



Standard of Effort Report

Fiscal Year 2021

June 15, 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Section I: General Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances	2
Revenues.....	2
Taxable Valuation and Levies.....	2
Fargo Public Schools Mill Levy History.....	2
District Mill Value Comparison	3
Average Daily Membership.....	3
Local and County Revenue.....	4
State Revenue	4
Federal Revenue	4
Total Revenues.....	5
How Do We Compare?.....	6
Expenditures	7
Teaching Staff.....	7
Teacher Salary and Benefits.....	9
Average Days of Teacher Employment.....	9
Teacher Contract Days.....	9
Licensed Support Staff	10
Licensed Support Staff Salary and Benefits Expenditures	11
Paraprofessional Staff Full Time Equivalents.....	12
Paraprofessional Staff Salary	12
Other Instructional Expenditures.....	13
Administration	13
Operations and Other Programs.....	15
General Fund Balance	20
Historical Fund Balance Analysis.....	20
Ending Fund Balance	20
Enhancements to Education	21
Adult Education.....	22
Trollwood Performing Arts School.....	23
Bluestem Center for the Arts	24
Section II: Special Education	25

Special Education Child Count	25
Special Education Revenues	26
Special Education Expenditures	27
Cost to Educate	27
Expenditures by Category Type	27
Expenditures by Service Area	28
Special Education Funding Shortfall.....	28
Section III: English Learners	29
Refugee Resettlement in North Dakota.....	29
Program and Students	29
Revenues.....	30
Title III	30
STEEP.....	30
State EL Weighting Factor	31
Expenditures	31
References	32

Executive Summary

This document is a comparison of Fargo Public Schools general fund to the finances of four North Dakota districts. Using data from the 2021 and 2022 “School Finance Facts” and “Employee Compensation” reports published by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, peer district annual financial reports and information supplied by the districts, this report analyzes the characteristics of the most recent revenue and expenditure allocations. The following districts have been selected for comparison:

- Bismarck Public Schools
- Grand Forks Public Schools
- Minot Public Schools
- West Fargo Public Schools

The report is divided into three sections:

- Section I discusses revenue, fund balance and expenditure performance of Fargo Public Schools in relation to peer school districts in North Dakota. The general fund categories considered include overall revenue and expenditures, instructional and administrative expenditures, and support program expenditures.
- Section II highlights district spending on Special Education, including breakdowns of Special Education expenditures on a per-child count basis by program/service area.
- Section III provides a review of the English Learners program.

Section I: General Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances

Revenues

Taxable Valuation and Levies

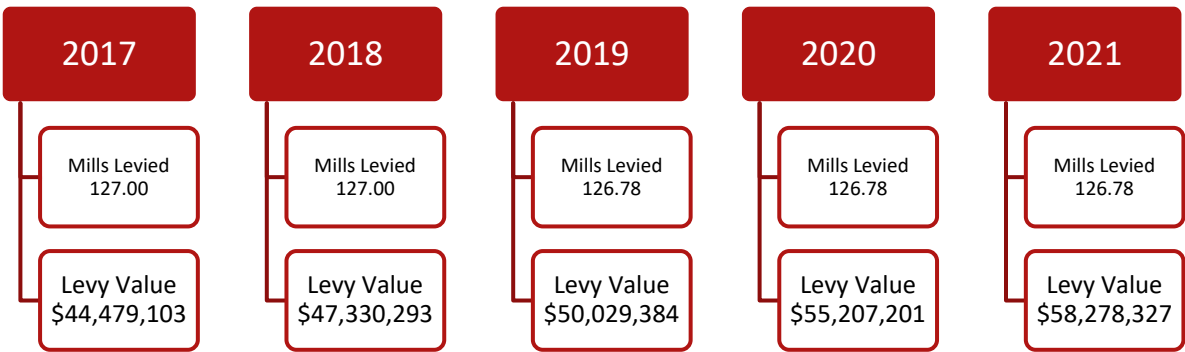
What is the Mill Levy?

The mill levy is determined each year by dividing the total amount of dollars needed by each political subdivision (city, county, schools, etc.) from the property tax by the total taxable value of the city of Fargo. This, in effect, ends up being the percentage of taxable value that is levied or assessed in property tax annually. The mill levy is a composite of several entities' tax levying powers. In Fargo, since there are three school districts involved (Fargo, West Fargo & Kindred), there are three different mill levies.

What is Taxable Value?

Taxable value refers to a percentage of the city assessor's appraisal according to a state-prescribed formula, after exemptions are removed. To calculate annual taxes for a property, the taxable value is multiplied by the mill levy.

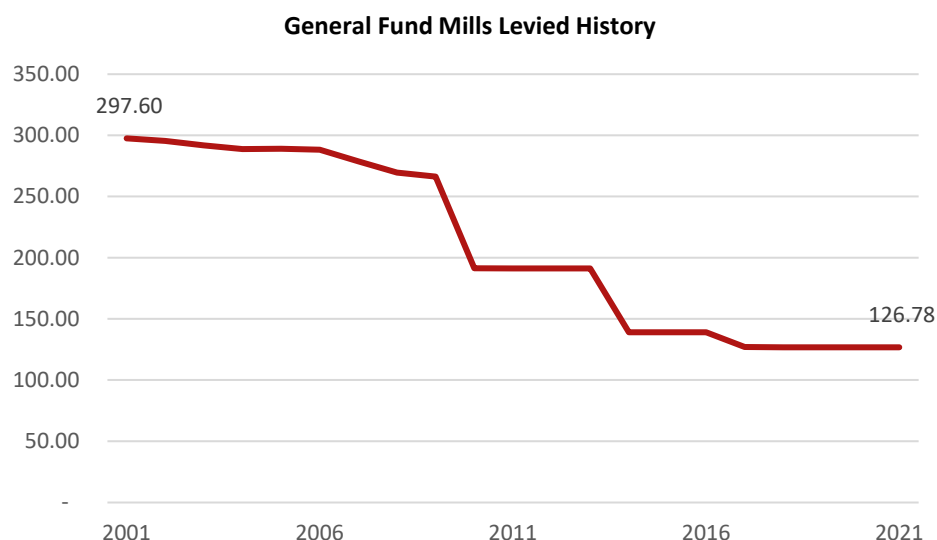
Fargo Public Schools mills levied, and value of those mills for the previous five years has been:



Fargo Public Schools Mill Levy History

Since 2001, Fargo Public Schools has decreased the general fund mill levy by a total of 170.82 mills. By honoring legislative intent, 125.0 mills were decreased (75 mills in fiscal year 2010 and 50 mills in fiscal year 2014). 33.82 mills were decreased through demonstrated fiscal responsibility to relieve tax burden on property owners. Most recently, 12.0 mills were decreased due to frozen property tax revenue in fiscal 2017, with a slight reduction in mills in 2018.

Local tax revenue includes property taxes, tuition and miscellaneous levies, and other taxes received such as electric, telecommunications, mobile home, and tax credits. It is important to note that while all districts levy for property taxes, other tax revenue sources vary.



District Mill Value Comparison

The value of a mill is different for each taxing district. Bismarck has the highest per mill value and Fargo has the highest taxable value per student enrolled. The statewide average taxable valuation per enrolled student is \$46,692.

	Value of a Mill	Taxable Value Per Enrolled Student ¹	General Fund Mill Levy ²
Bismarck	\$520,577	\$38,725	74.15
Fargo	\$459,681	\$41,061	126.78
Grand Forks	\$253,943	\$34,284	86.00
Minot	\$219,737	\$28,894	87.00
West Fargo	\$456,309	\$37,783	81.25

Average Daily Membership

Average Daily Membership (ADM) is a count of the days students are enrolled in a district and is used for state foundation aid purposes.

	ADM
Bismarck	13,799.76
Fargo	11,476.15
Grand Forks	7,675.27
Minot	7,663.05
West Fargo	11,814.00

¹The taxable valuation, mill levy, fall enrollment and teacher reports are for the 2021-2022 school year.

²General Fund levy includes tuition and/or miscellaneous levies.

Local and County Revenue

Local tax revenue includes property taxes, tuition and miscellaneous levies, and other taxes received such as electric, telecommunications, mobile home, and tax credits. While all districts levy for property taxes, other tax revenue sources vary. Fargo Public Schools has the highest tax revenue percentage and tax revenue per pupil membership.

County revenue is comprised of funds received from mineral resources such as coal production and conversion revenue. Only Minot receives county revenue. Other local revenue includes tuition, transportation, interest, student and community service activities, and miscellaneous sources such as rental income. Minot has the highest county/local revenue of the districts compared, due mostly to tuition received for educating Minot Air Force Base students.

	Local and County Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	Tax Revenue per ADM3
Bismarck	\$38,972,982	20.7%	\$2,824
Fargo	\$59,840,738	32.3%	\$5,214
Grand Forks	\$27,219,919	23.9%	\$3,546
Minot	\$27,576,427	24.4%	\$3,599
West Fargo	\$37,154,609	23.1%	\$3,145

State Revenue

State aid includes per pupil, transportation, state child placement, career and technical education, and handicapped program aid. All districts received more than 55% of their total revenue from state aid, with Fargo realizing the lowest percentage.

