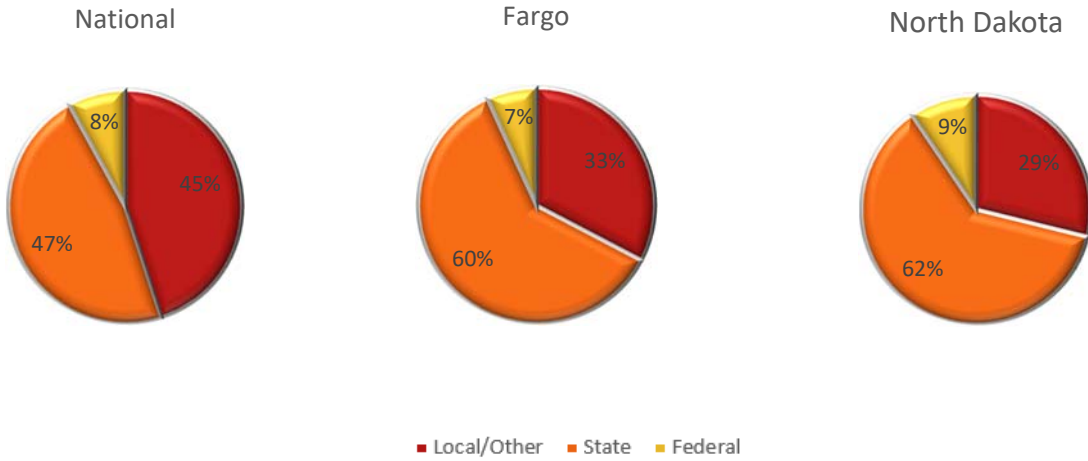
(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Total Revenue per ADM



How Do We Compare?

According to the *Condition of Education 2020*, a congressionally mandated annual report from the National Center for Education Statistics, the funding breakdown of elementary and secondary public school revenue is shown below with comparison to Fargo Public Schools and the state of North Dakota:



(Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics, 2020)

Expenditures

Teaching Staff

Licensed staff employee compensation data are presented according to "Teacher " and "Administrator" categories defined in North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) 15.1-02-13.6.

"Teacher" positions include the following: Coordinator, Counselor, Instructional Programmer, Library Media Specialist, Special Education Consultant, Pupil Personnel, Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Supervisor, Teacher, and Tutor in Training.

"Administrator" positions include the following: Asst. Director, Asst. Superintendent, Asst. Principal, Director, Principal, and Superintendent.

Teaching Staff Full Time Equivalent

	Teachers	Support Staff	Administrators	Total FTEs
Fargo	899	99	48	1,046
Grand Forks	617	79	37	733
Minot	548	75	35	658
West Fargo	830	128	40	998
Bismarck	827	83	45	955

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)

Education Level of Teaching Staff

There continues to be an increase in teachers furthering their own education through a postbaccalaureate degree with a lower percentage of elementary teachers seeking advanced degrees vs. secondary teachers.

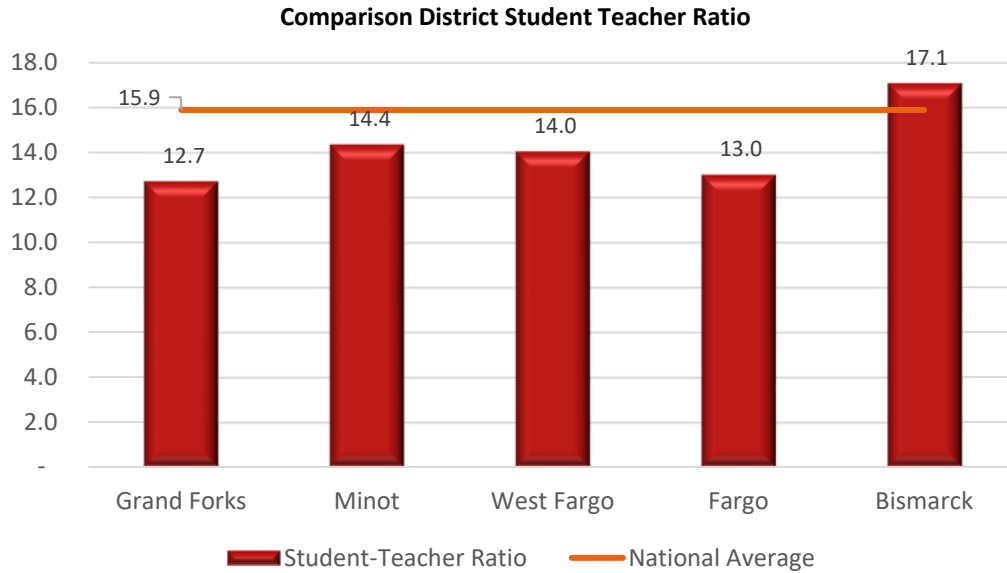
(Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics, 2020)

The following table summarizes the education and experience of teachers among the comparison districts:

	Grand Forks	Bismarck	Minot	West Fargo	Fargo
Master's Degree +	449	598	140	487	699
Percentage with master's degree +	58%	57%	22%	47%	67%
Years of experience allowed at hire	11	12	13	15	Unlimited
Steps on teacher schedule	25	25	12-15	25	12-18

Student-Teacher Ratios

The ratio of students to teachers is often used as an indicator of the resources devoted to education. The student-teacher ratio is obtained by dividing the number of full-time equivalent students (ADM) by the number of full-time equivalent teachers. The ratio, however, does not account for instruction time for students nor how much time teachers spend teaching.



(National Center for Education Statistics, 2019)
(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Average Class Size

Average class size is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled by the number of classes. The comparison districts report average class sizes for elementary students between 19 and 24 students. The national elementary average is 21.2 with the North Dakota statewide average being 17.8.

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2019)

Fargo Public Schools guiding preferences for class size are as follows:

- Primary – 21 average
- Intermediate – 22 average
- Secondary core academic classes – 26 average

Teacher Salary and Benefits

Teacher salary and benefits include instructional costs of regular, special and career and technical education, as well as federal programs, *including classroom instructional paraprofessionals*. All districts reported spending more than 57% of their total expenditures on teacher salaries and benefits.

	Teacher Salary & Benefits	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Per Pupil
Fargo	\$99,210,749	58.3%	\$8,482
Grand Forks	\$63,843,299	57.7%	\$8,135
Minot	\$63,721,359	59.9%	\$8,103
Bismarck	\$100,845,771	58.6%	\$7,139
West Fargo	\$83,395,406	58.1%	\$7,154

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

The table below shows licensed teacher salary information for each district. The national average public school teacher salary is \$62,304. The statewide average is \$53,434. West Fargo's salary information is listed excluding TFFR; with TFFR the base salary is \$44,038, average base salary is \$58,972, and average salary is \$62,317.

	Base Salary per Matrix	Average Base Salary	Average Salary	Average Compensation
Bismarck	\$46,088	\$61,554	\$65,876	\$92,727
Fargo	\$42,155	\$63,564	\$68,433	\$90,679
Grand Forks	\$41,818	\$56,928	\$59,955	\$80,057
Minot	\$40,750	\$62,899	\$65,421	\$92,118
<i>National Average</i>	\$38,617		\$62,304	
<i>North Dakota Average</i>	\$54,902		\$53,434	
West Fargo	\$38,423	\$51,453	\$54,372	\$82,986

(National Educational Association, 2019)

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)

(School District Teacher Negotiated Agreements 2020)

Average Days of Teacher Employment

The average days employed for teachers in North Dakota is 186 days. Fargo has the longest contract among the comparison districts at 191 days. Minot has the lowest with 186 days.

