

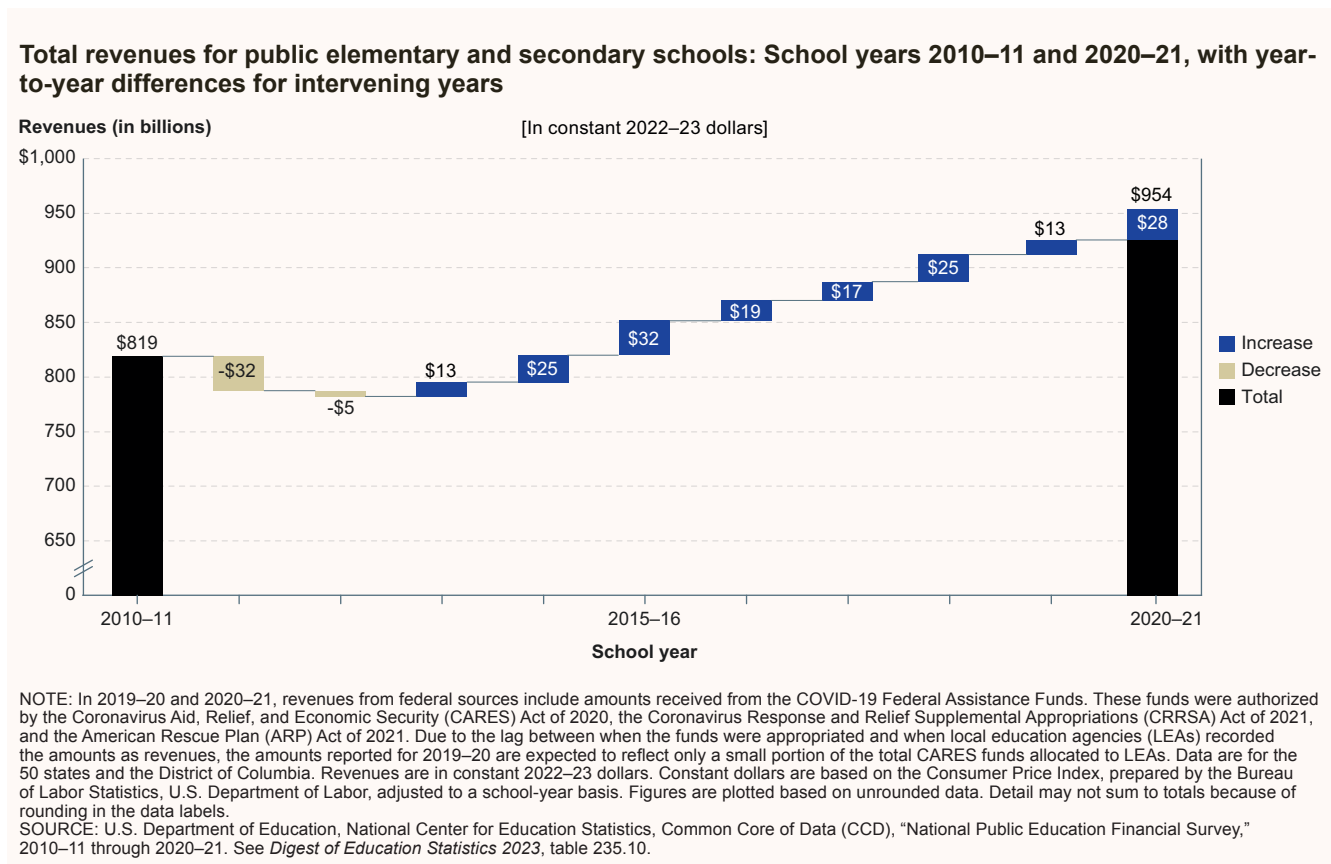
Public School Revenue Sources

Between 2010–11 and 2020–21, public school revenues increased by 16 percent (from \$819 billion to \$954 billion in constant 2022–23 dollars).

