



How We Fund K-12 Schools in Washington: Regionalization Factor

Regionalization factor impacts almost every funding formula Washington has established to fund K-12 education, but how it impacts funding is not widely understood. This FAQ will answer some common questions concerning regionalization factor and how it impacts education funding.

What is regionalization factor?

Regionalization factor is a multiplier used in school funding formulas, including the prototypical school funding model, to provide districts with higher-than-average housing values with more funding from the state to meet educational needs.

Why was regionalization factor created?

It was intended to address the difficulty some schools face in attracting and retaining qualified staff because of the higher cost of living in some areas.

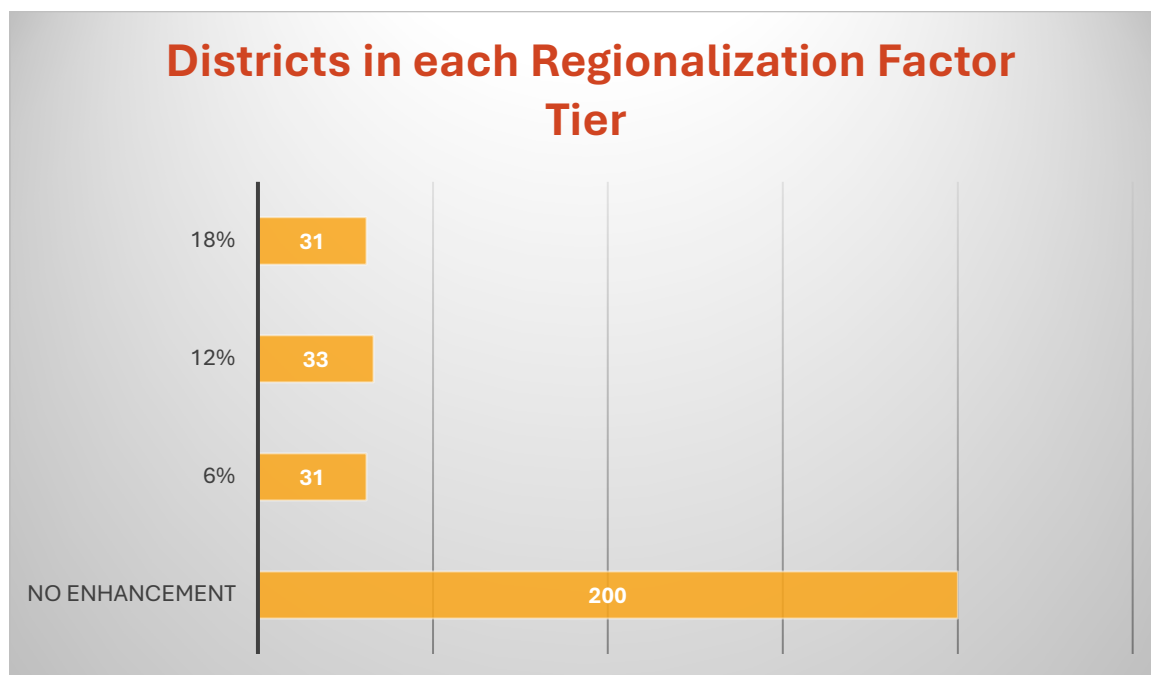
Are there other factors that impact how much districts receive to attract and retain K-12 staff that meet their needs?

In addition to regionalization factor, districts that have teachers with more years of experience and higher rates of advanced degree attainment than the state average get a funding enhancement of 4%. There are no other factors that impact state-funded teacher salary amounts, such as student needs or other student-based characteristics.

How much more funding can districts receive through regionalization factor?

Not all districts receive a regionalization factor enhancement, but those that do receive increases of 6% to 18% above the state base salary allocations.

How many districts receive a regionalization factor enhancement?



How often does the state update district regionalization factors?

State law requires the legislature to reassess district regionalization factors every six years. This was most recently completed in 2024.

What parts of state K-12 funding formulas are adjusted by regionalization factor?

Almost every part of state K-12 funding formulas, large and small, are adjusted by regionalization factors, including:

1. The foundational state K-12 funding formula (the prototypical school funding model)
2. Funding that supports students struggling academically (Learning Assistance Program)
3. Funding to support students receiving special education services
4. Funding to support students gaining English proficiency (Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program)
5. Over 70% of all state K-12 funding is adjusted by a district's regionalization factor

What does that mean for funding formulas that are intended to support students with additional needs, such as the learning assistance program (LAP) or support for students gaining English proficiency (TBIP)?

A student in a wealthy district who needs additional support generates more education funding than a student with similar needs in a district with high levels of concentrated poverty. This disparity impacts students receiving special education services, students gaining English proficiency, and students struggling academically.

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