

# Arizona Auditor General

## Arizona School District Spending Report

### Fiscal Year 2022

This document provides a text-based representation of the numbers and other information presented in the graphics on Safford Unified School District's summary results. All data is for fiscal year 2022 unless otherwise noted.

#### District demographic information

District name: Safford Unified School District

County: Graham

Operational peer group: 4

Transportation peer group: 6

Achievement peer group: 5

Legislative district(s): 6 and 19

Location: Town

Number of schools: 6

Students attending: 2,764

Size: Medium-large

5-year change in students attending: 6% decrease

Special education population: 17%

English learner population: 1%

Poverty rate for fiscal year 2021: 23%

Graduation rate for fiscal year 2021: 82%

#### District's spending by operational area

Every year, school districts must decide where to allocate their resources. This pie chart shows how Safford Unified School District spent its funding by operational area, including the percentage it spent in the classroom and specifically on instruction.

We categorize districts with certain similar qualities into peer groups in order to help create meaningful comparisons across districts. Safford Unified School District's peer group had an average instructional spending percentage of 53.3%. This number can help provide context for Safford Unified School District's own instructional spending percentage.

#### Pie chart showing district spending by operational area

Classroom spending, which includes instruction, student support, and instruction support spending: 72.0%

Instruction: 63.7%

Student support: 5.6%

Instruction support: 2.7%

Nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation spending: 28.0%

Administration: 11.2%

Plant operations: 9.3%

Food service: 5.0%

Transportation: 2.5%

### Instructional spending percentage highlights (fiscal years 2001-2022)

We have monitored instructional spending since fiscal year 2001. Below are highlights from Safford Unified School District's instructional spending trend showing the most recent year-to-year change and the years it spent its highest and lowest percentages on instruction. Reviewing these instructional spending percentage highlights can provide insight into short-term (year-to-year comparison) and long-term (highest and lowest comparison) trends of a district's allocation of monies to instruction. Depending on how much a district spends in total, even small changes in a district's percentage spent on instruction can equate to large changes in the actual dollars the district spent.

### List of the District's instructional spending percentage for the 2 most recent fiscal years, as well as its highest and lowest instructional spending percentages between fiscal years 2001 and 2022

Fiscal year 2021 instructional spending percentage: 66.8%

Fiscal year 2022 instructional spending percentage: 63.7%

Fiscal year of highest instructional spending percentage: 2021

Highest instructional spending percentage: 66.8%

Fiscal year of lowest instructional spending percentage: 2005

Lowest instructional spending percentage: 58.1%

### Why monitor school district spending?

Most school district funding is based on the number of students attending, and districts can choose how to spend most funding, so every decision a school district makes to spend on one operational area directly impacts its ability to spend on another. For example, if a district has higher spending in food service, it will have fewer dollars to spend on instruction.

The bar chart below, "Percentage point change in spending by area," illustrates how Safford Unified School District's spending by area has changed from the prior year and 5 years ago.

To put the spending percentages in context, it also can be helpful to review a district's per student spending in dollars. For example, 2 districts may spend the same percentage of their resources on instruction, but on a per student basis, 1 district may spend hundreds or even thousands of dollars more than the other.

### Bar chart showing the percentage point change in spending by area (fiscal year 2017 versus fiscal year 2022)

Change in classroom spending, which includes instruction, student support, and instruction support: -1.0%

Instruction: -0.8%

Student support: 0.5%

Instruction support: -0.7%

Change in nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation: 1.0%

Administration: -0.7%

Plant operations: 1.4%

Food service: 0.3%

Transportation: 0.0%

### Bar chart showing the percentage point change in spending by area (fiscal year 2021 versus fiscal year 2022)

Change in classroom spending, which includes instruction, student support, and instruction support: -3.3%