In school year 2020-21, elementary and secondary public school revenues totaled \$954 billion in constant 2022-23 dollars.^{1,2} Of this total, 11 percent, or \$101 billion, were from federal sources, 46 percent, or \$437 billion, were from state sources, and 44 percent, or \$416 billion, were from local sources.³ In 2020-21, the percentage distribution of revenue sources differed across the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data in this indicator represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia unless otherwise noted.

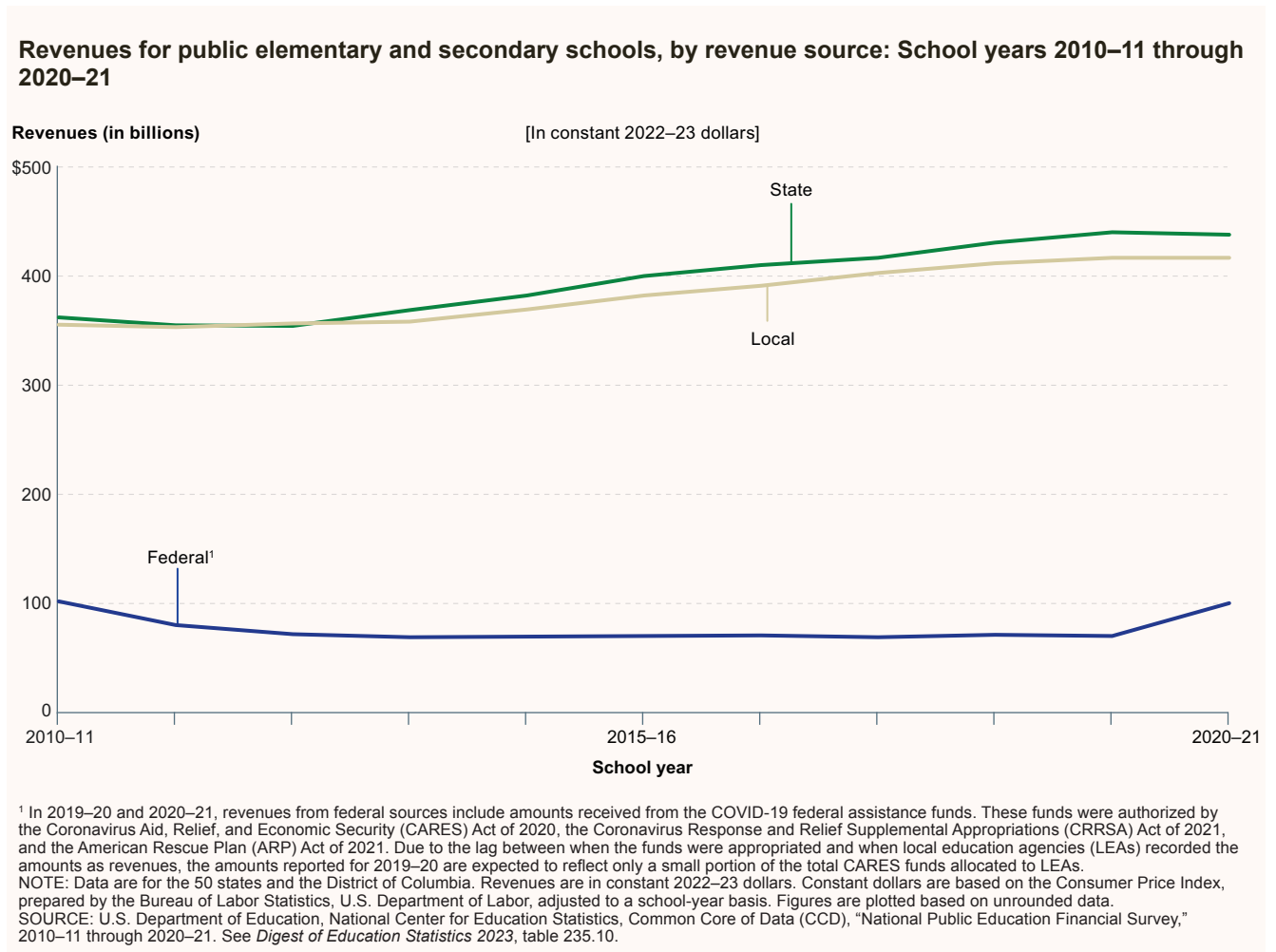
Total, Federal, State, and Local Public School Revenues

FIGURE 1.



