



Dear ASBA Member,

Each year, per state statute, the Arizona Auditor General produces a report on school district classroom spending.

This year's report continues to emphasize that despite continuous severe budget cuts, our public education leaders remain focused on allocating more dollars to support students in classrooms.

Let's look at what the data in the report shows.

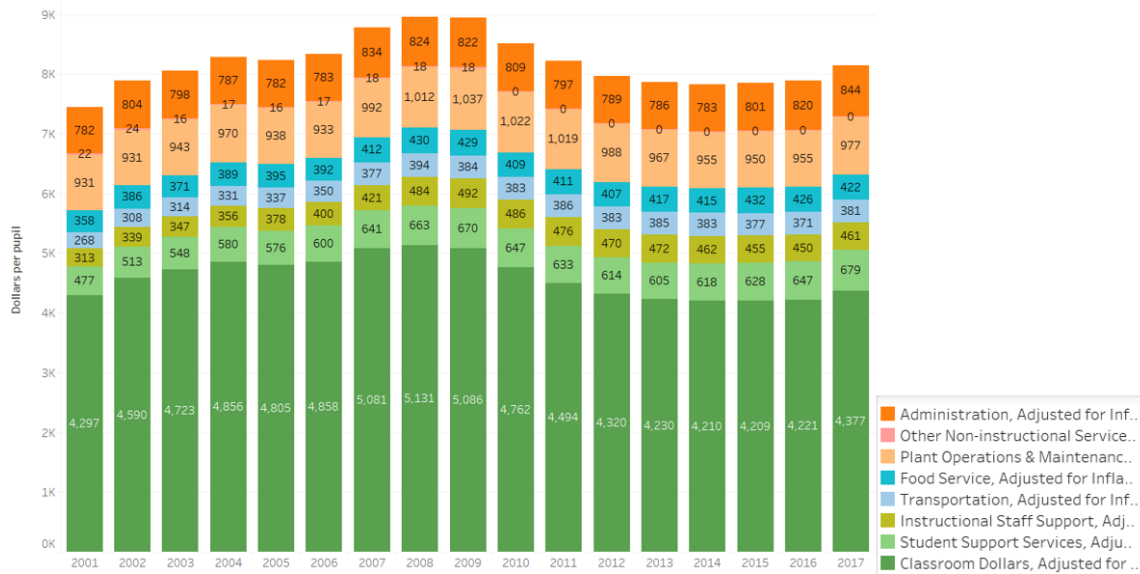
In the combined services of instruction, student support services and instructional staff support, school districts continue to keep funding at a stable level despite huge cuts to their budgets. In the Auditor General Report for Fiscal Year 2017, the percentage for instruction, student support services and instructional staff support was 67.7 percent compared to the 68.4 percent in the report in Fiscal Year 2001, the first time the Auditor General completed this type of study. This is a small percentage reduction when we consider the significant cuts to school district funding over this period, including a decade of cuts to capital funding.

The largest increases in spending since 2001:

- Student Support Services: \$202 per pupil – increases in this category are largely driven by increases in special education expenditures
- Instructional Staff Support: \$148 per pupil – increases in this category are due to higher turnover of teachers and increased training demands
- Transportation: \$113 per pupil – increases in this category are driven by special education expenditures as well as an aging fleet of vehicles



Arizona's Operational Spending per pupil Since 2001, inflation adjusted to fiscal year 2017 dollars



We continue to stand by the fact that the "dollars in the classroom" measure is an outmoded way of benchmarking how Arizona supports student success. The commonly accepted definition of "classroom spending" by the Governor, Legislature and public education leaders clearly indicates what it takes to support a classroom. The extremely narrow definition that the Auditor General's Office continues to use does not.

It does not describe effective use of dollars dedicated to teaching, learning and graduating every student attending a public school in Arizona, regardless of zip code or socioeconomic status.

Click on the link below to view the 2017 Auditor General Report.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,
 Dr. Timothy Ogle
 Executive Director, ASBA