

# Special Education Finances and Trends at San Francisco Unified School District

*Policy Analysis Report to Supervisor Hillary Ronen*

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Presentation to:

YOUTH, YOUNG ADULT, AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

April 8, 2022

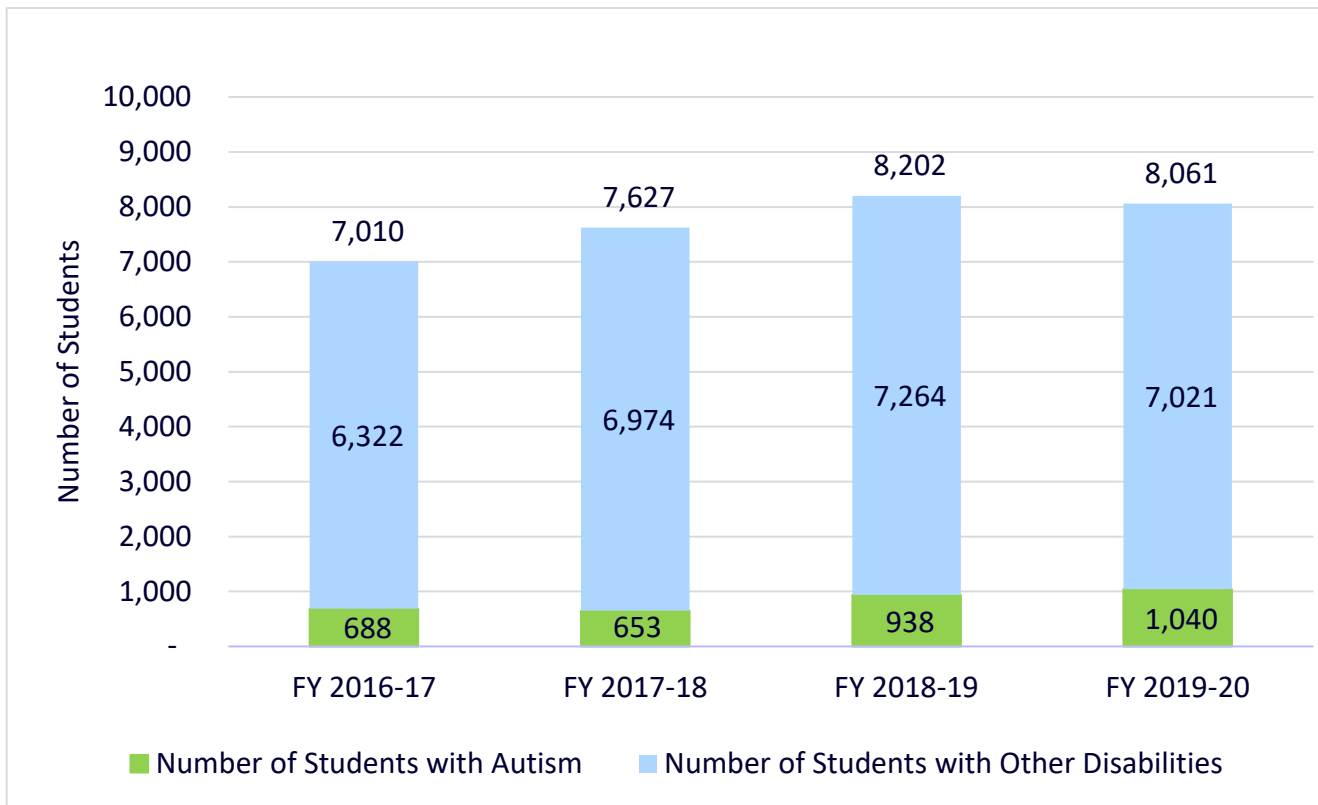
# Special Education

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- The federal government guarantees a “*free appropriate public education*” to all children with disabilities through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 (IDEA).
- In California, special education is funded by a combination of federal, state, and local sources.
- Federal and state funding has not kept up with the costs of legally mandated and guaranteed services in many districts throughout the state, including San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).

