

Staffing and financial resource allocations in Indiana

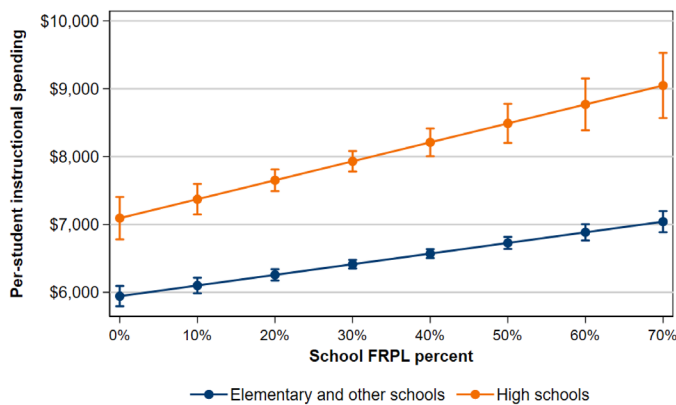
Research shows FRPL students have [lower access](#) to experienced and other qualified teachers, compared to non-FRPL students. Since teachers are often paid on salary schedules that do not vary based on their school, these sorting patterns will lead to more dollars allocated to affluent settings, all else equal. Do teachers contribute to funding gaps in Indiana?

| Inequality measure | Estimated gap |
|---|--|
| Within-district teacher spending | \$14 more spent on FRPL students, on average |
| Within-district novice teacher share | 9.91% of FRPL students' teachers are novice, 0.35% more than non-FRPL students |
| Within-district teacher ratio | For every 100 FRPL students, there are 6.05 FTE teachers, 0.07 more than non-FRPL students |

FINDINGS: Within districts, FRPL students have lower access to experienced teachers while simultaneously receiving slightly higher allocations of teacher spending. The result is explained by compensatory staffing, where FRPL students are in schools with increased staffing ratios for teachers (see above) and other instructional support staff (not shown).

FIGURE 1

Instructional spending vs school FRPL percent



Teacher and spending allocations show greater variance looking across district boundaries. IN's high-poverty schools spend higher amounts on instruction; instructional spending is higher and even more progressive in high schools (see above). High-poverty schools have higher shares of novice teachers, and higher teacher staffing ratios (see below).

FIGURE 2

Teacher resources vs school FRPL percent

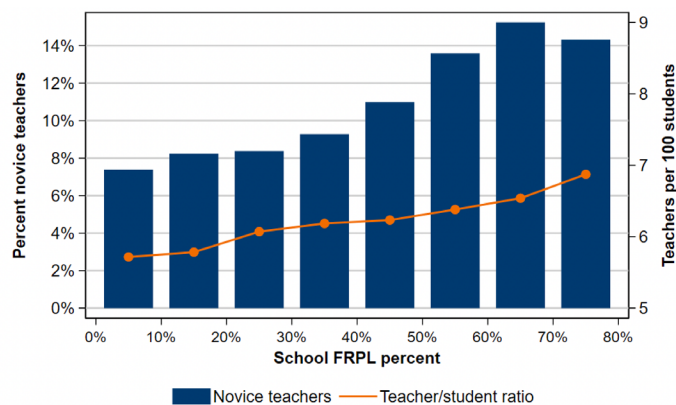
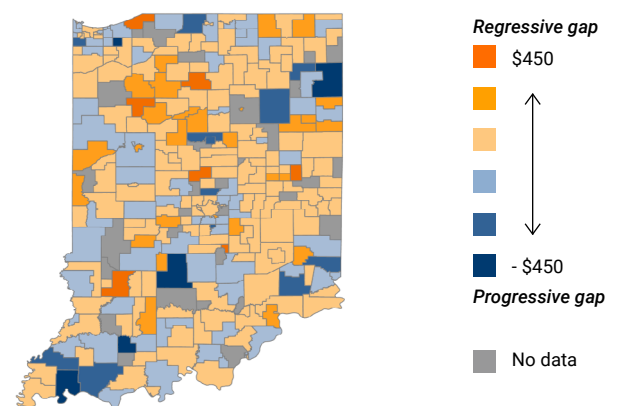


FIGURE 3

Instructional spending gaps (in \$)



Approximately 49% of Indiana's schools, serving 54% of students, are in **progressive** teacher spending districts.

CONCLUSION:

1. [Indiana districts generally compensate FRPL students' low access to experienced teachers with higher classroom staffing ratios](#); essentially exchanging quality for quantity. **FRPL students should have many more teachers (smaller class sizes) to be fairly compensated for inexperienced teachers.**
2. The pandemic has accelerated [problematic staffing challenges](#) nationwide, threatening the sustainability of this staffing exchange. **The state should seek to build out the pipeline for qualified teachers and implement policies to ensure equitable access to quality teaching.**

Source: This analysis uses school-level financial data from the [Economics Lab's NERDS database](#), paired with staffing data from the Civil Rights Data Collection and enrollment data from the Common Core of Data. FRPL is an acronym for eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch, our best proxy for low household income. Indiana uses the direct certification method to determine eligibility.