	State Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	State Revenue per ADM
Bismarck	\$126,031,065	66.9%	\$9,133
Fargo	\$105,424,508	56.8%	\$9,186
Grand Forks	\$68,044,454	59.8%	\$8,865
Minot	\$69,480,968	61.6%	\$9,067
West Fargo	\$106,427,285	66.2%	\$9,009

Federal Revenue

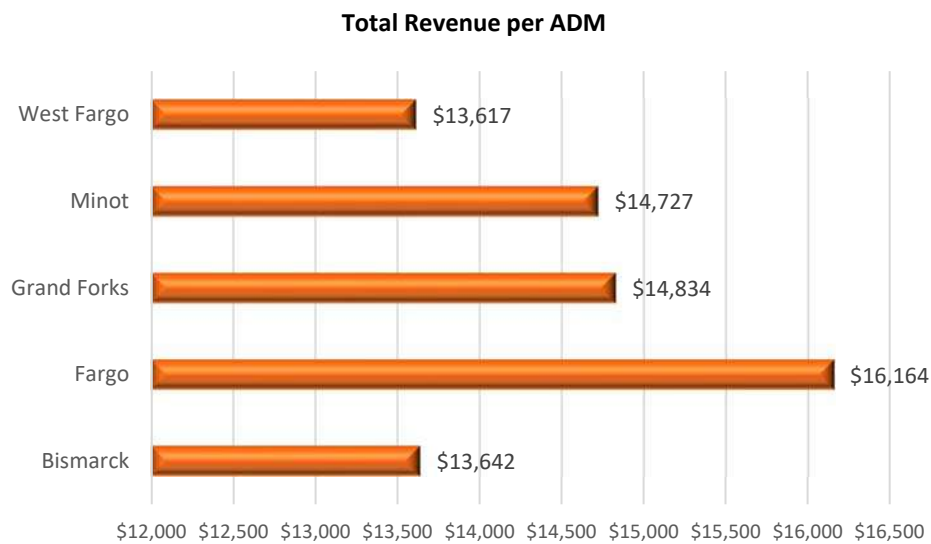
Most districts receive a small portion of total revenue from federal sources. The majority of this is pass-through funding from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) for programs such as Title I and IDEA-B. Grand Forks and Bismarck receive a significant portion of their federal funds through the Head Start program. Fiscal 2021 included the first round of federal funding related to the Coronavirus pandemic.

	Federal Revenue	Percentage of Total Revenue	Federal Revenue per ADM
Bismarck	\$23,238,071	12.3%	\$1,684
Fargo	\$19,809,551	10.7%	\$1,726
Grand Forks	\$17,717,527	15.6%	\$2,308
Minot	\$12,822,922	11.4%	\$1,673
West Fargo	\$16,587,362	10.3%	\$1,404

Total Revenues

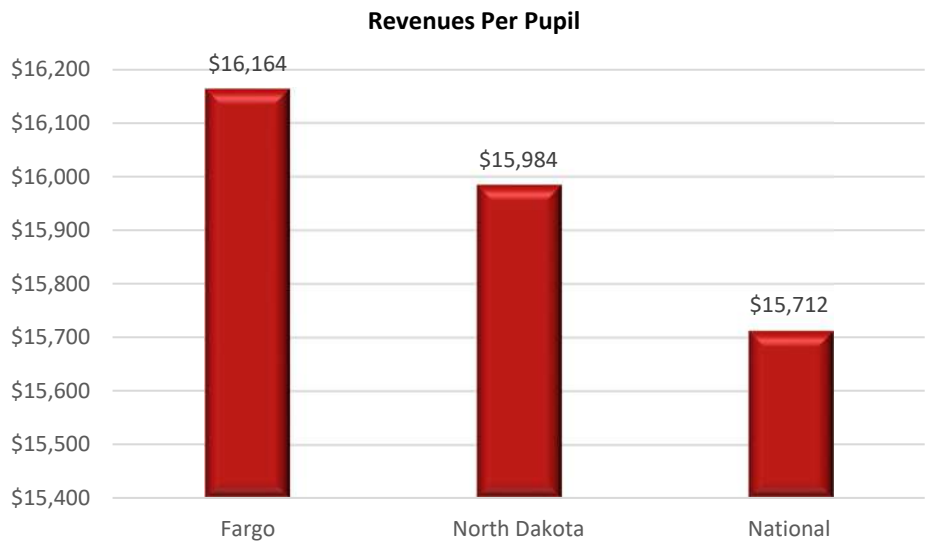
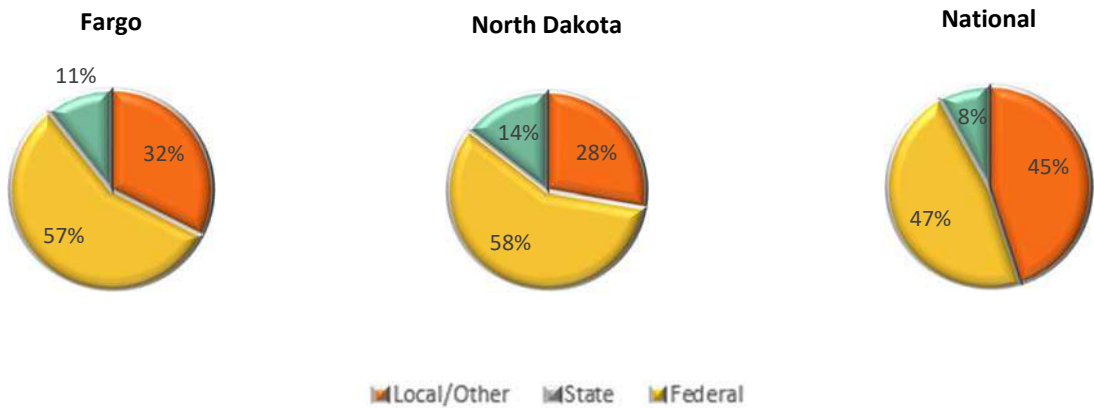
Total General Fund revenue is derived from property taxes, state funding, federal grant funding, tuition, and other local/county resources. Fargo has the highest total revenue per ADM.

	Total Revenue	Total Revenue per ADM
Bismarck	\$188,259,437	\$13,642
Fargo	\$185,496,055	\$16,164
Grand Forks	\$113,856,937	\$14,834
Minot	\$112,856,287	\$14,727
West Fargo	\$160,870,656	\$13,617



How Do We Compare?

According to the *Condition of Education 2022*, a congressionally mandated annual report from the National Center for Education Statistics, the funding breakdown of elementary and secondary public school revenue is shown below with comparison to Fargo Public Schools and the state of North Dakota:



Expenditures

Teaching Staff

Licensed staff employee compensation data are presented according to "Teacher " and "Administrator" categories defined in North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) 15.1-02-13.6.

"Teacher" positions include the following: Coordinator, Counselor, Instructional Programmer, Library Media Specialist, Special Education Consultant, Pupil Personnel, Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Supervisor, Teacher, and Tutor in Training.

"Administrator" positions include the following: Asst. Director, Asst. Superintendent, Asst. Principal, Director, Principal, and Superintendent.

Teaching Staff Full Time Equivalents

	Teachers	Support Staff	Administrators	Total FTEs
Bismarck	875	95	48	1,018
Fargo	912	96	54	1,062
Grand Forks	614	82	37	733
Minot	551	76	35	662
West Fargo	859	125	42	1,026

Education Level of Teaching Staff

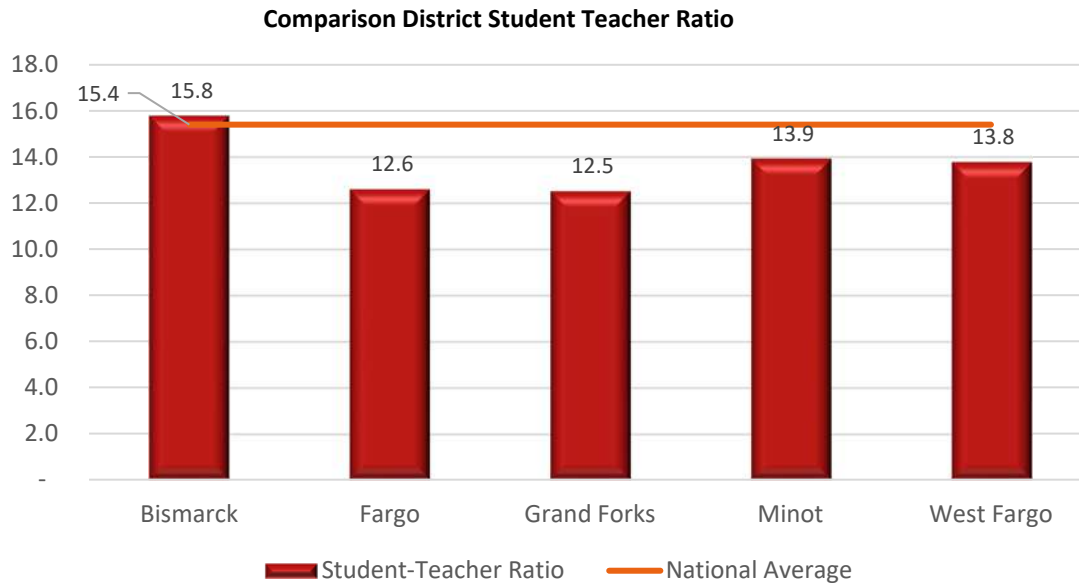
There continues to be an increase in teachers furthering their own education through a postbaccalaureate degree with a lower percentage of elementary teachers seeking advanced degrees vs. secondary teachers.

The following table summarizes the education and experience of teachers among the comparison districts:

	Grand Forks	Bismarck	Minot	West Fargo	Fargo
Percentage with master's degree +	57%	57%	53%	47%	63%
Years of experience allowed at hire	11	12	13	15	Unlimited
Steps on teacher schedule	25	25	12-15	25	12-18

Student-Teacher Ratios

The ratio of students to teachers is often used as an indicator of the resources devoted to education. The student-teacher ratio is obtained by dividing the number of full-time equivalent students (ADM) by the number of full-time equivalent teachers. The ratio, however, does not account for instruction time for students nor how much time teachers spend teaching.



