

# Putting More Money Into the Classroom

*A vital first step towards fixing our public schools.*



In 1970, it took  
**13 Kentucky students**  
to pay a teacher's salary.

Today it takes just **four.**



**So, where does the money go?**

In Kentucky, K-12 school spending per pupil has increased 252% since 1970, even when controlling for inflation.<sup>1</sup> Despite this, **average teacher salaries increased by only 11.8% during the same period.**<sup>2</sup>

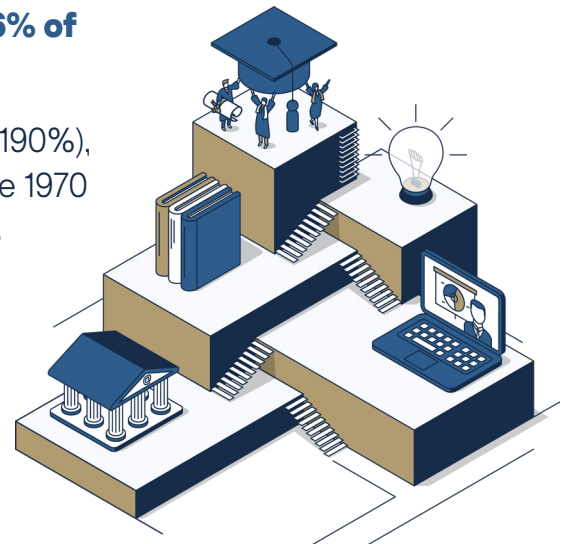


Compared to other states and Washington, D.C., the Bluegrass State ranks **7th-highest** by increase in per-pupil spending.

Nationally, only about 1 in 3 of the 3.4 million adults added to school districts since 1970 have been teachers. Today, **only 43.6% of school staff in Kentucky are classroom teachers.**<sup>3</sup>

Nationally, the increased number of administrative staff (190%), support staff (103%), and instructional aides (1,476%) since 1970 **has not improved student learning outcomes**, and has made it nearly impossible to increase pay that would attract and retain more high-quality teachers.<sup>4</sup>

**Only 29% of Kentucky eighth-graders** are proficient or above in reading, and **just 24%** in mathematics (below the national average).<sup>5</sup>

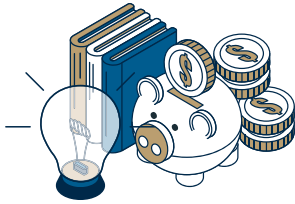


## THE SOLUTION

### K-12 Spending Transparency

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

By creating a window into each purchase a school makes, states empower parents to advocate for less waste, better teacher pay, and funding for other research-backed solutions that are proven to improve student learning outcomes.<sup>6-7</sup>



## HOW IT WORKS

Kentucky would set 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.

## WHY IT MATTERS

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

## THE BOTTOM LINE:

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

### SOURCES:

1. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23\\_236.70.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_236.70.asp)
2. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22\\_211.60.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_211.60.asp)
3. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23\\_213.40.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_213.40.asp)
4. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23\\_213.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_213.10.asp)
5. <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/profiles/stateprofile?sfj=NP&chort=1&sub=MAT&sj=&st=MN&year=2022R3>
6. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/21582440221082138>
7. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831220905580>