

# Hope Scholarship Reduces Resources for Public Schools, Lacks Necessary Oversight

By Kelly Allen, executive director and Sean O’Leary, senior policy analyst  
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## Overview

West Virginia’s state constitution requires that, “the Legislature shall provide, by general law, for a thorough and efficient system of free schools.” But due to a confluence of factors, including a growing Hope Scholarship voucher program, declining state revenues due to sweeping tax cuts, and the end of federal pandemic-era funding, school districts across West Virginia are facing a funding cliff going into the 2024-25 school year. The cumulative effect could challenge the state’s ability to provide that mandated thorough and efficient education to the vast majority of school-age children in West Virginia who attend its public schools. Statewide, the loss of funding from the public education system to the Hope Scholarship is expected to total up to \$21.6 million in the 2024-25 school year, with school districts across West Virginia will lose the state aid funding for an estimated 364 staff, including approximately 301 professional educators and 63 school service personnel.

As lawmakers mull the expansion of the Hope Scholarship, research from around the country shows that growing voucher programs have mixed or negative achievement results for students who participate in them, while a lack of accountability regarding public spending raises questions about where the funds diverted from the public education system are going.

## Key Findings

- West Virginia’s Hope Scholarship program has no cost or enrollment caps, no income limits, and requires no public accountability through collection and publication of program data.
- The Hope Scholarship provides \$4,489 per student for the 2023 school year, while the average private school tuition in West Virginia is over \$6,200 annually, even before accounting for additional fees that private schools often charge. This means that the amount of the scholarship is often insufficient to allow a student to attend private school unless their family can afford the additional thousands of dollars needed to fund a private education.
- Recent research shows mixed or negative achievement results for students participating in voucher programs. Respective studies in Indiana, Louisiana, and Ohio showed voucher students experienced significant losses in math achievement, large negative losses in reading and math, and worse academic outcomes than their closely matched peers attending public schools.
- Students who utilize the Hope Scholarship must waive their Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protections, and approved Hope Scholarship schools are not required to provide disability accommodations or follow a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- West Virginia public education officials are warning lawmakers that insufficient public education funding is driving ongoing crises in hiring and retaining teachers, aides, and bus drivers.
- West Virginia’s per pupil spending on public education is \$1,300 below the national average and less than all neighboring states except for Kentucky.
- Statewide, the loss of funding from the public education system to the Hope Scholarship is expected to total up to \$21.6 million in the 2024-25 school year, meaning school districts across West Virginia will lose the state aid funding for an estimated 364 staff, including approximately 301 professional educators and 63 school service personnel.

- In total, West Virginia’s 55 school districts will have \$392 million less in the 2024-25 school year than they did in the 2023-24 school year due to the expiration of federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds combined with state funding losses from students utilizing the Hope Scholarship to leave the public school system for private schools. Nearly half of the expended ESSER funds have been used for personnel costs.
- The Hope Scholarship is expected to quintuple in cost if an automatic eligibility expansion to all children, including those already in private school, goes into effect. While students who leave the public school system divert existing taxpayer funds away from public schools, students who become eligible for the Hope Scholarship despite never having attended public schools will represent substantial new costs to the state budget.

### Costly Voucher Programs, Empty Promises

In 2021, the West Virginia Legislature enacted the Hope Scholarship, which at the time was the broadest school voucher program in the nation. Also known as Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), the Hope Scholarship is a taxpayer-funded voucher that diverts state public education dollars to the private sector with few guardrails and no accountability mechanisms. Families apply to withdraw these public education dollars from the public system and instead use them to cover the costs of private school or home schooling.<sup>1</sup> ESAs could be better understood as “vouchers plus” as they allow a far broader range of allowable expenses than traditional vouchers. The Hope Scholarship’s allowable expenses beyond tuition include school uniforms, tutoring, summer programs, a broad range of so-called “educational services,” technology equipment, and “any other qualifying expenses approved by the board.”<sup>2</sup> ESA programs in Florida and Arizona have come under fire with taxpayer funds going toward the purchase of luxury car driving lessons, golf equipment, kayaks, and Disney resort passes.<sup>3,4</sup>

In addition to opening the door to broader allowable expenses than traditional vouchers, these programs tend to grow exponentially in size and cost after beginning with fairly narrow eligibility requirements. In the seven states that have had voucher programs in effect long enough to analyze their outcomes, the number of vouchers distributed in each state climbed sharply between 2008 and 2019. Across these seven states, voucher spending more than doubled

