

## Weighted Staffing Standards (WSS)/ School Funding Workgroup -- Meeting Notes 2021-22 School Year

Meeting Date: November 19, 2020, 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Meeting via “Teams”

Attendees: JoLynn Berge, Linda Sebring, Sara Bonneville, Eric Anderson, Erica Ayer, Diane DeBacker, Jeff Clark, Clover Codd, Shannon Conner, Laura Davis Brown, Eric Esbenshade, Dedy Fauntleroy, Farah Thaxton, Rina Geoghagan, Stanley Jaskot, Sara Mirabueno, Debbie Nelsen, Sheila Redick, Michael Stone, Jennifer Matter

### Agenda:

1. Equity Tiering – share simulation of proposed changes – Eric A
  - Substitute African American males as a factor (in place of “FRL+SoC”)
  - Change definition of WSS Students of Color to SoC FFEJ + Multiracial
2. Revised scenarios on Assistant Principal “Option 3”, per PASS member requests
  - Specific scenario requests to be provided by PASS members in WSS workgroup
3. Models of what 25% shift to Equity Tier calc for Equity Tier allocations
4. Potential shift to Tiering rather than Poverty for K-3 teacher allocations
5. Potential for Reductions in School Funding for 21-22 Budget

Opening discussions about request from the School Board to have board member(s) as part of this workgroup. Subject was brought up by board members. This is a workgroup with goal to provide recommendations to superintendent and board. Does not fall under “open public meeting”. How to still maintain a “safe space” for comment and ideas? Ask that PASS to communicate how they feel about this idea to the board. Most comments were not in favor of including a board member at this level of the budget process, at least for now.

- (1) **Equity Tiering** – Present simulation of some of the suggestions for changes in Equity Tier methodology.

Looking at minimizing impacts on schools (e.g. the 2-year rolling, etc.) to keep schools from bouncing back and forth between tiers. For example, last year, 12 schools changed tiers.

Last year (base model) carried forward “ELA proficiency” (items 1 and 2) . This year, considering (3) replace “students of color + FRL” with “African American Males”, (4) replace “Historically Underserved Students” (federal 7) with “Students of Color FFEJ + Multiracial FFEJ Students”, and (5) including both (3) and (4). Look at results if these changes.

- (1) Remove “SBA ELA” proficiency
- (2) Carry forward “SBA ELA” proficiency component (students meeting standards). Following charts (in the handout) use this model

- (3) Replace “Students of Color that are FRL” with “African American Males”
- (4) Replace “Historically Underserve” with “Students of Color FFEJ & Multiracial FFEJ”. Noted that about half of Multiracial are FFEJ (Furthest from Educational Justice)
- (5) Change both

Charts in handout showed the number of schools that moved from one tier to another under each of these proposals. “Technical Appendix” contains details of technical issues. Cut points based on historical data (standard deviations) that may need to be updated.

Important to keep this evolving and keep aligned to board strategic plan. Continue to talk about as a district. This fixes two of the things that were not in alignment. Does the group want to move forward with recommending these changes to Tiering model to the Superintendent and Board?

Comments/Discussion: Are there any schools that drop out of Tier 1 or Tier 2? Answer: in last slide, once school left Tier 1 (moved to Tier 2) and one school left Tier 2. Discussion about volunteering (in the past) to participate in a workgroup that discusses the use of standardized testing or not, reconsidering value and impact to students. Book being read in Cabinet discusses standardized testing and racial impacts. Discuss criteria for standard deviation measure for setting Tiering levels and should update be looked at. Comments about small schools losing in the process of using same Tiering method for all schools. Addressed in tiering calculation by using both counts and percentage of these students balances the absolute size with the proportion of students in these categories as a measure of Equity needs for the schools.

Question asked again if we (as a group) want to go forward with this proposed change? This seems like one of those things that may move us in the direction, importance and centering as in the Strategic Plan.

Comment that gentrification is shifting populations (in South East region), and this will show impact in Tiering.

- (2) **Revised Scenarios for Assistant Principal (A/P) allocation** – review of four scenarios from last meeting. Review current model cut points. Scenario 1 shows a model where schools in Tier 1 and 2 get a lower cut point in that model.

Question about possibility of using different cut points for elementary -vs- secondary schools. What would this look like? Are middle schools losing any FTE under these scenarios? (‘No’ in Scenario 1, 1.0 in scenario 2 and -0- again in scenario 3)

Belief expressed that this (current) model was developed in consideration of certificated evaluations; burden on school administrative staff for evaluations has changed. Maybe we are not using the right criteria to calculate this (Assistant Principal allocations). Maybe we should be looking at other measures. Wonder about special education in smaller schools. When we went to this model, it was right at the beginning of T-PEP; for (several) reasons, we should talk about

demographics of students and that is what should drive Assistant Principals. Further discussions on needs of students and need to support and nurture staff as criteria for Assistant Principals.

