



Christie Administration Releases the 2016 Taxpayers' Guide to Education Spending

For Immediate Release

Contact: Michael Yaple
David Saenz

Date: April 7, 2016

609-292-1126

Trenton, NJ – The Department of Education today released the *2016 Taxpayers' Guide to Education Spending* to help New Jersey residents and interested citizens learn more about the spending practices of school districts across the state.

"This annual spending guide has been a valuable source of clear, useful data on our schools for taxpayers throughout the state," said Commissioner of Education David C. Hesse. "The guide includes a full accounting for all dollars spent on our schools, providing a complete picture of school spending."

The *Taxpayers' Guide to Education Spending* provides the public with information about school districts' annual budgets. Two types of total expenditures are included:

- Total Spending Per Pupil – Comprises all district expenditures, including costs paid by the state on behalf of districts, as well as fees and tuition paid by students; and
- Budgetary Cost Per Pupil – Comprises costs borne by the school district, excluding costs that aren't comparable among school districts, such as transportation and facilities costs.

For the 2014-15 school year, the average Total Spending Per Pupil in the state, which includes district pension payments made by the state and other ancillary costs that vary by district, is \$19,652. This is 2.2 percentage points higher than the prior year's average of \$19,228.

Since the Total Spending Per Pupil includes pension payments made by the state and other district-specific costs, it should be noted that the state average Budgetary Per Pupil Cost increased by only 1.3 percentage points, from \$14,546 in the 2013-14 school year to \$14,736 in 2014-15.

The guide also compares school districts of similar size and ranks districts in 14 of the 17 spending categories, such as total administrative costs and total classroom instruction, as well as in four staff indicators, such as student/teacher ratios and ratios of faculty to administrative staff. Costs are ranked on a per-pupil basis from low to high.

The *Taxpayers' Guide to Education Spending* can be found [online](#).

The guide was first produced in the spring of 1997 as the *Comparative Spending Guide*. The guide's name was changed in 2011 when the Department of Education developed a new total spending measure that continues to provide a more comprehensive representation of district and state expenditures.