Fiscal Year 2026 Per Pupil Spending

House Committee on Ways and Means

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The Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) is a nonpartisan legislative office dedicated to producing unbiased fiscal analysis – this presentation is meant to provide information for legislative consideration, not to provide policy recommendations

Outline

- Distribution of per (weighted) pupil spending in fiscal year 2026
- Per (weighted) pupil spending and district characteristics

There Are Multiple Inputs That Impact the Calculation of Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending

- "**Per pupil spending**" is a technical term that is defined as Education Spending divided by Long-Term Weighted Average Daily Membership (LTWADM)
  - **LTWADM** is the total weighted pupil count
    - This captures total number of students as well as their weighting categories
    - In fiscal year 2026, Vermont had a total LTWADM of 142,564
  - **Education spending** is a school district's total budget minus its offsetting revenues
    - In fiscal year 2026, $1.99 billion was appropriated for the sum of all education spending, referred to as the "education payment"
- Because of multiple inputs, higher per (weighted) pupil spending could be a function of higher education spending, lower LTWADM, or both

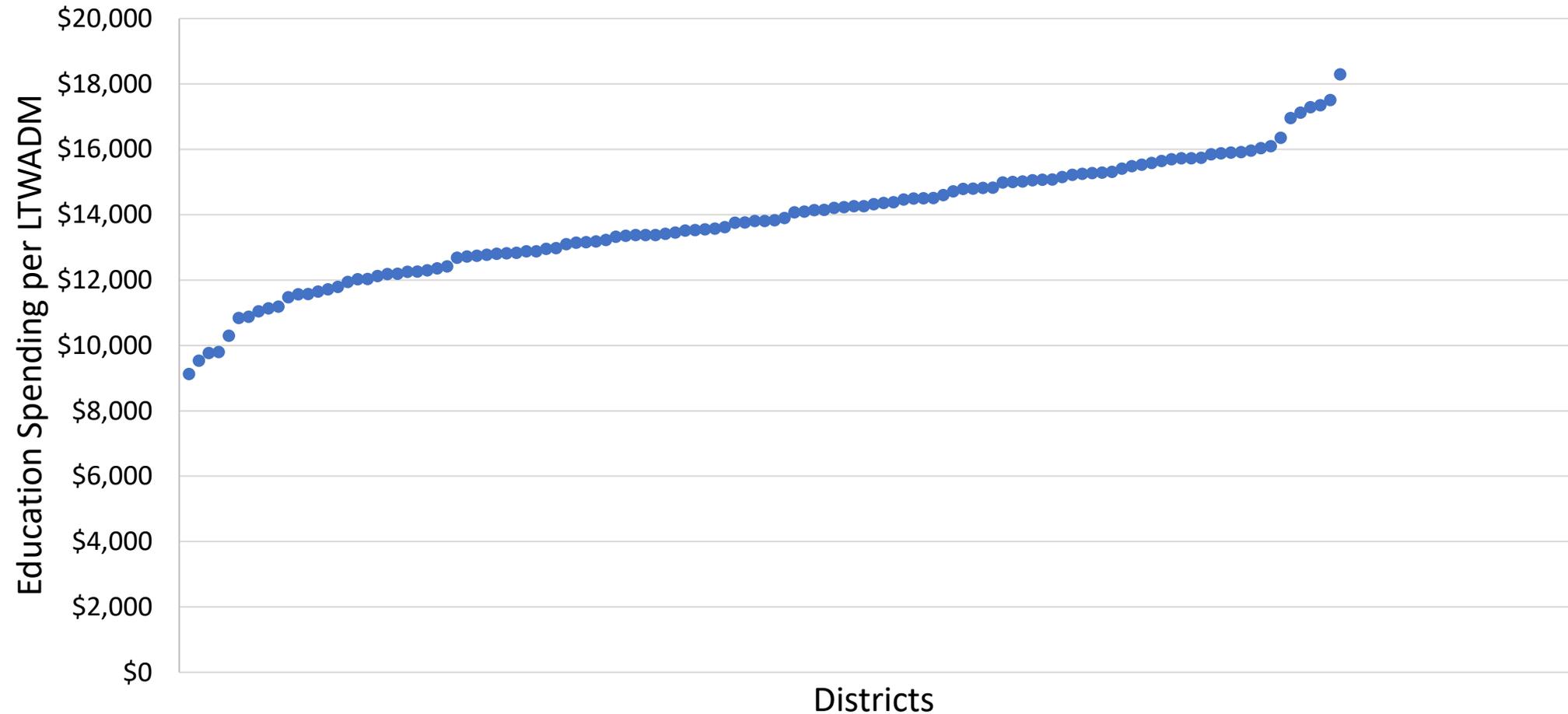# Distribution of Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending in Fiscal Year 2026

