

It's Time for Fair Funding for Rhode Island's Schools

Vote yes on House Bill 8351 and Senate Bill 3015

Rhode Island's school funding formula hasn't been fundamentally updated in 15 years. How much is invested in a child's education depends too heavily on where they live, not what they need to succeed.

A Plan Rhode Islanders Agree On

The Blue Ribbon Commission, 18 Rhode Island leaders including educators, parents, municipal officials, and community advocates – spent a year studying the problem and reached full consensus on four reforms:



Fund the Full Cost of Education

The state should share responsibility for the true costs of education, including transportation, building upkeep, and early childhood services, not leave them entirely to municipalities.



Require Fair Local Contributions

Every community should invest in schools based on its actual financial capacity, not based on an outdated formula.



Fund Students Based on Their Actual Needs

Students who need more support should receive more resources, regardless of what district they live in.



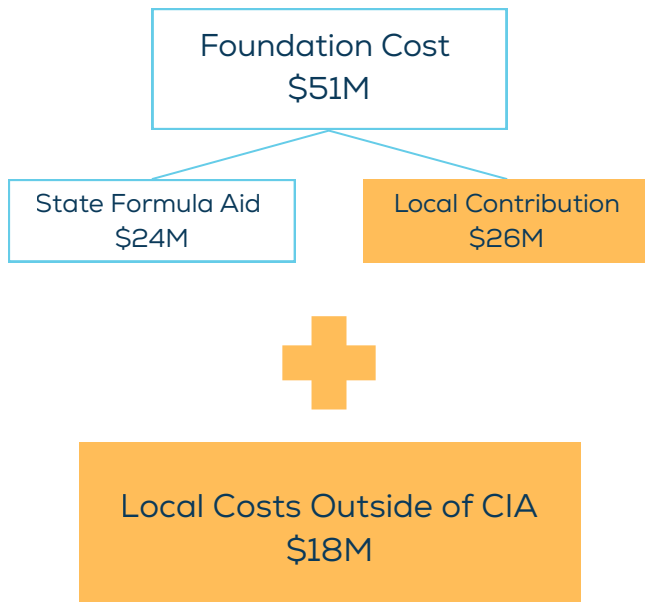
Require Transparency and Accountability

Every education dollar should be tied to student outcomes, with public reporting and independent oversight.

See back to find out what this system means for your district.

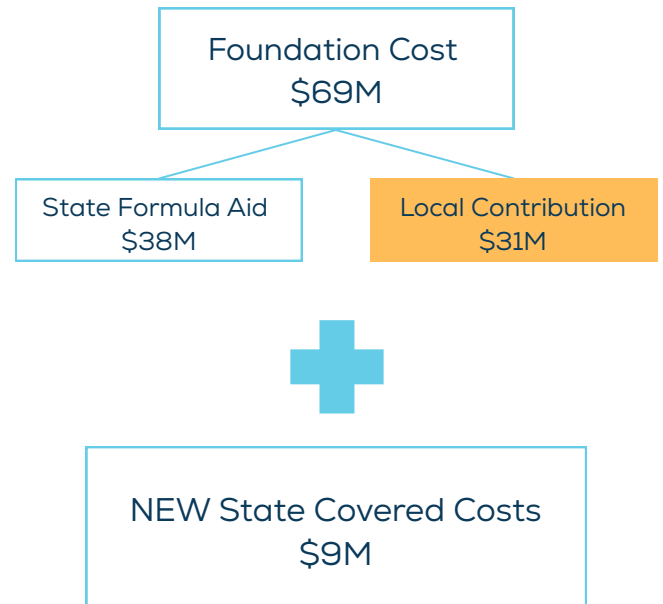
In Johnston, local costs would go from \$44M to \$31M.

Current System



Proposed System

58% State Share



How it looks in Johnston explained.

The [foundation cost](#) using the current formula is \$51M. Because the new system uses an expanded Core Education Amount (CEA) and new adjustments for economically disadvantaged students and high cost programs, the proposed foundation cost is \$69M.

Both the [state formula aid](#) and the [local contribution](#) go up, since more of the costs of educating Johnston students are included in this shared amount. In the current system, there are \$18M in locally incurred costs that sit outside of Core Instruction Amount (CIA).

[New state-covered costs](#) (e.g., high-cost special education, legacy pensions) in the amount of \$9M reduce local costs in the proposed plan.

While the Commission did not recommend a specific state or municipal cost share ratio, the example above illustrates what costs could look like under a scenario in which the state pays a 58% share under the new proposed system.

Ultimately, state leaders will need to re-run these scenarios to come to final recommendations.