Per-pupil operating spending varies across different types of Ohio school districts

Spending Per Pupil by District Comparison Group, FY 2026				
Comparison Group – Description		Number of Districts	Enrollment %	Spending Per Pupil
Rural	High poverty, small population	123	9.0%	$17,689
Rural	Average poverty, very small population	106	6.2%	$17,240
Small Town	Low poverty, small population	110	11.1%	$15,607
Small Town	High poverty, average population	89	11.1%	$16,519
Suburban	Low poverty, average population	77	20.1%	$16,676
Suburban	Very low poverty, large population	46	17.5%	$17,474
Urban	High poverty, average population	47	12.8%	$18,050
Urban	Very high poverty, very large population	8	12.1%	$22,909
	State Total*	**606**	**100%**	**$17,737**

*Three small outlier districts are not included.

Source: Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

- In FY 2026, average per-pupil operating spending within socioeconomic and geographic comparison groups ranged from $15,607 in low poverty, small town districts to $22,909 in the very large, high poverty urban districts.
- The very large, high poverty urban districts spent 29.2% ($5,171) above the state average of $17,737.
- Small town districts had the lowest spending per pupil, averaging 9.4% ($1,673) below the state average.
- On average, classroom instruction comprises most district operating spending. FY 2026 average operating spending by function:
  - 67.5% classroom instruction;
  - 32.5% nonclassroom activities (administration, operations, maintenance, transportation, and food service).