<sup>1</sup> Kelly Allen, “Hope Scholarship Would Be Nation’s Broadest, Likely Most Costly ESA Program,” West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, February 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Hope Scholarship Board, “The Hope Scholarship Parent Handbook,” <https://hopescholarshipwv.com/Portals/HopeScholarship/content/Documents/Hope%20Parent%20Handbook.pdf?ver=W9a-zBECXLqcY74mK-q8A%3d%3d> (accessed on November 19, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> Melissa Blasius and Garrett Archer, “Arizona Empowerment Scholarships: What \$304 Million bought,” *ABC 15*, October 2, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Nick Papantonis, “Florida allowed taxpayer-funded ‘school choice’ vouchers to pay for kayaks, Disney tickets,” *WFTV 9*, September 1, 2023.

## Do ESAs Serve Students with Disabilities?

Families who enroll in the Hope Scholarship must [waive](#) their Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protections. Private schools are not required to provide disability accommodations or follow a child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).

According to [privateschoolreview.com](#), West Virginia has only [two](#) private schools statewide that serve special education students. Authors contacted multiple private schools that received Hope Scholarship funding in 2022-23 who confirmed they do not provide disability accommodations.

Further, families often must pay additional costs or enroll their children in more expensive schools to receive services like disability accommodations when they are available, meaning that families who have children with disabilities will often incur far more costs. One [analysis](#) found that while Georgia’s school voucher benefit averages \$5,600, tuition at private schools that serve children with disabilities averages more than \$25,000.

within a decade, and nearly all the states diverted hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer funds from their public school systems to voucher programs over that period.<sup>5</sup>

In Arizona, the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program was created in 2011 with the purpose of expanding educational opportunities for students with disabilities. The program quickly expanded to include students in foster care, children of members of the U.S. Military, and students in schools designated as low performing. Within a decade, the program was expanded to all Arizona residents regardless of income and whether the student had ever been enrolled in public school before.<sup>6</sup> State officials are now warning that the program has an “unsustainable” fiscal impact, including creating a potential revenue shortfall in the state’s budget due to exploding costs estimated to climb to over \$1 billion annually.<sup>7</sup>

A similar phenomenon should be anticipated in West Virginia, where lawmakers built an automatic expansion into the Hope Scholarship legislation, allowing all students—regardless of whether they have ever attended public school—to be eligible for the scholarship beginning in the 2026-27 school year if a modest trigger is met. According to the legislation’s fiscal note, this expansion is expected to quintuple the annual cost of the program as most families who currently home school or have children in private schools will elect to receive the voucher, representing a “recurring cost to the state since the state currently provides no funding under the Public School Support Program (PSSP) for private and homeschool students.”<sup>8</sup> So while students who leave the public school system divert existing taxpayer funds away from public schools, students who become eligible for the Hope Scholarship despite never having attended public schools will represent substantial *new* costs to the state budget.

### **Hope Scholarship Lacks Public Accountability, Reporting Requirements**

West Virginia’s Hope Scholarship has no cost or enrollment cap, no income limits, and requires no public accountability through collection and publication of program data. The lack of required data is a common feature of voucher programs across the country, where it is often nearly impossible to know what families or private entities are benefiting from vouchers.

Currently there is no requirement that Hope Scholarship-approved schools be located in West Virginia or have accreditation. In the first year alone, the Hope Scholarship sent over \$300,000 to schools located outside of West Virginia and over \$1.7 million to unaccredited schools. This insightful information was only obtainable through a public records request, as data on Hope Scholarship recipients and vendors who receive state taxpayer funding is not currently made publicly available.<sup>9</sup> Legislation passed in 2023 allows completely unregulated microschools to accept Hope Scholarship funds, but there is no requirement that microschools register with any state or local entity or meet any provisions of law relating to education in order to operate.<sup>10</sup>

Proponents of vouchers tend to rely on dated, early studies that showed modest, at best, achievement impacts in small voucher programs that focused on targeted populations. But as programs grew over time—as nearly all did—more recent achievement results became remarkably negative, showing a clear correlation between

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<sup>5</sup> Samuel E. Abrams and Steven J. Koutsavlis, “The Fiscal Consequences of Private School Vouchers,” Public Funds for Public Schools, March 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Arizona Center for Economic Progress, “Arizona School Vouchers, Explained,” <https://azeconcenter.org/arizona-school-vouchers-explained/> (accessed on November 20, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Tom Pappert, “Arizona Gov. Hobbs Calls ESAs ‘Unsustainable’ over \$320 Million Shortfall Despite May Warning,” *The Tennessee Star*, July 27, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> HB 2013 Fiscal Note 2560, West Virginia Legislature HB 2013, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Kelly Allen, “Hope Scholarship Sends Public Taxpayer Dollars Out of State and to Unaccredited Schools,” West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, August 2023.

