

How to calculate a school district's classroom dollar percentage

General description

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the classroom dollar percentage is the amount spent for classroom purposes divided by the total amount spent for day-to-day operations, or total operational spending. The calculation excludes monies spent for capital outlay, such as purchasing land, buildings, and equipment, and debt repayment because these expenses benefit more than one period and can vary significantly from year to year. The calculation also excludes costs related to programs outside the scope of preschool through grade-12 education, such as adult education and community services.

Total operational spending includes classroom and nonclassroom expenses as shown below:

Classroom dollars

- **Classroom personnel**—Teachers, teachers' aides, substitute teachers, graders, contracted instructional services, athletic coaches
- **General instructional supplies**—Paper, pencils, crayons, etc.
- **Instructional aids**—Textbooks, workbooks, instructional kits, instructional computer software, films, etc. Internet access for instruction is also included in classroom spending.
- **Activities**—Field trips, athletics, and cocurricular activities such as choir and band
- **Tuition**—Paid to out-of-state and private institutions

Nonclassroom dollars

- **Administration**— Salaries and benefits for superintendents; principals; business managers; clerical and other staff who perform accounting, payroll, purchasing, warehousing, printing, human resource activities, and administrative technology services; and other costs related to these services and the governing board
- **Plant operation and maintenance**— Salaries, benefits, and other costs related to equipment repair, building maintenance, custodial services, groundskeeping, and security; and costs for heating, cooling and property insurance
- **Food service**— Salaries, benefits, food supplies, and other costs related to preparing, transporting, and serving meals and snacks
- **Transportation**— Salaries, benefits, and other costs related to transporting students to and from school and school activities and maintaining buses
- **Student support services**— Salaries and benefits for attendance clerks, social workers, counselors, nurses, audiologists, and speech pathologists and other costs related to these support services to students
- **Instruction support services**— Salaries and benefits of curriculum directors, special education directors, teacher trainers, librarians, media specialists, and instruction-related IT staff and other costs related to assisting instructional staff in the delivery of instruction

Account-based description

Using school district Uniform Chart of Account's terminology, the numerator and denominator of the **classroom dollar percentage** are calculated in the following manner:

Numerator—Classroom dollars

The numerator consists of only those expenditures included in the denominator that are coded to Function 1000—Instruction (including those functions that roll up into 1000, such as 1100).

Denominator—Total operational spending (current expenditures)

The denominator consists of ALL district expenditures, including classroom and nonclassroom, except those described below.

*These are the **primary funds** excluded:*

- **250 & 425** – Adult Education
- **515 & 520** – Civic Center and Community School
- **575** – Unemployment Insurance (an internal service fund)
- **600's** – Capital Projects Funds with the following exceptions:
 - *Include textbooks, instructional aids, and library books only (object codes 6641-6643).*
- **700's** – Debt Service
- **800 and above** – Fiduciary and Proprietary Funds

Other funds' capital, debt service, and non K-12 expenditures are removed by excluding the following programs, functions, and object codes.

These programs are excluded:

- **700 and above** – Adult/Continuing Education, Community College Education, and Community Services Programs

These functions are excluded:

- **3200 and 3300** – Enterprise and Community Services Operations
- **4000 and above** – Capital, Debt Service, and Other Financing Uses

These object codes are excluded:

- **6561 & 6565** – Tuition to other Arizona school districts
- **6631** – Fair market value of donated commodities
- **6700's** – Land, Buildings, and Equipment
- **6900's** – Other Financing Uses, such as Transfers and Indirect Costs

Similar transactions that a district accounts for in other funds, programs, functions, or object codes could also be excluded.