

Arizona Auditor General

Arizona School District Spending Report

Fiscal Year 2023

This document provides a text-based representation of the numbers and other information presented in the graphics on Flagstaff Unified School District's summary results. All data is for fiscal year 2023 unless otherwise noted.

District demographic information

District name: Flagstaff Unified School District

County: Coconino

Operational peer group: 2

Transportation peer group: 5

Achievement peer group: 1

Legislative district(s): 1, 6, and 7

Location: City

Number of schools: 15

Students attending: 8,639

Size: Large

5-year change in students attending: 8% decrease

Special education population: 16%

English learner population: 4%

Poverty rate for fiscal year 2022: 12%

Graduation rate for fiscal year 2022: 89%

District's spending by operational area

Every year, school districts must decide where to allocate their resources. This pie chart shows how Flagstaff 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. Flagstaff Unified School District's peer group had an average instructional spending percentage of 53.1%. This number can help provide context for Flagstaff 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: 69.3%

Instruction: 51.4%

Student support: 9.7%

Instruction support: 8.2%

Nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation spending: 30.7%

Administration: 9.5%
Plant operations: 10.8%
Food service: 3.3%
Transportation: 7.1%

Instructional spending percentage highlights (fiscal years 2001-2023)

We have monitored instructional spending since fiscal year 2001. Below are highlights from Flagstaff 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 2023

Fiscal year 2022 instructional spending percentage: 52.0%
Fiscal year 2023 instructional spending percentage: 51.4%
Fiscal year of highest instructional spending percentage: 2003
Highest instructional spending percentage: 61.3%
Fiscal year of lowest instructional spending percentage: 2023
Lowest instructional spending percentage: 51.4%

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 Flagstaff 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 2018 versus fiscal year 2023)

Change in classroom spending, which includes instruction, student support, and instruction support: -0.4%
Instruction: -1.6%
Student support: 1.9%
Instruction support: -0.7%

Change in nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation: 0.4%
Administration: 0.7%
Plant operations: -1.1%
Food service: 0.0%
Transportation: 0.8%

Bar chart showing the percentage point change in spending by area (fiscal year 2022 versus fiscal year 2023)

Change in classroom spending, which includes instruction, student support, and instruction support: -1.6%
Instruction: -0.6%
Student support: -0.3%
Instruction support: -0.7%
Change in nonclassroom spending, which includes administration, plant operations, food service, and transportation: 1.6%
Administration: 0.5%
Plant operations: 0.8%
Food service: -0.2%
Transportation: 0.5%

Table showing per student spending by area

Operational spending

Fiscal year 2022 district instruction per student spending: \$6,056
Fiscal year 2023 district instruction per student spending: \$6,156
One year change in district instruction per student spending: \$100
Fiscal year 2023 peer average instruction per student spending: \$5,707
Difference from peer average for district instruction per student spending: \$449
Fiscal year 2023 State average instruction per student spending: \$6,253
Difference from State average for district instruction per student spending: -\$97
Fiscal year 2022 district student support per student spending: \$1,159
Fiscal year 2023 district student support per student spending: \$1,164
One year change in district student support per student spending: \$5
Fiscal year 2023 peer average student support per student spending: \$982
Difference from peer average for district student support per student spending: \$182
Fiscal year 2023 State average student support per student spending: \$1,108
Difference from State average for district student support per student spending: \$56
Fiscal year 2022 district instruction support per student spending: \$1,036
Fiscal year 2023 district instruction support per student spending: \$991
One year change in district instruction support per student spending: -\$45
Fiscal year 2023 peer average instruction support per student spending: \$688
Difference from peer average for district instruction support per student spending: \$303
Fiscal year 2023 State average instruction support per student spending: \$717
Difference from State average for district instruction support per student spending: \$274
Fiscal year 2022 district administration per student spending: \$1,052
Fiscal year 2023 district administration per student spending: \$1,135