Total public school revenues increased by 16 percent from 2010-11 to 2020-21 (from \$819 billion to \$954 billion). During this time, total revenues were lowest in 2012-13 (\$782 billion). After 2012-13, revenues increased through 2020-21 by an average of \$21 billion (3 percent) per year. In comparison, public school enrollment increased by 3 percent overall between fall 2010 and fall 2019 and then fell by 3 percent in fall 2020 (see indicator [Public School Enrollment](#)).

FIGURE 2.

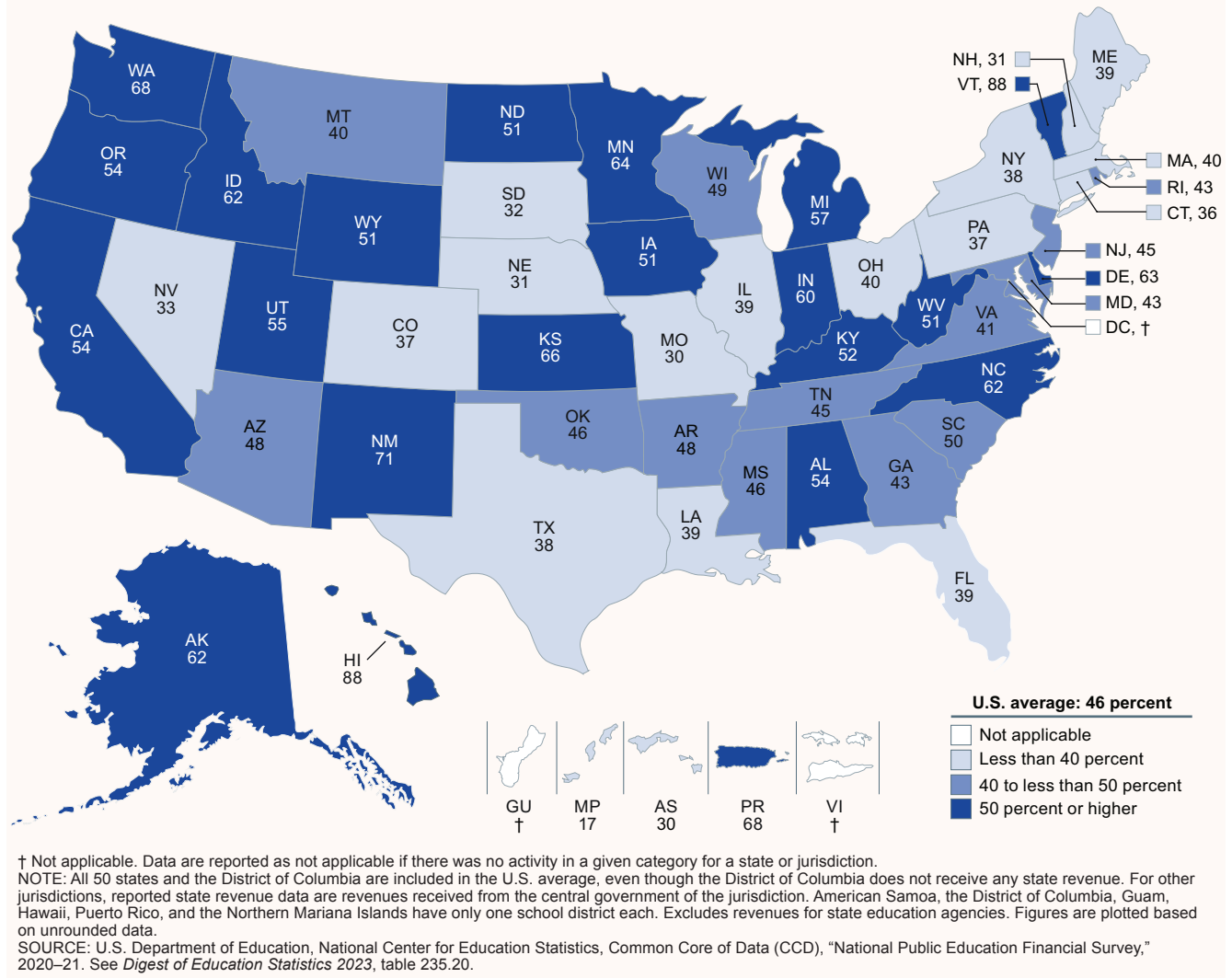


Between 2010-11 and 2020-21, federal, state, and local revenues exhibited different trends. At the beginning of this period, following the 2008 recession, state and local revenues experienced relative lows. In contrast, federal revenues were relatively high in the wake of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, which provided additional federal funding for education. Following these relative highs and lows, state and local revenues generally increased between 2010-11 and 2020-21, while federal revenues generally decreased through 2019-20. Specifically, between 2010-11 and 2020-21, the following patterns occurred:

- Federal revenues
 - were highest in 2010-11 (\$102 billion);
 - were lowest in 2017-18 (\$69 billion); and
 - increased by 43 percent (from \$70 billion to \$101 billion) from 2019-20 to 2020-21 (revenues from COVID-19 federal assistance funds are discussed in more detail later in this indicator).
- State revenues
 - increased 21 percent (from \$362 billion to \$437 billion);
