



Source: Jim West/Alamy Stock Photo

9

Organizing and Paying for Education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Describe the organizational structure of school districts and summarize the different sources of their funding. (InTASC 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
2. Explain the organizational relationship of teachers to their principal and how the responsibilities of the principal relate to those of the school district superintendent and the school board. (InTASC 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
3. Describe the organization of education at the state level, and explain the roles and relationships of the different governing bodies. (InTASC 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
4. Identify and explain key issues related to equity and equality in the financing of public education. (InTASC 3: Learning Environments)
5. Describe how the federal government is organized and the ways that it influences education and schooling. (InTASC 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
6. Understand and appreciate that politics are an inherent part of education, schools, and teaching and that it is important for you to see how teachers can be effective in this arena. (InTASC 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice)

EDUCATION in the NEWS

CITY SCHOOLS' STAFFING TO GET NEEDED INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Vindy.com, The Valley's Homepage

When officials of the Ohio Department of Education were making the case for the Youngstown Plan, the statutory blueprint aimed at re-engineering the academically challenged Youngstown [Ohio] City School District, they handed out a fact sheet about the urban system that was an eye-opener—even for those of us who have more inside information than John Q. Public.

Of particular interest were two revelations: the district's total budget is \$127 million; and, 37.2 percent of the money is spent outside classroom instruction. In other words, \$47.2 million is being spent outside the classrooms. To put that in perspective, this spending is second-highest among districts of similar size in the state.

Just how big is the Youngstown district? According to the state's fact sheet, there were 5,037 students attending city schools in 2014, compared with 5,252 students living in the district who attended

schools outside the district. In pure dollar terms, the per-student spending in Youngstown was \$13,111, while the state average was \$9,189.

Against that backdrop, we unequivocally support a special independent audit designed to answer this question: Is the district's payroll bloated? Or put another way, does the Youngstown schools system have too many employees?

It has long been shown that more than 60 percent of a public entity's operating budget is for employee costs—wages and benefits—and that the first place to cut in a difficult economy is payroll.

However, in a school system, a distinction must be made between teaching and nonteaching staff.

In the case of Youngstown, which has had the distinction of being the worst academically performing public school system in the

state, and also has had to contend with state-declared fiscal emergency, teachers are the most-important cog in the education wheel.

Thus, we would hope that the Cuyahoga County Educational Service Center, which has been contracted to conduct the special audit on staffing, would not only identify the areas that are afflicted by bloat but would determine if the number of teachers is adequate to deal with the systemic problems that have plagued the urban school district. Foremost is the dysfunctional home life of many inner-city students that does not lend itself to learning in the classroom.

ASLEEP AT THE DESK

Many students in Youngstown attend school ill-prepared to learn—falling asleep during the school day is a common phenomenon—and, therefore, require a great deal of individualized attention from the teacher. This short-changes those students who are eager to learn.

A teacher in Youngstown is oftentimes required to serve as a social worker, which also undermines learning in the classroom.

The special audit on staffing is important because it will provide a detailed look at what has been going on in Youngstown.

The report will be a valuable tool, not only for the Youngstown Academic Distress Commission, which hired Cuyahoga County Educational Service Center, but for the reconstituted commission defined in the statute.

It will also prove invaluable to the new chief executive officer of the school district. The CEO is to be appointed by the new academic distress commission.

This audit should be only one of many that needs to be conducted in Youngstown. Over the years, with special federal and state dollars flowing into Youngstown because of the high-poverty rate

among students, a large number of after-school programs were created by individuals in the community.

We would be interested to see how many of those programs, whose importance have been diminished by the continuing academic failure of the schools, still exist today and how closely they are monitored by the administration.

The bottom line is clear: With the Youngstown City School District sporting a budget of \$127 million, the question that taxpayers can be expected to ask is this: Where's the money?

Every time the \$13,114-per-student spending in Youngstown is seen in print, the reaction from the public is universal: If students aren't learning with so much money being spent, doubling the amount would not guarantee success.

That is why we remain unwavering in our support of the Youngstown Plan. The only hope for the district is a top-to-bottom shake-up.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is your thinking about the \$13,111 per-pupil funding in Youngstown? Is this amount a surprise? Do you see it as too high, too low, or about right?
2. As a teacher, how would you explain to citizens the district budget and that "37.2% of the money is spent outside classroom instruction"?
3. Do you see the criticism that a teacher is "often times required to serve as a social worker" being valid, or is this part of what effective teachers do?

Source: City Schools' Staffing To Get Needed Independent Review. Copyright © 2015 by vindy.com.

Have you ever thought about the size of the public education system? It is large! For example, in the fall of 2014, more than 55 million students entered 140,000 elementary and secondary schools. Approximately \$600 billion would be spent across the 2013–2014 school year. These are big numbers.

A major challenge is how best to organize the very large system of education so that it is efficient and effective. In addition, the necessary funds have to be found, and they must be spent wisely. As a result, the organization of schools, taxes, spending, school efficiencies, and accountability are continuing hot topics. Examining each of these topics and making decisions about them entails complex processes that are addressed through politics.

Funding has been a nationwide problem, especially since the beginning of the great recession in the fall of 2008. As is reflected in the "Education in the News" article, those engaged in deciding on school budgets have to keep in mind that obtaining sufficient funds from the various sources to support schools and deciding how the funds will be spent are difficult to accomplish and always can be questioned.

Teachers are just one part of the very large and complex education system that includes all levels of government. Historically, since the U.S. Constitution does not address education directly, the primary authority and responsibility for schools has been assigned to the states. However, in the past sixty years, the federal government has become directly involved with them. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) statute passed in 2001 has been a clear example of this increasing federalism. The 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) continues the increased role of the federal government in setting directions for public education.

Also, as is described later in this chapter, politics and accountability are closely linked. One consequence is that from now on, teachers are not likely to receive pay increases by simply having one more year of teaching experience. Public and political pressures are setting community expectations that any increases in salaries are to be tied to increases in performance. Student test scores, qualifications of teachers and principals, and other indicators of increasing performance are now important aspects of accountability.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS: ORGANIZATION AND FINANCES

All families and communities in the United States have access to a public school. The school may be located around the corner or a very long bus ride away. Unless a community is very small and remote, it will have more than one school organized as a school district or **local education agency (LEA)**. There are more than 14,000 districts and approximately 140,000 schools operating at this time. School districts have many common features but some different features. For example, some districts have only elementary schools and others only secondary schools. One of the significant differences is their size. The one hundred largest school districts each has more than 45,000 students whereas some two-thirds of all school districts have fewer than 2,500 students. Another way to think about these statistics is that the many more smaller school districts serve fewer (17 percent) students whereas the fewer number of larger districts serves the most (83 percent) students. (*Note:* All data reported in this chapter unless otherwise noted are from the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau website, reports, and data bases.)

School District Organization

The school district is governed by a school board, and its day-to-day operations are led by a **superintendent**. In most districts, your official hiring as a teacher will be done by the superintendent who makes a recommendation to the school board. Each district has its own district office, which houses an array of administrative, instructional, financial, and clerical support staff. As the state and federal levels of government have become increasingly active in setting educational agendas, a concomitant response has occurred at the district level in the form of an ever-increasing list of tasks that must be accomplished. The typical school district **organization chart** presented in Figure 9.1 reflects the functions and personnel that are part of the district office.

LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION. Legal authority for operating local school systems is assigned to local boards of education through state statutes. The statutes prescribe specifically how school board members are to be chosen and what duties and responsibilities they have in office. The statutes also specify the terms of board members, procedures for selecting officers of the board, duties of the officers, and procedures for filling any vacancies. Local citizens serving as school board members, also called *trustees*, are official agents of the state.

Most school boards in the United States are elected by popular vote in special **nonpartisan** elections in which candidates are not associated with a particular political party. In some cities, the mayor will appoint board members. The percentage of appointed school boards is higher in school districts enrolling more than 25,000 pupils, yet even in three-fourths of these larger districts, the board members are elected.

Usually, teachers cannot be board members in the districts where they teach; however, they can be board members in districts where they live if they teach in different districts. The trend toward more teachers becoming board members most likely results from the goal of professional associations to secure seats on school boards.

Powers and Duties of School Boards. The powers and duties of school boards vary from state to state; the school codes of the respective states spell them out in detail. A school board's major function is the development of policy for the local school district—policy that must be in harmony with both federal and state laws. Boards have only those powers granted or implied by statute that are necessary to carry out their responsibilities. These powers usually include the power to

- Obtain revenue.
- Maintain schools.
- Purchase sites and build buildings.

Local education agency The local formal organization for a set of schools, most commonly a school district.

Superintendent The administrator with overall responsibility for school district operations.

Organization chart A graphic representation of the line and staff relationships of personnel in a school, school district, or other type of organization.

Nonpartisan Candidates and elections that are not associated with a particular political party.

Mandatory Duties and responsibilities that must be accomplished.

Discretionary Duties and responsibilities that may be done by a designated body or may be delegated to another.

Chief executive officer (CEO) The school district executive with overall authority to administer a school district – a corollary to the superintendent.

- Purchase materials and supplies.
- Organize and provide programs of study.
- Employ necessary workers and regulate their services.
- Admit and assign pupils to schools and control their conduct.

Some duties of school boards are **mandatory**, whereas others are **discretionary**. Some duties cannot be delegated. If, for example, the state has given boards the power to employ teachers, they must do this; the power cannot be delegated—even to a school superintendent. Boards can delegate much of the hiring *process* to administrators, however, and then act officially on administrative recommendations for employment. An illustration of a discretionary power left to the local board is the decision whether to participate in a nonrequired school program, for example, a program of competitive athletics. Another illustration of discretionary power is the decision to employ only teachers who exceed minimum state certification standards.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS. One of the primary duties of the local board is to select its **chief executive officer (CEO)**, the superintendent. There is one notable exception to the general practice of selection of the superintendent by school boards. In a few states, especially in the Southeast, some school district superintendents are elected by the voters. In these situations, school superintendent selection is a political process just like that used for the election of mayors, county commissioners, some judges, and others. In either case, whether named by the board or

elected by the people, the superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school district, responding to the interests of school board members, planning the district's budget, and defining the district's long-term aspirations. The superintendent is expected to be visible in the community and to provide overall leadership for the district.

VIDEO ANALYSIS 9.1

▶ School district superintendents have to understand the needs of the district and the concerns of the community. In viewing this video, note the many district and community elements the superintendent is considering, and then answer the questions that follow the video in your Pearson eText.

THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP. The importance of leadership by the superintendent and board members cannot be overemphasized. The quality of the educational program of a school district is influenced strongly by the leadership that the board of education and the superintendent provide. Without the communication and support of high expectations by boards and superintendents, high-quality education is not likely to be achieved. For example, offering curriculum programs that exceed state-required minimums is discretionary. For a school district to excel, the local authorities, board members-, and superintendent must convince their communities that specified school programs are both needed and desirable.

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONSHIPS. Another important organizational concept to keep in mind is the difference between line and staff relationships. In any organization, some people will have the job of being executives, bosses, managers, or directors. Other people will be supervised by these persons. The supervisor typically has the authority, at least to some degree, to direct, monitor, and evaluate the work of the subordinate. When one person has this type of authority over another, there is a **line relationship**.

When there is no formal supervisory authority of one person over the other, they have a **staff relationship**. Assistant principals, department chairs and team leaders do not have line authority over teachers. They are in a staff relationship that is advisory. Only the principal has the final authority to direct what teachers do, or cannot do. This distinction between line and staff relationships becomes especially important in education because in many instances, it is not clear or absolute who has the authority or responsibility to direct the work of others. For example, teachers, as professionals, can legitimately claim more independence than can employees of other organizations. But teachers are not completely free to do whatever they want. If they were, the system of education would break down, at least in the experience of the students who must move through it, who would most likely not receive a coherent K–12 curriculum.

CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF. The superintendent of schools works with a staff to carry out the district's program of education. Although the size of the staff varies with the school district, some kind of formal organization is necessary. Each school district will have an organization chart similar to the one shown earlier in Figure 9.1.

In an organization chart, line officers hold the administrative power as it flows from the local board of education down to the pupils. Superintendents, assistant superintendents, and principals are line officers vested with authority over the people below them on the chart. Each person is directly responsible to the official above and must work through that person in dealing with a higher official. This arrangement is frequently referred to as the *chain of command*.

