

Q. Why would an increase in public school funding benefit students?

- A.** Substantial research points to a positive relationship between education funding and improved student outcomes, particularly for economically disadvantaged students — and the body of evidence is growing. Multiple studies have shown that economically disadvantaged students who attend well-resourced schools demonstrate greater academic achievement than similar peers in schools with scant resources.^{1,2} In a rigorous 2016 study, researchers found that increased funding for school districts with a large concentration of economically disadvantaged students resulted in increased student test scores. Their evidence supported the conclusion that the benefits of these investments to future student earnings far outweighed the cost.³

For detailed information on the relationship between investment in education and student outcomes, as well as strategies boards can use to support student achievement, please see CSBA's report *Meeting California's Challenge: Access, Opportunity, and Achievement: Key Ingredients for Student Success* (5/2017).

Q. How should school boards use any additional monies to boost student achievement?

- A.** No two school districts or county offices of education are exactly alike. Local school boards, working in conjunction with their constituents, are best positioned to set goals and find solutions that meet the specific needs of their individual communities. At the same time, we can identify common factors that lead to student achievement, including a rigorous, well-rounded and relevant curriculum; staff with the skills, knowledge and competencies to promote student success; education and assistance for families to support and guide learning; 21st-century infrastructure and technology; academic supports to improve achievement; early childhood education supports and services; physical, mental and environmental health supports; and services for students with specific needs.

Q. Isn't a sizable portion of the state budget devoted to public education?

- A.** K-14 education, which includes community colleges, accounts for roughly 40 percent of the state budget. This is a significant amount, but less, on a percentage basis, than what the rest of the country spends for public schools. California ranks just 45th nationally in the amount of taxable income spent on public schools, so nearly every other state places a higher value on public education. Why? Because they know that the answers to our most pressing concerns — economic vitality, social cohesion, public health, and strong, sustainable communities — are rooted in an educated populace prepared to tackle the problems of today and create a better tomorrow.

Q. Does California have the money for this?

- A.** California has the world's sixth largest economy and the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any state. Yet, four out of every five states provide more funding for schools on a per-pupil basis than California. Overall, California ranks 45th in the percentage of taxable income spent on K-12 education. California prides itself on being the home of American innovation. If other poorer states can find a way to prioritize education, we can, too.

Q. What should we do after we approve the resolution?

- A.** Upon approving the resolution, please send it to the California School Boards Association (CSBA) by emailing Senior Director of Communications Troy Flint at: tflint@csba.org. Also, please let your community know that your district or COE supports full and fair funding so all California students can graduate prepared for success in college, career and civic life.

1. Card, D., & Payne, A. A. (2002). School finance reform, the distribution of school spending, and the distribution of student test scores. *Journal of Public Economics*, 83 (1), 49-82. Retrieved from <http://davidcard.berkeley.edu/papers/school-finance-reform.pdf>

2. Greenwald, R., Hedges, L.V., & Laine, R. D. (1996). The effect of school resources on student achievement. *Review of Educational Research*, 66 (3), 361-396. Retrieved from <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.3102/00346543066003361>

3. Lafortune, J., Rothstein, J., & Schanzenbach, D. W. (2016). *School finance reform and the distribution of student achievement* (No. w22011). National Bureau of Economic Research.