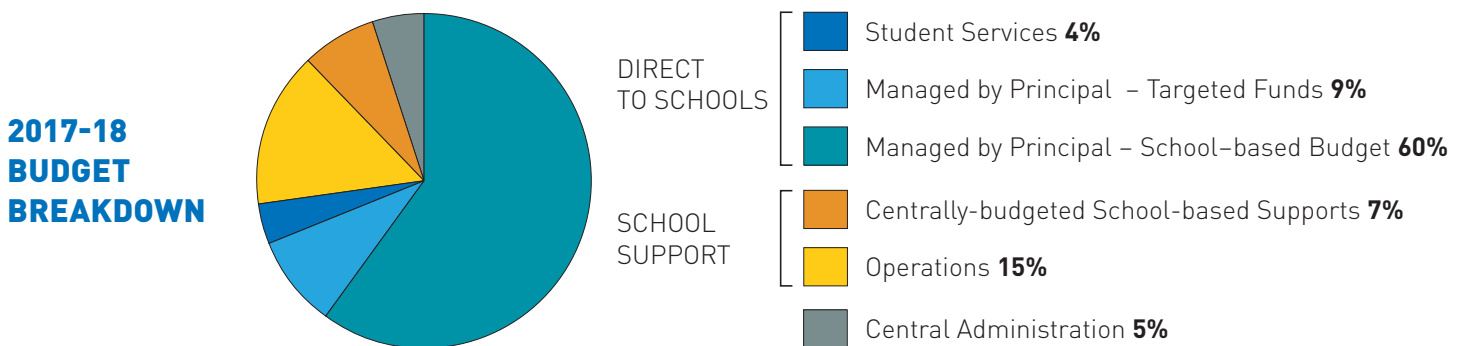


While Colorado ranks 42nd in the country in state spending per pupil, Denver Public Schools is committed to aligning our limited budget resources with our Shared Core Value of Students First. To do this, we prioritize protecting dollars and resources in our schools – where they matter most.

We work to give schools the maximum flexibility with their school-based budgets because we know that those closest to our kids, our teachers and our communities should decide how to best spend their dollars to match their kids' needs. Shifting greater resources and decision-making to our schools means we're building the ability of our school teams to drive instructional improvements for their kids.



This school year, 95% of the district's expenditures went directly to supporting students. The remaining 5% of expenses are used for central costs. That is among the lowest administrative budgets in the nation. DPS expects to spend just over \$10,500 per student in our district-managed schools this school year. DPS is shifting even more funds to our schools in the coming year.

As schools begin their 2017-18 budget planning, we want to help you understand how your school receives and spends money. We hope you'll view the video at <https://vimeo.com/181084308>, which explains how school funding works in DPS.

### How School Funding Works

- DPS receives a set amount of money from the state for each student to support their education.
- Some students may receive additional funding depending on their life circumstances – such as whether they're English language learners or qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Bond and mill levy funding approved by voters also brings additional money into the classroom to support areas like early literacy, student technology, and even social and emotional supports.
- In the spring, school leaders get estimates about how many students will attend their school in the fall.
- With the input of their Collaborative School Committees, staff and community members, school leaders have the flexibility to build their school budgets to support their school plans.
- After summer break, there are some adjustments made to account for actual student enrollment numbers – as the money follows the students where they actually go... ensuring Every Child Succeeds!

### State Budget Picture

Denver Public Schools received less state funding per student in 2016-17 than it had seven years ago, when our state already hovered near the bottom nationally in per-pupil funding. This means significant challenges for DPS and for all Colorado school districts, at a time when our state's constitutional constraints require state leaders to issue tax rebates.

Colorado school districts are still feeling the results of the economic recession – that's when state officials created a tweak, called the negative factor, to the school funding formula that allowed them to pay school districts less than the formula calculates they should get. Since it was implemented in 2009-10, the negative factor has withheld more than \$5 billion from Colorado school districts. State lawmakers returned a small amount of that \$5 billion last year but the governor's proposed budget calls again for an increase in the negative factor.

### Changing Demographics

DPS is also facing some challenges of its own: High housing pricing, shifting demographics and declining birth rates have contributed to slowing enrollment growth. DPS is still growing, just not as fast as it has been. Fewer students in DPS means less funding for our schools.

Because of gentrification in Denver, schools are losing critical federal Title I funds to serve their lowest-income students.

### Prioritizing Dollars

While DPS is working hard at the state level to grow the funding pie for our schools and to increase investment in public education, we are anticipating additional potential cuts in state funding for the 2017-18 school year. We are prioritizing and protecting dollars and resources in our schools, where they matter most, and giving schools maximum flexibility to decide how to best spend their dollars to meet their specific kids' needs. We are also adding resources and supports for our highest-needs students and schools.

DPS plans to increase school budgets by roughly \$2.5 million to keep pace with average salary increases and changes in student enrollment. An additional \$44 million is being shifted from centrally-budgeted school supports to school budgets, including about \$21 million for Early Childhood Education.

### Bond/Mill Levy Funding

In November 2016, Denver voters approved bond and mill funding measures for students in Denver Public Schools, agreeing to invest \$572 million in bond funding to build and improve schools and \$56.6 million in operating dollars to support key district priorities, including Teacher Leadership & Collaboration, Whole Child supports, technology, early literacy efforts and concurrent enrollment. (Learn more at [bond.dpsk12.org](http://bond.dpsk12.org).)

### Budget Approval

While the DPS budget office has released guidance to schools and principals have begun working with their communities on next year's budget, the final districtwide budget will go to the Denver Board of Education for approval in May.