**Data Memo**

**Does Money Lead to Success?**

Public Elementary-Secondary schools in New York, Alaska, New Jersey, Connecticut, and the District of Columbia spend the highest per pupil, while schools in Utah and Idaho spend the least per pupil. Does the amount of spending per pupil affect students’ academic performance? This story will examine how spending of public school systems may be placing students at a disadvantage for academic success, or may be giving them a boost. Through examining test scores by state, this story will examine any correlation between the states’ spending and students’ performance.

**Data Sources**: 2012 School System Finances Table report, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) National report, State ACT and SAT Scores for public schools

**What Processing Will the Data Need?** The data will need minimal processing.

**Who Will I Need to Talk To?** Public school district administrators who may give insight into the per pupil spending; representative of NAEP to ensure I understand their data

**Thinking-Task Questions:** Is there are correlation between per pupil spending and academic performance? How does performance change over time? Are there other areas of spending that correlate with students’ performance (i.e. teachers’ salaries)?