# Number of SFUSD Students with Disabilities

FYs 2016-17 –2019-20: Number of students with disabilities grew by 15 percent overall.  
Number of students with autism grew much faster - by 51 percent.



➤ District total Average Daily Attendance (ADA): 50,096 in FY 2019-20.

Source: San Francisco Unified School District, and Ed Data Education Data Partnership CDE Ed Source FCMAT

## SFUSD Special Education Adopted Budgets, FYs 2016-17 – 2019-20

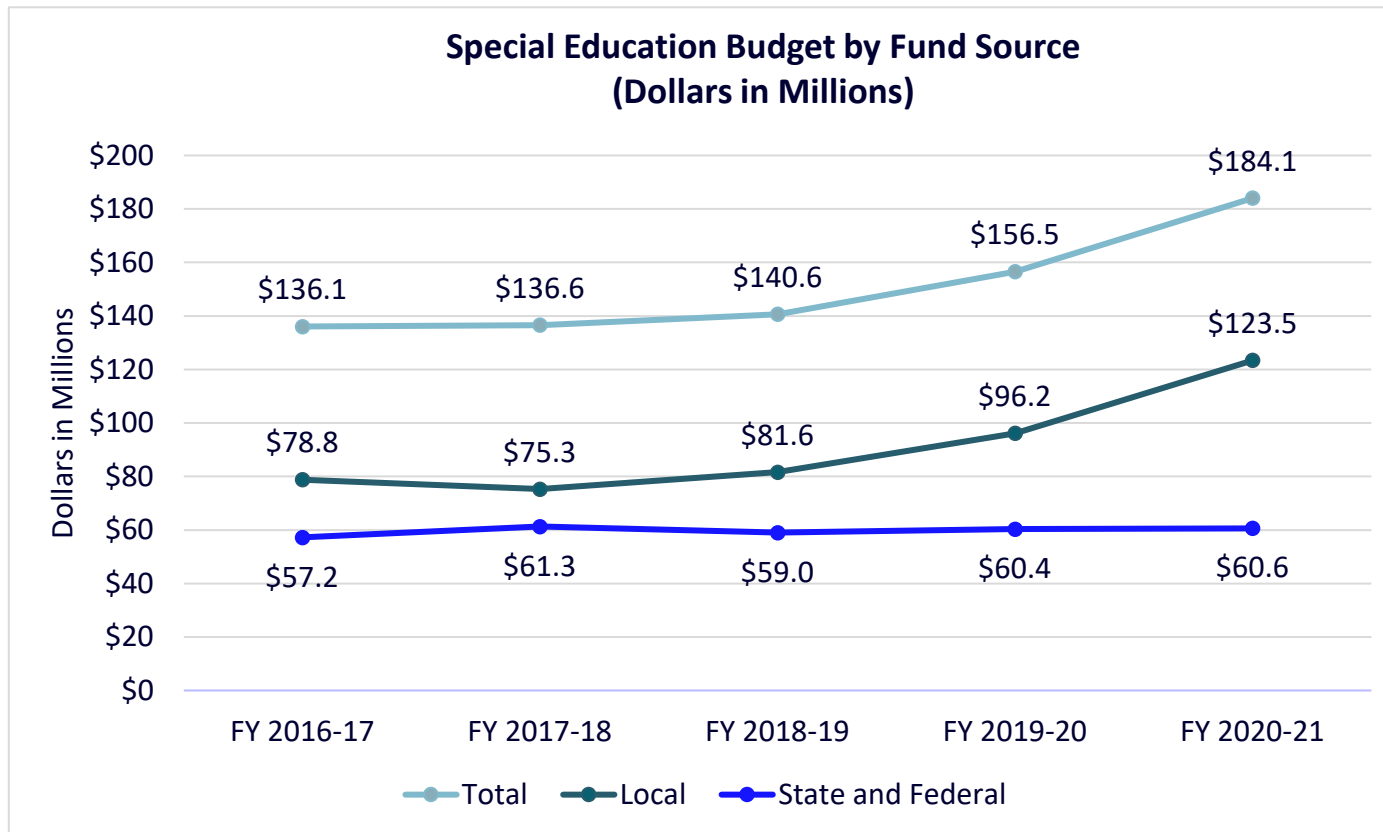
Local Unrestricted General Fund grew more than nine times faster than state and federal sources.

Fund Source	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	% Change
State AB 602	\$35,443,680	\$36,069,616	\$37,517,392	\$38,275,483	\$39,248,521	11%
Federal	14,128,991	16,199,397	13,455,638	13,784,964	14,086,938	0%
Other State	7,641,257	9,020,625	8,034,128	8,312,394	7,290,378	-5%
<b>Subtotal</b>	57,213,928	61,289,638	59,007,158	60,372,841	60,625,837	6%
<b>Unrestricted General Fund</b>	78,837,607	75,319,562	81,642,817	96,166,851	123,457,870	57%
<b>Total</b>	\$136,051,535	\$136,609,200	\$140,649,975	\$156,539,692	\$184,083,707	35%

Source: San Francisco Unified School District

# State and Federal Revenue for Special Education, FYs 2016-17 – 2020-21

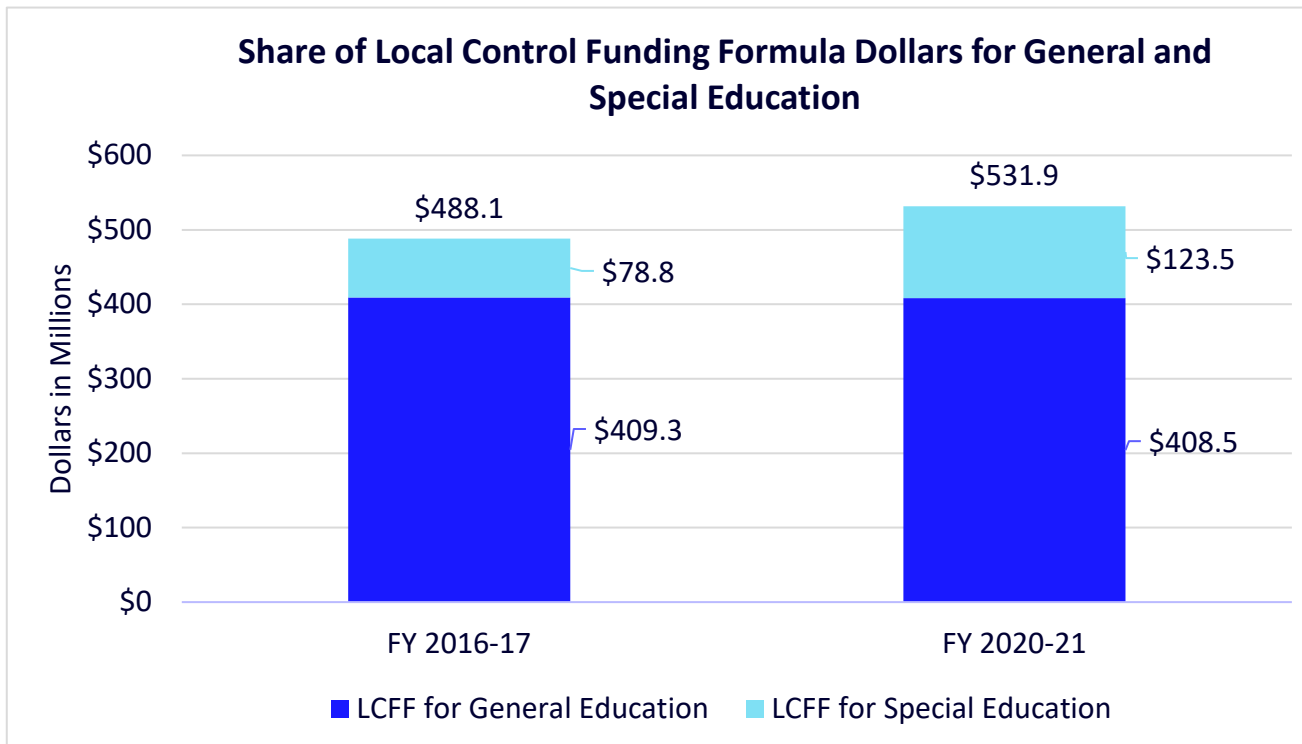
State and federal revenue for Special Education grew by just 6 percent: FY 2016-17 to FY 2020-21.