Discussion of Scenario 4, using the former weighted student formula. Is it consensus of group that evaluations have changed enough that group wants to move off of staff measure and go toward a student count measure for assigning Assistant Principals? Seems to be agreement to move away from staff-based measure to a student-count measure for allocating assistant principals. Is there any way to add staff, so nobody loses staff? (per JoLynn Berge, not likely at this time that funding can be increased to enrich formula and add assistant principals). Might be better to stay with current model to keep stability. Can we look at other scenarios people in PASS suggest? Look at with different cut points. Want to be careful to look at staff as more than just evaluations. Want to look at changes at different schools. Different version of scenario 4 to align to strategic plan and use equity tiering (need input as to what that would look like). Move the cut points to end up -0- change. Budget office will send out an amended Scenario 4 that results in -0- change in total # of A/P's, adjusting set points until same number of A/Ps are calculated by this formula (input requested as to which set-points should be relaxed, toward the 0.5 A/P or the 3.0 A/P end).

Written comments on this topic:

- I think something feels arbitrary when you can see that there is a number flux of what counts as "tier 1" or "tier 2" from one data model compared to the next. In one model we have 25 schools that need extra attention- in the other we have 20.

- Are we tiering small schools with the same criteria as traditional schools?

- This still based on how many certificated staff--correct? Believe all MS and HS need an AP. And all elementary schools that serve primarily students FFEJ or significant numbers of SPED programs should have 1.0 AP

- In terms of the evaluation demands and the frequency of comprehensive years, we have to consider that some schools have a larger compliment of comprehensives - there are still needs for ongoing support, PD, check in, etc

(3) **Models of what 25% shift to Equity Tier calc for Equity Dollar allocations –**

Discussion of models to shift Equity Dollars calculation to data from Equity Tiering. Moved on to item 5.

(4) **Potential shift to Tiering rather than Poverty for K-3 teacher allocations –**

Discuss move to Tiering instead of Poverty for K-3 teacher ratios. Moved on to item 5.

(5) **Potential for Reductions in School Funding for 21-22 Budget –**

Review of board presentation showing structural deficit. Revenues do not match expenditures. Every year have to cut because cannot pay for everything district is currently funding. Slide shows \$48 million gap for 2021-22 that still needs to be covered after one-time funding options are applied. Have been saving in the past to cover prior years, but have mostly used all the savings. State inflationary factor does not keep pace with spending. Using one-time options to cover what they can. Board does not want to reduce school funding for next year. That may not be an option in the future. Do WSS committee members want to be part of the conversation, provide recommendations, to the board on reductions to school funding if they have to go there? If we use all of our Economic Stabilization Fund to solve 2021-22, there is no more funds for future years. Is it better to take a steep cliff in two years, or to ramp it down over 2-3 years in a more gradual process? If revenues are not going up, then expenditures have to go down, either gradually over time or more sharply if pushed out to future years.

Where would cuts come from? Slide shows some alternatives. Board does not want to reduce WSS. Board has picked areas for focus for participatory budget activities (slide 8)

(Special programs and homeless student supports, Black and American Indian studies, Restorative Justice, counseling support, staff of color hiring and retention, Dual Language programs, Family support and social work, anti-racist and bias professional development, nutrition services, and improved technology use in finance planning and design), and areas for review (slide 11)

(Strategic Plan, Highly Capable program, curriculum adoption, security operations, Schools and Continuous Improvement, special education instructional assistants, reduction in reserves, and eligible transfers from Capital Fund).

Detail on these areas on succeeding slides.

Comments indicate group would like to participate in any discussions on funding cuts that would affect WSS and school funding. . Belief that step-down approach, dealing with part in 20-21 and then the rest in 21-22 is the best option for the district.

Discussion of better time to meet. Friday morning mentioned.

Draft Budget Development Calendar was included in the slide presentation.

Topics for next month.

- Review and decide about Equity Tiering changes
- A/P scenario 4 ... re-work for -0- change
- A/P scenario 4 with different student counts & weights
- Shift to Tiering measure for Equity Dollar allocations.
- Shift to Tiering for K-3 teacher allocations
- Group's decision on possibly proposing reductions to WSS for future years.

Meeting adjourned 4:56