Teacher Contract Days

	Student Contact Days	Holidays	Staff Development Days	Parent Teacher Conference Days	Teacher Contract
Fargo	175	5	7	4	191
Grand Forks	175	3	6	4	188
West Fargo	175	3	7	2	187
Bismarck	175	3	7	2	187
Minot	175	3	6	2	186

(School District Teacher Negotiated Agreements 2020)

Licensed Support Staff

Licensed support staff includes the functional departments of librarians, counselors, and other instructional support staff.

Licensed Support Staff Full Time Equivalents

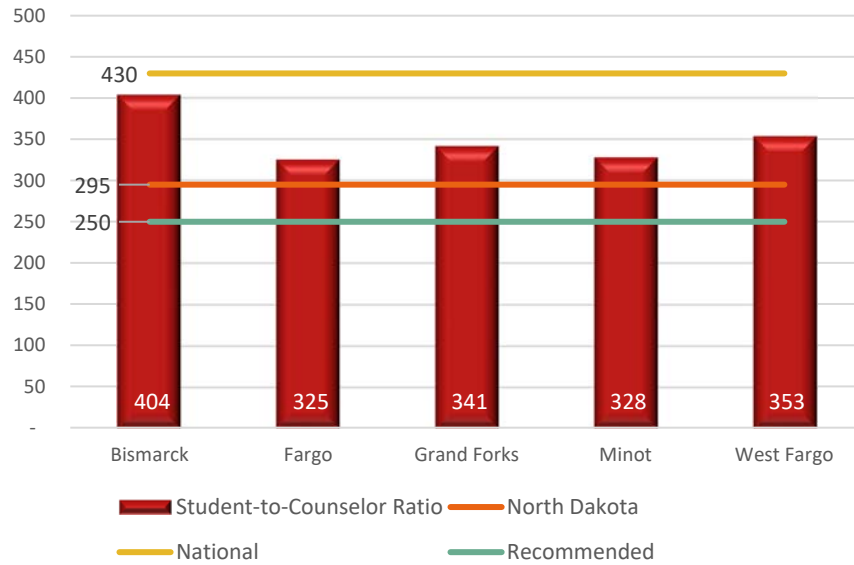
	Coordinator	Library Media Specialist	Pupil Personnel	School Counselor	School Psychologist	Speech-Language Pathologist	Supervisor
Bismarck	5	14		35		29	
Fargo	11	19		36	4	29	
Grand Forks	17	12		23	4	23	
Minot	13	4		24	5	29	
West Fargo	15	18	1	33	13	37	11

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)

School Counselors

The national average student to counselor ratio is 430:1 while the North Dakota ratio is 295:1. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends that schools strive to maintain a 250:1 ratio.

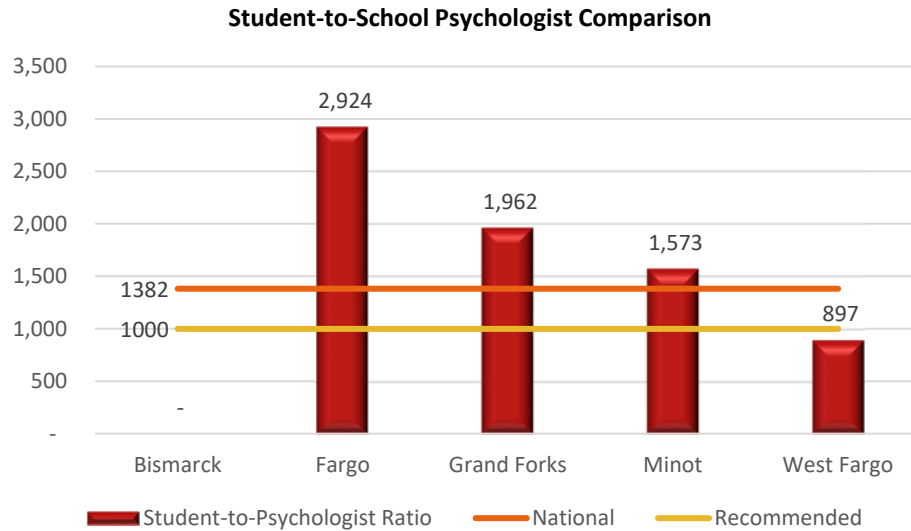
Student-to-School Counselor Comparison



(National Association for College Admission Counseling, American School Counselor Association)

School Psychologists

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) generally recommends a basic ratio of no more than 1,000 students per school psychologist. Most districts do not meet this standard. The actual average ratio is estimated to be 1,382:1. If more comprehensive and preventive services are being provided, the recommended level is no more than 500 to 700 students per school psychologist.



(National Association of School Psychologists)

Licensed Support Staff Salary and Benefits Expenditures

Licensed support staff salary and benefits include instructional support costs of regular, special and career and technical education, as well as federal programs. Bismarck reports the highest percentage of support staff salary and benefits of the districts compared, while Fargo spends the highest amount per student.

	Support Staff Salary & Benefits	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Support per Pupil
Fargo	\$7,671,586	4.5%	\$656
West Fargo	\$5,961,621	4.2%	\$511
Grand Forks	\$4,560,970	4.1%	\$581
Bismarck	\$7,843,324	4.6%	\$555
Minot	\$3,890,571	3.7%	\$495

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Paraprofessional Staff Full Time Equivalents

Paraprofessional staff are those trained to assist other professionals but do not themselves have professional licensure. Fargo Public Schools employs the following paraprofessional positions:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Special Needs, English Language, Regular Ed, Testing Proctor Para	272.62	279.23	302.5	314.85	318.59
Positive Behavior Technician	-	3.0	8.56	10.97	11.76
Print Center Clerk	3.93	5.28	5.28	5.28	4.47
IT/Help Desk	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
Security Proctor	-	3.97	4.0	4.0	3.0
Library/Library Assistant Para	29.53	30.96	29.99	29.99	29.15
Total Paraprofessional FTEs	313.08	325.47	357.30	372.09	373.97

(Fargo Public Schools Business Office)

Over the past five years, the District has experienced a 18.8% increase in paraprofessional full-time equivalents, mostly in the special education services area.

Paraprofessional Staff Salary

Paraprofessional salary expenditures have increased 36.9% over the past five years with an average increase of 8.6% per year. Fiscal 2020 realized lower growth than in previous years. The District is working to adjust staffing patterns to optimize paraprofessional staff and control costs.



(Fargo Public Schools Business Office)

Other Instructional Expenditures

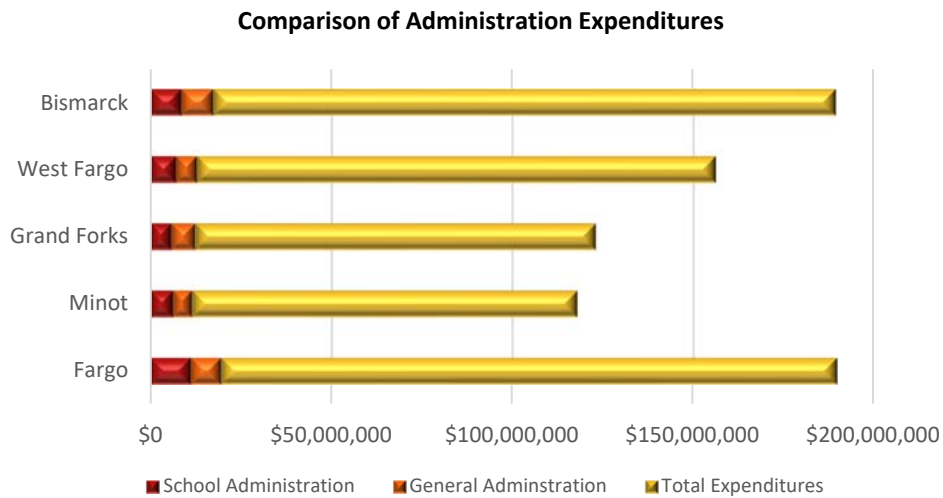
Other instructional expenditures include contracted services, supplies, books, and equipment, including technology related items.

