

Inequities in Access to Funding for Students of Color

TOP TAKEAWAYS IN FUNDING FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

- 1: Most districts receive less than the state says they should.
- 2: The districts serving the most students of color tend to have the biggest funding disparities.

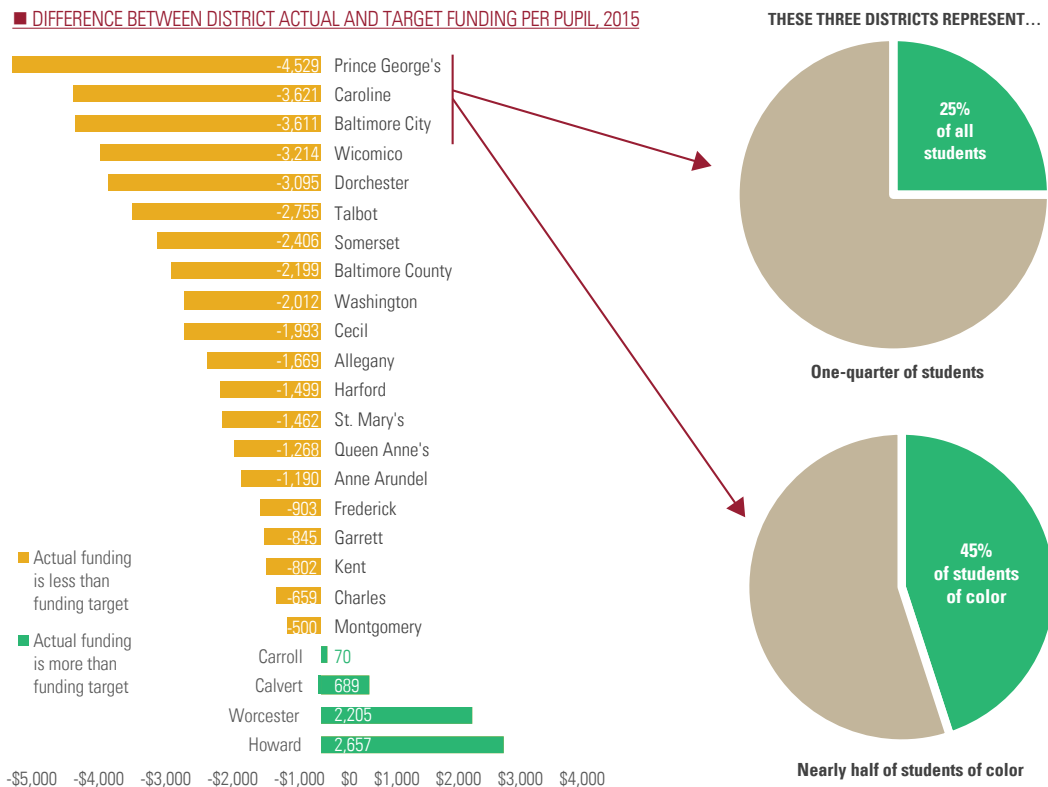
Money — both how much there is and how well it's spent — matters in education. Increases in spending can lead to improved [student achievement](#), [educational attainment](#), and [higher wages](#), with greater benefits for students from low-income families. Maryland's funding formula acknowledges that some students and schools have higher needs by calling for more funding for students from low-income families, English learners, and students with disabilities. But today, these goals are left unfulfilled. In reality, the districts with higher need students are not actually getting the amount of funding the state says they should. And the districts with the most students of color are especially shortchanged. The state has the opportunity — and responsibility — to address these shortfalls.

SCHOOL FUNDING SHORTFALLS TODAY

Maryland's [school funding formula](#) determines the amount of funding each district needs to serve its unique student population. The state provides a portion of that funding but does not ensure that each district actually receives the total amount generated by the funding formula.

Most districts receive less than the state says they should.

