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School District Purchasing Priorities | 2024-25



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EdWeek
Market Brief®

New Special Report

School District Purchasing Priorities, 2024-25

| About This Report

It's a time of transition in the nation's school districts. And one of high stakes for education companies across the market.

Over the past four years, an enormous amount of federal stimulus funding, about \$190 billion, has flowed into schools to support a public education system attempting to rebound from the worst of the pandemic. That funding stream is being phased out after this year. A tangled assortment of school district needs, however, have not gone away, and as a result, many school systems are showing a strong interest in maintaining spending in a variety of academic and non-academic areas, through one funding source or another.

A new *EdWeek Market Brief* special report takes an in-depth look at which types of products and services school districts are planning to spend the most or least amount of money on in their budgets for next fiscal year. The report, **School District Purchasing Priorities, 2024-25**, breaks down projected spending, product category by product category. It also offers insights about overall market conditions, shifting district attitudes toward technology—including artificial intelligence—and the most pressing challenges facing district and

school administrators, and teachers, that are influencing their buying.

The report focuses on projected spending in school systems in fiscal year 2024-25—beginning this summer and extending through the next academic year—and is based on nationally representative surveys conducted of district and school leaders, as well as classroom teachers, by the EdWeek Research Center. Now in its third year, the report finds that core demands remain strong for many of the products that top decision-makers have come to see as essential, in areas like social-emotional learning, supplemental math and English/language arts materials, and devices, in particular.

It is not difficult to see why those appetites remain undiminished. There's widespread anxiety among district and school leaders and teachers about an array of academic and non-academic hurdles. For top-level K-12 administrators, there are persistent worries about recruiting and retaining teachers. Among educators, there are concerns about students' mental health, and classroom discipline. And there's a conviction that the loss of federal stimulus aid will have a negative impact on academic recovery.

Among the insights delivered in the report:

- While district and school leaders have major anxieties about the loss of federal stimulus funding, **they also believe a substantial portion of stimulus-funded projects and programs will remain in place** in some form, when the money goes away.

- School districts have sought to rebalance the mix of print and digital products as they move further from pandemic-era remote learning, but **spending on devices, and some other specific categories of tech** will remain strong.
- While district leaders expect to scale down in areas that have benefited from stimulus aid, such as SEL and summer-learning, there are clear indications **they want to protect those programs through other funding streams.**
- There are **category-by-category projections of district spending** in areas including supplemental and core math and English/language arts curriculum; learning management and student information systems; assessment; on-campus and out-of-school internet connectivity; and academic resources focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Many of the core findings in the new report reflect broader themes the editorial team at *EdWeek Market Brief* has been exploring through our ongoing coverage, the data collected and analyzed by the EdWeek Research Center, and our live events. Once you've read our analysis of new district purchasing priorities, let us know how the findings mesh with the conversations your organization is having with school systems, and where our coverage needs to go next

See the next 2 pages for a snapshot of a pair of findings from this report.

About EdWeek Market Brief

EdWeek Market Brief is a membership service that provides essential intelligence on the needs and priorities of school districts to companies and other organizations focused on the education market. Its members include some of the most prominent organizations in the industry, located in the U.S. and internationally, as well as medium-sized companies and startups, nonprofit and research organizations, consulting firms, and higher education institutions.

Week after week, our service provides enterprise members with in-depth journalism, original data from surveys of district officials, interviews with K-12 decisionmakers and industry insiders, and news of lucrative bidding opportunities. *EdWeek Market Brief* enterprise members also have unlimited access to an extensive library of on-demand webinars, on topics such as the state of K-12 budgets; effective sales

strategies and mistakes to avoid; keys to working successfully in foreign education markets; district demands for social-emotional learning products; and shifts in school buyers' needs during the coronavirus.

