

## RAR Dashboard Visuals: Data Sources and Reflective Questions

The RAR Dashboard contains visuals that are intended to spark inquiry and discussion pertaining to resource equity and distribution. The dashboard is published on ISBE's webpage to assist district teams in conducting self-led RARs, but it is also available to other stakeholders interested in exploring resource allocation patterns. Much of the data used in the visualizations comes directly from the [Illinois Report Card](#). However, the presentation differs from what appears on the Report Card. District leaders should be familiar with the RAR Dashboard, as it may invite new questions from stakeholders about resource allocation across the district.

RAR Dashboard visualizations provide an opening to discuss how the current resource allocation system operates; they should be considered alongside other local context. The dashboard draws on data from a limited number of years — it is a snapshot that may not be entirely reflective of current practices. Many of the visualizations are derived from the annual Site-Based Expenditure Report, which provides per-pupil spending figures for all public schools. It is not unusual to see large differences in per-pupil spending across schools within a district. Particular schools may have unique or special programs, higher concentrations of students with intensive needs, or different staffing arrangements. Changes in spending over time may be attributable to changes in any of these underlying factors or to something else entirely, such as new allocation methods or different accounting decisions. For instance, districts have flexibility in how they choose to allocate certain shared expenditures to schools. Transportation costs may be allocated on an equal per-pupil basis to all schools, or only to schools based on the number of students who travel by bus, or even based on miles traveled. Each method is legitimate but can influence the final per-pupil expenditure figures.

Similarly, the "Teacher Experience by School" graph captures the distribution of teachers based on years of experience. Viewed alongside per-pupil spending data, this visual may help to explain a common driver of spending differences (e.g., more experienced teachers generally command higher salaries). At the same time, high-quality teachers exist at all points on the salary scale. District leaders will need to draw on other sources of information, including dialogue with departments and other key stakeholders, to develop a comprehensive understanding of current practices and patterns.

The content below provides additional contextual information about the sources of data used in the RAR Dashboard, as well as questions to consider when viewing the data. ISBE encourages district staff and community members to view these new visualizations alongside other public and local data to generate productive local dialogue about the connection between resource allocation and school improvement.

## Per Pupil Spending by School and Year

The “Per Pupil Spending by School and Year” graph allows users to compare per-pupil spending over time across schools in a district. Per-pupil spending is on the Y-axis, while school names are on the X-axis. The color of each scatterplot point indicates the year. (A corresponding key can be found in the upper left-hand corner of the visual.) Users can filter by District, School, Summative Designation, and Type of Per-Pupil Spending.

### Questions to Consider

1. Are there any obvious patterns in per-pupil spending changes over time? For instance, are spending changes (increases or decreases) consistent across schools in each year, or is the pattern more mixed?
2. Which schools spent the most per student? The least? Has this changed over time?
3. What drives differences in spending across schools?
4. Does it appear that Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief money had an impact on per pupil spending?
5. Are the spending trends what you would expect?

### Data Source

See Data Sources for Per Pupil Spending and Student Demographic Information. \*

## School Enrollment and Per Pupil Spending

The “School Enrollment and Per Pupil Spending Data” captures enrollment data and per pupil spending data for schools in the district. Users can view each school’s summative designation, grades served, enrollment, and percentages of special student populations alongside per-pupil spending. The table can be filtered by District, School, Year, and Type of Per-Pupil Spending. Users can also sort numerical variables from low to high by clicking on column headers.

### Questions to Consider

1. Do the spending patterns align with student need? What about with school improvement status?
2. How are different student populations distributed across the district? How does this impact spending?
3. Do you think changes are needed in the district’s method for allocating resources?

### Data Source

See Data Sources for Per Pupil Spending and Student Demographic Information. \*

## Teacher Experience by School

The “Teacher Experience by School” stacked bar chart compares the distribution of teacher experience across schools in a district. Share of teachers is on the Y-axis, while the different schools in the district are on the X-axis. The colored sections each bar represent the share of teachers with different amounts of experience (the corresponding key for teacher experience in the upper left-hand corner of the visual). Users can filter by District, School, Summative Designation, and Year.

### Questions to Consider

1. Which schools have more experienced teachers? Fewer? What explains this result?
2. Is the distribution of experienced teachers surprising to you? Does it explain some of the spending patterns reviewed in previous visuals?
3. How do the teacher experience patterns align with student need?

### Data Source

The “Teacher Experience by School” visual draws on teacher data reported by each district to the state. The percentage of teachers within each experience range is taken by dividing the number of teachers within an experience cohort by the total number of teachers at the school.

## ELA and Math Growth Percentile by Per Pupil Spending

The “Growth Percentile by Per Pupil Spending” visuals compare ELA and math growth percentiles to spending across schools in the district. Each subject has its own display. While proficiency demonstrates whether students have mastered a common, high standard, growth recognizes progress toward and beyond the standard, no matter where each student started. The growth percentile is represented on the Y-axis, while per-pupil spending is shown along the X-axis. The color of the scatterplot points represents the summative designation of the school (a corresponding key in the upper left-hand corner of the visual). Users can filter by District, School, Summative Designation, Type of Per Pupil Spending, and Year.

### Questions to Consider

1. Does the growth data align with your current understanding of school improvement efforts?
2. What patterns do you see in the data? For instance, do any schools with lower per-pupil spending amounts have higher growth compared to similar schools in the district? Do

any higher spending schools have lower growth compared to similar schools in the district?

3. How do school outcomes compare to the state average?
4. What do the growth and spending visuals reveal about resource levels or potential resource inequities, if anything?

#### Data Source

The “Growth Percentile by Per Pupil Spending” graphs rely on Illinois Report Card data. If the data is available, the student growth percentile relies on two prior year Illinois Assessment of Readiness scores. At the school and district level, the growth percentile is the sum of students’ student growth percentile divided by the number of students with a student growth percentile on record.

#### **Percent Change in Per Pupil Spending by School (Two-Year Increment)**

The “Percent Change in Per Pupil Spending by School (Two-Year Increment)” examines the percent change in spending across schools in the district over a two-year period. Percent change is the relative increase or decrease in spending over time as a percentage of the original amount of spending. The percent change is represented on the Y-axis, while the X-axis contains the different schools in the district. Users can filter on District, School, Summative Designation, Type of Per Pupil Spending, and Year.

#### Questions to Consider

1. Which schools have seen a significant percentage increase in spending over the past two years? Which schools have seen a significant percentage decrease?
2. Is the data surprising?
3. Do the changes in spending align with district priorities or student needs?
4. Could these spending changes have been predicted by the district’s resource allocation methodologies?

#### Data Source

See Data Sources for Per Pupil Spending and Student Demographic Information. \*

#### **\*Data Sources for Per Pupil Spending and Student Demographic Information**

Per pupil spending data found on the Illinois Report Card is collected through the Site-Based Expenditure Report. Districts report the actual dollars spent in the previous school year, including site-level costs (like school staff) and district-wide centralized costs allocated to each

individual school (like transportation and central office staff), divided by the school's enrollment. Student enrollment and demographic information is based on the most recent enrollment data available for the reporting year in question. This is true for per-pupil spending data throughout the RAR Dashboard.