

Franklin City Public Schools Budget Factors

The Schools Our Children Deserve

We all want our children to attend schools that are well-resourced and able to provide reliable transportation, nutritious meals, quality instruction, and essential health services. Since the pandemic, our roughly 900 students in Franklin City face more challenges than ever, from staff shortages, drops in academic achievement, and additional mental health needs. When looking at our current local spending, it's clear our budget comes up short in meeting the most pressing challenges our students and schools face today. Franklin City can step up to fund our schools at levels that meet our students' needs and better reflect our capacity and commitment to our children.



Budget

In the 2022-2023 school year, Franklin City spent \$17,125 per student, ranking us 26 out of 131 school divisions in the state. Yet, when adjusted for the high cost of living, the spending power drops to \$16,981 per student and Franklin City ranks 20 out of Virginia's 131 school divisions.

Franklin City has seen a drop in local per student spending of \$173 or 3% between the 2014-2015 and 2022-2023 school years (adjusted for inflation). Compared to the regional average for local per student spending, Franklin City only spent \$227 more in the 2022-2023 school year. While Franklin City had a strengthening economy over this time, its level of commitment and effort towards schools did not reflect this.



Capacity and Effort

Virtually every locality in the state spends beyond what the state requires it to match (referred to as Required Local Effort) because the state vastly underestimates what it actually costs to run schools. In aggregate, divisions spent 107% above the Required Local Effort, but Franklin City spent 141%, which is 34 percentage points above the state average.

Franklin City has capacity to do more to raise adequate revenue for its schools. Franklin City's property tax effort is 4% below the average city rate.

A one penny property tax increase in Franklin City would raise approximately \$70,000 annually.



Outcomes

Many students lost significant ground on state academic achievement between the 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 school years. Students in Franklin City saw a drop in pass rates on the reading SOL test of 27.5% and 66.7% in math - among the largest declines in the state. Yet further disparities exist, with math SOL pass rates dropping 70.1% for economically disadvantaged students. Franklin City must do more for its students who face significant barriers to education.



Staffing

The teacher vacancy rate in Franklin City was 6.2% as of October 2023, 2.3 percentage points higher than the state average. The overall staffing vacancy rate was 3.9% as of October 2023, adding pressure for all staff to cover shortage areas.

Franklin City had an average budgeted teacher salary of \$61,413 in the 2023-2024 school year, which is \$9,028 below the state average. Adjusted for the relatively high cost of living in the locality, the average teacher salary drops to \$60,896. With high salaries and lower cost of living in nearby communities, on top of a dwindling supply of graduates with teaching degrees, Franklin City is not in a strong position to compete for high-quality educators in the future.