



Competencies and Outcomes

Module 6: Funding at the Federal, State and Local Levels

Description: Let's delve into school funding and budgets! Schools depend on a variety of funding sources locally and at the state and federal levels, providing for staffing, programs and services at the district and school levels. As an education professional, it's important to understand how school budgets work and how they impact the degree to which we are successful in our work. In this module, you will learn how to think about revenue streams and how to advocate for the levels of funding that allow us to keep our promises to students!

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Competencies

This module aligns with the following NEA Leadership Competencies:

Advocacy

Utilizes best practices in advocacy and political efforts

Acts as a political advocate

Makes strategic plans that are data driven and uses analysis and metrics to achieve key advocacy and political goals

Communication

Develops a two-way strategic communications plan that focuses on research, planning, implementation and evaluation

Effectively uses current media (print, broadcast, online, social media) to communicate

Identifies and utilizes appropriate messages in acting as a compelling advocate for the organization

Governance and Leadership

Effectively executes governance and leadership responsibilities

Advances the organization by internalizing its mission, vision, and core values

Sets strategic objectives to guide long-term goals and priorities

Leading our Professions

Recognizes and promotes the association's role in improving the learning of all students

Advocates for policies and strategies that positively impact our professions and the learning of all students

Analyzes and applies research to determine the potential impact on our professions and the learning of all students

Organizing

Utilizes best practices, technologies, and methods that through experience and research have led to successful organizing outcomes
Makes strategic plans that rely on data and analysis to set and achieve key organizing objectives
Engages in collective action to identify and address pivotal issues
Creates conditions for continuous association growth and strength

Strategy and Fiscal Health

Acts strategically to align the organization's work with stakeholder needs
Understands the Interdependency of strategic planning, budget development, and business policy
Promotes stewardship and financial integrity of the organization
Supports financial health
Utilizes data and analyzes trends to inform decision-making

Earning Criteria

Earning this badge indicates that the learner completed Module 6: Funding at the Federal, State and Local Levels of The Worthy Educator EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential and is certified to have the understandings, skills and dispositions to successfully serve as an advocate for the education profession.

Evidence

The learner was assessed on advocacy core competencies through self-assessment and reflection on thirteen activities verifying the role of the educator as an influencer and advocate for what is best for children and for the profession in a democratic society.

Earning Criteria

Recipients must complete the earning criteria to earn this badge:

1. Identify district revenue streams locally and from the state and federal government.
2. Review the most recent district budget to understand where district monies are spent in the total school program.
3. Interview a local realtor to understand how property values are determined, and how local schools impact property values.
4. Create a short list of three to five budgeting priorities for local schools that improve outcomes for students over the next decade.

Evidence is verified and approved by authorized leaders of The Worthy Educator to ensure the integrity and quality of these requirements are met.

Skills

Recipients of this badge demonstrate these skills:

Researching district sources of revenue

Analyzing district spending to understand budget priorities

Advocate for new priorities that address identified budget needs

Alignment

This badge is aligned with the [Leadership Competencies](#) of the [National Education Association](#).

Pathways

This module supports these educator advocacy pathways:

Professional Development and Skill-Building

Direct Instruction: learning education policy and advocacy can equip educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively advocate for change says jobsineducation.com.

Building Relationships and Coalitions

Networking: joining and forming coalitions with other educators, parents, and community members to amplify their voices and increase their influence.

Amplifying Voices and Sharing Stories

Research: using data to support advocacy for positions, policies and legislation.

Direct Engagement with Decision-Makers

Local Government: engaging with local government officials on issues like funding, resources, and community partnerships can also be impactful.

Advocate for Change: make direct communication with decision-makers, create public awareness, and engage the community in support for what is best for children.

Focusing on Specific Issues

Identify Key Issues: adopt positions on specific issues to advocate for policies and practices that support optimal outcomes for public education and the students it serves.

Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: Overview of Funding for Pre-K–12 Education

Accessed August 4, 2025

<https://www.asha.org/advocacy/schoolfundadv/overview-of-funding-for-pre-k-12-education/>

Charbonneau, Jeff: Keeping Our Promise to Students [VIDEO 8:52]

Original content exclusively recorded for The Worthy Educator

Della Flora, Olympia: Understanding School District Funding [VIDEO 16:12]

Original content exclusively recorded for The Worthy Educator

Education Commission of the States: 50-State Comparison: K-12 Funding

Published March 11, 2024

<https://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-k-12-funding-2024/>

Everything Policy: School Funding

Updated January 16, 2024

<https://www.everythingpolicy.org/policy-briefs/school-funding>

First Focus on Children: School Vouchers and the Growing Threat to Public Education

Published January 30, 2025

<https://firstfocus.org/resource/school-vouchers-issue-brief/>

Hahn, Heather & Sumiko Daly, Hannah: How Would Children Fare Under Proposed Cuts to Federal Spending?