Average Class Size

Average class size is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled by the number of classes. The comparison districts report average class sizes for elementary students between 18 and 27 students. The national elementary average is 26.2 with the North Dakota statewide average being 20.4.

Fargo Public Schools guiding preferences for class size are as follows:

Grade Level	Classroom Enrollment	
Kindergarten-1 st	Target 21	Range: 16-24
2 nd -3 rd	Target 22	Range: 17-26
4 th -5 th	Target 25	Range: 18-27
Secondary Core Classes	Target 27	Range: 16-29

Teacher Salary and Benefits

Teacher salary and benefits include instructional costs of regular, special and career and technical education, as well as federal programs, *including classroom instructional paraprofessionals*. All districts reported spending more than 57% of their total expenditures on teacher salaries and benefits.

	Teacher Salary & Benefits	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Per Pupil
Bismarck	\$108,310,201	58.1%	\$7,849
Fargo	\$103,502,920	57.4%	\$9,019
Grand Forks	\$67,170,322	57.6%	\$8,752
Minot	\$67,898,054	60.5%	\$8,860
West Fargo	\$90,540,024	58.3%	\$7,664

The table below shows licensed teacher salary information for each district. The national average public school teacher base salary is \$41,770. The statewide average base salary is \$56,063. West Fargo's salary information is listed as adjusted for TFFR; excluding TFFR the base salary is \$38,423, average base salary is \$51,802, and average salary is \$55,604.

	Base Salary per Matrix	Base Salary Daily Rate	Average Base Salary	Average Base Salary Daily Rate	Average Salary	Average Salary Daily Rate	Average Compensation
Bismarck	\$46,488	\$248.60	\$61,935	\$331.20	\$66,283	\$354.45	\$93,828
Fargo	\$42,682	\$224.64	\$63,521	\$334.32	\$68,814	\$362.18	\$91,175
Grand Forks	\$42,445	\$225.77	\$57,656	\$306.68	\$60,728	\$323.02	\$80,660
Minot	\$42,250	\$227.15	\$65,703	\$353.24	\$68,864	\$370.24	\$96,507
West Fargo (adjusted)	\$43,539	\$231.59	\$58,699	\$312.23	\$63,007	\$335.14	\$86,030
<i>National Average</i>	\$41,770				\$65,293		
<i>North Dakota Average</i>	\$55,377				\$59,779		

Average Days of Teacher Employment

The average days employed for teachers in North Dakota is 186 days. Fargo has the longest contract among the comparison districts at 190 days, which includes two additional holidays and a parent engagement day. Minot has the lowest with 186 days.

Teacher Contract Days

	Student Contact Days	Holidays	Staff Development Days	Parent Teacher Conference/Engagement Days	Teacher Contract
Fargo	175	5	7	3	190
Grand Forks	175	3	6	4	188
West Fargo	175	3	8	2	188
Bismarck	175	3	7	2	187
Minot	175	3	6	2	186

Licensed Support Staff

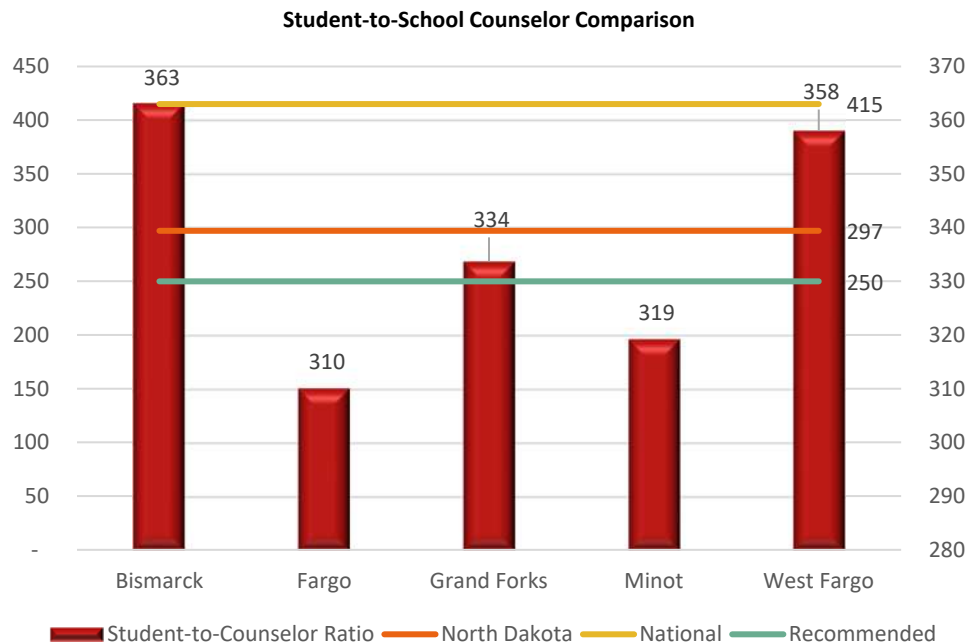
Licensed support staff includes the functional departments of librarians, counselors, and other instructional support staff.

Licensed Support Staff Full Time Equivalents

	Coordinator	Library Media Specialist	Pupil Personnel	School Counselor	School Psychologist	Speech-Language Pathologist	Supervisor
Bismarck	5	15		38	2	35	
Fargo	11	19		37	4	25	
Grand Forks	17	13		23	5	24	
Minot	12	5		24	4	31	
West Fargo	15	19	1	33	9	35	13

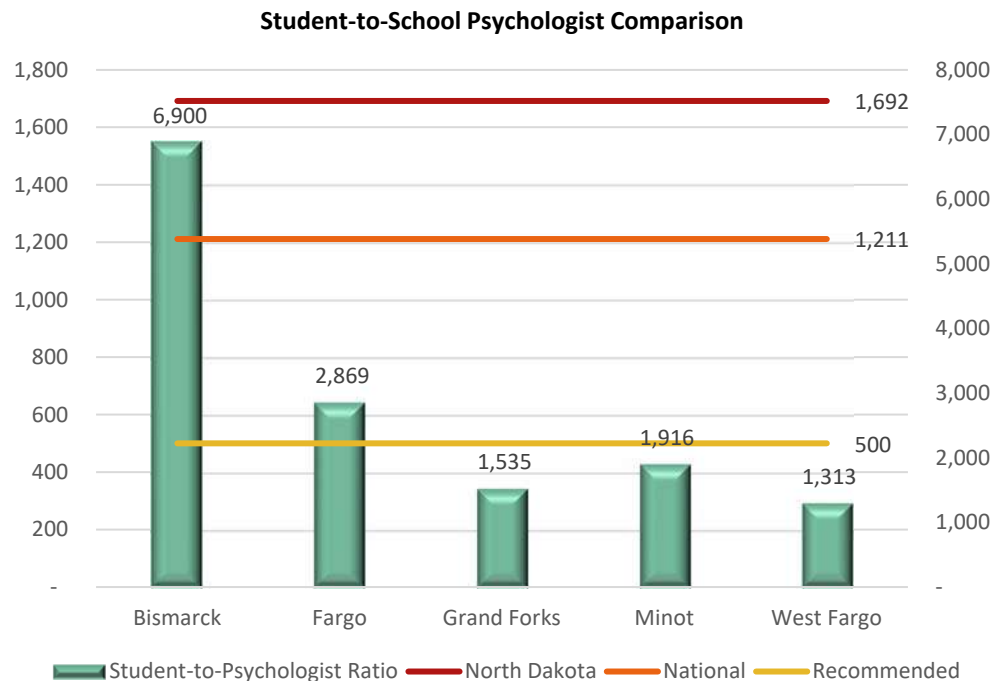
School Counselors

The national average student to counselor ratio is 415:1 while the North Dakota ratio is 297:1. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends that schools strive to maintain a 250:1 ratio.



School Psychologists

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) recommends a basic ratio of no more than 500 students per school psychologist (down from 1,000 students previously recommended). Most districts do not meet this standard. The national average ratio is estimated to be 1,211:1 with North Dakota averaging 1,692:1.



Licensed Support Staff Salary and Benefits Expenditures

Licensed support staff salary and benefits include instructional support costs of regular, special and career and technical education, as well as federal programs. Bismarck reports the highest percentage of support staff salary and benefits of the districts compared, while Fargo spends the highest amount per student.

	Support Staff Salary & Benefits	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Support per Pupil
Bismarck	\$12,607,970	6.8%	\$914
Fargo	\$11,963,539	6.6%	\$1,042
Grand Forks	\$8,233,247	7.1%	\$1,073
Minot	\$5,795,905	5.2%	\$756
West Fargo	\$16,082,201	10.4%	\$1,361

Paraprofessional Staff Full Time Equivalents

Paraprofessional staff are those trained to assist other professionals but do not themselves have professional licensure. Since the onset of the pandemic, the district has experienced shortages in filling these positions. Fargo Public Schools employs the following paraprofessional positions:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Special Needs, English Language, Regular Ed, Testing Proctor, Para	279	303	315	305	284
Positive Behavior Technician	3	9	11	1	2
Print Center Clerk	5	5	5	4	4
IT/Help Desk	7	7	7	8	8
Security Proctor	4	4	4	4	4
Library/Library Assistant Para	31	30	30	31	31
Total Paraprofessional FTEs	329	357	372	353	334

Paraprofessional Staff Salary

Paraprofessional salary expenditures have increased 29.4% over the past five years with an average increase of 7.0% per year. Fiscal 2020 and 2021 realized lower growth than in previous years, 1.5% and 1.9% respectively, due in part to staffing shortages. The District is working to adjust staffing patterns to optimize paraprofessional staff and control costs.



