



Building State Capacity
and Productivity Center



Financial Transparency Displays: a) for what? b) for whom? c) how will it work? September 27, 2018

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Agenda



1. Visualization Goals & Audiences
2. Sample Visualizations
3. New BSCP Center data visualization paper



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The problem with most financial displays...



they. don't. get. used.



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Critical questions for visualization designs



WHAT do you hope they'll do

- i. Seek improved equity across district schools.
- ii. Seek improved outcomes for the dollar (relative to meaningful peers).
- iii. Improve participation in allocation.
- iv. Other?
- v. Agnostic?

WHO do you hope will use the info?

- a) Parents
- b) Advocacy
- c) Principals
- d) District Leaders

HOW will that happen?
(no really: How exactly?)



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HOW will that happen? (no really: How exactly?)

Parents look up how much is spent at their school, then compare to other schools (taking stock of demographics), then lobby district for change.



Critical questions for visualization designs



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Advocacy compares spending across all schools in the district (taking stock of demographics), then presses district for change.



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HOW will that happen? (no really: How exactly?)

Principals benchmark their own school's spending and outcomes, in comparison to meaningful peers, and then: a) manages school differently to improve results, b) seeks new ideas/innovations from peers, c) presses districts for changes in allocation that can help.



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HOW will that happen? (no really: How exactly?)

Users examine their own spending (and maybe demographics and outcomes) and are invited to weigh in on proposed spending going forward (requires display of budgets too).



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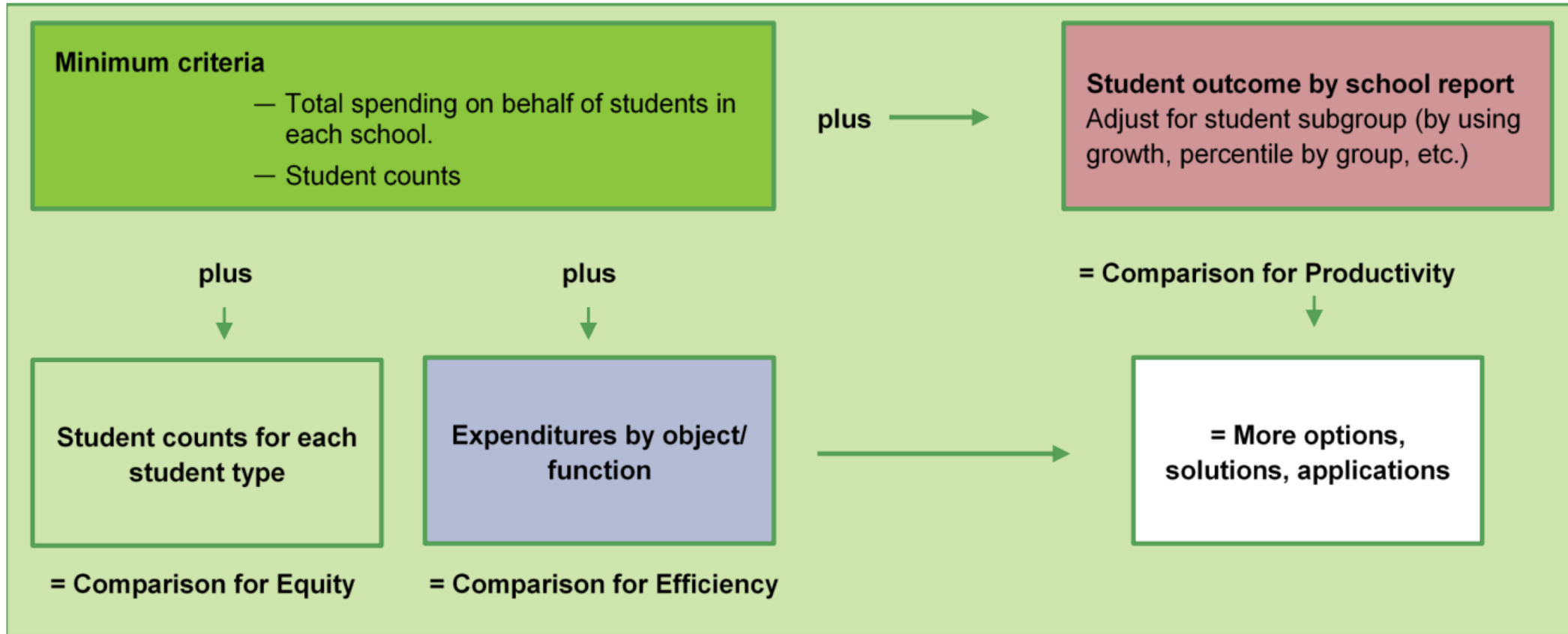
Which other data are needed for this to happen?