 - were highest in 2019-20 (\$440 billion); and
 - were lowest in 2012-13 (\$354 billion).
- Local revenues
 - increased 17 percent (from \$355 billion to \$416 billion);
 - were highest in 2020-21 (\$416 billion); and
 - were lowest in 2011-12 (\$353 billion).

FIGURE 3.

State revenues for public elementary and secondary schools as a percentage of total public school revenue, by state or jurisdiction: School year 2020–21



In 2020-21, there were variations across the 50 states and the District of Columbia in the distribution of public school revenue coming from federal, state, and local sources. Specifically,

- in 21 states, more than half of all revenues came from state governments;
- in 12 states and the District of Columbia, more than half of all revenues came from local governments; and
- in the remaining 17 states, no single revenue source comprised more than half of all revenues.

Among the 50 states in school year 2020-21, the percentage of revenue coming from federal sources was

- highest in South Dakota (20 percent) and Mississippi and Montana (19 percent each); and
- lowest in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut (5 percent each).

The percentage of public school revenue coming from state sources was

- highest in Hawaii⁴ and Vermont (88 percent each); and
- lowest in Missouri (30 percent) and New Hampshire and Nebraska (31 percent each).

The percentage of revenue coming from local sources was

- highest in New Hampshire (62 percent) and Nebraska and Connecticut (59 percent each); and
- lowest in Hawaii (1 percent) and Vermont (2 percent).

