

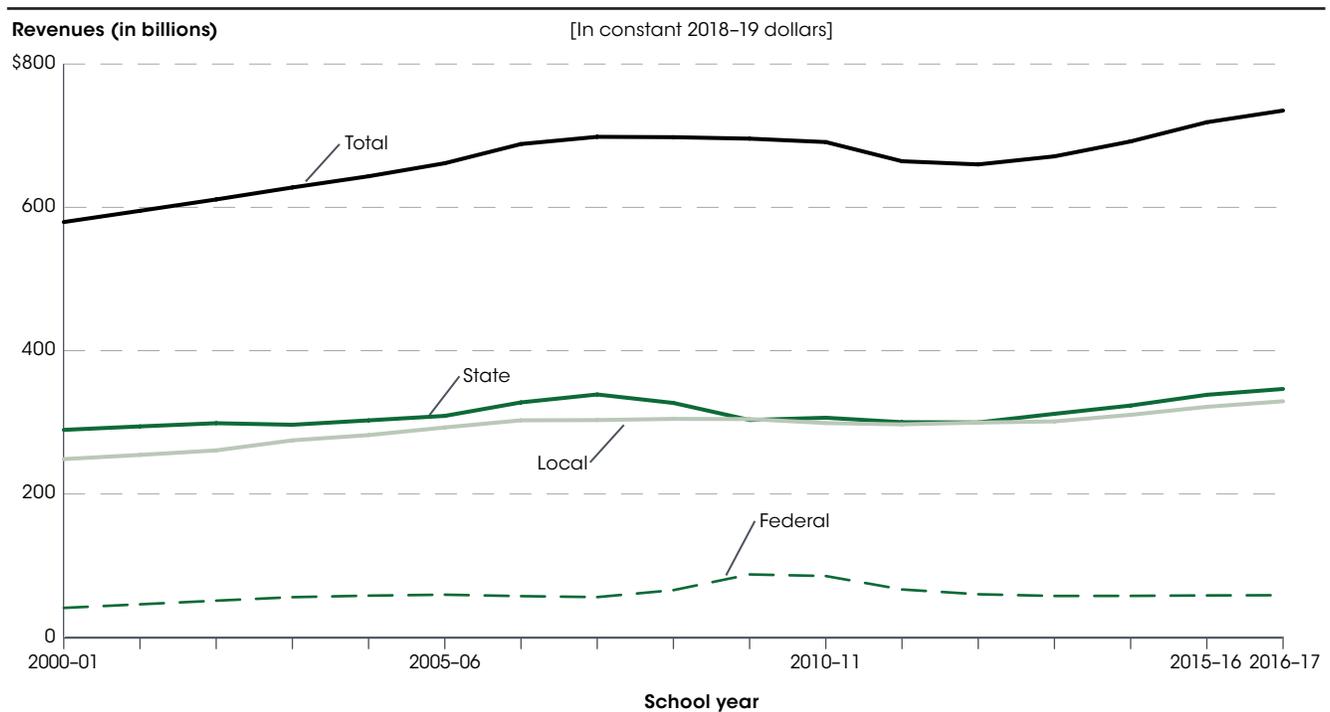
Public School Revenue Sources

Since 2000–01, public school revenues have increased by 27 percent in constant dollars, and public school enrollment increased by 7 percent.

In school year 2016–17, elementary and secondary public school revenues totaled \$736 billion in constant 2018–19 dollars.¹ Of this total, 8 percent, or \$60 billion, were from federal sources; 47 percent, or \$346 billion, were from state sources; and 45 percent, or \$330 billion, were from local sources.² In 2016–17, 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 6 percent, 32 percent, and 62 percent, respectively, while the corresponding percentages in Vermont were 7 percent, 90 percent, and 4 percent.

Total public school revenues were 27 percent higher in school year 2016–17 than in 2000–01 (\$736 billion vs. \$581 billion, in constant 2018–19 dollars). During this time, total revenues rose from \$581 billion in 2000–01 to \$699 billion in 2007–08, decreased to \$661 billion in 2012–13, and then increased to \$736 billion in 2016–17. These changes were accompanied by a 7 percent increase in total elementary and secondary public school enrollment, from 47 million students in 2000–01 to 51 million students in 2016–17 (see indicator [Public School Enrollment](#)).