	Other Instructional Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Fargo	\$11,867,696	7.0%
Bismarck	\$12,094,412	7.0%
West Fargo	\$20,043,517	14.0%
Minot	\$7,469,253	7.0%
Grand Forks	\$9,010,664	8.1%

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Administration

Administration expenditures include those items related to school administration (principal’s office) and general administration (school board, special area administration, business office and other support services). The chart below depicts the percentages expended for school administration and general administration compared to total expenditures for each of the comparison Districts.



(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Administration Full Time Equivalents

Administration full time equivalents are those employees in the following administrative positions who possess a teaching license.

	Assistant Director	Assistant Principal	Assist Supt Admin Assist	Director	Principal	Supt of Schools	Total
Bismarck	3	14	2	4	21	1	45
Fargo	1	20	2	3	21	1	48
Grand Forks	1	10	2	5	18	1	37
Minot		9	2	5	18	1	35
West Fargo		12	2	5	20	1	40

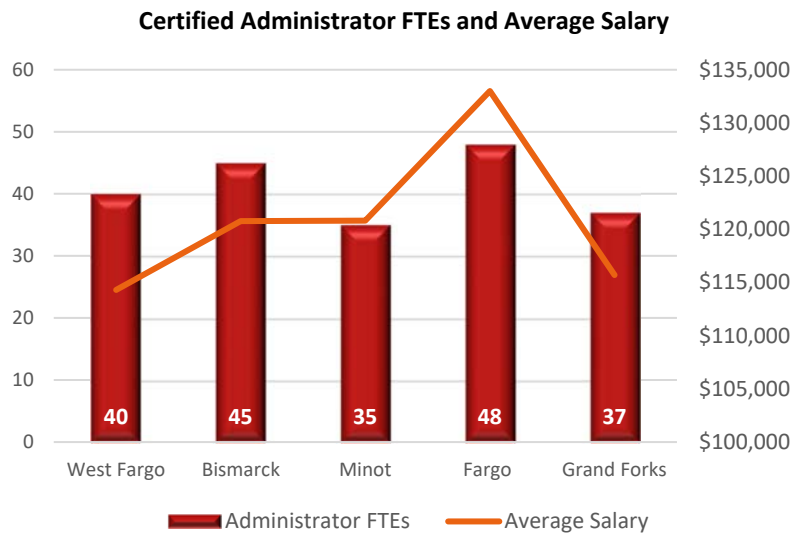
(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)

Average Administrator Salary

Average administrator salary includes the base contract plus additions to the base contract such as extended time, co-curricular, signing bonuses, substitute work and other pay for those with teaching licenses. Note that West Fargo contributes both the employer and employee shares of TFFR, therefore, the average base and average salary amounts below are comparatively lower (\$129,930 and \$131,002, adjusted for TFFR).

	Average Base	Average Salary	Average Compensation
Bismarck	\$118,962	\$120,769	\$160,910
Fargo	\$127,339	\$133,000	\$170,464
Grand Forks	\$114,417	\$115,703	\$152,020
Minot	\$120,696	\$120,813	\$161,322
West Fargo	\$112,491	\$114,299	\$168,297

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)



(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2019-20)

Operations and Other Programs

Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

Fargo Public Schools operates and maintains approximately 2.8 million square feet of building space in a district covering 57 square miles.

In a continued effort to follow the district's long-range facilities plan, Fargo continues to invest in neighborhood schools by ensuring the buildings are maintained to provide a quality school environment to all students.

	Operations & Maintenance Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Fargo	\$14,692,331	8.6%
Minot	\$9,439,907	8.9%
Bismarck	\$14,514,617	8.4%
Grand Forks	\$9,095,550	8.2%
West Fargo	\$9,588,130	6.7%

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

School Facilities

The following table summarizes the current school facilities operated by each district by instructional level.

	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Total
Bismarck	16	3	4	5	28
Fargo	16	3	4	3	26
Grand Forks	13	3	3	2	21
Minot	12	3	4	2	21
West Fargo	15	3	3	3	24

Custodial Staff Analysis

The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) custodial staffing guidelines for Educational Facilities specifies five levels of cleanliness that many institutions use to manage cleaning efforts:

- Level 1: Orderly Spotlessness
- Level 2: Ordinary Tidiness
- Level 3: Casual Inattention
- Level 4: Moderate Dinginess
- Level 5: Unkempt Neglect

The accepted level of cleanliness for school buildings is Level 3 cleaning which assumes a custodian can clean 28,000 - 31,000 square feet in an 8-hour shift, with the mean being 29,500 sq. ft.

Level 3 cleaning indicates garbage is emptied daily, floors are swept or vacuumed daily, restrooms are cleaned, and disinfected daily, common areas are swept or vacuumed daily, and dusting, white board cleaning, and glass cleaning are done on a regular basis.

In Fargo Public Schools, staffing also accounts for the following factors:

- Secondary engineers do not have an area to clean daily as their job duties require tasks such as HVAC work, a larger share of grounds work, scheduling, repairs, preventive maintenance work orders, etc.
- Elementary engineers do have an area to clean daily, but it is not an 8-hour assignment.
- Not all areas within the building are cleaned daily. Mechanical rooms and storage spaces must be removed from the calculation to determine daily cleanable square footage.

Summary and building information for the District is below:

No. of Properties	Total Square Footage	Daily Cleanable Square Footage	Total Maintenance FTEs	Maintenance FTEs Cleaning Daily	Average Square Footage Cleaned per Staff Member
25	2,779,545	2,567,857	103	81	31,702
Building					
Agassiz	180,600	157,170	5.0	4.0	39,293
Ben Franklin	202,064	187,920	6.5	5.75	32,682
Bennett	90,268	81,241	3.5	2.5	32,496
Carl Ben Eielson	178,802	166,285	6.0	5.0	33,257
Centennial	88,519	79,667	4.0	3.0	26,556
Clara Barton	54,968	49,471	2.0	2.0	24,736
Davies	290,000	269,700	9.25	8.25	32,691
Discovery	205,000	190,650	6.5	5.5	34,664
Eagles	83,906	67,586	3.5	2.5	27,034
Ed Clapp	83,978	75,580	4.0	3.0	25,193
Hawthorne	35,719	32,147	2.0	1.25	25,718
Horace Mann	43,856	39,470	2.0	1.25	31,576
Jefferson	60,637	54,573	2.5	1.75	31,185
Kennedy	89,667	80,700	4.0	3.0	26,900
Lewis and Clark	73,821	66,438	4.0	2.75	24,159
Lincoln	75,000	67,500	3.5	2.5	27,000
Longfellow	73,266	65,939	3.0	2.0	32,970
Madison	44,010	39,609	2.25	1.25	31,687
McKinley	39,147	35,232	2.0	1.0	35,232
North	287,824	267,676	8.5	8.0	33,460
Roosevelt	46,943	43,656	1.75	0.75	29,249
South	316,768	294,594	11.5	9.0	32,733
Trollwood	47,935	44,579	1.0	1.0	44,579
Washington	74,287	66,858	3.0	2.25	29,715
District Office	19,626	17,663	0.75	0.75	23,551
Operations Center	66,681	25,953	1.0	1.0	25,953
	2,779,545	2,567,857	103.0	81.0	794,218

Student Transportation Expenditures

Student transportation expenditures include regular, special and career and technical education transportation. Transportation relating to extracurricular activities is not included in the following analysis.

