



Louisiana Education Funding and the Southern Regional Average

- When school funding is discussed, officials often declare that the state of Louisiana's contribution to K-12 education is above the southern regional average. (SLIDE 1)
- The term "southern regional average" refers to the average per pupil funding in 16 states as calculated by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).
- SREB's average, however, is not appropriate for comparing states to one another. The way that SREB calculates its average results in an average that is weighted by student. This means that the funding levels for large states are weighted more than the funding levels for small states.
- For example, Texas has 6 times as many students as Louisiana. The SREB average puts 6 times the emphasis on Texas' funding level as it does for Louisiana's average. In fact, Texas and Florida together have 40 percent of all students in SREB states. Thus, the funding levels in these two states have a tremendous effect on the average as calculated by SREB.
- When an unweighted average of state-level funding is calculated, Louisiana's state funding of K-12 education is below the southern regional average. (SLIDE 2)
- This same pattern is true for the southern regional average of local-level funding for K-12 education – only the pattern is reversed. Local funding in Louisiana is below the average calculated by SREB, which is weighted by student. However, when the unweighted average is calculated, local-level funding in Louisiana is above the southern regional average. (SLIDES 3 and 4)

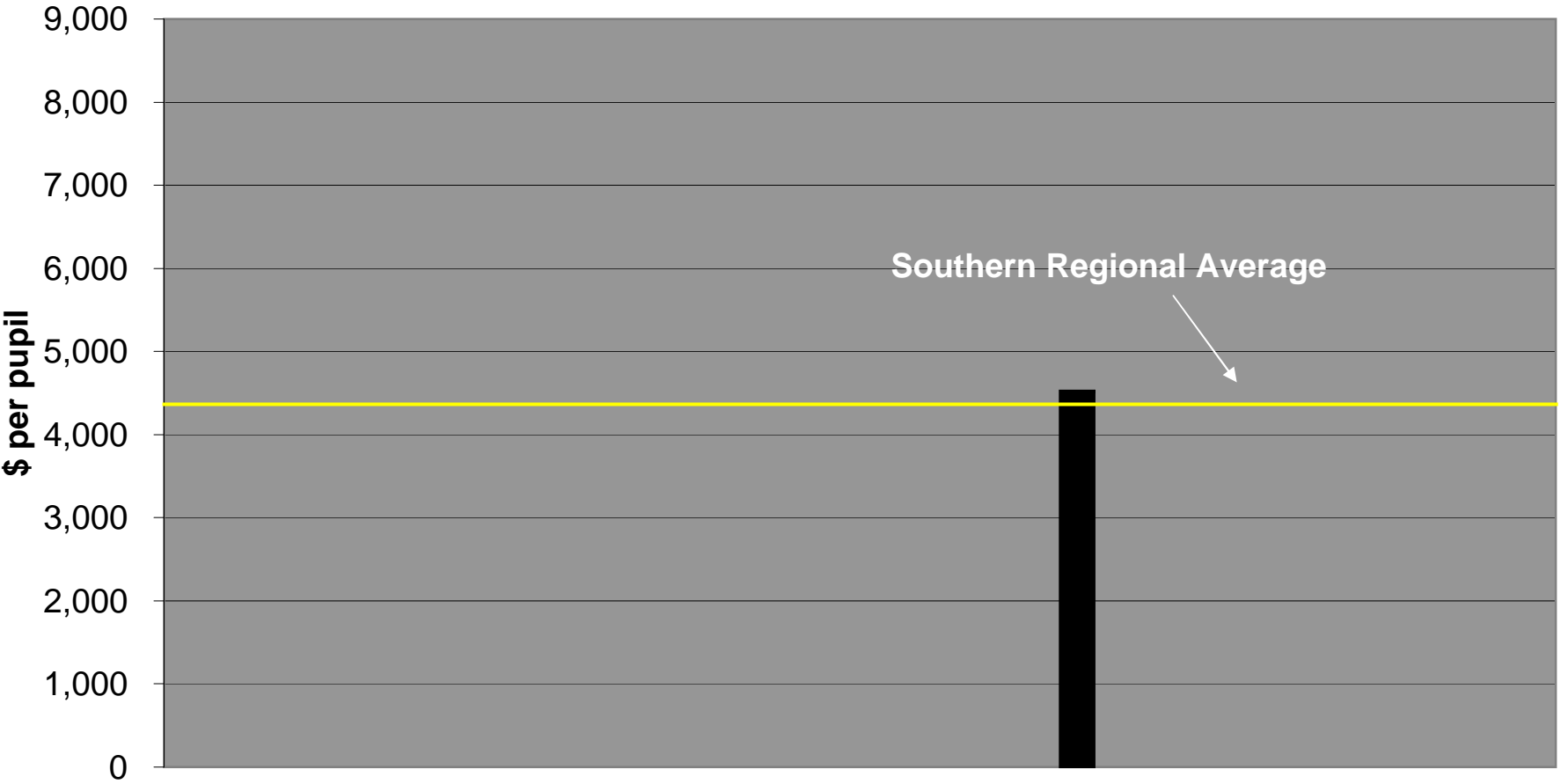
Methodological Note:

