Exposing Hidden Funding Inequities

Ary Amerikaner
The Education Trust

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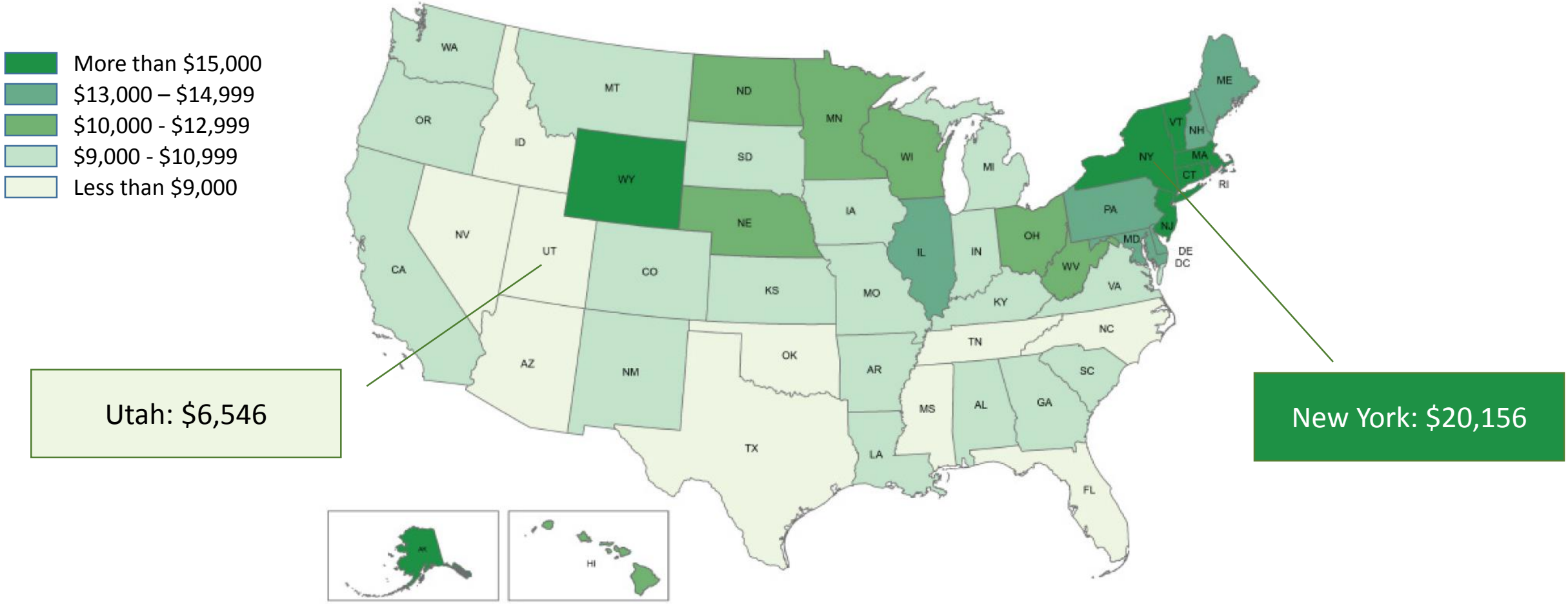
Our Roadmap

1) Inequities we can – and cannot – see today
2) ESSA's new requirement
3) Getting it right: questions to ask the state
4) Opportunities to use the new data

