



SPEND IT ON SCHOOLS: HOLIDAY EDITION

PARTNERSHIP
FOR THE
**FUTURE of
LEARNING**

Spend It On Schools

How would you reimagine public education?

You have:

\$125,400,000,000.00

to spend on education

This holiday season, Americans are expected to spend **\$800 billion** on clothing, electronics and other retail expenses, up seven percent from last year. They will spend **\$604 million** on Thanksgiving turkeys. And about **\$20 million** was spent on Halloween costumes for pets.

Large numbers like *these tend to boggle the mind*. But an online tool is here to help. Freshly renamed “Spend it on Schools” (based on the feedback of young people who used the app), the free, interactive tool is sponsored by The **Partnership for the Future of Learning**, with support from the **National Education Policy Center** and **Voqal**. It allows users to enter a dollar amount of their choice and to then explore what it could purchase for K-12 education.

If you’re unsure where to start, the tool can guide the way. For example, Immigration and Customs Enforcement spends nearly **\$1.8 billion** annually on detention. Users who click on that option might then learn that it’s enough to hire restorative justice coordinators for more than 90 percent of schools in America.

But just in case you’re interested in getting a handle on America’s spending on Hot Wheels, turkey, and bumble bee costumes for Shih Tzus, here are some other ideas for filling your **Spend it on Schools** shopping cart:

- If Americans put their turkeys where their mouths are, they could pay for nurses in roughly one in five of the schools that don’t currently have them.
- Serious about recruiting and retaining more teachers of color? The amount we spend on Fido’s Halloween costumes could get us halfway toward the goal of fully funding the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence program to provide competitive grants

to teacher preparation programs at minority-serving institutions, in partnership with other colleges and universities. Congress has approved this program but is not funding it.

- As for the amount we are expected to spend on gifts and other retail expenses this holiday season, that just about broke the game. It's enough to pay for every single expense included in the app—from one year of free preschool for all four-year-olds to providing loan forgiveness to preservice teachers—and still have more than \$86 billion left over for next year.

Not satisfied with these scenarios? Try it yourself! Click on <https://www.spenditonschools.org/> and scroll to the very bottom of the screen and enter an amount if you're interested in creating your own expense category. Or just click on one of the pre-filled amounts (e.g., the \$748.2 billion spent annually on government fossil fuel subsidies) and see what K-12 expenses it could fund.

NEPC Resources on School Finance and Funding

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