

Sustainable—Tax structures and economic development policies should be capable of supporting investment in public schools, and they should be fair and equitable for all citizens. Tax structures should be progressive enough to generate the necessary funding in both good and bad economic times. An independent state authority (above) should be empowered to establish and maintain a sustainable tax structure.

Indicators for adequate school funding include:

Sufficiency of Funding

- ▶ State determines the costs necessary for each student to meet state content and performance standards, and updates costs as significant changes are made to its standards.³
- ▶ 100 percent of districts conduct cost-adjustments based on student needs, demographics, and resources (e.g. comparable wage index) to ensure sufficiency.

Equity in Funding

- ▶ State mandates districts report on average per-student expenditures disaggregated by federal, state, and local dollars.
- ▶ 100 percent of districts report on the distribution of state-certified teachers, education support professionals, and specialized instructional support personnel.

Productive Use of Funds

- ▶ State requires annual district-level compliance audits.
- ▶ 100 percent of districts post an up-to-date budget plan online.

Funding Sustainability

- ▶ State funds capacity building to ensure sustainability.
- ▶ 100 percent of districts have multi-year school budgets.

Conclusion

We are a country with more than 16 million children living under the poverty level—that is 22 percent of all children in the U.S. When these children are placed in resource-scarce schools, not only do the students lose out on one of the surest paths out of poverty, but our country loses its ability to prosper. If we could raise Hispanic and African American achievement levels, we could add approximately \$50 trillion to the U.S. economy over the next 80 years.⁴ To be a globally competitive country, we must provide a high-quality education to each and every student and sufficiently fund the resources they need to overcome obstacles and excel.

Notes

1. Shultz and Hanushek, "Education is the Key."
2. McKinsey and Company, *The Economic Impact of the Achievement Gap in America's Schools* (April, 2009).
3. Acceptable methods for costing out: Professional Judgment approach, the Resource Cost Model, Evidence-Based, or the Successful School District method.
4. U.S. Department of Education, *For Each and Every Child- A Strategy for Education Equity and Excellence*, Washington, D.C., 2013.