	Regular Transportation	Special Ed Transportation	Career & Technical Ed Transportation
Fargo	\$2,317,248	\$2,772,616	\$221,783
Bismarck	\$4,383,398	\$176,510	\$17,725
Grand Forks	\$535,376	\$820,795	\$23,907
Minot	\$744,021	\$739,900	\$0
West Fargo	\$3,403,013	\$1,297,933	\$0

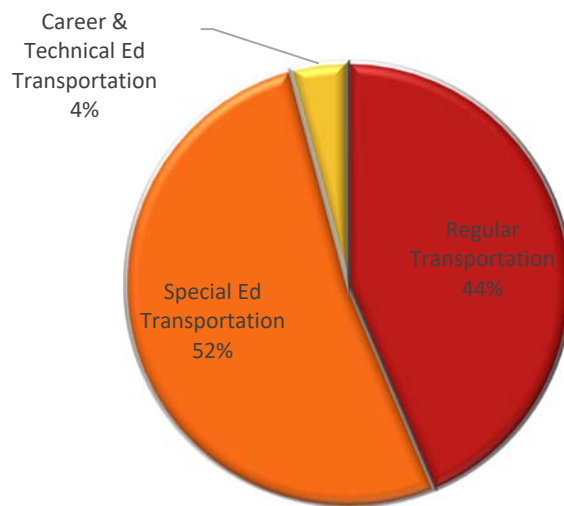
(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Districts provide in city transportation based on walk-out distances. Minot provides transportation only for Minot Air Force Base students to high schools and rural elementary students in the BEL school attendance area, along with special education students. Grand Forks only transports special education students and student from the Grand Forks Air Force Base to Central High School.

	Elementary Walk-Out	Secondary Walk-Out	Student Transportation Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Fargo	½ Mile	½ Mile	\$5,311,647	3.1%
Bismarck	½ Mile	1 Mile	\$4,577,632	2.7%
Minot	Does not transport	Does not transport	\$1,483,921	1.4%
Grand Forks	Does not transport	Does not transport	\$1,380,078	1.2%
West Fargo	Over .9 miles	Over .9 miles	\$4,700,947	3.3%

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Fargo incurs the highest total cost to transport students with over 50% of transportation costs spent on special education students.

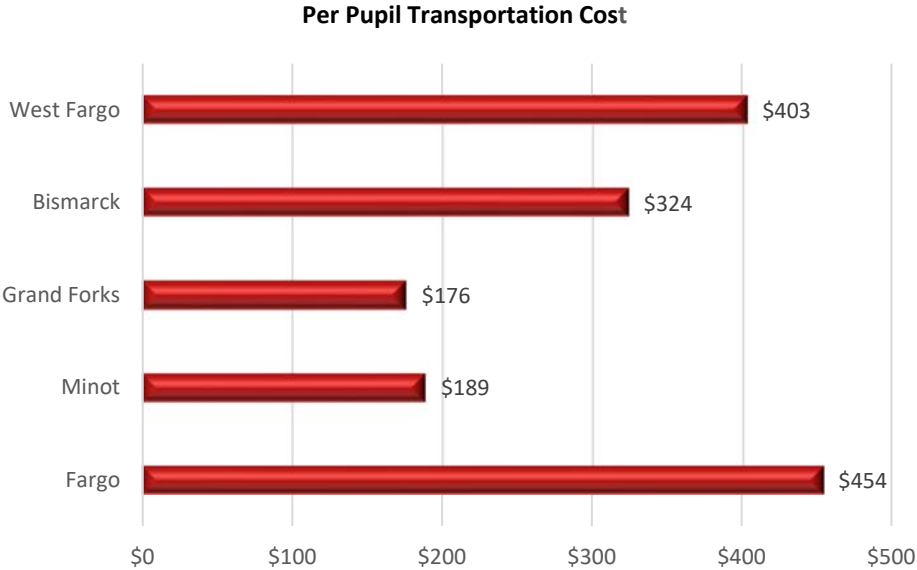


While most states provide some funding to school districts for transportation, the amount varies widely. During the 2020 school year, the NDDPI provided the District transportation reimbursement in the amount of \$1,112,422, or about 21% of bussing costs, based on school year 2019 transportation information. The reimbursement formula is based on both miles and rides.

The District’s 2020 transportation data is provided in the following table:

Route Type	Vehicle Count	Vehicle Capacity	Total Annual Runs	Total Annual Rides	Total Miles	Rides per Run	Miles Per Run	Max Ride Time in Minutes
Extended Year	31	23	1,1146	6,750	15,516	6.05	13.9	38.0
In City	48	78	24,192	750,475	207,320	31.02	8.57	15.0
Rural	3	77	882	19,908	25,326	22.57	28.71	45.0
Special Ed	69	21	13,825	68,068	209,377	4.92	15.14	42.0
Vocational Ed	2	31	4,662	25,704	30,366	5.51	6.51	20.
Total	153	26	44,677	870,908	487,905	14.02	10.92	32.0

(Fargo Public Schools Business Office)



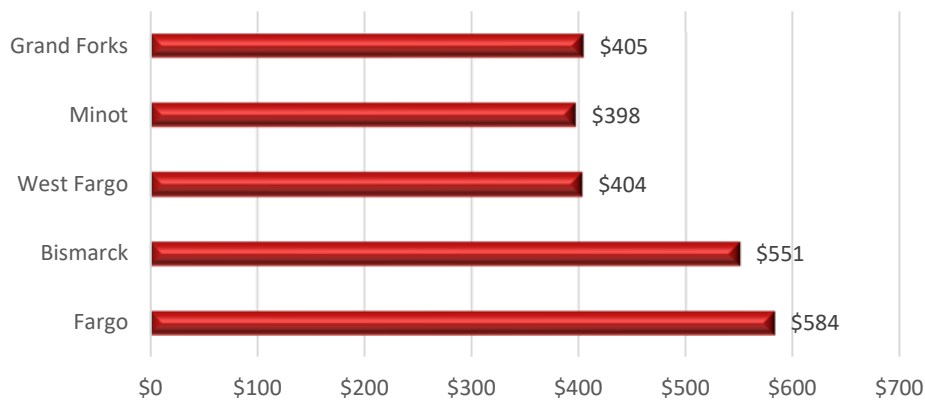
Extracurricular Expenditures

It is important to note that school districts apply different methods in reporting student activities expenditures. The table below represents expenditures for student activities paid directly from the general fund as well as those for in a separate student activities fund.

	Student Activities Fund	General Fund	Total Extracurricular Expenditures	Per Pupil Cost
Fargo	\$6,570,837	\$255,425	\$6,826,262	\$584
Bismarck	\$2,439,560	\$5,343,951	\$7,783,511	\$551
West Fargo	\$4,240,374	\$465,178	\$4,705,552	\$404
Minot	\$1,078,235	\$2,048,043	\$3,126,277	\$398
Grand Forks	\$721,696	\$2,456,678	\$3,178,374	\$405

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)
 (North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2020)

Per Pupil Extracurricular Cost



Other Program Expenditures

Other program expenditures include Head Start, adult education, tuition for students attending school outside of their home district, debt service payments and fund transfers.