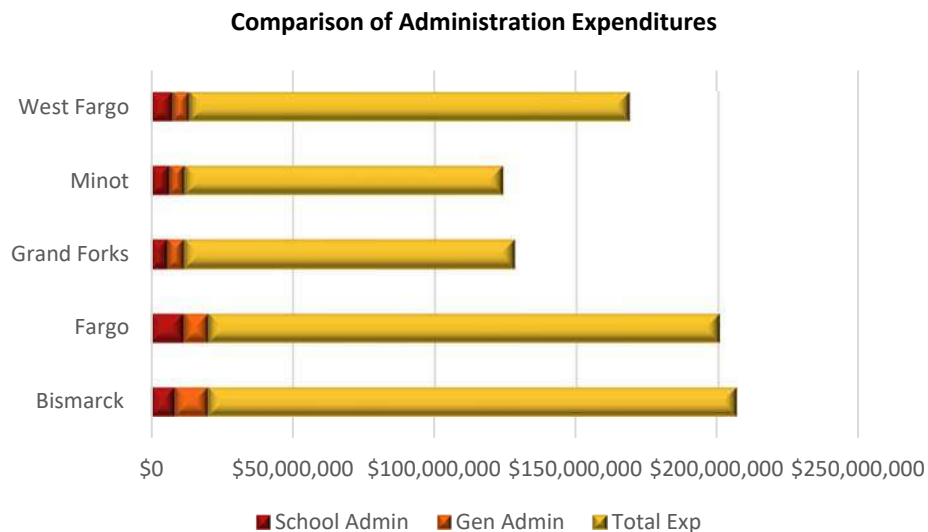
Other Instructional Expenditures

Other instructional expenditures include contracted services, supplies, books, and equipment, including technology related items.

	Other Instructional Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Bismarck	\$9,376,438	5.0%
Fargo	\$13,315,533	7.4%
Grand Forks	\$5,632,435	4.8%
Minot	\$5,084,664	4.5%
West Fargo	\$12,801,610	8.2%

Administration

Administration expenditures include those items related to school administration (principal's office) and general administration (school board, special area administration, business office and other support services). The chart below depicts the percentages expended for school administration and general administration compared to total expenditures for each of the comparison Districts.



Administration Full Time Equivalents

Administration full time equivalents are those employees in the following administrative positions who possess a teaching license.

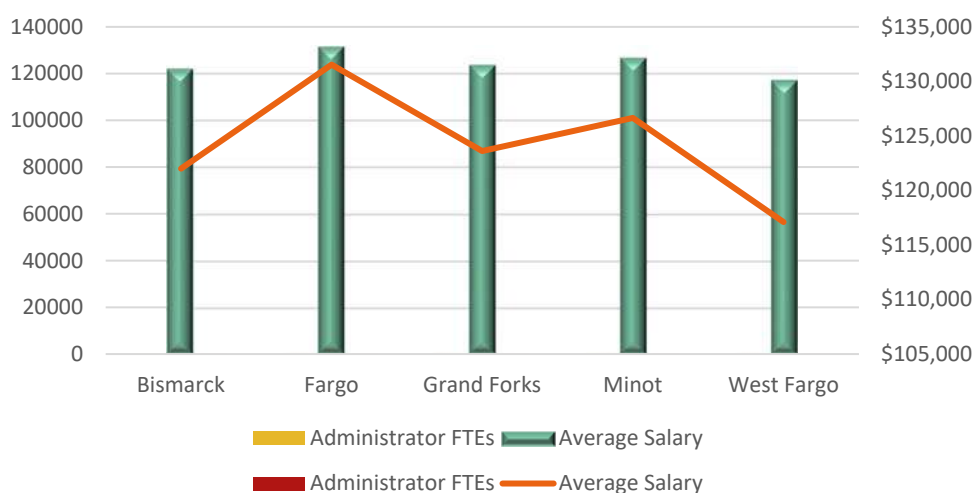
	Assistant Director	Assistant Principal	Assist Supt Admin Assist	Director	Principal	Supt of Schools	Total
Bismarck	2	14	2	7	22	1	48
Fargo	1	25	2	4	21	1	54
Grand Forks	1	11	2	5	17	1	37
Minot		9	2	5	18	1	35
West Fargo		13	2	5	21	1	42

Average Administrator Salary

Average administrator salary includes the base contract plus additions to the base contract such as extended time, co-curricular, signing bonuses, substitute work and other pay for those with teaching licenses. Note that West Fargo contributes both the employer and employee shares of TFFR, therefore, the salary amounts below are comparatively lower (\$128,620, \$132,702, and \$196,147, respectively, adjusted for TFFR).

	Average Base	Average Salary	Average Compensation
Bismarck	\$118,848	\$121,998	\$162,861
Fargo	\$125,520	\$131,537	\$168,924
Grand Forks	\$122,249	\$123,611	\$160,951
Minot	\$126,444	\$126,645	\$169,814
West Fargo	\$113,507	\$117,107	\$173,100

Certified Administrator FTEs and Average Salary



Operations and Other Programs

Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

Fargo Public Schools operates and maintains approximately 2.8 million square feet of building space in a district covering fifty-seven square miles.

In a continued effort to follow the district's long-range facilities plan, Fargo continues to invest in neighborhood schools by ensuring the buildings are maintained to provide a quality school environment to all students.

	Operations, Maintenance, & Capital Project Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Bismarck	\$17,972,437	9.6%
Fargo	\$17,257,907	9.6%
Grand Forks	\$15,322,337	13.1%
Minot	\$10,973,365	9.8%
West Fargo	\$10,737,526	6.9%

School Facilities

The following table summarizes the current school facilities operated by each district by instructional level.

	Elementary	Middle	High	Other	Total
Bismarck	16	3	4	5	28
Fargo	16	3	4	4	27
Grand Forks	13	3	3	2	21
Minot	12	3	4	2	21
West Fargo	15	3	4	5	27

Custodial Staff Analysis

The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) custodial staffing guidelines for Educational Facilities specifies five levels of cleanliness that many institutions use to manage cleaning efforts:

- Level 1: Orderly Spotlessness
- Level 2: Ordinary Tidiness
- Level 3: Casual Inattention
- Level 4: Moderate Dinginess
- Level 5: Unkempt Neglect

The accepted level of cleanliness for school buildings is Level 3 cleaning which assumes a custodian can clean 28,000 - 31,000 square feet in an 8-hour shift, with the mean being 29,500 sq. ft.

Level 3 cleaning indicates garbage is emptied daily, floors are swept or vacuumed daily, restrooms are cleaned, and disinfected daily, common areas are swept or vacuumed daily, and dusting, white board cleaning, and glass cleaning are done on a regular basis.

In Fargo Public Schools, staffing also accounts for the following factors:

- Secondary engineers do not have an area to clean daily as their job duties require tasks such as HVAC work, a larger share of grounds work, scheduling, repairs, preventive maintenance work orders, etc.
- Elementary engineers do have an area to clean daily, but it is not an 8-hour assignment.
- Not all areas within the building are cleaned daily. Mechanical rooms and storage spaces must be removed from the calculation to determine daily cleanable square footage.

No. of Properties	Total Square Footage	Daily Cleanable Square Footage	Total Maintenance FTEs	Maintenance FTEs Cleaning Daily	Average Square Footage Cleaned per Staff Member
29	2,876,435	2,655,208	105.0	84.0	854,171
Building					
Agassiz	180,600	157,170	5.0	4.0	39,293
Ben Franklin	202,064	187,920	6.5	5.75	32,682
Bennett	90,268	81,241	3.5	2.5	32,496
Carl Ben Eielson	178,802	166,285	6.0	5.0	33,257
Centennial	88,519	79,667	4.0	3.0	26,556
Clara Barton	54,968	49,471	2.0	2.0	24,736
Davies	290,000	269,700	9.0	8.25	32,690
Discovery	210,000	195,300	6.5	5.5	35,509
Eagles	83,906	67,586	3.5	2.5	27,034
Ed Clapp	83,978	75,580	4.0	3.0	25,193
Explorer Academy	45,305	40,775	2.0	2.0	27,183
Hawthorne	35,719	32,147	2.0	1.25	25,717
Horace Mann	43,856	39,470	2.0	1.25	31,576
Jefferson	60,637	54,573	2.5	1.75	31,184
Kennedy	92,774	83,496	4.0	3.0	26,900
Lewis and Clark	73,821	66,438	4.0	2.75	24,159
Lincoln	75,000	67,500	3.5	2.5	27,000
Longfellow	73,266	65,939	3.0	2.0	32,969
Madison	44,010	39,609	2.25	1.25	31,687
McKinley	39,147	35,232	2.0	1.0	35,232
North	287,824	267,676	8.0	7.25	36,920
Roosevelt	46,943	43,656	1.75	0.75	29,249
South	316,768	294,594	10.0	9.25	31,848
Trollwood	47,935	44,579	1.0	1.0	44,579
Washington	74,287	66,858	3.0	2.25	29,714
District Office Old	19,626	17,663	1.0	1.0	23,510
District Office New	43,478	39,130	2.0	1.25	29,347
Operations Center	66,681	25,953	1.0	1.0	25,953

Student Transportation Expenditures

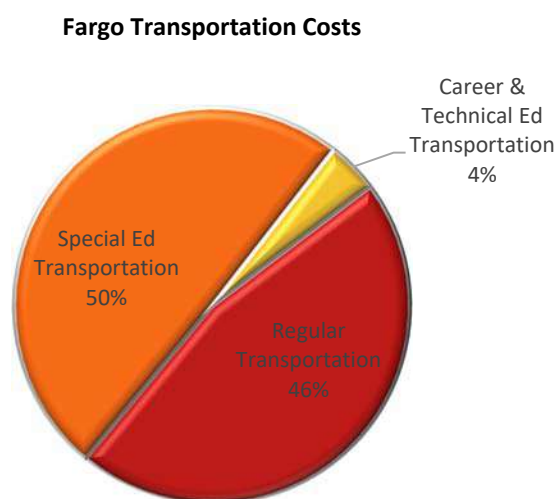
Student transportation expenditures include regular, special and career and technical education transportation. Transportation relating to extracurricular activities is not included in the following analysis.