What data does your system need to accomplish the HOW?




Figure 1. Different data pairings enable different analyses and uses



Colorado Financial Transparency Website



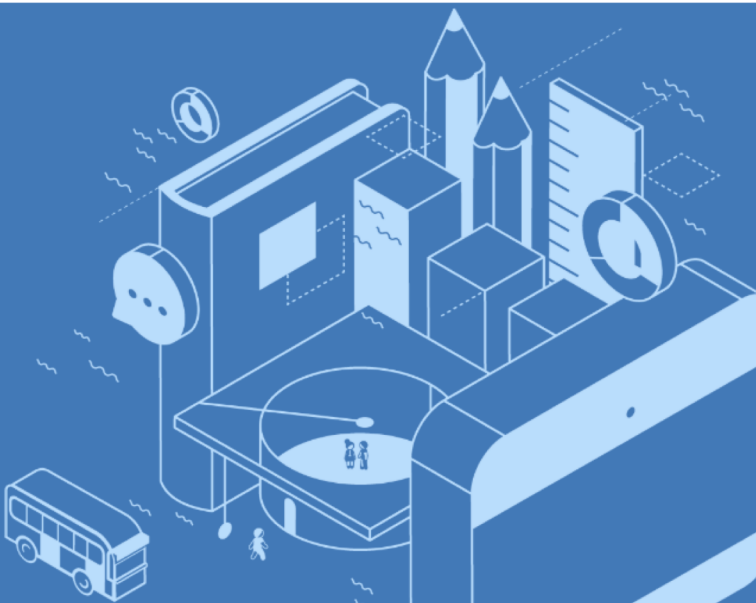
 **Financial Transparency** | FISCAL YEAR 2016 - 2017


Search by city, name or zip code

Financial Transparency for Colorado Schools


Welcome to the Colorado K12 Financial Transparency website. Here you will find revenue and expenditure information for each school, district, and BOCES throughout the state. Click below to learn more, or begin exploring using the search and map features.


[Learn more](#)



 **Search for a School, District, or BOCES**

Search by city, name or zip code

 **Explore the Map**



State Snapshot

Gain state-level context. Explore key financial Colorado data from the platform and discover the value of engaging, easy-to-read financial transparency.

[Learn more about Colorado](#)



- What: Other/Agnostic (comply with state law)
- Who: Unsure
- How: Unsure



Colorado Financial Transparency Website



Denver County 1

Greenlee Elementary School

1150 Lipan Street
DENVER, CO 80204

335
STUDENTS SERVED

[Compare](#) [Historical Data](#)

Compare Schools

You may compare up to four schools, districts, or BOCES. Use the search to add new comparisons.

Spending

Spending

\$14,134 per student
[View Breakdown](#)

\$10,196 State Average

Learning Environment
\$2,861,979
[View Fund Breakdown](#)

Operations
\$237,395
[View Fund Breakdown](#)

\$3,099,375 TOTAL

Construction, Debt, Refinancing & Other
\$225,339 TOTAL

These expenditures are those that are not associated with day-to-day operation of school activities. They are comprised of major construction projects, debt payments, acquisition of land, and other programs.

