

Our Children, Our Future



Education Fact of the Week:

Our Northern Neighbors, Money and Achievement

You have seen many references to Iowa's 35th in the nation ranking and \$1,612 expenditure gap compared to the rest of the nation. Iowa's education coalition is concerned about this because we know an adequate investment is a necessary condition to improve outcomes and opportunities for our students. With discussion of school start date limitations, there have been conjectures that starting school later either doesn't impact or might even improve student achievement since Wisconsin and Minnesota start later than Iowa and "their achievement is better."

Achievement and Demographics

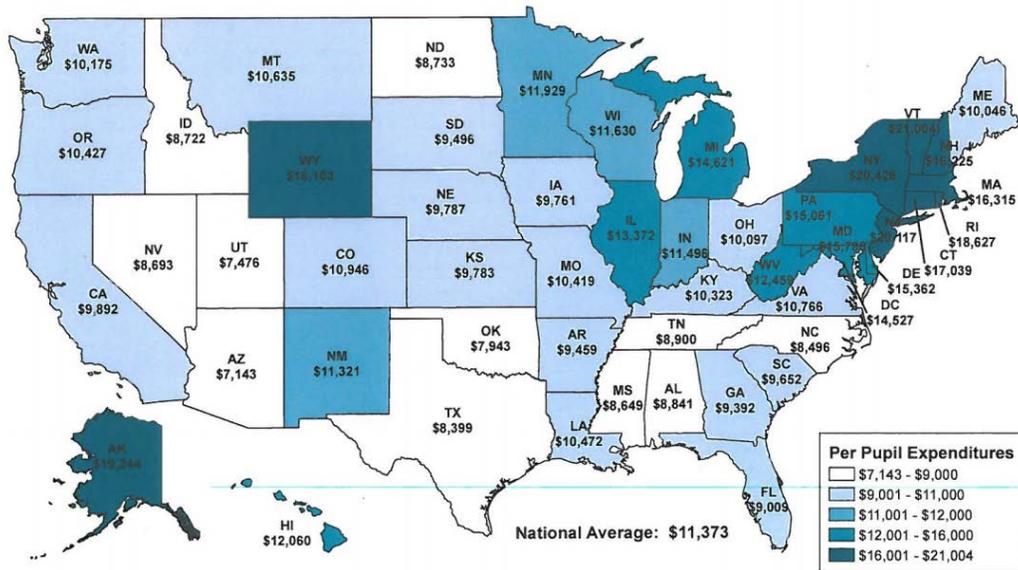
Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin are very similar in many aspects of student performance and not surprisingly, demographics. Missouri, Iowa's neighbor to the south is also included for comparison purposes, in the following table which shows details:

Indicator	Iowa	Minnesota	Wisconsin	Missouri
Children below 100% federal poverty level	16%	15%	18%	23%
4 th grade NAEP reading score	224	227	221	222
4 th grade NAEP math score	246	253	245	240
8 th grade NAEP reading score	269	271	268	267
8 th grade NAEP math score	285	295	289	283
4 year adjusted cohort graduation:				
All students	89%	78%	88%	86%
Black students	74%	51%	64%	73%
Limited English Proficient	74%	51%	66%	67%
Low-income (FRL) eligible	80%	59%	75%	79%
Total Expenditures per Pupil	\$9,761	\$11,929	\$11,630	\$10,419

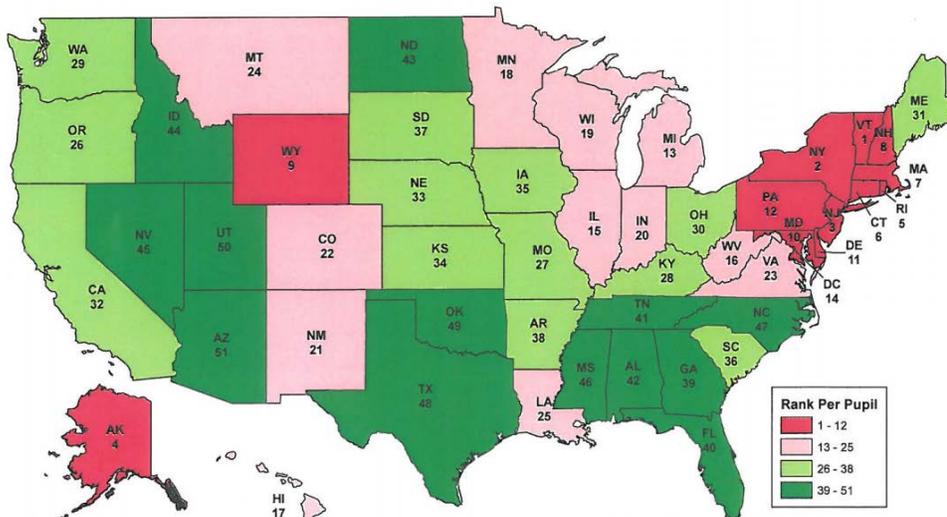
Iowa's achievement is relatively close to our neighbors in terms of NAEP scores and outperforms our neighbors in graduation rates. The following details relate to per pupil expenditures, where Iowa clearly lags our neighbors to the north, by \$2,168 in Minnesota to \$1,869 in Wisconsin and to the south, Missouri, which spends \$658 more per pupil.

Expenditures per pupil: Although the start date issue is clearly one of core values, considering who is in the best position to decide when school starts and why, we thought it appropriate to remind stakeholders and state leaders about the inputs to education, such as per pupil expenditures. At the Dec. 19, 2014 School Finance Interim Committee, LSA shared two maps, [along with other documents](#), which showed expenditures per pupil and rankings for the 2013-14 school year.

PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES - 2013-2014



PER PUPIL RANKINGS - 2013-2014



Source: National Education Association, Rankings of the States 2013 and Estimates of School Statistics 2014

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Investing in Continued Success

Imagine what would be possible if Iowa students were funded at the national average, an additional \$1,612 more per pupil than is currently spent. The Education Coalition calls on our Legislature and Governor to set a 6% growth rate per student for the 2015-16 school year. Setting the 2015-16 per pupil rate needs to be done within the first 30 days. The 2016-17 rate should be set within 30 days of the release of the Governor's budget, returning to the practice required in Iowa law (Iowa Code 257.8).

Schools need sufficient notice to anticipate revenue, make timely staffing decisions and thoughtfully plan to invest the funds wisely for student learning. The future of Iowa's students and our state's continued success depend on a solid investment in the priority of public education.

Brought to you by the joint efforts of Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa, Iowa Area Education Agencies, Iowa State Education Association, the Rural Schools Advocates of Iowa, and the Urban Education Network of Iowa in support of adequate and timely school funding.

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