	Regular Transportation	Special Ed Transportation	Career & Technical Ed Transportation
Bismarck	\$4,823,728	\$78,224	\$10,742
Fargo	\$2,688,625	\$2,873,241	\$241,466
Grand Forks	\$607,039	\$887,167	\$8,712
Minot	\$725,601	\$765,844	\$0
West Fargo	\$3,369,536	\$1,446,139	\$0

Districts provide in city transportation based on walk-out distances. Minot provides transportation only for Minot Air Force Base students to high schools and rural elementary students in the BEL school attendance area, along with special education students. Grand Forks only transports special education students and students from the Grand Forks Air Force Base to Central High School.

	Elementary Walk-Out	Secondary Walk-Out	Student Transportation Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Bismarck	½ Mile	½ Mile	\$4,912,694	2.6%
Fargo	½ Mile	1 Mile	\$5,803,331	3.2%
Grand Forks	Does not transport	Does not transport	\$1,502,919	1.3%
Minot	Does not transport	Does not transport	\$1,491,445	1.3%
West Fargo	Over .9 miles	Over .9 miles	\$4,815,675	3.1%

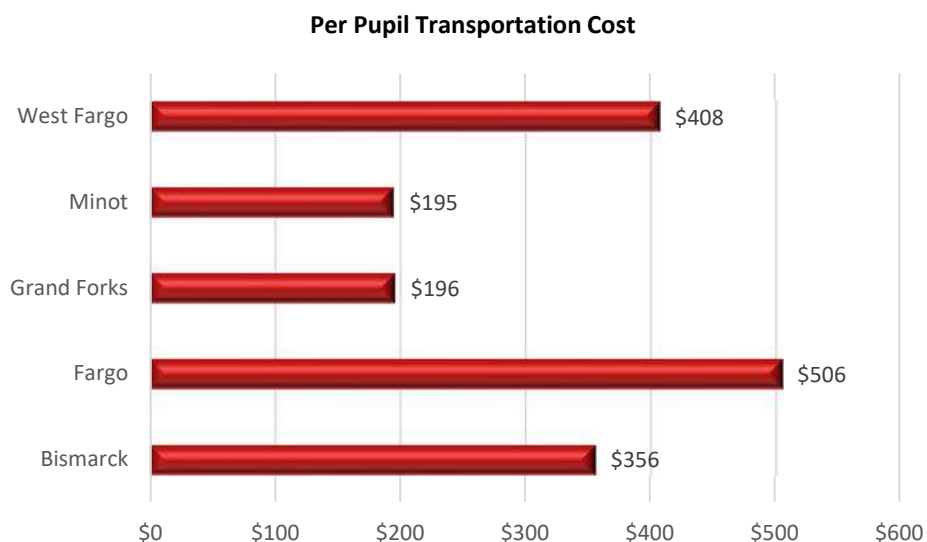
Fargo incurs the highest total cost to transport students with 50% of transportation costs spent on special education students.



While most states provide some funding to school districts for transportation, the amount varies widely. During the 2021 school year, the NDDPI provided the District transportation reimbursement in the amount of \$796,179, or about 14% of bussing costs, based on school year 2020 transportation information. The reimbursement formula is based on both miles and rides.

The District's 2021 transportation data is provided in the following table:

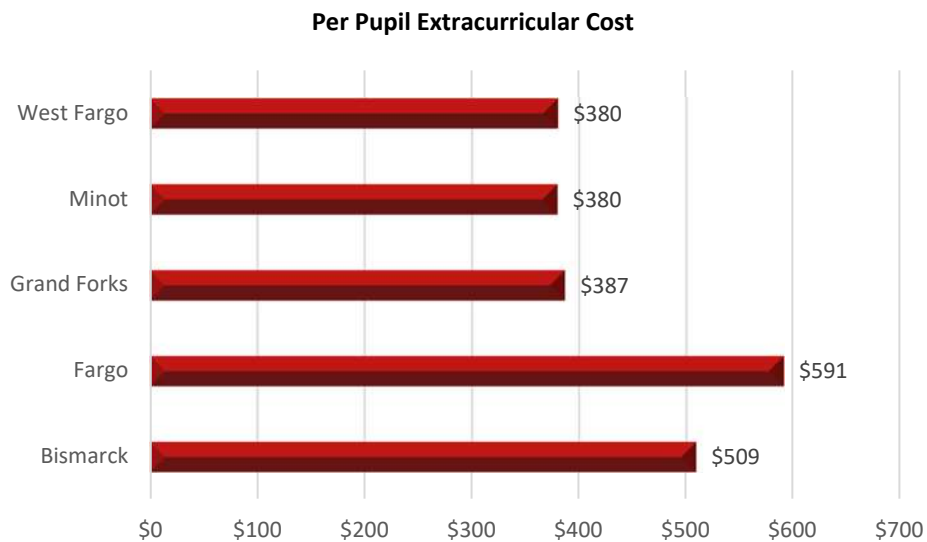
Route Type	Vehicle Count	Vehicle Capacity	Total Annual Runs	Total Annual Rides	Total Miles	Rides per Run	Miles Per Run	Max Ride Time in Minutes
Extended Year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In City	47	77	26,163	797,202	254,021	30.47	9.71	16.0
Rural	3	77	2,223	11,970	81,225	5.38	36.54	48.0
Special Ed	62	22	16,151	91,994	240,044	5.70	14.86	40.0
Vocational Ed	2	31	5,472	13,680	35,568	2.50	6.50	20.0
Total	114	23	50,009	914,846	610,857	11.01	12.21	31.0



Extracurricular Expenditures

It is important to note that school districts apply different methods in reporting student activities expenditures. The table below represents expenditures for student activities paid directly from the general fund as well as those for in a separate student activities fund.

	Student Activities Fund	General Fund	Total Extracurricular Expenditures
Bismarck	\$1,717,076	\$5,311,246	\$7,028,322
Fargo	\$6,524,900	\$261,580	\$6,786,479
Grand Forks	\$751,721	\$2,217,543	\$2,969,263
Minot	\$703,748	\$2,208,123	\$2,911,872
West Fargo	\$4,111,725	\$382,573	\$4,494,298



Other Program Expenditures

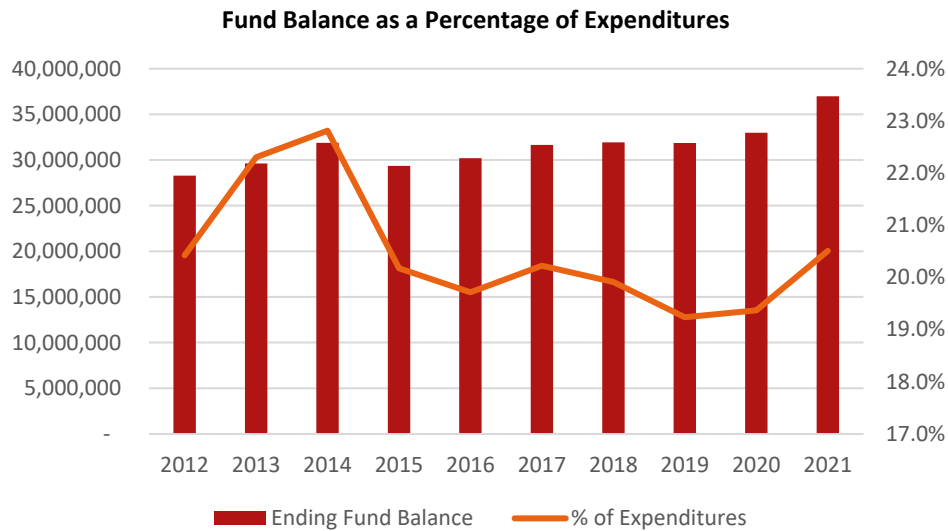
Other program expenditures include Head Start, adult education, tuition for students attending school outside of their home district, debt service payments and fund transfers.

	Adult, Community & Enterprise Services Expenditures	Tuition Expenditures	Debt Service & Transfer Expenditures	Total All Other Expenditures	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Bismarck	\$5,383,322	\$1,853,570	\$589,332	\$7,826,225	4.2%
Fargo	\$1,716,630	\$1,904,673	\$4,134,050	\$7,755,353	4.3%
Grand Forks	\$3,274,430	\$1,063,651	\$456,808	\$4,794,888	4.1%
Minot	\$4,962,592	\$1,204,351	\$658,412	\$6,825,355	6.1%
West Fargo	\$1,688,233	\$1,569,418	\$2,960,464	\$6,218,115	4.0%

General Fund Balance

Historical Fund Balance Analysis

The chart below displays Fargo Public School's general fund balance as a percentage of expenditures for the past ten years. Although expenditures have risen, the general fund balance has averaged 20.5%.



