

Welcome!

**As we wait for folks to join,
please drop in the chat...**

1. Name
2. Organization/district
3. What brings you here today?

National Trends in District Spending on Teacher Professional Learning

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March 2024

What if we could marshal the

\$18 billion

spent annually on teacher PL and
focus it on high-impact programs
that advance educational equity?

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BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Teachers Know Best

Teachers' Views on
Professional Development



Most studies focus on individual districts because they...

Are key
decision-makers

Keep detailed
records

Are a
manageable unit
of analysis

Prior estimates are highly variable

| Per Teacher | Percent of Total Expenditure |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| \$18,000 (TNTP Mirage, 2015) | 9-19.5% (Miles et al., 2017) |
| \$7,900-\$21,700 (ERS, 2013) | 1.8-6.9% (Miles et al., 2004) |
| \$1,400-\$8,000 (Miles et al., 2004) | 3% (Killeen et al., 2002) |
| \$2,900-\$16,000 (Fermanich, 2002) | |
| \$1,400-\$22,000 | 1.8%-19.5% |

It's difficult to interpret the existing estimates...

Focal districts
may not be
representative

Inconsistent
definitions of
PL spending

No insight into
changes over
time

To better understand large-scale trends in PL spending, we need...

- 1 Representative or national data
- 2 A consistent definition of PL activities and spending
- 3 Multiple years

This Study: National District Finance Data

| | |
|-------------|--|
| What | F-33: survey of K-12 district revenues & expenditures (NCES Common Core of Data) |
| Who | All public school districts in 50 states and D.C. |
| When | Annually, 1999-2021 |
| Plus | District directory: non-fiscal district data Comparable Wage Index for Teachers (CWIFT) |

What does F-33 count as PL spending?

Includes

- Formal PD activities
- Curriculum development and planning
- Student assessment (district-wide)
- Library and media services
- Instruction-related technology (non-classroom)

- Services, e.g. consultant and vendor fees
- Conference fees and tuition
- Salaries and stipends for PL leaders
- Training and support for PL leaders
- Substitute coverage
- Materials and facilities

Excludes

- Administrator time cost
- Teacher time cost

- Teacher salary lanes and bonuses
- Teacher evaluation

F-33 provides an imperfect measure

Includes

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When we use our data to look at districts from previous studies, we find that our estimates understate PL costs

| | District Sample | Their estimates | Our estimates |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| TNTP Mirage, 2015 | 3 large districts | \$18k/teacher | \$9.1k/teacher |
| ERS, 2013 | DCPS | \$18.5k/teacher | \$10.8k/teacher |
| Miles et al., 2017 | Duval | 8.9% of budget | 5-7% of budget |

