

Putting More Money Into the Classroom

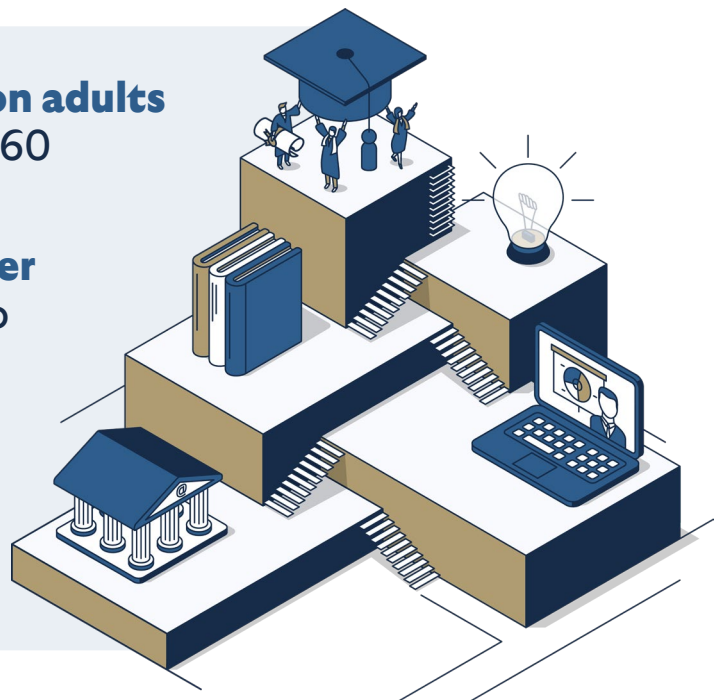
A vital first step towards fixing our public schools.

K-12 school spending has increased 340% since 1960, even when controlling for inflation, but **student learning and teacher pay remain at troublingly low levels.**¹⁻²

Only about **40% of the 4.6 million adults** added to school districts since 1960 **have been teachers.**

Teachers' paychecks went further nearly 40 years ago than they do today due to rising inflation and flat pay.

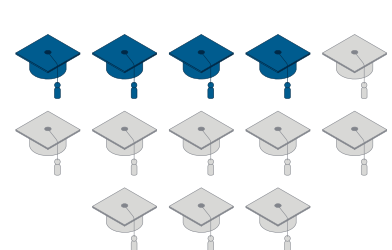
Fourth-grade **reading scores have not improved** in more than three decades.



In 1960, it took 13 students to pay a teacher's salary.

Today it only takes four.³

So, where does the money go?



THE SOLUTION

K-12 Spending Transparency

Education spending transparency allows parents, school boards, and taxpayers to stand up to unaccountable bureaucracies that waste money and fail to educate children.

By creating a window into each purchase that a school makes, states empower parents to advocate for wasting less and putting more money into higher teacher pay and other research-backed solutions that are proven to improve student learning outcomes.⁴⁻⁵



- The increased number of administrators (172%), support staff (246%), and instructional aides (1438%) **has not improved student learning outcomes**—and has made it nearly impossible to increase pay that would attract and retain more high-quality teachers.⁶



- **Publishing school-by-school information will help ensure that taxpayers know how their money is being spent—and can hold schools accountable.**

HOW IT WORKS

Each state sets up a public checkbook portal for local schools to **publish detailed information about every dollar they spend.**



Local officials, parents, and members of the public would have **immediate access to information** on how every dollar is spent, whether an administrator's salary, office supplies, or new curricula.



This policy can be even more effective when paired with **mandatory training for superintendents, principals, and school board members** so that they understand the information and what actions they can take when they find something concerning.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

When communities come together, armed with facts about how public-school dollars are spent, parents can hold schools accountable and advocate for proven strategies that improve student outcomes and compensate teachers fairly.

SOURCES:

1. <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/scores/?grade=4>
2. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_236.20.asp
3. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_236.55.asp

4. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/21582440221082138>
5. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831220905580>
6. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_213.10.asp