Fiscal Year 2026 Per Pupil Spending

- Statute requires the December 1 letter to include the range of per (weighted) pupil spending:
    - The December 1 letter stated: *"For the current 2025-2026 school year (FY26), the range of per (weighted) pupil spending among districts that operate at least one school is $10,846.46 to $19,089.92"*

Fiscal Year 2026 District Education Spending Per Weighted Pupil

Distribution of Fiscal Year 2026 District Education Spending per Weighted Pupil
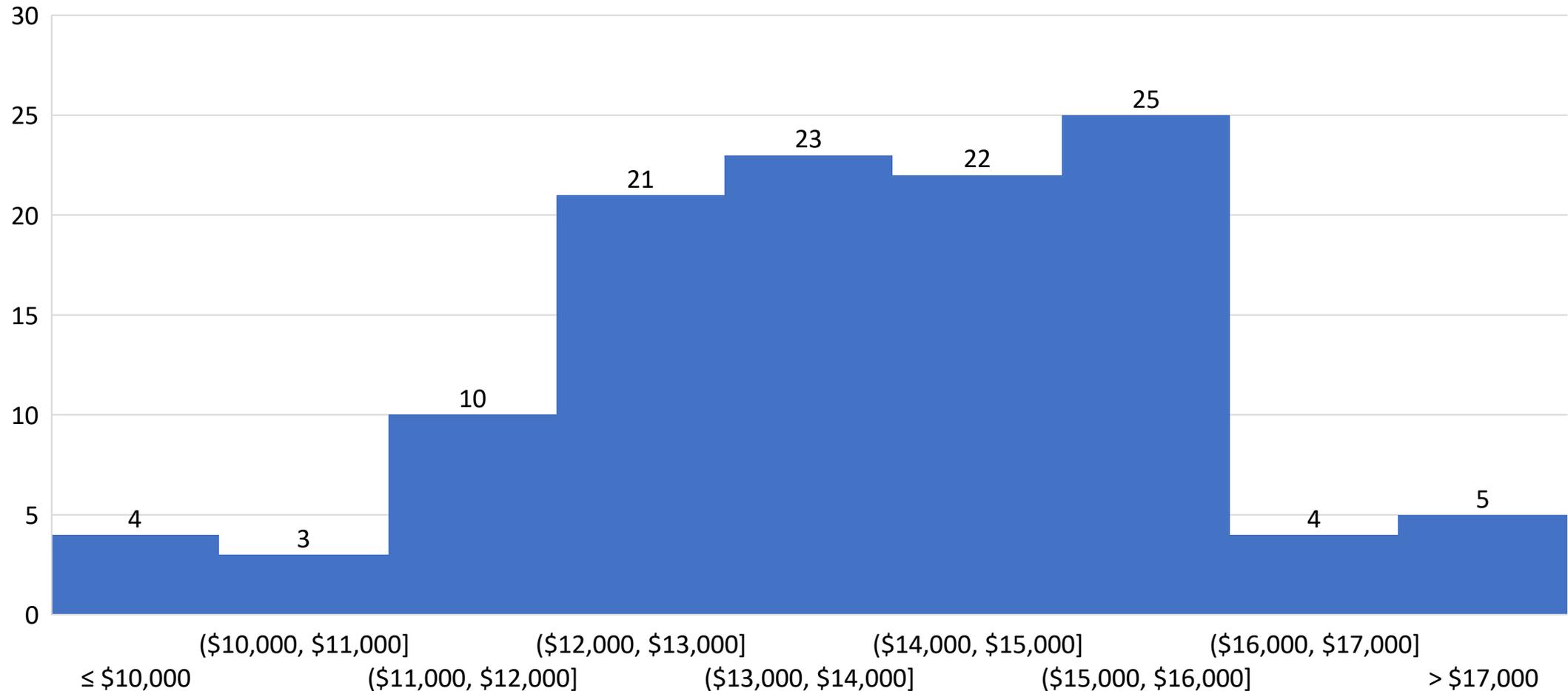
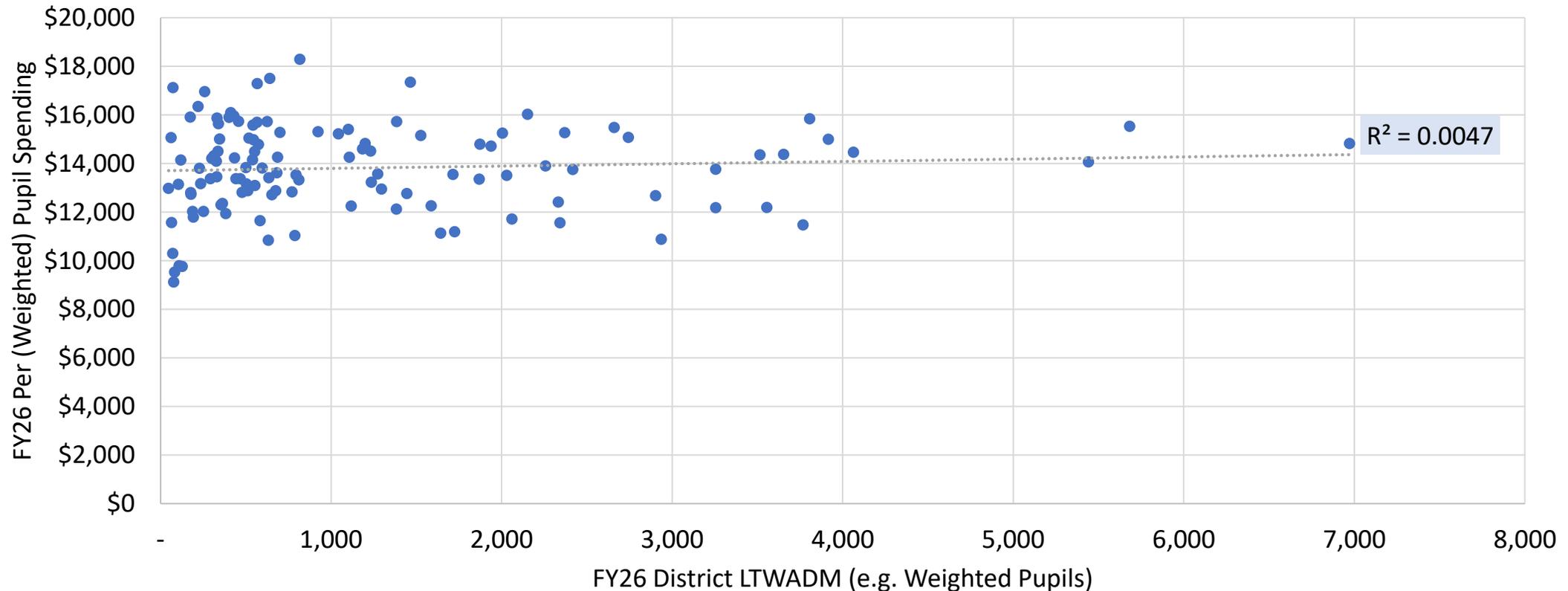# Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending and District Characteristics