Instruction: -3.1%

Student support: 0.1%

Instruction support: -0.3%

Change in nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation: 3.3%

Administration: -0.1%

Plant operations: 2.1%

Food service: 0.9%

Transportation: 0.4%

### Table showing per student spending by area

#### Operational spending

Fiscal year 2021 district instruction per student spending: \$6,144

Fiscal year 2022 district instruction per student spending: \$5,922

One year change in district instruction per student spending: -\$222

Fiscal year 2022 peer average instruction per student spending: \$5,274

Difference from peer average for district instruction per student spending: \$648

Fiscal year 2022 State average instruction per student spending: \$5,846

Difference from State average for district instruction per student spending: \$76

Fiscal year 2021 district student support per student spending: \$506

Fiscal year 2022 district student support per student spending: \$518

One year change in district student support per student spending: \$12

Fiscal year 2022 peer average student support per student spending: \$881

Difference from peer average for district student support per student spending: -\$363

Fiscal year 2022 State average student support per student spending: \$986

Difference from State average for district student support per student spending: -\$468

Fiscal year 2021 district instruction support per student spending: \$272

Fiscal year 2022 district instruction support per student spending: \$247

One year change in district instruction support per student spending: -\$25

Fiscal year 2022 peer average instruction support per student spending: \$575

Difference from peer average for district instruction support per student spending: -\$328

Fiscal year 2022 State average instruction support per student spending: \$632

Difference from State average for district instruction support per student spending: -\$385

Fiscal year 2021 district administration per student spending: \$1,045  
Fiscal year 2022 district administration per student spending: \$1,043  
One year change in district administration per student spending: -\$2  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average administration per student spending: \$1,023  
Difference from peer average for district administration per student spending: \$20  
Fiscal year 2022 State average administration per student spending: \$1,088  
Difference from State average for district administration per student spending: -\$45  
Fiscal year 2021 district plant operations per student spending: \$666  
Fiscal year 2022 district plant operations per student spending: \$859  
One year change in district plant operations per student spending: \$193  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average plant operations per student spending: \$1,197  
Difference from peer average for district plant operations per student spending: -\$338  
Fiscal year 2022 State average plant operations per student spending: \$1,209  
Difference from State average for district plant operations per student spending: -\$350  
Fiscal year 2021 district food service per student spending: \$374  
Fiscal year 2022 district food service per student spending: \$468  
One year change in district food service per student spending: \$94  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average food service per student spending: \$489  
Difference from peer average for district food service per student spending: -\$21  
Fiscal year 2022 State average food service per student spending: \$507  
Difference from State average for district food service per student spending: -\$39  
Fiscal year 2021 district transportation per student spending: \$194  
Fiscal year 2022 district transportation per student spending: \$235  
One year change in district transportation per student spending: \$41  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average transportation per student spending: \$483  
Difference from peer average for district transportation per student spending: -\$248  
Fiscal year 2022 State average transportation per student spending: \$461  
Difference from State average for district transportation per student spending: -\$226  
Fiscal year 2021 district total operational per student spending: \$9,201  
Fiscal year 2022 district total operational per student spending: \$9,292  
One year change in district total operational per student spending: \$91  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average total operational per student spending: \$9,922  
Difference from peer average for district total operational per student spending: -\$630  
Fiscal year 2022 State average total operational per student spending: \$10,729  
Difference from State average for district total operational per student spending: -\$1,437

### Nonoperational spending

Fiscal year 2021 district land and buildings per student spending: \$424  
Fiscal year 2022 district land and buildings per student spending: \$2,141  
One year change in district land and buildings per student spending: \$1,717  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average land and buildings per student spending: \$2,218  
Difference from peer average for district land and buildings per student spending: -\$77  
Fiscal year 2022 State average land and buildings per student spending: \$1,373  
Difference from State average for district land and buildings per student spending: \$768  
Fiscal year 2021 district equipment per student spending: \$364  
Fiscal year 2022 district equipment per student spending: \$406