Findings

1. We are spending far more on PL at a national level than previous estimates suggest

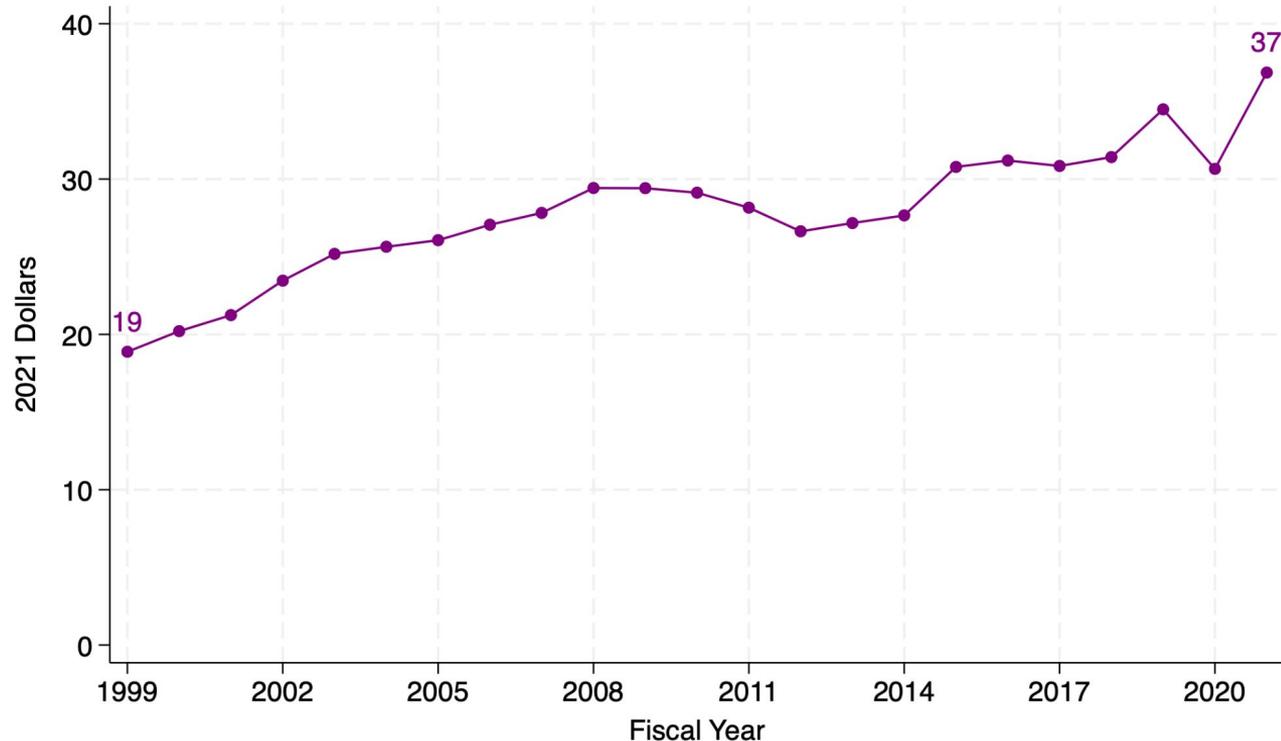
- Districts are spending **\$37 billion** annually, of which nearly **70%** goes towards salaries and benefits for district staff
- The average district spends **\$7,700 per teacher**
- The 100 largest districts spend **\$12,000 per teacher** on average

**Estimates for 2021*

2. Some spending patterns have shifted substantially, but others have hardly changed

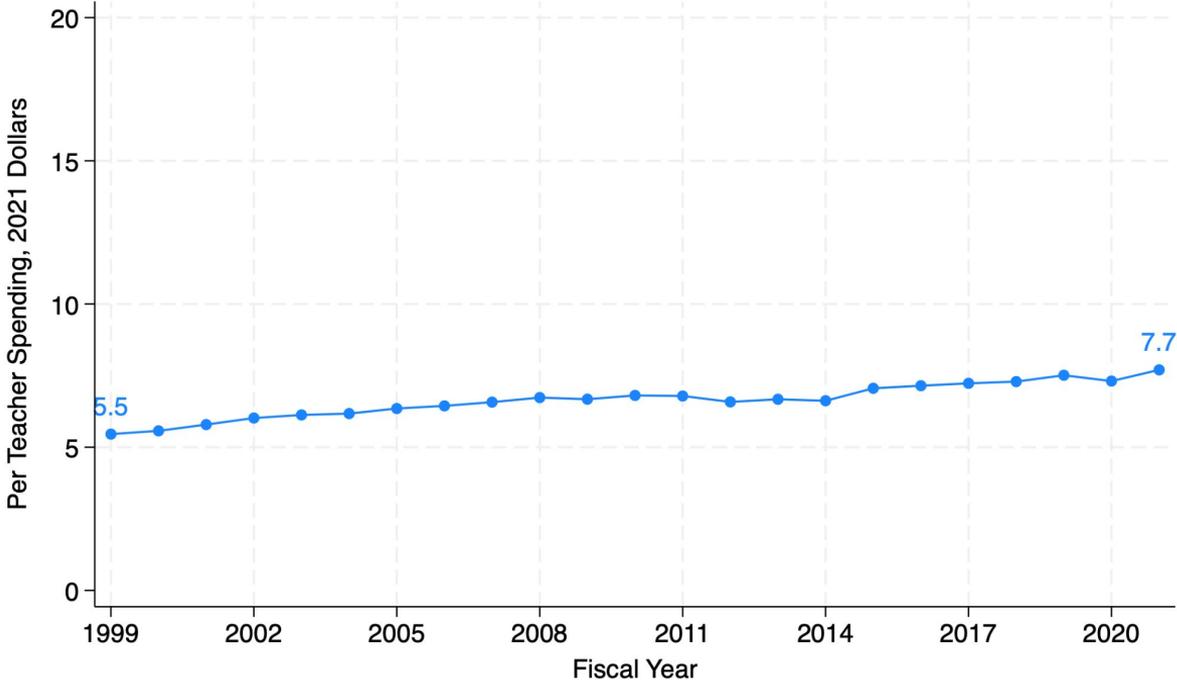
- total spending has **nearly doubled**
- per teacher spending has increased by **40%**
- the proportion of the districts' overall budget dedicated to PL has **held steady at 3%**
- the proportion of district PL spending dedicated to benefits and salaries has **held steady at 70%**