Source: San Francisco Unified School District

# Local Control Funding Formula

Special Education funding from LCFF grew by 57 percent;  
General Education funding fell slightly from FY 2016-17 to FY 2020-21.

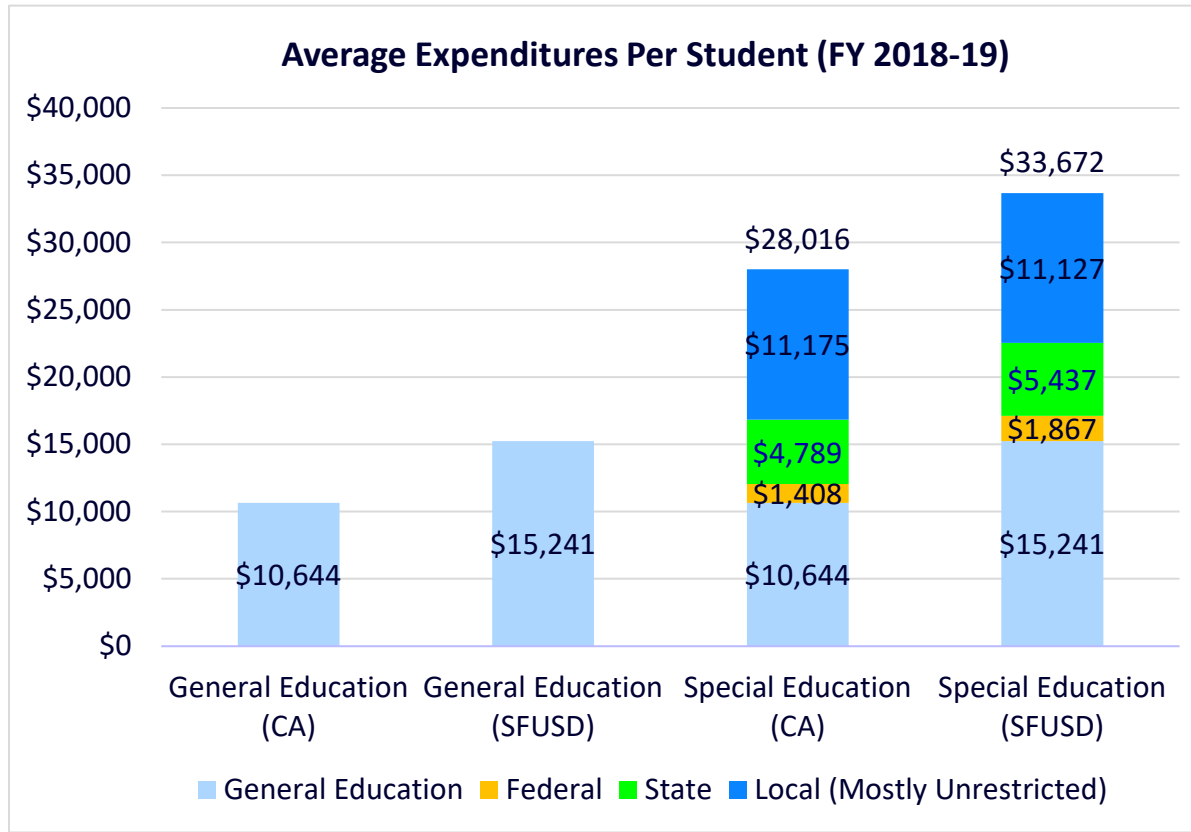


- Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) dollars from State are largest source of District’s discretionary funding.
- LCFF is primary funding source for general education, but only after covering gap in Special Education funding.

Source: San Francisco Unified School District data

# General & Special Ed Average Expenditures Per Student

Statewide and in San Francisco, providing necessary and legally mandated services to students with disabilities is more costly on average than the costs for students receiving general education only.



