



**EDUCATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATES**

Your education policy team.

# 50-State Comparison

## K-12 Special Education Funding

March 2019

STATE ▲	FUNDING MECHANISM	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT (DOLLAR AMT OR WEIGHT)	IS THERE A CAP OR A MINIMUM THRESHOLD IN PLACE?	NOTES	CITATION
Alabama	Census-Based System	The adjustment for special education reflects 5% ADM weighted 2.50.	2.5 for 5% of the ADM	Yes - census-based		Ala. Code § 16-13-232

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Alaska	Single Student Weight System and High-Cost	<p>Available to provide special education, gifted and talented education, vocational education, and bilingual education services to its students.</p> <p>A special needs funding factor of 1.20 shall be applied.</p> <p>High Cost Factor: A district is eligible for intensive services funding for each special education student who needs and receives intensive services and is enrolled on the last day of the count period; for each such student, intensive services funding is equal to the intensive student count multiplied by 13.</p>	1.2 + (intensive student count) X 13	No		Alaska Stat. Ann. § 14.17.420
Arizona	Multiple Student Weights System and High-Cost	Fourteen different categories based on the student's specific disability.	Ranging from 1.003 to 8.947	No		Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 15-943
Arkansas	High-Cost	Arkansas only provides funding for very high cost students, called Special education-catastrophic occurrences funding.	Special education-catastrophic occurrences funding is a line item appropriation calculated based on student growth.	Yes - minimum threshold		Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2305

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California	Census-Based System	Census-based model: the state allocates special education funds based on the total number of students enrolled, regardless of students' disability status.	Each special education local plan area has a unique per-pupil special education funding rate consisting of both state and federal funds.  Not less than 10% of the total statewide units of average daily attendance for each special education local plan area.	Yes - minimum threshold		Cal. Educ. Code § 56836.145
Colorado	Multiple Student Weights System	Districts receive \$1,250 for each student with a disability. An additional \$6,000 for children with certain disabilities may be provided.	State ECEA funding of special education programs for children with disabilities is \$167,017,698 for budget year 2017-18.	No		Colo. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 22-20-114
Connecticut	High-Cost	The district is responsible for all costs up to 4.5 times the average per-pupil educational costs. The State Board of Education shall, within available appropriations, pay any costs in excess of the local or regional board's basic contribution.	The state only provides funding if the costs exceed 4.5 times the average per-pupil expenditure.	Yes - minimum threshold		Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 10-76g
Delaware	Resource-Allocation System	Resource allocation model.	Increased teacher-student ratios: Preschool--12.8 K-3--16.2 4-12 Regular Education--20 4-12 Basic Special Education (Basic)--8.4 Pre K-12 Intensive Special Education (Intensive)--6 Pre K-12 Complex Special Education (Complex)--2.6.	Yes - minimum threshold		Del. Code Ann. tit. 14, § 1703

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Florida	Multiple Student Weights System and High-Cost	Fixed funding for special education students not receiving level 4 or 5 services is provided through an Exceptional Student Education guaranteed allocation.	Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2 and 3 with ESE Services: 1.107 Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with ESE Services: 1.000 Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 with ESE Services: 1.001 Support Level 4: 3.619 Support Level 5: 5.526	No		Fla. Stat. Ann. § 1011.62
Georgia	Multiple Student Weights System	Five categories based on individual disabilities.	Category I-- 2.3798 Category II-- 2.7883 Category III-- 3.5493 Category IV-- 5.7509 Category V-- 2.4511	No		Ga. Code Ann. § 20-2-161
Hawaii	Single School District (Resource-Allocation System)	Spending for special education is based on state appropriations.	\$409,869,091 FY2019	No	Information on Hawaii's system of funding special education services comes from the <a href="#">Hawaii Department of Education</a> .	
Idaho	Census-Based System	Census-based model	Districts receive special education funding at a rate of 6.0% of a district's total K-6 enrollment and 5.5% of a district's total 7-12 enrollment for additional support units. The percentage of a district's total enrollment eligible for exceptional child funding is divided by the exceptional child support unit divisor of 14.5 to determine the number of exceptional child support units generated by the district.	Yes - census-based		Idaho Code Ann. § 33-1002