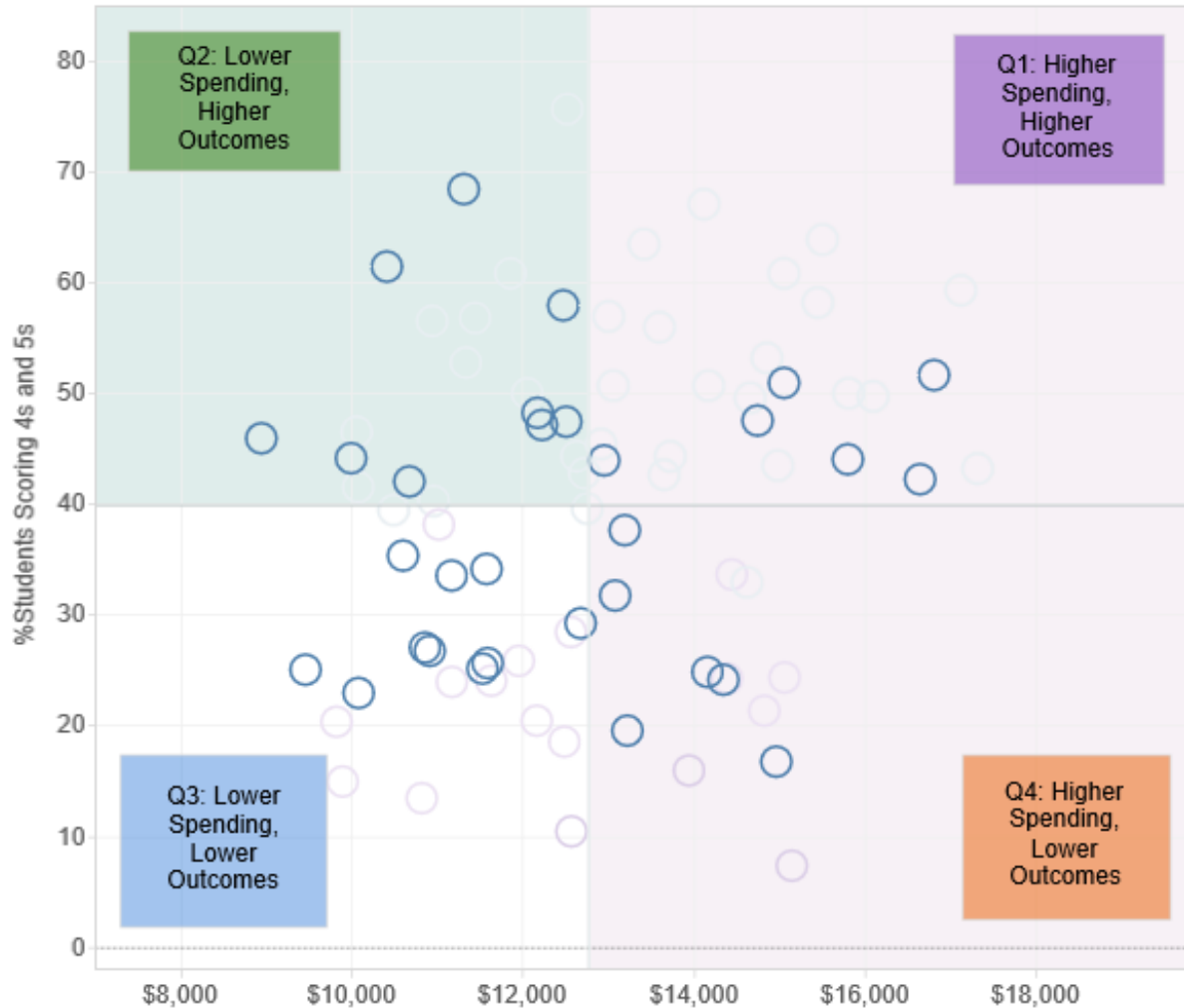
Greenlee Elementary School	Ashley Elementary School	Chinook Trail Elementary School	State Average
1150 Lipan Street DENVER, CO 80204	1914 Syracuse Street DENVER, CO 80220	11795 Grand Lawn Circle COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80924	
335 STUDENTS SERVED	403 STUDENTS SERVED	964 STUDENTS SERVED	
205 SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	205 SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	36 SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	
Denver County 1	Denver County 1	Academy 20	
TOTAL SPENDING PER STUDENT \$14,134	TOTAL SPENDING PER STUDENT \$13,740	TOTAL SPENDING PER STUDENT \$7,823	\$10,196
Breakdown	Breakdown	Breakdown	
SCHOOL ALLOCATION PER STUDENT	SCHOOL ALLOCATION PER STUDENT	SCHOOL ALLOCATION PER STUDENT	
DISTRICT ALLOCATION PER STUDENT \$4,882	DISTRICT ALLOCATION PER STUDENT \$4,882	DISTRICT ALLOCATION PER STUDENT \$3,357	