Sources: San Francisco Unified School District; California State Special Education Funding System Study Part 2, WestEd, July 2020; Ed Data Education Data Partnership CDE Ed Source FCMAT; calculations by BLA

# “Full Funding” of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

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- Prior to passage of IDEA in 1975, Congress determined that the federal government would pay up to **40 percent** of the excess cost of special education services based on the national average of per-pupil expenditures.
- At the time, Special Ed costs were estimated to be approximately double the cost of General Education.
- *If 40 percent of SFUSD costs were covered by the federal government:*

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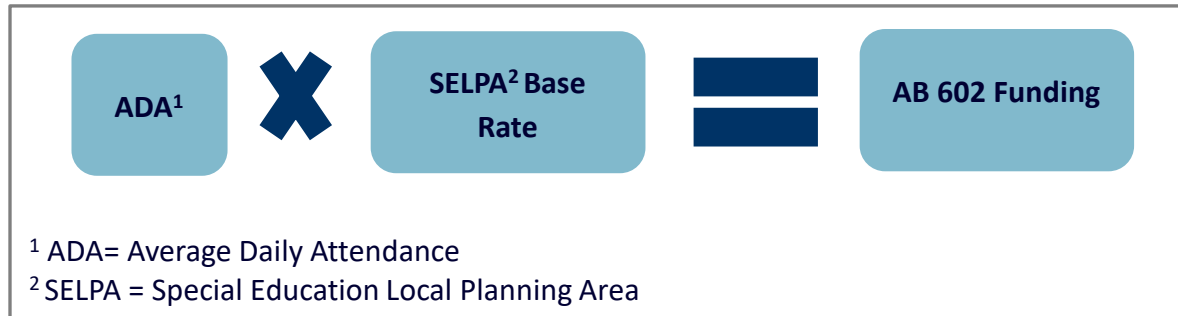
<b>FY 2018-19</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Total federal funding at 40% of District costs	\$50,166,286
Actual federal funding FY 2018-19	\$13,455,638
Additional federal funding if 40% of District costs	\$36,710,648

Sources: San Francisco Unified School District data; calculations by BLA



# Two Scenarios for Increased State Special Education Funding

State Special Education funding formula (AB 602 funding):