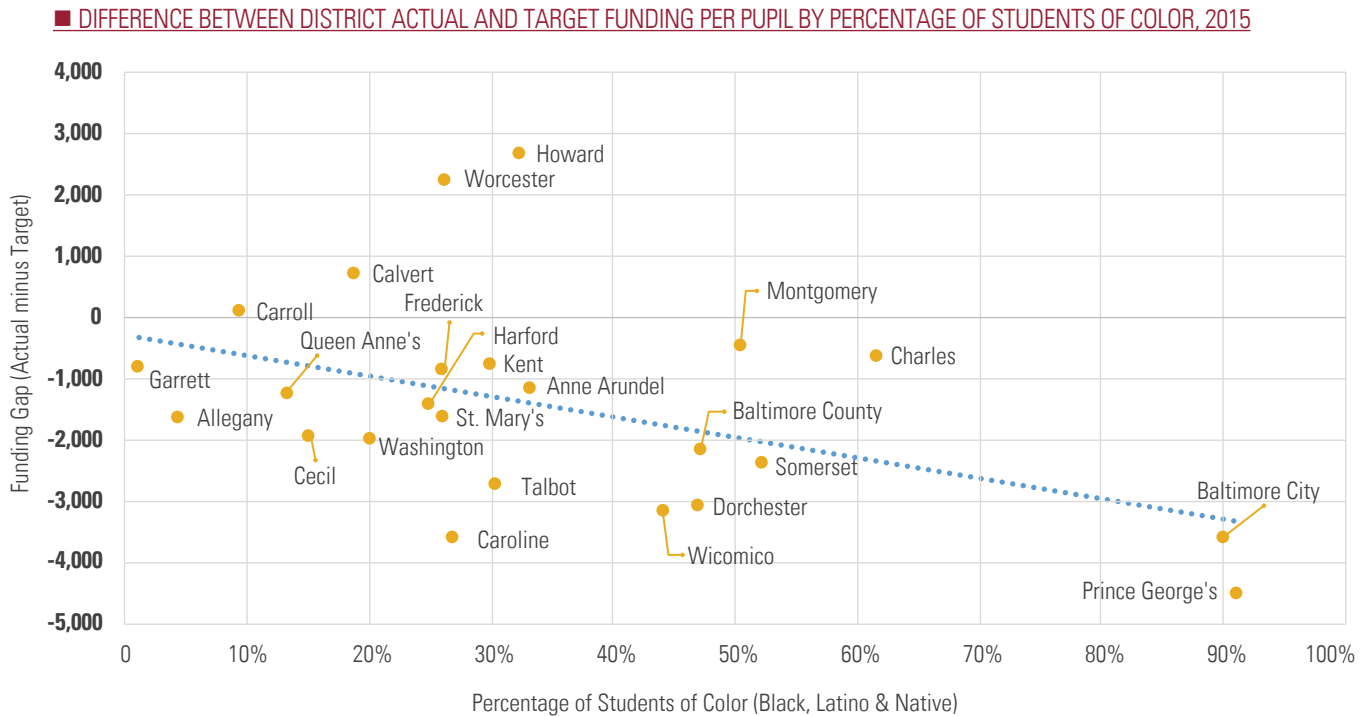
In FY2015, 20 of Maryland's 24 districts received less funding than the state said they needed (under the original formula proposed through the Thornton commission); the gap between what a district should have received and what the district did receive ranged from \$500 to \$4,500 per pupil. The three districts with the biggest funding gaps serve about 200,000 students of color, nearly half of the state's entire population of students of color, and were **shortchanged by a total of \$861 million**.



Source: Adequacy of Education Funding in Maryland, [Presentation to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence by Department of Legislative Services](#) Office of Policy Analysis, January 9, 2017 and The Education Trust analysis of data from the [2015–16 Common Core of Data](#).

Districts with more students of color have bigger gaps.

Across school districts in Maryland, as the percentage of students of color increases, the gap between the district's funding target and its actual funding gets worse.



Source: Adequacy of Education Funding in Maryland, [Presentation to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence by Department of Legislative Services Office of Policy Analysis](#), January 9, 2017 and the Education Trust analysis of data from the 2015–16 Common Core of Data.

A RACE-FOCUSED EQUITY FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATION REFORM IN MARYLAND

The state must make sure that districts — especially those serving the most students of color — get their fair share of funding by...

- ✓ Setting **funding targets** in all districts that maintain the state's existing commitments to providing more resources for students with additional needs, and specifically take into consideration concentration of poverty.
- ✓ Ensuring that each district actually receives the **full amount** of its need-based funding target from the state and the local municipality.
- ✓ Ensuring that extra funds that go to districts for particular groups of students are **spent in the schools** serving those students.
- ✓ Ensuring that additional funding is spent in **evidence-based** ways — on resources and in ways that have been shown to improve outcomes for those students.