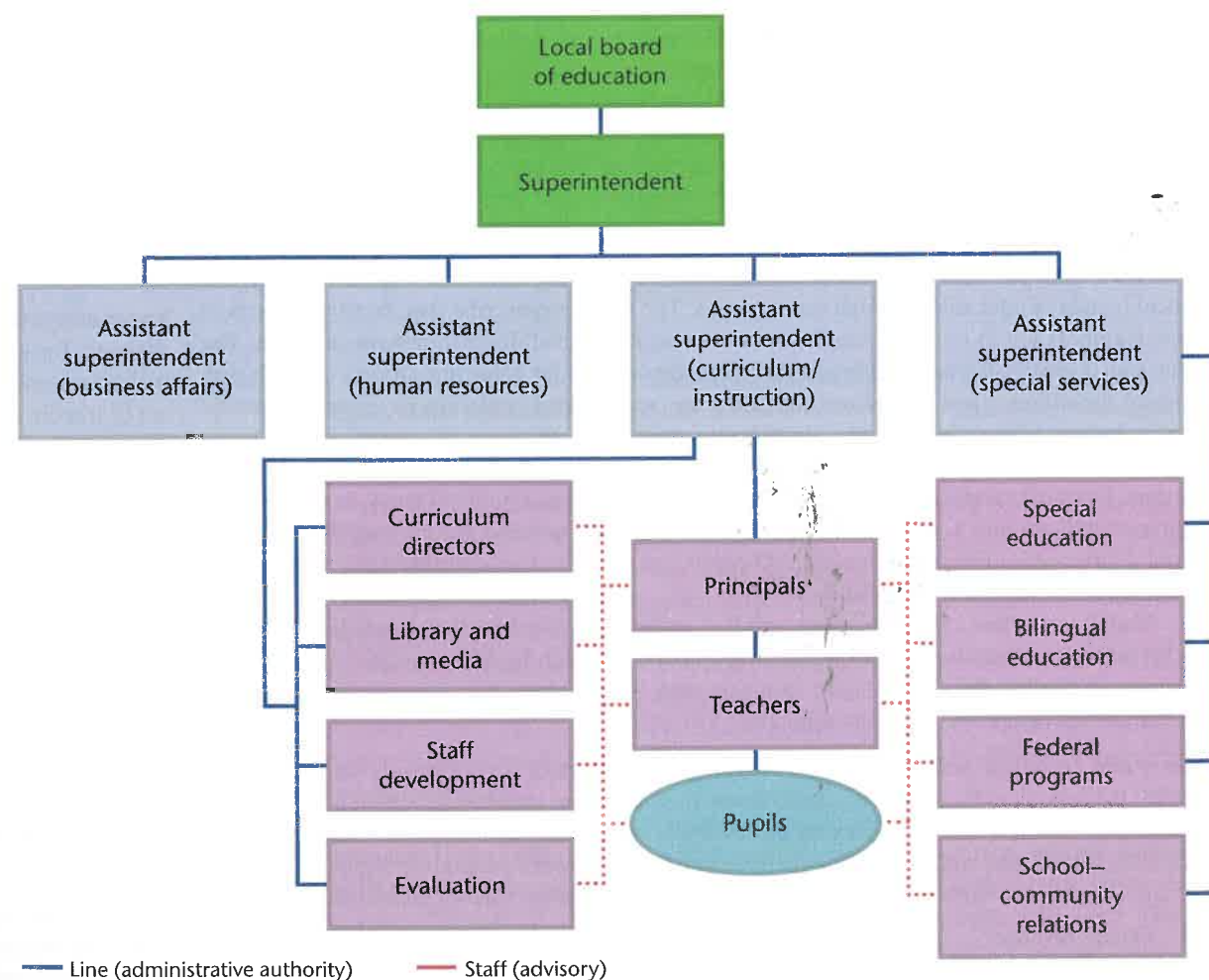
Administrative staff positions are shown in Figure 9.1 as branching out from the direct flow of authority. Staff includes librarians, curriculum coordinators, staff developers, guidance officers, transportation officers, and others. They are responsible to their respective superiors but have no line authority over teachers. They assist and advise others using their special knowledge and abilities. Teachers are generally referred to as staff even though they are in the direct flow of authority. However, their line authority in this arrangement prevails only over pupils.

A NEW ROLE—CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER. Increasingly, school districts are establishing a new executive level role. The chief academic officer (CAO) is charged with providing leadership

Line relationship An organizational arrangement in which a subordinate is directly responsible to a supervisor.

Staff relationship An organizational arrangement in which one party is not under the direct control or authority of another.

FIGURE 9.1 Typical School District Line and Staff Organization Chart



and overall coordination of testing, instruction, and professional development. In today's districts, there are many tests and assessments being administered. At the same time, teachers are being pressed to use the data to make decisions about instruction. Teachers also are expected to learn about and use **evidence-based programs (EBP)**, which are practices that research studies have documented to be effective. One response by districts to all that is necessary to lead and coordinate these efforts is to establish the chief academic officer position.

School District Expenditures

One important task of school districts is to obtain and spend the money required for schooling. The amount of money involved is significant. For example, it was estimated that in the 2013 school year, nearly \$600 billion would be spent on schooling. This would be an average of nearly \$10,700 per pupil. All of this money would have to come from somewhere (including your taxes) and be allocated in ways that are equitable.

Major expenditure categories are presented in Figure 9.2. As you would expect, the largest percentage, approximately two-thirds of the total amount, is direct spending on instruction. However, more than one-third is spent on other components. School buses must be purchased and have drivers; district staff and administrators must report to the state and federal governments about activities and how funds are spent; school buildings have to be constructed and maintained. All of the funds cannot go directly to instruction.

INTERMEDIATE UNITS. One other type of organization that you as a teacher should know about is the **intermediate unit**. This organization functions between the state department of education and the local school districts. They may be organized by county or represent a consortium of several districts. These units have different names in different states. For example, in some states, such as New York and Colorado, they are called boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES); in Texas, they are called regional service centers; in California, county education offices; and in Georgia, regional education service agencies (RESAs).

A fundamental purpose of the intermediate unit is to provide services that an individual district cannot efficiently or economically provide. Cooperative provisions for special education and vocational-technical education have been very successful. Other services that intermediate units can provide include audiovisual libraries, centralized purchasing, in-service training for teachers and principals as well as other school workers, health services, instructional materials, laboratories, legal services, and special consultant services. Stimulated by educational reform, the in-service dimension of the intermediate unit has escalated in some states in recent years. For example the Cuyahoga County Education Service Center in the *Education in the News* feature was charged with conducting an audit of how the Youngstown, (OH) City School District was spending its funds.

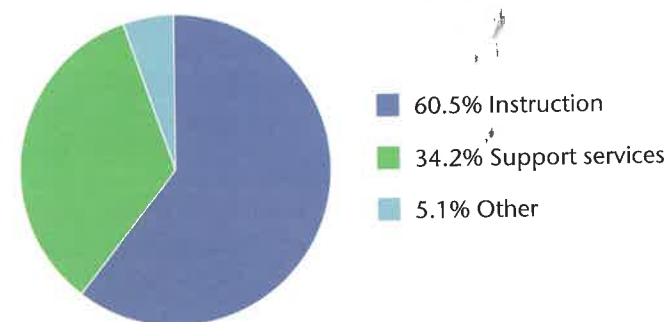
Intermediate unit
An education organization located between local districts and the state that delivers support services to one or more school districts.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.1

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.1 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

FIGURE 9.2 Percentage Distribution of Current Spending by Function for Public Elementary and Secondary Education in the United States for Fiscal Year 2013



Source: Based on Figure 3 in "Public Education Finances: 2013," United States Census Bureau.

THE ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS

The basic building block of the U.S. education system is the school. There are nearly 99,000 public schools across the nation. To an amazing extent, schools are organized in the same way in each state. In fact, schools are organized pretty much the same in other countries too.

The all-too-typical school building consists of a set of classrooms with corridors for the movement of students and a central office. It has one or more large spaces for a cafeteria and gymnasium/auditorium. Schools also have staff lounges where teachers can make preparations, relax, and exchange ideas. School campuses have outside spaces for a playground, athletics, parking (staff and students), and a driveway for dropping off and picking up students. Wherever you go, you will find this basic architecture.

This typical design of schools is frequently criticized for resembling an egg crate. If you viewed a school building with the roof off, you would see that it looks like an egg carton: a series of cells or pockets with routes running between them. Some educational critics see this architecture as interfering with the need to introduce new educational practices. For example, the walls restrict communication between teachers and channel the flow of student traffic. Teachers have to make an effort to see what goes on in any other classrooms.

Even when a school is built with modest attempts to change the interior space, teachers and students still seem to want to preserve the egg crate concept. For example, you may have visited an elementary school that had an open space design. Instead of self-contained classrooms, there might be an open floor plan equivalent in size to three or four classrooms. However, if you observed the arrangement of furniture, bookshelves, and screens, you probably noted that teachers and students had constructed zones and areas that were equivalent to three or four self-contained classrooms.

This is not meant to criticize teachers for how they have adapted to new school architectures; rather, it is meant to point out how the organization of the space parallels the activities of the people who use it. There are many good reasons for organizing schools around self-contained classrooms. And in the case of the open space concept, the noise from three or four teachers and 90 to 120 students can be so disruptive that little learning can occur. One key to the successful use of open space plans, then, is to be sure the building is designed in ways that control and dampen noise.

The physical arrangement of a school into individual classrooms has organizational as well as instructional implications. For example, it is easy for teachers to be isolated in their classrooms. This geographic isolation contributes to teachers' not knowing about or becoming engaged with issues that affect the whole school. Geographic isolation can affect the school as a whole, too. The school staff might not be aware of community concerns or of what is going on in other schools across the district. Teachers and administrators must make deliberate efforts to learn about other parts of the education system.

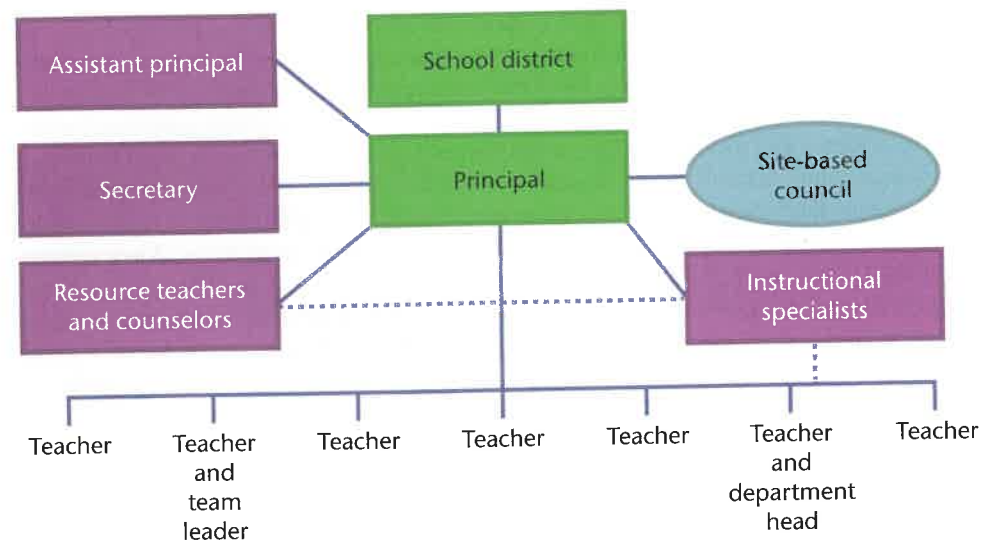
The School Organization Chart

All of the people within a school have to be organized in some way. Their formal working relationships can be pictured in the organization chart shown in Figure 9.3. The principal is the single line authority for all of these adults *and* all of the students! Interestingly, most experts on organizations advocate that no more than five to seven people should be directly supervised by one administrator. Yet in nearly all schools, the principal is responsible for a minimum of thirty adults and several hundred students. In very large schools, the principal may have 200 people to supervise. As you can see, the simple picture of "top-down" leadership breaks apart when one considers the wide array of tasks and the sheer number of people at work in each school. As a result, a number of formal roles and structures exist for arranging the relationships among the varied role groups and for facilitating coordination and communication.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 9.1

Think about principals you knew when you were a student. How would you feel about having one of them as your principal when you are a teacher? What do you think each of those principals would expect of you as a teacher?

FIGURE 9.3 A School Organization Chart



PRINCIPALS. As in school districts, schools have line and staff relationships. At the top of the school organization chart is the principal. By law, the principal is the final authority at the school. The principal's responsibilities include instructional leadership, community relationships, supervision of staff (including teachers, secretaries, and custodians), teacher selection and evaluation, students, building and grounds, provisions of contracts, and administration of the attendance office and all budgets. The principal is in a line relationship with the school district superintendent. In larger school districts, the principal may have an intermediate supervisor, such as an assistant superintendent or a director of elementary or secondary education.

The tasks and responsibilities of principals keep expanding. For example, there has been a push to increase teacher and parent participation in making school decisions. This pressure has led to the creation of special committees of teachers and parents to work with the principal. In addition to the traditional parent-teacher organization, most schools now have a **school improvement process (SIP)** and an SIP committee that includes teachers and perhaps a parent.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS. Larger elementary schools and most junior high schools, middle schools, and high schools have one or more additional administrators. Normally, they are called assistant principals, although sometimes in high schools they are titled vice principals. Large high schools have several assistant or vice principals and other administrators that have director or dean titles, such as director of athletics and dean of students. These administrators share the tasks of the principal and provide additional avenues of communication between teachers, students, staff, parents, the community, and the district office.

In elementary schools, the job differentiation between the assistant principal and the principal is less clear, and both administrators are a part of most operations. In the high school setting, specific roles and tasks are frequently assigned to the

different administrator roles. For example, in most districts, each teacher must be formally observed each year. This activity takes more time than the principal has available, so the assistant/vice principal(s) observes and evaluates some teachers. Usually, the principal concentrates on observing the new teachers because he or she makes the recommendation on whether (or not) they will be rehired.

School improvement process (SIP) The process by which a school staff develops a plan and implements action steps to improve student test scores.

The principal is responsible for the actions of all school personnel and must work closely with the superintendent and the school community.



Source: Triangle Images/Photodisc/Getty Images

VIDEO ANALYSIS 9.2

Superintendents employ and supervise principals. They set expectations for what principals will be like and in turn what their teachers will be like. Watch the accompanying video and answer questions about the characteristics that superintendents look for in principals that follow the video in your Pearson eText.

DEPARTMENT HEADS AND TEAM LEADERS. Elementary schools normally have another, less formal level of leadership: grade-level or team leaders. These are full-time teachers who assume a communication and coordination role for their grade level(s) or team. Junior high schools and high schools have department chairs. Normally, departments are organized around the major subject areas (mathematics, science, English, and social studies) and the cocurricula (athletics and music). Teachers are members of one of the departments, which has regular meetings to review data about student performance, plan curriculum, and facilitate communication. In middle schools, the leaders of interdisciplinary teams serve in the same way. Department heads and team leaders also meet with the principal from time to time and bring information back to their departments. In most districts, department chairs and team leaders are considered to be teachers, not administrators. One implication of this organizational arrangement is that they will not be a part of the formal teacher evaluation process.