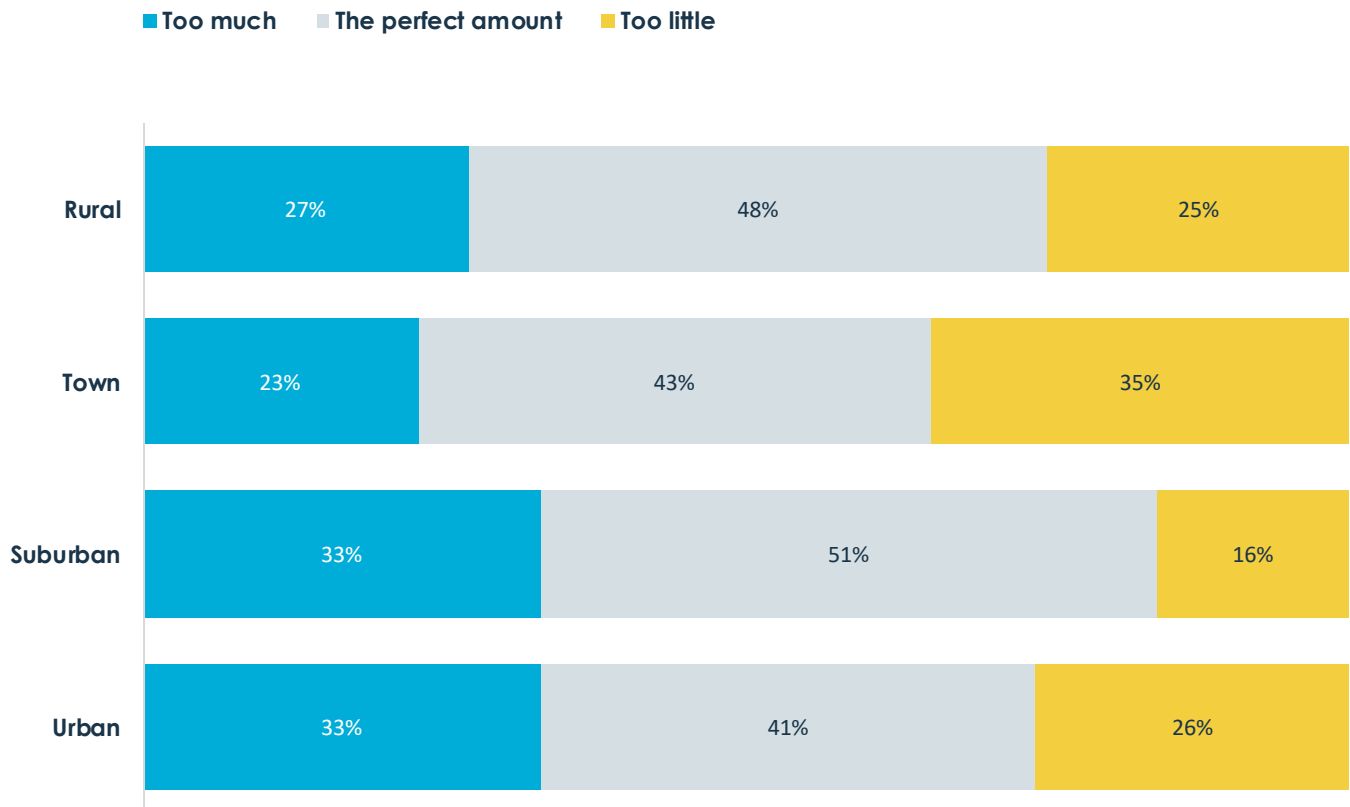
In addition, enterprise members have exclusive access to in-depth research reports on the K-12 market as well as quarterly briefings on key trends in district purchasing, budgets, and challenges facing vendors.

For more information on *EdWeek Market Brief* content, please get in touch with Managing Editor Sean Cavanagh at scavanagh@educationweek.org.

For information on becoming an *EdWeek Market Brief* member and event sponsoring opportunities, please contact Ryan Lanier at rlanier@educationweek.org.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES AND PAIN POINTS

Urban, Suburban Districts More Likely To See Too Much Ed Tech in Schools



INSIGHT: District and school leaders and teachers in rural areas have a more favorable view of tech's current role in their schools than do their urban and suburban counterparts. (The differences are statistically significant.) Administrators and educators from smaller and more rural communities may be more inclined to see digital tools/platforms as creating opportunities for students that did not exist, because of previous lack of investment in that area.

Survey Question:

How would you describe the amount of ed-tech currently in use in your classroom, district, or school?