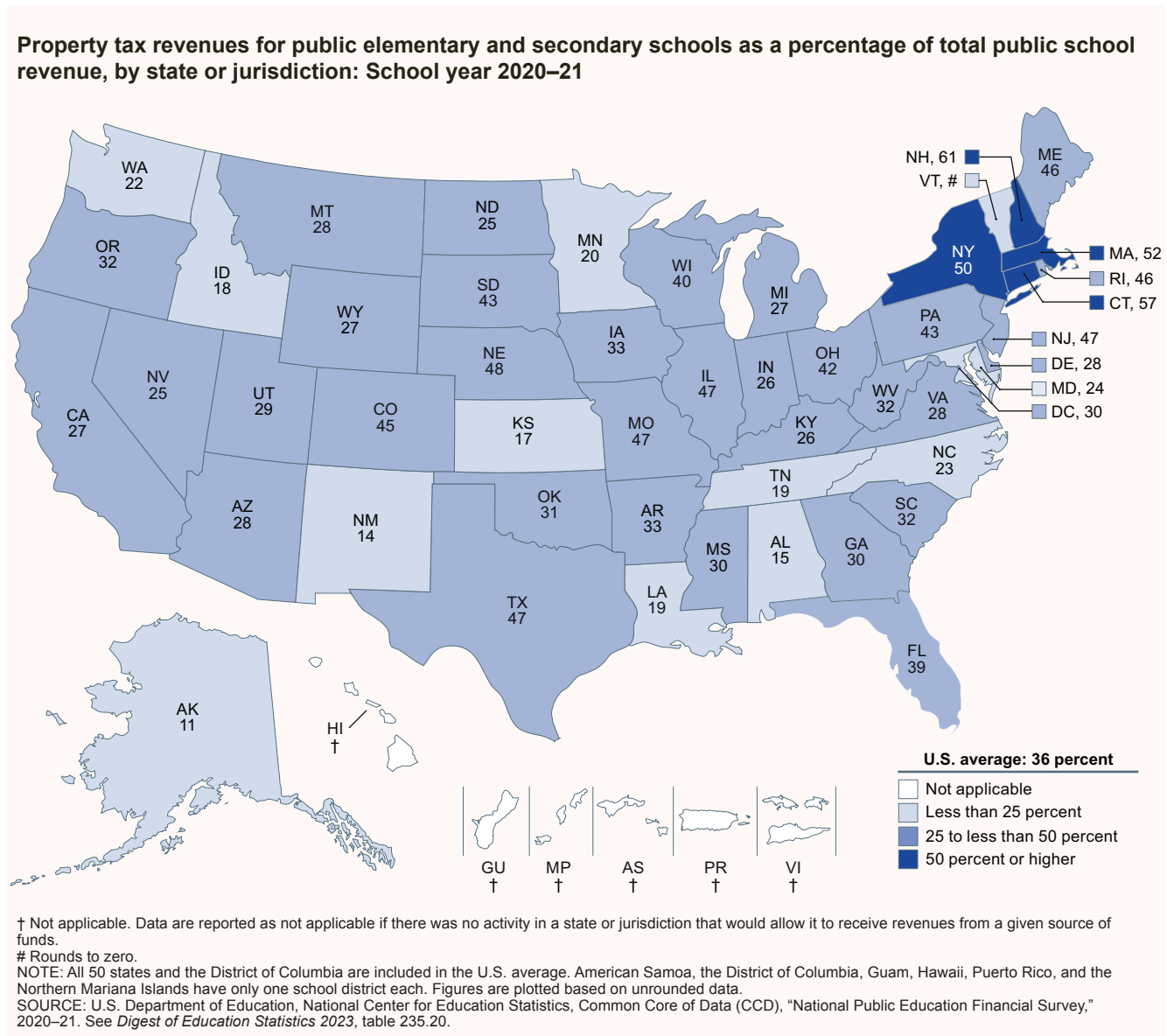
In the District of Columbia, which does not receive any state revenue, 90 percent of all revenue was from local sources and the remaining 10 percent was from federal sources.

Data on the sources of public school revenues were available for some other U.S. jurisdictions as well. The percentage of revenue from federal sources was 83 percent in the Northern Mariana Islands, 70 percent in American Samoa, 57 percent in the U.S. Virgin Islands, 34 percent in Guam, and 32 percent in Puerto Rico. In Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the remaining revenues came from local sources; in American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands, the remaining revenues came from state sources; and in Puerto Rico, nearly all remaining revenues came from state sources.⁵

Local Property Tax as a Revenue Source for Public Schools

On a national basis in 2020-21, some 83 percent (\$343 billion) of *local* revenues for public schools were derived from local property taxes. Connecticut (98 percent), New Hampshire (98 percent), Rhode Island (97 percent), and Maine (97 percent) had the highest percentages of local revenue from property taxes.