TEACHERS. The single largest group of adults in the school is composed of the teachers. A typical elementary school has from fifteen to more than forty teachers whereas a large high school has more than one hundred. Teachers are busy in their classrooms working with their students, and this is where the egg crate architecture of schools can be a problem. Unless special mechanisms are used, such as regular department/grade-level meetings, individual teachers can easily become isolated from the school as a whole. The self-contained classroom architecture and the work of attending to twenty to forty students in the classroom at any one time means that teachers have little time or opportunity to communicate with other adults. As a consequence, the principal and all of the teachers need to work hard with the other members of the school staff to facilitate communication. All must make an effort to work together to continually improve the school.

VIDEO NOTE 9.1

Principals have expectations for teachers that go beyond the basics of instruction. Watch this video and consider how well you match the expectations of these principals.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ROLES. There are several other types of positions in schools that deal directly with instruction. For example, most schools will have a professional in charge of the media/library center. In the past this position was more of a librarian. Now this role is changing to being a curriculum and instruction resource for teachers. Most schools today will have a technology support role. This person will work with teachers and students to not only keep the technology operating but advise on technology based programs and resources for instruction.

Another important teacher role is **resource teacher**, also known as special education teachers. In some schools these teachers will spend all day with a small number of students who have IEPs. In other schools, the special education teachers will "pull out" students who need supplemental instruction from the regular classroom. The special education teacher will work with these students individually and in small groups. The special education teacher also will collaborate with the regular classroom teacher.

Resource teacher Teachers who are credentialed to teach students with special needs and to work with regular teachers in providing special education services.

INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIALISTS. An increasingly important group of education professionals in schools is composed of the master teachers who are specialists in literacy, mathematics, and technology. These instructional specialists lead school-based professional development sessions, coach all teachers, and facilitate using data about student learning to plan instruction. Most schools will also have “resource” teachers who work with children who have special needs. They also may coteach with the general education teachers.

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF. A school has other personnel who support the administrators and teachers. One of the most important of these supporting roles is filled by the school secretary. Every experienced teacher and principal will advise you to be sure to develop a good working relationship with the school secretary who is at the nerve center of the running of the school. When a student has a problem, when a teacher needs some materials, when the principal wants a piece of information from the files, or when a student teacher wants to know about parking a car, the first person to contact is the school secretary.

The cleanliness of your classroom as well as the whole school depends on the efforts of the custodians. They also can be helpful to teachers in locating supplies and moving furniture. Keep in mind that they observe and talk with students. Frequently, custodians and other support staff will know about something that is going on before the teachers do. Cafeteria workers are another group of adult workers in the school who can make a positive difference in how the school feels and functions. Make an effort to come to know each of these staff members. They can be a help to you, and you need to be a help to them.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO). The concerns about safety have resulted in there being increased police presence in and around schools. SROs in schools are sworn law enforcement officers. They may be members of a local police agency, or they may be employees of the school district. They can make arrests and document incidents. In the past, many of these incidents would have been handled by the principal as a school discipline problem. When there are SROs in the school, the same incidents are more likely to lead to juvenile arrests. SROs also represent an additional cost to the school district and/or the police agency.

Innovations in School Organization

There are several interesting and innovative approaches to school organization including online and hybrid programs as well as the alternative school models such as charter and magnet schools. Other organizational innovations include changing the school calendar and the daily schedule.

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLS. The normal school year of nine to ten months with vacation all summer is often criticized. One concern is that students will forget too much over the summer. Critics point out that the current school year was instituted back in the 1800s when most people lived on farms and the children were counted on to perform summer chores.

One interesting solution is the **year-round school**. This is not an extended school year in that students attend school for more days. Rather, year-round schools spread the time in school across twelve months. One way a school might do this is by having multiple “tracks” of six to eight weeks. During any one month, one-fourth to one-third of the students will be on vacation and the others will be attending classes. In this way, students have more frequent but shorter times away from school. An additional advantage is that the school site can handle more students on an annual basis. Curiously, much of the resistance to year-round schools comes from parents who are concerned about being able to schedule family vacations; however, once such a schedule has been implemented, most parents discover that being able to schedule vacations throughout the year has advantages.

FOUR-DAY WEEK. Some rural districts that have school buses traveling long distances have implemented four-day school weeks. Each of the four days is longer, but on the fifth day there is no school. Although there has been no research on this approach, the prevailing impression is that students accomplish just as much. One of the complicating factors in this structure is scheduling athletic and cocurricular activities.

STAGGERED START TIMES. A very effective solution to having several thousand kids arrive at school at the same time is have different start times. For example, ninth and tenth graders arrive

School resource officer (SRO) Sworn law enforcement officer placed in schools to increase safety and security.

Year-round school School that is open all year with only a proportion of the students attending at any one time.

for the beginning of the first period, but eleventh and twelfth graders don’t arrive until the beginning of the second period.

LATER START TIME FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS. The research findings are clear, and we expect that your experience is consistent with the research. Adolescents’ biological clocks have them not wanting to get up early in the morning whereas elementary school students are more likely to wake up early (Mayo Clinic staff, n.d.). A few school districts are reversing the start times. Elementary schools have an earlier start time with secondary schools starting later in the morning. There are even suggestions that student learning increases when this relatively simple schedule change is made. Of course, the frequently heard objection is the bus schedule, which is perceived as too difficult to run in reverse, i.e. picking up elementary school students first. Another structure for increasing time for teaching and learning is to lengthen the school day, which is the topic in the “Differing Perspectives” feature.

FEEDER SCHOOL ALIGNMENT. In the majority of school districts, communication and coordination across levels of schooling are quite limited. A few school districts have created an organization arrangement that places a high school and the junior high/middle schools and elementary schools whose students “feed” into it in one unit. In this alignment, there can be vertical communication and coordination that result in continuity around curriculum and more communication among administrators and teachers. An additional strength is the possibility of all administrators and teachers attending to the transition of students from one school to the next.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.2

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.2 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES

SHOULD THE SCHOOL DAY BE LENGTHENED?

An important school organizational structure is the length of the school day. As many school districts are forced to cut budgets, some are pushing for a longer school day. For example, in the fall of 2011, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced an initiative to add ninety minutes to the school day. Other districts added a seventh or eighth period to high school schedules. In some districts, an additional week is being added to the school calendar. What do you think? Is adding an hour or more to the school day a good idea or a bad one?

YES

Extending the school day provides expanded learning time (ELT). There is more time for instruction and therefore more opportunity to increase student learning. ELT created by adding an extra period in secondary schools provides added opportunities for electives, field trips, credit retrieval (picking up on course credits that were not accomplished in the past), giving students more time to do academic assignments and teachers more time to meet with students. ELT can be applied in more innovative ways, too, such as having staggered start times.

Adding to the school day has benefits for families, too. In many families where both parents are working, there will be less need to find after-school child care. ELT also can provide more flexibility in arranging parent conferences.

NO

This is just another simple solution to what really is a complex problem. Simply adding more time doesn’t mean that it will be used effectively. Many schools already have after-school programs. Extending the day will mean later start times for after-school athletics and other extracurricular activities. More time in school means less time for children to play before it gets dark outside.

There also is the very serious question of how ELT will be paid for. The additions to teacher salaries, facilities costs, and supervisory costs must come from somewhere. ELT presumes that teachers do not have work to do other than being in the classroom. Teacher collaboration, grading papers, and preparing for tomorrow’s lessons have to be done sometime. Also, where is the research that supports ELT leading to increases in student learning?

ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

In certain countries, such as Taiwan, the national constitution specifies responsibility for education, but the U.S. Constitution does not say anything about education. The Tenth Amendment has been interpreted as granting this power to the states. As a consequence, the states are the governmental units in the United States charged with the responsibility for education. Local school districts, then, receive through state law the power to administer and operate the school system for their communities. State legislatures within the limits expressed by the federal Constitution and their own state's constitutions, are the chief policy makers for education. State legislatures grant powers to state boards of education, state departments of education, chief state school officers, and local boards of education. Figure 9.4 shows a typical state organization chart for education.

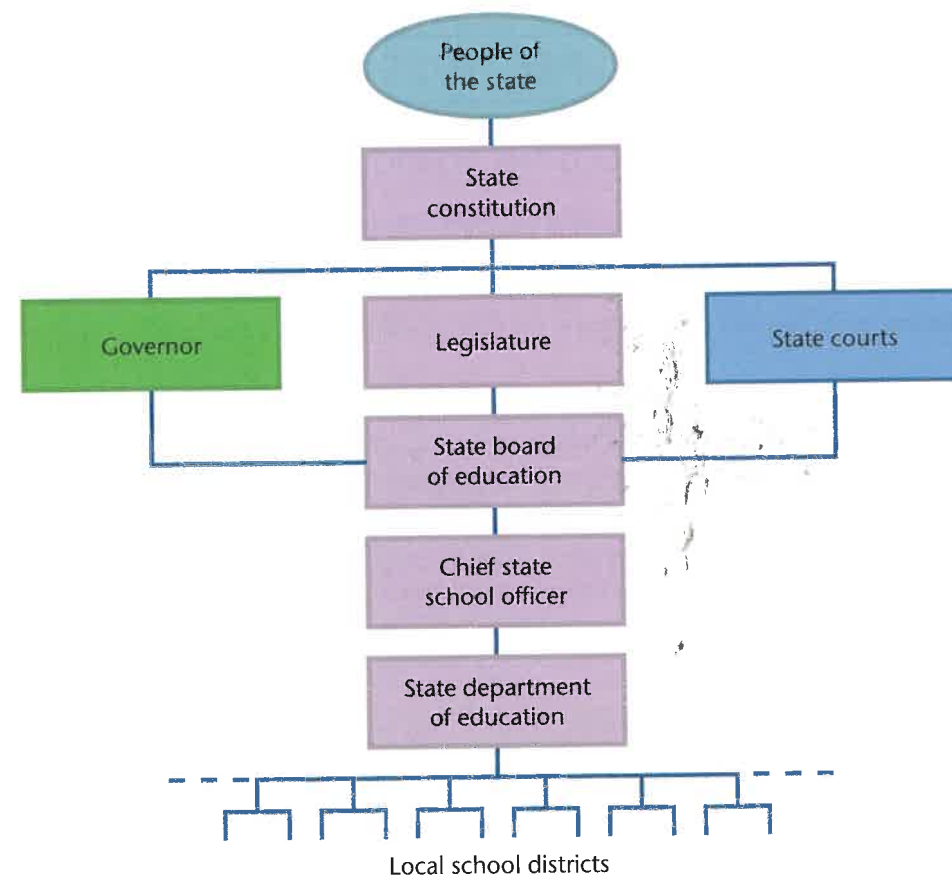
Regulatory Functions for which the state board has the authority to establish rules and regulations that limit and permit action.

Advisory Functions and areas in which the state board can only offer suggestions and indicate preference for action.

State Board of Education

State boards of education are both **regulatory** and **advisory**. Regulatory functions include the establishment of standards for issuing and revoking teaching licenses, the establishment of standards for approving and accrediting schools, and the development and enforcement of a uniform system for gathering and reporting educational data. Advisory functions include considering the educational needs of the state, both long and short range, and recommending to the governor and the legislature ways of meeting these needs. In studying school problems and in suggesting and analyzing proposals, state boards of education can be invaluable to the legislature, especially because the legislature is under pressure to decide many issues. A state board can provide continuity over time for an educational program that annual or biannual legislative procedures do not accommodate. A state board can also coordinate, supplement, and establish study commissions.

FIGURE 9.4 State Organization Chart



These commissions examine questions and issues related to such topics as the impact of setting different levels of cut scores on tests, textbook adoptions, school finance, licensure, student learning standards, school building standards, and teacher education.

STATE BOARD MEMBERSHIP. Members of state boards of education get their positions in various ways. Some are appointed by the governor with confirmation by the senate. In other states, state boards of education may be elected by the people, the legislature, or the local school board members in a regional convention, also with confirmation by the senate. The terms of members of state boards of education are usually staggered to avoid a complete changeover at any one time. Board members usually serve without pay but are reimbursed for expenses. The policies of nonpayment and staggered terms are considered safeguards against political patronage.

Chief State School Officer

Every state has a chief state school officer, commissioner of education, or superintendent of public instruction. Some state superintendents are elected by the people; others are appointed either by the state board or by the governor.

Arguments advanced for electing the chief state school officer hold that, as an elected official, the person will be close to the people, responsible to them, and free from obligations to other state officials. An elected person will also be independent of the state board of education. Opponents of the election method argue that this method exposes the state department of education to partisan politics, that an elected official is obligated to other members of the same political party, and that many excellent candidates prefer not to engage in political contests.

Those who advocate that the chief state school officer should be appointed by a state board of education or the governor claim that policy making should be separated from policy execution, that educational leadership should not rest on the competence of one elected official, and that this method enhances the state's ability to recruit and retain qualified career workers in education. Opponents of appointment by a state board of education claim mainly that an appointed chief school officer will not be responsible to the people. The principal objection to gubernatorial appointment is the inherent danger of the appointee's involvement in partisan politics.

State Department of Education

The state government carries on its activities in education through the **state department of education**, also known as the **state education agency (SEA)**, which is directed by the chief state school officer. These activities have been classified into five categories:

1. **Operational.** Operational activities are those in which the state department of education directly administers schools and services, such as schools for the blind. Regulatory activities include making sure that teachers meet licensure standards, that school buses are safe, and that curricular requirements are fulfilled. Service activities include advising and consulting, disseminating research, and preparing materials (on state financial aid, for example).
2. **Regulatory.** SEA personnel now regularly audit school performance on state tests, review school improvement plans, and force restructuring of low-performing schools and school districts.
3. **Developmental.** Developmental activities are directed at improving performance across all schools and districts; they include planning, staffing, and research into better performance for the operational and regulatory as well as the service functions.
4. **Public Support.** Public support and cooperation activities involve public relations, political activities with the legislature and governor, and relations with various other governmental and nongovernmental agencies.
5. **Monitoring.** The monitoring function has become increasingly important as the federal government has pressed for more accountability.

State Legislature

State legislatures are generally responsible for creating, operating, managing, and maintaining state school systems. The legislators are the state policy makers for education. State legislatures

State department of education The state office that has day-to-day oversight responsibility for K-12 education.

