

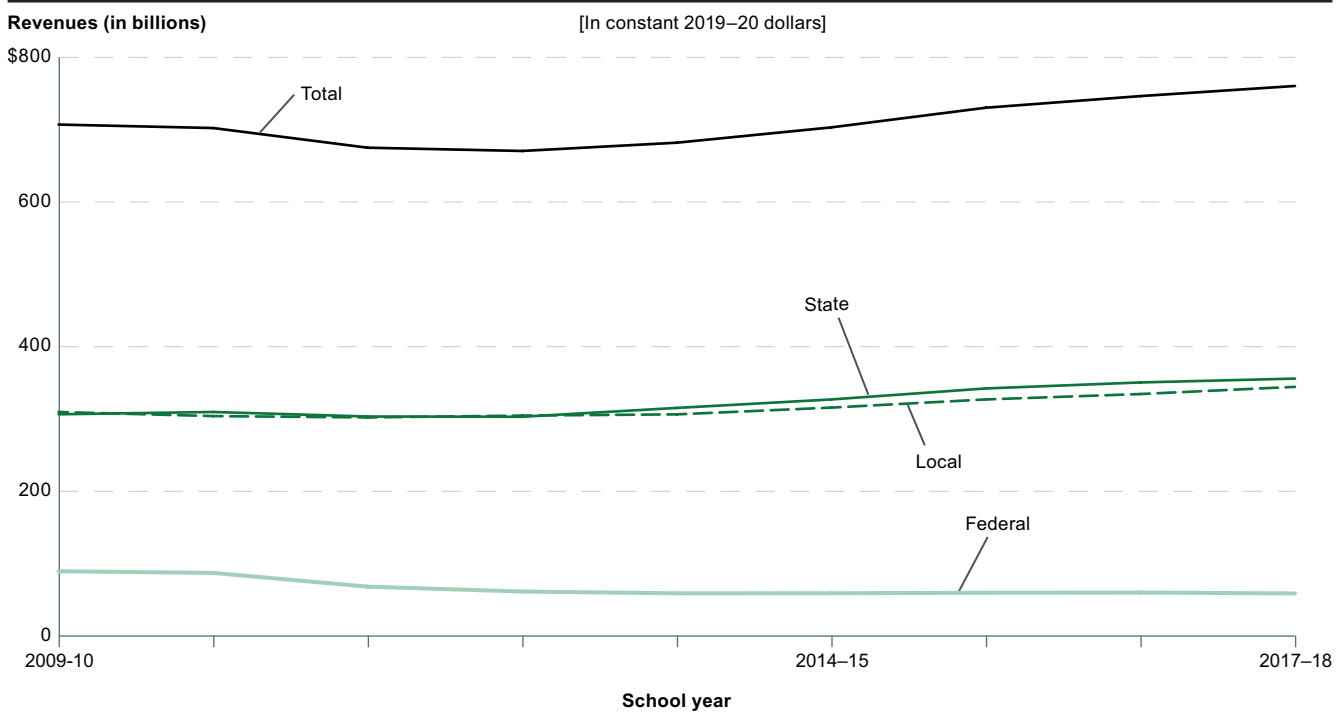
## Public School Revenue Sources

*Between 2009–10 and 2017–18, public school revenues increased by 8 percent in constant 2019–20 dollars, and public school enrollment increased by 3 percent.*

In school year 2017-18, elementary and secondary public school revenues totaled \$761 billion in constant 2019-20 dollars.<sup>1,2</sup> Of this total, 8 percent, or \$59 billion, were from federal sources; 47 percent, or \$357 billion, were from state sources; and 45 percent, or \$345 billion, were from local sources.<sup>3</sup> In 2017-18, the percentages from each source differed across the 50 states and the District of Columbia. For example, the percentages of total revenues coming from federal, state, and local sources in New Hampshire were 5 percent, 31 percent, and 63 percent, respectively, while the corresponding percentages in Vermont were 6 percent, 90 percent, and 4 percent.

Total public school revenues were 8 percent higher in school year 2017-18 than in 2009-10 (\$761 billion vs. \$708 billion). During this time, total revenues were lowest in 2012-13 (\$671 billion) and then rose to \$761 billion in 2017-18. These changes were accompanied by a 3 percent increase in total elementary and secondary public school enrollment, from 49 million students in 2009-10 to 51 million students in 2017-18 (see indicator [Public School Enrollment](#)).

