

K-12 Public Classified Employees

Report highlights

December 2022

The state salary-based apportionment formula covers about 60 percent of wages for qualifying classified employees.

Classified employees support instructional staff, prepare lunches, transport students, and do the other ancillary work that helps schools function.

Since 1994, the state has funded 0.375 qualifying classified full-time equivalent (FTE) positions per support unit through its salary-based apportionment formula.

The roles and responsibilities of classified employees have changed since 1994, but the FTE allocation per support unit has remained unchanged.

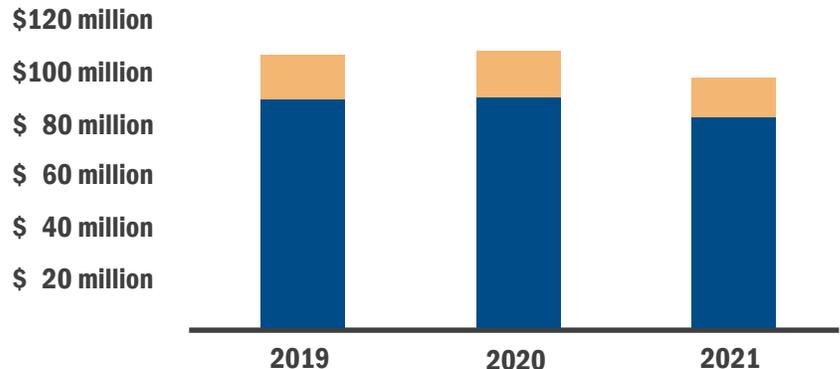
In Idaho, classified employees in schools are paid less than their peers who work in other sectors. The difference in wages is most pronounced when comparing classified employees to Idaho workers in the public sector, not including school districts and hospitals.

Compared with neighboring states, wages are lower in Idaho for nearly all classified positions. Wage differences are particularly large along the Washington border.

In 2021, the state salary-based apportionment formula provided **\$22,761** per allocated qualifying classified FTE to local education agencies (LEAs), which include school districts and public charter schools. LEAs also use discretionary funds and supplemental levies to fund these positions.

LEAs received **\$138.1 million** from the state for qualifying classified wages in 2021, but wages for these employees were **\$219.5 million** – a difference of **\$81.4 million**. LEAs also paid **\$16 million** for the costs of employer obligations to the state retirement plan and mandatory withholdings.

The total funding gap is around \$100 million a year for qualifying classified employee wages and employer obligation benefits.



Policy Considerations

If the Legislature would like the state to assume more of the qualifying classified staffing costs, it may change the apportionment formula and the amount paid per qualifying classified FTE.

If other changes were to be made to the formula, the funding formulas of Washington and Wyoming can serve as a guide. Options include separating out high-waged classified FTEs into their own funding formula, adjusting the allocation formula by classified FTE type, and applying cost of living adjustments to funds given to LEAs.

View the report at: www.legislature.idaho.gov/ope/

