

# State Ratings Rubric

## 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 2026

### FUND STUDENTS ADEQUATELY

#### COMPONENT & DESCRIPTION

| <b>Funding Adequacy</b><br>Per-student funding is at or above the national average (\$17,853 for the 2022-23 school year). | Per-student funding is significantly less than the national average (more than \$2,000 below).        | Per-student funding is slightly less than the national average (less than \$2,000 below). | Per-student funding is at or above the national average.                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Yearly Increases</b><br>Base funding for all students increases every year to account for inflation.                    | Little to no increase in base funding (less than 1% increase).                                        | Some increase in base funding (1-3%).                                                     | Significant increase in base funding (more than 3%).                                           |
| <b>Progressive Tax Policies</b><br>The state maintains healthy revenue sources for schools.                                | Enacted or implemented tax cuts, phaseouts, or other policies that reduce revenue for K-12 education. | Maintained revenue supporting K-12 education.                                             | Enacted or implemented tax policies or other changes that increase revenue for K-12 education. |

### FUND STUDENT NEEDS EQUITABLY

| <b>Student-Based Formula</b><br>The funding formula is primarily student-based. | Resource-based or program-based formula that provides funds based on staffing or program ratios not tied to actual student needs. | Hybrid formula that combines weighted-student funding with other models. | Primarily weighted-student formula with a base amount for every student and additional money – or “weights” – for unique student needs. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                      |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Students from Low-Income Backgrounds</b><br>The state provides additional funds for students from low-income backgrounds.             | Little to no additional funding (less than 10% of the base amount) for each student. | Some additional funding (10-99% of the base amount) for each student.                           | Significant additional funding (100% or more of the base amount) for each student.                                                            |
| <b>English Learners</b><br>The state provides additional funds for English Learners.                                                     | Little to no additional funding (less than 10% of the base amount) for each student. | Some additional funding (10-99% of the base amount) for each student.                           | Significant additional funding (100% or more of the base amount) for each student.                                                            |
| <b>Students with Disabilities</b><br>The state provides additional funds for students with disabilities, based on their needs.           | Little to no additional funding, or funding not based on actual student counts.      | Additional funding that does not differentiate between the types of disabilities students have. | Three or more tiers of additional funding based on the types of disabilities students have.                                                   |
| <b>FUND DISTRICTS APPROPRIATELY</b>                                                                                                      |                                                                                      |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>COMPONENT &amp; DESCRIPTION</b>                                                                                                       |                                                                                      |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Cost Sharing</b><br>The state requires local governments to share the cost based on their ability to pay.                             | Local share very low or does not change based on ability to pay.                     | Local share changes based on ability to pay.                                                    | The state takes extra steps to address property wealth differences, like recapture policies, district integration, or statewide property tax. |
| <b>Local Revenue Cap</b><br>The state limits wealthy districts from contributing excessively more than other districts.                  | No cap on how much local revenue districts can raise.                                | The state sets a cap on how much local revenue districts can raise, but voters can override it. | The state sets a cap on how much local revenue districts can raise, and voters cannot override it.                                            |
| <b>Rural Districts</b><br>Small districts and districts with few students per square mile ("sparse districts") receive additional funds. | No additional funding.                                                               | Additional funding for small districts OR sparse districts.                                     | Additional funding for small districts AND sparse districts.                                                                                  |
| <b>Concentrated Poverty</b><br>Districts with high concentrations of poverty receive <a href="#">additional funds</a> .                  | No additional funding.                                                               | Some additional funding.                                                                        | Meaningful additional funding.                                                                                                                |

## FUND STUDENTS TRANSPARENTLY & EFFECTIVELY

| COMPONENT & DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                     |                                                                       |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Formula Transparency</b><br>The funding formula is easy to understand and clearly explained.                                             | Formula NOT transparent AND NOT clearly explained.                    | Formula is transparent OR clearly explained.                                                                              | Formula is transparent AND clearly explained.                                                                              |
| <b>Funding Data</b><br>The state shares detailed, timely, and user-friendly public data on districts' funding.                              | Data not shared or does not show how district funding was calculated. | Data shows how district funding was calculated, OR it is timely and user-friendly.                                        | Data shows how district funding was calculated, AND it is timely and user-friendly.                                        |
| <b>District Spending Plans</b><br>The state requires districts to share public reports about how they invest funds to meet students' needs. | No requirement.                                                       | Spending plan does not show how specific investments relate to district goals for student groups with additional funding. | Spending plan shows specific investments and how they relate to district goals for student groups with additional funding. |
| <b>Formula Review</b><br>The state requires a clear, stakeholder-led process to evaluate the formula and recommend improvements.            | No requirement for a recurring review process.                        | Review process does not include key stakeholders or provide public engagement opportunities.                              | Review process is conducted regularly, includes key stakeholders, and provides public engagement opportunities.            |

## FUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS EXCLUSIVELY

|                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                    |                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Vouchers</b><br>The state does not divert public funds to private schools through voucher programs, education savings accounts, or scholarship tax credits. | Universal voucher program with little to no income eligibility restrictions or accountability requirements. | Limited voucher program with some income eligibility restrictions and accountability requirements. | No voucher program. |
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Sources: Education Law Center, EdFund, EdBuild, Bellwether, Education Commission of the States, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy