

What drives the cost of education in Alaska?

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Some of the key ISER publications that will be referenced in Monday's presentation are linked below; they are organized as they are referenced in the presentation.

Context

The presentation starts by providing a brief Alaska education context.

- [Including the North: A comparative study of the policies on inclusion and equity in the Circumpolar North.](https://lauda.ulapland.fi/handle/10024/63716) (2019). <https://lauda.ulapland.fi/handle/10024/63716>

What do we pay?

The first section of the presentation draws not from ISER research, but from publicly available datasets representing unadjusted per-pupil dollars spent.

- [U.S. Census Bureau 2016 Annual Survey of School System Finances.](https://www.governing.com/gov-data/education-data/state-education-spending-per-pupil-data.html) <https://www.governing.com/gov-data/education-data/state-education-spending-per-pupil-data.html>

Do we really pay that much more?

The presentation then applies community cost differentials (developed by ISER) and federal cost of living indexes (COLI) to look at state per-pupil spending when adjusted to Anchorage costs, and when adjusting for the Anchorage COLI.

- [Alaska School District Cost Study Update.](https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1113) (2005). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1113>
- [Salary & Benefits Schedule and Teacher Tenure Study.](https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1584) (2015). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1584>
- [Cost of living index for selected US cities.](https://www.infoplease.com/business-finance/us-economy-and-federal-budget/cost-living-index-selected-us-cities1) (2010). <https://www.infoplease.com/business-finance/us-economy-and-federal-budget/cost-living-index-selected-us-cities1>
- [Education Equity and Taxpayer Equity: A Review of the Alaska Public School Foundation Funding Program.](https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=822) (1991). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=822>

What drives the costs?

Looking at costs on a more “apples to apples” comparison, the focus shifts to the cost components.

- [Trends in healthcare spending.](https://pubs.iseralaska.org/media/a3cda29a-5f21-405c-95ce-9b246244f5bf/Trends_in_Alaskas_Health-Care_Spending_Research_Summary.pdf) (2018). https://pubs.iseralaska.org/media/a3cda29a-5f21-405c-95ce-9b246244f5bf/Trends_in_Alaskas_Health-Care_Spending_Research_Summary.pdf

- **Energy costs and rural Alaska out-migration.** (2017). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1627>
- **Impact of Rising Energy Costs on Rural Alaska.** (1980). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=479>

What are the opportunities?

Acknowledging fixed costs, the presentation concludes by exploring opportunities around education policy.

- **The cost of teacher turnover in Alaska.** (2017). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1634>
- **It's more than just dollars: Problematizing salary as the sole mechanism for recruiting and retaining teachers in rural Alaska.** (2018). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1701>
- **Statute and implementation: How phantom policies affect tenure value and support.** (2018). <https://iseralaska.org/publications/?id=1700>