

**Meeting Notes**  
**Weighted Staffing Standards (WSS)/ School Funding Workgroup**  
**2022-23 School Year WSS Development**

Meeting Date: September 23, 2021, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Meeting via “Teams”

Workgroup Members:

JoLynn Berge, Ashley Davies, Linda Sebring, Sara Bonneville,  
Treena Sterk, Michael Stone, Eric Anderson, Laura Davis Brown, Anthony Ruby, Concie Pedroza,  
Dedy Fauntleroy, Rina Geoghagan, Gerrit Kischner, Keven Wynkoop, Shannon Conner,  
Rainey Hartford Swan, Jennifer Matter

Attendees:

Eric Anderson, JoLynn Berge, Sara Bonneville, Ashley Davies, Laura Davis Brown, Jennifer Matter,  
Gerrit Kischner, Anthony Ruby, Linda Sebring, Treena Sterk, Keven Wynkoop, Rainey Swan, Shannon  
Conner, Dedy Fauntleroy, Rina Geoghagan, Michael Stone, Concie Pedroza

Agenda:

1. Norm setting
2. Review purpose and function of this workgroup
3. Identify areas of focus
4. Small schools/enrollment policy
5. School changes to allocated staff work days/year
6. Equity Tiering

Opening discussions: JoLynn Berge introduced Ashley Davies as someone that will be working with her to conduct these meetings, and asked participants to introduce themselves. Ashley Davies went over the agenda items.

- (1) **Norm Setting** – review of Norms as provided by Ashley Davies on power point presentation. She will send this info to the share point site. Suggest at top of next meeting to review norms (at top of each meeting).
- (2) **Review purpose/function** – Discussion of purpose and function of this group. Committee (workgroup) set up quite some time ago, ever since there has been a WSS (1995?). This workgroup reviews and considers the funding of schools though the WSS model. Major component of district budget, and major use of state and local funding. Equity Tiering being used to apply equity lens to these discussions. This group reviews the Equity Tiering model.

What this group is not: WSS workgroup is not involved with position classifications or other bargaining/renegotiation issues. WSS workgroup does not consider full district budget, only the schools funding model; there are other avenues for those discussions.

Discussion: How is this different from “rearranging the deck chairs”, if cannot discuss shifting resources from other parts of the district budget? Some thoughts: We can recommend no cuts

to WSS if we choose. Where group has been successful has been in the Equity Tiering and other equity measures. There are policy decisions under WSS that we can influence. One thought on something that could be addressed is discrepancy between Elementary and Secondary Equity Dollar rates based on FRL numbers. Can we have influence on estimating budget in areas shown to be underspent? Will go over the carryforward process. Suggested that we need to move away from saying "PASS approved" the WSS decisions/process, rather say we (PASS) had input into the process. Because they do not approve of the WSS, of "underfunding" schools. Having been on both sides (in a school and on the central/admin side), recognize the difficulty and significance of this job, and how small 0.5 changes can have impact on master schedules. "This isn't the fun committee."

Additional comments. Thrilled to take the two-and-a-half years of principal comments and bring them to this committee. Add on to discussion/comments on influence on policy decisions, have impact on how [resources] are allocated and how enrollment drives different outcomes. Enrollment policy has ability to be changed. Policies are set because we set them. Hope this gives you hope that we hear you.

**(3) Areas of focus –** From discussions with district staff these are areas suggested for focus of WSS workgroup:

- Rounding Rules
- Small Schools (all areas: Elem Middle HS and K8's)
- K-8 truncations (reduce grade-levels served)
- School Choice and Enrollment Policies – explore current policies and address impacts that choice policy has on some of our schools, especially really small schools

Discussions: wondered about other alternative models such as IB, language immersion, etc. What gets mitigated [added to basic model]. Consider what gets funded to support choice and other programs. With virtual teaching, it may not be necessary to have teachers in each school when students from several different schools could be taking classes in a subject from a single teacher. Can we look at Special Ed staffing and programs, and comparisons with other districts? These are [special ed] issues in the contract and are bargained; also there is a special education task force looking into these issues. We can share information on special ed that has been compiled. Around large/small schools, keeping an eye on how large schools function differently, not just small schools. Will we be considering the non-traditional schools also in the discussions of small schools and what gets mitigated? [short answer] Yes. Will capacity issues be considered in discussions of truncating K-8 schools? [short answer] Yes.