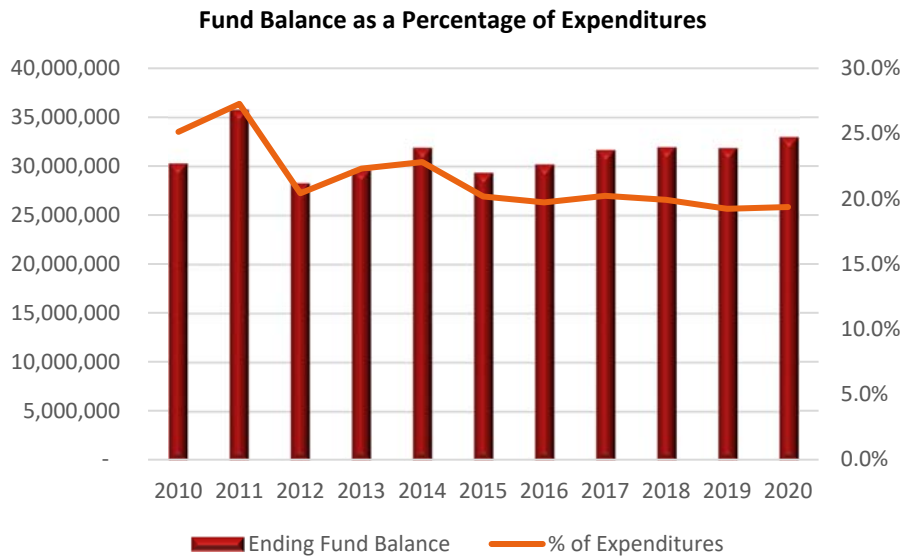
	Adult, Community & Enterprise Services Expenditures	Tuition Expenditures	Debt Service & Transfer Expenditures	Total All Other Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Fargo	\$1,095,720	\$1,600,274	\$7,930,448	\$10,626,442	6.2%
Bismarck	\$5,644,150	\$1,509,918	\$577,829	\$7,731,898	4.5%
West Fargo	\$1,549,297	\$2,107,922	\$2,623,343	\$6,280,562	4.4%
Minot	\$3,571,742	\$1,301,550	\$565,534	\$5,438,826	5.1%
Grand Forks	\$3,003,670	\$849,880	\$424,345	\$4,277,896	3.9%

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

General Fund Balance

Historical Fund Balance Analysis

The chart below displays Fargo Public School’s general fund balance as a percentage of expenditures for the past ten years. Although expenditures have risen, the general fund balance has decreased, resulting in a lower percentage over the time evaluated.



Ending Fund Balance

When comparing ending general fund balances, Fargo had the highest ending funding balance of the districts evaluated at \$32.9 million, representing approximately 2.3 months of operating expenditures. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends, at a minimum, that general-purpose governments, regardless of size, maintain unrestricted budgetary fund balance in their general fund of no less than two months of regular general fund operating revenues or regular general fund operating expenditures.

	Ending Fund Balance	Total Expenditures	Percentage of Expenditures	Months Operating Expenditures
Fargo	\$32,974,678	\$170,267,360	19.4%	2.32
Grand Forks	\$10,296,601	\$110,683,137	9.3%	1.12
Minot	\$19,352,200	\$106,441,589	18.2%	2.18
Bismarck	\$20,052,241	\$172,068,920	11.7%	1.40
West Fargo	\$13,495,431	\$143,428,338	9.4%	1.13

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

Enhancements to Education

Fargo Public Schools provides numerous enhancements to the education of our students including:

Student Transportation

Educational Field Trips for Elementary Students:

- Red River Zoo
- MSUM Planetarium/Science Center
- Fargo-Moorhead Community Theatre
- Ukrainian Kaleidoscope
- Fargo Theatre and Downtown Fargo
- Bonanzaville
- Living Agriculture
- Young People's Court
- My Day in Court
- Buffalo River Science Center
- MSUM Theatre

In-School Experiences for Elementary Students:

- Fire Safety
- Bus Safety
- Bicycle Safety
- Junior Achievement
- Reading Corps
- Operation Big Band-Aid
- Creative Arts Programming & Plains Art
- Red Flag Green Flag
- ND and Fargo History (Steve Stark)
- Learning Bank

Secondary Music Trip (every other year)

Secondary Career Fair, Expo, and Field Trips

5th Grade Orchestra

Middle School Music Sectionals

Secondary 8 Period Day

Trollwood Performing Arts School

Enhancements for Employee Well-Being:

- Flu Shot Clinics
- Health Club Reimbursement

Adult Education

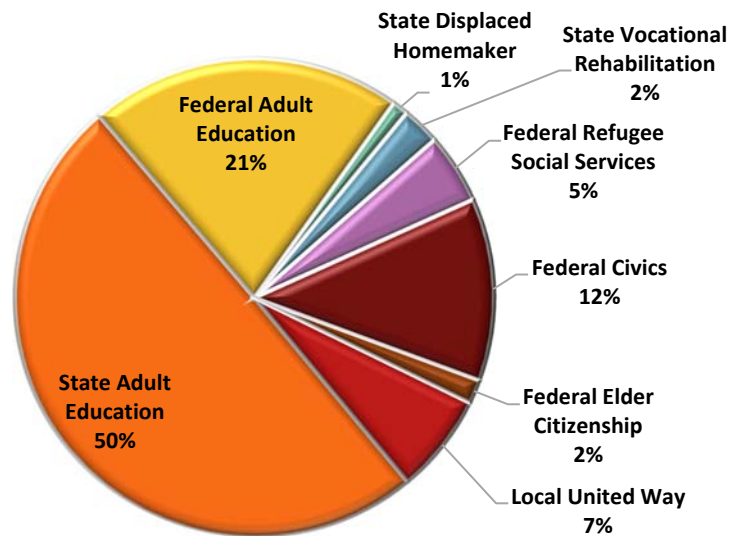
The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction receives federal funds under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) and state funds to support the operations and free programs of the Adult Learning Centers who serve individuals who:

- are at least 16 years of age;
- are not enrolled in high school;
- do not have a high school diploma;
- are mandated by State Law;
- may lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills; and/or
- cannot speak, read, or write the English language

There are 8 regional adult learning centers and satellites in ND to serve the public. Programming offered through the Fargo Adult Learning Center includes:

- General Education Degree
- English Learners
- College and Career Readiness including Basic Job Skills, Computer Literacy and Driver's Literacy
- Citizenship
- Displaced Homemaker
- Certified Nursing Program
- Literacy
- Even Start Family Literacy

The Adult Learning Center employed 22 full time staff during the 2020 school year, serving on average 950 adult students. Most funding for the program is derived from state sources:



Trollwood Performing Arts School

Trollwood Performing Arts School, located at Bluestem Center for the Arts in Moorhead, MN, is a unique arts program of Fargo Public Schools committed to providing high quality arts education, exceptional community entertainment, and serves as a community events and exposition center.

Since 1978, thousands of young people have spent their summers learning, growing, and making friends at Trollwood. Trollwood offers nine annual arts education, youth leadership and performance programs.

