According to new data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau, per student spending on public elementary and secondary school systems increased for every state in 2015, except for Arizona where spending decreased by 0.5 percent. Alaska and New York lead the pack, with both increasing spending by more than nine percent. Nationally, per student spending was $11,392 in 2015 - a 3.5 percent increase over the previous year - representing the largest year-over-year increase in per student spending since 2008.

Expenditures per student include instruction, support services and noninstructional functions, including direct expenditure for salaries, employee benefits, student transportation, building maintenance and other services and supplies.

Spending per student varies significantly across states with some states spending more than three times as much as others. In 2015, Idaho ($6,923) and Utah ($6,575) spent the least per student while New York ($21,172) and Alaska ($20,172) spent the most.

Overall, state governments contribute the greatest percentage of public school funding (47.1 percent) followed closely by revenue raised from local sources (44.6 percent). The federal government contributed 8.3 percent of total public elementary and secondary funding in 2015, but some states rely more heavily on federal funding than others. Nearly 15 percent of public school funding in Louisiana and Mississippi came from the federal government in 2015, while just 4.1 percent of funding came from the federal government in Connecticut and New Jersey.

[Source: U.S. Census Bureau]

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