**(4) Small Schools/enrollment policy –** with small schools in particular, schools under 300, under 250, under 200. Will provide list of schools with small enrollment, building capacity, list of schools that are under-utilized. Small schools that may be located close together.

Related to school choice, topics that have come up: option schools and school choice, set at certain sizes and fill them to that limit. Non choice schools have guaranteed entry if live in the area. Option and choice size limits are tied to prior year staffing. In August option school seats become available and are filled, which drastically impacts neighborhood schools.

Side comment on rounding rules and AAFTE in WSS.

Mitigations on large vs small schools: used to offset the fact that core staffing does not really change for larger schools. What is in model, what is mitigated [enhanced]?

Question about special ed programs, and cost analysis of moving programs to larger, more comprehensive schools.

All are components of keeping a building open. Virtual remote staffing model intersection with WSS funding.

Does this group have the ability to [recommend big changes] or suggest closure or truncation only? Is this for this year [2022-23] or the following year? This group can make recommendations for both this year and the following year, emphasizing that this is where the district needs to go. How much are you talking about in savings? Is this a \$500,000 conversation or is this a \$8,000,000 conversation.

SEL teachers, hard to find teachers with right abilities. Where are the “bleeds” in Spec Ed; can we get data on where the money is going? We can get Special Ed to address program placement.

- (5) **School changes to allocated staff work days/year** – may be an issue for WSS or it may not be for the WSS. Issue came up when it was discovered that an elementary school had staffed a 260 day secretary. Why did that school feel they needed a 260 day employee? Equity issue where schools that have more resources can choose to pay people more with those resources where other schools do not have that ability.

If we go down this path, will we be micromanaging when schools choose to use the “cheaper” option. Discussion of staffing, what requires waivers, what changes (counselor to social worker) do not affect dollars available in budget. Do not see the problem with a school buying up their staff positions (220 day to 260 day), and do not support putting this through the waiver process (it is a nightmare).

- (6) **Equity Tiering** – Eric Anderson ran through presentation on Equity Tiering and history of the development of the tool as a way to identify/prioritize schools that may want to protect during times of budget reductions. It is more of a norming tool, not a standard. Using a 2-year rolling average to minimize schools bouncing back and forth between tiers. 6 student groups and 3 measurements for each group. [presentation is available on share point site for WSS workgroup]. Questions about how these tiers really serve kids. There are students furthest from educational justice in Tier 4 as well as Tiers 1, 2 and 3. We can look at the weighting to adjust tiering. There are places in the formula where we could use different data points [other than poverty alone]. How do we drive the right kinds of programming to those (Tier 4) schools that do not have other resources available to them? How do we fund the transition where schools have built programs around certain needs?

Discussion on staffing why some schools need and AP although the number of staff do not supply them with one. Why not just look by race? Should stay aligned with strategic plan; we can wait race factors more in the Tiering calculations. Specifically Black boys/men instead of students of colour measurement.

Noted that equity dollars allocated based on Free and Reduced Lunch students (FRL) [measure of poverty). There is a large difference between the rate paid per FRL pupil for Elementary grades compared to for Secondary grades.

Which students counted as “students of colour” connected to what is input on the enrollment forms.

