

## Introduction

This *ERS Research Snapshot* provides answers to some of the key questions often asked by education leaders, policy makers, other school employees, and community members about budgeted revenues and expenditures within U.S. public school systems:

- *Why is information about school district budgets important?* ..... 2
- *How were school district budgets generally allocated in 2006-07?* ..... 2
- *To what extent did expenditure allocations of districts vary by enrollment size, geographic region, community type, and per-pupil expenditure level?* ..... 3
- *How have allocations for instructional services changed since last year?* ..... 8
- *How much of school district budgets was set aside for staff salaries and other benefits?* ..... 8
- *On what sources did school districts rely for funds, and how much did each source contribute?* ..... 9

To provide answers to these questions, data on budgeted revenues and expenditures, gathered from the ERS National Survey of School District Budgets, 2006-07, are presented in this report.

## Overview

In 2006-07, slightly more than two-thirds (67.5 percent) of school district budgets, on average, were allocated to *instructional services* (compared with 6.0 percent for school-site leadership, 5.5 percent for central-office and school board services, 9.9 percent for student services, and 10.5 percent for building operations). These proportions are slightly influenced, however, by a school district's enrollment size, geographic region, community type, and per-pupil expenditure level.

Over three-fourths (78.4 percent) of school district budgets were allocated to staff salaries, retirement contributions, and other benefits in 2006-07. Overall, classroom teachers received the largest portion of district money allocated for salaries and benefits (65.7 percent). This translates into \$4,554 per pupil and an average of 51.5 percent of the total budget. Auxiliary and support staff represented 25.9 percent of the staff compensation portion of the budget (20.4 percent of total current expenditures and \$1,812 per pupil). School-site leaders represented 5.0 percent of the staff compensation portion of budget (3.9 percent of total current expenditures and \$342 per pupil), and professional administrative personnel at the central-office level accounted for 3.4 percent of the staff compensation budget (2.6 percent of total current expenditures and \$237).

Over the last decade, some responsibility for funding schools has shifted toward the states. In 2006-07, states accounted for 49.3 percent of budgeted revenue. However, local districts are still responsible for providing a significant portion of revenue. In 2006-07, an average of 44.0 percent of the funds needed to operate the schools was provided by local sources.

These and other data on budgeted expenditures and revenue within public school systems are collected and reported each year by Educational Research Service (ERS) as part of the ERS National Survey of School District Budgets in Public Schools.