

**Title:** Roll Call: Public School Funding and Attendance  
**Presenter:** Ryan Tsai, Pasadena City College  
**Mentor:** Shane Underwood

Schools across the United States are adopting the system of average daily attendance to determine how much money a school receives. This methodology dictates that schools that maintain high attendance rates per student receive more money while those who don't see budget cuts and funds withheld. This is a system that forces schools to focus on their numbers instead of the identity and individuality of their students. The system also discriminates against schools in lower income areas, as it labels them as underperforming and withholds funds while expecting them to improve. Bruce Biddle found that funding discrepancies exist in between states and even cities within a state (Biddle, n.p.). Attendance based funding expects an end but fails to provide the means. Oftentimes schools end up viewing students as price tags and calculate how much it would 'cost' the school to lose that student by expulsion or suspension. Cinque Henderson delivers a compelling anecdote in which an aggressive student was allowed to remain in school simply because the school needed the \$41 that the student was providing them by attending. When combined with the fact that school attendance rates in California are on the decline, schools stand to lose money no matter what happens. This paper aims to explore the philosophical undertones of this system and explain the shortcomings while offering a move forwards.

## Works Cited

- Biddle, Bruce J, and David C Berliner. "A Research Synthesis / Unequal School Funding in the United States." Unequal School Funding in the United States - Educational Leadership, ACSD, May 2002, [www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may02/vol59/num08/Unequal-School-Funding-in-the-United-States.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may02/vol59/num08/Unequal-School-Funding-in-the-United-States.aspx).
- Buber, Martin. I And Thou. Clark, 1952.
- Gadamer, Hans Georg. Truth and Method. Translated by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G Marshall, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013.
- Heidegger, Martin. Being and Time. Stellar Books, 2013.
- Henderson, Cinque. "How Some School Funding Formulas Hurt Learning and Make Schools More Dangerous." The Washington Post, WP Company, 1 Mar. 2019,