

How is public education funded in Maine?

The State of Maine uses a formula called Essential Programs and Services (EPS) to calculate its baseline funding for public education every year. These ratios can be found on the ED 279 report for RSU/MSAD 58.

There are multiple variables that go into this calculation, but the two that impact us most are **enrollment** and **town valuations**.

Here's the breakout of the 25/26 EPS allocation per town based on **enrollment**. Strong has the most students in MSAD 58, and therefore has the highest dollar amount for their allocation.

Town	Ave # Pupils	% of Total Pupils	Total EPS Allocation
Strong	155.5	36.12%	\$2,770,164.45
Phillips	124.5	28.92%	\$2,217,972.21
Kingfield	87.5	20.33%	\$1,559,176.17
Avon	63.0	14.63%	\$1,122,023.98
MSAD 58 Total EPS Budget	430.5	100%	\$7,669,336.81

The district is then required to pay a local share of the total EPS budget, which is split up by each town's **valuation**. This is why Kingfield pays the highest amount, even though it has fewer students.

Town	Town Assessment	Required Local Contribution
Kingfield	\$174,566,667	\$1,064,856.67
Strong	\$104,983,333	\$640,398.33
Phillips	\$101,300,000	\$617,930.00
Avon	\$52,366,667	\$319,436.67
Total Req'd Local		\$2,642,621.67

The required local share is subtracted from the total EPS amount, and the state subsidizes the remaining balance:

MSAD 58 Total EPS Allocation	\$7,669,336.81
Required Local EPS Contribution (what we pay)	- \$2,642,621.67
Total State Subsidy (before adjustments)	\$5,026,715.14

But wait...the town totals in the proposed school budget are much higher. Why?

Remember: the state's funding formula is for essential programs and services (think: english, math, science). It's designed to cover roughly half of our school budget.

So while we pay a required local share in order to get the state subsidy, the district also asks us to make an additional local contribution to cover the rest.

For example, our EPS allocation for co- and extracurricular activities is \$48,720, but MSAD 58 is budgeting \$324,703 for co-curriculars and athletics. The \$275,983 difference is raised through the *additional* local share of taxes.

Here are the combined totals each town pays:

(Based on the V3 budget proposal from April 17, 2025)

Town	Required Local Contribution	+	Add'l Local Contribution	=	Total Local Contribution
Kingfield	\$1,064,856.67		\$1,196,773.33		\$2,261,631
Strong	\$640,398.33		\$719,549.67		\$1,359,948
Phillips	\$617,930.00		\$694,307		\$1,312,237
Avon	\$319,436.67		\$359,032.33		\$678,469
Total Local	\$2,642,621.67		\$2,944,663.33		\$5,612,285

So how do our costs stack up against surrounding towns in Franklin County?

Three of our towns are among the top 5 highest paying municipalities across both MSAD 58 and RSU 9.

Town	Pupils**	Increase	% Increase	Assessed Local Share
Farmington	810.5	\$178,846	3.40%	\$5,446,730
Wilton	564	\$43,185	1.48%	\$2,871,523
Kingfield	87.5	\$163,334	7.75%	\$2,271,196
Strong	155.5	\$113,561	9.07%	\$1,365,698
Phillips	124.5	\$128,510	10.81%	\$1,317,786
Chesterville	211	\$46,417	4.04%	\$1,196,017
Industry	90.5	\$63,644	2.18%	\$1,150,097
New Sharon	184.5	(\$23,514)	- 2.40%	\$1,122,871
New Vineyard	105	\$11,159	1.26%	\$899,868
Vienna	805	\$2,216	0.25%	\$807,282
Avon	63	\$50,303	7.97%	\$681,338
Weld	29.5	(\$77,814)	-10.64%	\$653,666
Starks	65.5	\$10,355	1.75%	\$603,201
Temple	51.5	(\$22,691)	-4.55%	\$487,447

Here are the total **costs per pupil** for each town in MSAD 58:

Town	Local Cost Per Pupil	Total Cost Per Pupil
Kingfield	\$25,956.53	\$31,605.89
Strong	\$8,782.62	\$22,478.87
Phillips	\$10,584.63	\$23,436.37
Avon	\$10,814.89	\$23,554.37

Why is this happening?

Maine's student enrollment is shrinking statewide.

According to the ME Education Policy Research Institute, Maine has one of the lowest student-to-school ratios in the country, and our district is no exception.

- In 2014, MSAD 58's total preK - 12 enrollment was **740**.
- By 2023, it was **587**.
- By 2033, NESDEC projects another 23% decrease, leaving just **450** pupils districtwide.

	Mt. Abram HS	Day Mtn MS	Phillips Elem.	Kingfield Elem.
Current Operating Capacity	512 pupils	264 pupils	239 pupils	239 pupils
24/25 Enrollment	212 pupils	141 pupils	119 pupils	95 pupils
Projected 33/34 Enrollment¹	150 pupils	127 pupils	100 pupils	73 pupils*

Why it matters: MSAD 58 has too many buildings, and not enough students.

Declining enrollment means our facilities are under capacity, resulting in a higher cost per pupil to operate our schools.

¹ Assuming same middle and HS config, all 28 preK pupils in KES, & similar split between PES and KES for K-4.
Source: NESDEC MSAD58 Enrollment Projections.