

FSF Working Group: Meeting #2 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: August 4th, 2022

Meeting Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Members Present: Alan Ong, Charlie Huang, Chris Caruso, Constance Asiedu, Dia Bryant, Elizabeth (Liz) Haela, Gabrielle Cayo, Geneal Chacon, Greg Faulkner, Jan Atwell, Jasmine Gripper, Joanne Buckheit, Kaliris Salas Ramirez, Lara Lai, Marguerite Roza, Maria Villalobos, Mark Cannizzaro, Mary Vaccaro, Masis Sarkissian, Melessa Avery, Michael Athy, Paullette Healy, Randi Levine, Reana Akthar, Sam Weinberger, Santa Soriano Vazquez, Sheree Gibson, Tazin Azad, Ted Leather, Tom Sheppard

NYC Department of Education Staff Present: Emma Vadehra, Benjamin Schanback, Erin Gehant, Jermaine Robinson, Katherine Maro, Lawrence Pendergast, Nathaniel Styer, Rana Khan, Xavier Edwards

All presentations from the meeting are available on the NYC Department of Education website at:

<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/financial-data-and-reports>

1. Welcome

COO opened second meeting, and shares agenda, including a review of goals, introducing the elected Co-Chairs, and presentations from experts on the Fair Student Funding formula, the 2019 Task Force process and recommendations, and the national context.

2. Introduction of New Members

Facilitator (Erin Gehant) introduced and welcomed new members to the working group (WG).

3. Review of Goals and Norms

Facilitator reviewed goals of the working group: “Reviewing and making recommendations relating to the Fair Student Funding formula, including the categories, types of students, grade levels, and weights within the formula, in order to best meet the needs of students citywide, while keeping equity at the core of our work. Developing recommendations in time to inform the FY 2024 FSF formula.” Member noted that the scope of the work did not take into account the breadth of school funding inequities.

4. Introduction of Co-Chairs

Facilitator reviewed the process of electing Co-Chairs: individuals were nominated by WG members or self-nominated. Then, a Google poll was sent to working group members and the top two vote-getters were selected as Co-Chairs; Facilitator introduced Co-Chairs, Jasmine Gripper, Executive Director of Alliance for Quality Education and Dia Bryant, Executive Director of Education Trust-New York.

5. Presentations

The WG then heard presentations from three individuals, followed by discussion:

Randi Levine of Advocates for Children of New York provided overview of the 2019 Fair Student Funding Task Force. Randi had previously participated in the Fair Student Funding Task Force that was convened in 2019. Randi shared that members were taught about the FSF formula and that participants can come into this work without much prior knowledge about the details of school finance. She shared some of the challenges of the previous task force including the large size of the group and that it was difficult to

come to consensus. Further, she shared that the group was able to identify new weights, but not actual funding amounts or where the funding should be shifted away from to fund the newly identified weights. Randi discussed the reports and the areas where the task force wanted to add weights. Randi then provided an opportunity for questions from WG Members.

Rana Khan of NYC Department of Education shared overview of the Fair Student Funding Formula, including what FSF funds can be used for in schools, as well as a review of services that are funded outside of FSF (e.g., 3K and Pre-K programs, District 75 schools). Rana also shared historical context around FSF, including that prior to the adoption of FSF, school budgets, aside from Federal Funding, were not set based on student need; and reviewed recent changes to the FSF formula has changed, most notably changes to AIS and Special Education Weights in SY12-13 and enhancements to ELL weights in SY16-17. Rana shared the current weights, including base weights by grade level and breakdowns for Academic Intervention, English Language Learners, Special Education and Portfolio High Schools. The full presentation Rana used can be found at (<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/financial-data-and-reports>).

Dr. Marguerite Roza shared analysis of Weighted Student Funding and how NYC's FSF formula compares in the national context. Marguerite shares that 30 – 40 districts across the United States also use a "Weighted Student Funding" approach. Marguerite shared specific attributes of some other districts' FSF formula that differ from NYC's (e.g., Boston Public Schools separate classifications of students with disabilities). Marguerite shared an analysis of how NYC's FSF formula actually impacts schools by poverty level, including that low-income students attend schools that receive, on average, \$1,186 more per pupil than schools that are attended by students who are not from low-income families. Marguerite reviewed some common implementation issues with WSF, such as ensuring schools have flexibility, identifying how much of the district's funding goes into the Formula, and addressing low enrollment schools, and ensuring principals have robust training to implement. The full presentation Marguerite used can be found at (<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/financial-data-and-reports>).

6. Overview of Member Feedback

Facilitator shared summary of the previous week's JamBoard activity and presents high-level themes from participant responses. Some of the key themes included an interest in engaging on a critical, equity-centered analysis of the work of the Working Group; acknowledgement that the FSF formula is only part of a much broader policy context; weights for special populations of students must be examined, including Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Students in Temporary Housing; modeling the impact of recommendations is critical and that this work must be transparent.

Based on member input, the Facilitator proposed the following Issue Area groups:

- a. Special Population Weights, including Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Academic Intervention Services: Top selection
- b. Poverty: Rates and Weights
- c. Meeting the Diverse Needs of All NYC Public Schools second selection
- d. Portfolio Weights
- e. Public Engagements

Participants were asked to follow up this meeting by completing a survey demonstrating their interest in participating in one of the groups above.

7. Meeting Overtime

Meeting continued in overtime to allow participants to ask additional questions of presenters.