



Where Do You Live?

Minnesota's Educational Opportunity Gap

Where you live in Minnesota can make a significant difference in what taxpayers pay to support their local schools. School districts have vastly different property tax bases. In districts with greater property wealth, a school district can raise operating revenue at a much lower cost to individual taxpayers. In lower-property-wealth districts, taxpayers may have to pay significantly more to raise the **same amount of revenue per student**.

School districts rely on operating levies to help maintain educational programs and services and address budget shortfalls. However, the ability to raise this local revenue is not equal across Minnesota. Districts with less property wealth have fewer resources over which to spread the tax burden, making school operating levies more costly for local homeowners and businesses.

The result: Two Minnesota taxpayers with properties of the same value can pay dramatically different amounts for their school district to raise the exact same amount of operating revenue per student.

School District	*Annual Taxpayer Cost for the Same Levy Amount
Cook County	\$285
Northland	\$310
Hopkins	\$425
St. Louis Park	\$477
West St. Paul	\$553
Winona Area	\$593
Red Wing	\$649
Rochester	\$788
Lake City	\$902
Mankato	\$922
Lakeville	\$981
Northfield	\$991
Fairmont	\$1,334

The chart shows the estimated annual property tax cost on a **\$300,000 residential or business property** for a school district to generate **\$3,090 per pupil unit in combined Local Optional Revenue (LOR) and operating referendum revenue** for the **2026–27 school year**, based on property taxes paid in 2026. The same \$3,090 per pupil unit is used for each district to demonstrate how differences in school district property wealth affect the local taxpayer cost of raising the same amount of revenue. **Same property value. Same revenue per student. Very different taxpayer cost.** These differences make it more difficult for lower-property-wealth school districts to raise comparable local operating revenue and demonstrate why greater property tax equalization is important to Minnesota students, schools, and taxpayers.

The quality of a student's education should not depend on their ZIP code.