



California's Hidden Teacher Spending Gap: How State and District Budgeting Practices Shortchange Poor and Minority Students

REVISED CDE DATA SHOWS BIGGER GAPS

ETW Recalculates Estimates Based on CDE Corrections; New Figures Show Even Bigger Funding Gap for California's Low-Income Students

On Friday, March 11, 2005 the California Department of Education (CDE) announced that previously released data, available on its Web site, included errors in the reporting of numbers of children who take part in free and reduced lunch (FRL) programs. These data are critical for understanding poverty rates at schools and districts across California.

The CDE had quietly released its revised data at an earlier date without making a formal announcement. When the Education-Trust West (ETW) caught the errors earlier this week, the CDE agreed to publicly acknowledge that the data had been faulty and that they have since been set straight. (For CDE's announcement go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr05/yr05rel35.asp>.)

Education Trust-West relied on the CDE's original data for our report released earlier last month, *California's Hidden Teacher Spending Gap: How State and District Budgeting Practices Shortchange Poor and Minority Students*.

In light of the CDE's revised data, we've recalculated our estimates.

Our revised estimates show even more strongly that there is a pervasive teacher salary gap between high-poverty and affluent schools within districts in California.

Background:

In our report on *California's Hidden Teacher Spending Gap*, we used data from the California Department of Education (CDE) on students' participation in free and reduced lunch programs to determine the highest and lowest poverty schools within districts. Since the completion of our data analysis and the release of our report, the CDE has announced a correction of this free and reduced lunch (FRL) data, with a significant number of schools now showing larger percentages of students participating in free and reduced lunch programs than in the original data. These increases in free and reduced lunch percentages resulted in some changes in our identification of high- and low-poverty schools. As a result, we have recalculated our estimates of the teacher salary gaps between high- and low-poverty schools in all the districts affected by the CDE's data change. Since the new numbers from the Department relate only to percentages of low-income students in California, the minority-gap numbers in our report remain unchanged.

Data changes:

In most districts, there were no changes in the FRL percentages. In 64 districts there were changes in FRL percentages that resulted in changes in our estimates of the gap in teacher salaries between the highest-poverty and lowest-poverty schools. In most cases, the gaps increased. Now, there are more (and bigger) salary gaps than we first reported.

Changes to Table I: Average Teacher Salary Gap in 50 Largest CA Districts.

The revised FRL data resulted in changes in our estimates of the gaps in average teacher salaries between high- and low-poverty schools in thirteen of the fifty largest school districts. Of these thirteen districts, only in San Francisco Unified School District did the salary gap between high- and low-poverty school decrease. In the remaining twelve school districts, our estimates of the teacher salary gaps increased. These changes are marked in red in the table below.

Forty-two (not forty as we originally reported) of the fifty largest school districts have a gap between the average salaries of the teachers in the poorest schools and the teachers in the most affluent schools: on average, an estimated \$2576 less per teacher.

Average Estimated Gaps Between High- and Low- Poverty Quartiles, 50 Largest California Districts, Sorted Alphabetically

	Previous Salary Gap	Revised Salary Gap
Anaheim Union High	1,586	1,586
Bakersfield City Elementary	4,032	4,565
Capistrano Unified	-1,627	-1,627
Chino Valley Unified	1,526	1,526
Chula Vista Elementary	-857	-857
Clovis Unified	806	806
Colton Joint Unified	951	951
Compton Unified	1,134	1,134
Corona-Norco Unified	264	264
Desert Sands Unified	1,052	1,052
East Side Union High	-6,711	-6,711
Elk Grove Unified	1,218	1,218
Fontana Unified	4,740	4,740
Fremont Unified	2,276	2,276
Fresno Unified	2,342	2,364
Garden Grove Unified	505	505
Glendale Unified	499	578
Grossmont Union High	213	213
Hacienda la Puente Unified	3,455	3,481
Irvine Unified	-326	-326
Kern Union High	3,523	3,834
Lodi Unified	2,065	2,065
Long Beach Unified	-1,079	6,641
Los Angeles Unified	-1,142	1,413
Montebello Unified	348	837
Moreno Valley Unified	3,828	3,828
Mt. Diablo Unified	1,106	2,683
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified	2,613	3,026
Oakland Unified	1,670	1,670
Ontario-Montclair Elementary	1,300	1,300

