

Estimating Teacher Tuition Costs for Scholarship Funding

Introduction. Research supports that one of the most important drivers of preschool program quality, and later positive outcomes for children, is the efficacy of preschool classroom teachers. Highly qualified preschool teachers, with both a bachelor's degree and specialized training in early education or child development, are associated with higher quality educational environments for young children. Similarly, teacher assistant preparation is connected to both teaching quality and overall program quality. In light of this research, the CPQ&R was designed to provide cost estimations for scholarship funding to support teaching staff in attaining higher education degrees and specialized training.

Approach. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects state-level data on average undergraduate tuition and fees for students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Information is provided on both in-state and out-of-state tuition rates for public (2-year and 4-year) and private (4-year only) postsecondary institutions for each state. The data reflects rates for full-time students enrolled for a full academic year, excluding room and board. To calculate an estimated cost per credit, total rates for tuition and fees were divided by an estimated average of 24 credits per academic year.

Across the nation, the majority of postsecondary institutions require 120 credits for a bachelor's degree and 60 credits for an associate's degree, awarding 3 credits per class. To determine a viable estimate of scholarship funding needed for teaching staff to enroll in higher education classes, it was assumed that full-time teaching staff would take no more than 2 classes in each of the fall, spring and summer semesters, for a total of 6 classes (or 18 credits) per year. As a result, the CPQ&R assumes that full-time teachers may take 6 years to earn a bachelor's degree ($120 \text{ credits} / 18 \text{ credits} = 6 \text{ years}$ and 2 semesters) and full-time teacher assistants may take 3 years to earn an associate's degree ($60 \text{ credits} / 18 \text{ credits} = 3 \text{ years}$ and 1 semester).

In addition to scholarship funding for teacher assistants earning an associate's degree, programs may wish to provide scholarships to cover the Child Development Associate (CDA) assessment fee. The CPQ&R is built to incorporate a one-time scholarship to support the cost of the application and course book, based on estimates from the Council for Professional Recognition.

Results. Estimated annual tuition and fees in public 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions are presented in Table 1. The table represents annual tuition and fees for teachers (public 4-year institutions) and teacher assistants (public 2-year institutions) to obtain 18 credits per year. An assumption is made that public scholarship funding will be provided only to students enrolled in public, in-state institutions of higher education.

The most expensive states for public 4-year tuition/fees include Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, each with average rates exceeding \$10,000 per 18 credits. At the other end of the spectrum, Wyoming and Florida have two of the lowest rates, each well under \$3,000 per 18 credits. California is the only state below \$1,000 for 18 credits of coursework in a public 2-year college while Vermont and New Hampshire again hold the highest rates. It should be noted that data for 2-year institutions was not available for Delaware or the District of Columbia. National averages are used instead for those states.

Data from Table 1 is now included in the state data provided in the CPQ&R, and may be used to customize the provision of scholarship funding for teaching staff in state-funded preschool programs. Built into the tool are modifiable assumptions about the number of teaching staff who already hold required degrees/specializations, teaching staff with credits towards required degrees/specializations, and timing/percent of teaching staff entering the scholarship program in a given year (if higher education capacity is a concern). Cost estimates can be easily customized in a variety of ways to meet program needs.

Conclusion. Updated, state-by-state tuition costs are now included in the default assumptions of the latest version of the CPQ&R. When a user selects a state, the corresponding tuition rates for that state are automatically populated.

Users can override these rates if they choose; for example, they can choose to provide scholarship funding for fewer credits per year, for only a percentage of total costs, or based on the tuition rate of a specific, individual state postsecondary institution.

Customizing tuition costs by state increases the utility of the CPQ&R and further delivers on CEELo's goal to provide a tool that immediately returns informed cost estimates upon entering a state preschool slot count. By refining tuition costs based on state level data, the CPQ&R also provides insight into the need and expense to appropriately staff preschool classrooms for high quality.

Public, In-State Colleges, Tuition/Fees, 18 Credits		
	4-year Colleges	2-year Colleges
Alabama, AL	\$7,100	\$3,272
Alaska, AK	\$5,408	\$2,865
Arizona, AZ	\$7,542	\$1,597
Arkansas, AR	\$5,943	\$2,396
California, CA	\$5,922	\$946
Colorado, CO	\$7,014	\$2,674
Connecticut, CT	\$8,794	\$3,141
Delaware, DE	\$7,183	\$2,367
District of Columbia, DC	\$4,209	\$2,367
Florida, FL	\$3,326	\$1,914
Georgia, GA	\$5,257	\$2,171
Hawaii, HI	\$7,284	\$2,310
Idaho, ID	\$5,254	\$2,420
Illinois, IL	\$10,227	\$2,811
Indiana, IN	\$6,657	\$3,131
Iowa, IA	\$6,271	\$3,593
Kansas, KS	\$6,367	\$2,417
Kentucky, KY	\$7,511	\$2,971
Louisiana, LA	\$6,610	\$3,023
Maine, ME	\$6,914	\$2,755
Maryland, MD	\$6,812	\$2,987
Massachusetts, MA	\$9,248	\$3,589
Michigan, MI	\$8,917	\$2,567
Minnesota, MN	\$8,162	\$3,982
Mississippi, MS	\$5,604	\$2,123
Missouri, MO	\$6,132	\$2,271
Montana, MT	\$4,877	\$2,536
Nebraska, NE	\$5,799	\$2,244
Nevada, NV	\$4,140	\$2,183
New Hampshire, NH	\$11,619	\$5,251
New Jersey, NJ	\$9,973	\$3,274
New Mexico, NM	\$5,118	\$1,192
New York, NY	\$5,782	\$3,842
North Carolina, NC	\$5,414	\$1,853
North Dakota, ND	\$5,532	\$3,421
Ohio, OH	\$7,370	\$2,742
Oklahoma, OK	\$5,414	\$2,720
Oregon, OR	\$7,304	\$3,197
Pennsylvania, PA	\$10,551	\$3,786
Rhode Island, RI	\$8,539	\$3,200
South Carolina, SC	\$9,115	\$3,313
South Dakota, SD	\$6,226	\$4,352
Tennessee, TN	\$6,965	\$3,036
Texas, TX	\$6,282	\$1,574
Utah, UT	\$4,750	\$2,768
Vermont, VT	\$11,653	\$4,667
Virginia, VA	\$9,094	\$3,722
Washington, WA	\$5,177	\$2,886
West Virginia, WV	\$5,431	\$3,007
Wisconsin, WI	\$6,314	\$3,219
Wyoming, WY	\$3,233	\$2,240

Table 1: Tuition Costs for 18 Credits in 2- and 4-Year Public Institutions of Higher Education, by State