State education agency (SEA) The general term for the state department of education or state department of public instruction.

create state departments of education to execute state policy. State legislatures, though powerful, also operate under controls.

In these difficult economic times, the most important actions of state legislatures involve making decisions about the financing of schools. The sources of funds, including tax structures, and the distribution of funds for education are determined by state legislatures. Legislatures also can become involved in other education issues such as licensure standards, tenure rights of teachers, programs of study, building construction standards for health and safety, and compulsory attendance laws.

State legislatures in their legislative deliberations about the schools are continually importuned by special-interest groups. These groups, realizing that the legislature is the focus of legal control of education and how the funds are allocated, can exert considerable influence on individual legislators. Some of the representative influential groups are illustrated in Figure 9.8, which will be described later in this chapter.

It is not uncommon for more than a thousand bills to be introduced each year in a state legislative session. Many of these bills originate with special-interest groups. In recent years, state legislatures have dealt with education bills on a wide range of topics, including accountability, finance, textbooks, adult basic education, length of the school year, legal holidays, lotteries, teacher and student testing, no pass/no play policies, and school standards of various sorts.

Governor

The top executive in each state is the governor. Many governors have emphasized the importance of education in their states. Beginning in 2011, several Republican governors reversed this traditional perspective by supporting legislation that would reduce the influence and rights of teachers and other public employees. For example, governors in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Arizona supported legislation to eliminate the collective bargaining rights of teachers and selected other categories of public employees. Don't forget that governors can also veto school legislation. When there is a dispute over the interpretation of legislation or a challenge to its constitutionality, the attorney general and the state judiciary system will become involved.



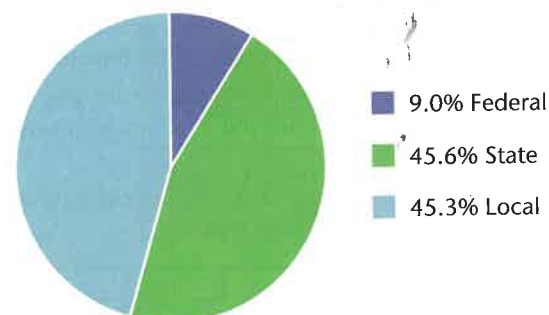
CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.3

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.3 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

PAYING FOR SCHOOLS

School systems nationwide receive their funds from federal, state, and local sources. In recent years, the proportion of dollars from each source has remained quite constant. As is summarized in Figure 9.5, on average the state provides around 45 percent of the funding, local sources provide around 45 percent, and federal sources provide a little over 9 percent. However, there will be some

FIGURE 9.5 Sources of revenue for public elementary and secondary schools



Source: Based on Figure 1 in "Public Education Finances: 2013," United States Census Bureau.

state-by-state differences, including in the amount of federal dollars received. Still, contrary to what you might have thought, public education is primarily funded by local and state sources of revenue. This means that the governor and legislature in each state will have the most say in how well their schools will be funded and where the majority of funds will come from.

Key Finance Questions

When the financing of education is considered, the first questions asked by the taxpayers are "How much do I have to pay?" and "How much will my school(s) receive?" In the last thirty years, two other questions have sharpened the discussions about education finance: "Does each school across the state have the same amount of funding?" This is the **equity** question. "Is there enough funding so that students can achieve?" This is the **adequacy** or **sufficiency** question. The equity question was at the center of many school funding lawsuits in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1989, a decision of the Kentucky Supreme Court brought the adequacy question to the forefront. That court decision held that every child in the state had the right to an "adequate" education. The direct consequence of that decision was the state legislature's passing the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990. The significance of KERA is that it did not deal solely with equalizing spending by each school district—that is, equity. KERA went further by specifically connecting funding with the implementation of school and curriculum reforms, specifying student outcomes and development of a statewide strategy for assessing academic achievement.

Any discussion related to the financing of education now has to deal with all three questions: "How much will each source pay?" "Is there equity in the distribution?" and "Are the resources adequate so that all students can achieve the identified outcomes?" Each of these questions is a key theme in the "Education in the News" feature at the beginning of this chapter.

System of Taxation and Support for Schools

The "Education in the News" article clearly illustrates how the media and taxpayers are constantly watching to see how well school districts are spending their tax dollars. Actually, a variety of taxes from local, state, and federal sources are needed. Each of these government sources distributes some of the tax dollars it takes in to local school districts.

The three principal kinds of taxes that provide revenue for schools are property taxes, sales or use taxes, and income taxes. The property tax is generally a local tax whereas the sales tax generally is a state and local mix, and income taxes are collected at the city, state, and federal levels. As mentioned earlier, nearly \$600 billion in revenues were raised by local, state, and federal governments to fund public education for the 2013 fiscal year. Each type of tax has advantages and disadvantages, yet it is unlikely that any one of these taxes, used by itself for education, would be sufficient.

In evaluating a system of taxes, one should consider the varying ability of citizens to pay, the economic effects of the taxes on the taxpayer, the benefits that various taxpayers receive, the total yield of the tax, the economy of collection, the degree of acceptance, the convenience of paying, the problems of tax evasion, the stability of the tax, and the general adaptability of the tax system. Clearly, systems of taxation are complicated; each system is an intricately interdependent network.

PROPERTY TAXES AND LOCAL REVENUE. Until recently, the **property tax** was the primary source of revenue for schools. It is based on the value of property, both real estate and personal. Real estate includes land holdings and buildings such as homes, commercial buildings, and factories. Personal property consists of automobiles, machinery, furniture, livestock, and intangibles such as stocks and bonds. The property tax has both advantages and limitations.

Property Taxes: Advantages and Limitations. An advantage of taxing property is that it is not easily moved to escape taxation as income might be. Also, because the owners of property pay the tax, it is easy to identify them. Historically, the main advantage of the property tax was its stability. Although the tax tends to lag behind changes in market values, it provides a steady, regular income for the taxing agency. However, since the beginning of the 2008 recession, there has been significant decline in property values. This has led to reduction in taxes being paid with a consequence being fewer dollars for schools.

The property tax has numerous limitations. It can have a negative impact on the value of housing: It tends to discourage rehabilitation and upkeep because both of these tend to raise the

Equity Provision of the same amount of funding to all schools or students.

Adequacy The provision of sufficient funds so that all students can achieve.

Sufficiency The provision of adequate funding so that all students can achieve.

Property tax A tax based on the value of property, both real estate and personal.

value of the property and therefore its taxes. The tax is often a deciding factor in locating a business or industry, and it is likely not to be applied equally on all properties.

Determining the Value of Property. One problem with the property tax lies in the potential unfairness of inconsistent property assessments. In some areas, assessors are local people, usually elected, with no special training in evaluating property. Their duty involves inspecting their neighbors' properties and placing values on them. In other areas, sophisticated techniques involving expertly trained personnel are used for property appraisal. In either circumstance, assessors are likely to be subject to political and informal pressures to keep values low in order to keep tax rates low.

The assessed value of property is usually only a percentage of its market value. This percentage varies from county to county and from state to state. Attempts are made within states to equalize assessments or to make certain that the same percentage of full cash value is used in assessing property throughout the state. In recent years, attempts have been made to institute full cash value for the assessed value. For the property tax to be a fair tax, equalized assessment is a necessity.

Property Tax: Progressive or Regressive? Property tax is most generally thought of as a **progressive tax**—that is, one that taxes according to ability to pay; the more wealth one has in property, the more one pays. But because assessments can be unequal and because frequently the greatest wealth is no longer related to real estate, the property tax can be regressive. **Regressive taxes**, such as sales and use taxes, are those that affect low-income groups disproportionately. Some evidence supports the contention that people in the lowest income groups pay a much higher proportion of their income in property taxes than persons in the highest income groups.

Inequities of the Property Tax. Significant support for schools across the nation has been provided by the property tax. However, as described previously, because of schools' heavy dependence on property taxes for financing, enormous discrepancies in resources and quality have built up between schools located in rich and in poor communities.

Property taxes are calculated on the basis of assessed valuations, so a district with a high assessed valuation per pupil is in a better position to provide quality education than is one with a low assessed valuation per pupil. To illustrate the school finance consequences of differences in local wealth, let's look at a simple example. If school district A has an assessed valuation of \$90 million and a school population of 1,000 pupils, for example, and school district B has an assessed valuation of \$30 million and a school population of 1,000, a tax rate of \$2 per \$100 of assessed valuation would produce \$1.8 million for education in district A but only \$600,000 in district B. School district A could therefore spend \$1,800 per pupil compared with \$600 per pupil in school district B with the same local tax rate.

Per pupil expenditure is a statistic that also is used to make international comparisons. See the Perspective on Diversity feature to see how per pupil expenditure in the U.S. compares with other developed countries.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE COURTS ON TAXATION AND EDUCATION. Can the property tax continue to be the primary base for financing schools? This question was asked of the U.S. Supreme Court in *San Antonio (Texas) Independent School District v. Rodriguez* (1979).

Keep in mind that the U.S. Constitution does not mention education, so any litigation has to be based on indirect connections. In the *Rodriguez* case, the challenge was initiated under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This clause prohibits state action that

would deny citizens equal protection. The U.S. Supreme Court, in a five-to-four decision, reversed the lower court decision in *Rodriguez* and thus reaffirmed the local property tax as a basis for school financing. Justice Potter Stewart, voting with the majority, admitted that "the method of financing public schools . . . can be fairly described as chaotic and unjust" (From *The Property Tax: The Road to Unequal Schools* by Potter Stewart, 2016.) He did not, though, find it unconstitutional. The majority opinion, written by Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., stated, "We cannot say that such disparities are the product of a system that is so irrational as to be invidiously discriminatory" (From *American Constitutional Law* by Lewis F. Powell, 2015.) Justice Thurgood Marshall, in the dissenting opinion, charged that the ruling "is a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of education opportunity" (From *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* by Thurgood Marshall, 2015.) Another part of the opinion in *Rodriguez* addressed the role of the states in supporting public education:

The consideration and initiation of fundamental reforms with respect to state taxation and education are matters reserved for legislative processes of the various States, and we do no violence to the values of federalism and separation of powers by staying our hand. We hardly need add that this Court's action today is not to be viewed as placing its judicial imprimatur on the status quo. The need is apparent for reform in tax systems which may well have relied too long and too heavily on the local property tax. And certainly innovative thinking as to public education, its methods, and its funding is necessary to assure both a higher level of quality and greater uniformity of opportunity. These matters merit the continued attention of the scholars who already have contributed much by their challenges. But the ultimate solutions must come from the lawmakers and from the democratic pressures of those who elect them.¹ (Rodriguez, 1979)

These comments in *Rodriguez* foreshadowed the continuing string of school finance suits that have been filed in most states.

State Sources of Revenue

Clearly, states are the major source of funding for schools. In the most recent year for which statistics are available, the states provided 48.3 percent of the fiscal resources for local schools. This money is referred to as **state aid**, and within most states, all or a major portion of this money is used to help achieve equality of opportunity.

The main sources of tax revenue for states have been classified by the Department of Commerce into four groups: sales and gross receipt taxes, income taxes, licenses, and miscellaneous. Sales and gross receipt taxes include taxes on general sales, motor fuels, alcohol, insurance, and amusements; income taxes include both individuals and corporations; licenses include those on motor vehicles, corporations, occupations, vehicle operators, hunting, and fishing. The miscellaneous classification includes property taxes, taxes on severance or extraction of minerals, and death and gift taxes. The two largest sources of state revenues are sales and income taxes.

SALES AND INCOME TAXES. Sales and income taxes are lucrative sources of revenue for most states. Also, it is relatively easy to administer both. The sales tax is collected bit by bit, in a relatively painless way, by the vendor who is responsible for keeping records and then sending the funds to the appropriate agency. The state income tax can be withheld from wages; hence, collection is eased. Income taxes are considered progressive taxes because they frequently are scaled to the ability of the taxpayer to pay. Sales taxes are regressive; they affect low-income groups disproportionately. All people pay the sales tax at the same rate, so people in low-income groups pay as much tax as people in high-income groups. Part of the advantage of sales taxes and income taxes is that they can be regulated by the legislature.

GAMBLING: AN INCREASING SOURCE OF REVENUE. In 1964, New Hampshire implemented a lottery. Since then, legalized gambling in its many forms from casinos and riverboats to horse racing has become an important source of state and local revenues. By 2012, forty-three states and the District of Columbia were operating lotteries. Every state except Hawaii and Utah collects revenue from one or more forms of gambling. Further, in every year between 1998 and 2014 (with the exception of 2009), gambling revenues went up.

Gambling is an indirect source of revenue in the sense that it is not seen as a direct tax on citizens; instead, the revenues come through taxes on the games. Income for states from lotteries grew from \$978 million in 1980 to nearly \$18.4 billion in 2014. In 2014, nearly \$28 billion was

State aid The money that a state provides for the fiscal resources of local schools.



Source: Lindasj27/Shutterstock

¹ From *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*. Published by U.S. Supreme Court, © 1979.

collected by state and local governments. On average across all fifty states, gambling represents 2.4 percent of state revenue (Dadayan, 2015).

In most states, such as California and Florida, the original intent was for these funds to be used for educational enhancements. But within three years of the California lottery's implementation, in a tight budget year, the California legislature incorporated the lottery funds into the base education budget. Other states have had similar experiences. In general, the revenues from gambling are but another source of funds for the state.