<sup>10</sup> West Virginia Code §18-8-1.

program size and negative impacts. Additionally, methodological flaws were discovered in early positive studies when attempting to replicate them.<sup>11</sup>

Newer, more rigorous research shows mixed or negative achievement results for students participating in voucher programs. Respective studies in Indiana, Louisiana, and Ohio, three early and large adopters of voucher programs, showed voucher students experienced significant losses in math achievement, large negative losses in reading and math, and worse academic outcomes than their closely matched peers attending public schools.<sup>12, 13</sup> In fact, the learning losses among voucher program participants in Louisiana and Ohio were greater than those caused by the pandemic.<sup>14</sup>

Valid questions remain about when and what the public and lawmakers will learn about achievement among Hope Scholarship recipients and the schools that receive these taxpayer dollars. While some nonpublic schools in West Virginia are required to administer standardized tests and report their composite results to the state Department of Education, those results are not readily publicly accessible, as public school test scores are.<sup>15</sup> That creates a challenge for families trying to send their children to quality schools and leaves little room for public accountability regarding the utility of the program.

### **The Myth of Voucher Savings**

Proponents of voucher programs often claim that their program costs are neutral or that they even save states money. However, analyses show that vouchers are as costly or more costly than educating students in traditional public schools, both at the individual student level and in the aggregate.

At the individual student level, rather than providing education at a lower cost, vouchers simply shift education expenses onto parents. While the Hope Scholarship provides \$4,489 per student in the 2023-24 school year, the average private school tuition in West Virginia costs over \$6,200 annually, even before accounting for additional fees that private schools often charge.<sup>16</sup> And while public schools must provide meals, transportation, and special education services, these and other essential services must often be purchased separately by students attending private schools, if they are offered at all. According to one analysis, vouchers in states like Georgia and Louisiana fall far short of average private school tuition costs generally and cover an even smaller share of tuition at private schools that offer services for students with disabilities. In Georgia, while the average voucher amount is \$5,000, tuition at private schools that offer services to students with disabilities costs over \$25,000 on average.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Christopher Lubienski et al., “Evolving Evidence on School Voucher Effects,” Indiana University Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Policy Brief #22-4, November 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan N. Mills et al., “How Has the Louisiana Scholarship Program Affected Students?,” Education Research Alliance for New Orleans, February 22, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> David Figlio and Krzysztof Karbownik, “Evaluation of Ohio’s EdChoice Scholarship Program,” Thomas B. Fordham Institute, July 2016.

<sup>14</sup> National Coalition for Public Education analysis, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/582f7c15f7e0ab3a3c7fb141/t/63d162c3ae7bc31595b41397/1674666706305/2023+-+NCPE+Voucher+Toolkit+FINAL.pdf> (accessed December 8, 2023).

<sup>15</sup> West Virginia Department of Education, “Standardized Testing and Enrollment Requirements,” <https://wvde.us/nonpublic-school-information/standardized-testing-and-enrollment-requirements/> (accessed November 30, 2023).

<sup>16</sup> “West Virginia Private Schools By Tuition Cost, 2023-24,” [privateschoolreview.com](https://www.privateschoolreview.com/tuition-stats/west-virginia), <https://www.privateschoolreview.com/tuition-stats/west-virginia> (accessed November 30, 2023).

<sup>17</sup> Megan Casey Whittaker, “The Average Voucher Doesn’t Cover Full Cost of Private School, NCLD Data Analysis Shows,” Understood.org, <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/the-average-voucher-doesnt-cover-full-cost-of-private-school> (accessed on November 9, 2023).

Private schools accepting the Hope Scholarship are able to be selective and exclusionary about the students they accept in ways that public schools cannot. The vast majority of private schools in West Virginia have a religious affiliation, with many requiring applicants and students to sign a moral or biblical contract or attend church regularly as a condition of enrollment. All 20 private schools that received over \$100,000 in Hope Scholarship funds during the 2022-23 school year are religious schools. Some require a tuition surcharge for students who are not part of the religion of that school, while others have preferential admissions policies that prioritize religious students for acceptance ahead of non-religious students.<sup>18</sup>

At an aggregate level, the Hope Scholarship is undoubtedly increasing costs to the state. Students utilizing voucher programs represent a small percentage of the total students in a school district and are typically spread across grade levels and schools. Therefore, the reduction in the numbers of students attending a particular class or school is usually too small to reduce the operating costs of those schools. Further, many of the costs to educate students in public schools, like building maintenance and transportation, are fixed regardless of enrollment changes. Notably, West Virginia school districts face significantly higher transportation costs than the national average due to the state's rural terrain.<sup>19</sup> These factors leave schools with a smaller budget but the same level of costs, by extension leaving students who remain in public school system with fewer resources.