One year change in district equipment per student spending: \$42  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average equipment per student spending: \$908  
Difference from peer average for district equipment per student spending: -\$502  
Fiscal year 2022 State average equipment per student spending: \$840  
Difference from State average for district equipment per student spending: -\$434  
Fiscal year 2021 district interest per student spending: \$62  
Fiscal year 2022 district interest per student spending: \$44  
One year change in district interest per student spending: -\$18  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average interest per student spending: \$201  
Difference from peer average for district interest per student spending: -\$157  
Fiscal year 2022 State average interest per student spending: \$309  
Difference from State average for district interest per student spending: -\$265  
Fiscal year 2021 district other per student spending: \$26  
Fiscal year 2022 district other per student spending: \$29  
One year change in district other per student spending: \$3  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average other per student spending: \$62  
Difference from peer average for district other per student spending: -\$33  
Fiscal year 2022 State average other per student spending: \$203  
Difference from State average for district other per student spending: -\$174  
Fiscal year 2021 district total nonoperational per student spending: \$876  
Fiscal year 2022 district total nonoperational per student spending: \$2,620  
One year change in district total nonoperational per student spending: \$1,744  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average total nonoperational per student spending: \$3,389  
Difference from peer average for district total nonoperational per student spending: -\$769  
Fiscal year 2022 State average total nonoperational per student spending: \$2,725  
Difference from State average for district total nonoperational per student spending: -\$105

### Spending totals

Fiscal year 2021 district total per student spending: \$10,077  
Fiscal year 2022 district total per student spending: \$11,912  
One year change in district total per student spending: \$1,835  
Fiscal year 2022 peer average total per student spending: \$13,311  
Difference from peer average for district total per student spending: -\$1,399  
Fiscal year 2022 State average total per student spending: \$13,454  
Difference from State average for district total per student spending: -\$1,542

### Operational efficiency measures

Performance measures, such as those shown below, can be used in addition to instructional spending percentage to assess a district's operational efficiency. We have classified the District's spending relative to its peer districts' average as very low, low, comparable, high, very high, or N/A (not available or applicable). High or very high spending when compared to peer averages may signify an opportunity for improved efficiency in that area. A district's data may not be available or applicable if it did not operate a program in that operational area. For example, not all districts operate food service or transportation programs.

## Table showing operational efficiency measures relative to peer averages

### Operational area—Administration

State average administration spending per student: \$1,088

Peer average administration spending per student: \$1,023

District administration spending per student: \$1,043

District's administration spending per student relative to peer average: Comparable

State average students per administrative position: 63

Peer average students per administrative position: 68

District students per administrative position: 63

### Operational area—Plant operations

State average plant operations spending per square foot: \$7.21

Peer average plant operations spending per square foot: \$6.75

District plant operations spending per square foot: \$4.92

District's plant operations spending per square foot relative to peer average: Very Low

State average square footage per student: 167

Peer average square footage per student: 178

District square footage per student: 175

### Operational area—Food service

State average food service spending per meal: \$3.25

Peer average food service spending per meal: \$3.51

District food service spending per meal: \$3.28

District's food service spending per meal relative to peer average: Low

State average meals per student: 158

Peer average meals per student: 133

District meals per student: 143

### Operational area—Transportation

Transportation performance measures are compared using different peer groups because we have found there are other factors, such as the number of miles a district averages for each rider, that impact transportation spending.

State average transportation spending per mile: \$5.53

Peer average transportation spending per mile: \$5.09

District transportation spending per mile: \$4.23

District's transportation spending per mile relative to peer average: Very Low

State average transportation spending per rider: \$1,945

Peer average transportation spending per rider: \$1,052

District transportation spending per rider: \$859

District's transportation spending per rider relative to peer average: Very Low

## Why monitor average teacher salary?

Teacher salaries are one of a school district's most significant costs and have been a topic of high interest in recent years in Arizona. Beginning in fiscal year 2018, the State budget included additional money intended to increase the State's average teacher salary by 20 percent between fiscal years 2017

and 2021. The bar chart below shows how Safford Unified School District's average teacher salary changed during this time and immediately after the plan ended, as well as how it compared to the State average. Further, we have broken down what portion of the District's average teacher salary was from Classroom Site fund (CSF) monies.