Published February 4, 2025

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/how-would-children-fare-under-proposed-cuts-federal-spending>

Hanover Research: K-12 Leaders Lean into Change with These 2025 Education Trends

Published April 29, 2025

<https://www.hanoverresearch.com/insights-blog/k-12-education/k-12-leaders-lean-into-change-with-these-2025-education-trends/>

Houston Association of Realtors: The Relationship Between Property Taxes and School Funding

Accessed August 4, 2025

<https://www.har.com/ri/3386/the-relationship-between-property-taxes-and-school-funding>

National Association of Secondary School Principals: School and Student Leaders Unite to Advocate for Education Funding on Capitol Hill
Published March 18, 2025 <https://www.nassp.org/2025/03/18/school-and-student-leaders-unite-to-advocate-for-education-funding-on-capitol-hill/>

New York City Public Schools: School Funding: Where Does the Money Go? [3:48]
Published September 24, 2024
https://youtu.be/0hLjAmnU8ls?si=hLdd_ba6aF48hV-W

Peter G, Peterson Foundation: How Is K-12 Education Funded? Published July 22, 2025 <https://www.pgpf.org/article/how-is-k-12-education-funded/>

Raise Your Hand Texas: School Funding Advocacy Day [4:06]
Published June 18, 2025
<https://youtu.be/XUIDX7hD1kA?si=Ps4MOtR3yKLXh9nR>

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

The following are submitted to the module discussion board for engagement and evaluation:

- I. How is your school district's annual school budget funded by local monies? State funding? Federal programs?

Find the district's documents and determine from where the monies come that constitute its fully funded operational budget.

What percentage of your school district budget comes from federal funding? How much of the budget is funded by the state? What percent comes from local revenue? Are there any other sources of funding beyond this?

Create a pie chart of your district revenue streams, indicating the percentage of funding that comes from federal, state and local dollars. Account for any additional sources of funding, as well.

When your pie chart is complete, share the visual in our EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

II. Compare the budget spending pie chart for the New York City Public Schools in School Funding: Where Does the Money Go? [3:48].

How do the percentages for each category they share compare with the corresponding categories in your school district?

Identify the strengths of where New York City spends their education dollars, then identify the strengths on where your local district puts its emphasis on student spending.

What are your takeaways from this comparison?

1. What does your local district get right in spending priorities?
2. Where does your local district's budget need to improve?
3. How will current funding streams impact your district's programs?
4. What are your personal priorities for budget planning for next year?
5. How can you share your ideas with other local stakeholders?

Share your answers in our EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

III. Realtors are an excellent source of information on the valuation of local properties and the taxes that are assessed on businesses and homeowners.

Schedule a meeting with a realtor in your community to learn about current property values and the taxes that are collected annually for schools.

Prepare a short list of questions to ask when you meet. Some possible items may include:

1. How are local property taxes assessed?
2. How do property tax rates here compare with other nearby areas?

3. What factors influence the rate at which property taxes are set?
4. Where are those taxes spent in the community?
5. What is the relationship between property taxes, schools and the quality of life in our community?

How does what you learn from this meeting inform your view about public funding of schools? How will this help you moving forward as an EDInfluencer?

Share your findings in our EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

IV. Budgeting Priorities

Identify three to five budgeting priorities for your local schools that will improve outcomes for students over the next decade.

Choose ONE way to submit:

Option 1: Written Note

- A few bullet points that answer:
 - What budget issues rise to the top for you and your students?
 - How do they affect your classroom?
 - Who can you influence to advocate for your priorities?
 - Who are the ultimate decision-makers to approve these priorities?

Option 2: Video Chat

- A 2-minute video where you:
 - Explain your budget priorities
 - Describe how, if enacted, they can benefit your students
 - Appeal to stakeholders and decision-makers for their support

Option 3: Infographic

- A visual organizer illustrating:
 - Your budget priorities
 - How they can benefit your students
 - A call to action to stakeholders for their support

Share your ideas using the form of expression of your choice to our EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator to share it with likeminded Worthy Educators!

Rubric

Worthy Educator EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Rubric

Criteria	3 Outstanding	2 Adequate	1 Needs Improvement
Voice	A compelling introduction Grabs the reader's attention Relates personal perspective Appeals to stakeholder perspective Offers personal experience and expertise Utilizes an inclusive, professional tone Elevates the narrative on education Confident expression of ideas	A clear introduction Addresses the reader directly Present educator credentials Maintains a consistent tone Avoids blame and polarizing statements Smooth use of syntax and semantics	Uses first-person voice Succinctly states ideas Relates personal opinion Leaves the reader wanting more elaboration
Persuasiveness	Clarity of the purpose of the piece Shows awareness of audience Evidences expertise and credibility Presents solid data and evidence Uses logic and reason Appeals to emotion and experience Makes the case effectively Influences the reader to take action	Directly states premise Shows audience awareness Logical flow of ideas Cites professional experience Espouses personal priorities Makes clear closing statement	Speaks on own behalf Straightforward presentation of ideas Unconvincing presentation Didactic tone
Organization	Begins with clear thesis statement Effective use of language Ideas are logically sequenced Builds to a call to action Creates a satisfying conclusion Documents references cited Adherence to technical conventions Clean formatting	Clean introduction Clear expression of ideas Well-developed structure Documents references cited Technically consistent Clean formatting	Underdeveloped thesis States thoughts in isolation Meets minimum requirements of assignment Technical errors
Substance	High interest topic Relevant to current issues in education Viable treatment of the topic References reliable sources Indicates desired course of action Enlists the support of stakeholders Outlines next steps Describes desired outcome	Knowledgeable on the topic References current events Appeals to popular sentiment Cites personal aspirations Outlines options for action Brings discussion to satisfying conclusion	Surface-level treatment of ideas Uses lists rather than sentences Promotes personal agenda Lacks connection to future
Vision	Makes the case for future needs Universally relevant message Explains what is at stake Outlines consequences of inaction Paints a credible picture Provides clarity and detail Builds a bridge from the present Invites others to help build out the vision	Makes the case for change Connects with the reader Speaks in the present tense Describes possibilities Inspires hope and aspiration Invites others to join in the vision	Describes current circumstances Asks questions without providing answers Reactive rather than proactive Unclear next steps