One year change in district administration per student spending: \$83
Fiscal year 2023 peer average administration per student spending: \$1,116
Difference from peer average for district administration per student spending: \$19
Fiscal year 2023 State average administration per student spending: \$1,207
Difference from State average for district administration per student spending: -\$72
Fiscal year 2022 district plant operations per student spending: \$1,167
Fiscal year 2023 district plant operations per student spending: \$1,290
One year change in district plant operations per student spending: \$123
Fiscal year 2023 peer average plant operations per student spending: \$1,281
Difference from peer average for district plant operations per student spending: \$9
Fiscal year 2023 State average plant operations per student spending: \$1,363
Difference from State average for district plant operations per student spending: -\$73
Fiscal year 2022 district food service per student spending: \$412
Fiscal year 2023 district food service per student spending: \$402
One year change in district food service per student spending: -\$10
Fiscal year 2023 peer average food service per student spending: \$418
Difference from peer average for district food service per student spending: -\$16
Fiscal year 2023 State average food service per student spending: \$523
Difference from State average for district food service per student spending: -\$121
Fiscal year 2022 district transportation per student spending: \$765
Fiscal year 2023 district transportation per student spending: \$847
One year change in district transportation per student spending: \$82
Fiscal year 2023 peer average transportation per student spending: \$583
Difference from peer average for district transportation per student spending: \$264
Fiscal year 2023 State average transportation per student spending: \$532
Difference from State average for district transportation per student spending: \$315
Fiscal year 2022 district total operational per student spending: \$11,647
Fiscal year 2023 district total operational per student spending: \$11,985
One year change in district total operational per student spending: \$338
Fiscal year 2023 peer average total operational per student spending: \$10,775
Difference from peer average for district total operational per student spending: \$1,210
Fiscal year 2023 State average total operational per student spending: \$11,703
Difference from State average for district total operational per student spending: \$282

Nonoperational spending

Fiscal year 2022 district land and buildings per student spending: \$3,295
Fiscal year 2023 district land and buildings per student spending: \$1,436
One year change in district land and buildings per student spending: -\$1,859
Fiscal year 2023 peer average land and buildings per student spending: \$1,567
Difference from peer average for district land and buildings per student spending: -\$131
Fiscal year 2023 State average land and buildings per student spending: \$1,531
Difference from State average for district land and buildings per student spending: -\$95
Fiscal year 2022 district equipment per student spending: \$714
Fiscal year 2023 district equipment per student spending: \$923
One year change in district equipment per student spending: \$209
Fiscal year 2023 peer average equipment per student spending: \$811

Difference from peer average for district equipment per student spending: \$112
Fiscal year 2023 State average equipment per student spending: \$852
Difference from State average for district equipment per student spending: \$71
Fiscal year 2022 district interest per student spending: \$299
Fiscal year 2023 district interest per student spending: \$367
One year change in district interest per student spending: \$68
Fiscal year 2023 peer average interest per student spending: \$389
Difference from peer average for district interest per student spending: -\$22
Fiscal year 2023 State average interest per student spending: \$286
Difference from State average for district interest per student spending: \$81
Fiscal year 2022 district other per student spending: \$258
Fiscal year 2023 district other per student spending: \$289
One year change in district other per student spending: \$31
Fiscal year 2023 peer average other per student spending: \$247
Difference from peer average for district other per student spending: \$42
Fiscal year 2023 State average other per student spending: \$257
Difference from State average for district other per student spending: \$32
Fiscal year 2022 district total nonoperational per student spending: \$4,566
Fiscal year 2023 district total nonoperational per student spending: \$3,015
One year change in district total nonoperational per student spending: -\$1,551
Fiscal year 2023 peer average total nonoperational per student spending: \$3,014
Difference from peer average for district total nonoperational per student spending: \$1
Fiscal year 2023 State average total nonoperational per student spending: \$2,926
Difference from State average for district total nonoperational per student spending: \$89

Spending totals

Fiscal year 2022 district total per student spending: \$16,213
Fiscal year 2023 district total per student spending: \$15,000
One year change in district total per student spending: -\$1,213
Fiscal year 2023 peer average total per student spending: \$13,789
Difference from peer average for district total per student spending: \$1,211
Fiscal year 2023 State average total per student spending: \$14,629
Difference from State average for district total per student spending: \$371

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: \$1,207

Peer average administration spending per student: \$1,116
District administration spending per student: \$1,135
District's administration spending per student relative to peer average: Comparable
State average students per administrative position: 62
Peer average students per administrative position: 65
District students per administrative position: 62