State Differences in the Funding of Education

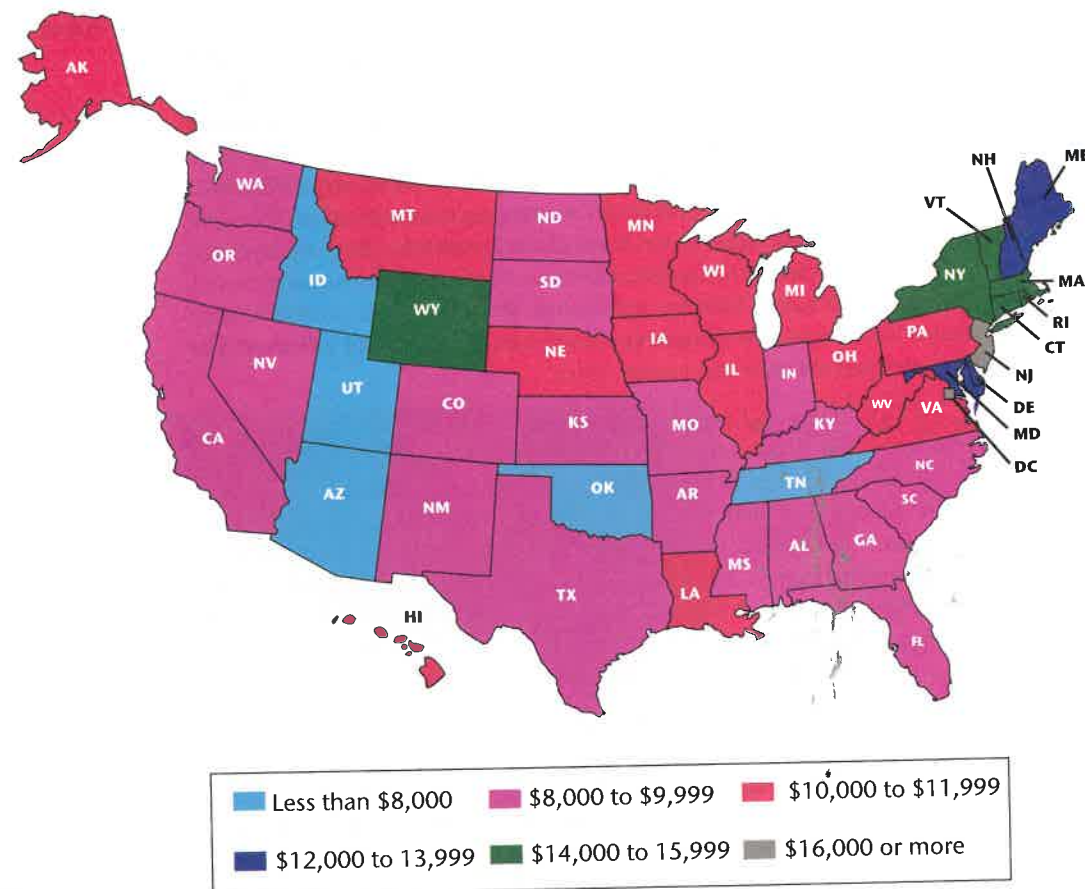
A very useful statistic for evaluating differences in school funding is the **per-pupil expenditure**. This is a standardized statistic compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics that takes into account local, state, and federal funds invested in K–12 education state by state. The most recently available data are presented in Figure 9.6. As is described in the Perspectives on Diversity feature, per-pupil expenditure also is used to compare school funding across nations.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 9.2

Per-pupil expenditure
Average dollars spent for each student.

In comparison to other states (see Figure 9.6), how well is education funded in your state? Do you think the level of per-pupil expenditure for your state is sufficient?

FIGURE 9.6 Public Elementary-Secondary School System per-Pupil Current Spending by State: Fiscal Year 2013



Note: The prekindergarten student membership was imputed for some states, affecting the total student count and per pupil expenditures calculation. Some values were affected by redistribution of reported expenditure values to correct for missing data items and/or to distribute state direct support expenditures.

Source: Public Elementary-Secondary School System Per Pupil Current Spending By State: Fiscal Year 2013 from Public Education Finances: 2013. Published by US Census Bureau, © 2015.

PERSPECTIVES on DIVERSITY

International Comparisons: Expenditures per Student as an Indicator

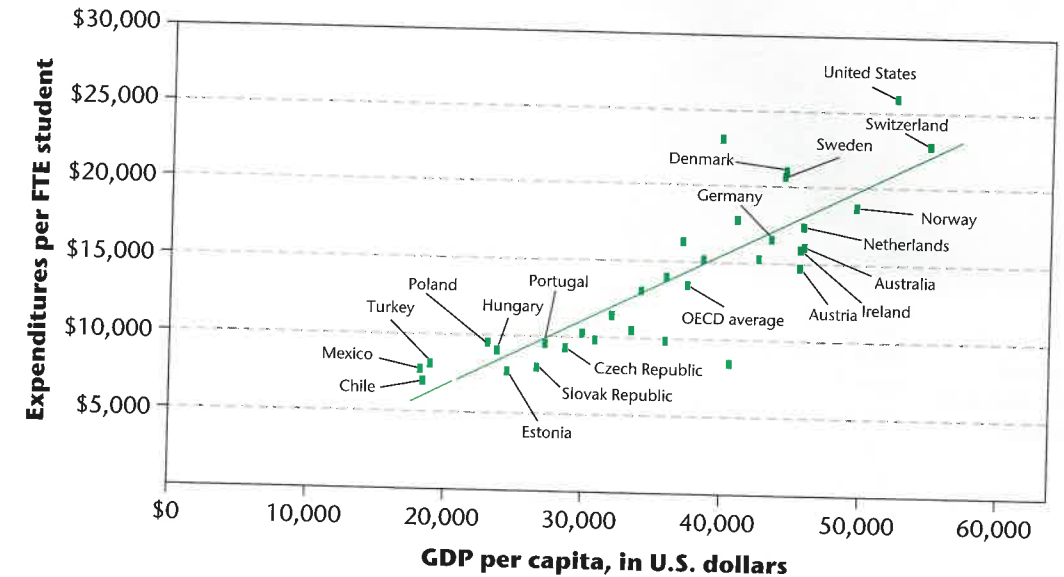
Many indicators are used to demonstrate how the United States compares to other countries in education. Frequently the data are chosen to show that the United States is underperforming. One useful resource for international comparisons is the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) website at www.oecd.org. OECD is a partnership of the most developed nations, including those of Western Europe, the United States, Japan, and Australia.

To find financial data that shows expenditures per student, refer to the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The data for eight countries, along with the average for OECD countries, are presented in Figure 9.7.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

1. Given the intense concerns about international competitiveness, how would you explain the fact that the United States is spending well above other countries yet our students perform below other countries on many of the tests?
2. How could you use these data to make a case for more or less spending for schools in the United States? Also, how would you allocate these funds?

FIGURE 9.7 Per-Pupil Expenditures by OECD Country in 2012



Source: Per-Pupil Expenditures By Oecd Country In 2012 from Education Expenditures by Country. Published by US Department of Education, © 2015.

Continuing Challenges to School Finance Within the States

As frustrations have increased about the performance of schools, policy makers and communities have increasingly turned to the courts to address issues of fairness in school funding. Some states have had new suits initiated, and others are continuing to struggle to respond to earlier court decisions and directives. In all, forty-five of the states have experienced and/or are experiencing court cases that deal with school finance. One indicator of the current size of the frustration occurred in Connecticut in 2016 when Judge Thomas G. Moukawsher of the State Superior Court, in *Connecticut Coalition for Justice in education Funding v. Reila* presented a 90 page ruling. He challenged the squabbling of school boards, and “the uselessly perfect teacher evaluations” while a third of the students in the poorest communities cannot read at even the basic levels. In his ruling the judge threw out the state’s school financing system.



The different forms of legal gambling have become another source of funds for education.

THE STATE PERSPECTIVE ON TAXATION AND EDUCATION. The earliest court suits, those brought before 1989, were based in equal protection challenges and questions about unequal resource allocations. As LaMorte (2011) has observed, “Plaintiffs were unsuccessful in about two-thirds of these cases” (p. 303). In some of these cases, the plaintiffs emphasized a claim of equal protection; in others, the focus was on specific language in the state’s constitution.

For example, in *Serrano v. Priest* (1971), the California Supreme Court was called on to determine whether the California public school financing system with its substantial dependence on local property taxes violated the Fourteenth Amendment. In its six-to-one decision, the California court held that heavy reliance on unequal local property taxes “makes the quality of a child’s education a function of the wealth of his parents and neighbors.” Furthermore, the court declared, “Districts with small tax bases simply cannot levy taxes at a rate sufficient to produce the revenue that more affluent districts produce with a minimum effort” (From *Serrano v. Priest*, 5 Cal.3d 584. Published by U.S. Supreme court, 1971.) Officially, the California Supreme Court ruled that the system of school financing in California was unconstitutional, but it did not forbid the use of property taxes as long as the system of finance was neutral in the distribution of resources. Within a year of *Serrano v. Priest*, five other courts—in Minnesota, Texas, New Jersey, Wyoming, and Arizona—ruled similarly.

Since 1989, the plaintiffs have changed their argument from questions about equity to questions about adequacy. The question has become one of asking whether or not the state is meeting established standards. Using this new argument, plaintiffs have

been winning two-thirds of the cases. However, states have countered by claiming that they do not have the funds to comply with the courts’ mandates. Even while acknowledging the difficulty, the courts have continued to insist that financial limitations are not an excuse not to do what the state’s constitution sets out. For example, in *Claremont School District v. Governor*, 794 A.2d 744 (N.H. 2002), the court stated: “We hold, therefore, that to the extent the minimum standards for school approval excuse compliance solely based on financial conditions, it is facially insufficient because it is in clear conflict with the State’s duty to provide a constitutionally adequate education.”²

STATES’ RESPONSIBILITY TO GUARANTEE EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY. The signal year for the shift in direction of school finance suits was 1989 with several state supreme courts making significant decisions in the direction of requiring more funding of schools. Since then, in a number of states, the education finance systems were knocked down by the courts, and the state legislatures were directed to remedy the wrongs.

In *Helena Elementary School District v. State* (1989), the Montana Supreme Court ruled that the state’s school finance system violated the state constitution’s guarantee of equal educational opportunity. The state’s constitution article mandates that the state establish an educational system that will develop the full educational potential of each person. In 1990, the court delayed the effects of its decision to allow the legislature time to enact a new finance system.

The Kentucky Supreme Court also ruled that the state’s entire system of school governance and finance violated the state constitution’s mandate for the provision of an efficient system of common schools throughout the state (*Rose v. The Council for Better Education Inc.*, 1989). The Kentucky Supreme Court’s opinion stated:

The system of common schools must be adequately funded to achieve its goals. The system of common schools must be substantially uniform throughout the state. Each child, every child, in this commonwealth must be provided with an equal opportunity to have an adequate education. Equality is the key word here. The children of the poor and the children of the rich, the children who live in poor districts and the

² From *Claremont school district & a.V.Governor*, 794 a.2d 744. Published by The Supreme Court Of New Hampshire, 2002.

children who live in the rich districts must be given the same opportunity and access to an adequate education. This obligation cannot be shifted to local counties and local school districts. (Council, 1989)³

The court directed the state legislature to develop a new educational system, which was adopted as the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990.

Throughout the 1990s, there continued to be suits, court actions, and legislative initiatives regarding how best to address funding inequities for public schools. Earlier court decisions were also revisited. For example, in a turnaround of earlier decisions, in 1994, the State Supreme Court of Arizona ruled that the state’s property tax–based school financing system was unconstitutional because it created wide disparities between rich and poor school districts. As has been true in other states, the court left it up to the legislature to rectify the problem.

As each of these cases illustrates, changes are occurring in states’ provisions for financial support for education. As you will see in the “Perspectives on Diversity” feature, many will argue that in comparison to those of other countries, the U.S. costs of education are too high.



VIDEO 9.2

Watch this video to see how the Dysart (Arizona) School District developed a clear and entertaining presentation to explain sources of funding and how the money is spent.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=On3EaofQbgl>

Entrepreneurial Efforts to Fund Education

The combination of reduced revenues, budgets cuts, increasing enrollments, and demands for better educational services is pressuring schools, school districts, and state officials to search for new funding sources. Some sources that were highly controversial in the past, such as the lottery, have now become a regular part of the main revenue stream. Other potential new sources of funds are now being considered, debated, and utilized.

ADVERTISING: A NEW SOURCE OF REVENUE. School districts are increasingly being approached to sell advertising space. Billboards around athletic fields and in gymnasiums have become common. Soft drinks and fast foods are advertised on the sides of school buses. Placing advertisements at the bottom of the school district’s home page and placing ads on high school cafeteria tables are being considered. Many schools now receive significant “profits” from restricting the brands of soft drinks and snacks in dispensing machines. Other school districts are seeking corporate sponsorships to support music and sports programs. One school district near the Dallas–Fort Worth International Airport sold space for advertising on the rooftops of district buildings to catch the eye of travelers on incoming flights.

MORE STUDENT FEES. Expanded use of student fees, especially for noncore subjects and extra-curricular activities, has become common practice. Fees for enrollment, gym clothes, yearbooks, and lab equipment have become standard. Fees for student parking are becoming routine as well. For parents with more than one child in a secondary school, these fees can quickly total more than \$500 a year. Through various fees, a large high school can increase its revenues by \$50,000 to more than \$300,000 annually, which can add up to \$1 million in four years. Participation in an athletic program means yet more fees.

MORE FUND-RAISING SCHEMES. The entrepreneurial spirit seems to have no bounds once school and school district administrators jump on the capitalist bandwagon. Bake sales and parent booster groups are passé compared to some of the more innovative approaches being tried these days. Recently in several school districts in California, students took home a form that their parents could sign to switch their long-distance telephone carrier. The school’s parent–teacher association would receive 10 percent of the long-distance payment from each family. If the students signed up friends, neighbors, and relatives, the school would gain more revenue. Projections were that through this mechanism, a large school could gain as much as half a million dollars a year. One other step being implemented in some school districts is the installation of cell phone towers on

³ From *Rose v. Council for Better Education*, 790 S.W.2d 186, 60 Ed. Law Rep. 1289 (1989). Published by Supreme Court of Kentucky, 1989.



Source: Karen Hunt/Alamy Stock Photo

Profits from the sale of food and beverages can be an important source of funds for schools.

school grounds. This represents another source of revenue but also raises concerns about the possibility of the electronic waves damaging children's health.

