

Daily Mail

More money spent on schools does NOT equal better results, 40-year study finds

April 7, 2014

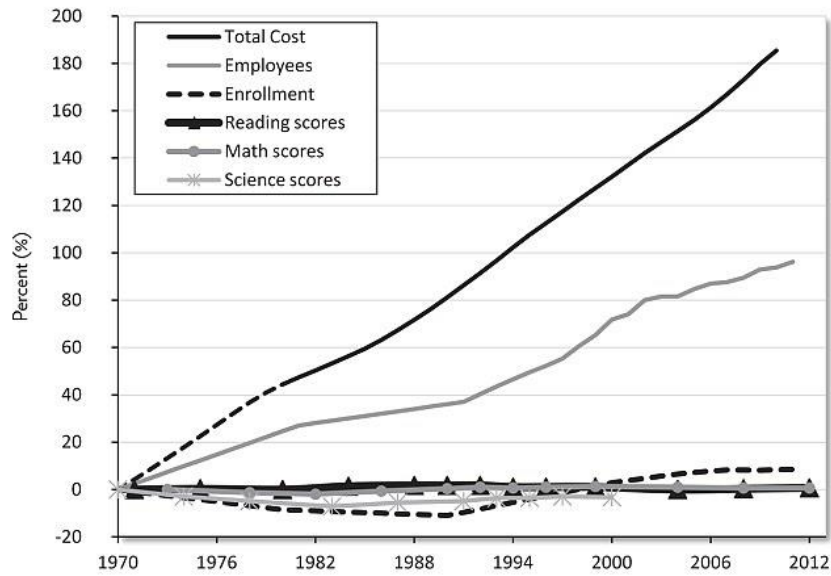
The costs of sending students through school have more than tripled in real terms over the past 40 years, yet despite the billions of extra taxpayers dollars being spent, the results students are achieving show almost no improvement.

Andrew Coulson who conducted the study believes the answer is simple - that there's no discernible correlation between spending and results.

'What we've done over the past 40 years hasn't worked,' said Coulson, director of the Center For Educational Freedom at the CATO Institute.

The most troublesome question facing education: Why are results for U.S. public school students so mediocre, despite the billions of taxpayer dollars spent?

Figure 1
Trends in American Public Schooling Since 1970

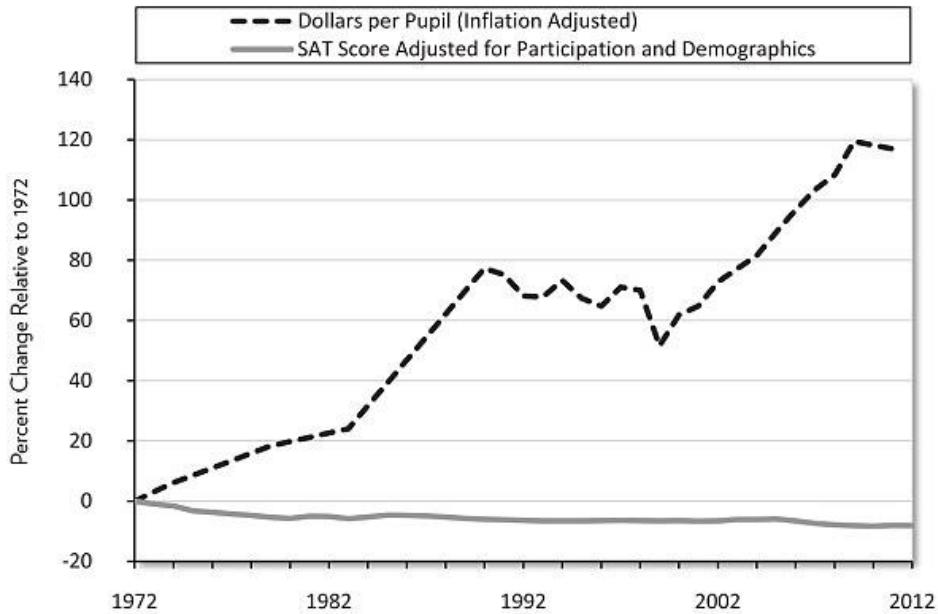


Sources: U.S. Department of Education, "Digest of Education Statistics"; and NAEP tests, "Long Term Trends, 17-Year-Olds."
 Note: "Total cost" is the full amount spent on the K-12 education of a student graduating in the given year, adjusted for inflation. In 1970, the amount was \$56,903; in 2010, the amount was \$164,426.
 © Cato Institute

No difference: there is no discernible correlation between spending and outcomes

Figure 33
New York

New York Education Trends



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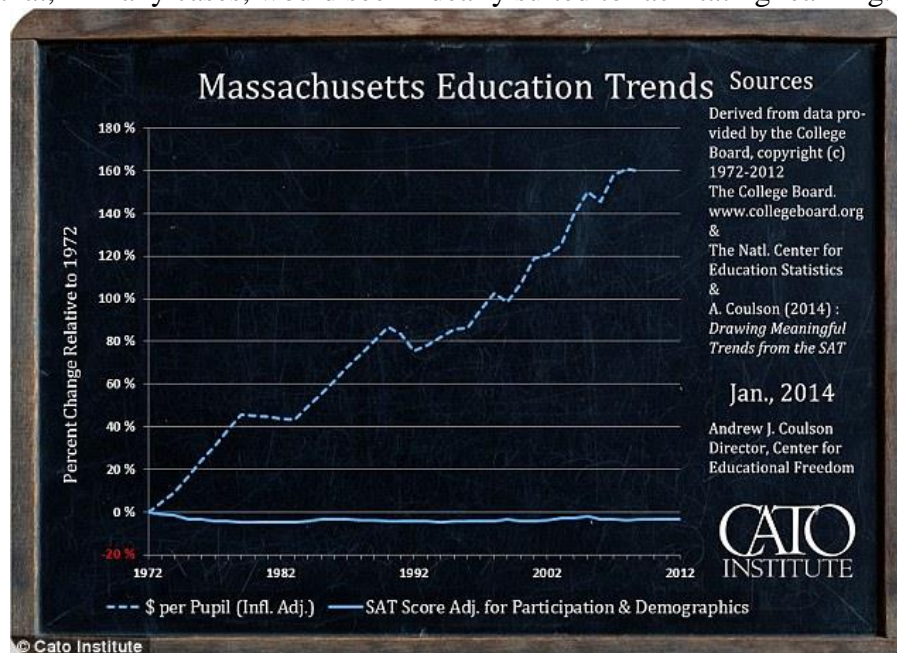
Trending: The average performance change nationwide has declined three percent in mathematical and verbal skills. Moreover, there's been no relationship, effectively, between spending and academic outcomes

'The average performance change nationwide has declined 3 percent in mathematical and verbal skills. Moreover, there's been no relationship, effectively, between spending and academic outcomes.'

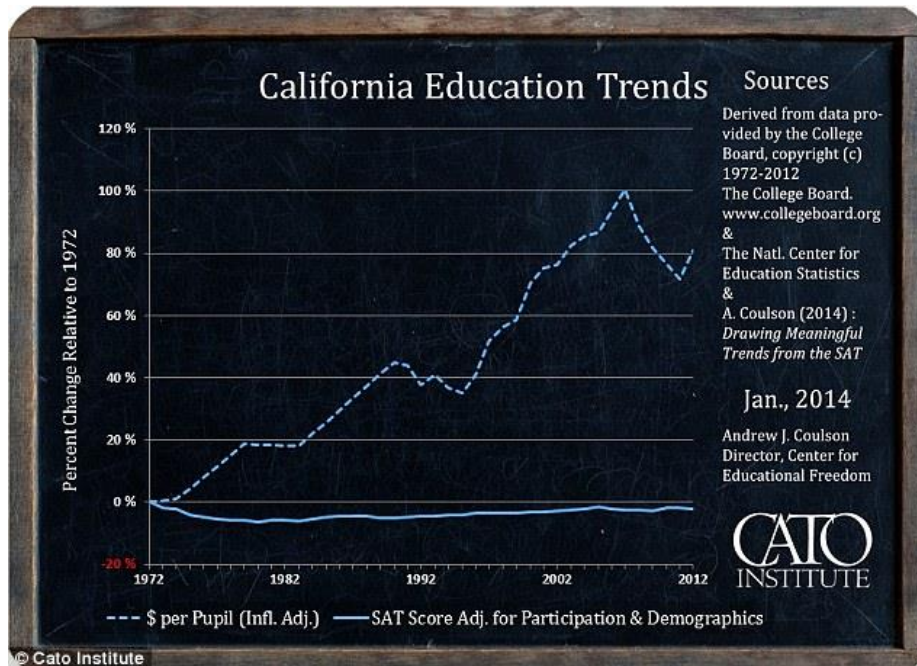
Coulson just released his study, 'State Education Trends: Academic Performance and Spending over the Past 40 Years,' and he points to this chart that incorporates costs and the number of public school employees with student enrollment and test scores.

Rob Nikolewski who has been looking at the study noted in Watchdog.org that while spending has just about tripled in inflation-adjusted dollars and the number of school employees has almost doubled since 1970, reading, math and science scores for students have remained stagnant.

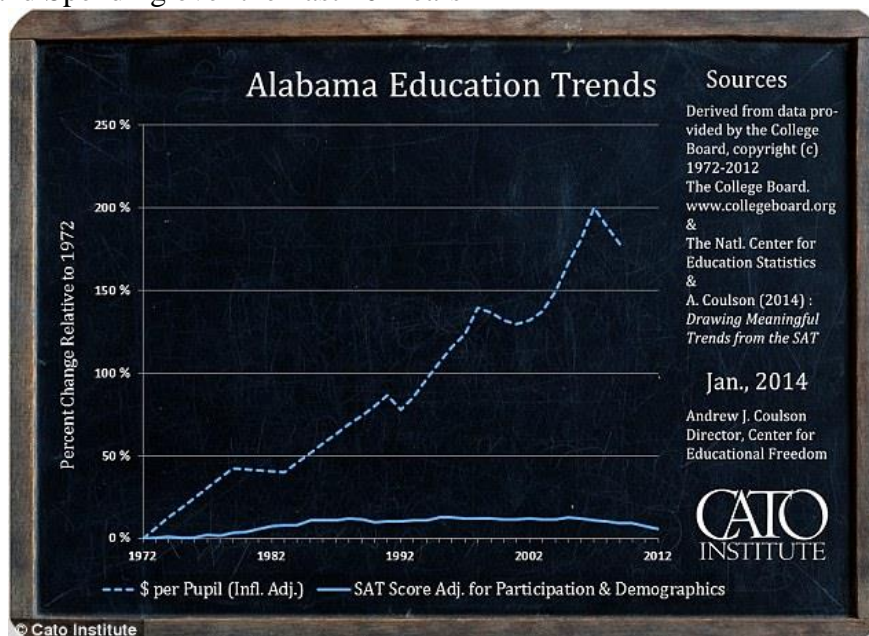
'That is remarkably unusual,' Coulson wrote in his study. 'In virtually every other field, productivity has risen over this period thanks to the adoption of countless technological advances — advances that, in many cases, would seem ideally suited to facilitating learning.'



Flatlined: While spending has just about tripled in inflation-adjusted dollars and the number of school employees has almost doubled since 1970, reading, math and science scores for students have remained stagnant



Details for every state: Everything is contained in the study, State Education Trends - Academic Performance and Spending over the Past 40 Years



Could do better: No matter where students are in the country, the performance has been at rock bottom despite billions of dollars being plowed into education
 And yet, surrounded by this torrent of progress, education has remained anchored to the riverbed, watching the rest of the world rush past it.'

Coulson also says that not only is there no evidence that spending increases improve scores, he says the statistics show that decreases in spending have no discernible effect in negatively influencing student scores.

'At one time or another over the past four decades, Alaska, California, Florida and New York all experienced multi-year periods over which real spending fell substantially (20 percent or more of their 1972 expenditure levels),' he wrote. 'And yet, none of these states experienced noticeable declines in adjusted SAT scores.'

Such a study may well have parents asking if spending has no affect then why do students at private schools, which charge tuition, perform better than students in public schools? National studies have shown the average per-pupil spending in the U.S. exceeds \$11,000. The Cato report assumes that education money is spent the same way it was in the 1960s and '70s, according to New Mexico Watchdog.

Schools provide many more special services in education such as after-school programs. Also, the technology in classroom has altered with computers and electronic smart-boards an every day part of the teaching process.

Conclusion: Surrounded by this torrent of progress, education has remained anchored to the riverbed, watching the rest of the world rush past it