From 1999 to 2021, district spending has nearly doubled



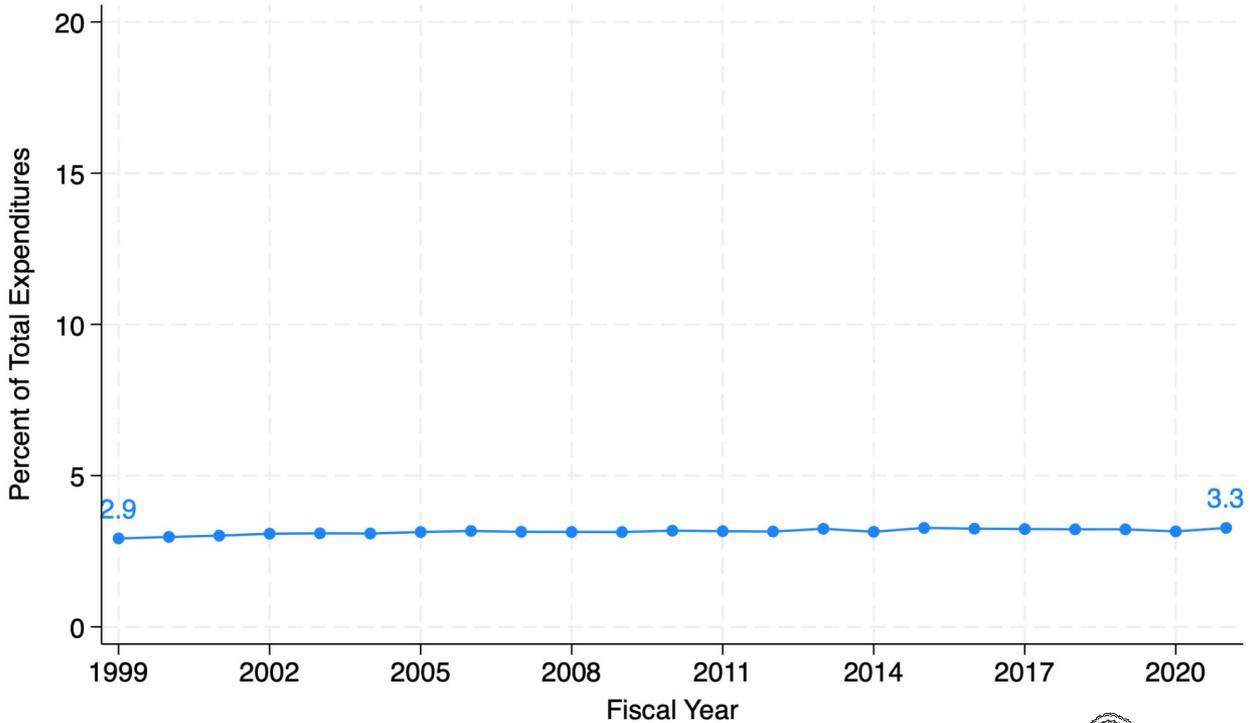
**Adjusted for inflation*

Per-teacher spending increased by around 40% across the same time period

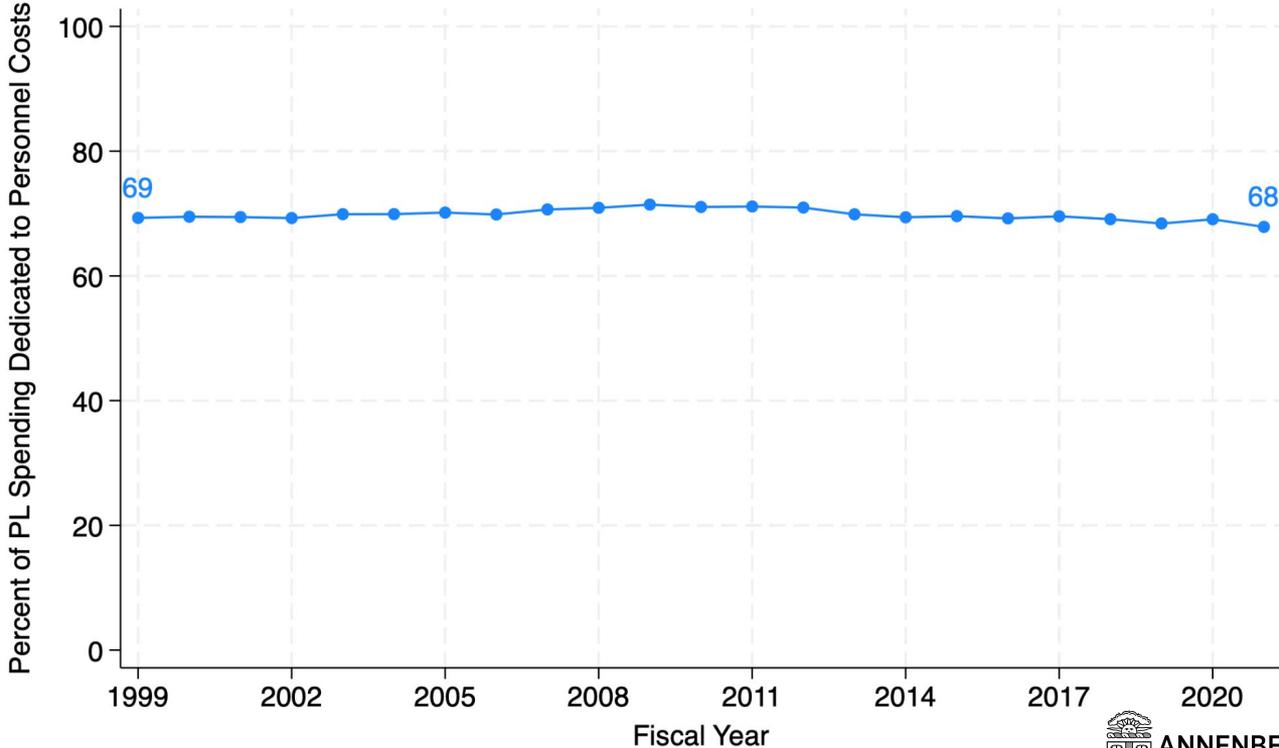


**Adjusted for inflation*

The average share of districts' overall budget dedicated to PL has held steady at 3%



The proportion of district PL spending dedicated to salaries and benefits has held steady at 70%