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Illinois	Resource-Allocation System and Census-Based System	Both resource-based and census-based.	Resource-based: One FTE teacher position for every 141 special ed students One FTE instructional assistant for every 141 special ed students One FTE psychologist for every 1000 special ed students  Census-based: The State Superintendent shall calculate the amount the unit must expend on special education and bilingual education pursuant to the unit's Base Funding Minimum, Special Education Allocation, and Bilingual Education Allocation.	Yes - minimum threshold		105 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 5/18-8.15
Indiana	Multiple Student Weights System	Dollar amounts based on disability	Severe disabilities: \$9,156 Mild and moderate disabilities: \$2,300 Communication disorders: \$500 (duplicated) Homebound programs: \$500 (cumulative) Special preschool education programs: \$2,750	No		Ind. Code Ann. § 20-43-7-6
Iowa	Multiple Student Weights System	Three different weights based on the type of classroom the student is educated.	Regular classroom: 1.8 Little integration in regular classroom: 2.2 Severe/multiple disabilities: 4.4	No		Iowa Code Ann. § 256B.9
Kansas	Reimbursement System	State covers "excess costs" to supplement Federal allocations.	School board must follow an 11 step formula to determine the amount of state aid for special education services a school district is entitled to receive for the school year.	No		Kan. Stat. Ann. § 72-3422
Kentucky	Multiple Student Weights System	The state has three weights for exceptional children.	Each category is given an additional weighting of 2.35, 1.17, and 0.24, respectively.	No		Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 157.200

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Louisiana	Single Student Weight System	Flat weight for all students with disabilities.	2.5	No		La. Stat. Ann. § 17:7
Maine	Multiple Student Weights System and High-Cost	<p>First 15%: 2.5  Above 15% threshold: 2.88  Fewer than 20 students: receive additional allocation</p> <p>For high-cost in-district special education placements, additional state funds must be allocated for each student estimated to cost 3 times the statewide special education per-pupil rate.</p>	<p>Up to 15%: 2.5  More than 15%: 2.88  Fewer than 20 students: receive additional allocation  Additional funding for very high cost students</p>	No		Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 20-A, § 15681-A
Maryland	Single Student Weight System	Flat multiplier regardless of disability	1.74	No		Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 5-209
Massachusetts	Census-Based System and High-Cost	Census-based system. Plus, reimburses school districts for a portion of the costs of educating extraordinarily high-needs special education pupils (called the Special Education Circuit Breaker). Calculated by multiplying the average foundation budget per pupil by four.	Assumed in-district special education enrollment: 3.75 percent Vocational enrollment: 4.75. Reimbursement for very high cost students.	Yes - census-based		Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. ch. 71B, § 5A
Michigan	Reimbursement System	Partial reimbursement.	Not to exceed 75% of the total approved costs of operating special education programs.	Yes - reimbursement cap		Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. § 388.1652

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Minnesota	Reimbursement System and Multiple Student Weights	Minnesota funds special education using a hybrid system incorporating multiple student weights and partial reimbursement.	<p>56% reimbursement of a formula (reimbursement) plus additional funding based on students slotted into three categories.</p> <p>\$10,400 for autism spectrum disorders, developmental delay, and severely multiply impaired</p> <p>\$18,000 for deaf and hard-of-hearing and emotional or behavioral disorders</p> <p>\$27,000 for developmentally cognitive mild-moderate, developmentally cognitive severe-profound, physically impaired, visually impaired, and deafblind</p>	No		Minn. Stat. Ann. § 125A.76
Mississippi	Resource-Allocation System	Resource-based allocation: One teacher unit is provided for each approved class of exceptional students. The funding allocated is based on the teacher's certification and experience.	The allocation of funds for each teacher unit shall be based on the teacher's certification.	No		Miss. Code. Ann. § 37-23-35
Missouri	Single Student Weight System	Flat weight for all students with disabilities, if the count exceeds the special education threshold (not in the bottom or top 5% of ADA).	1.75	Yes - minimum threshold		Mo. Ann. Stat. § 163.011