- Start by looking at one school or district at a time
- Can compare schools, but cannot see all schools in one LEA at the same time
- Financial data only
- Does include school's share of central dollars (district allocation)

Scatterplot Visualization



Schools: \$ Spent by Student vs. Math Score (circle color is school's #FRL)



Choose Outcome

- Overall Achievement
- Math Score
- Reading Score
- Growth Score

School District

cranston +

School Level

Elementary

School Size Group

(All)

View by

- Quadrant
- Quadrant in View
- #Students
- %FRL
- %ELL
- %Special Ed

Click to highlight

- 0%-25%
- 25%-50%
- 50%-75%
- 75%-100%

Urban Rural

Not Urban

Saylesville ES (170-3112)

Lincoln
Q1: Higher Spending, Higher Outcomes

\$ Spent by Student: \$16,649

#Students: 255

#ELL: 6

#FRL: 83

#SpEd: 53

Overall:

ELA: 60.90

Math: 42.20

Growth:

- What: Seek improved outcomes
- Who: District and school leaders
- How: Compare spending and outcomes so user can utilize information to drive improvements



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EdTrust New York: Advocacy tool



- What: Equity
- Who: Multiple
- How: Compare spending across schools in district to advocate for equitable distribution
- Some info on outcomes but user has to navigate numerous screens

New York School Funding Transparency Tool



This tool is designed to help the public better understand how funds are spent within school districts, and whether resources are reaching the students who most need them. School districts shown here have submitted their budget information to the state, and it is currently under review. Read the data note [here](#). Have questions? Please contact us at schoolfunding@edtrustny.org.

HOME

SEE MY SCHOOL

SEE MY DISTRICT

COMPARE
SCHOOLS

MAP THE DATA



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District user: Allows quick comparison of budgeting in high need to low need schools.



HOME
SEE MY SCHOOL
SEE MY DISTRICT
COMPARE SCHOOLS
MAP THE DATA

Use the search box below to select your school district.

You'll see how the district is allocating funds and if the schools with the greatest needs receive the most resources.

