

Rich Exner, Cleveland.com—Wealthiest districts score best in 2025

The September 15 Cleveland.com [article](#) by Rich Exner graphically shows how family income affects student outcomes in school districts.

It is not a surprise that the 5-star rated districts had the highest median income, and the 2-star rated districts had the lowest median income. The star ratings and the income levels follow the same pattern from top to bottom. The ratings and median incomes are:

- 5 stars - \$64,073
- 4.5 stars - \$47,245
- 4 stars - \$44,003
- 3.5 stars - \$40,699
- 3 stars - \$38,185
- 2.5 stars - \$35,027
- 2 stars - \$33,2821

Typically, low-income districts have low property wealth per pupil, which is problematic. Some politicians often label low wealth and income districts as “failing” districts. They blame the educators and leaders for the lower outcomes. The charter school and voucher schemes were initiated to rescue poor kids from “failing districts”. Research indicates that neither charter schools nor private schools improve the test scores of students that switch from the public system to private schools or charters.

A recent state-mandated study indicates that disadvantaged students should be counted by a factor of 1.47 in the school funding formula. The current compensatory funding of disadvantaged students is much less.