Figure 1. Revenues for public elementary and secondary schools, by revenue source: School years 2000–01 through 2016–17



NOTE: Revenues are in constant 2018–19 dollars, adjusted using the Consumer Price Index (CPI). See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 106.70.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 2000–01 through 2016–17. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 235.10.

All revenue streams provided higher revenues in 2016–17 than in 2000–01: federal was higher by 42 percent, state increased by 20 percent, and local increased by 32 percent. However, the revenue streams have progressed differently over time. Federal revenues for public schools were 111 percent higher in school year 2009–10, the year after the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, than in 2000–01 (\$89 billion vs. \$42 billion, in constant 2018–19 dollars). Federal revenues have since decreased 33 percent from the 2009–10 high to \$60 billion in 2016–17. State revenues increased 17 percent from 2000–01 to 2007–08 (\$289 billion to \$338 billion), decreased 12 percent from 2007–08 to 2012–13 (\$299 billion), and then increased 16 percent from 2012–13 to a high of \$346 billion in 2016–17. Local revenues increased steadily, from \$250 billion to \$330 billion, from 2000–01 through 2016–17.

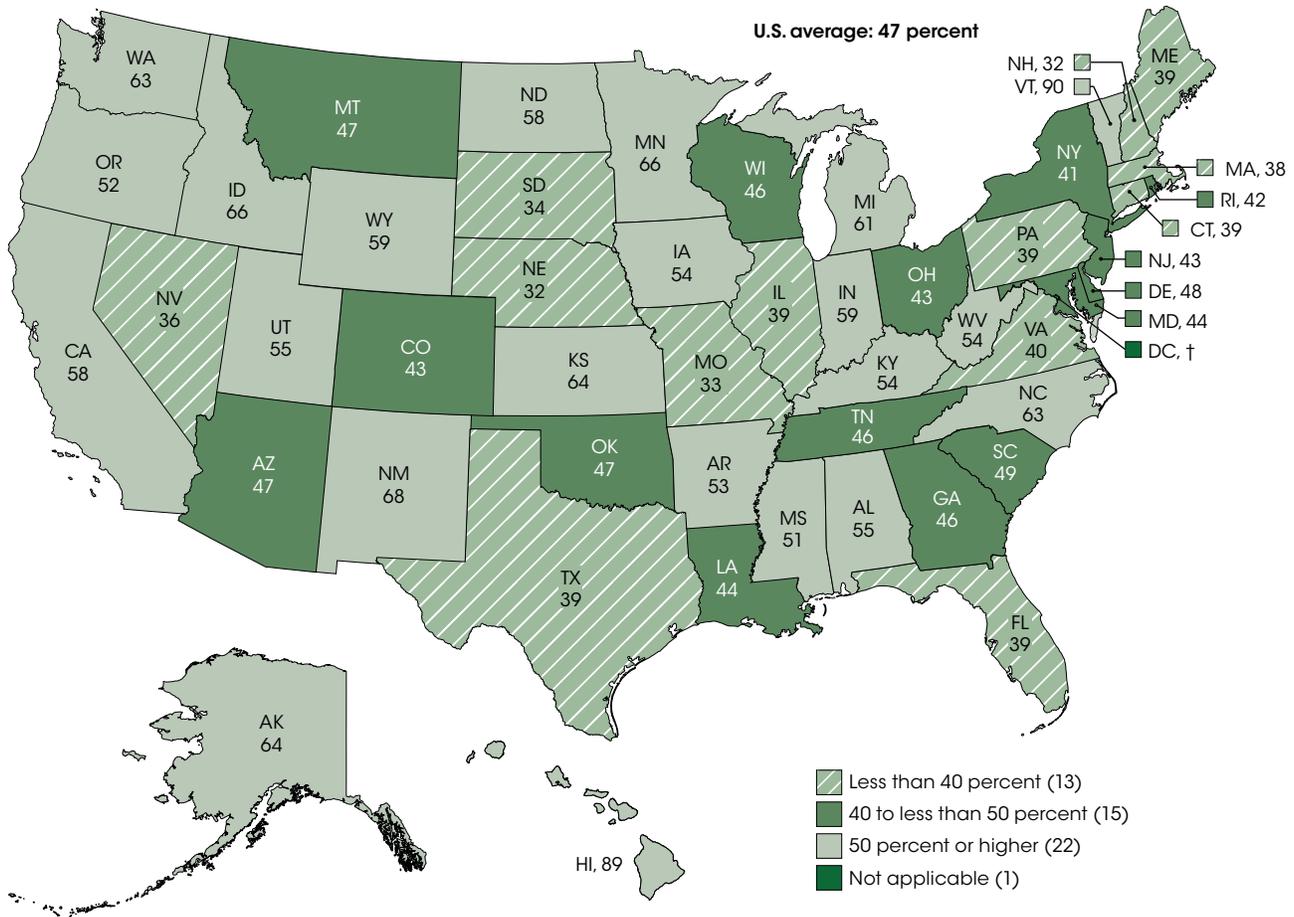
More recently, total revenues for public schools were \$16 billion (2 percent) higher in school year 2016–17 (\$736 billion) than in 2015–16 (\$720 billion), in constant 2018–19 dollars. Federal revenues were \$0.3 billion (1 percent) higher in 2016–17 than in 2015–16. State revenues were \$8.2 billion (2 percent) higher in 2016–17 than in 2015–16. Local revenues were \$7.8 billion (2 percent) higher in 2016–17 than in 2015–16, reflecting revenues from local property taxes that were \$6.9 billion (3 percent) higher and revenues from other local government sources that were \$1.0 billion