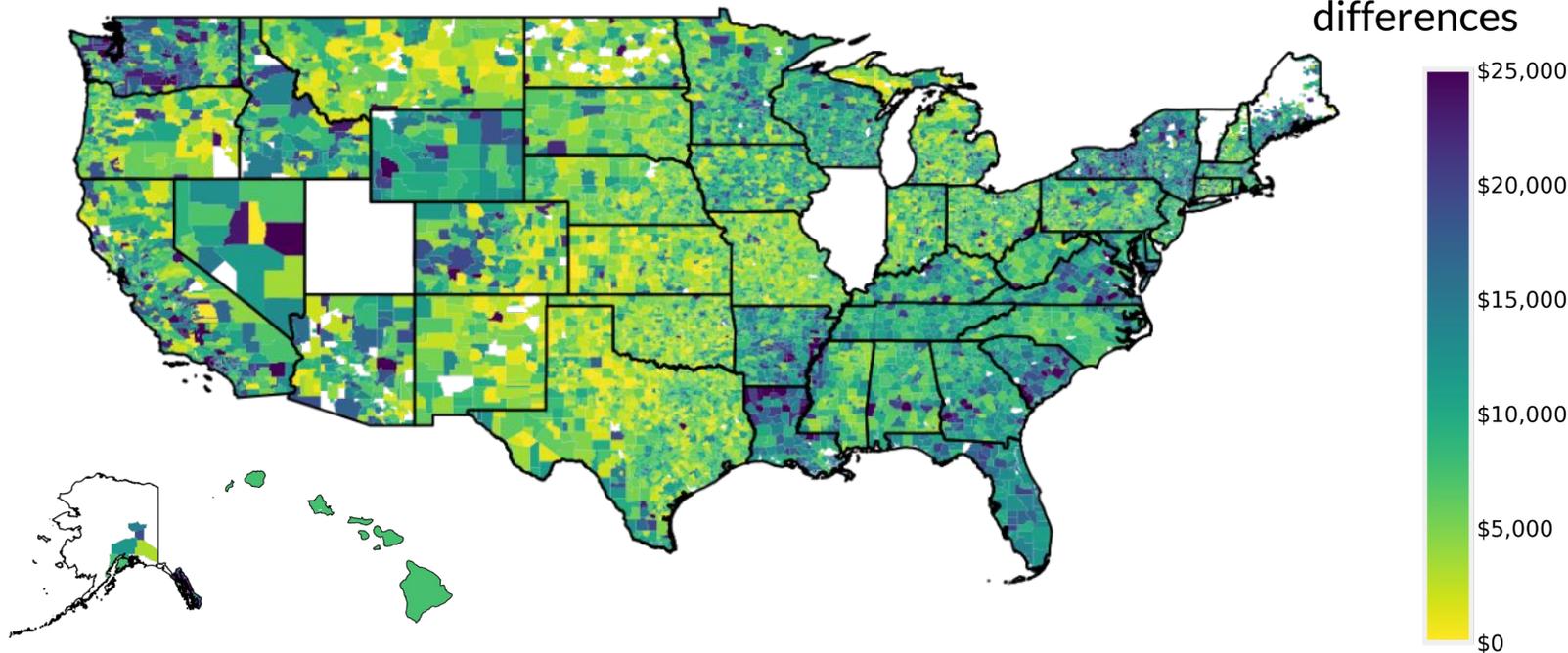


3. Spending patterns are driven in large part by district decision-making, needs, and constraints

- Per-teacher spending patterns **vary considerably across districts**, even when we adjust for differences in the cost of living and state-wide trends
- **Larger and more urban** districts spend **far more per teacher** than smaller and less urban districts