One entrepreneurial activity was initiated at Del Oro High School in Loomis, California. At one fall football game, three cows were turned loose on the football field for "cow-chip bingo." The field was marked off in one-yard squares and chances were sold. The owners of squares where the cows made a "deposit" were the winners. The remaining funds were then available to support the school's athletic programs.

Questions About Fund-Raising Efforts. Given the special place and role of schools in society, important questions are being raised about the appropriateness of many of these newer fund-raising efforts. How to achieve equity is one important question. Schools in wealthy communities can raise more money than schools located in poor communities. If an important goal is to provide equal educational opportunity for all students, then the unequal distribution of funds and equipment is once again an issue.

A second important question has to do with children being exposed to advertising in schools. Students are a captive audience for those products that are being advertised. Many educators are concerned that students are impressionable, unsophisticated consumers and are easily influenced. In the school context, many students will have difficulty distinguishing advertising from lesson messages. Because of budget pressures, however, schools and school districts will likely continue to develop their commercial bent.

WHAT ABOUT TAXING MARIJUANA? As state policy makers and municipalities face the need to find more dollars—without raising income and real estate taxes—there is a pattern of casting the net ever wider. Thirty years ago, the various forms of gambling were seen as inappropriate. Today all but three states have made one or more forms of gambling legal and are gaining tax revenue as a result. What could be future sources of revenue that were off-limits in the past?

One such source of revenue is the production and sale of marijuana. As of 2012, marijuana dispensaries had become legal in sixteen states and the District of Columbia. In Colorado in 2014, sales accounted for \$63 million in tax revenue and \$13 million in licenses and fees. It is estimated that as of 2016, the cannabis market in Colorado will exceed \$1 billion (Ingraham, 2015). Some have estimated that legalization of marijuana in more states could be worth \$40 to \$100 billion in added revenue. As good as these dollar amounts sound, there are considerable risks associated with becoming reliant on this funding source just as there are now for tobacco, alcohol, and gambling.

State Aid

State aid for education exists largely for three reasons: (1) The state has the primary responsibility for educating its citizens, (2) the financial ability of local school districts to support education varies widely, and (3) personal wealth is now less related to real property than it once was. State aid can be classified as having general or categorical use. *General aid* can be used by the recipient school district as it desires; *categorical aid* is earmarked for specific purposes. General aid is often administered through a program that funds each school district up to a foundation level of education required per pupil. Categorical aid may include, for example, money for transportation, vocational education, driver education, or programs for children with disabilities. Frequently, categorical aid is given to encourage specific education programs; in some states, these aid programs are referred to as *incentive programs*. Categorical aid funds may be granted on a matching basis; thus, for each dollar of local effort, the state contributes a specific amount.

GENERAL STATE AID: EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY. Historically, general aid has been based on the idea that each child, regardless of place of residence or the wealth of the local

district, is entitled to receive a basic education. General state aid was established on the principle of equality of opportunity and is usually administered through a foundation program. Creating a *foundation program* involves determining the dollar value of the basic education opportunities desired in a state, referred to as the foundation level, and determining a minimum standard of local effort considering local wealth. The foundation concept implies equity for taxpayers as well as equality of opportunity for students.

How State Foundation Programs Work. Figure 9.8 shows how a foundation program operates. The total length of each bar represents the foundation level of education required per pupil expressed in dollars. Each school district must put forth the same minimum local effort to finance its schools; this effort could be, for example, a qualifying tax rate that produces the local share of the foundation level. This tax rate will produce more revenue in a wealthy district than it will in a poor district; therefore, the poor district will receive more state aid than the wealthy district. Local school districts do not receive general state aid beyond that amount established as the foundation, but they are permitted in most instances to exceed foundation levels at their own expense.

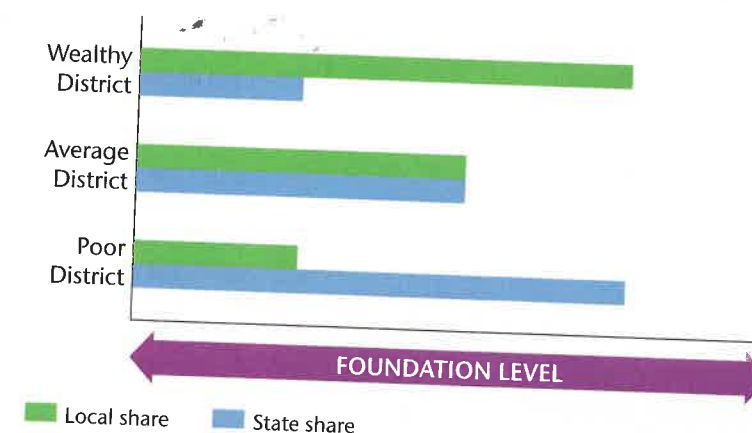
State Foundation Programs: Limited Effectiveness. The effectiveness of using various state foundation programs to bring about fiscal equalization has been limited. A major limitation is that the foundation established is frequently far below the actual expenditure or far below the level needed to provide adequate educational opportunity. For example, if a state established a per-pupil foundation level of \$1,500 and the average actual per-pupil expenditure was \$3,000, equalization would not have occurred.

A second limitation is that most general state aid programs do not provide for different expenditure levels for different pupil needs. Special education and vocational education, for example, both require more money to operate than the usual per-pupil expenditure for the typical elementary or secondary school pupil.

TAXPAYER REVOLT. In the past forty plus years, there have been a number of political initiatives by taxpayers to reduce their tax burden, especially the amount they pay in property taxes. In the past, the antitax movement was called a **taxpayer revolt**. A most dramatic instance of taxpayer revolt occurred in California in June 1978 with the passage of a citizens' ballot initiative, Proposition 13, which limited by constitutional amendment the property tax as a source of revenue. Subsequent and similar propositions have been added in other states. Many of the more recent initiatives have included the demand for a "taxpayer's bill of rights," or TABOR. All of these efforts, along with a low success rate of local school bond referenda and the closing of school districts for periods of time because of insufficient operating funds, indicate more—and more serious—problems ahead for the funding of public schools.

Taxpayer revolt The point at which taxpayers openly object to paying more.

FIGURE 9.8 Equalization and the Foundation Principle



**CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.4**

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.4 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

As mentioned earlier, under the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, education is seen as a function of the states. Although the states have the primary responsibility for education and historically the schools have been operated at the local level, during the past sixty years, the federal government has assumed an ever-increasing involvement in education. In the 1960s and 1970s, the rationale for this interest and involvement was linked to national security and solving social problems. In the early 1990s, the rationale was based on economic competitiveness. In the late 1990s, the focus shifted to standards and testing as well as concerns about funding of the infrastructure of schools.

The arrival of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002 accelerated the involvement of the federal government in education. This increasing centralization of power is called **federalism**. One consequence of federalism of education has been the establishment of more federal agencies, programs, and laws that address the performance of schools, teachers, and students at the local level.

Leadership

The federal government has historically provided leadership in education in specific situations, usually in times of need or in crises that could not be fully addressed individually by each state or local school district. In the 1980s, policy maker concerns over the quality of schools led to more active leadership on the part of the federal government, such as moves to establish national priorities in education and to raise major issues. For example, *A Nation at Risk*, the report prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, was published in 1983.

That report was not a mandate, nor was funding recommended, but it did sound an alarm and provided recommendations for reform to be considered by states and local school districts. Identifying national educational issues and encouraging forums on these issues at the state and local levels, along with soliciting responses, have been appropriate federal activities. Other activities include research on significant national educational issues and dissemination of exemplary practices. During the past sixty years, the federal government has insinuated itself more and more by tying school district access to federal funds to education mandates. If states and schools accept federal dollars, then they also must accept the mandates that come with the funds.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 9.3

What is your view about educational federalism? Is it a good thing to have strong directions set nationally, or should states and local districts have more say in those directions?

Federalism The process of centralizing power and control over education at the federal level.

In the past sixty years, the federal government has increased its involvement in education, taking a bigger role in determining the direction in which education should be heading.



Source: Jan Richter/Stock/Getty Images

The U.S. Department of Education

The first-ever agency of education in the federal government, established in 1867 through the diligent efforts of Henry Barnard, was called the Department of Education. Later, it was called the Office of Education (1869); at another time, it was the Bureau of Education within the Department of the Interior. In 1939, the Office of Education became a part of the Federal Security Agency, which in 1953 became the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to

which the U.S. Office of Education was assigned. In October 1979, President Jimmy Carter signed legislation creating a cabinet-level federal agency, the Department of Education. The latest version of the Department of Education, in contrast with the first in 1867, has become a powerful agency.

The U.S. Department of Education has some 4,400 employees, and its 2012 budget was \$68.1 billion. The department includes many offices and resources, including the National Center for Education Statistics, which compiles a wide range of statistics about education; the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; and the Office of Civil Rights. Information about grants, teacher resources, and statistics is available through the various Department of Education offices and programs or online at www.ed.gov.

There is no question that offering aid and awarding grants are effective ways to influence the goals of education nationally. However, debate continues about whether the offices of the federal government should have a stronger or weaker influence on education. Some people maintain that the socioeconomic forces of society are not contained within local school districts or state boundaries and therefore that direct federal intervention is needed. Others advocate dissolution of the department, insisting that education is a state responsibility. As is easy to see, over the last fifty years, the clear trend in terms of acts of Congress and presidential leadership is toward a greater federal role in education.

Educational Programs Operated by the Federal Government

The federal government directly operates some school programs. For example, the public school system of the District of Columbia depends on Congress for funds. The Department of the Interior has the educational responsibility for children of national park employees, for Samoa (classified as an outlying possession), and for the trust territories of the Pacific, such as the Caroline and Marshall Islands. Many of the schools on Native American reservations are financed and managed through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) of the Department of the Interior. Twenty-five of these schools have become what are called contract schools in which the tribe determines the program and staff but the BIA supports the schools financially. The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for the Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy at Annapolis, the Coast Guard Academy at New London, and the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. The DOD also operates a school system (Department of Defense Education Activity, or DoDEA) for the children of military staff wherever members are stationed. The instruction supplied by the vocational and technical training programs of the military services has made a big contribution nationally to education as well.

The federal government also funds education research by individual university faculty and a set of ten regional education laboratories, which provide curriculum development, technical assistance, and evaluation services to school districts and states. Other important resources for teachers are the various clearinghouses, including the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). This center maintains digital archives of research reports and curriculum materials. Teachers can request specific information and literature searches from the ERIC databases.

The Major Federal Education Policy (ESEA—NCLB and now ESSA)

In 1955, Congress passed and President Johnson signed the **Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**. This statute was part of the Great Society initiative to address poverty. The ESEA provided federal funds for a number of activities including targeted funds for schools with many low-income students. An important assumption was that supporting schools would help students become more successful and contributing adults in society. Since then, the ESEA has been reauthorized every five years or so. With each reauthorization, the ESEA became a little more directive about what schools, districts, and states would need to do in order to receive federal funds.

An underlying theme across the various ESEA reauthorizations has been “accountability.” Policy makers have been concerned about the quality of education and have used the lever of federal dollars to set expectations for states, school districts, schools, and teachers. With each reauthorization, the scope of the bill has expanded. Although a major intent over the years of the ESEA has been to increase the success of poor and minority students, the results during the past fifty years have been mixed.

The widest, most sweeping, and directive effort by the federal government came with President George W. Bush’s 2002 reauthorization of the ESEA. This statute was called No Child Left Behind

Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) The major federal education statute first passed in 1965.

(NCLB). Two major purposes of NCLB were to raise student achievement across the board and to eliminate the **achievement gap** among students from different backgrounds. The nearly 2,100 pages of this bill contained many directives and initiatives for states, school districts, schools, and teachers. Three of these are particularly important for future teachers to understand: highly qualified teachers (HQT), adequate yearly progress (AYP), and schools in need of improvement (SINOI). Although NCLB has now been replaced with the 2015 reauthorization of ESEA, now called **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, each of these directives continues to affect teachers and schools.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER (HQT). NCLB required each state to set minimum qualifications for being eligible for a license to teach. Requirements included taking and passing a licensure test, having a concentration of courses in the content area(s) to be taught, and having at least a bachelor degree.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP). This has become the basis for determining whether schools, districts, and states are in compliance with the law. The primary criterion is student performance on standardized tests. In addition, instead of the average test score for all students being used to evaluate a school, student test scores had to be **disaggregated** into the subgroups of

- Economically disadvantaged students.
- Major racial or ethnic groups.
- Students with disabilities.
- English-language learners (ELL).

SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT (SINOI). NCLB set timelines and established consequences for states, school districts, and schools that did not show year-to-year increases in test scores. Schools that did not demonstrate progress are labeled as “low-performing” or “failing” schools. These schools received a label such as “N3” or “N4,” which indicates the number of years during which the students in one or more subcategories did not meet AYP.

OTHER NCLB REQUIREMENTS. Many more elements, mandates, and expectations were part of the 2002 version of ESEA (i.e., NCLB), such as annual testing of students in grades 3 through 8 in math and reading/language arts and testing them three times in science by grade 12. Annual state report cards were required, in which, among other things, SINOI schools must be listed. Also, school districts must make available to parents on request the following information about their child’s classroom teacher:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas taught.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status.
- The baccalaureate degree of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher and the subject area of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and, if so, the paraprofessional’s qualifications.

The movement toward making more information about individual teachers available to the public keeps increasing. As you will read in the “Teaching in Challenging Times” feature, the pressure to link student performance to individual teachers has become another hot topic.

IMPACT OF NCLB. The NCLB legislation placed heavy demands on teachers, schools, school districts, and states. There have been many positive outcomes as well as many criticisms of it. One important outcome of the requirement to disaggregate test scores has been that schools now strive to increase test scores for all students. No longer can expectations for achievement by minority, special needs, or ELL students be lower than for other, more “mainstream” students.

