

State Ratings Rubric: South Carolina



MEETS CRITERIA










PARTIALLY MEETS CRITERIA

DOESN'T MEET CRITERIA

- Rating went up since last year
- Some improvements since last year
- Rating did not change
- Rating went down since last year
- Some decline since last year

Last updated: August 2025

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	RATING	EXPLANATION
FUND STUDENTS ADEQUATELY			
Funding Adequacy	Per-student funding is at or above the national average (\$16,645).		Per-student funding was \$297 less than the national average in the 2021-22 school year.
Yearly Increases	Base funding for all students increases every year to account for inflation.		The per-student base amount increased by 2.8% for the 2025-26 school year, from \$5,724 to \$5,884.
Progressive Tax Policies	The state maintains healthy revenue sources for schools.		Legislation passed in 2025 to reduce the income tax rate for highest earners.
FUND STUDENT NEEDS EQUITABLY			
Student-Based Formula	The funding formula is primarily student-based.		Hybrid formula.
Students from Low-Income Backgrounds	The state provides additional funds for students from low-income backgrounds.		50% weight.
English Learners	The state provides additional funds for English Learners.		20% weight.
Students with Disabilities	The state provides additional funds for students with disabilities, based on their needs.		160% weight, regardless of the types of disabilities students have.

FUND DISTRICTS APPROPRIATELY			
Cost Sharing	The state requires local governments to share the cost based on their ability to pay.		Local governments contribute 25% on average, based on certain types of property revenue.
Local Revenue Cap	The state limits wealthy districts from contributing excessively more than other districts.		The state does not set a cap.
Rural Districts	Small districts and districts with few students per square mile (“sparse districts”) receive additional funds.		No additional funding.
Concentrated Poverty	Districts with high concentrations of poverty receive additional funds .		No additional funding.
FUND STUDENTS TRANSPARENTLY & EFFECTIVELY			
Formula Transparency	The funding formula is easy to understand and clearly explained.		The formula is complicated, and the state education department’s manual is not user-friendly.
Funding Data	The state shares detailed, timely, and user-friendly public data on districts’ funding.		Data is timely and user-friendly but is only somewhat detailed.
District Spending Plans	The state requires districts to share public reports about how they invest funds to meet students’ needs.		The Education Funding Dashboard shows district spending, but not how specific investments related to students with greater needs.
Formula Review	The state requires a clear, stakeholder-led process to evaluate the formula and recommend improvements.		A legislator-led review committee is required to meet, but has not published public recommendations since 2019.
FUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS EXCLUSIVELY			
Vouchers	The state does not divert public funds to private schools through voucher programs, education savings accounts, or scholarship tax credits.		The South Carolina Education Scholarship Trust Fund program provides vouchers with near-universal eligibility and no accountability requirements.

Sources: Education Law Center, EdFund, EdBuild, Bellwether, Education Commission of the States, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, South Carolina Department of Education