CHOOSE A DISTRICT

New York City Department of Education

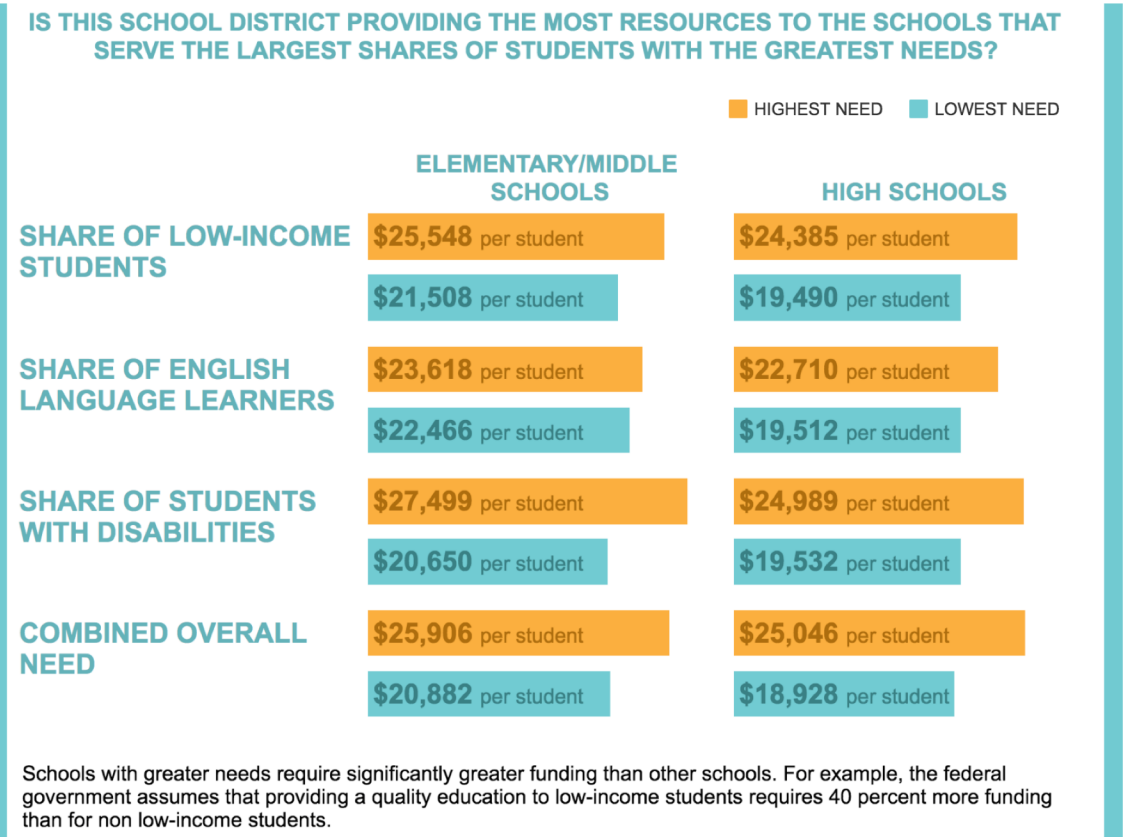
HOW DO SCHOOLS IN MY DISTRICT COMPARE?

CHOOSE DATA

GRAND TOTAL SPENDING PER STUDENT (including central office costs)