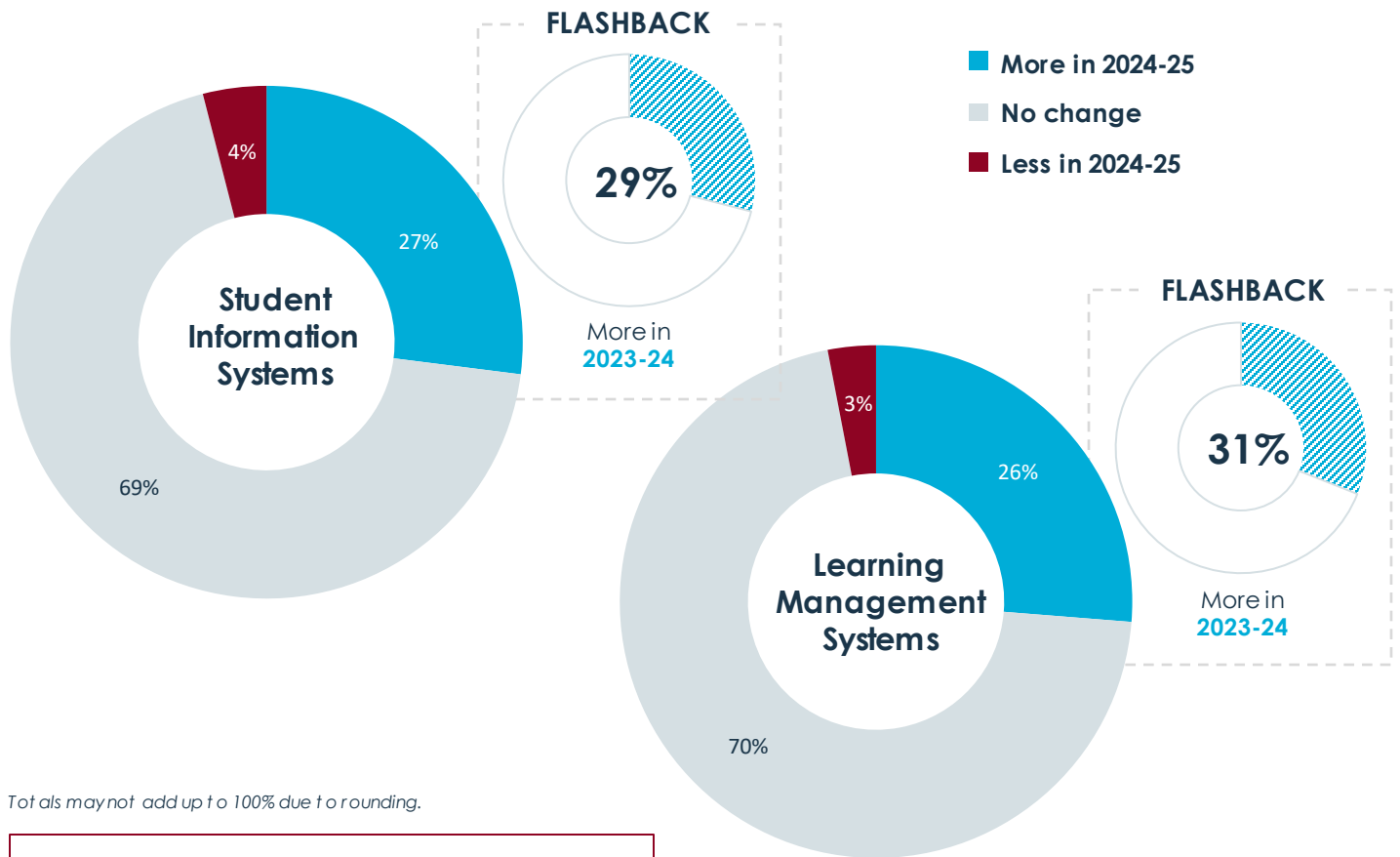
Link to relevant story:

- <https://marketbrief.edweek.org/marketplace-k-12/technology-seen-bridge-diversity-equity-inclusion/>

SOURCE: EdWeek Research Center nationally representative August 2023 survey of 218 district leaders, 271 school leaders, and 453 teachers.

SPENDING BY PRODUCT CATEGORY

Projected Spending on Student Information, Learning Management Systems Will Dip Slightly Compared to Current Year



Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

INSIGHT:
 School systems' plans to invest in major tech management systems remain relatively stable next fiscal year, though LMS spending will fall somewhat. It could be that districts became cognizant of a need to overhaul their data and learning platforms as digital usage soared during and after the pandemic – and that they elected to invest heavily then, and thus don't anticipate spending as much next year.

Survey Question:
 When it comes to the following technology-related expenses, how do you anticipate your spending for NEXT YEAR'S budget (2024-25) will compare to the spending in the current (2023-24) budget?

Link to relevant story:
 ▪ <https://marketbrief.edweek.org/exclusive-data/devices-internet-upgrades-districts-will-buying-next-year/>

SOURCE: EdWeek Research Center August 2023 nationally representative survey of 161 district leaders.

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