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School spending - out of control

Bill Bumpas - OneNewsNow - 3/11/2010 6:15:00 AM



How much money is really spent per student in America's largest school districts? Shocking new research exposes out-of-control spending on public education.

According to a report by the [Cato Institute's](#) Center for Educational Freedom, the nation's six largest school districts spend on the average 44 percent more per student than what is officially being reported. Cato Institute's Adam Schaeffer explains how districts get away with these discrepancies.

"They decided that capital expenses don't count because you're not spending the money directly on educating a child in the classroom," he explains. "So the only thing that counts are kinds of the things that touch the child in the classroom -- a teacher, or a book, or the lights in the classroom. But anything besides that -- health and retirement benefits a lot of times, capital expenses -- almost always, just don't count."

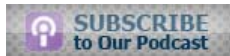


Schaeffer

Budget discrepancies range from Los Angeles, where schools are \$15,000 per student beyond their reported spending, and Phoenix, where schools outspend their reported budget by about \$1,500 per pupil.

"These organizations are too big. They have too much money; one hand doesn't know what the other one's doing half the time," Schaeffer contends. "And what we really need to do is force them to have clearer, more concise, more user-friendly information that the public can access at will and really be a watchdog."

According to the research, public schools spent 93 percent more than the estimated median private school tuition.



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