Inequities We Can & Cannot See

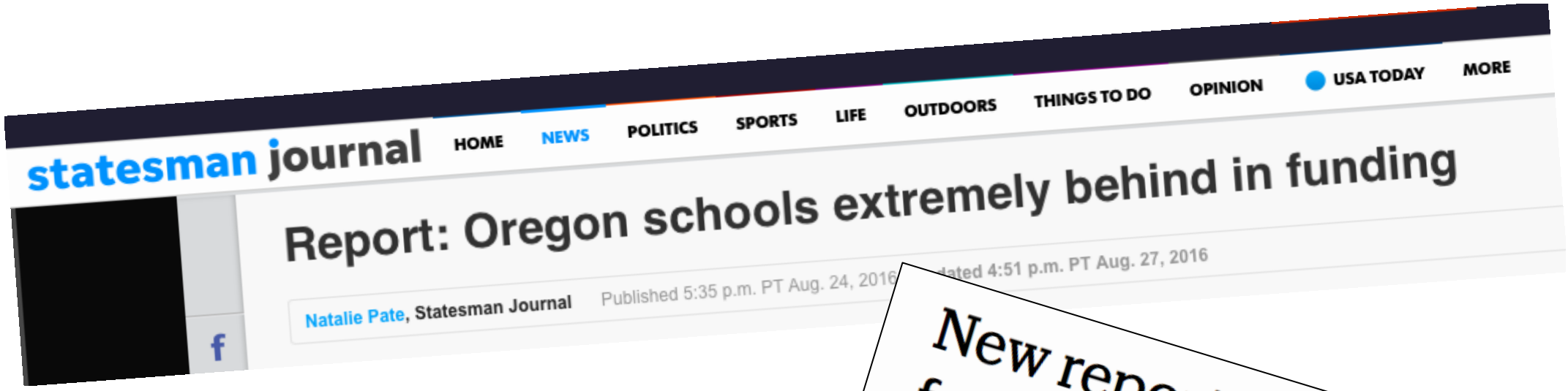
STATES | DISTRICTS | SCHOOLS

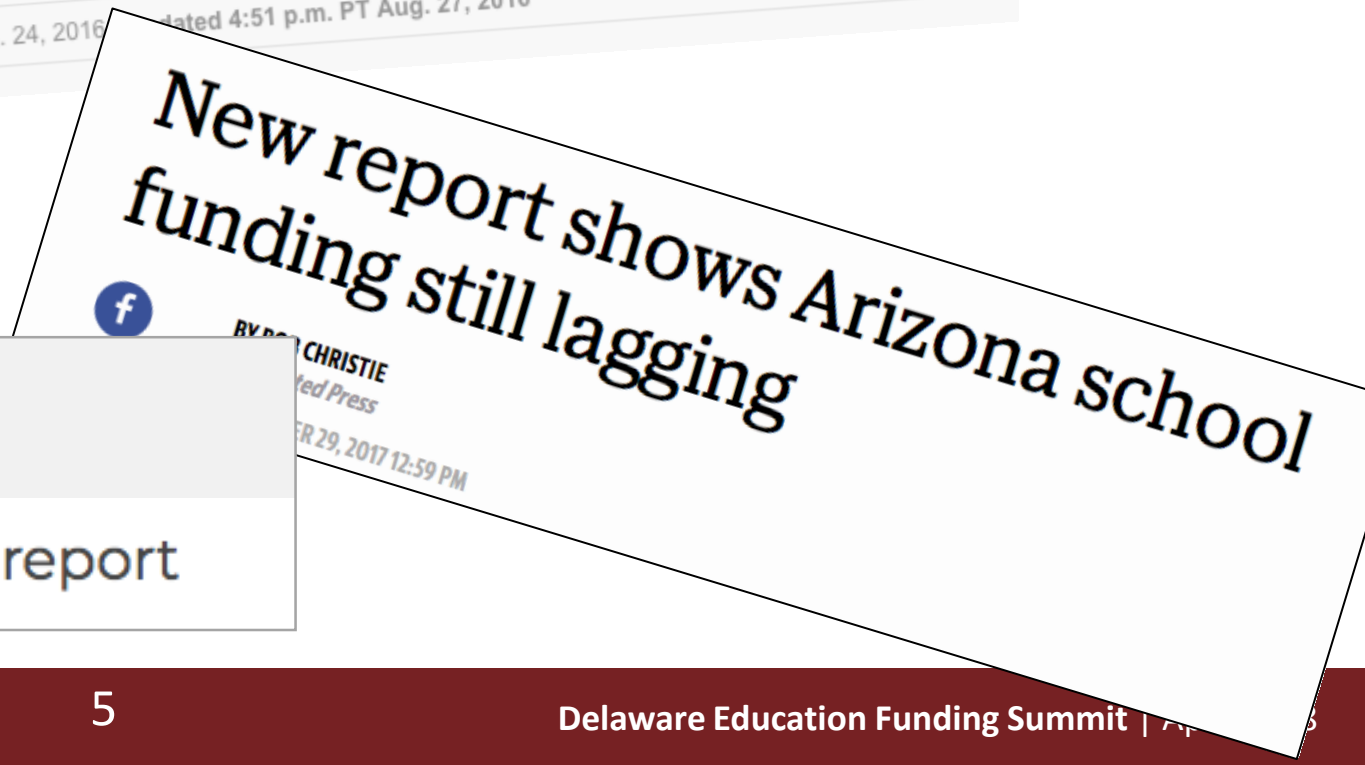
Inequities We Can See Today: Between States