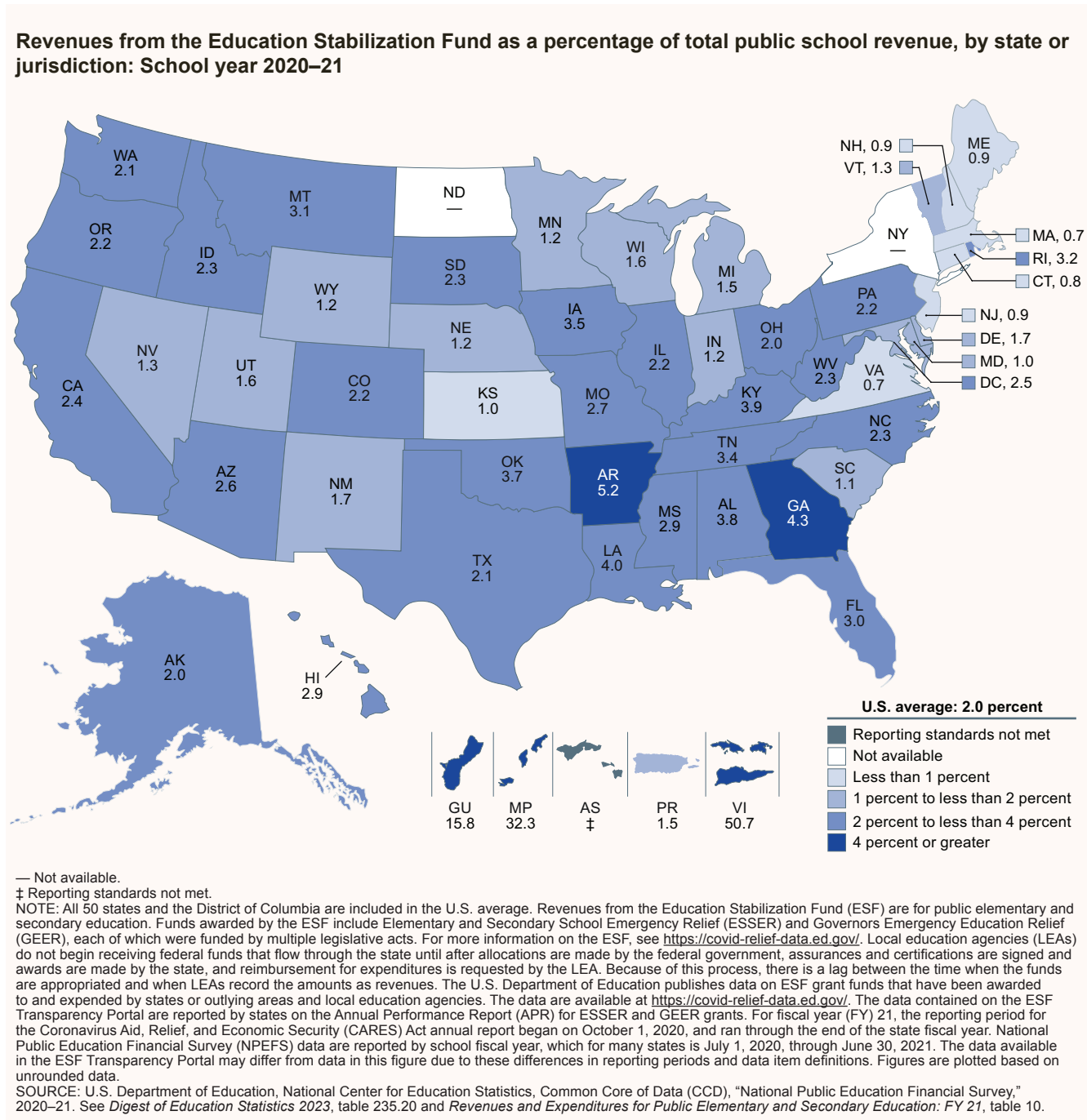
FIGURE 4.



