

STATE FUNDING

What are the numbers statewide for the per pupil state funding and how has the state funded education changed during recent years?

Budget Year	Regular Program State Cost
2022-2023	\$7,413
2021-2022	\$7,227
2020-2021	\$7,048
2019-2020	\$6,880
2018-2019	\$6,736
2017-2018	\$6,664

Is the funding formula the same for all schools in the state?

Yes.

Is it possible to change the funding?

The State decides how to fund public schools. This is 100% a legislative decision.

How does property tax work with school funding?

School districts are funded through a per-pupil funding formula. If there is an increase in property tax, there would be a corresponding decrease in State Aid since the funding per student remains the same across Iowa.

What is causing or attributes the reason for the need to have cuts year after year?

The two largest factors driving reduction decisions are declining enrollment and low Supplemental State Aid (commonly referred to as SSA) that does not keep up with rising costs.

Is there an opportunity to request permission from the state to overspend the budget?

Within certain categorical funds (i.e., SPED, ELL), districts can request, through a formal process with the State, additional Spending Authority to cover expenses beyond funding that is provided through the Funding Formula. However, in these cases the district does not get additional funds, just the authority.

What if you don't have the funds to spend the entire maximum spending amount?

A district can borrow and pay interest expenses, which negatively impacts its spending authority. However, DMPS is not in this situation. We have the cash to cover the maximum spending amount.

What are examples of miscellaneous income items that increase spending authority (slide 20)?

Federal funds (e.g., Title, ESSER) and interest income from investments.

Is it possible for the district to use funds from one siloed funding source to support another siloed funding source that is short funds?

No.

If a student comes in from an outside district, will the outside district lose funding for that student? How does DMPS combat that issue?

Funding is based on enrollment from the previous school year "Official Count" enrollment day. Meaning, districts receive per pupil funding this year based on the number of students enrolled the previous year. For example, funding for the current school year (2022-23) is based on student enrollment from October 2021. Consequently, if a student enrolled in DMPS in November 2021, the district would not get funding from the state for that student to cover the costs of educating said student for the remaining seven months of the 2021-22 school year.

State funding does follow the student. So, if the student in the example above comes from another Iowa public school district to DMPS, we work with that district on tuition billing. This goes both ways. DMPS sends tuition to other public schools for mid-year transfers.

- If a student comes from a private school to DMPS mid-year, we do not get funds for that student.
- If a student comes from out-of-state to DMPS mid-year, we do not get funds for that student.
- Foreign exchange students are not funded by the state.

FY 2024 BUDGET

What are some of the strategies being funded to be implemented in the budget?

- Health & Benefits Changes
- Operational Changes
- Staffing Changes
- Departmental Budget Reduction

What is Wellmark doing for DMPS related to the health cost savings?

Des Moines Public Schools has engaged in cost savings program through Wellmark and PrudentRx. PrudentRx is designed to not only help employees save on specialty prescription drug costs but help incur district savings. PrudentRx works with the participant and the drug manufacturer to obtain manufacturer copay card assistance, where available, and will manage enrollment and renewals for those copay cards on their behalf. The PrudentRx solution delivers significant savings for clients and helps drive down specialty trend for clients that have adopted the program through an innovative plan design. The results are significant, delivering an average double-digit negative trend for those who opted in. DMPS is anticipating saving estimated at \$750,000.

As an additional benefit to the Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield prescription drug plan, employees who are enrolled in the PrudentRx solution will be able to fill covered specialty medications for \$0 out-of-pocket.

When will the information on staff cuts be released?

Impacted school building administrators were notified on January 20th. The last day for notification to individual staff impacted was February 10th.

How does attrition impact staffing cuts?

For teaching staff, if a person whose position is being cut has the qualifications required for an open position (due to attrition and retirement) the teacher can transfer to open positions.

Are teachers serving in roles other than “classroom teacher” counted in the 2% teacher reductions?

No.

What position falls under the support staff classification?

- Instructional Coaches
- Counselors (only reduced due to decline in enrollment)
- Interventionist
- Behavior Strategist
- Clerical
- Technology

How do the cuts fit into the support related to the foundational tier system?

The 3/7 work session focused on investments in the foundational tier in SEL and Safe & Welcoming Environments. The 3/21 work session focused on student/teacher recruitment & retention, activities & athletics infrastructure, and unknown issues. Please refer to the 3/21 work session for additional information.

When a new superintendent is hired, will all these plans be subject to change?

Yes. The new Superintendent will have the opportunity to review decisions and make changes.

What makes up the investment in Goal 3? What makes up that investment?