Source: [Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education](), National Center for Education Statistics

Inequities We Can See Today: Between States





Inequities We Can See Today: Between Districts

- High poverty districts receive roughly **$1,000 / student *less*** than low poverty districts around the country
- In **16 states** high poverty districts receive *less* per pupil than low poverty districts.

Inequities We Can See Today: Between Districts

EXCLUSIVE: Funding inequalities between rich, poor school districts reached record levels under Cuomo: report

Inequities We Cannot (Clearly) See Today: Between Schools

Preliminary data indicate inequities between schools <u>within</u> districts

Inequities We Cannot (Clearly) See Today: Between Schools

But these data have serious limitations

- **Civil Rights Data Collection**
  - Excludes large categories of spending
  - Quality concerns
  - Inconsistent calculations across districts
- **State data sets**
  - Not publicly available
  - Inconsistent calculations across districts

Inequities We Cannot (Clearly) See Today: Between Schools

Limited data has meant very little public attention paid to inequities between schools within school districts.

ESSA's New Requirement

WHAT | WHEN | WHY

ESSA's New Requirement

- State and district report cards must annually include per-pupil expenditures of Federal, State, and local funds, disaggregated by source of funds
- Must include actual personnel and non-personnel expenditures
- Must be reported for the **LEA as a whole** and **for each school**
- Must be reported for the previous fiscal year

ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(x), (h)(2)(C)

Timeline

2017-2018 Report Cards *(likely published fall/winter of 2018)*

- Report per pupil expenditures from the preceding fiscal year (e.g. the fiscal year covering the 2017-2018 school year); *or*
- Provide a brief description of the steps the SEA and LEAs are taking to ensure that information on the per-pupil expenditures will be included beginning with report cards for the 2018-2019 school year.

2018-2019 Report Cards *(likely published fall/winter of 2019)*

- Report per pupil expenditures from the preceding fiscal year (e.g. the fiscal year covering the 2018-2019 school year)

https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/perpupilreqltr.pdf

What would you do
(or have you already done)
with school level spending data?

We asked advocates from around the country.

Here's some of what they told us.

Use it to PROVE inequities when talking to decision makers

Advocate for funding that matches the needs of students

Hold LEAs accountable

Push to cut waste

Find bright spots where resources are following need and dig deeper to learn what is working

Organize families / communities for local action

See if schools that are supposed to get more $ for disadvantaged students are actually getting it

Ask questions!

Track over time to see where budget increases are spent

Advocate for more funding in low performing schools

Press statement calling for resource equity

Use the data in testimony before County Council and school board when they develop budgets

Draw parallels between funding and outcomes

None of these things will be possible if the data aren't collected and reported well.

