

ACTIVE CITIZENS FOR EDUCATION

WHITE PAPERS ON EDUCATION

Purpose: to present independent information and analyses about key educational issues concerning curriculum, instruction, administration and operation of concern to the Madison Metropolitan School District and to the community-at-large.

The reader is requested to keep in mind that as additional information becomes available these papers will be updated.

MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT PER PUPIL COST

Background: The data underlying this discussion has been derived from School Facts '03, a publication of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, from which the conclusions and comparisons have been calculated. This publication receives per student expenditures from each school district in the State. The communities chosen for this comparative analysis are: Appleton, Green Bay, Kenosha and Racine. The reported expenditure categories are uniform for MMSD and the four comparable districts.

2002-2003 School Year

	Appleton	Green Bay	Kenosha	Racine	Average of Comparable Districts	Madison	Madison Comparison	
Instruction	5,199	5,675	5,385	5,572	5,457.75	6,654	+\$1,196.25	+21.9%
Pupil Services	389	483	514	443	457.25	704	+\$246.75	+54%
Instructional Support	352	470	503	379	426	640	+\$214	+50.2%
Administration	566	536	522	527	537.75	738	+\$200.25	+37.2%
Buildings & Grounds	766	721	950	767	801	1,008	+\$207	+25.8%
Pupil Transportation	166	240	244	391	260.25	322	+\$61.75	+23.7%
Capital Expansion/ Debt Service	608	783	614	575	645	342	-\$303	-53%
Other *	<u>736</u>	<u>545</u>	<u>259</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>475</u>	<u>746</u>	<u>+\$271</u>	<u>+57.1%</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$8,782</u>	<u>\$9,453</u>	<u>\$8,991</u>	<u>\$9,014</u>	<u>\$9,060</u>	<u>\$11,154</u>	<u>+\$2,094</u>	<u>+23.11%</u>

Description of Categories

Instruction. Total expenditures on programs involving direct teaching interactions between staff and students, which may occur in a school classroom or in another location, such as a home or hospital. Expenditures includes supplies and materials used in teaching.

Pupil Services. Activities designed to assess and improve the well-being of students and to supplement the teaching process. Examples include health services, case work by social workers, guidance counseling, psychological testing and counseling, and speech pathology and audiology services.

Instructional Support. Total expenditures on activities associated with assisting the instructional staff and enhancing learning experiences for students. Examples include curriculum development, staff training, and media services, such as library, audio visual, educational television and computer-assisted instruction.

Administration. Activities associated with: establishing and administering overall school district policies; directing and managing the operations of individual schools; directing, managing or supervising the business and fiscal operations of the district; or providing central services on a district-wide basis, such as research, planning or statistical analysis, data processing or public information services.

Buildings and Grounds. Expenditures on operation and maintenance of buildings and grounds.

Pupil Transportation. District general fund costs associated with transporting students to and from school and on school-related trips.

Capital Expansion/Debt Service. Payments of principal and interest on school district indebtedness, plus any processing or refinancing costs, and expenditures from the capital expansion fund.

* **Other.** This category is not separately listed in the source materials. The amount listed here is the difference between the "Total Expenditures" as listed in the source materials and the cumulative total of the other categories listed.

Analysis: It is evident that MMSD per pupil costs exceed the average of those of the other districts in every category except Capital Expansion/Debt Service.

Total expenditures: for Instruction, MMSD exceeds the average of the other four by 21.9%; for Pupil Services by 54%; for Instructional Support by 50.2%; for Administration by 37.2%; for Buildings and Grounds by 25.8%; for Pupil Transportation by 23.7%; and, for Other, MMSD exceeds the average of the other four by 57.1%.

Note that these figures cover the 2002-2003 school year when MMSD total per pupil expenditures were \$11,154, which is \$2,094 higher than the average of the four comparable districts. For the 2003-2004 school year, total MMSD expenditures were \$12,500. When those

figures become available they will likely confirm a continuation of the data trend in categories where Madison spends more when compared to the other districts.

MMSD clearly spends significantly more money in all categories except one. Cost analysis procedures have not been applied by the Board of Education and administration to programs and services. Cost analysis and cost-benefit analysis processes would provide the district and the community with data to make decisions regarding priorities, effectiveness and efficiencies that would help contain costs and to improve performances in all categories. In the important performance area of academic achievement, test results from the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam for the Madison school district do not justify a greater than 23% additional cost per pupil compared to the average per pupil costs of four peer districts.

For further information please refer to these additional documents by Active Citizens for Education:

- “Comparative Performance Results” chart of academic test results.
- “District Administration Costs & Administration Staffing Levels” comparing MMSD with four peer districts.
- “Retention Rates” comparing retentions in MMSD with four peer districts.

Questions to Consider upon Reviewing the Data:

1. How does the MMSD Board of Education (BOE) evaluate and assess effectiveness and efficiency and rate the results benefits of each phase of the educational system?
2. How does the BOE build its annual budget to take into account costs and results?
3. Can the \$2,094 extra per pupil be justified?
4. Do comparative test scores justify additional per pupil costs?

Notes:

1. Information was obtained from School Facts 03 a publication of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance.
2. Active Citizens for Education (ACE) is a Madison based non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to identifying, analyzing and presenting reliable information about issues concerning curriculum, instruction, administration and operation of the Madison Metropolitan School District. It is expected this information will assist in stimulating widespread public debate and increasing enlightened decision-making by the public and policy-makers to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and performance of the Board of Education, administration, staff and pupils of the District. Contact: ACE, Don Severson, President at P.O. Box 2153, Madison, WI 53701; 608/238-8300; donleader@aol.com

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