- In addition to spending less per teacher, **smaller districts** spend a smaller percentage on **salaries, stipends, and benefits for district employees**

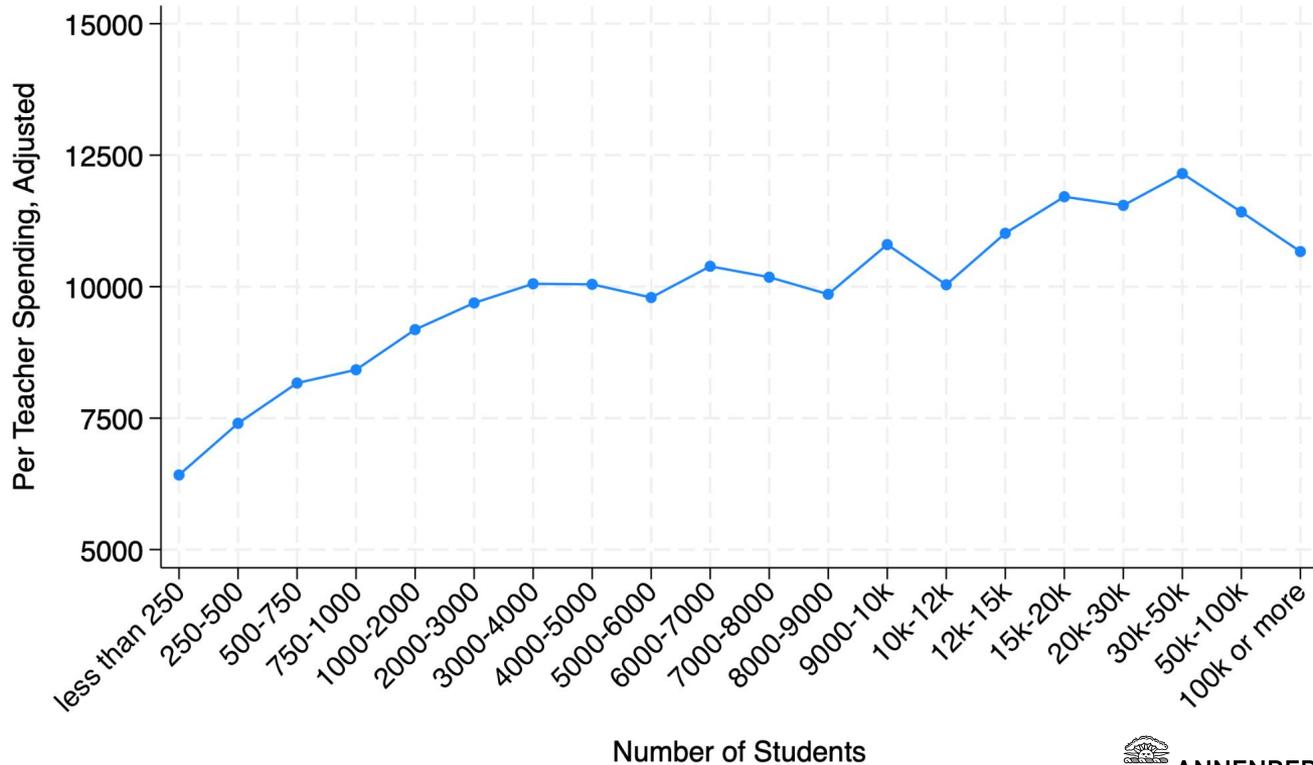
Spending patterns vary considerably across districts and states, but most of the variation is within states