SREB calculates the southern regional average (for state-level funding in this case) as follows: (1) sum all state-level funding for education for all SREB states; (2) sum Average Daily Attendance for all SREB states; (3) divide the results from step 1 by the results from step 2.

The Cowen Institute calculated the southern regional average (for state-level funding in this case) as follows: (1) divide the amount of state funding for a given state by the Average Daily Attendance for that state to get an average per pupil funding for that state; repeat for every SREB state; (2) average the per pupil funding levels derived in step 1.



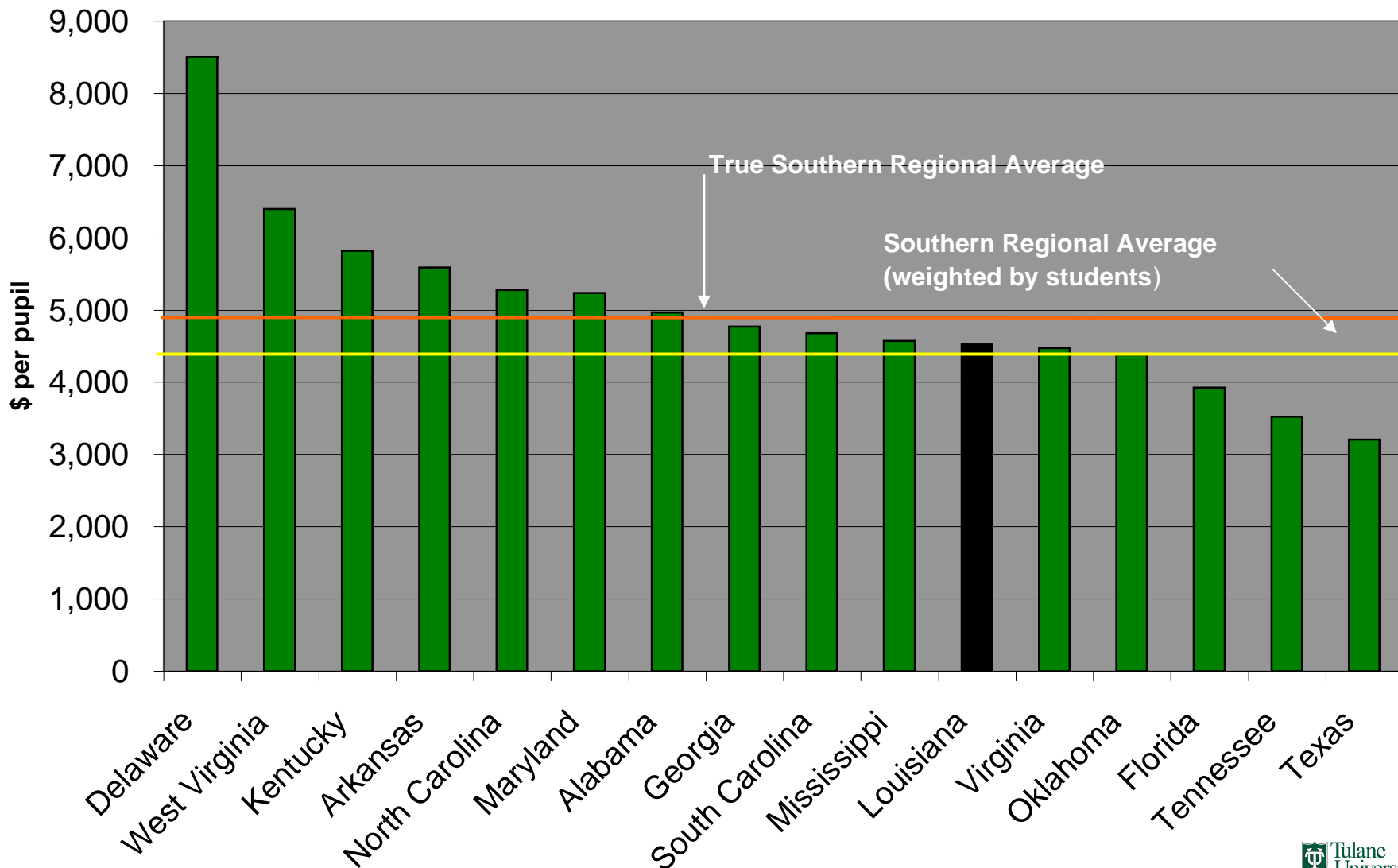
State Funding for K-12 Education



Louisiana

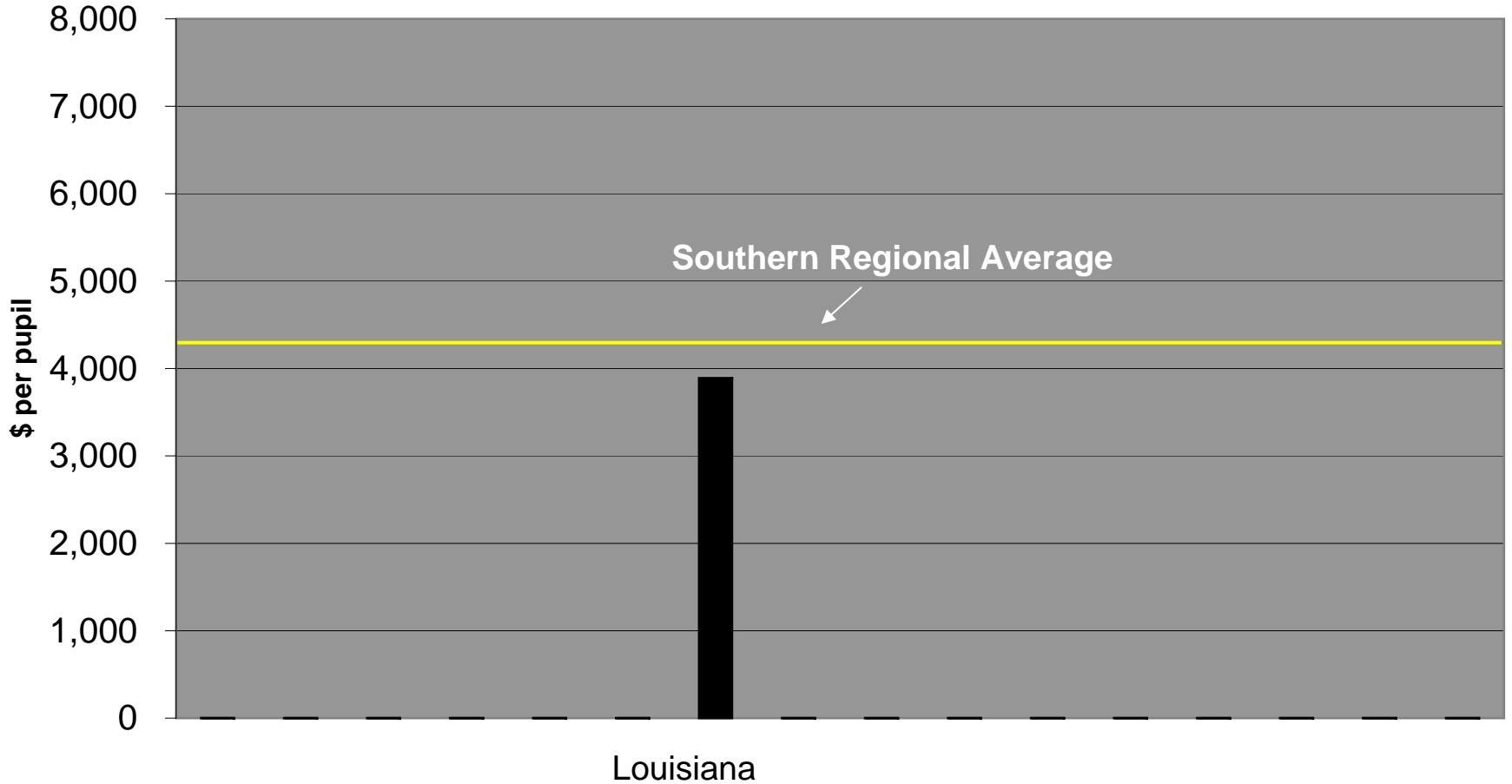
Source: Southern Regional Education Board, *Elementary and Secondary Education Funding*, Feb. 2010