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Montana	Census-Based System	Census-based system.	The superintendent of public instruction shall determine the total special education payment to a school district, according to the following formula: (i) 52.5% through instructional block grants; (ii) 17.5% through related services block grants; (iii) 25% to reimbursement of local districts; and (iv) 5% to special education cooperatives and joint boards for administration and travel.	No		Mont. Code Ann. § 20-9-321
Nebraska	Reimbursement System	Partial reimbursement.	For special education and support services provided in each school fiscal year, the State Department of Education shall reimburse each school district in the following school fiscal year a pro rata amount determined by the department.	No		Neb. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 79-1142
Nevada	Single Student Weight	The funding provided to each school district through the multiplier for pupils with disabilities is limited to the actual number of pupils with disabilities enrolled in the school district, not to exceed 13% of total pupil enrollment for the school district.	1.53	Yes - cap		N.R.S. 387.122

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New Hampshire	Single Student Weight System and High-Cost	Flat dollar amount.  District is responsible for 3.5 times the state average per-pupil expenditure plus 20 % of additional cost. The department of education shall be liable for all costs in excess of 10 times the state average per-pupil expenditure.	Additional \$1,956.09 for a special education student who has an individualized educational plan (FY18 and FY19). Extra funding for very high cost students.	No		N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 186-C:18
New Jersey	Census-Based System and High-Cost	Census-based system with an option for extraordinary special education aid	Special education categorical aid = $(RE \times SEACR \times AEC \times \frac{1}{3}) \times GCA$ where RE is the resident enrollment of the school district or county vocational school district; SEACR is the State average classification rate for general special education services pupils; AEC is the excess cost for general special education services pupils; and GCA is the geographic cost adjustment as developed by the commissioner. Extraordinary special education aid is also available.	No		N.J. Stat. Ann. § 18A:7F-55
New Mexico	Multiple Student Weights System	Students are assigned to four different categories based on the services they receive.	Class A and Class B: 1.7 Class C: 2.0 Class D: 3.0	No		N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-8-21
New York	Single Student Weight System	Single weight system.	The % of pupils with special education needs x districts adjusted average daily attendance for the year prior x the enrollment index.	No		N.Y. Educ. Law § 3602
North Carolina	Single Student Weight System	Depends on state allocations.	Flat dollar amount, 12.5% cap	Yes - cap		N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 115C-107.1

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North Dakota	Single Student Weight System	Additional flat weight.	1.082	No		N.D. Cent. Code Ann. § 15.1-27-03.1
Ohio	Multiple Student Weights System	Students are assigned to six different categories based on their specific disabilities.	Category 1: \$1,578 Category 2: \$4,005 Category 3: \$9,622 Category 4: \$12,841 Category 5: \$17,390 Category 6: \$25,637	No		Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3317.013
Oklahoma	Multiple Student Weights System	Students are assigned to ten different categories based on their specific disabilities.	Vision Impaired: 4.8 Learning Disabilities: 1.4 Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing: 3.9 Deaf and Blind: 4.8 Educable Mentally Handicapped: 2.3 Emotionally Disturbed: 3.5 Multiple Handicapped: 3.4 Physically Handicapped: 2.2 Speech Impaired: 1.05 Trainable Mentally Handicapped: 2.3	No		Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 70, § 18-201.1
Oregon	Single Student Weight System	Single weight system.	2.0 but may not exceed 11% of the districts ADM.	Yes - cap		Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 327.013
Pennsylvania	Multiple Student Weights System	Multiple students weights based on cost.	Three categories based on student costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Category 1: &lt; \$25,000/year</li> <li>• Category 2: \$25,000 - \$49,999/year</li> <li>• Category 3: \$50,000 and up/year</li> </ul> The weighted special education student headcount for each district: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Category 1: 2.51</li> <li>• Category 2: 4.77</li> <li>• Category 3: 8.46</li> </ul>	No		72 Pa. Stat. Ann. § 1722-J; 24 P.S. § 25-2509.5