**Figure 1. Revenues for public elementary and secondary schools, by revenue source: School years 2009–10 through 2017–18**



NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Revenues are in constant 2019–20 dollars. Constant dollars based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to a school-year basis.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 2009–10 through 2017–18. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 235.10.

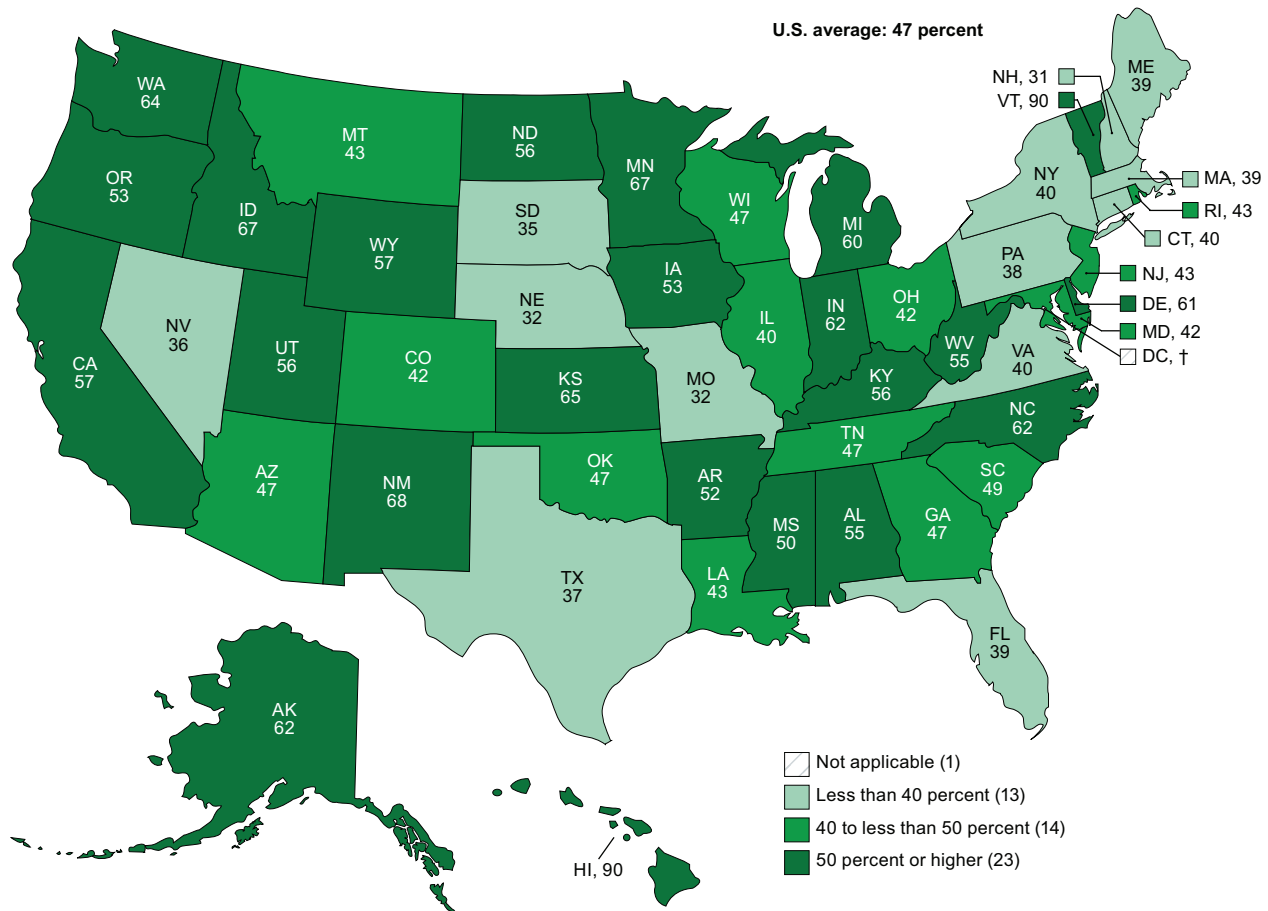
Between 2009-10 and 2017-18, state revenues increased by 16 percent and local revenues increased by 11 percent. In contrast, federal revenues decreased 34 percent between 2009-10 and 2017-18. During this time, the revenue streams progressed differently. Federal revenues decreased 34 percent from the 2009-10 high (\$90 billion), the year after the passage of the American Recovery and