Getting it Right: Questions for Your State

CALCULATING | REPORTING

Getting it Right: Questions for Your State

CALCULATING | REPORTING

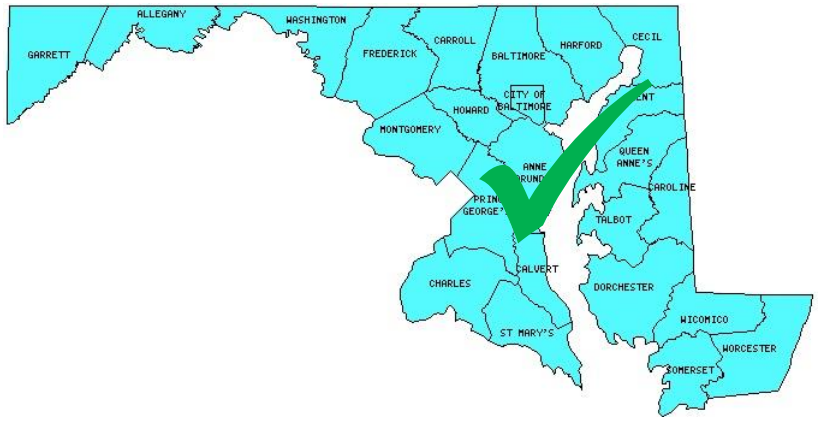
Three Questions About Calculating the Data

1. Will there be statewide rules all districts must follow?
2. How will central office expenditures be treated?
3. Who will define “central office expenditures” and “school site expenditures”?

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

1. Will there be statewide rules all districts must follow?

   ✓ Look for statewide business rules so that data are comparable across districts



Three Questions About Calculating the Data

2. How will central office expenditures be treated?

✓ Look for 3 separate numbers for each school

1. *School site expenditures*
2. *School's share of central office expenditures*
3. *Grand total*

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

	School A	School B	District Avg
School Site			
Federal	$900	$1,000	$940
State and local	$9,100	$7,000	$8,000
Site Total	$10,100	$8,000	$8,940
School Share of Central Office			
Federal	$400	$400	$400
State and local	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000
Central Share Total	$3,400	$3,400	$3,400
Grand Total	$13,500	$11,400	$12,340

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

Watch out for:

- ✗ Excluding central office expenditures entirely

or

- ✗ Reporting central office and school site spending as a single number

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

	School A	School B	District Avg
School Site			
Federal	$900	$1,000	$940
State and local	$9,100	$7,000	$8,000
Site Total	$10,100	$8,000	$8,940

Excluding central office expenditures:
Bad for comparing spending across districts; bad for comparing across charter and traditional public schools

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

	School A	School B	District Avg
Grand Total	$13,500	$11,400	$12,340

Reporting all spending in a single grand total:
Masks inequities in spending between schools within a district by including money spent on things not ever seen in the school (e.g. superintendent salary)

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

3. Who defines the terms “school site expenditures” and “central office expenditure”?

Pop Quiz!

School site or central office expenditures?

1. Classroom teachers
2. Curriculum development
3. Professional development for teachers
4. Reading coaches who rotate schools
5. Food / Nutrition
6. Transportation

Three Questions About Calculating the Data

3. Who defines the terms “school site expenditures” and “central office expenditure”?

Look for:

- ✓ The state requires that salaries for personnel who work in a single school be “school site” expenditures;
- ✓ The state issues guidelines or “decision rules” for other costs;
- ✓ Districts apply those decision rules