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Rhode Island	Reimbursement and High-Cost	Reimbursement capped at 110% of the state average. Categorical for very high cost students.	Reimbursement capped at 110% of the state average. Categorical for very high cost students.	Yes - reimbursement cap		16 R.I. Gen. Laws Ann. § 16-24-6  16 R.I. Gen. Laws Ann. § 16-7.2-6
South Carolina	Multiple Student Weights System	Different weights based on disability.	1.74 Educable mentally handicapped pupils Learning disabilities pupils  2.04 Trainable mentally handicapped pupils Emotionally handicapped pupils Orthopedically handicapped pupils  2.57 Visually handicapped pupils Hearing handicapped pupils Pupils with autism  1.90 Speech handicapped pupils  2.10 pupils who are homebound pupils who reside in emergency shelters	No		S.C. Code Ann. § 59-20-40

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South Dakota	Census-Based System and Multiple Student Weights System	Six levels of disability based on individual disability.	<p>Additional dollar amounts ranging from \$5,527.09 to \$28,161.22.</p> <p>“Level one disability,” a mild disability; assume 10% of ADM times \$5,527.09.</p> <p>“Level two disability,” cognitive disability or emotional disorder; times \$12,756.08.</p> <p>“Level three disability,” hearing impairment, deafness, visual impairment, deaf-blindness, orthopedic impairment, or traumatic brain injury; times \$16,258.12.</p> <p>“Level four disability,” autism; times \$15,766.80.</p> <p>“Level five disability,” multiple disabilities; times \$28,161.22.</p> <p>“Level six disability,” prolonged assistance; times \$8,111.33.</p>	No		S.D. Codified Laws § 13-37-35.1
Tennessee	Resource-Allocation System	Resource allocation model where teachers, assistants, and supervisors are allocated based on the number of students with disabilities.	<p>Teachers: 10 options based on disability and severity</p> <p>Supervisors: 750:1</p> <p>Assessment Personnel: 600:1</p> <p>Assistants: 60:1</p> <p>Materials: \$36.50</p> <p>Equipment: \$17.25</p> <p>Travel: \$17.25</p>	Yes - minimum threshold		Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-09-02

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Texas	Multiple Student Weights System	Different weights based on where the student is educated.	Ranging from 1.1 to 5.0  Mainstream instructional arrangement: 1.1 Homebound: 5.0 Hospital class: 3.0 Speech therapy: 5.0 Resource room: 3.0 Self-contained, mild and moderate, regular campus: 3.0 Self-contained, severe, regular campus: 3.0 Off home campus: 2.7 Nonpublic day school: 1.7 Vocational adjustment class: 2.3	No		Tex. Educ. Code Ann. § 42.151
Utah	Block Grant	Block grant based on prior 5 years' allocations with a growth factor.	The State Board of Education shall use a school district's or charter school's average number of special education add-on weighted pupil units determined by the previous five year's average daily membership data as a foundation for the special education add-on appropriation. Capped at 12.18%	Yes - Cap on growth		Utah Code Ann. § 53F-2-307
Vermont	Resource-Allocation and High-Cost	Hybrid system	Resource-based allocation: 9.75 special education teaching positions per 1000 students. Reimbursement for high cost: Very high cost (one child exceeds \$50,000 for a fiscal year)	No		Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 16, § 2961 and Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 16 V.S.A. §2962
Virginia	Resource-Allocation System	Resource-based system, varies by district	A per-child special education add on amount is determined by calculating the number of teachers and aides necessary to meet the special education program standards in each school.	No		Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-253.13:2

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Washington	Single Student Weight System	Single weight system.	1.9309 with a cap of 13.5%	Yes - cap		Wash. Rev. Code Ann. § 28A.150.390
West Virginia	Only High-Cost	Hybrid resource-allocation and reimbursement for only high-cost students.	FTE calculated for teacher, therapist, aides, and bus drivers.	No	Information on West Virginia's system of funding special education services comes from the West Virginia Department of Education <a href="#">Source 1</a> and <a href="#">Source 2</a> .	
Wisconsin	Reimbursement System and High-Cost	Partial reimbursement with additional monies for high-cost students	Additional funding for students costing over \$30,000.	No		Wis. Stat. Ann. § 115.881
Wyoming	Reimbursement System	Total Reimbursement, Capped at 2018 levels.	The amount provided for special education shall be equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the amount actually expended by the district during the previous school year for special education programs and services.	Yes - capped at 2018-2019 reimbursement levels		Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 21-13-321