Reinvestment Act of 2009, to \$60 billion in 2013-14, and then fluctuated between \$59 billion and \$61 billion from 2013-14 to 2017-18 (\$59 billion). State revenues were lowest in 2012-13 (\$304 billion) and then increased 17 percent from 2012-13 to a high of \$357 billion in 2017-18. Local revenues were lowest in 2011-12 (\$303 billion) and then increased 14 percent to a high of \$345 billion in 2017-18.

In addition to the decrease in dollars received, revenues from federal sources also decreased as a percentage of total public school revenues from 2009-10 to 2017-18. Federal revenues accounted for 13 percent in 2009-10 and 2010-11 following the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and for 8 percent in 2017-18. Local sources accounted for 45 percent of total revenues from 2011-12 through 2017-18, which was higher than the percentages in 2009-10 and 2010-11. The percentage of total revenues coming from state sources increased between 2009-10 and 2017-18 (from 43 to 47 percent).

In school year 2017-18, there were substantial variations across the states in the percentages of public school revenues coming from state, local, and federal sources. In 23 states, more than half of all revenues came from state governments, while in 17 states and the District of Columbia, more than half of all revenue came from local governments. In the remaining 10 states, no single revenue source comprised more than half of all revenues.

**Figure 2. State revenues for public elementary and secondary schools as a percentage of total public school revenues, by state: School year 2017-18**



† Not applicable.

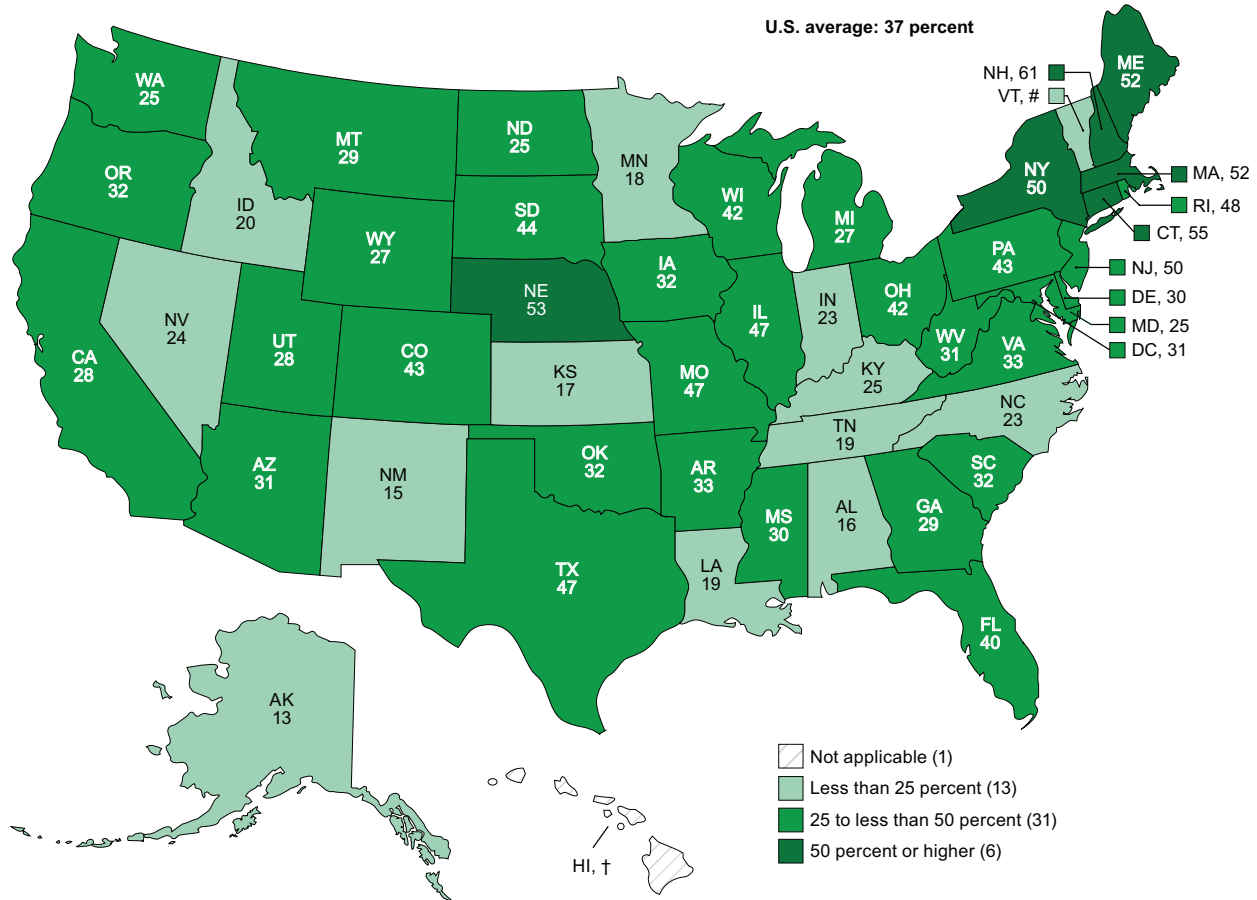
NOTE: All 50 states and the District of Columbia are included in the U.S. average, even though the District of Columbia does not receive any state revenue. The District of Columbia and Hawaii have only one school district each; therefore, the distinction between state and local revenue sources is not comparable to other states. Categorizations are based on unrounded percentages. Excludes revenues for state education agencies.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 2017-18. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 235.20.