Interpreting Relationships

- R^2 is a measure describing the "goodness of fit" of a model
  - R^2 ranges from 0 to 1
  - An R^2 of 0 means that none of the variation can be explained by the relationship
  - An R^2 of 1 means that all of the variation can be explained by the relationship
- Correlation (or lack thereof) is not causation
  - Correlation speaks to the existence of a relationship (or lack there of), but does not explain *why* that relationship does or does not exist
  - No noteable relationship between district characteristics and per pupil spending does not mean those characteristics *are not* impacting district spending. It also doesn't mean those characteristics *are* impacting spending or are the only/primary/significant impact on spending.

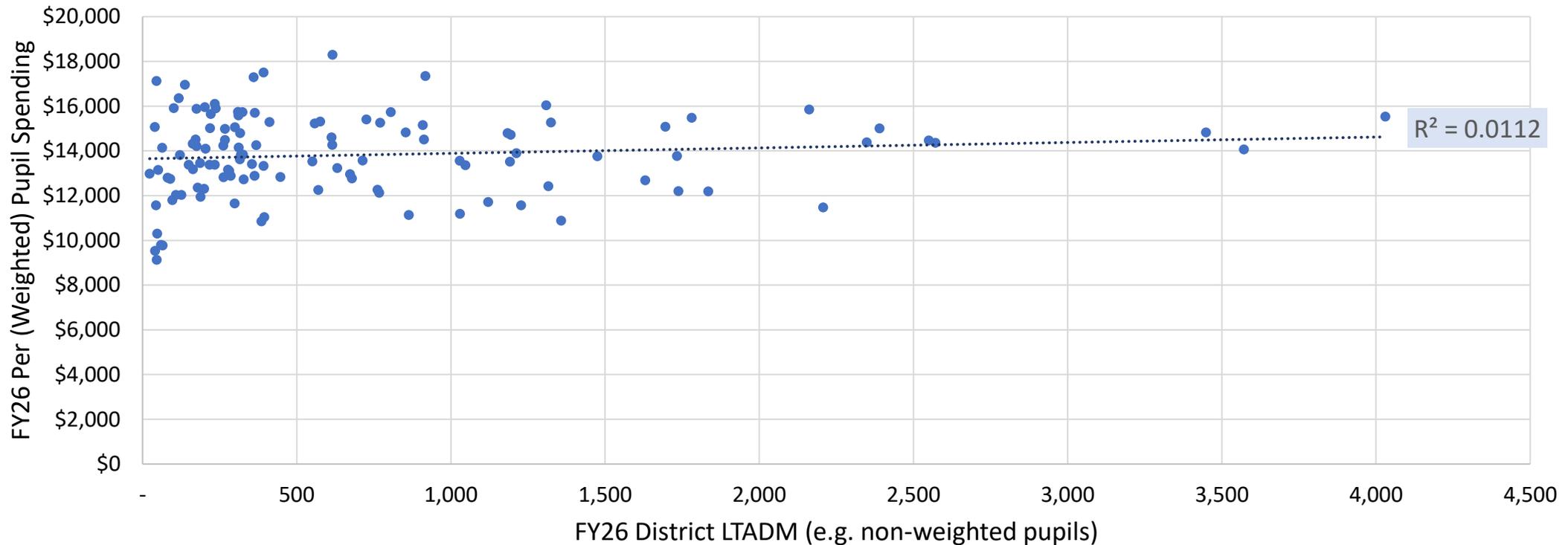# Fiscal Year 2026 Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending by District LTWADM

Notes:
R^2 is a measure describing the "goodness of fit" of a model. R^2 ranges from 0 to 1. An R^2 of 0 means that none of the variation can be explained by the relationship. An R^2 of 1 means that all of the variation can be explained by the relationship.

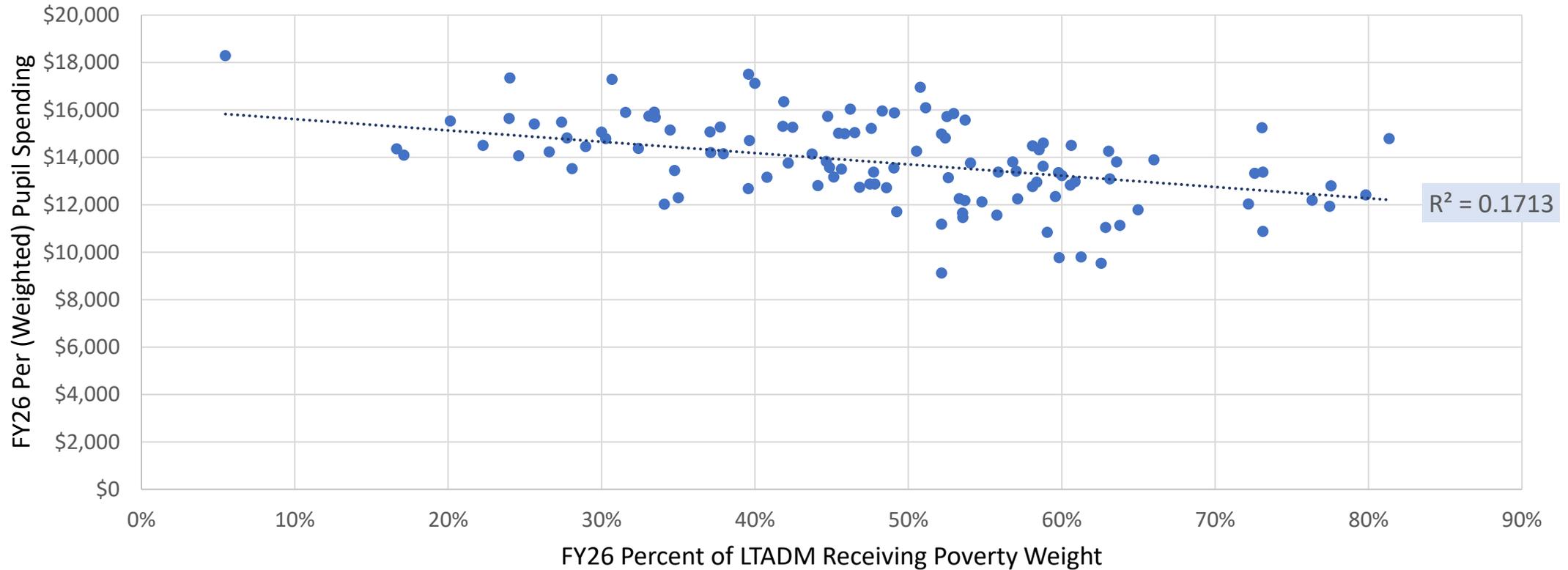# Fiscal Year 2026 Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending by District LTADM