Trollwood Performing Arts School's history of service to youth through arts education has been acknowledged with several prestigious awards:

- United Nation's Peace Messenger Award, 1991
- President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, Coming Up Taller Award, 2002. Trollwood was one of only 11 organizations across the nation to be chosen for their outstanding youth arts programs
- Governor's Award for the Arts, 2003, awarded by North Dakota Governor John Hoeven in honor of Trollwood's long-standing commitment to excellence in arts education and community entertainment
- Lake Agassiz Arts Council's Arts Education Advocate Award, 2007
- Certificate of Excellence for Superior Performance and Leadership by Impact Foundation through Dakota Medical Foundation, 2008
- Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Chamber Choice Small Non-Profit of the Year Finalist, 2008
- Fargo-Moorhead Convention & Visitors Bureau "Countryopolitan Award" for creating the new 4-season campus to promote tourism in the Fargo-Moorhead area, 2009
- Metro Area Mayors' Committee for People with Disabilities "Universal Access Award" for meeting the minimum requirements set by the ADA and made additional architectural designs that have increased the accessibility for people with disabilities, 2009
- North Dakota Parent-Teacher Association Friend of the Child Award, 2011
- American Advertising Federation-North Dakota

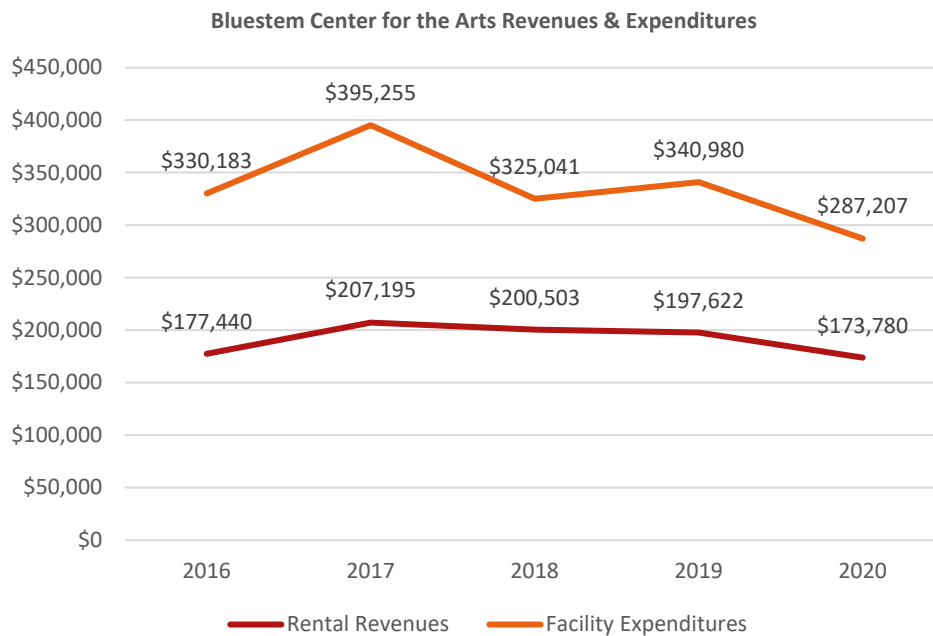
Bluestem Center for the Arts

Fargo Public Schools, through Trollwood Performing Arts School, serves as the managing arm for Bluestem Center for the Arts, a world-class facility headquartered in Moorhead, MN. Nestled along the Red River of the North, Bluestem Amphitheater features an outdoor stage with seating for 3,000. The venue also offers a unique indoor educational center, which serves as a performance venue available for rent. The Center’s beautiful grounds are made up of picturesque river views, grassy meadows, woods, and wildlife.

The venue was constructed through collaboration between Fargo Public Schools and the City of Moorhead. The District leases the facility from the City of Moorhead.

Bluestem Center for the Arts hosts many programs that inspire a love for the arts in community members of all ages. The facility is used for school arts curriculum and activities, public performances, exhibitions, community festivals, corporate retreats, conferences, and other private rental opportunities. Since opening, thousands of patrons have enjoyed a broad range of programming including theatre, arts educational opportunities, concerts, dance, music, and special events.

District management of the facility began in 2012. The following information summarizes facility activity for the previous five years:



Section II: Special Education

This section assesses district funding and spending on special education programs and services for the five largest districts in the state.

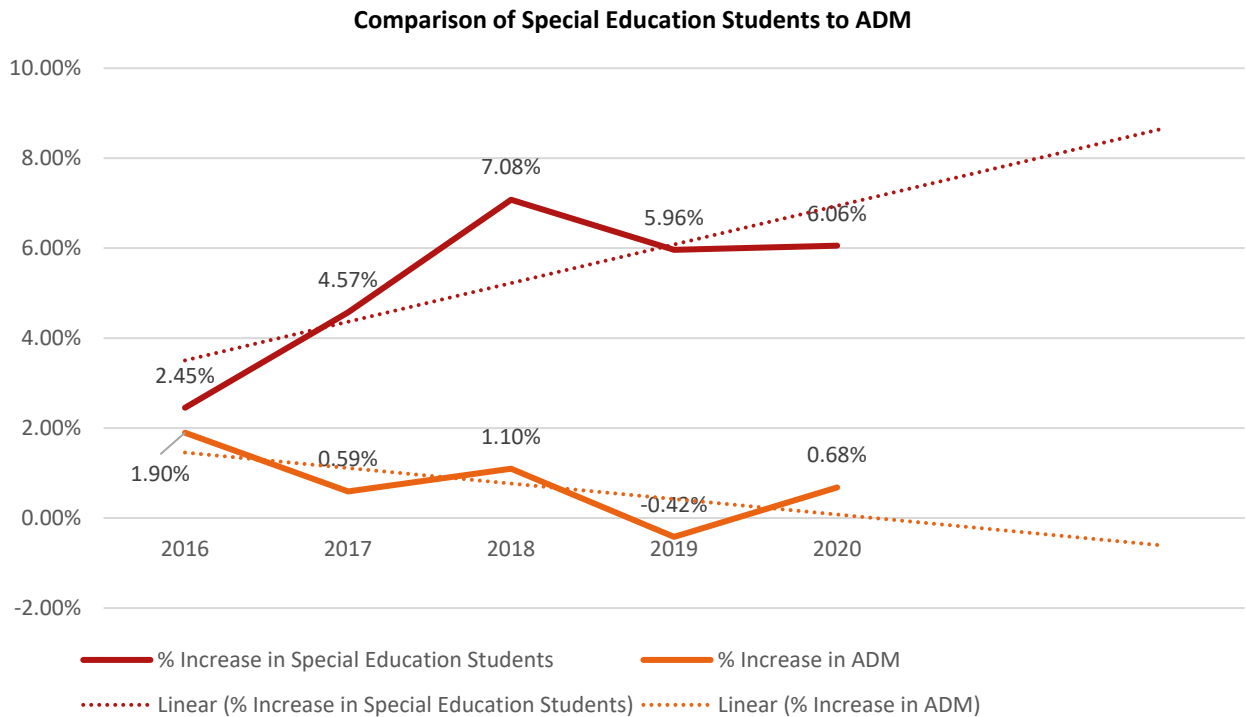
Special Education Child Count

School districts are required to submit to NDDPI their unduplicated count of children receiving special services each December. The table below displays the child count for the comparison districts and the percentage of special education students in each district.

	Special Services Child Count	ADM	%
Fargo	1,734	11,697.00	14.82%
Bismarck	1,713	14,125.32	12.13%
Grand Forks	1,376	7,848.28	17.53%
Minot	1,316	7,864.08	16.73%
West Fargo	1,556	11,657.49	13.35%

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)
(Souther, 2019)

Fargo Public Schools has realized an increase in students requiring special services at a higher rate than the growth in ADM. The forecast of this data projects a continued increase in this trend.