Orange Unified	4,338	4,338
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	5,291	5,291
Pomona Unified	2,764	2,764
Poway Unified	870	870
Rialto Unified	4,336	4,336
Riverside Unified	123	123
Sacramento City Unified	4,846	4,846
Saddleback Valley Unified	-1,138	-1,138
San Bernardino City Unified	4,886	4,886
San Diego Unified	4,187	4,187
San Francisco Unified	2,247	1,286
San Jose Unified	4,008	4,008
San Juan Unified	-2,261	-2,261
Santa Ana Unified	2,898	2,898
Stockton City Unified	2,220	2,239
Sweetwater Union High	2,486	2,486
Torrance Unified	-1,340	-1,340
Visalia Unified	2,688	2,688
Vista Unified	-1,962	-1,962
West Contra Costa Unified	4,609	6,405

Changes to Table 3: Average Teacher Salary Gap in 10 Largest CA Districts.

The poverty salary gaps for the ten largest districts marked in red indicate a change from our previous estimates.

Gaps Between Estimated Average Teacher Salaries in Lowest and Highest Quartile Poverty Schools, by School Type, in 10 Largest School Districts

DISTRICT	Poverty					
	Previous-Elementary	Revised-Elementary	Previous-Middle	Revised-Middle	Previous-High School	Revised-High School
Elk Grove Unified	697	697	-2,514	-2,514	3,042	3,042
Fresno Unified	3,160	3,160	3,052	3,052	1,165	1,165
Long Beach Unified	-1,959	6,942	-3,276	5,578	1,612	4,032
Los Angeles Unified	-1,256	1,589	-1,660	1,826	-1,193	-159
Sacramento City Unified	5,231	5,231	-895	-895	4,958	4,958
San Bernardino City Unified	5,760	5,760	3,451	3,451	4,356	4,356
San Diego Unified	3,909	3,909	4,087	4,087	3,196	3,196
San Francisco Unified	2,363	2,341	740	1,872	3,810	4,464
San Juan Unified	3,259	3,259	5,654	5,654	1,893	1,893
Santa Ana Unified	3,021	3,021	4,517	4,517	-3,540	-3,540

Changes to Table 4: Average Teacher Spending Gap (Impact to Schools)

Average Estimated School Gaps Between Schools in High- and Low-Poverty Quartiles, by School Type, in 10 Largest School Districts

DISTRICT	Poverty					
	Previous-Elementary	Revised-Elementary	Previous-Middle	Revised-Middle	Previous-High School	Revised-High School
Elk Grove Unified	36,561	36,561	-157,937	-157,937	325,113	325,113
Fresno Unified	125,881	125,881	104,980	104,980	85,534	85,534
Long Beach Unified	-71,075	362,683	-131,094	251,012	138,573	574,387
Los Angeles Unified	-41,621	83,363	-109,335	175,960	-116,862	-23,763
Sacramento City Unified	140,144	140,144	-39,078	-39,078	227,073	227,073
San Bernardino City Unified	228,668	228,668	239,357	239,357	463,426	463,426
San Diego Unified	139,972	139,972	216,460	216,460	267,900	267,900
San Francisco Unified	42,922	43,817	19,218	44,905	132,446	195,426
San Juan Unified	81,899	81,899	202,423	202,423	103,330	103,330
Santa Ana Unified	120,456	120,456	309,381	309,381	-215,960	-215,960

Changes: Impact on Students Section.

What does this mean for students? Simply this: If a low-income high school student has six teachers a day, she is taught by teachers paid a combined \$20,328 less per year than her counterparts in a wealthier high school in these districts. From the time this low-income student enters high school until she graduates, California spends \$81,312 less on her teachers than on teachers serving wealthier students in these districts over the same period of time. If this student attended high poverty schools from the time of kindergarten through high school, California would have spent a total of \$141,714 less of all of her teachers (K-12) than on the K-12 teachers serving the most affluent students.