Additionally, Hope Scholarship students often still receive services from the public school districts they left that now have less funding available to them due to the voucher program. As a result of legislation passed in 2023, Hope Scholarship and other private school students are permitted play sports on public school teams, shifting private school costs back onto the public education system.<sup>20</sup> The IDEA requires public school districts to use a proportionate amount of their federal funds to provide services to private school students with disabilities whose parents have chosen to place them in private school. However, the costs of private school consultations and of identifying students who need services, including individual evaluations, cannot be paid from those proportionate federal funds, representing additional costs to the public school districts.<sup>21</sup>

Multiple school districts are already warning that their residents will need to approve excess levies that increase property taxes to fund existing professional educator and school service personnel jobs, as well as other capital costs that are at risk due to declining district enrollment resulting from the Hope Scholarship and broader enrollment challenges.<sup>22, 23</sup> And these additional costs are coming even before program eligibility is expanded to include students who never attended public schools and thus were never funded through the school aid formula. At that point, the program is expected to cost the state's general revenue fund an additional \$100 million per year that will not be offset through reduced costs to the public education system, as the students who will become eligible were never in the public school system to begin with.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Hope Scholarship Will Divert More Funding from Public School Districts in 2024-25**

State aid to public school districts is calculated based on student enrollment. As such, the school district loses state funding for every student they lose, whether because the student moves away, graduates, or leaves the public school system. The state's share of the school aid formula averages around \$4,500 per student, though it

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<sup>18</sup> WVCPB analysis of private schools listed as Hope Scholarship vendors in West Virginia.

<sup>19</sup> WVCPB analysis of Hope Scholarship and U.S. Census Bureau Public School Finance data.

<sup>20</sup> Sam DeCoste, "West Virginia passes new law to let Hope Scholarship students play sports at public schools," *13 News*, March 31, 2023.

<sup>21</sup> West Virginia Department of Education Policy 2419.

<sup>22</sup> Mike Nolting, "Preston County Schools hope to pass levy renewal, save some positions," *WV MetroNews*, November 19, 2023.

<sup>23</sup> Kimberly Donahue, "Kanawha County BOE talks potential bond levy as enrollment falls", *WSAZ*, October 2, 2023.

<sup>24</sup> HB 2013 Fiscal Note 2560, West Virginia Legislature HB 2013, 2021.

varies widely by county. The school district loses a fixed amount of state funding for each student lost, including funding earmarked specifically for professional educators and school service personnel. As highlighted above, school districts around the state are already raising alarms about how those enrollment declines could impact capital expenditures (e.g., buildings, maintenance) and overall staffing capacity. While some argue that funding losses resulting from the Hope Scholarship do not harm public schools given the students who utilize the program are no longer educated within the public school system, this argument fails to take into consideration fixed costs to the districts, as well as the fact that all students are impacted when fewer teachers and service personnel are available to serve students.

Because of the way the school aid formula is calculated, the school districts' enrollment counts taken in October 2023 will begin to impact their budgets in the 2024-25 school year. Those counts will be reflective of the second year of the Hope Scholarship, where enrollment in the voucher program across West Virginia more than doubled compared with the program's first year. Statewide, the loss of funding from the public education system to the Hope Scholarship is expected to total up to \$21.6 million in the 2024-25 school year, meaning school districts will lose the funding for an estimated 364 staff, including approximately 301 professional educators and 63 school service personnel. In Table 1 in the Appendix below, we estimate the number of educators and service personnel that are estimated to be lost by county.

### **Federal ESSER Funding Expiration Will Cost School Districts Funding Currently Used for Personnel Costs**

In addition to school districts feeling the fiscal impact of enrollment declines due to the Hope Scholarship, federal COVID-19-era education funds will also expire in September 2024, further reducing resources that have gone to salaries and benefits, pay raises for employees, school supplies, and building investments. The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds have provided K-12 schools with significant new resources in recent years to address the challenges of reopening schools, supporting students' mental health and basic needs, and recovering from the learning losses that occurred during the pandemic. ESSER funding was appropriated over three pieces of federal legislation, first from the CARES Act, then the CRRSA Act, and finally via the American Rescue Plan. The first two sources of funding have expired, leaving just ESSER III funds, the final and largest round of funding, which will expire next September.