We have also included a table that displays other student- and teacher-related measures that may provide additional context for how Safford Unified School District's average teacher salary may have changed. For instance, changes in a district's teacher population can impact the district's average teacher salary.

### Bar chart and table showing average teacher salary and other measures

Fiscal year 2017 district average teacher salary: \$53,549  
Fiscal year 2018 district average teacher salary: \$56,135  
Fiscal year 2019 district average teacher salary: \$54,367  
Fiscal year 2020 district average teacher salary: \$62,850  
Fiscal year 2021 district average teacher salary: \$66,136  
Fiscal year 2022 district average teacher salary: \$75,384  
Fiscal year 2017 district amount from CSF: \$5,452  
Fiscal year 2018 district amount from CSF: \$6,757  
Fiscal year 2019 district amount from CSF: \$7,506  
Fiscal year 2020 district amount from CSF: \$7,217  
Fiscal year 2021 district amount from CSF: \$6,002  
Fiscal year 2022 district amount from CSF: \$12,761  
Fiscal year 2017 State average teacher salary: \$48,372  
Fiscal year 2018 State average teacher salary: \$48,951  
Fiscal year 2019 State average teacher salary: \$52,441  
Fiscal year 2020 State average teacher salary: \$54,814  
Fiscal year 2021 State average teacher salary: \$56,349  
Fiscal year 2022 State average teacher salary: \$58,366  
Fiscal year 2017 district students per teacher: 18.2  
Fiscal year 2018 district students per teacher: 19.2  
Fiscal year 2019 district students per teacher: 17.4  
Fiscal year 2020 district students per teacher: 18.4  
Fiscal year 2021 district students per teacher: 16.8  
Fiscal year 2022 district students per teacher: 21.3  
Fiscal year 2017 district average years of teacher experience: 13.7  
Fiscal year 2018 district average years of teacher experience: 13.8  
Fiscal year 2019 district average years of teacher experience: 13.9  
Fiscal year 2020 district average years of teacher experience: 15.2  
Fiscal year 2021 district average years of teacher experience: 14.6  
Fiscal year 2022 district average years of teacher experience: 13.3  
Fiscal year 2017 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 15%  
Fiscal year 2018 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 20%  
Fiscal year 2019 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 19%  
Fiscal year 2020 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 9%  
Fiscal year 2021 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 17%



Fiscal year 2022 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 15%

## Student achievement

In fiscal years 2020 and 2021 State assessment testing was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with school districts being exempted from conducting State assessments in fiscal year 2020 and not all eligible students participating in fiscal year 2021. With nearly all districts returning to in-person learning in fiscal year 2022, we are presenting the percentage of students who passed State assessments for Math, English Language Arts (ELA), and Science assessments. For fiscal year 2022, we also present an achievement peer group average and the State average for comparison.

To provide additional context, we have included percentage of students who passed State assessments for the District in Math, ELA, and Science for the past 5 fiscal years. Data is not reported for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 for the reasons noted above, and a district may not have data presented for additional years to protect student privacy.

## Bar charts showing student assessment passage rates

Fiscal year 2022 district Math passage rate: 35%

Fiscal year 2022 peer Math passage rate: 20%

Fiscal year 2022 State Math passage rate: 33%

Fiscal year 2022 district English Language Arts passage rate: 38%

Fiscal year 2022 peer English Language Arts passage rate: 25%

Fiscal year 2022 State English Language Arts passage rate: 40%

Fiscal year 2022 district Science passage rate: 22%

Fiscal year 2022 peer Science passage rate: 15%

Fiscal year 2022 State Science passage rate: 24%