



Challenges Facing K-12 Education Funding in Virginia



DID YOU KNOW?

1. STATE UNDERFUNDING

Virginia's school divisions receive less funding per student than neighboring states, such as West Virginia and Kentucky.

Local governments cover more than half the cost of K-12 education, most contributing more than the state-mandated minimum required local effort.

The state currently recognizes only 2/3 of K-12 staff actually employed, leaving localities to cover the remaining 1/3 entirely on their own.

2. IMPACT ON SCHOOLS

Staffing Shortages: Localities are forced to employ essential staff like teacher aides without adequate state support.

Teacher Salaries: The state's formula to calculate teacher salaries fails to account for actual local salary needs.

Support Cap: A cap on support positions (e.g., administrative, operational, maintenance staff, etc.) introduced during the Great Recession still restricts state contributions, despite partial restoration.

WHY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CARRY THE MAJORITY OF THE RESPONSIBILITY

Virginia's funding formula underestimates actual staffing needs and salary costs, forcing local governments to step up and increase funding.

Local governments often fund K-12 Education well above the required effort, struggling to meet rising healthcare, salary, and infrastructure costs.

This makes providing a quality and equitable education to every student across the Commonwealth much more difficult.

DATA & FAST FACTS

Local governments solely fund over 57,000 K-12 staff positions.

State funding formula only recognized 8% of actual instructional aides employed.

Average school division salary is about 5% more than what is calculated by the state formula.

Cost to remove the support cap is approximately \$200 million.

In FY 2021, local governments invested \$6.6 billion more than the state funding formula indicated was needed.



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THE CALL TO ACTION

1. ELIMINATE THE SUPPORT CAP

What's the issue?: The cap limits the number of state recognized support positions (e.g., administrative, operational, maintenance staff, etc.) forcing local governments to cover the shortfall.

Solution: Repeal the cap and other Recession era constraints entirely to ensure proper state funding for all necessary school staff.

2. REVISE THE STATE FORMULA FOR TEACHER SALARIES

What's the issue?: Current methods artificially underestimate actual teacher salary needs.

Solution: The state should calculate salaries based on actual average teacher pay to better align with local divisions' salary structures

3. RECOGNIZE FULL K-12 STAFFING NEEDS

What's the issue?: The state only recognizes two-thirds of the staff currently employed by local school divisions under the Standards of Quality (SOQ).

Solution: Fully recognize and fund all K-12 staff positions to ensure schools are properly equipped to support students.

WHY THE STATE NEEDS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

A Fair Funding System: Virginia must fund actual staffing levels and the true cost of education, easing the burden on localities.

Competing with Neighboring States: By increasing state funding, Virginia will be better positioned to recruit and retain a quality workforce, ensuring students receive the best education they deserve regardless of where they live.