Ending Fund Balance

When comparing ending general fund balances, Fargo had the highest ending funding balance of the districts evaluated at \$32.9 million, representing approximately 2.3 months of operating expenditures. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends, at a minimum, that general-purpose governments, regardless of size, maintain unrestricted budgetary fund balance in their general fund of no less than two months of regular general fund operating revenues or regular general fund operating expenditures.

	Ending Fund Balance	Total Expenditures	Percentage of Expenditures	Months Operating Expenditures
Fargo	\$36,973,183	\$180,273,252	20.5%	2.46
Grand Forks	\$7,482,084	\$116,636,454	6.4%	0.77
Minot	\$19,972,101	\$112,236,385	17.8%	2.14
Bismarck	\$21,792,383	\$186,519,295	11.7%	1.40
West Fargo	\$19,146,137	\$155,219,949	12.3%	1.48

Enhancements to Education

Fargo Public Schools provides numerous enhancements to the education of our students including:

Student Transportation

Educational Field Trips for Elementary Students:

- Red River Zoo
- MSUM Planetarium/Science Center
- Fargo-Moorhead Community Theatre
- Ukrainian Kaleidoscope
- Fargo Theatre and Downtown Fargo
- Bonanzaville
- Living Agriculture
- Young People's Court
- My Day in Court
- Buffalo River Science Center
- MSUM Theatre

In-School Experiences for Elementary Students:

- Fire Safety
- Bus Safety
- Bicycle Safety
- Junior Achievement
- Reading Corps
- Operation Big Band-Aid
- Creative Arts Programming & Plains Art
- Red Flag Green Flag
- ND and Fargo History Presentations
- Learning Bank

Secondary Music Trip (every other year)

Secondary Career Fair, Expo, and Field Trips

5th Grade Orchestra

Middle School Music Sectionals

Secondary 8 Period Day

Trollwood Performing Arts School

Enhancements for Employee Well-Being:

- Flu Shot Clinics
- Health Club Reimbursement

Adult Education

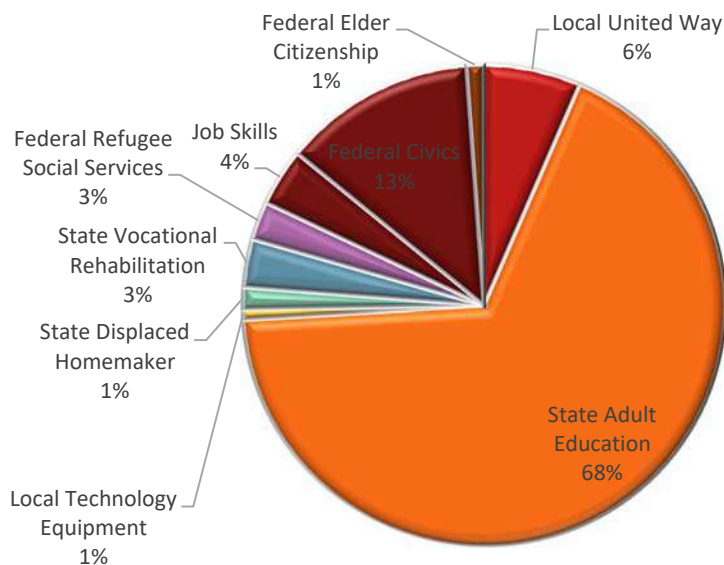
The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction receives federal funds under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) and state funds to support the operations and free programs of the Adult Learning Centers who serve individuals who:

- are at least 16 years of age;
- are not enrolled in high school;
- do not have a high school diploma;
- are mandated by State Law;
- may lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills; and/or
- cannot speak, read, or write the English language

There are eight regional adult learning centers and satellites in ND to serve the public. Programming offered through the Fargo Adult Learning Center includes:

- General Education Degree
- English Learners
- College and Career Readiness including Basic Job Skills, Computer Literacy and Driver's Literacy
- Citizenship
- Displaced Homemaker
- Certified Nursing Program
- Literacy
- Even Start Family Literacy

The Adult Learning Center employed twenty-two full time staff during the 2021 school year, serving on average 950 adult students. Most funding for the program is derived from state sources:



Trollwood Performing Arts School

Trollwood Performing Arts School, located at Bluestem Center for the Arts in Moorhead, MN, is a unique arts program of Fargo Public Schools committed to providing high quality arts education, exceptional community entertainment, and serves as a community events and exposition center.

Since 1978, thousands of young people have spent their summers learning, growing, and making friends at Trollwood. Trollwood offers nine annual arts education, youth leadership and performance programs.

Trollwood Performing Arts School's history of service to youth through arts education has been acknowledged with several prestigious awards:

- United Nation's Peace Messenger Award, 1991
- President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, Coming Up Taller Award, 2002. Trollwood was one of only eleven organizations across the nation to be chosen for their outstanding youth arts programs
- Governor's Award for the Arts, 2003, awarded by North Dakota Governor John Hoeven in honor of Trollwood's long-standing commitment to excellence in arts education and community entertainment
- Lake Agassiz Arts Council's Arts Education Advocate Award, 2007
- Certificate of Excellence for Superior Performance and Leadership by Impact Foundation through Dakota Medical Foundation, 2008
- Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Chamber Choice Small Non-Profit of the Year Finalist, 2008
- Fargo-Moorhead Convention & Visitors Bureau "Countryopolitan Award" for creating the new 4-season campus to promote tourism in the Fargo-Moorhead area, 2009
- Metro Area Mayors' Committee for People with Disabilities "Universal Access Award" for meeting the minimum requirements set by the ADA and made additional architectural designs that have increased the accessibility for people with disabilities, 2009
- North Dakota Parent-Teacher Association Friend of the Child Award, 2011
- American Advertising Federation-North Dakota
- "Best of the Valley" and "Best Live Entertainment Venue from Fargo Forum's Best Annual Non-Sporting Event for 5 years running
- "Best Large Music Venue" 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 from High Plains Reader
- Award of Excellence from NSPRA Publications & Digital Media Awards, 2021

Bluestem Center for the Arts

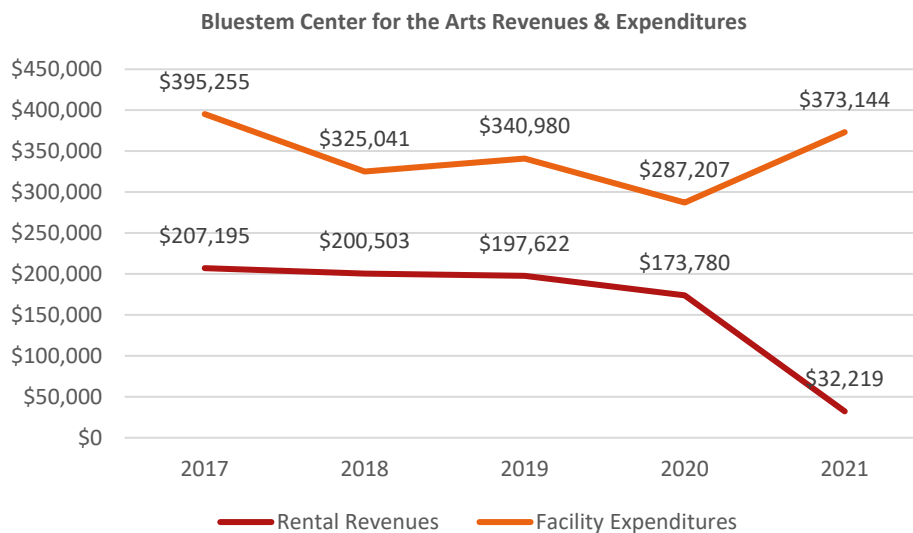
Fargo Public Schools, through Trollwood Performing Arts School, serves as the managing arm for Bluestem Center for the Arts, a world-class facility headquartered in Moorhead, MN. Nestled along the Red River of the North, Bluestem Amphitheater features an outdoor stage with seating for 2,500. The venue also offers a unique indoor educational center, which serves as a performance venue available for rent. The Center's beautiful grounds are made up of picturesque river views, grassy meadows, woods, and wildlife.

The venue was constructed through collaboration between Fargo Public Schools and the City of Moorhead. The District leases the facility from the City of Moorhead.

Bluestem Center for the Arts hosts many programs that inspire a love for the arts in community members of all ages. The facility is used for school arts curriculum and activities, public performances, exhibitions, community festivals, corporate retreats, conferences, and other private rental opportunities. Since opening, thousands of patrons have enjoyed a broad range of programming including theatre, arts educational opportunities, concerts, dance, music, and special events.

With the onset of the pandemic in March of 2020, rental venues were closed or extremely limited to the public during the summer months, resulting in the facility realizing a significant loss in revenue.

District management of the facility began in 2012. The following information summarizes facility activity for the previous five years:



Section II: Special Education

This section assesses district funding and spending on special education programs and services for the five largest districts in the state.

