



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

UPSFF Working Group

Meeting Notes

Sept. 10, 2020, 3-5 p.m.

- Introductions and roll call
- Discussion about how the working group will make recommendations. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will influence the group's two-year recommendations. Need to take into account enrollment trends when the group makes recommendation.
- Review of the At-Risk Student Need slides that were updated. A new version of the slides is available on the website. No material changes were made to the recommendations made to the DME or other options to refine the UPSFF, but some of the graphics did change. Over-age, Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), and students with multiple risk factors underperform non-at-risk students.
- Review and discussion of the at-risk options that were presented at the last meeting.
 - Discussion about changing the at-risk definition to include more students:
 - Undocumented students who may qualify for at-risk, but are not captured in the definition.
 - Use free and reduced-price meals counts, but some schools that use community eligibility do not collect this information. A large percentage of students are considered free and reduced lunch so it might create a very broad definition for at-risk. Might be better to just raise the foundation weight.
 - Making Alternative students eligible for at-risk funding. The intent of the alternative student weight is to be the high school weight plus the at-risk weight. However, sometimes the at-risk weight is increased without a similar increase to the alternative weight.
 - Parenting students
 - Students who are children of incarcerated parents
 - Intervening at earlier grades: Can we build up funding in the early years to address the conditions that would identify students as at-risk later on?
- Review and discussion of the At-Risk Concentration study. At-risk concentration is different from at-risk need because we are discussing a school-level characteristic instead of student-level characteristics. This is different from the majority of the weights in the existing UPSFF, which generally funds LEAs based on student-level characteristics. The at-risk concentration part of the study looks at the possible options for introducing such a weight.
 - For both Math and ELA, as the concentration level of the school increases, the school tends to underperform schools with lower concentration levels.
 - Review of how other states introduce funding that is similar to at-risk concentrations. There is a wide range of thresholds that other states are

using to fund at-risk concentrations in schools and this study does not recommend a specific threshold. There is a risk of implementing a threshold where a school could lose out on funding if they miss the threshold by a few students. This is harder for charter schools because they are funded based on the enrollment audit.

- Review and discussion of methods recommended in the study for funding at-risk concentration. The chart on slide 27 shows the count of schools by concentration range.
- Discussion about other methods to fund schools, outside of the UPSFF Working Groups recommendations. There may be other options, such as grants, that could be more impactful if utilized. This would also be helpful to measure effectiveness of the funding.
 - Discussion about how to better measure effectiveness by looking at different factors (i.e., graduation rates, growth on PARCC, etc.). Colorado and Massachusetts have done work in this area.
- Public Comment period
 - Valerie Jablow – DCPS parent. Want to take into account student mobility. Getting kids in after the count day from other DCPS schools and charters. These students are sometimes grade-levels below where they are supposed to be. This puts pressure on the receiving schools because money does not follow the student. Consider something in the recommendations, like a way to track students. Mobility throughout the school year is correlated to lower outcomes. Schools that have high mobility struggle to have adequate resources to deal with that. Real problem, not for all schools, but for a subset of them. Our funding systems seem to ignore that.
 - The working group discussed this comment. Mobility is also hard for charter schools because there is no funding after enrollment count day. A recommendation to have this work revisited could be included by this working group.
 - Jessica Sutter – Ward 6 State Board of Education representative. Identify funding factors prior to high school to mitigate factors that lead to overage students. Is there an opportunity to intervene younger? What would the trade-offs be? Want to make sure we get students to high school. We have done this well with early childhood and would love to see the group discuss the cost/benefits for intervening at a younger age.
 - The working group discussed this comment. It would be helpful to know when students become overage. This would help to figure out where in the earlier grades we need more intervention.