Operational area—Plant operations

State average plant operations spending per square foot: \$8.05
Peer average plant operations spending per square foot: \$8.36
District plant operations spending per square foot: \$6.42
District's plant operations spending per square foot relative to peer average: Very Low
State average square footage per student: 169
Peer average square footage per student: 156
District square footage per student: 201

Operational area—Food service

State average food service spending per meal: \$4.12
Peer average food service spending per meal: \$3.98
District food service spending per meal: \$4.82
District's food service spending per meal relative to peer average: Very High
State average meals per student: 128
Peer average meals per student: 100
District meals per student: 83

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: \$6.19
Peer average transportation spending per mile: \$5.76
District transportation spending per mile: \$7.58
District's transportation spending per mile relative to peer average: Very High
State average transportation spending per rider: \$2,039
Peer average transportation spending per rider: \$2,508
District transportation spending per rider: \$3,226
District's transportation spending per rider relative to peer average: Very High

Why monitor average teacher salary?

Teacher salaries are one of a school district's most substantial costs and have been a topic of high interest in recent years in Arizona. Therefore, we have expanded our reporting on average teacher salary in FY 2023 to provide additional information based on stakeholder feedback. The breakdown below shows Flagstaff Unified School District's average teacher salary and amount from Classroom Site Fund (CSF) monies as we have reported in prior years. In FY 2023, we have also reported the average base salary for teachers depending on their years of experience. This differs from the average teacher

salary. Specifically, average base salary represents the average of only base salaries paid to the teachers within the presented categories of years of experience, meaning it does not reflect additional pay teachers may receive, such as performance pay and stipends or additions to base pay unrelated to additional duties. Neither the average teacher salary nor the average base salary includes payments for additional nonteaching duties a teacher may perform for additional pay, such as tutoring, cocurricular activities, or athletics. A district's average base salary may not be available if the District did not have teachers during the fiscal year for one of the categories of years of experience. For some districts, the data did not meet our criteria for reporting, which is indicated by NR (not reliable).

The additional teacher salary information we report this year can provide a better picture of how a district pays its teachers. For example, if a district has a large difference between the average base salary for teachers in their first 3 years and the average base salary of teachers in their 4th year or later, it indicates that the district's salary schedule provides additional base compensation to teachers as they gain additional teaching experience. If the district's total average teacher salary is substantially higher than the base salary amounts, it indicates that the district pays teachers more in performance pay and one-time payments than a district whose overall average teacher salary is similar to its base salary amounts. Further, not all districts recognize a teacher's classroom experience outside of their school district when determining a teacher's pay. The graphic below indicates whether the district reported recognizing classroom experience outside of the district, and if so, whether the district reported compensating teachers for classroom experience through placement on the district's salary schedule, meaning the teacher's experience resulted in a higher base pay, and/or by making additional payments to teachers in addition to their base pay, such as a stipend.

Additionally, it is important to consider the proportion of experienced teachers in a district's teacher population, which can impact a district's average teacher salary. For example, a district's total average teacher salary may have decreased since the prior year if its most experienced teachers have left district employment and the district has hired less experienced teachers to replace them. Smaller districts generally have more variation in average teacher salary and other teacher measures due to their smaller teacher population where replacing one experienced teacher with a less experienced teacher can have a more substantial year-to-year impact on reported amounts.

District average teacher salary and other measures (fiscal year 2023)

Average teacher salary: \$55,727

Amount from CSF: \$9,828

District average salary compared to the State average: -\$7,207

District reported that it paid any of its teachers for prior classroom experience outside the District: Yes
If so, the district reported these payments were made:

 Included in base salary by being accounted for with salary schedule placement: Yes

 In addition to, but separate from, base salary: No

Average years of teacher experience: 10.2

Percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 31%

Average base salary of teachers in their first 3 years: \$48,854

Percentage of teachers in their 4th year or later: 69%

Average base salary of teachers in their 4th year or later: \$57,820

Students per teacher: 15.9

Districts received additional State monies intended to increase average teacher salary

In FYs 2018 through 2021, the State provided additional monies to districts to increase teacher salaries by 20 percent from the FY 2017 base year. The bar chart below shows how Flagstaff Unified School District's average teacher salary changed during this time frame and immediately after the annual State increases from FYs 2018 through 2021 ended, as well as how it compared to the State-wide average. Additionally, the chart shows the portion of the District's average teacher salary paid with CSF monies.