Another impact was facing the reality that more and more schools failed to achieve AYP in one or more of the student categories and therefore was labeled as “needing improvement.” Schools, districts, and states responded by employing a number of tactics to increase test scores:

- “Bubble kids” are those who scored a few points below the proficient level. By targeting them, it was hoped that on the next testing, they would score at or above the cut score. One consequence was that students who had passed received less attention.

Achievement gap The systematic difference in learning between majority and minority or rich and poor students.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act.

Disaggregated The process of grouping test scores based on student characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

TEACHING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Should Teachers’ Evaluation Rankings Be Made Public?

In the past, information about teachers’ salaries and their evaluations were considered personnel matters and kept confidential. There would be a published pay schedule that usually was based on years of teaching experience. With each increasing year of teaching experience, there would be a “step” increase in a teacher’s salary. Most pay schedules also increased salary when a teacher received a master’s degree.

Teachers also receive supplemental pay for activities outside of their regular classroom assignment, such as tutoring after school and leading extracurricular activities, such as coaching and directing some of the performing arts. Another source of annual increases has been a **cost of living adjustment (COLA)**, which made adjustments in salary due to inflation.

In most states and districts, individual teacher’s salaries were kept confidential until now. Teacher evaluations were kept confidential, too. Now there is increasing pressure to make individual teacher salary and performance information public. The source of this pressure has been the federal government (e.g., A condition of states receiving waivers under NCLB was pressure to make information about teacher pay public) as well as many governors and state legislators.

Another initiative is to break away from the annual salary increases. Instead some states and districts are implementing “value-added” teacher evaluation systems. Instead of teacher salaries being based on years of experience, they are to be based on the growth, i.e. increases, in test scores of each teacher’s students. A related initiative is to rank each teacher in comparison to other teachers and make this information available to the public. Some believe that basing teacher evaluation on student performance will lead to increases in teacher effectiveness. On the other hand, others are concerned that making this information public will result in parents shopping for the “best”

teachers. Those opposing this initiative point out that test scores are not always accurate and there are more learning outcomes than what gets measured on the tests.

WHAT ARE MY CHALLENGES?

1. Describe your comfort level with having your evaluations as a teacher being based in large part on the test scores of your students.
2. What are your thoughts about being ranked in comparison to the increase in test scores of other teachers? Do you see this as a motivator or a detractor? Would it affect your teaching?
3. How comfortable are you with having your ranking published in the newspaper and probably reported on local television news?
4. If a ranking system were implemented in one school district and not in another, all other things being equal, would that impact your decision on which district to choose?
5. As a parent, which district would you choose for your own children?
 - “Safe harbor” was the name given to schools that were “in need of improvement” one year and made progress in reducing the number of students scoring below the proficient category the next year. But safe harbor did not mean the school had reached the AYP target. It just meant that for the next year, the school would not be held to further sanctions.
 - “District in need of improvement” is the label applied when there was a districtwide pattern of schools not making AYP.
 - “Corrective actions” were the steps that the state must take if a school/district failed to achieve AYP over time.
 - “Supplemental services” such as consultants to analyze data and provide training as well as the addition of after-school programs were to be provided to SINOI schools.

NCLB WAIVERS. The NCLB mandated that student performance in the 2001–2002 school year was to serve as the performance baseline. In each subsequent year, there was to be improvement in the test scores so that by the school year 2013–2014, all students would be “proficient.” States then had twelve years to have all students meet the 2013–2014 proficiency level, which means that students within each subgroup who had test scores in 2001–2002 below the proficient level needed, on average, to improve by one-twelfth each year. This goal was not achieved. As more and more schools were being placed on the “watch list” and all states were having more schools identified as “failing,” something had to be done. There also was a failure of Congress to pass the next reauthorization of ESEA. So, in the fall of 2011, President Barak Obama initiated a process by which states could apply for a waiver from some elements of NCLB. States that received waivers had to address several elements:

- Adopt standards for college and career readiness (which for most states meant adopting some form of the common core standards).
- Establish a new accountability system (which meant moving to “growth scores”).

Cost of living adjustment (COLA) A procedure for increasing salaries based on the rate of inflation.

- Implement purposeful ways of improving learning for ELL and (SE) students.
- Develop an educator evaluation system based on measures to improve teacher effectiveness.

These are the same major themes that are now built into the new reauthorization of ESEA.

ESSA. In December 2015, Congress passed and President Obama signed the newest reauthorization of ESEA. In large part, key components of NCLB including those described above have been maintained. Elements of ESSA that are important for you as a future teacher to know about include:

- *Accountability Plans.* Each state has to develop its own plan, which is then approved by the U.S. Department of Education.
- *Accountability Systems.* All schools must contain three academic indicators and one nonacademic indicator (e.g., student engagement.) High schools must also use their graduation rate.
- *Low-Performing Schools.* States need to identify and intervene on the bottom 5 percent of schools and high schools with graduation rates of 67 percent or less.
- *Testing.* Test in reading and math grades at each grade level 3–8 and once in high school and break out the data for subgroups.
- *Standards.* States must adopt “challenging” standards; the U.S. Secretary of Education is barred from forcing or encouraging states to pick a particular set of standards.
- *Teachers.* Elimination of “highly qualified” teacher requirement and the waiver that required use of student outcomes in teacher evaluation. States must ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers.

REFLECTIONS ACROSS THE MANY AUTHORIZATIONS OF ESEA. Thoughtful critics and historians have offered some interesting comparisons between the original 1965 ESEA, NCLB, and the 2015 ESSA. Some critics of the original ESEA say that it failed because it provided money without accountability. In response to this criticism, the NCLB Act had a much stricter criterion for accountability—so much so that states objected to having so much federal direction. This is why states have been granted more autonomy with 2015 ESSA. Also, the ESEA of 1965 may have offered money without much educational accountability, but the NCLB and the 2015 ESSA demand heavy accountability without much greater federal financial and technical assistance. Unfortunately, none of these approaches, so far, has turned out to be more successful in reducing the achievement gap.

In 1965, extensive federal mandates, such as NCLB and ESSA, would never have made it through Congress. At that time, the federal role in education was marginal, and most state education agencies had limited authority and capabilities. Local people were extremely wary that more federal aid would bring federal control. This most certainly is what has happened. The federal as well as state roles in education have grown, and states and school districts recognize that accepting federal requirements goes along with receiving federal funding.

In summary, the many versions of ESEA chart a clear trend of increasing federal direction of education. There has been a ratcheting up of the accountability criteria and a narrow defining of success in terms of student performance on standardized tests. What each version of ESEA has lacked are results showing clear patterns of success for all students, a system of positive awards, and sufficient funding to do all that is required.

Federal Aid

As illustrated earlier in Figure 9.5, the federal government provides the smallest proportion (9.0 percent) of revenue for public education. Still, the United States has a history of federal aid to education, but it has been categorical and not general aid; it generally has been related to the needs of the nation at the time. Federal aid actually started before the U.S. Constitution was adopted with the Northwest Ordinance of 1785, which provided land for public schools in “western territories.” Such specialized federal aid has continued in a steady progression to the present. Almost 200 federal aid-to-education laws have been passed since the Northwest Ordinance.

LOCAL CONTROL VERSUS FEDERALISM. In the past, an important and unique feature of education in the United States was **local control**, the belief that educational decisions should be made at the local level rather than at the state or national level. The rationale has been that people at the

Local control Educational decision making by citizens at the local level rather than at the state or national level.

local level, including teachers and parents, know what is best for the students in their community. As has been described in this chapter, the trend during the past sixty years has been toward more federalism. The NCLB Act was the most ever move toward centralization of control of education by the federal government. As you have just read, it included many mandates to states, school districts, schools, and teachers.

Those who advocate for more federal and state involvement argue that education is a responsibility of all society. Some also argue that national survival requires centralized policies and programs, including a national curriculum. The underlying questions are not just about what is best for students and the nation; they are also about power, authority, and who gets to make decisions.

Technology for School Administration

In schools today, an important application of technology is in planning class schedules for students and teachers. In the “old” days, school principals used entire chalkboards to sketch out, arrange, and rearrange teacher assignments and student schedules. Now there are computer programs to do this task.

A more significant use of technology—one that teachers experience weekly, if not daily—is for compiling, analyzing, and displaying student data. Many schools have a **school improvement team (SIT)** or **response to intervention team (RIT)** that meets once a week. The team has representatives from each grade level and/or content area. The special education resource teacher and literacy specialists are often members of the SIT/RIT. In each meeting, the progress of all students who have been identified as in need of extra help is reviewed. Technology has been used to score and store the various tests and assessments for each student. During the meeting, the data for each student are displayed on a screen. Each student’s progress is reviewed, and the team reaches agreement on what instructional interventions should be performed next. Due to the use of technology, the records of several hundred students can be compiled and retrieved as needed for these weekly reviews.

Technology for School District Administration

Technology is important at the district level. One of the most obvious uses is for computing and managing budgets. Technology also is used to manage heating and cooling, develop school bus schedules, keep personnel records, and prepare payrolls.

Nearly all districts now have a **student information system (SIS)**, which allows all test scores to be compiled and analyzed at the district office. District administrators can review how students are performing across the district, for each school, and even for each type of student. For example, the performance of students who receive free or reduced lunches can be compared to that of those who come from wealthy neighborhoods. In the best SIS, teacher-friendly, up-to-the-day data displays are available for each student through the computer on the teacher’s desk.

School improvement team (SIT) A team representing all subject areas or grade levels that reviews student progress on a weekly basis.

Response to intervention team (RIT). A school-based committee that examines weekly the performance of individual students and plans the next week of instruction for each.

Student information system (SIS) A computer-based data management system that is designed to compile and analyze test scores so that district administrators can review the performance of all students and each school.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.5

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.5 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

POLITICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

So far this chapter has provided information about the formal organization and structures of public education. We also have introduced some aspects of the sources of revenue and expenditures for public education at the local, state, and federal levels. Although these organizational structures illustrate the line and staff relationships, another set of relationships is important to consider and understand. Each of these levels is involved in politics—the politics of education. Reread the “Education in the News” at the beginning of this chapter. In that one article, you can identify several of the interest groups—and conflicting agendas—that are engaged in influencing the development of the Youngstown, Ohio, School District budget.

Local school districts and professional associations follow closely what is happening in their state legislature. Other interest groups such as the Chamber of Commerce also are monitoring the

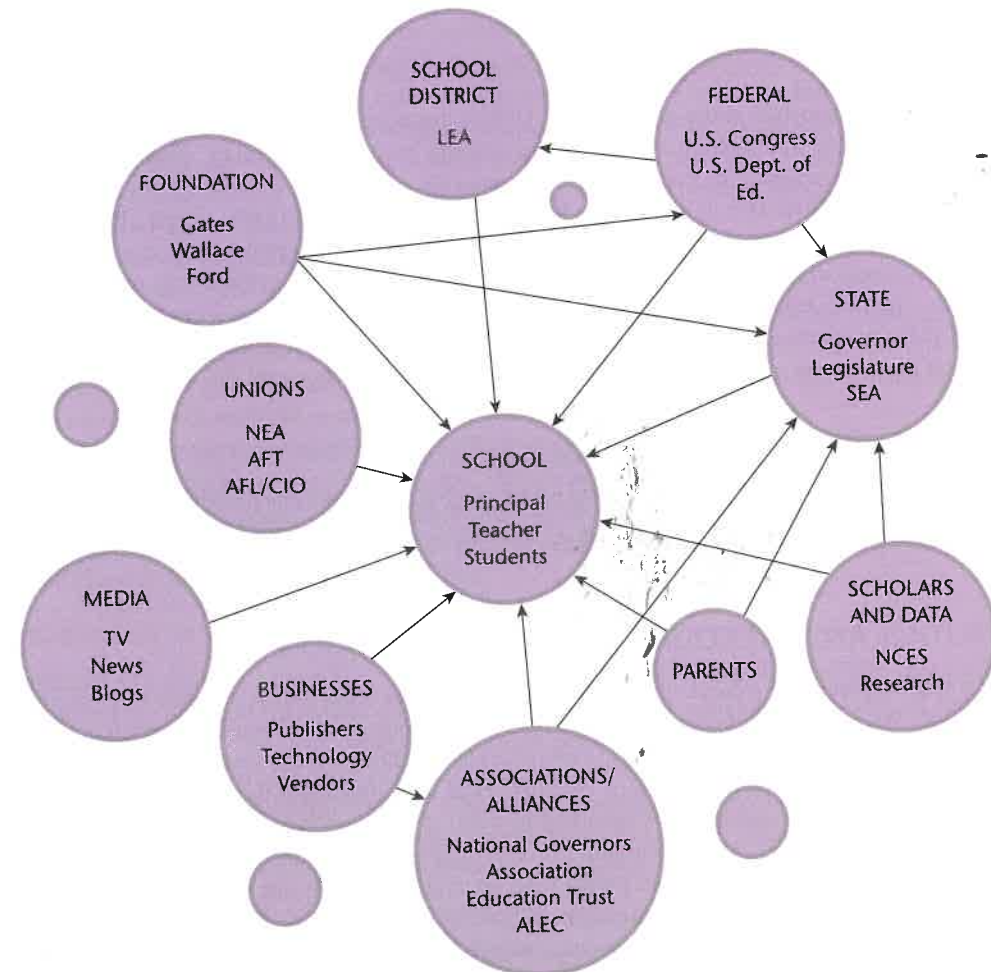
direction and wording of draft statutes. The interest groups' purpose is to influence representatives' understanding of local needs and the direction that will be taken within relevant legislation. These groups do not hesitate to let members in the legislature and their governor know how they should vote. It is not unusual for local school superintendents and board members as well as teacher association members to meet with their legislators, congressional representatives, and their governor in person. These contacts with federal and state agencies are examples of **political action**. You—today as a teacher education candidate and in the future as a teacher—cannot escape politics. So learn all you can now and begin developing your political knowledge and skills.

Regardless of how education is defined in statute and how it is organized, the actual decision making takes place in a political arena. Politics are always a factor. Stability, continuity, and leadership for education are influenced by many interest groups and coalitions. As diagramed in Figure 9.9, many individuals and groups attempt to influence education decisions as they are being made by each governing body. In the end, the schools have to implement what is decided.