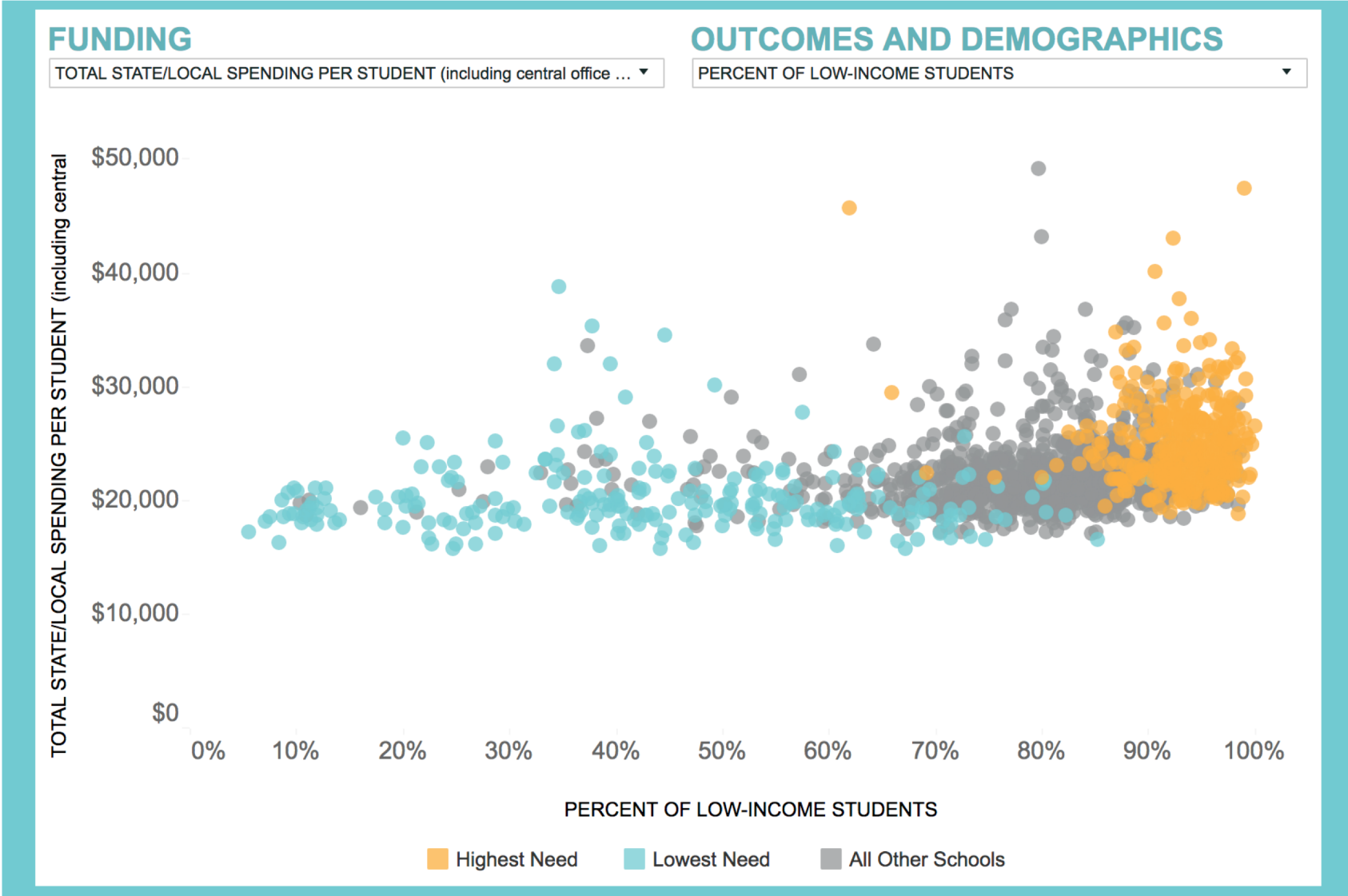
ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS	\$23,239	average per student
HIGH SCHOOLS	\$21,350	average per student

A typical school district spends more per student in high schools than in elementary/middle schools.