(2 percent) higher. Local revenues from private sources were \$0.1 billion (1 percent) lower in 2016–17 than in 2015–16.³

Between school years 2000–01 and 2016–17, the percentage of total revenues for public schools coming from federal sources fluctuated between 7 and 13 percent, accounting for 7 percent of total revenues in 2000–01, for 13 percent in 2009–10 and 2010–11 following the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and for 8 percent in 2016–17. Local sources accounted for 45 percent of total revenues from 2011–12 through 2016–17, which was higher than the percentages between 2000–01 and 2010–11. The percentage of total revenues coming from state sources decreased 3 percentage points between 2000–01 and 2016–17 (50 to 47 percent). Within the 2000–01 to 2016–17 period, the percentage of revenues coming from state sources was highest in 2000–01 (50 percent) and lowest in 2009–10 (43 percent).

In school year 2016–17, there were substantial variations across the states in the percentages of public school revenues coming from state, local, and federal sources. In 22 states, more than half of all revenues came from state governments, while in 16 states and the District of Columbia, more than half of all revenue came from local governments. In the remaining 12 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 2016–17

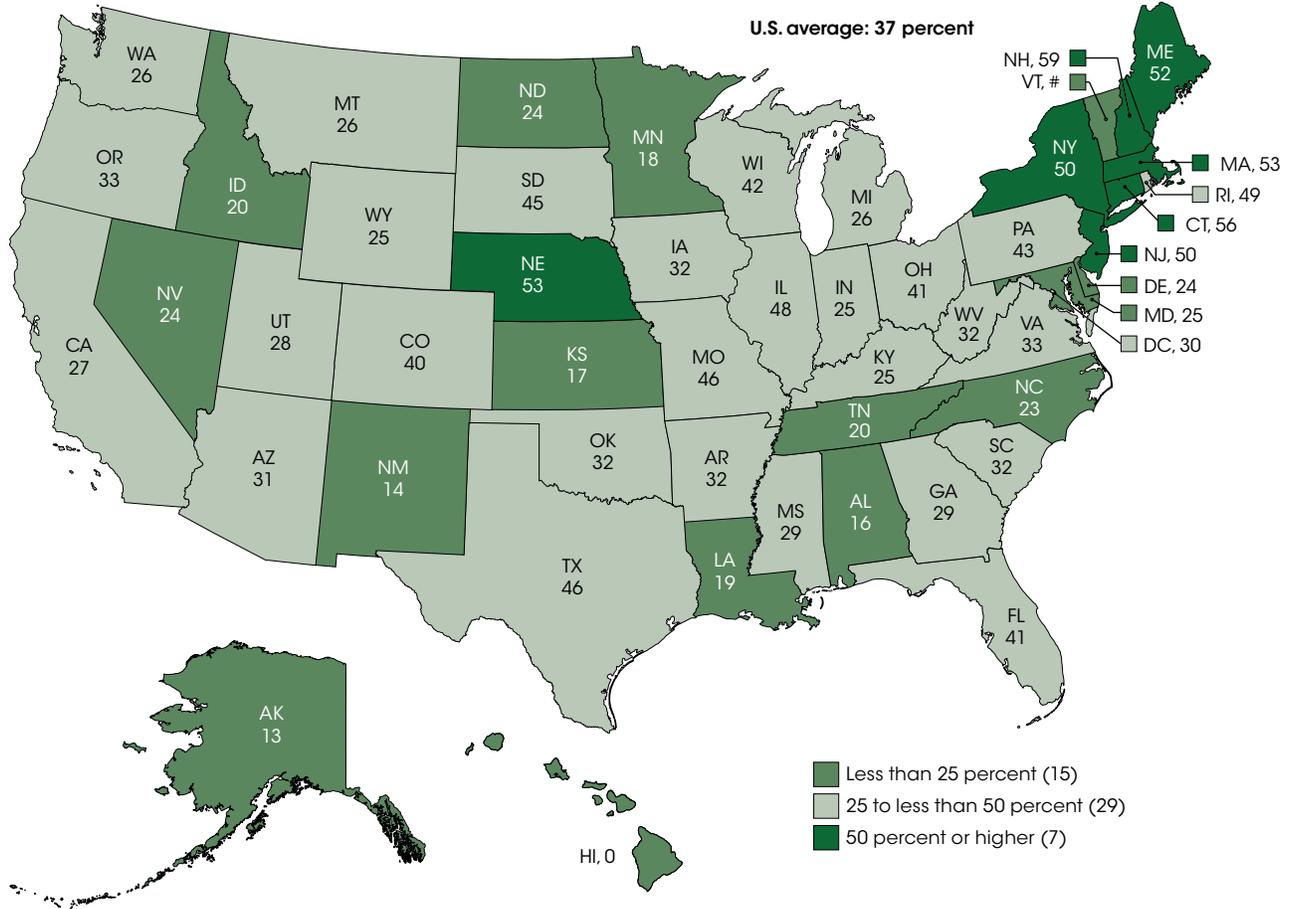


† Not applicable.
NOTE: All 50 states and the District of Columbia are included in the U.S. average, even though the District of Columbia does not receive any state revenue. The District of Columbia and Hawaii have only one school district each; therefore, the distinction between state and local revenue 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," 2016–17. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 235.20.