Special Education Revenues

Since its initial enactment, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has included a commitment to pay 40% of the excess costs of educating students with disabilities. According to the National Education Association, the federal share was just 13% in fiscal 2020, the lowest share since fiscal 2000. This lack of funding creates a shortfall that places a burden on state and local education agencies to fill in the remaining funding gap.

Comparison district federal special education revenue and funding per student are depicted in the following tables:

	Total Federal Revenue	Federal Special Education Revenue	% Federal Special Education Revenue
Fargo	\$11,744,065	\$3,192,217	27.18%
Bismarck	\$12,179,782	\$3,664,123	30.08%
Grand Forks	\$10,770,719	\$2,364,729	21.96%
Minot	\$7,941,696	\$3,063,108	38.57%
West Fargo	\$8,035,398	\$3,152,863	39.24%

	Federal IDEA Revenue	Federal IDEA Funding per Student
Fargo	\$3,192,217	\$1,841
Bismarck	\$3,320,680	\$1,939
Grand Forks	\$2,364,729	\$1,719
Minot	\$2,703,968	\$2,055
West Fargo	\$2,336,598	\$1,502

(Souther, Department of Public Instruction)

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

North Dakota school districts incur the full cost of educating students with disabilities based upon an approved contract and are subsequently reimbursed for amounts in excess of the cost cap, which is four times the state average cost for regular education. The fiscal 2020 cost caps were as follows based on a 175-day calendar year:

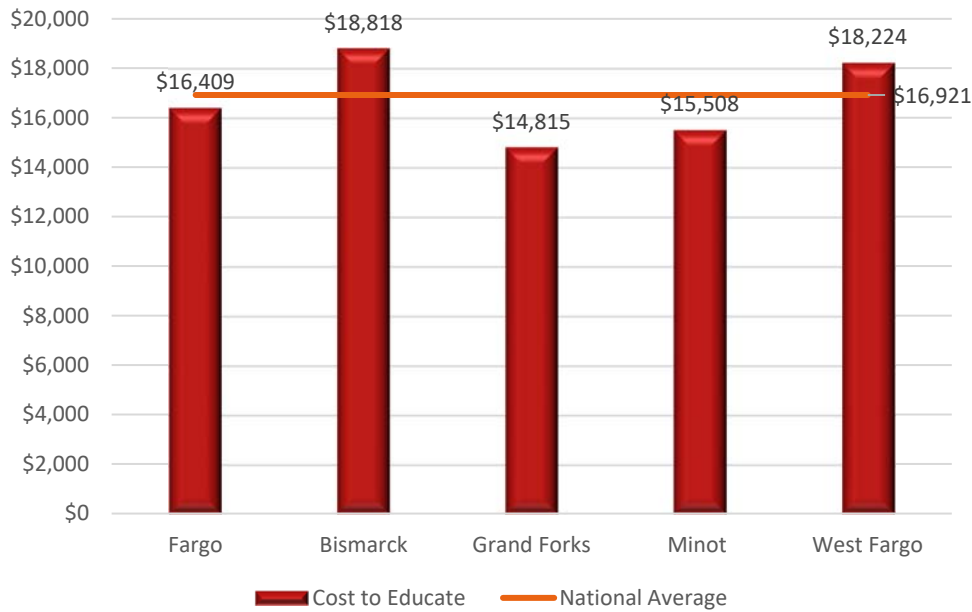
	State Average Cost	2019-2020 Cost Cap
Elementary (Grades 1-8)	\$11,877.62	\$47,510.48
Secondary (Grades 9-12)	\$13,223.15	\$52,892.60

(North Dakota Department of Public Instruction)

Special Education Expenditures

Cost to Educate

According to the National Education Association’s most recent data, the average cost per regular education student is \$7,552 and the average cost per special education student is an additional \$9,369 per student, for a total cost to educate of \$16,921. The districts compared are within +/- 12 percent of the national average.



Expenditures by Category Type

The following information displays the breakdown of special education costs by expenditure type for the comparison districts. The information does not include transportation or tuition paid to other districts to educate students with disabilities.

	Fargo	%	Bismarck	%	Grand Forks	%	Minot	%	West Fargo	%
Salaries & Benefits	\$26,438,053	97%	\$30,267,186	98%	\$19,650,674	96%	\$19,693,832	98%	\$25,616,000	96%
Purchased Services	\$715,123	3%	\$336,952	1%	\$465,379	2%	\$200,445	1%	\$943,448	4%
Supplies & Other	\$187,571	1%	\$404,014	1%	\$269,000	1%	\$152,973	1%	\$239,819	1%
Total Expenditures	\$27,340,746		\$31,008,153		\$20,385,053		\$20,047,251		\$26,799,266	

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

Expenditures by Service Area

Service Area	Fargo	Bismarck	Grand Forks	Minot	West Fargo
Preschool Instruction	2,116,429	1,783,034	585,687	1,818,125	1,717,370
Intellectual Disability Instruction	2,968,068	13,926,553	-	4,323,293	3,588,634
Heard of Hearing Instruction	554,395	393,785	63,456	219,086	416,681
Deaf Instruction	-	29,407			
Visually Handicapped Instruction	209,650	107,375	50,557	244,096	100,988
Speech Impaired Instruction	2,415,095	3,344,820	1,919,982	2,765,949	3,042,037
Physically Impaired Instruction	-	1,061,768	-	102,355	32,482
Other Health Impaired Instruction	196,645	3,880	-	-	846,922
Autism Instruction	1,164,208	55,770	-	486,821	3,257,277
Emotionally Disturbed Instruction	6,578,946	2,139,127	-	4,142,744	2,747,546
Learning Disabled Instruction	5,100,229	3,556,089	-	2,920,369	5,972,354
Multiple Handicapped Instruction	1,521,617	-	15,075,942	290,815	-
Gifted & Talented Instruction	1,060,792	730,709	278,152	435,020	438,091
Social Work Services	-	1,526,769	-	507,982	389,109
Counseling Services	-	-	157,409	-	-
Adaptive Physical Education	65,758	-	113,402	9,654	108,456
Psychological Services/Testing	514,538	1,300,468	446,423	453,328	1,026,813
Audiology Services	37,154	-	117,990	-	-
Speech Services	-	-	-	-	-
Medical Services/Diagnosis & Evaluation	-	-	-	-	111,202
Occupational Therapy Services	803,979	-	248,477	364,731	561,450
Physical Therapy Services	362,230	-	86,052	100,028	320,395
Other Student Support Services	297,280	171,271	278,521	105,328	664,692
Support Services Instructional Staff	919,361	119,844	94,805	-	598,539
Administrative Services	454,369	712,689	867,123	757,527	797,491
Business Services	-	9,799	-	-	60,737
Other Support Services	-	34,996	1,077	-	-
Tuition	1,111,818	1,227,706	-	361,382	1,556,830
Boarding	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation	2,772,616	176,510	820,795	739,900	1,297,933
Total	31,225,180	32,412,368	21,205,848	21,148,533	29,654,029

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

Special Education Funding Shortfall

As mentioned previously, a funding shortfall exists in special education. The table below depicts the local cost and local cost percentage school districts must fund to cover the costs of educating students with special needs.

