

THE MONEY BEHIND ONE STUDENT

DID YOU KNOW | OPERATING COST + WHAT FOLLOWS THE STUDENT

ABOUT \$14,400
OPERATING COST / STUDENT
Safe range: about \$14,000-\$14,500

ABOUT \$5,200
STATE SHARE / STUDENT
MFP: \$181.8M / ~35,000 students

ABOUT \$9,200
MOSTLY LOCAL / STUDENT
Property taxes + sales taxes

HOW \$488.9M OF REVENUE BECOMES \$502.4M OF SPENDING
Transfers in: \$26.4M = \$19.8M Disaster Loan + \$5.0M Construction + \$1.6M other interfund recovery.
Transfers out: \$12.9M. Net transfer benefit: about \$13.5M - enough to cover the revenue/spending gap.

1 | WHAT ONE STUDENT COSTS

- \$502.4M General Fund / ~35,000 students. Safe stump range: about \$14,000-\$14,500.
- Federal NCES check: \$14,823 per pupil in FY2023.

GUARDRAIL: OPERATING MONEY ONLY. TOTAL WITH CONSTRUCTION / DEBT IS ~\$18,000+ PER STUDENT; DO NOT USE THAT AS 'THE COST OF A YEAR OF SCHOOL.'

2 | WHO PAYS FOR THAT STUDENT
ABOUT \$5,200 STATE
+ ABOUT \$9,200 LOCAL

- State share: MFP (\$181.8M / ~35,000 students).
- The rest is overwhelmingly parish property taxes and sales taxes.

3 | PRIVATE-SCHOOL COMPARISON
2026-27 published tuition / fees

St. Paul's - Covington	~\$12,535 with fees
Archbishop Hannan	~\$12,800 with fees
Northlake Christian	\$13,250 elementary-\$15,260 12th
Covington-area private elementary avg.	~\$11,048

GUARDRAILS - KEEP THE COMPARISON HONEST

- Private tuition understates private cost: parishes and donors subsidize it, and private-school teachers earn less. Do not say private schools 'do it cheaper.'
- Public schools carry costs private schools do not: every child accepted, including special education; bus fleets; free meals for all students; and school resource officers - all inside the \$14,400.

We spend about \$14,000 per student - more than St. Paul's charges. Parents deserve schools worth staying for, and every dollar belongs in the classroom.

4 | WHEN A STUDENT LEAVES
TWO DIFFERENT DOORS
DOOR 1 | MOVE, PRIVATE SCHOOL, OR HOMESCHOOL

Only the state share leaves - about \$5,200 average. Local property and sales taxes do not follow; the family keeps paying and the district keeps collecting. Budget hit: \$3.6M + \$5.0M.

DOOR 2 | NEW K-8 CHARTER

State AND local support follow. Louisiana funds state-authorized Type 2 charters from the district's combined state and local per-pupil support; the local piece is deducted through the district's MFP payment.

Charter impact: \$8.6M. Entire projected regular enrollment-loss impact: \$5.0M. Per student, the charter hit is roughly double.

SOUND BITE

When a family moves to Texas, we lose the state's share. When a family walks across the street to the charter, we lose the state share AND the state takes back a chunk of our local tax dollars. Same student, twice the budget hit.

GUARDRAIL

The exact charter transfer rate has not been pulled yet. Say 'roughly double per student' - never give a precise charter per-student dollar figure.

BOTTOM LINE

Every student who stays is worth about \$14,000 in classroom funding. The cheapest budget fix we have is being a district families don't want to leave.

SOURCE LOCK: STPSB FY2026-27 budget; NCES FY2023 district fiscal data; published 2026-27 school tuition schedules; La. R.S. 17:3995 and the adopted MFP charter-funding formula. Private notes - figures are talking-point averages.