FY24 Goal 3: Investments Math for Black Males

FY 2024 Inputs	Investment	Actions *New	Output
Curricular Materials	\$0.69 M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supplies to support Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Algebra Foundations – *K-5 Math Intervention Materials – AAIMS Training Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Grade-Level Expectations
Professional Learning	\$0.53 M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Illustrative Math Grades 6-8, Algebra, Geometry, & Algebra 2 – *K-5 Illustrative Math – *K-8 UnboundED Cohort 6 – *HS UnboundED Institute – AAIMS Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Grade-Level Expectations • Data Literacy
Staffing / Schedule Changes	\$1.32 M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – *K-1 Classroom Integration Associate – *BFL/CSC reallocation – *Middle School Schedule adds instructional time and PLC – *Creation of New Math Electives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of HQ Curriculum • Access to Grade-Level Expectations • Data Literacy
Extended Learning	\$0.83 M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Summer Jump Start (Rising 6th and 9th Grade) – *K-5 Math Summer Learning – *K-4 ML and Black Male Afterschool Programming – *Tutoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Grade-Level Expectations • Engagement
TOTAL	\$3.37 M		

FY 2025 AND BEYOND

How will the voucher program and potential influx of charter schools affect future budget planning?

There is a lack of legislative guidance to properly determine the impact of potential charter schools. This is a big unknown for districts across the state. This will not significantly impact districts for FY 2024 (the 2023-24 school year), as funding is established based on enrollment from October 2022. However, this will be a FY 2025 (the 2024-25 school year) issue that all districts will have to deal with.

Nationally, we have seen that when voucher programs are implemented, the focus has been on urban centers, where the vast majority of students are located. In addition, the area around DMPS currently has the largest concentration of existing private schools.

Why would a family not accept the ESA money?

It is a family decision. Some families may not accept state money for religious reasons. Some families may feel that it is part of their family budget to send their children to private schools and should not be a public expense. It is entirely up to those families.

Most importantly, most families believe that a public education, with its richness in programming and opportunities, is the best choice for their child. A public education also offers an opportunity for students to experience diversity that is more indicative the larger community and allows learning and growth opportunities that only that diversity can offer. It is widely documented that stronger public schools make stronger communities; some parents may be considering this as well when making educational choices for their family.

What is the district going to do if a student leaves to attend nonpublic and then returns to the public school and the funding does not come back? Are we going to allow them back?

Public schools cannot turn away resident students. We will welcome them back. However, the district will not see any funding for said students for a year.

Is the district considering consolidating schools?

There will be no consolidations for the next school year i.e., FY 2024.

The district has hired a demographer who is currently conducting a demographic study and analysis. The demographic study being conducted currently will drive the discussions on potential consolidations. Using the results of this data, one of the first courses of action will be to look at

same-level schools that are within close physical proximity to each other and identify those that are under-enrolled. The earliest that any consolidations would be considered would be FY 2025. However, this is an issue that will need additional community input before decisions are finalized.

Can DMPS restructure schools in high and middle schools with different grade spans? Such as grades 10-12 and grades 7-9

Yes.

Will consolidation mean staffing cuts?

It depends. It would be position specific.

GENERAL QUESTIONS: ENROLLMENT

What are our kindergarten enrollment numbers? Is the number increasing?

Kindergarten enrollment decreased dramatically during the pandemic. In 2020/21 there was a big drop, as parents “red shirted” their children. There was a corresponding atypical increase in 2021/22.

Is there a grade level where the district is losing the students?

The district is seeing the greatest decrease in middle level grades.

What is DMPS doing to make itself attractive to bring students from outside DMPS?

We are promoting the awesome things that are happening with DMPS students, staff, and unique programming. You may have seen billboards across central Iowa. This is part of a concerted effort to increase the awareness of DMPS.

GENERAL QUESTIONS: STAFFING

The pandemic caused many teachers to leave the profession nationally. Are we still in the same situation with teachers leaving?

Nationally, and throughout Iowa, this is an issue that school districts are dealing with. Teachers are leaving the profession for a variety of reasons. The district continues to work with our teaching staff to create an environment where our staff feels valued and welcomed. Currently, the district has a 98% fill rate for teacher positions.

How does staff shortage and substitutes affect the budget?

It is a bit of a wash. If we have an opening for a staff position, that position may be filled through substitutes. The funds earmarked for the position are used to cover the subbing costs.

Can Administration costs be cut?

DMPS is losing administrators to neighboring districts who are offering higher salaries and attractive benefit packages. The district must be competitive with our neighbors.