Per-teacher spending, adjusted for cost of living differences

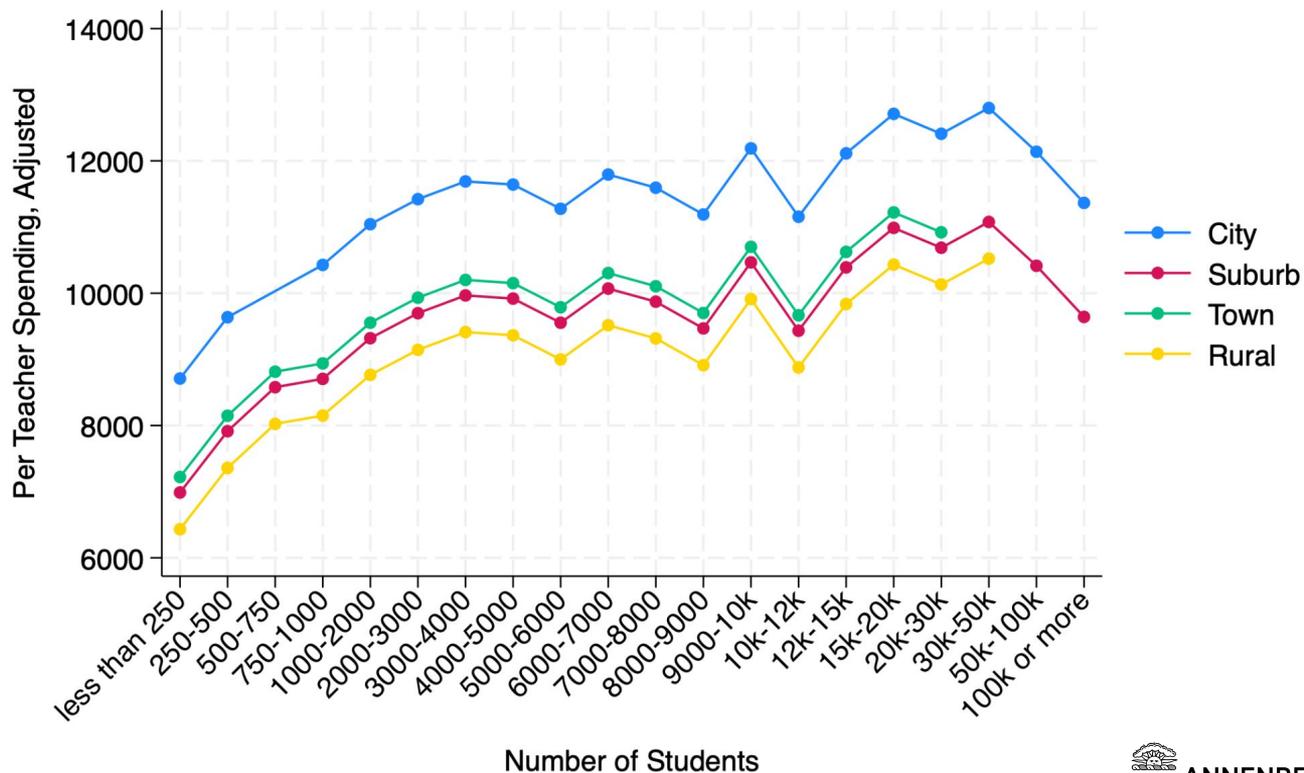


**Data missing for Illinois and Utah in 2021*

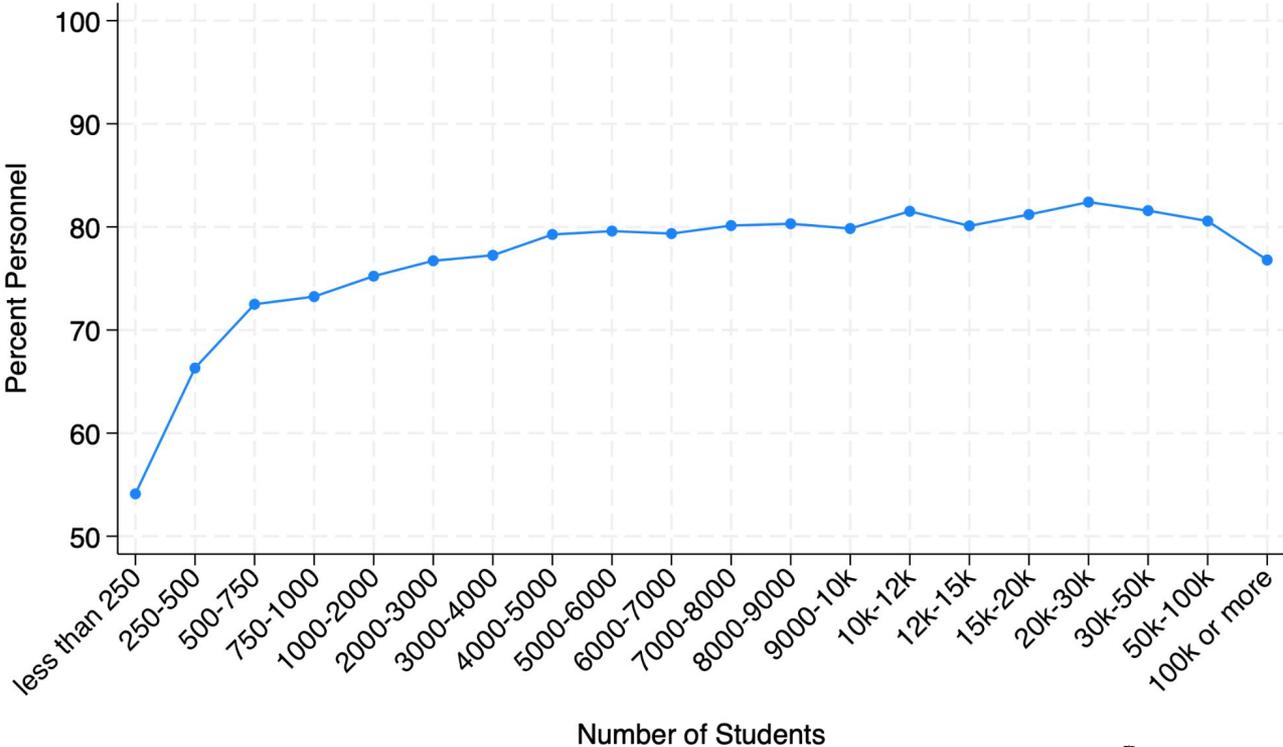
Within the same state, larger districts spend more on PL per teacher, even after controlling for cost of living



Within the same state, larger and more urban districts spend more per teacher, even after controlling for cost of living



Within the same state, smaller districts spend a lower percentage on salaries and benefits, even after controlling for urbanicity



Key Findings

- We are spending far more on PL at a national level than previous estimates suggest: **\$7700 per teacher and \$37 billion in total**
- While PL spending has increased substantially over the last two decades, the proportion of the budget allocated to PL and the allocation of PL spending between personnel and non-personnel costs has hardly changed
- Even after controlling for differences between states and differences in cost of living, PL spending varies considerably across districts
- Larger and more urban districts spend more per teacher than smaller and more rural districts

Marshalling the

\$37 billion

spent annually on teacher PL to
advance educational equity requires
understanding districts' fiscal
decision-making

How is the
money
allocated?

What is the
money spent
on?

What is the
return on
investment?



Research Partnership
for Professional Learning



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