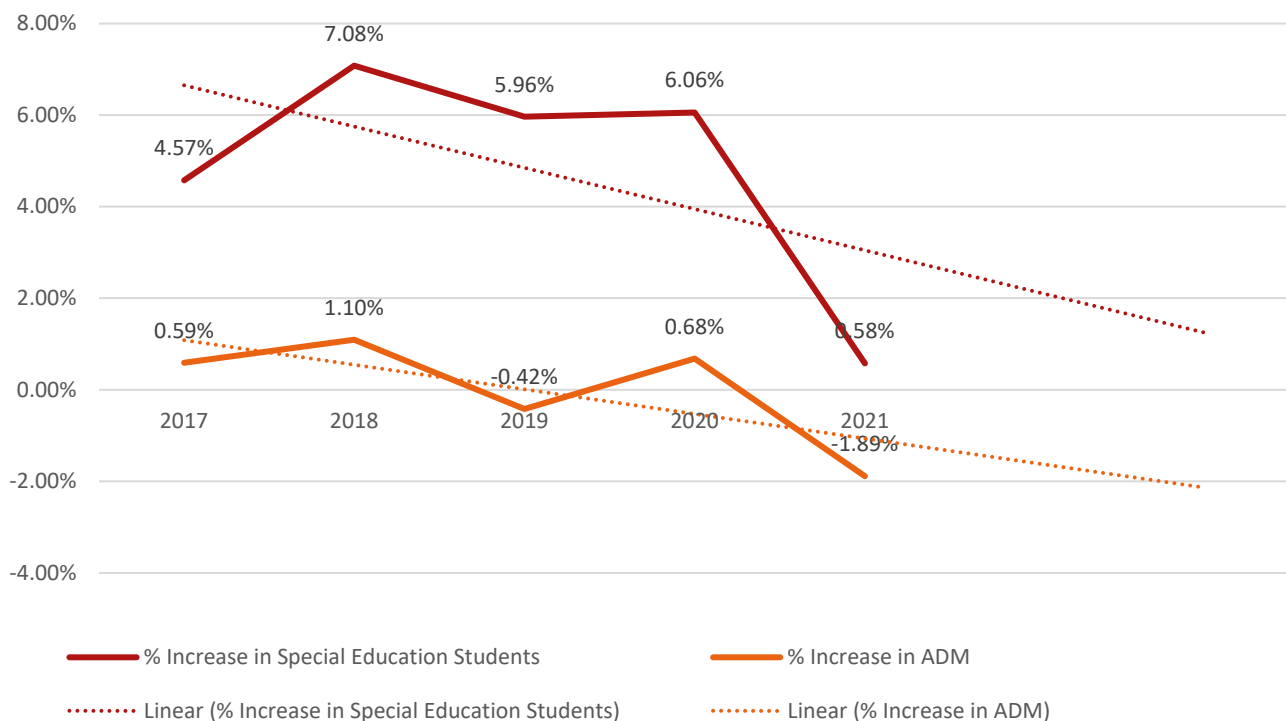
Special Education Child Count

School districts are required to submit to NDDPI their unduplicated count of children receiving special services each December. The table below displays the child count for the comparison districts and the percentage of special education students in each district.

	Special Services Child Count	ADM	%
Bismarck	1,700	13,799.76	12.32%
Fargo	1,744	11,476.15	15.20%
Grand Forks	1,298	7,675.27	16.91%
Minot	1,376	7,663.05	17.96%
West Fargo	1,601	11,814.00	13.55%

Fargo Public Schools has realized an increase in students requiring special services at a higher rate than the growth in ADM. The forecast of this data projects a continued increase in this trend.

Comparison of Special Education Students to ADM



Special Education Revenues

Since its initial enactment, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has included a commitment to pay 40% of the excess costs of educating students with disabilities. According to the National Education Association, the federal share was just 13% in fiscal 2021, the lowest share since fiscal 2000. This lack of funding creates a shortfall that places a burden on state and local education agencies to fill in the remaining funding gap.

Comparison district federal special education revenue and funding per student are depicted in the following tables:

	Total Federal Revenue	Federal Special Education Revenue	% Federal Special Education Revenue
Bismarck	\$23,238,071	\$3,674,216	15.81%
Fargo	\$19,809,551	\$3,277,942	16.55%
Grand Forks	\$17,717,527	\$2,165,451	12.22%
Minot	\$12,822,922	\$3,410,141	26.59%
West Fargo	\$16,587,362	\$3,934,768	23.72%

	Federal IDEA Revenue	Federal IDEA Funding per Student
Bismarck	\$3,674,216	\$2,161
Fargo	\$3,277,942	\$1,880
Grand Forks	\$2,165,451	\$1,668
Minot	\$2,809,074	\$2,041
West Fargo	\$2,503,255	\$1,564

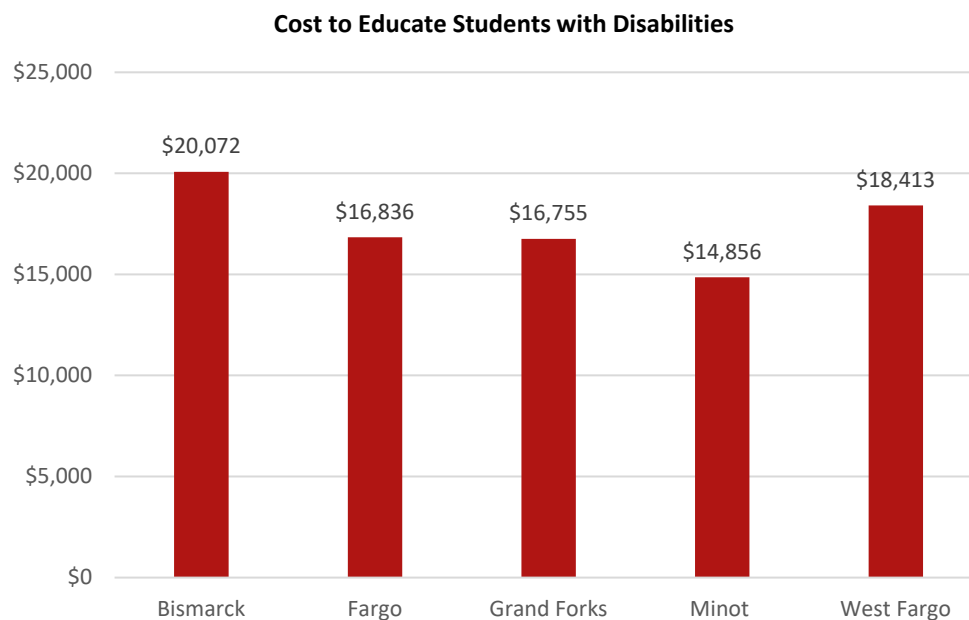
North Dakota school districts incur the full cost of educating students with disabilities based upon an approved contract and are subsequently reimbursed for amounts in excess of the cost cap, which is four times the state average cost for regular education. The fiscal 2021 cost caps were as follows based on a 175-day calendar year:

	State Average Cost	2020-2021 Cost Cap
Elementary (Grades 1-8)	\$12,215	\$48,861
Secondary (Grades 9-12)	\$13,475	\$53,898

Special Education Expenditures

Cost to Educate

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, public schools spend \$15,621 per pupil, inclusive of capital outlays and interest on school debt. The ND average spending per pupil is \$13,513. The following chart depicts the average spending per special education student of the comparison districts.



Expenditures by Category Type

The following information displays the breakdown of special education costs by expenditure type for the comparison districts. The information does not include transportation or tuition paid to other districts to educate students with disabilities.

	Fargo	%	Bismarck	%	Grand Forks	%	Minot	%	West Fargo	%
Salaries & Benefits	\$31,781,762	97%	\$26,841,137	82%	\$20,001,945	61%	\$19,647,574	60%	\$26,663,067	82%
Purchased Services	\$308,329	1%	\$1,017,495	3%	\$588,661	2%	\$231,738	1%	\$1,312,630	4%
Supplies & Other	\$543,493	2%	\$249,606	1%	\$199,761	1%	\$188,532	1%	\$378,573	1%
Total Expenditures	\$32,633,583		\$28,108,238		\$20,790,367		\$20,067,844		\$28,354,269	

Expenditures by Service Area

Service Area	Bismarck	Fargo	Grand Forks	Minot	West Fargo
Preschool Instruction	\$2,113,251	\$2,250,638	\$981,544	\$1,863,161	\$1,738,414
Intellectual Disability Instruction	13,329,878	2,956,834	-	4,197,170	3,390,619
Heard of Hearing Instruction	379,296	731,843	78,087	265,018	352,817
Deaf Instruction	-	-	-	-	-
Visually Handicapped Instruction	124,542	213,941	85,977	251,424	104,670
Speech Impaired Instruction	3,545,304	2,602,899	2,126,021	3,030,467	3,075,586
Physically Impaired Instruction	1,048,063	-	-	103,612	7,963
Other Health Impaired Instruction	2,681	121,890	-	3,000	1,032,916
Autism Instruction	(1)	1,441,987	-	440,945	3,564,384
Emotionally Disturbed Instruction	2,487,251	6,117,129	-	4,057,614	2,928,791
Learning Disabled Instruction	3,662,779	6,007,688	-	2,986,468	6,475,428
Multiple Handicapped Instruction	-	1,580,040	14,757,957	104,434	-
Gifted & Talented Instruction	607,128	732,206	285,192	416,386	365,663
Social Work Services	1,851,847	-	-	534,166	415,990
Counseling Services	-	-	62,770	-	-
Adaptive Physical Education	-	68,996	116,364	10,531	98,651
Psychological Services/Testing	1,354,380	416,413	499,542	374,678	1,064,007
Audiology Services	-	38,480	123,406	-	-
Speech Services	-	-	-	-	-
Medical Services/Diagnosis & Evaluation	-	-	-	-	88,845
Occupational Therapy Services	215	798,777	246,324	352,329	625,927
Physical Therapy Services	255,807	383,770	74,708	102,921	336,186
Other Student Support Services	670,210	246,988	414,208	116,323	979,033
Support Services Instructional Staff	170,938	923,641	53,806	24,246	838,912
Administrative Services	985,103	474,077	884,351	832,953	808,472
Business Services	10,096	-	-	-	60,995
Other Support Services	34,813	-	110	-	-
Tuition	1,489,334	1,253,681	957,586	374,379	1,124,755
Boarding	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation	78,224	2,873,241	887,167	765,844	1,446,139
Total	\$34,201,142	\$32,235,159	\$22,635,121	\$21,208,067	\$30,925,163

Special Education Funding Shortfall

As mentioned previously, a funding shortfall exists in special education. The table below depicts the local cost and local cost percentage school districts must fund to cover the costs of educating students with special needs.