What is the district doing to recruit teachers for unfilled positions?

- Previously, the district provided a retention bonus to all teachers to remain with the district for the 2022-2023 school district.
- Based on data, the district has identified hard to fill teaching positions. Hiring and referral bonuses have been offered for these positions.
- The district has increased recruitment efforts with widespread advertisement and leveraging social media platforms to also extend to our community.
- The district has monthly job fairs to give on the spot offers.

Is adjusting the Flex lab teacher being discussed in the allocation process?

Not at this time.

Why is the same staff allocation used for small and large schools?

Allocations to building vary based on needs, enrollment, and course requests by students. This results in staffing levels for small and large schools being differentiated. However, there are some positions allocated the same (e.g., principal, office manager, etc.)

GENERAL QUESTIONS: DMPS PROGRAMS

Could we use Classroom size as a priority to help promote our School District. How will changing boundaries affect the classroom size?

Our classroom size, in terms of the number of students in each class, is similar to surrounding districts. Our school size, especially with our elementary schools, is overall smaller than our neighbors. Changing attendance boundaries would not impact classroom size but would likely increase school size.

Does DMPS still have magnet schools?

No.

Do we still have the IB program?

Yes. We the Primary Years Program and Middle Years Program. The Diploma program was discontinued a few years ago.

Does Central Campus still attract students from other districts to come to Central Campus for their unique programs?

Yes. However, first preference is always DMPS students.

How are schools to tell the story when there is continued cut of program like science and CTE elective courses?

These courses are not being reduced district-wide and in fact are in many cases increasing. In some cases, these shifts or additions are being added centrally, at Central Campus, to ensure access to every student. If a particular school is reducing a course, it is due to student requests declining for that course or because the course is being offered centrally.

GENERAL QUESTIONS: OTHER

Is there any thought of setting up these budget forums at community sites beside just in the schools?

Yes. Feedback is always welcome. The schools were chosen to reach all sides of the city. When the district holds community forums at our school buildings, logistics (such as space, parking, etc.) can be managed at no expense to the district nor participant. The district will record the presentation given in the Community Forums and post it online again this year.

What are some of the after-school activities in elementary schools?

DMPS offers a combination of formal after school options like Metro Kids Care and 21st Century at many sites and informal activities like Lego or Chess Club, etc. at many others.

How is the stadium being funded?

Building the community stadium is a joint venture between DMPS and Drake University. For the DMPS portion, the majority of funds are from SAVE and corporate sponsorships. Ongoing maintenance costs will be funded by Drake.

Who decides where sales tax funds are being spent?

The district has a community group that works with the Facilities department and school staff to develop five-year plans for using SAVE funds. The current plan runs through 2025.

What is the district doing to address school security and bullying? Specifically, are metal detectors being considered?

Like all schools in every part of the nation, there are instances of bullying. DMPS has a variety of supports in place to address student behavior. DMPS considers and evaluates multiple avenues for school safety. Metal detectors are only one item that is being considered; however, implementing metal detectors in our schools is an issue that would need additional community input.

Has the district looked at contracted private security company to provide security?

No.

How many Non-Public schools are in the DMPS district?

There are currently 13 non-public schools within our boundaries.

Could the school Calendar be changed to shorten summer and then have a bigger break mid-year?

The calendar can be changed as long as it is within the limits set by the State. Schools are not allowed to start until after a certain date in August without a waiver for good cause. The calendar is reviewed every year.

What is DMPS relationship with city government now and hope to have?

DMPS and the City of DSM work together closely. For example, the City is allocating funding from its budget to add additional preschool programs within the district. The City is also allocating funds to expand the school-based food pantries to reach students and families where they are.

Is there an opportunity to work with the county for funding support?

Polk County provides DMPS with grants each year through gaming funds and empowerment funds. The district will continue to leverage this working relationship to benefit students and families in Central Iowa.

Does the district do any advocating for things with the legislature?

The district has a paid Lobbyist, enlists parent/community advocacy through the CLAT committee, and the Board and Superintendent advocate on the Hill.

Would advocating for DMPS be beneficial to the district?

Yes. Absolutely.

What are things that the community can do to help make DMPS the best it can be? How do we change the public-school narrative? How to make it more positive?

Be involved! Advocate for our students at the legislature by joining CLAT.

There are many positive things going on every day in every one of our schools. Share those stories with your friends, neighbors, colleagues, and representatives. There is a tendency to focus on the negative, when the reality is that the positive stories far outweigh the negative. Be a messenger of the great work that is happening in DMPS.