West Virginia received nearly \$762 million in total ESSER III funding, which according to the state's plan was to be used to support the return to in-person learning, safely reopen and sustain school operations, address the academic impact of lost learning time, and support students' social, emotional, and mental health needs.<sup>25</sup> Of the \$368 million of ESSER III funds expended through October 2023 statewide, 48 percent has been spent on personnel costs (salaries and benefits). When these funds expire, schools will likely have to either shift other funds to keep educators and service personnel on staff or risk losing that staff entirely.<sup>26</sup>

In total, West Virginia's 55 school districts will have \$392 million less in the 2024-25 school year than they did in the 2023-24 school year due to the expiration of ESSER federal funds combined with state funding losses from students utilizing the Hope Scholarship to leave the public school system for private schools. In Table 2 in the Appendix, we highlight the total number of ESSER III funds received by each county, as well as the amount of funds they have remaining which will presumably be used in the 2023-24 school year. We also estimate the total funding the school district will lose as a result of the expiration of ESSER III funds combined with state funding losses from enrollment declines.

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<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "West Virginia ARP ESSER Fact Sheet," <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/arp-esser-wv-plan.pdf> (accessed on November 20, 2023).

<sup>26</sup> WVCPB analysis of WV ESSER III Allocations and Funds Spent by School District.

## Tax Cut Triggers Will Continue Downward Spiral as Overall Size of Budget Shrinks

In recent years, West Virginia lawmakers have reduced spending and held agency budgets flat to create space for 2023's personal income tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefited the state's wealthiest households. After adjusting for inflation, the FY 2024 appropriated budget is \$591.2 million less than FY 2019 expenditures, leaving state agencies and programs with fewer resources to serve their missions compared to five years ago. The 2023 tax cut package is expected to reduce state tax revenues by over \$800 million in FY 2025. In addition, the legislation included a complicated triggering mechanism that will eventually eliminate the personal income tax entirely. It is important to note that the personal income tax has historically been the largest source of state revenue in West Virginia, providing over 40 percent of the state's general revenue funds up until FY 2024.

The triggering mechanism essentially forces current and future legislators to slash the budget and underfund public services, as the additional cuts to the personal income tax will occur automatically unless lawmakers reverse course and repeal the triggers. Senate leaders have already warned that a modest pay raise for state public employees, including public school teachers and personnel, is at risk unless lawmakers can make offsetting budget cuts elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> Further, significant new PEIA, Medicaid, and Hope Scholarship costs will be added to the base budget in upcoming years, just as the triggers go into effect and automatically divert new revenue to tax cuts instead of those budget needs.<sup>28</sup> As program costs like the Hope Scholarship grow and take up a larger portion of a smaller budget, lawmakers may be forced to cut existing public education funding or forego needed new investments.

## Evidence Shows That Increased Public Education Spending Improves Performance

West Virginia's per pupil spending on public education is \$1,300 below the national average and less than all neighboring states except for Kentucky.<sup>29</sup> Some public education officials are raising concerns about how the state's outdated school funding formula and insufficient funding to offer competitive pay is driving ongoing crises in hiring and retaining teachers, aides, and bus drivers.<sup>30, 31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Brad McElhinny, "Senate Finance Chairman Expresses Caution About Pay Raises for State Workers," *WV MetroNews*, November 9, 2023.