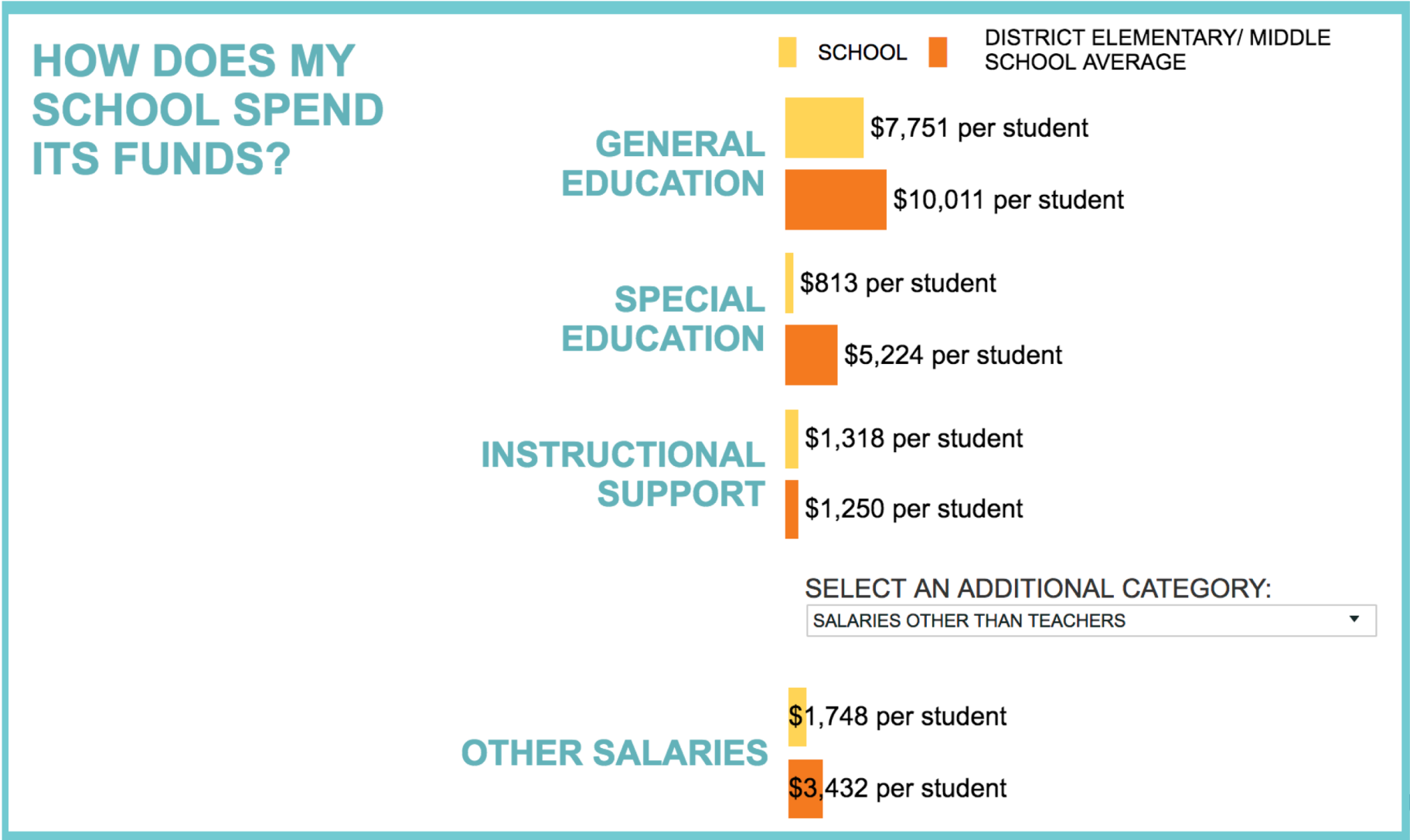


On average, does this district budget more on highest need schools?

