

How much are school districts spending on School-level and District-level administration?

The table below shows data from the Colorado Department of Education’s Financial Transparency website for FY 2017-18 (the most recent data posted). The chart includes the 19 largest school districts in the state. There were 666,222 students, representing 72.3 percent students, served in the state in the 2017-18 school year (910,280).

The data illustrates that, on average, school districts spend about ten percent of per pupil dollars on school-level administration. This includes principals, assistant principals, department chairpersons, and all other individuals who help run school activities, including the clerical staff. The school districts are spending one to two percent on district-level administrative costs. These costs include activities associated with the general administration or executive responsibility for the entire school district; including cabinet level positions as well as district governance services (i.e. Board of Education).

District Name	Students served	# of schools in district	Percent of Per Pupil \$s for School-level Administration	Percent of Per Pupil \$s for District-level Administration	School-level administration \$ per student	District-level administration \$ per student
Denver County 1	91,794	205	14%	1%	\$1,279	\$126
Jefferson County R-1	86,112	163	11%	1%	\$824	\$69
Douglas County Re 1	61,597	93	11%	1%	\$822	\$78
Cherry Creek 5	55,657	67	6%	1%	\$506	\$104
Adams - Arapahoe 28J	40,920	61	12%	2%	\$908	\$173
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	38,870	57	10%	1%	\$708	\$58
St. Vrain Valley Re 1J	32,421	64	10%	2%	\$764	\$111
Boulder Valley RE 2	31,282	61	9%	2%	\$874	\$150
Poudre R-1	30,019	53	9%	1%	\$717	\$105
Colorado Springs 11	27,427	55	10%	1%	\$856	\$76
Academy 20	25,831	38	11%	1%	\$764	\$87
Greeley 6	22,325	33	9%	1%	\$631	\$74
Mesa County Valley 51	22,084	46	9%	2%	\$654	\$120
Falcon 49	21,448	25	13%	2%	\$759	\$133

School District 27J	17,833	29	11%	2%	\$655	\$115
Pueblo 60	16,910	34	8%	2%	\$587	\$120
Thompson R2-J	16,278	35	8%	1%	\$637	\$52
Littleton 6	15,643	23	8%	1%	\$675	\$114
Harrison 2	11,771	27	12%	2%	\$912	\$152
Totals	666,222	1,169				
Average	35,064	62	10%	1%	\$765	\$106

According to CDE the school level administration activities are concerned “with the overall administrative responsibility for a school or combination of schools.” CDE summed the expenditure records with a program code within range of 2400-2499. District administration activities are concerned “with the establishing and administering policy for operating the school district.” CDE summed the expenditure records with a program code within the range of 2300-2399.