In school year 2017-18, the percentages of public school revenues coming from state sources were highest in Vermont and Hawaii<sup>4</sup> (90 percent each) and lowest in New Hampshire (31 percent) and Missouri and Nebraska (32 percent each). The percentages of revenues coming from federal sources were highest in Alaska (16 percent) and South Dakota and Mississippi (14 percent each) and lowest in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut

(4 percent each). Among the 50 states, the percentages of revenues coming from local sources were highest in New Hampshire (63 percent) and Nebraska and Missouri (60 percent each) and lowest in Hawaii and Vermont (2 and 4 percent, respectively). In the District of Columbia, which does not receive any state revenue, 92 percent of all revenues were from local sources and the remaining 8 percent were from federal sources.

**Figure 3. Property tax revenues for public elementary and secondary schools as a percentage of total public school revenues, by state: School year 2017–18**



† Not applicable.  
 # Rounds to zero.

NOTE: All 50 states and the District of Columbia are included in the U.S. average. Categorizations are based on unrounded percentages.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 2017–18. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 235.20.

On a national basis in 2017-18, some \$279 billion, or 81 percent, of *local* revenues for public school districts were derived from local property taxes. Connecticut (98 percent) and Delaware and Rhode Island (97 percent each) had the highest percentages of *local* revenues from property taxes. On a national basis in 2017-18, revenues from local property taxes comprised 37 percent of *total* revenues for public

school districts. The percentages of total revenues from local property taxes differed by state. New Hampshire and Connecticut had the highest percentages of *total* revenues from property taxes (61 and 55 percent, respectively). In Vermont, the percentage of revenues from local property taxes rounded to zero. Hawaii has only one school district, which received no funding from property taxes.

**Endnotes:**

- <sup>1</sup> All revenues in this indicator are adjusted for inflation to constant 2019-20 dollars using the Consumer Price Index, or CPI. For this indicator, the CPI is adjusted to a school-year basis. The CPI is prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.
- <sup>2</sup> Data in this indicator represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- <sup>3</sup> Local revenues include revenues from such sources as local property and nonproperty taxes, investments, and student

- activities such as textbook sales, transportation and tuition fees, and food service revenues. Local revenues also include revenues from intermediate sources (education agencies with fundraising capabilities that operate between the state and local government levels).
- <sup>4</sup> Hawaii has only one school district. Therefore, the distinction between state and local revenue sources is not comparable to other states.

**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, tables 235.10 and 235.20; *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 105.30  
**Related indicators and resources:** [Public School Expenditures](#)

**Glossary:** Constant dollars; Consumer Price Index (CPI); Elementary school; Property tax; Public school or institution; Revenue; School district; Secondary school