State Funding for K-12 Education



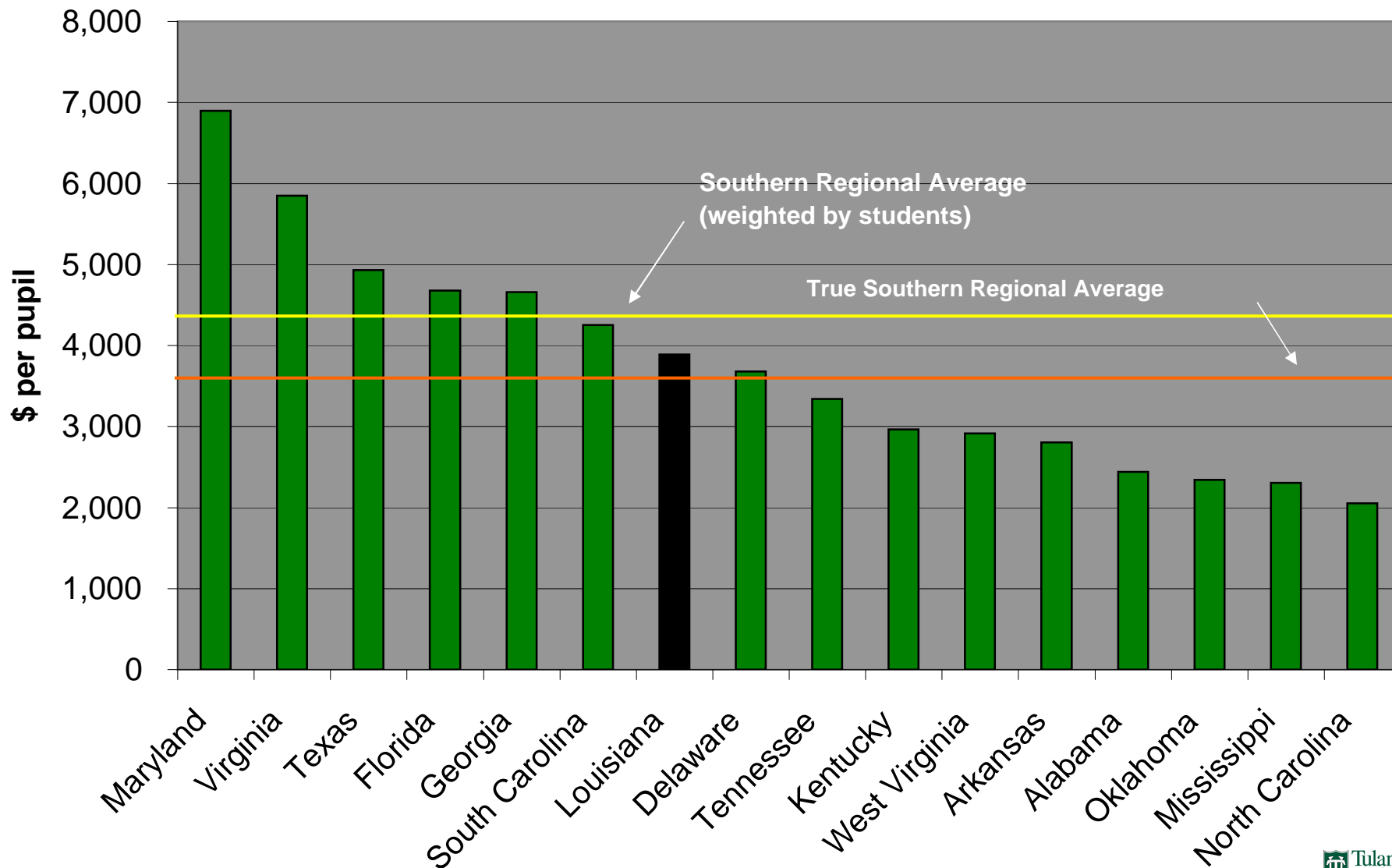
Source: Southern Regional Education Board, *Elementary and Secondary Education Funding*, Feb. 2010

Local Funding for K-12 Education



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