In school year 2016–17, the percentages of public school revenues coming from state sources were highest in Vermont and Hawaii (90 and 89 percent, respectively) and lowest in Missouri (33 percent) and Nebraska and New Hampshire (32 percent each). The percentages of revenues coming from federal sources were highest in New Mexico (15 percent) and Mississippi and Alaska (14 percent each) and lowest in Connecticut and New Jersey (4 percent

each). The percentages of revenues coming from local sources were highest in New Hampshire and Nebraska (62 and 60 percent, respectively) and lowest in Vermont and Hawaii (4 and 2 percent, respectively). Ninety-one percent of all revenues for the District of Columbia were from local sources, and the remaining 9 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 2016–17



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," 2016–17. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 235.20.

On a national basis in 2016–17, some \$269 billion,⁴ or 82 percent, of local revenues for public school districts were derived from local property taxes. Connecticut and Rhode Island had the highest percentages of *local* revenues from property taxes (98 and 97 percent, respectively). The percentages of total revenues from local property

taxes differed by state. In 2016–17, New Hampshire and Connecticut had the highest percentages of *total* revenues from property taxes (59 and 56 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:

¹ Revenues in this indicator are adjusted for inflation 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.

² 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).

³ Private revenues consist of tuition and fees from patrons and revenues from gifts.

⁴ In constant 2018–19 dollars.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, tables 235.10 and 235.20; *Digest of Education Statistics 2018*, 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