On a national basis in 2020–21, revenues from local property taxes comprised 36 percent of *total* revenue for public schools. The percentage of total revenue from local property taxes generally differed by state. New Hampshire and Connecticut had the highest percentages of total revenue from property taxes (61 and 57 percent, respectively). In Vermont, the percentage of revenue from local property taxes rounded to zero. Hawaii has only one school district, which received no funding from property taxes.

Revenues From COVID-19 Federal Assistance Funds

FIGURE 5.



Federal revenue in 2020–21 included COVID-19 federal assistance funds. These funds were authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021.⁶ The portion of these funds administered by the Department of Education is referred to as the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF).⁷

In 2020–21, some 2 percent (\$18.6 billion) of total public school revenues nationally were awarded from the ESF. This percentage was

- highest in Arkansas (5 percent) and Georgia, Louisiana, Kentucky, Alabama, and Oklahoma (4 percent each); and
- lowest in Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Kansas (less than 1 percent each).

New York and North Dakota were not able to separately report COVID-19 federal assistance funds.⁸

In addition, ESF awards accounted for 51 percent of the total revenue in the U.S. Virgin Islands, 32 percent in the Northern Mariana Islands, 16 percent in Guam, and 1 percent in Puerto Rico. COVID-19 federal assistance funds reported by American Samoa did not meet reporting standards and were suppressed.

As noted previously, ESF awards accounted for only a subset of COVID-19 federal assistance funds. Data are also available for funds awarded by the Department of the Treasury, including the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) and Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). Reported CRF revenues totaled \$10.2 billion and accounted for 1 percent of total revenue nationally, with a high of 8 percent in Maine and a low of less than one-half of 1 percent in 18 states.⁹ Only three states (Minnesota, Nevada, and Texas) and the District of Columbia reported greater than zero revenues from SLFRF. However, not all state education agencies were able to separately report CRF and SLFRF revenues when school districts received these funds from state or local governments. Therefore, caution should be used when comparing these revenues across states.

Endnotes:

¹ For general technical notes related to data analysis, data interpretation, rounding, and other considerations, please refer to the [Reader's Guide](#).

² All revenues in this indicator are adjusted for inflation to constant 2022–23 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.

³ Local revenues include revenues from such sources as local property taxes, other public revenues, and private revenues. Private revenues include tuition from individuals, transportation fees from individuals, food services (excluding federal reimbursements), district activities, textbook revenues, and summer school revenues.

⁴ Hawaii operates as a single school district and has no local education agencies (LEAs).

⁵ Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands have only one school district. In Puerto Rico, a small percentage (less than one-half of 1 percent) of revenues came from local sources. Reported state revenue data are revenues received from the central government of the jurisdiction.

⁶ States were not asked to report on all possible COVID-19 recovery-related revenues. For instance, states were not asked about COVID-19 funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for school nutrition programs. Any recovery-related assistance received by public

elementary and secondary schools in 2020–21 is captured as part of total revenue for that year, regardless of whether these recovery-related revenues are reported separately as COVID-19 federal assistance funds.

⁷ Funds awarded by the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) for public elementary and secondary education include Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) and Governors Emergency Education Relief (GEER), each of which were funded by multiple legislative acts. For more information on the ESF, see <https://covid-relief-data.ed.gov/>.

⁸ New York and North Dakota were not able to separately report COVID-19 federal assistance funds because their accounting systems did not track such revenues separately. For more information on these two states, see [Exhibit F-19. Fiscal Data Plan responses to question 15, by state or jurisdiction: Fiscal year 2021](#).

⁹ These 18 states do not include 2 states where revenues from CRF funds were not able to be reported and 5 states and the District of Columbia where they were not applicable.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables [235.10](#) and [235.20](#); *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table [105.30](#); *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: FY 21*, [table 10](#)

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/High school](#)