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Congress Can Improve School Finance Transparency.

As state legislative sessions open across the country, lawmakers are considering bills giving parents greater control over their children's share of public school spending, following historic progress last year. But teachers unions and other opponents of education choice programs will likely leverage public misunderstanding about public school finances to oppose giving parents options beyond their children's assigned public school. Correcting that misunderstanding should be a priority for school choice advocates in the new year.

Recent polling by EdChoice makes clear the extent of public misunderstanding and the importance of showing parents how public schools are financed. Summarizing the poll results, EdChoice researcher Colyn Ritter writes, "More than half of Americans say public school funding is too low — until they are shown how much schools actually spent." Americans estimate that public schools spend about $5,000 per student, but actual national average per-pupil expenditure is nearly three times as much: roughly $14,000.

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THE HILL

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