

How does Liberty's Funding Compare to Neighborhood Schools?

By: Joel Goeltl, Treasurer Board of Directors
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Liberty Common School receives approximately 85% of the public funding Poudre School District provides to its "neighborhood" schools.

Liberty's primary funding source is the tax dollars allocated annually by the Colorado legislature to each school district in the state. This allocation is called the Per Pupil Revenue (PPR). In accordance with Liberty's charter contract, Poudre School District (PSD) forwards the PPR to Liberty for each student enrolled as determined by the annual October count. This public funding mechanism is essentially the same for PSD's neighborhood schools.

In addition to PPR, neighborhood schools also receive bond revenues, financed through local property taxes, to pay for school facilities including buildings, land, equipment, and furnishings. Although Liberty parents also pay property taxes, PSD does not allow charter schools access to these bond revenues. Therefore, unlike neighborhood schools, Liberty must also pay its facility costs (approximately 15% of annual expenses) from its PPR, leaving less money for staffing, books, and other educational resources.

Liberty does receive a small amount of public funding from some of PSD's mill levy overrides on local property taxes. However, like the bond revenues, even though Liberty parents pay these taxes, PSD does not allow charter schools access to most of its mill levy override funds.

When all funding sources are considered, **Liberty Common School receives approximately 85% of the public funding provided to PSD neighborhood schools.** Liberty strives to make up this funding difference through larger class sizes (Liberty has 29 students per class beginning in 1st grade), careful fiscal management, and other income including activity fees, sponsorships, grants and donations.

Donations from our generous parents and surrounding community make up approximately 3% of Liberty's funding and are critical to our budget. Liberty's annual giving campaign focuses on two key events. The fall campaign ends in December to enable parents to maximize year-end tax benefits. All donations to Liberty Common School are tax deductible. Liberty's annual spring gala raises funds for "big ticket" items to enhance our educational program. We are very grateful to the many parents who support this fun-filled annual event with their time and generosity.