	Special Education Revenues	Special Education Expenditures	Local Special Education Expenditures	Local %
Bismarck	\$24,101,213	\$34,201,142	\$10,099,929	29.5%
Fargo	\$24,056,179	\$32,235,159	\$8,178,980	25.4%
Grand Forks	\$17,330,058	\$22,635,121	\$5,305,062	23.4%
Minot	\$18,346,151	\$21,208,067	\$2,861,916	13.5%
West Fargo	\$22,581,587	\$30,925,163	\$8,343,576	27.0%

Section III: English Learners

Refugee Resettlement in North Dakota

Over the past years, 68.0% of refugees who were settled in North Dakota by Lutheran Social Services, now Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, were settled in Fargo, which includes all adults and children who were new refugees during this period. It does not include secondary migrants, asylum seekers or unaccompanied refugee minors. The breakdown by community table follows:

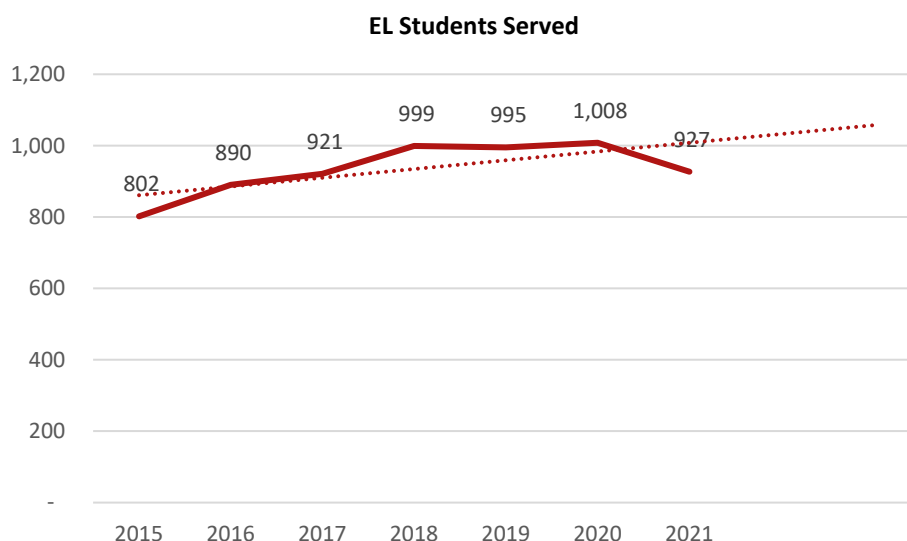
Fiscal Years	North Dakota	Fargo	West Fargo	Bismarck	Grand Forks
2016-2021	1,418	1,027	21	157	213
2011-2015	2,377	1,665	45	106	561
2006-2010	1,693	897	489	19	288
2000-2005	1,610	1,239	197	69	105
Total	7,098	4,828	752	351	1,167

Program and Students

The purpose of the English Learner (EL) Program is to identify and provide specialized instruction, for students who qualify, through highly qualified teachers targeted to build students' English proficiency (Listening + Speaking + Reading + Writing), academic content knowledge, acculturation skills and choice (college-career-life) readiness.

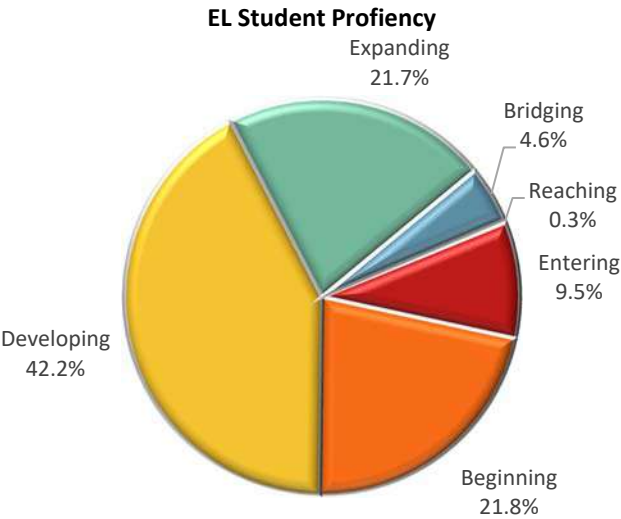
Fargo Public Schools served 927 students during the 2021 school year, a decrease of 8.0% over the previous year. Students are screened through the District's Home Language Survey and evaluated through a World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) screener test to see if they meet the criterion to receive EL support services. Daily minutes of EL services varies depending upon the student need.

Fargo Public School students receiving EL services have continued to increase with the forecasted trend showing additional progression.



Annually, all EL students take a standardized WIDA Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test to determine their level English Language proficiency. There are five proficiency levels with the sixth reaching attainment of proficiency. Students are exited from the EL program when they score a 5.0 on the ACCESS test. Exited students continue to be progress monitored for two years to ensure they are being successful in the mainstream classes.

The 2021 breakdown of the District’s student proficiency is displayed below:



Revenues

EL programming is funded through a variety of grants with most of the support through general fund dollars (state and local).

Title III

Title III funding is to be utilized for school districts that have qualified Limited English Proficient (LEP) or EL students enrolled in local schools. Districts must have enough qualified students for a minimum grant award of \$10,000 to be eligible to receive any Title III funds.

	Bismarck	Fargo	Grand Forks	Minot	West Fargo
2021 Title III Revenues	\$53,009	\$74,682	\$32,652	\$12,060	\$150,427

STEEP

STEEP funds, also known as the “refugee school impact grant,” are used to better meet the needs of refugee children as they adjust to life in the U.S. STEEP funds support success in school by addressing the needs of newly arrived refugee children through entry-level programs and extracurricular services that increase the likelihood of: (1) high attendance and school engagement; (2) full classroom performance; (3) access to the core curriculum through increased English language proficiency; and ultimately, (4) academic success. Only refugee students who have arrived in the U.S. within the last 36 months, including any secondary migration, are eligible for STEEP programming.

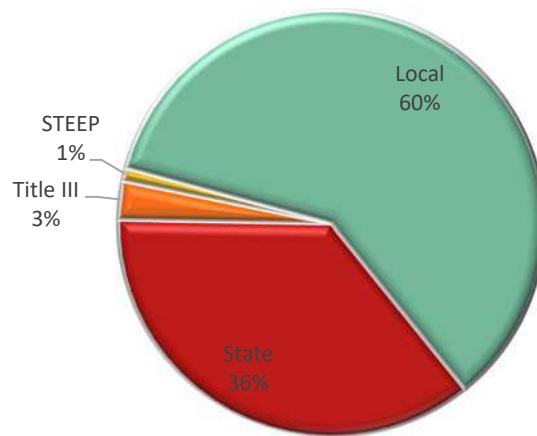
State EL Weighting Factor

State aid contains additional ADM weighting factors for EL students in the following proficiency levels, providing approximately \$1M in EL specific funding to the District.

English Learner Proficiency Level	Weighting Factor
Level 1	.40
Level 2	.28
Level 3	.07

Fargo Public School's EL revenue by source for 2021 is as follows:

EL Revenue by Source



Expenditures

Nearly 98% of Fargo Public Schools EL expenditures are spent on salary and benefits for highly qualified teaching staff. The remaining expenditures are related to purchased services (interpreters), student transportation and supplies.

Total EL expenditures have remained consistent for the past four years. Due to the discontinuance of certain grant funds, increased local support may be required to provide the same level of support for students in future years.

The table below displays the District's total expenditures related to EL services and the cost per student served for the past five years:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total EL Expenditures	\$2,760,198	\$2,712,158	\$2,704,058	\$2,617,227	\$2,505,460
EL Students	921	999	995	1,008	927
Cost per Student	\$2,997	\$2,715	\$2,718	\$2,596	\$2,703

References

- American School Counselor Association. (n.d.). *Student-to-School-Counselor Ratio 2020–2021*. Retrieved from schoolcounselor.org: <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/238f136e-ec52-4bf2-94b6-f24c39447022/Ratios-20-21-Alpha.pdf>
- Department of Public Instruction, N. D. (2020, December). Special Education Child Count. (J. Gapp, Interviewer)
- Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *2022 edition of the Condition of Education*. Retrieved from Condition of Education: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe>
- Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Digest of Education Statistics*. Retrieved from List of Current Digest Tables: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. (2022, June). Refugee Resettlement Arrival Stats. (J. Gapp, Interviewer) Retrieved from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (n.d.). *NASP Research Center*. Retrieved from nasponline.org: <https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/policy-priorities/critical-policy-issues/shortage-of-school-psychologists>
- National Education Association. (2022). *Educator Pay and Student Spending: How Does Your State Rank?* National Education Association.
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (2020-21). *Employee Compensation: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction*. Retrieved from North Dakota Department of Public Instruction: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/districtschools/finance-operations/finance/teacher-compensation>
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (2022, February). *Finance & Operations: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction*. Retrieved from North Dakota Department of Public Instruction: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SFO/Downloadable%20Data%20File/2022finfacts.pdf>
- (2021). *North Dakota School District Financial Reports*.