We have also included a table that displays other student- and teacher-related measures that may provide additional context regarding changes to Flagstaff Unified School District's average teacher salary during this timeframe. 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: \$43,134

Fiscal year 2018 district average teacher salary: \$44,896

Fiscal year 2019 district average teacher salary: \$44,418

Fiscal year 2020 district average teacher salary: \$45,878

Fiscal year 2021 district average teacher salary: \$48,432

Fiscal year 2022 district average teacher salary: \$54,651

Fiscal year 2023 district average teacher salary: \$55,727

Fiscal year 2017 district amount from CSF: \$5,702

Fiscal year 2018 district amount from CSF: \$7,008

Fiscal year 2019 district amount from CSF: \$6,700

Fiscal year 2020 district amount from CSF: \$9,187

Fiscal year 2021 district amount from CSF: \$6,357

Fiscal year 2022 district amount from CSF: \$10,376

Fiscal year 2023 district amount from CSF: \$9,828

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 2023 State average teacher salary: \$62,934

Fiscal year 2017 district students per teacher: 16.2

Fiscal year 2018 district students per teacher: 16.3

Fiscal year 2019 district students per teacher: 15.9

Fiscal year 2020 district students per teacher: 15.7

Fiscal year 2021 district students per teacher: 14.5

Fiscal year 2022 district students per teacher: 15.6

Fiscal year 2023 district students per teacher: 15.9

Fiscal year 2017 district average years of teacher experience: 12.2

Fiscal year 2018 district average years of teacher experience: 12.0
Fiscal year 2019 district average years of teacher experience: 12.2
Fiscal year 2020 district average years of teacher experience: 12.5
Fiscal year 2021 district average years of teacher experience: 12.1
Fiscal year 2022 district average years of teacher experience: 11.1
Fiscal year 2023 district average years of teacher experience: 10.2
Fiscal year 2017 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 20%
Fiscal year 2018 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 19%
Fiscal year 2019 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 19%
Fiscal year 2020 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 19%
Fiscal year 2021 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 18%
Fiscal year 2022 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 24%
Fiscal year 2023 district percentage of teachers in first 3 years: 31%

Student achievement

For FY 2023, we present an achievement peer group weighted average and the State average for comparison to the individual districts' percentage of students who passed State assessments in Math, English Language Arts (ELA), and Science assessments. We report a passage rate consistent with ADE's publicly available data file, and therefore, some individual districts' results may not be available due to ADE's redaction standards. For FY 2023, we also present an achievement peer group weighted average and the State average for comparison.

Additionally, we have included the district's percentage passing for each of the past 5 fiscal years, excluding FYs 2020 and 2021, for Math, ELA, and Science assessments. In FYs 2020 and 2021 State assessment testing was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with school districts being exempted from conducting State assessments in FY 2020 and not all eligible students participating in FY 2021.

Bar charts showing student assessment passage rates

Fiscal year 2019 district Math passage rate: 32%
Fiscal year 2020 district Math passage rate: N/A
Fiscal year 2021 district Math passage rate: N/A
Fiscal year 2022 district Math passage rate: 24%
Fiscal year 2023 district Math passage rate: 23%
Fiscal year 2023 peer Math passage rate: 48%
Fiscal year 2023 State Math passage rate: 34%
Fiscal year 2019 district English Language Arts passage rate: 37%
Fiscal year 2020 district English Language Arts passage rate: N/A
Fiscal year 2021 district English Language Arts passage rate: N/A
Fiscal year 2022 district English Language Arts passage rate: 33%
Fiscal year 2023 district English Language Arts passage rate: 32%
Fiscal year 2023 peer English Language Arts passage rate: 53%
Fiscal year 2023 State English Language Arts passage rate: 40%
Fiscal year 2019 district Science passage rate: 46%
Fiscal year 2020 district Science passage rate: N/A
Fiscal year 2021 district Science passage rate: N/A

Fiscal year 2022 district Science passage rate: 21%
Fiscal year 2023 district Science passage rate: 24%
Fiscal year 2023 peer Science passage rate: 37%
Fiscal year 2023 State Science passage rate: 27%