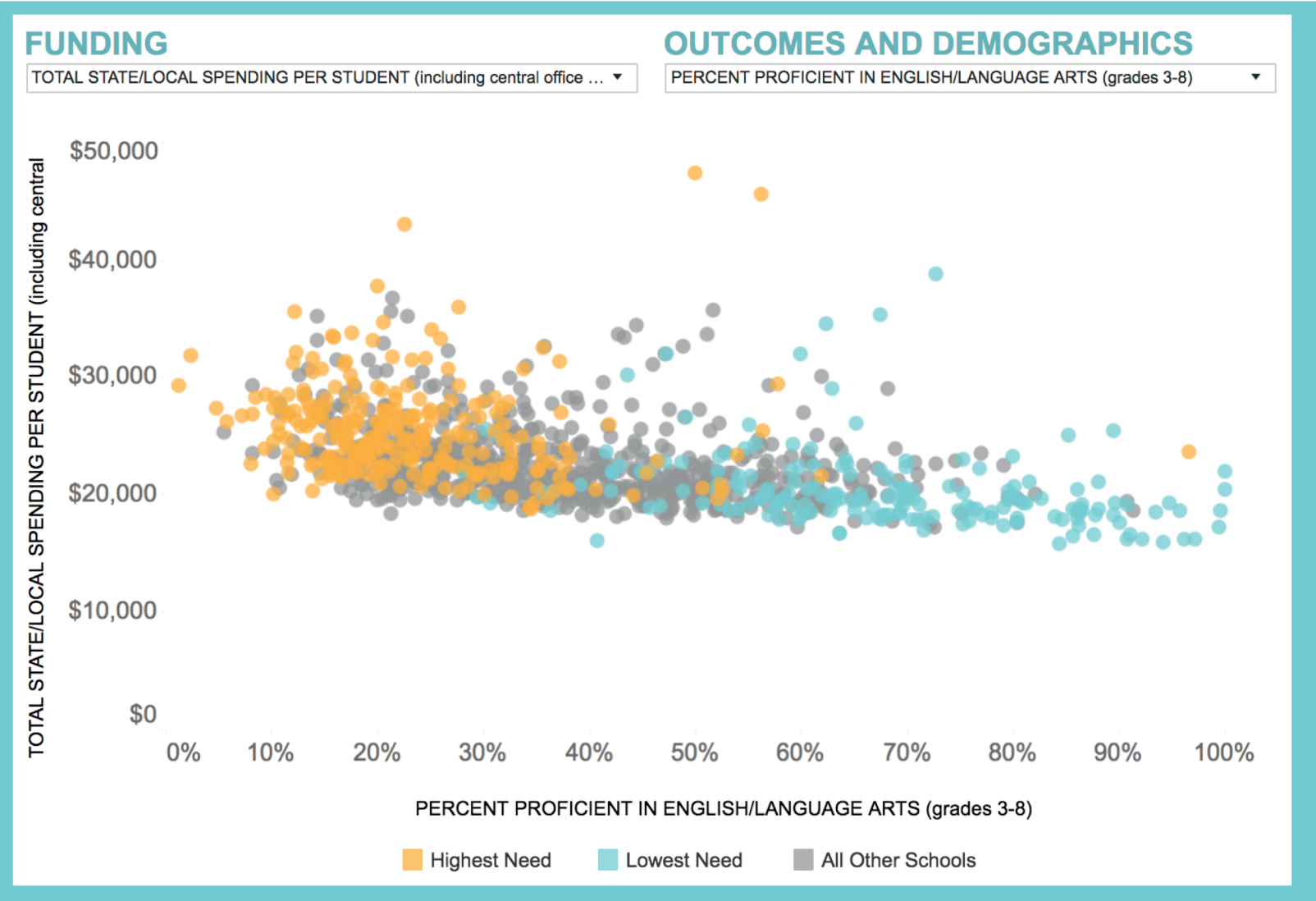
District user: quick view of budgeting and poverty across all schools – for equity



Principal/parent user—does my school budget more/less than district average?



District user: comprehensive view of funding and outcomes



Data Visualization Checklist: Helps clarify the WHO, WHAT and HOW



1. How much is spent in School X?
2. Is School X spending more or less per pupil than other schools in the same district? Other schools with similar student demographics? Other schools in the same state?
3. Does it appear that District Y divvies up funds equitably across schools?
4. What is driving spending differences across schools?
5. What funds/expenditures (if any) were excluded?
6. How does School X's expenditures on services (transportation, food, etc.) compare to other schools?
7. How does School X's costs for inputs (teaching, leadership, etc.) compare to other schools?
8. Is there a school (or schools) School X can learn from? Specifically, is there a school spending a similar amount with similar student demographics but is able to achieve higher student outcomes?
9. Compared to peer schools, how well is School X able to leverage funds to achieve outcomes for students?

4 Easy Wins for Data Visualization:



1. Keep budgeting (funding) and spending language straight
2. Include an option for users to weigh in, ask questions or provide feedback
3. Report spending alongside relevant student and school information when possible (don't report spending numbers in isolation)
4. Think of visualization development on a continuum – don't rule out ideas simply because they cannot happen in Y1

New BSCP Center Resource



A Checklist to Guide Data-Visualization Decisions

When considering how school-level per-pupil expenditures are to be made public, an important first step is to understand how the data can (and will) be used by various stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, district and school leaders, community advocates, parents, media, etc.).

http://www.bscpcenter.org/ftresources/resources/BSCP_Visualization_Checklist_Document.pdf



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Questions?

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