	Special Education Revenues	Special Education Expenditures	Local Special Education Expenditures	Local %
Fargo	\$23,760,151	\$31,225,180	\$7,465,029	23.91%
Bismarck	\$23,499,668	\$32,412,368	\$8,912,700	27.50%
Grand Forks	\$18,625,213	\$21,205,848	\$2,580,635	12.17%
Minot	\$18,800,142	\$21,148,533	\$2,348,391	11.10%
West Fargo	\$21,734,097	\$29,654,029	\$7,919,932	26.71%

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

Section III: English Learners

Refugee Resettlement in North Dakota

Over the past 21 years, 68% of refugees who were settled in North Dakota by Lutheran Social Services were settled in Fargo, which includes all adults and children who were new refugees during this period. It does not include secondary migrants, asylum seekers or unaccompanied refugee minors. The breakdown by community table follows:

Fiscal Year	North Dakota	Fargo	West Fargo	Bismarck	Grand Forks
2020	124	95	0	24	5
2019	132	95	0	32	5
2018	180	109	8	22	41
2017	415	330	5	29	51
2016	541	373	8	50	110
2015	478	330	1	40	107
2014	563	408	16	37	102
2013	427	277	8	10	132
2012	555	413	12	1	129
2011	354	237	8	18	91
2010	468	312	44	19	93
2009	438	295	48	0	95
2008	403	180	163	0	60
2007	202	60	112	0	30
2006	182	50	122	0	10
2005	225	87	122	0	16
2004	223	156	34	0	33
2003	111	70	19	1	21
2002	51	37	8	0	6
2001	367	315	12	26	14
2000	633	574	2	42	15
TOTAL	7,072	4,803	752	351	1,166

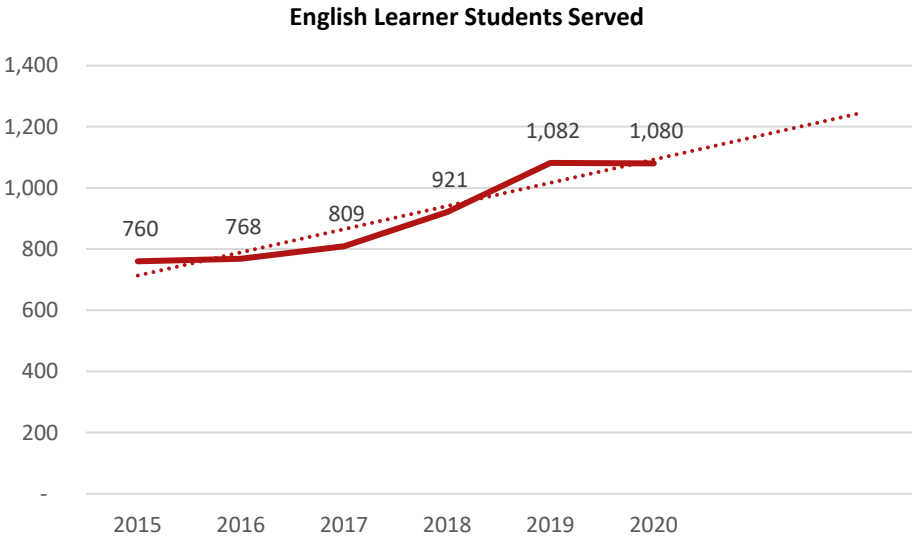
(Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, 2020)

Program and Students

The purpose of the English Learner (EL) Program is to identify and provide specialized instruction, for students who qualify, through highly qualified teachers targeted to build students' English proficiency (Listening + Speaking + Reading + Writing), academic content knowledge, acculturation skills and choice (college-career-life) readiness.

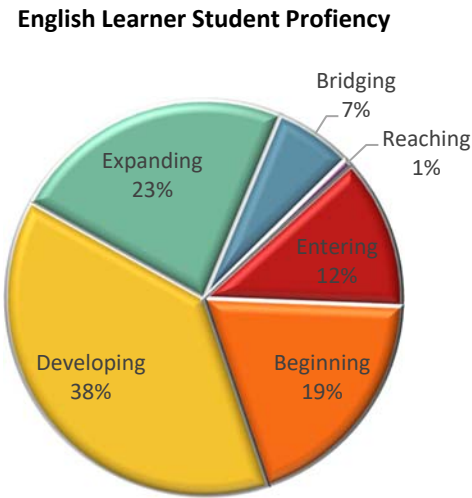
Fargo Public Schools served 1,080 students during the 2020 school year, a decrease of .2% over the previous year. Students are screened through the District's Home Language Survey and evaluated through a World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) screener test to see if they meet the criterion to receive EL support services. Daily minutes of EL services varies depending upon the student need.

Fargo Public School students receiving EL services have continued to increase with the forecasted trend showing additional progression.



Annually, all EL students take a standardized WIDA Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test to determine their level English Language proficiency. There are five proficiency levels with the sixth reaching attainment of proficiency. Students are exited from the EL program when they score a 5.0 on the ACCESS test. Exited students continue to be progress monitored for two years to ensure they are being successful in the mainstream classes.

The 2020 breakdown of the District’s student proficiency is displayed below:



Revenues

EL programming is funded through a variety of grants with most of the support through general fund dollars (state and local).

Title III

Title III funding is to be utilized for school districts that have qualified Limited English Proficient (LEP) or EL students enrolled in local schools. Districts must have enough qualified students for a minimum grant award of \$10,000 to be eligible to receive any Title III funds.

	Fargo	Bismarck	Grand Forks	Minot	West Fargo
2020 Title III Revenues	\$68,724	\$24,823	\$15,864	\$10,162	\$59,634

(North Dakota School District Financial Report, 2020)

STEEP

STEEP funds, also known as the “refugee school impact grant”, are used to better meet the needs of refugee children as they adjust to life in the U.S. STEEP funds support success in school by addressing the needs of newly arrived refugee children through entry-level programs and extracurricular services that increase the likelihood of: (1) high attendance and school engagement; (2) full classroom performance; (3) access to the core curriculum through increased English language proficiency; and ultimately, (4) academic success. Only refugee students who have arrived in the U.S. within the last 36 months, including any secondary migration, are eligible for STEEP programming.

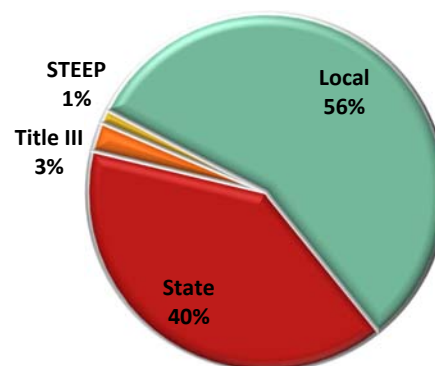
State EL Weighting Factor

State aid contains additional ADM weighting factors for EL students in the following proficiency levels, providing approximately \$1M in EL specific funding to the District.

English Learner Proficiency Level	Weighting Factor
Level 1	.40
Level 2	.22
Level 3	.07

Fargo Public School’s EL revenue by source for 2020 is as follows:

English Learner Revenue by Source



Expenditures

Nearly 99% of Fargo Public Schools EL expenditures are spent on salary and benefits for highly qualified teaching staff. The remaining expenditures are related to purchased services (interpreters), student transportation and supplies.

Total EL expenditures have remained relatively consistent for the past four years. Due to the discontinuance of certain grant funds, increased local support may be required to provide the same level of support for students in future years.

The table below displays the District's total expenditures related to EL services and the cost per student served for the past five years:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total EL Expenditures	\$2,716,714	\$2,760,198	\$2,712,158	\$2,704,058	\$2,617,227
EL Students	768	809	921	1,082	1,080
Cost per Student	\$3,537	\$3,412	\$2,945	\$2,499	\$2,423

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