

Public Schools Are Spending Money Like Crazy, Despite Sharp Enrollment Declines

The public education system has been failing students for years. From misappropriating funds to providing inadequate lessons and passing illiterate students; [public schools](#) are losing support. Despite this they continue receiving extensive budgets which do not properly represent enrollment rates, attendance numbers, or staffing issues.

While it is true that 2020 was an extremely difficult year for these taxpayer-funded institutions, those who blame the COVID-19 pandemic are using it as a scapegoat. Before the extensive government pandemic response, the nation was experiencing a teacher shortage and a political takeover of public schools—the likes of which had never been experienced—which has only increased during the political battle over public health issues.

Politicized Teachers Unions & School Boards?

Since 2013 conflicts between teachers and school boards have been [reported](#). This specifically hindered interest in the teaching profession.

In 2015 student interest in the teaching profession [dropped by 5 percent](#) in just a year and has continued to [decline](#). Although arguments over teacher pay have been brought to the forefront of the situation, elementary and secondary school teachers made an average of over [\\$63,000](#) during the 2019-2020 school year, and since then districts have [increased pay](#) and added massive [bonuses](#) to attract educators back to the

profession, inflating budgets, yet still the teacher shortage remains.

New students entering the teaching profession continue to decline as teachers unions and school boards not only battle themselves, but [parents](#) as well. Instead of listening to the communities they serve, these powerful organizations are pushing their own political ideologies in the classroom. Educational focus has shifted from teaching core classes like math, science, and history, to identity-based practices which promote critical race theory (CRT) and gender theory.

The [National School Board Association](#) itself has fought to persuade schools to adopt CRT and the 1619 project. These race-focused lessons have yet to produce successful results. Because of this, families have disputed replacing sound lessons with untested classroom theories. When expressing their concerns at school board meetings these parents were [silenced](#), and even publicly smeared as “[domestic terrorists](#).”

In addition, during the pandemic various school boards and teachers unions fought to keep children [isolated](#) and [masked](#) long after it was deemed safe for them to return to in-person learning. Yet, educators still wished to receive full pay as students suffered from widespread [learning loss](#) and achievement gaps. It was even discovered that the American Federation of Teachers influenced [CDC reopening guidelines](#), indicating that their power held sway over school health policies, arguably even more than factual public health data.

Student Performance Is Suffering

Parents quickly recognized the harmful effects of lockdowns and long-term masking. Schools which remained locked down longer saw the sharpest [enrollment declines](#). These are, coincidentally, in highly progressive areas where CRT and

other identity based lessons have been adopted by teachers and districts.

In 2019 math was deemed a “[racist](#)” subject in the state of Washington. By [2021](#), 70% of students in the area were failing math and more than half failed English. In nearby Oregon, reading and writing requirements have been removed to offer more “[equitable](#)” education experiences, and even test taking was deemed “racist” by the [National Education Association](#).

In addition, the Biden Administration is leading the Department of Education to bring race to the forefront of [American education](#) on a national level. Instead of allowing states to choose what is best for their populations, [government grants](#) are now being awarded based on the implementation of identity-based education practices.

Public school officials have been quick to blame the pandemic for increasing student failures, but teaching equity over performance has yet to lead students to [academic excellence](#). [Learning loss](#) is plaguing students across the nation, and instead of utilizing COVID relief money to ensure that students achievement gaps are filled in before Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSR) [expire](#), progressive states have allocated masses of these taxpayer dollars for identity based lessons.

COVID Relief Funds Abused

Taxpayer funded ESSR money was swiftly approved and distributed with little to no oversight during the pandemic. Because of this, [less than half](#) of public schools have used COVID relief money to update HVAC units and reduce viral illness transmissions. Instead, districts in New York, California, Illinois, and Minnesota openly spent their pandemic dollars on political endeavors.

The [California](#) Department of Education received \$15.1 billion

in ESSR funding. Instead of focusing all of these taxpayer dollars on public health concerns the state funneled portions of this money into “implicit bias training,” “ethnic studies,” and “LGBTQ+ cultural competency.”

Similarly, New York gained \$9 billion in emergency funding. This money was not primarily focused on keeping students healthy or improving classroom air quality but, “anti-racism,” “anti-bias,” “socio-emotional learning,” and “diversity, equity, inclusion,” lessons.

Illinois has also utilized masses of pandemic-relief money to institute equity plans with a specific focus on “anti-racism.” [Minnesota](#) took their \$1.15 billion in ESSR funds and decided to use a portion of this massive payout for “culturally responsive” training and addressing “gender bias,” with a focus on gender affirmation.

COVID relief funds have been abused and directed to non-pandemic related educational services. All the while, students continue to fail at record rates and leave the public education system [entirely](#).

Enrollment Is Down, Yet Budgets Are Up

Public schools are funded by local, state, and federal [taxes](#). Funding is determined by varying factors which usually include student performance, enrollment rates, and attendance. Yet despite experiencing drops in all of these criteria, somehow states are still increasing budgets.

California—which has lost [2.6 percent](#) of public school students since the start of the pandemic—has approved the [largest education budget](#) in the state’s history. This massive increase comes as California’s largest public school district has experienced a [40 percent](#) chronic absenteeism rate. This

reflects a national trend.

A third of Chicago schools are at least [half empty](#), but that didn't stop the Chicago Board of Education from increasing their 2022 budget from what was approved in [2021](#). In Washington D.C., public school reading and math proficiency has [dropped](#), and enrollment has stagnated, but the mayor proposed a [5.9 percent](#) budget increase.

[Pennsylvania](#), [Minnesota](#), and other states have all continued spending more despite serving fewer students. These public schools are bleeding money and costing taxpayers billions in debt that will eventually have to be repaid.

Public schools received record amounts of funding during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, school boards and teachers unions have allowed politics to dominate their policies and teaching practices. As a result, student success rates have suffered, and families are walking away from the system while lawmakers are passing budget increases that only further tax communities.

This pattern of spending is unsustainable. These schools are bleeding money. There is currently no end in sight as districts continue this trend into the 2022-2023 school year and beyond.

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