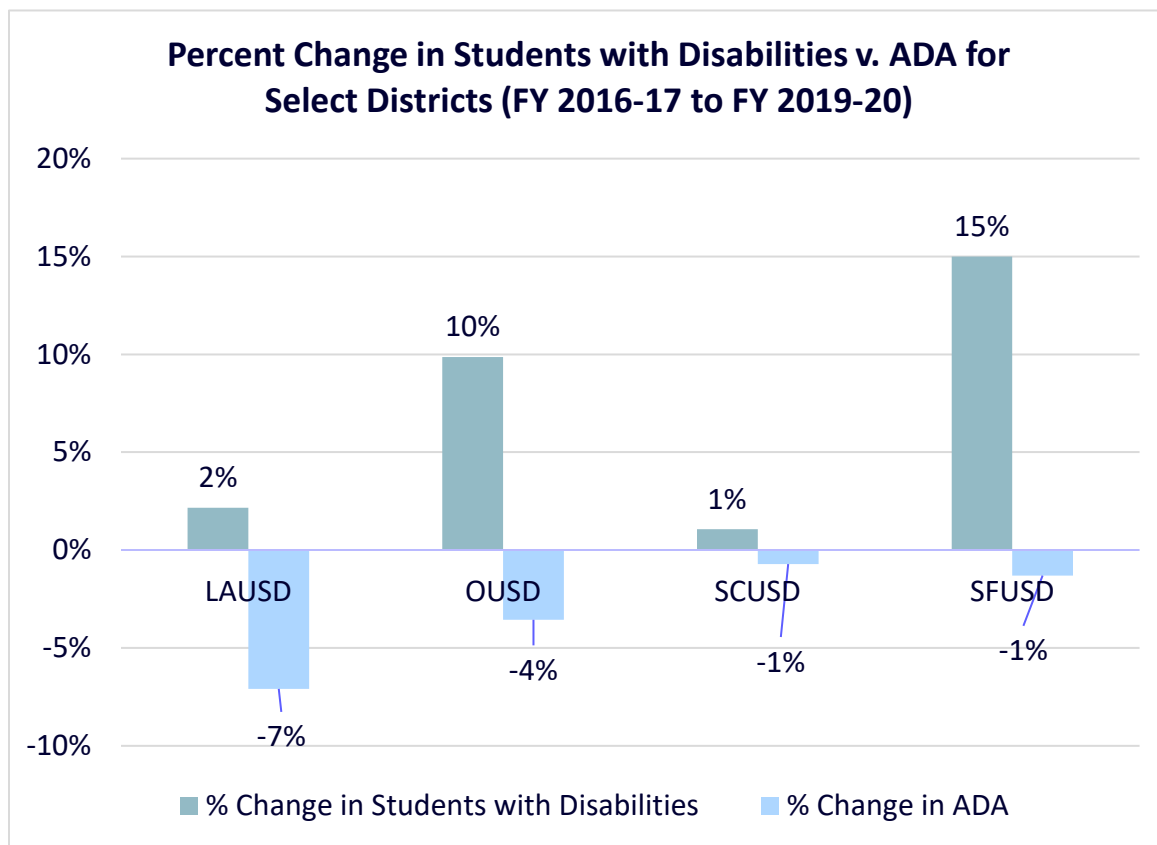


Total State Funding Scenarios	New SFUSD SELPA Base Rate	Change from \$715 Base Rate	ADA	Revenue: Current \$715 AB 602 Rate	Revenue: Increased AB 602 Rate	Annual Additional AB 602 Funding for SFUSD
\$500 million (Governor proposal)	\$820	\$105	50,096	\$35,818,640	\$41,078,720	\$5,260,080
\$1 billion (BLA scenario)	\$925	\$210	50,096	\$35,818,640	\$46,338,800	\$10,520,160

Source: Calculations by BLA

## Students with Disabilities Growing as ADA Declines in SF & Other Districts

...but State Special Education funding is based on ADA, not the number of students with disabilities



- State shifted formula in 1998 to rely on ADA instead of services provided.
- The current “AB 602” formula was intended to simplify funding calculations and encourage instructional innovation in mainstream classrooms.

Sources: CA Department of Education and Ed Data Education Data Partnership. CDE Ed Source FCMAT; calculations by BLA

## Multidistrict Comparison Shows Federal & State Revenue Lags Local Funding

		FY 2016-17	FY 2019-20	% Change
Long Beach Unified	Federal & State	\$59.3	\$60.5	2%
	Local	\$218.7	\$239.2	9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$278.0</b>	<b>\$299.7</b>	<b>8%</b>
Los Angeles Unified	Federal & State	\$556.8	\$550.8	-1%
	Local	\$1,840.5	\$2,089.8	14%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,397.3</b>	<b>\$2,640.6</b>	<b>10%</b>
Oakland Unified	Federal & State	\$36.9	\$37.9	3%
	Local	\$90.1	\$129.3	43%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$127.1</b>	<b>\$167.2</b>	<b>32%</b>
Sacramento City Unified	Federal & State	\$35.0	\$38.4	10%
	Local	\$120.5	\$140.2	16%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$155.5</b>	<b>\$178.6</b>	<b>15%</b>
San Diego Unified	Federal & State	\$97.9	\$101.9	4%
	Local	\$407.9	\$432.6	6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$505.8</b>	<b>\$534.5</b>	<b>6%</b>
San Jose Unified	Federal & State	\$14.4	\$13.7	-5%
	Local	\$79.5	\$94.4	19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$93.9</b>	<b>\$108.2</b>	<b>15%</b>
San Francisco Unified	Federal & State	\$57.2	\$60.4	6%
	Local	\$78.8	\$96.2	22%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$136.1</b>	<b>\$156.5</b>	<b>15%</b>

# Questions and comments

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Full report: <https://sfbos.org/budget-legislative-analyst-reports>

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