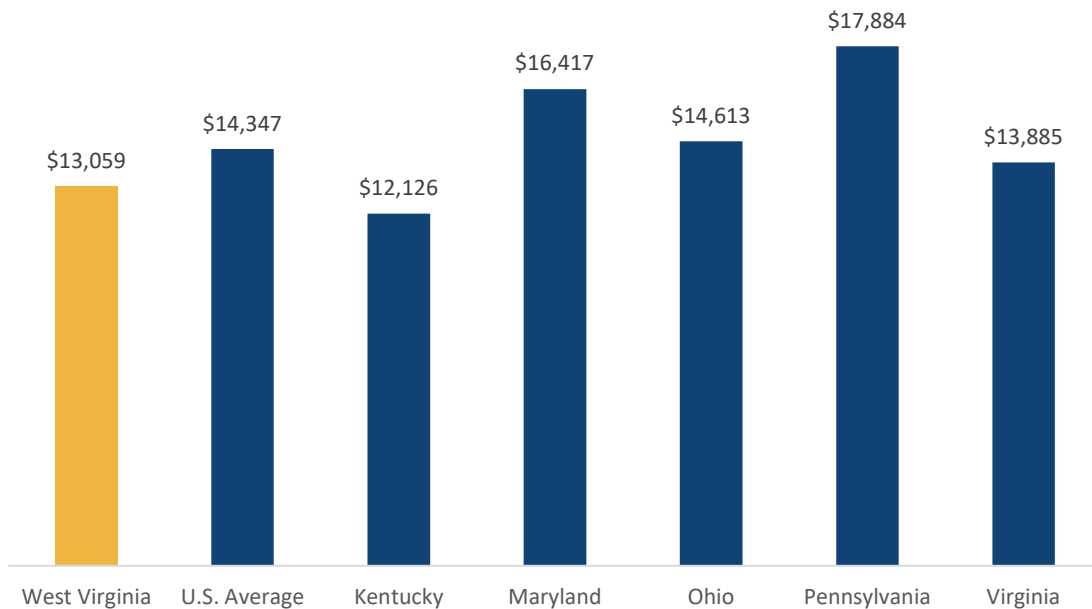
<sup>28</sup> Sean O'Leary, "West Virginia's Revenue Gap Grows to \$210.7 Million as Hundreds of Millions in Spending Obligations Loom," West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, November 8, 2023.

<sup>29</sup> 2021 Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/school-finances.html> (accessed on November 30, 2023).

<sup>30</sup> Jack Walker, "State lawmakers prep for 2023 WV Legislature with Marion County Board of Education," *Times West Virginian*, November 28, 2023.

<sup>31</sup> *West Virginia News*, "Bus Driver Shortage Creates Problems in West Virginia Schools", November 9, 2023.

**Figure 1: Average Per-pupil Spending by State and U.S. Average, 2021**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data

Evidence shows that increased funding for public education leads to better outcomes, with low-income students benefiting the most.<sup>32</sup> Put simply, robust public education funding is a critical component to reducing poverty and inequality. Meanwhile, recent evidence reveals that expansions of voucher programs lead to poorer outcomes. Accordingly, lawmakers should reaffirm their commitment to the public school system.

### Recommendations

Evidence shows that broadly designed voucher programs have mixed or negative impacts on student achievement. In West Virginia, no public reporting is required to help policymakers evaluate whether the Hope Scholarship is achieving what they intended. Lawmakers should halt further expansion of the program and implement public reporting and accountability measures before spending more resources on an unproven program. The Hope Scholarship board and the West Virginia Department of Education should, at a minimum, annually publish the standardized test results of Hope Scholarship students, the demographic information of who is receiving the Hope Scholarship, and a list of each private school and education service provider receiving funding and the amount received.

Additionally, the program would benefit from stronger guardrails and regulations. In the first year of the program alone, hundreds of thousands of dollars went to private schools located out-of-state and nearly \$2 million went to unaccredited schools. Lawmakers should ensure that only accredited schools in West Virginia that do not discriminate against students on the basis of religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other factors can receive Hope Scholarship funds. They could also strengthen fiscal responsibility by instituting income and enrollments caps on the program so costs do not rise exponentially and harm the ability of the state to fund its public education system and other priorities.

Finally, regardless of the expansion of the Hope Scholarship, the vast majority of West Virginia children will continue to receive their education in the state’s public schools, which must not lose resources to the Hope

<sup>32</sup> Bruce Baker, “Does Money Matter in Education? Second Edition,” Shanker Institute, April 2019.



Scholarship. Lawmakers should reaffirm their commitment to public schools by allocating robust funding which provides equitable resources to all school districts and meets the state's constitutional guarantee of a thorough and efficient school system for all.

## Appendix

**Table 1: Estimated Number of Professional Educators and Service Personnel No Longer Funded by the State Aid Formula by County Due to Enrollment Decline from Hope Scholarship Applicants Leaving Public School District**

COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	NET NEW 2023-24 HOPE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS	FEWER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS FUNDED	FEWER SERVICE PERSONNEL FUNDED	TOTAL FEWER PERSONNEL FUNDED
BARBOUR	18	1.27	0.37	1.64
BERKELEY	360	25.95	5.44	31.39
BOONE	14	1.02	0.52	1.54
BRAXTON	10	0.73	0.34	1.06
BROOKE	43	3.11	1.49	4.60
CABELL	193	13.95	3.18	17.13
CALHOUN	44	3.60	0.66	4.27
CLAY	5	0.36	0.16	0.52
DODDRIDGE	3	0.22	0.05	0.26
FAYETTE	161	11.56	4.49	16.04
GILMER	29	2.09	0.44	2.53
GRANT	5	0.35	0.11	0.47
GREENBRIER	82	5.85	1.00	6.85
HAMPSHIRE	43	3.10	1.27	4.37
HANCOCK	73	5.28	1.94	7.22
HARDY	1	0.05	0.00	0.05
HARRISON	201	14.77	2.64	17.41
JACKSON	57	4.14	1.45	5.59
JEFFERSON	173	12.49	2.61	15.10
KANAWHA	437	31.60	10.88	42.47
LEWIS	48	3.17	0.51	3.68
LINCOLN	29	2.11	0.96	3.07
LOGAN	132	9.56	4.22	13.78
MARION	162	11.71	1.28	12.99
MARSHALL	42	3.04	0.59	3.63
MASON	31	2.25	0.62	2.87
MCDOWELL	7	0.51	0.25	0.76
MERCER	94	6.80	1.52	8.32
MINERAL	28	2.03	0.42	2.45
MINGO	20	1.44	0.57	2.00
MONONGALIA	201	14.49	3.04	17.52
MONROE	32	2.26	0.68	2.93
MORGAN	17	1.08	0.28	1.36
NICHOLAS	71	5.15	1.81	6.97
OHIO	156	11.28	1.08	12.36
PENDLETON	17	1.37	0.26	1.63
PLEASANTS	11	0.61	0.17	0.78

<b>POCAHONTAS</b>	8	0.58	0.12	0.70
<b>PRESTON</b>	73	5.30	1.13	6.43
<b>PUTNAM</b>	185	13.38	0.87	14.25
<b>RALEIGH</b>	269	19.14	2.41	21.55
<b>RANDOLPH</b>	79	5.75	2.11	7.86
<b>RITCHIE</b>	7	0.55	0.11	0.66
<b>ROANE</b>	27	1.92	0.93	2.85
<b>SUMMERS</b>	17	1.24	0.32	1.55
<b>TAYLOR</b>	39	2.75	0.40	3.15
<b>TUCKER</b>	5	0.36	0.08	0.44
<b>TYLER</b>	1	0.07	0.02	0.09
<b>UPSHUR</b>	58	10.93	0.88	11.80
<b>WAYNE</b>	77	5.58	2.23	7.81
<b>WEBSTER</b>	5	0.36	0.08	0.44
<b>WETZEL</b>	5	0.35	0.16	0.52
<b>WIRT</b>	10	0.73	0.15	0.88
<b>WOOD</b>	291	21.04	5.98	27.02
<b>WYOMING</b>	9	0.65	0.27	0.92
<b>STATEWIDE TOTAL</b>	<b>4,180</b>	<b>301.27</b>	<b>63.16</b>	<b>364.43</b>

Source: WVCBP analysis of WV State Treasurer's Office and West Virginia Department of Education data.

*Methodology note: Authors calculated personnel losses based on the change in the school districts' PSSP aid given the net new Hope Scholarship applicants in the 2023-24 school year minus those in the 2022-23 school year, as those personnel would have been lost already. These estimates are based on the number of Hope Scholarship applications submitted from each county, as final awarded Hope Scholarship numbers were not available at the time of the public records request to the WVSTO. These figures assume that all Hope Scholarship applicants were awarded the Hope Scholarship and that all Hope Scholarship recipients had previously attended public school in their district of residence, a requirement of eligibility for the Hope Scholarship. This calculation does not take into account the impact of enrollment loss or gain in the county for other reasons aside from the Hope Scholarship.*

**Table 2: Estimated Funding Loss by County School District from Expiration of Remaining ESSER III Funds and Loss in State Aid Formula Funding Due to Hope Scholarship Students Leaving Public Education System**

