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Press Contact: Malek Al-Shammary, press@ibo.nyc.gov, (917) 513-7488

Annual Department of Education Spending: 2024 Shifts

June 17, 2025— In 2024, Department of Education (DOE) actual spending totaled \$40 billion, \$33 billion in the operating budget, and additional funds for pensions and debt service costs outside the operating budget. For Fiscal Year 2025, current modified budget estimates the Department of Education total budget will be \$41.2 billion. Education remains the largest single area of City spending, with impacts across all five boroughs—through public schools, charter schools, early childhood education programs, and special education.

Recognizing the need to break the City's \$100 billion budget into more understandable pieces, IBO publishes annual data on Department of Education [spending](#)—tracking trends all the way back to 1990.

From 1990 through 2024, DOE operating expenses increased by an average of \$666 million per year – total spending for education was \$40 billion in 2024, or \$36,000 per-pupil. During the same period, debt service rose an average of \$91 million per year. Pension contributions grew steadily between 2000 and 2017 but decreased from 2018 through 2024 due to stronger pension fund returns. Newly added to this update, IBO provides more information on DOE's operational costs related to fringe benefits and school related programs, which total \$4.5 billion and \$19 billion respectively.

Since 2014, funding for school-related programs have grown by an average of **\$630 million per year**. For 2024, the school-related program actuals totaled **\$19 billion**, broken down as follows:

- General education schools received **\$8.4 billion**.
- Charter school spending reached **\$3.1 billion**.
- Categorical funding added up to **\$2.7 billion**.
- Special education costs accounted for **\$2.4 billion**.
- Pre-K programs totaled **\$1.8 billion**.





In 2024, City funding made up 52% of the Department of Education total budget, followed by 35% provided by New York State, and 12% by the Federal Government.

Even as the pupil-to-teacher ratio has fluctuated over the years, the **pupil-to-teacher ratio has steadily declined 22%**—from 12.1 in 1990 to 9.4 in 2024.

While this report focuses on year-over-year DOE spending, IBO has also published work that provides a contextual overview of New York City's [Education landscape](#). IBO has looked at [3-K and Pre-K enrollment and capacity](#), shifts in [early childhood education funding, and how many teachers the City needs](#) to be in compliance with the state class size law.

Previous IBO research has analyzed [the condition of school buildings](#)—the average age being 75 years old—and [examined how teacher salaries in New York City compare](#) with the surrounding region. Together, these reports help show how City, State, and Federal funding translates into different areas of the City's school system – spanning staffing, infrastructure, programming, and accessibility.