Getting it Right: Questions for Your State

CALCULATING | **REPORTING**

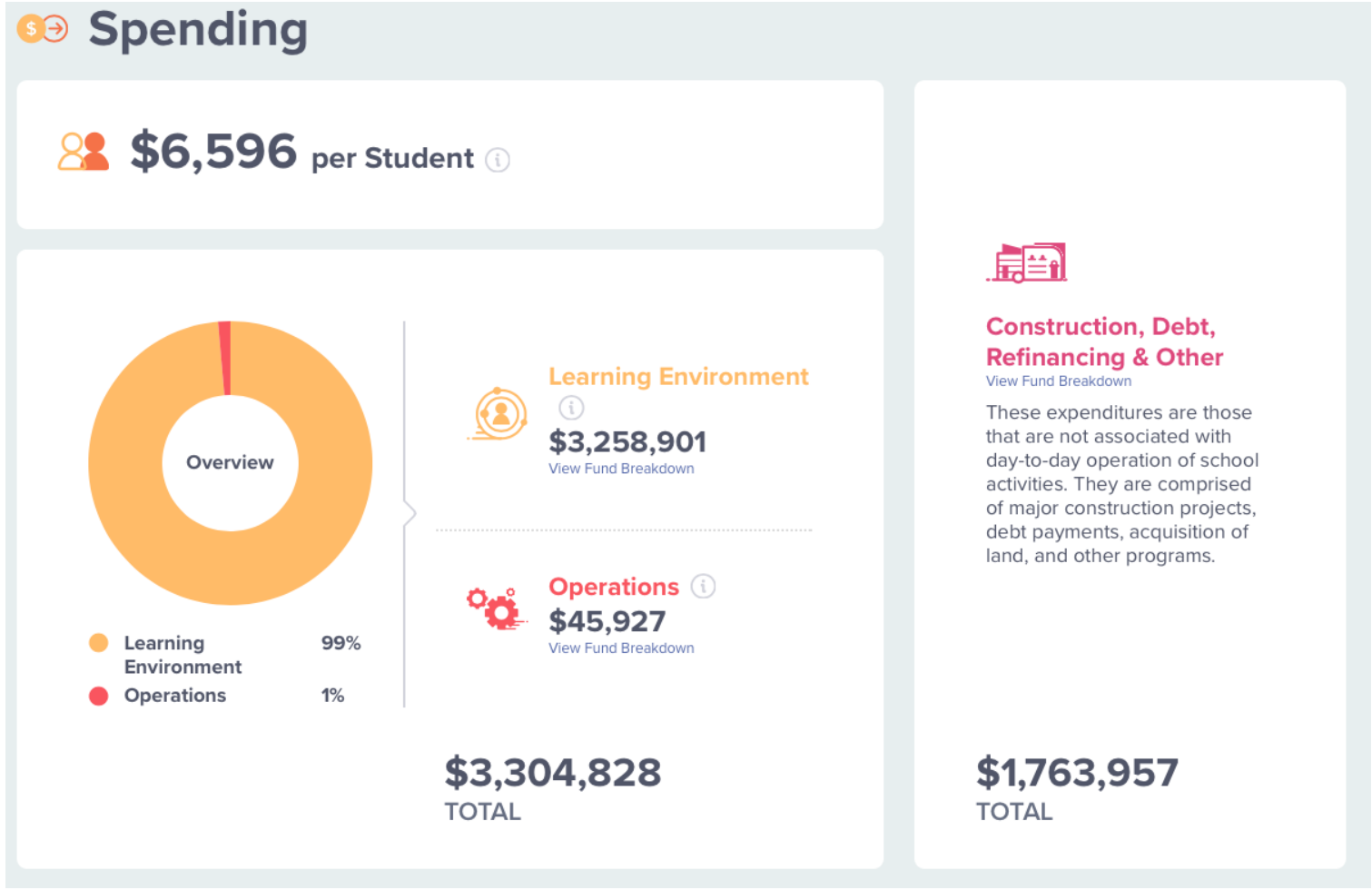
Reporting the Data

What contextual data will be reported *with* school spending data?

- ✓ District average
- ✓ State average
- ✓ Student demographic data
- ✓ Student achievement data

Reporting the Data: What Not to Do

- ✗ Single per pupil spending number
- ✗ No information about:
  - ✗ District or state averages
  - ✗ Student need
  - ✗ Student outcomes



Using the Data: Opportunities in ESSA

Supplement Not Supplant | Resource Allocation Reviews

Using the Data

These data will allow you to identify inequities if collected and reported well.

But will they prompt action to remedy inequities?

Using the Data

ESSA requires states, districts, and schools to review resource allocation decisions as part of the school improvement process.

Using the Data

- **States** must review resource allocations to support districts with many schools identified for improvement (ESSA §1111(d)(3)(A)(ii))

- **Districts** with schools identified for improvement must identify and address resource inequities impacting those schools (ESSA §1111(d)(1)(B)(iv))

Using the Data

- **Schools** identified for improvement based on low performance for individual groups of students must identify and address resource inequities within their school (ESSA §1111(d)(2)(C))

Using the Data

Will these reviews lead to meaningful change or will they be “check the box” compliance exercises?

The Education Trust will release new fact sheets with tips about how to ensure ESSA’s school improvement activities lead to meaningful change this spring.

ANY
QUESTIONS
?