<b>COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>	<b>REMAINING ESSER III FUNDS TO BE EXPENDED IN 2023-24</b>	<b>STATE AID FORMULA FUNDING LOST DUE TO HOPE SCHOLARSHIP ENROLLMENT LOSSES</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
BARBOUR	\$4,988,591	\$98,033	\$5,086,624
BERKELEY	\$15,332,378	\$2,008,096	\$17,340,474
BOONE	\$7,504,781	\$82,425	\$7,587,206
BRAXTON	\$6,265,050	\$52,773	\$6,317,823
BROOKE	\$4,000,218	\$169,215	\$4,169,433
CABELL	\$11,147,243	\$1,044,305	\$12,191,548
CALHOUN	\$1,662,394	\$256,033	\$1,918,427
CLAY	\$4,329,550	\$34,410	\$4,363,960
DODDRIDGE	\$1,155,250	\$0	\$1,155,250
FAYETTE	\$14,312,845	\$968,542	\$15,281,387
GILMER	\$1,377,925	\$163,563	\$1,541,488
GRANT	\$590,120	\$19,902	\$610,022
GREENBRIER	\$3,909,878	\$454,478	\$4,364,356
HAMPSHIRE	\$4,536,755	\$232,103	\$4,768,858
HANCOCK	\$6,822,058	\$389,229	\$7,211,287
HARDY	\$1,481,282	\$5,357	\$1,486,639
HARRISON	\$22,635,326	\$977,552	\$23,612,878
JACKSON	\$4,077,571	\$299,872	\$4,377,443
JEFFERSON	\$2,475,490	\$797,190	\$3,272,680
KANAWHA	\$45,010,276	\$2,139,559	\$47,149,835
LEWIS	\$3,318,370	\$256,569	\$3,574,939
LINCOLN	\$7,226,841	\$197,208	\$7,424,049
LOGAN	\$12,993,021	\$789,555	\$13,782,576
MARION	\$15,900,317	\$863,597	\$16,763,914
MARSHALL	\$5,849,391	\$35,356	\$5,884,747
MASON	\$5,802,692	\$179,951	\$5,982,643
MCDOWELL	\$14,098,238	\$42,346	\$14,140,584
MERCER	\$23,750,159	\$549,013	\$24,299,172
MINERAL	\$5,960,180	\$170,544	\$6,130,724
MINGO	\$14,499,817	\$125,690	\$14,625,507
MONONGALIA	\$6,637,913	\$896,030	\$7,533,943
MONROE	\$1,674,910	\$198,081	\$1,872,991
MORGAN	\$3,045,264	\$86,469	\$3,131,733
NICHOLAS	\$6,822,781	\$423,665	\$7,246,446
OHIO	\$7,041,615	\$578,129	\$7,619,744
PENDLETON	\$892,868	\$90,516	\$983,384
PLEASANTS	\$428,791	\$47,086	\$475,877
POCAHONTAS	\$1,184,578	\$38,006	\$1,222,584

<b>PRESTON</b>	\$5,818,475	\$414,429	\$6,232,904
<b>PUTNAM</b>	\$4,242,940	\$975,897	\$5,218,837
<b>RALEIGH</b>	-\$5,230,219	\$1,539,496	
<b>RANDOLPH</b>	\$4,536,042	\$437,064	\$4,973,106
<b>RITCHIE</b>	\$2,059,595	\$7,864	\$2,067,459
<b>ROANE</b>	\$5,178,405	\$151,307	\$5,329,712
<b>SUMMERS</b>	\$4,291,800	\$93,302	\$4,385,102
<b>TAYLOR</b>	\$4,256,566	\$195,085	\$4,451,651
<b>TUCKER</b>	\$1,025,618	\$22,253	\$1,047,871
<b>TYLER</b>	\$1,621,045	\$0	\$1,621,045
<b>UPSHUR</b>	\$1,284,915	\$341,481	\$1,626,396
<b>WAYNE</b>	\$15,753,724	\$473,122	\$16,226,846
<b>WEBSTER</b>	\$4,222,831	\$32,197	\$4,255,028
<b>WETZEL</b>	-\$169,034	\$1,396	
<b>WIRT</b>	\$330,125	\$61,732	\$391,857
<b>WOOD</b>	\$15,003,529	\$1,575,831	\$16,579,360
<b>WYOMING</b>	\$5,696,060	\$53,274	\$5,749,334
<b>STATEWIDE TOTAL</b>	<b>\$370,665,144</b>	<b>\$21,639,150</b>	<b>\$392,304,294</b>

Source: WVCBP analysis of WV State Treasurer's Office and West Virginia Department of Education data.

*Methodology note: This table assumes that all remaining ESSER III funds will be expended in the 2023-2024 school year and not returned to the U.S. Department of Education. It also assumes all Hope Scholarship applicants were awarded the Hope Scholarship and that all Hope Scholarship recipients had previously attended public school in their district of residence, a requirement of eligibility for the Hope Scholarship. This calculation does not take into account the impact of enrollment loss or gain in the county for other reasons aside from the Hope Scholarship.*

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