**Topics (materials) for next month:**

- Rounding rules at elementary – gather information on what various changes would look like
- Small schools – what is getting mitigated, who is getting mitigated, what is cost of mitigation
- Small schools capacity, school choice
- K-8 data on small K-8’s
- Examples of schools with different sizes resources, \$ and staffing per pupils
- Special ed information
- Budget to actual numbers & what
- Review how AAFTE is calculated (broadly)

**Next Steps:**

- staff will be working on data requests, above.

Will look at these topics next week, and will see what the workgroup would like to continue. Where do you want to go with the conversation, all the way to making a recommendation on an issue? The direction that the district needs to go?

Comment about who should be this workgroup, and think about (additional?) representation, brining more people to the table. How to lay the groundwork in this budget process toward a different budget process looking toward the future. Thinking about 6-8 from PASS is a good number, for PASS to decide. Representation from all levels, everyone feeling represented. Will need to have separate conversation about a bigger change to funding formula. How many seats does SEA get?

Meeting adjourned 4:07

## Notes and comments from “chat”:

[1:59 PM]

1:59 PM Meeting started

[2:12 PM] Davies, Ashley E

Here are the norms for reference:

- Be prepared and come ready to engage.
- Separate your own personal feelings from what’s best for the organization and our commitment to students of color further from educational justice.
- Balance your participation - speak and listen.
- Be open to feedback and be willing to learn.
- Say it now, in the room. Avoid waiting until later to raise an issue.
- Look ahead to positive action and solutions.

[2:20 PM] Kischner, Gerrit

I need to step out for dismissal.

[2:38 PM] Davies, Ashley E

- Rounding Rules
- Small Schools
- K-8 Truncations
- School Choice & Enrollment Policy

[2:53 PM] Kischner, Gerrit

In elementary, it also used to round by grade level.

[2:59 PM] Wynkoop, Keven

Sorry, but I have to leave for deposition prep. Fun!

[3:04 PM] Davis Brown, Laura

Sorry I have to leave for a prior commitment. Excited to be a part if this process.

[3:28 PM] Berge, JoLynn D

We do actually use it for other funds outside of the WSS for allocation purposes, like strat plan, etc.

[3:29 PM] Kischner, Gerrit

it also plays into class size reduction measures, correct?

[3:31 PM] Berge, JoLynn D

Yes.

[3:39 PM] Jennifer Matter [WA] (Guest)

It makes me think we should potentially rename this tiering model. It's a misleading title.

[3:44 PM] Kischner, Gerrit

What portion of the WSS driven by the Equity Tiers?

[3:44 PM] Kischner, Gerrit  
?

[3:51 PM] Kischner, Gerrit  
At the elementary level, the per student FRL is so low that it can never drive staffing

[3:52 PM] Kischner, Gerrit  
Thank you, Linda!

[3:58 PM] Kischner, Gerrit  
Let's not lose track of Linda's point around tracking underspend -- if we are allocating money that can't be used, we should figure out why.

[3:59 PM] Pedroza, Concepcion  
Hi All - Just an observation, why are there no principals or APs that represent schools south of the ship canal bridge. This should be noted.

[3:59 PM] Anderson, Eric M  
Kischner, Gerrit Can several small schools pool their FRL dollars for a shared resource (e.g., coach)?

[4:01 PM] Wynkoop, Keven  
Pedroza, Concepcion We agree! PASS is putting out an application for WSS reps going forward to make sure we have effective representation of different schools.

[4:01 PM] Pedroza, Concepcion  
Is there representation on PASS Leadership: just a question?

[4:03 PM] Wynkoop, Keven  
Laura D-B just got promoted out of the PASS Board. We also had another south of the ship canal principal that was slated to be a component, but he just decided he couldn't continue.

[4:07 PM] Jennifer Matter [WA] (Guest)  
I need to go to my other meeting that started. Sara- please send me the meeting materials if you don't change the folder access to include external people.

[4:07 PM] Kischner, Gerrit  
Anderson, Eric M Elementary schools have not typically pooled FRL money. We have also usually conceived of it as intended for direct services to kids (not coaches).