**Challenging Assumptions: The Inverse Relationship Between School Spending and Student Performance**

**Introduction**  
The assumption that higher financial investment in education leads to better academic results is widely held. However, an analysis of school performance data across different spending levels reveals a more complex relationship. This report examines the connection between per-student spending and academic performance, focusing on metrics such as average math and reading scores and passing rates. The findings provide insights for more effective resource allocation strategies to optimize student success.

Top 5 and Bottom 5 Schools by Overall Performance

Top 5 Performing Schools

| School Name | % Passing Math | % Passing Reading | % Overall Passing |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Johnson High School | 94.13% | 97.04% | 91.33% |
| Griffin High School | 93.27% | 97.31% | 90.95% |
| Figueroa High School | 93.39% | 97.14% | 90.60% |
| Peña High School | 93.87% | 96.54% | 90.58% |
| Wright High School | 94.59% | 95.95% | 90.54% |

Bottom 5 Schools

| School Name | % Passing Math | % Passing Reading | % Overall Passing |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Shelton High School | 66.37% | 80.22% | 52.99% |
| Hernandez High School | 65.99% | 80.74% | 53.20% |
| Wilson High School | 65.68% | 81.32% | 53.51% |
| Huang High School | 66.75% | 80.86% | 53.53% |
| Cabrera High School | 66.06% | 81.22% | 53.54% |

**Key Trends**

1. **Inverse Relationship Between Spending and Academic Performance**  
   Schools with lower per-student spending (below $585) demonstrate significantly higher performance, with an average overall passing rate of 90.37%. In contrast, schools in the "$645-680" spending range have a much lower passing rate of 53.53%.
2. **Decline in Passing Rates with Increased Spending**  
   As spending per student increases, passing rates for both math and reading decline. The "<$585" category shows 93.46% passing math, compared to just 66.16% in the "$645-680" category, indicating that higher spending does not necessarily correlate with better academic outcomes.

**Conclusion**  
The analysis challenges the notion that increased financial resources directly lead to improved academic outcomes. Instead, factors such as resource allocation efficiency, teaching quality, and student engagement appear more influential. A strategic approach to educational funding that prioritizes these elements may better enhance student achievement.