

The High Price of Poverty

Think of a student in the grade level you teach. How much do you think it costs each year for that student to fully participate in their education? Make some guesstimates about the cost of education for students in the grade level you teach. To get you started, below is a non-exhaustive list of common education expenses.

School Expense	Guestimated Yearly Cost
Back to school clothes	
Backpacks and shoes	
Back to school supplies	
Textbooks or other required books	
Digital learning devices (laptops, tablets, etc.)	
Printer, printing paper, ink	
Monthly Wi-Fi expenses	
Art supplies	
School projects, poster paper etc.	
Field trips	
Class parties and celebrations	
School pictures	
Year books and school memorabilia	
School fundraising participation (wrapping paper? Chocolates? Book fair?)	
Immunizations	
Extracurricular fees and participation	
Extracurricular equipment (cleats, shin guards, ballet shoes etc.)	
Musical instruments	
Transportation to/from extra curriculars	
Attending school sporting, theater, band, choir events	
School dances	
Coaching	
Tutoring	
Library fees/fines	
Mid-year school supplies	
Mid-year school clothes	
Winter clothes (coats, hats, boots, etc.)	
Grooming (haircuts, hair braiding etc.)	
SAT/ACT/College applications	
Other	
Total	

Discussion Questions

- How do you imagine families feel when they cannot provide their child with all things required for full participation?
- What do you think is the emotional and educational impact on students who cannot fully participate due to the cost of education?
- What can you do within *your sphere of control* (your classroom, the instructional decisions you make) to minimize additional educational expenses and create more educational equity for your students?
- What can you do within *your sphere of influence* (your school, your colleagues, larger society's expectations) create more educational equity for all students?