For example, some associations, such as teachers unions and Chambers of Commerce, have established records of heavy influence on the direction of education. Through their initiatives, new laws may affect any and all parts of the education system. In terms of the political arena, there are many other sources of influence. National foundations can have a major influence on the direction of education reform. Scholars and agencies that have data related to a particular issue may also influence final decisions. There are many other influences such as textbook publishers and little-known associations, such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), that can

Political action
Becoming involved to influence decision making.

FIGURE 9.9 Influencers on the Politics of Education Decision Making



have a major influence on education policy. Suffice it to say that numerous participants, agencies, and interest groups strive to influence the shape and direction of the U.S. education system.

Politics: Neither Positive nor Negative

Politics are ongoing inside all organizations, including schools. People have varying interests and agendas. In many cases, there are basic differences in points of view that need to be resolved for the organization to move ahead.

Advocating for one's point of view and interests is what politics is about. This is where knowledge and political skill become a special strength for teachers and school administrators. Policy makers, the media, and parents are very interested in the positions and views of educators. Another important political skill is being open to talking with all parties and negotiating areas of agreement. Rather than judging "politics" as bad, successful teachers learn how politics work and develop their skills to contribute to and influence the political process. Learn more about organizations and political processes, and you will see politics as fascinating and, yes, even fun.

Politics Across the Education System

There is no escaping politics as a basic force within organizations and across society. Graphic examples in recent times include the desperate attempts in each state to balance budgets. Legislators, governors, school board members, superintendents, and mayors hear from different interest groups, all wanting more money for themselves. In each case, if one side receives more, another side will receive less. As is well illustrated in the "Education in the News," even once a school district budget is set, the media and others may demand scrutiny of it. The wide-ranging, sharply stated, and often opposing views at the national level about what should be done in the reauthorization of ESEA (the NCLB legislation) illustrate how complex the issues are and how difficult coming to a decision can be. Politics can be just as intense and conflicted at the local level.

SCHOOL BOARD POLITICS. Most school districts have "at-large" elections to select board members. In at-large elections, every voter in a community is able to vote for a candidate for each seat on the board. The alternative is to have each board seat represent a particular region of the district. Either way, there will be strong interest on the part of each voter in having a board member who will represent the voter's interests. Nearly every decision a board makes has a political component. Issues such as approving the superintendent's salary, changing the boundaries of a school attendance zones, raising taxes, reducing staff or extracurricular programs, busing students, and tolerating a losing athletic season bring out strong voices, often with competing points of view.

SUPERINTENDENT POLITICS. As the chief executive officer, the superintendent has to listen to the opinions of all board members and strive to maintain a majority of the board's support to be retained. The superintendent also has to work with and listen to teachers, principals, central office staff, parents, and various members of the community. All will have suggestions for the superintendent and for what the school district should be doing.

School Politics

Schools are not devoid of politics, nor are you free from politics in your teacher education program. Principals, other teachers, parents, students, and teacher education faculty have certain things they would like to see accomplished. There also are likely to be conflicting views about how to accomplish those ends. Resolving these issues requires political leadership and skill.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 9.4

How do you feel about the suggestion that education is political and that you should develop your political knowledge and skill? In what ways do you see this as being important to you, your teaching, your students, and your school? Or do you think that you can avoid politics as a teacher?

TEACHERS AS POLITICIANS. Teachers often state that they do not wish to become involved in politics—as if they have a choice. Teachers do lobby and are on the receiving end of various political agenda. For example, teachers lobby the principal for preferred teaching assignments,

parents lobby teachers and the principal to have particular teachers for their children, and teachers join together to advocate for a particular instructional approach. Decisions about what committees and tasks (e.g., lunch duty) each teacher will do entail some political elements. Sometimes teachers and/or parents will lobby the superintendent or the school board. Sometimes to inform about the good things going on and other times to address a problem or work condition.

CLASSROOM POLITICS. Yes, there are politics in classrooms. When students approach the teacher to request clarification about an assignment or lobby to have a test rescheduled, they are engaging in politics. So are the parents who talk with the teacher about how their child is progressing. These are not bad actions—they are instead keys to success in organizations and social systems.

WHEN TO TALK TO WHOM. When teachers have an idea about the school, want to try something different, or see a problem, it is important for them to talk with others to see what they think. Others may share an interest in the idea or may know about related thoughts of others. However, if you are aware of a serious problem, such as safety or a potentially illegal incident, then it is important to report this immediately to your direct supervisor. If department heads or team leaders are in place, the first discussions should be with them. In any organization, including schools, if there is a serious problem, the normal protocol is to talk first with the person at the next level up the “chain of command.” For teachers, this means informing the principal if there is no department head or team leader. Depending on the issue, a beginning teacher or one who is new to the system might seek advice from an experienced colleague before taking further action. In terms of politics, one must know how the system works; colleagues and principals can be helpful in this regard.

SOURCES OF POWER. Often when thinking about politics, the idea of power comes to mind. Some people are seen as having more power than others. What may not be understood is that there are different sources of power. The early sections of this chapter introduced you to one important source, **position power**. For example, administrators in line positions have authority over the people under them in the organization chart.

There are other forms of power that at times can be more influential than position power. For example, **expertise** can be important. A teacher who has expert knowledge about teaching ELL students and a reputation for their excelling in his or her classroom has power. Being a member of certain **networks** or associations, such as teacher unions and professional associations, is another source of power.

Another important source of power is to form an **interest group** or **coalition**. Suppose several teachers are interested in using a certain computer program that the school does not have. By working together, the teachers as a group may be able to influence the principal or a parent association to purchase the program. Each teacher individually could not get the support, but by forming a coalition, together they have more power.

Accountability

Besides paying for schools, the most enduring theme in politics at this time is **accountability**. Accountability has its roots in two fundamental modern problems: the continuous escalation of educational costs and, closely related, the loss of faith in educational results. The failure of the U.S. educational system, particularly in cities and some remote rural areas, has been accurately documented. All too often, the expectations of citizens for their children have not been met. The concerns are supported when the media report that certain schools have not made AYP and when test scores are compared with those of other countries.

Teacher Accountability

The president, congress, governors, legislators, school boards, and district administrators all want schools (and teachers) to be accountable. The elements of accountability vary from close monitoring of school finances to publication of school report cards and to new forms of teacher evaluation. Teachers are the primary contact with students, and they are directly responsible for instruction and student achievement. Therefore, teachers are expected to do their utmost to motivate students to learn and achieve. The idea of **value added** is now being tied to teacher evaluation. The key

Position power Power derived from holding a certain office, title, or job.

Expertise Having a higher level of knowledge about a certain topic or skill than most people.

Networks Personal connections gained through membership in an organization, club, or association.

Interest group Group of people who have a shared agenda.

Coalition Two or more interest groups that join in an effort to advance a shared agenda.

Accountability Establishing expectations and consequences for achieving or failing to achieve certain levels of performance.

accountability question has become: To what extent did the school and each teacher add value as seen through increases in students' test scores? School districts and states are now implementing formulas for determining each teacher's pay that include analysis of growth in student test scores. One consequence is even more pressure on students to do well on the tests.

REWARDS FOR BEING ACCOUNTABLE. The other side of the accountability coin is determining the rewards for success and the sanctions for failure. In the 1980s, many reward programs consisted of bestowing special designations and plaques on schools. In the 1990s, there was a shift to the use of money as a reward or sanction. Under NCLB, there were few rewards. Instead, different forms of threats and sanctions hung over states, school districts, and schools, especially those that were “failing.”

REWARDING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS. In some states and districts, teachers and principals are rewarded for earning an advanced degree or achieving national board certification. There can be recognition and celebrations within a school, at the district level, and through statewide awards for outstanding teachers. Each year, national state and national winners are recognized at the White House.

SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT CARDS. In the past, report cards were used only to evaluate students. A new element in the accountability movement is the use of new forms of report cards to “grade” schools, school districts, and states. Advocates of school report cards argue that parents and voters need to know how well their school or school district is doing in comparison to others. Advocates also point out that evaluating schools is complex; many factors need to be considered. A report card can incorporate many factors and present a clear picture of a school's successes. Opponents express concern that report cards still are overly simplistic representations. They argue that report cards increase competition, which is not supposed to be a part of public education. Proponents argue that competition will make low-performing schools improve and/or inform parents so that they can make the choice of sending their children to another school.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 9.6

Complete Check Your Understanding 9.6 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

Value added Linking increases in outcomes with the amount of teacher effort.

SUMMARY

SCHOOL DISTRICTS: ORGANIZATION AND FINANCES

- In fiscal year 2013, the average U.S. expenditure per student was nearly \$10,700.
- School boards have the authority to hire teachers and principals.
- The superintendent is the chief executive officer of a school district.
- Curriculum coordinators in the district office have staff authority.

THE ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS

- Department heads and team leaders are important communication sources.
- Don't forget to work well with school secretaries, custodians, and cafeteria workers.

ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

- The U.S. Constitution passes authority for education to the states.
- Each state has a superintendent of public instruction, also called the chief state school officer.
- The state department of education licenses teachers and administrators.

PAYING FOR SCHOOLS

- On average, 46+ percent of the expenditures for education comes from the state.
- Until recently, the property tax has been the primary source of revenue for schools.
- The property tax is progressive whereas the sales tax is regressive.

- Adequacy, equity, and equal opportunity are key themes that must be addressed in financing education.
- Foundation programs are one way in which states adjust funding to achieve equity.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

- The federal government has increased its influence by offering the carrot of extra funds along with the stick of mandates.
- No Child Left Behind was the name given to the 2002 reauthorization of ESEA. The 2015 approval of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA) has continued the heavy involvement.

- Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is the key to evaluating school performance.
- Teacher evaluations are increasingly being based on value-added data.

POLITICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

- Politics are neither positive nor negative.
- Teachers need to be political.
- Accountability is important at all levels from states to school districts to schools to teachers.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Do you think the federal government should be assuming a strong role over states, school districts, and schools? What are some likely consequences of this increasing federalism?
2. Would it be better to increase the use of sales and income taxes to fund elementary and secondary education, or is it better to rely on the property tax?
3. What situations have you encountered that illustrate the tension between state and local education interests? Is local control an issue in your state?
4. When is it appropriate for teachers to engage in politics? How can teachers influence what goes on in their schools? How can they influence decisions at the district and board levels?
5. What forms or types of accountability do you believe should be used to evaluate schools and teachers? What are your thoughts about the increasing use of test scores to evaluate teachers?
6. Many states have turned to gaming (lotteries, riverboat casinos, and slot machines) as a source of revenue for schools. What are the arguments in support of this funding mechanism? What do you see as possible downsides?

SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. When you have the opportunity to visit a school or interview a teacher or the principal, ask that person to draw an organization chart and indicate where he or she is placed on it. Did the person just draw line relationships, or did he or she also consider staff relationships? Ask about organization relationships with the district office (e.g., relationships with curriculum coordinators and staff developers). Does the person see these relationships as line or staff?
2. Seek an opportunity to study a school budget. Determine the different sources of revenue (e.g., local, state, federal, grants, activity fees). What are the biggest line-item expenditures? Are some monies discretionary for teachers? Note that in most schools, especially high schools, a surprising number of activities generate cash. Inquire about the implications of having cash on hand, and ask how these amounts are secured and what policies guide their uses.

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

1. Develop an organizational chart for a school you are familiar with. Use solid lines to represent line relationships and dotted lines to signify staff relationships. Draw the arrangement of personnel in regard to each of the following decisions: (a) determining a child's grade on his or her report card, (b) expelling a student (*Hint: Don't forget that the school is part of a school district*), (c) deciding on the topic for a staff development day, and (d) determining whether a particular teaching activity will be used. After considering these different decisions, explain your thoughts and feelings about the authority and accountability of teachers within the school as an organization.
2. One important component of accountability is the role of standards. Most states have adopted the common core state standards. Check your state's department of

education website for information about the standards your state is using. What are the expectations? Can districts and schools opt out, or is there a mandate to use certain standards? For future use, be sure to make a record of the related websites and information you find.

3. The funding of education and levels of taxation will continue to be hot topics for school districts, state legislatures, and taxpayers. Start a file of articles from newspapers and blogs as well as notes from television and radio news reports that deal with school finance and spending. As your file grows, review the items. Do certain topics and themes, such as concern about high taxes and teacher pay, keep coming up? When you are ready to apply for a position, having knowledge about finance and spending issues will make you better informed and prepared.

WEB SOLUTIONS

Now is the time for you to get a head start learning about the school district(s) where you would like to be employed as a teacher. What do you know already? Do you know the name of the superintendent? What do you know about the district's school board? Have you studied the job application process? What is the average student/teacher ratio? And how does this district compare to other districts where you might want to teach, or the district(s) where you went to school? All of this information is available on the Web if you know where to look.

The way to begin learning more is to study the website for the school district(s) you are interested in working. That website will have information about the organization of the school district as well as tabs that lead to the human resource office, the school board, and information on how-to contact each school.

School district websites do not provide information about how its test scores and funding compare to other districts. To find such information, you should check with the state education department website. Also, check out the websites for the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education

Statistics. Within each of these websites, you can find additional information about any school district and school. Begin by opening "School Search." Then click on "Public School District." Enter the name of the school district you are interested in. The district page will provide information about the number of teachers and, of particular importance for you to consider, are items such as the school's ranking on standardized tests. If you go deeper by clicking on the list of schools, you can even see the student/teacher ratio for each school.

Develop a table for comparing the contact information and key descriptive statistics, such as student/teacher ratios, for different schools and districts where you would like to be employed. You will be glad to have this information at hand when you start applying for that teaching position.

The U.S. Census Bureau has a very informative and easy-to-use website. "All that you desire to know" about public education can be explored. School enrollments, comparisons of sources of revenue, spending by state, and the amount of money spent on "Back to School Shopping" can easily be found. The internal search engine is easy to use as well.