Notes:
R^2 is a measure describing the "goodness of fit" of a model. R^2 ranges from 0 to 1. An R^2 of 0 means that none of the variation can be explained by the relationship. An R^2 of 1 means that all of the variation can be explained by the relationship.

# Fiscal Year 2026 Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending by District Poverty Level

Notes:
(1) Unsuppressed data has been used to calculate trendline. Districts with suppressed data are not appearing on the chart.
(2) R^2 is a measure describing the "goodness of fit" of a model. R^2 ranges from 0 to 1. An R^2 of 0 means that none of the variation can be explained by the relationship. An R^2 of 1 means that all of the variation can be explained by the relationship.

Fiscal Year 2026 Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending by Fiscal Year 2025 Per (Weighted) Pupil Spending
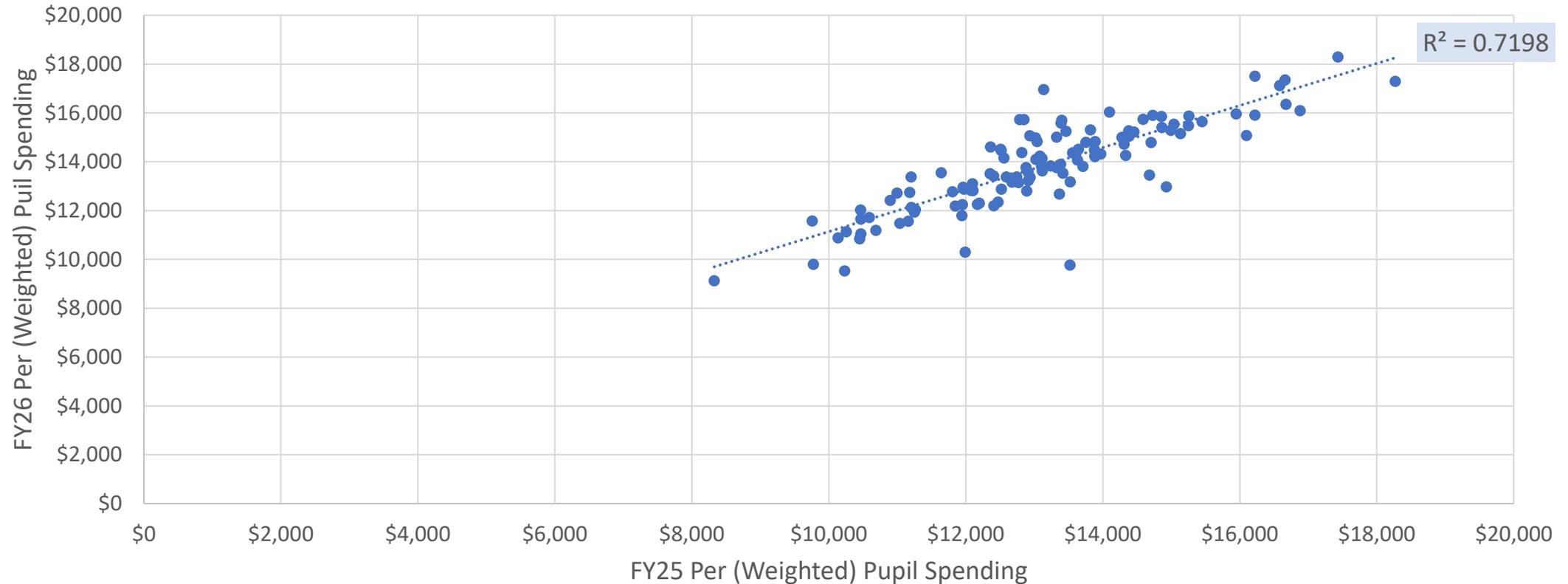
Notes:

R² is a measure describing the "goodness of fit" of a model. R² ranges from 0 to 1. An R² of 0 means that none of the variation can be explained by the relationship. An R² of 1 means that all of the variation can be explained by the relationship.

Questions?