

# Patrick County 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 2,000 students in Patrick 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. Patrick 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, Patrick County spent \$13,391 per student, ranking us 98 out of 131 school divisions in the state.

Patrick has seen an increase in local per student spending of \$725 or 25% between the 2014-2015 and 2022-2023 school years (adjusted for inflation). Compared to the regional average for local per student spending, Patrick spent a whopping \$1,529 less in the 2022-2023 school year. While Patrick 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 Patrick County only spent 63%, which is 44 percentage points below the state average. Patrick would need to spend \$2,319,171 more annually to be at the average state percent above the Required Local Effort (this reflects the low level of effort the division puts into per pupil spending relative to the state).

Patrick County has capacity to do more to raise adequate revenue for its schools. Patrick County's property tax effort is 12% below the average regional rate.

A one penny property tax increase in Patrick County would raise approximately \$170,000 annually.



### Outcomes

Many students lost significant ground on state academic achievement between the 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 school years. Students in Patrick saw a drop in pass rates on the reading SOL test of 9.4% and 25.0% in math. Yet these total numbers mask worrisome disparities, with math SOL pass rates dropping 46.2% for English Learners and 34.4% for economically disadvantaged students. Patrick must do more for its students who face significant barriers to education.



### Staffing

The teacher vacancy rate in Patrick was 3.4% as of October 2023. The overall staffing vacancy rate was 3.5% as of October 2023, adding pressure for all staff to cover shortage areas.

Patrick had an average budgeted teacher salary of \$51,269 in the 2023-2024 school year, which is \$19,172 below the state average. With high salaries and lower cost of living in nearby communities, on top of a dwindling supply of graduates with teaching degrees, Patrick is not in a strong position to compete for high-quality educators in the future.