



RHODE ISLAND

Description of the Formula

The following responses are applicable to FY 2015. On July 1, 2011, the state implemented a new education financing formula. All previous categories of aid were suspended. The formula distributes aid on a per pupil basis and provides a core instructional amount for the basic education program (FY 2015 = \$8,966). The formula includes one weight, called the student success factor, which is linked to poverty density and provides additional funding (40% of the core amount) to support student needs beyond the core amount. The formula distribution is shared between the state and local using a ratio that considers the municipality's ability to pay and student need. The formula also includes categorical funding for high cost special education students, career and technical education, early childhood programs, and non-public and regional transportation.

District-Based Components

Density/Sparsity of Small Schools

Does not apply.

Grade Level Differences

Does not apply.

Declining Enrollment or Growth

Formula calculations are updated annually for enrollment changes.

Capital Outlay and/or Debt Service

The Housing Aid program provides partial reimbursement of school construction projects. The reimbursement share ratio is based on a district's wealth compared to the aggregate state wealth, with a minimum share of 35% (minimum share remains 30% for projects completed prior to June 30, 2012). Incentive bonuses are built into the formula for energy conservation, handicapped accessibility, and asbestos abatement projects. Regional districts are also entitled to

an additional incentive bonus. The Board of Education and state legislature must approve all school construction projects prior to implementation.

Transportation

The formula includes categorical funding to offset the excess costs associated with transporting students to out of district non-public schools and within regional school districts. This fund requires the state to assume the costs of non-public out-of-district transportation for those districts participating in the statewide system and equally share the regional school district student transportation costs.

Charter Schools

Charter schools are funded through the funding formula and receive the state per pupil associated with the sending community.

Student-Based Components

Special Education

The formula includes categorical funding to offset the excess costs associated with special education students that exceed the state approved threshold based on an amount above five times the core foundation amount (FY 2015 threshold = \$62,760).

Low Income / Comp Ed / At-Risk

The formula includes one weight, called the student success factor, that provides forty percent of the core instruction per pupil to all resident children eligible for USDA reimbursable school meals (FY 2015 = \$3,586).

English Language Learner/Bilingual Education

Does not apply.

Gifted and Talented Education

Does not apply.

Career and Technical Education

The formula includes categorical funding to help meet initial investment requirements needed to transform existing or create new comprehensive career and technical education programs and career pathways in critical and emerging industries and to help offset the higher than average costs associated with facilities, equipment maintenance and repair, and supplies necessary for maintaining the quality of highly specialized programs.

Preschool Education

The formula includes categorical funding to increase access to voluntary, free, high-quality pre-kindergarten programs.

Other

The formula includes a bonus to encourage district consolidation. This fund provides 2% of the district's education aid in the first year of regionalization and 1% in the second year. The regionalization bonus is phased out in year 3.

Revenue and Expenditure Information

State Mandates Restricting Revenue or Expenditure Increases

Municipal annual tax levies are capped at 4%.

Property Assessment Ratios Used/Legal Standards for Property Assessment

Full and fair cash value or a uniform percentage not exceeding 100% within the statewide caps noted above.

Measure of Local Ability to Support Schools

Equalized property valuation per pupil, adjusted for a median family income ratio, is used in the state share ratio calculations for formula aid and the school housing aid program.

School District Budget and Tax Rate Procedures/Sources of Local Revenue

All 36 districts are fiscally dependent. Voter approval is required for budget and tax increases. Majority vote is required for approval. There are no limits on the number of elections that can be held in one year. The source of local revenue for schools is property tax.

State Support of Nonpublic Schools

Reimbursement of certain non-public textbooks only. State is expected to assume all non-public transportation costs for those districts participating in the statewide system.