Working Group 4
More Resources for At-risk Students

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Policy Area:

System that Ensures At-risk Students are Successful that supports these students and their families as soon as they arrive at school with both academic supports and extensive case management to address social, physical, mental and family needs to enable success at school

Element Detail 4a

Element: Add a **concentrated poverty weight** to the funding formula to support intensive services for students and their families to enable them to succeed in school, that are coordinated and able to meet the additional needs of students in schools located in distressed communities. ~~with a higher tier of intensive case management services for traumatized students needing intensive, comprehensive services.~~

Design Assumptions:

Overview:

1. Maryland provides substantial funding for at–risk students through its compensatory education funding formula which many schools utilize to ~~school funds for schools throughout the state to~~ provide wraparound services to students ~~in the school that need~~ in need of additional ~~these~~ supports. However, top performing systems around the world provide additional funds to provide a greater degree of services for those students that are at the highest risk of not succeeding in school.
2. Adding a concentrated poverty weight will allow ~~MD~~ Maryland to provide funds to schools with high levels of poverty to enhance or establish programs and services to support the needs of ~~most needy~~ students in schools with high levels of poverty.

~~2.~~

3. Funding should be provided to schools to implement or enhance a community school model that is based on a plan developed and submitted by an eligible school to meet the specific needs of the students at that school.

Implementation Plans:

4. Implementation plans should include but are not limited to:
    a) A community based needs assessment process that is conducted in partnership with a local capacity building organization to develop a implementation strategy for addressing the needs of the students and their families and building on and strengthening community resources near the school;
    b) Ensuring that an experienced and qualified community schools coordinator at a vice principal level is hired;
    c) Inclusion of community partners in geographic proximity to the school who can assist in meeting the needs indentified;

d) Ensuring that time is made available to train staff on the support offered, identifying the need for supports and how to engage with the community school coordinator in engaging with these supports
e) Development of strategies to maximize external non–State or local education funding

5. Broad strategies addressed in the implementation plan should include but are not limited to supporting:
   a) Physical and behavioral health and wellness;
   b) Family and community engagement and supports;
   c) Extended learning time and tutoring services;
   d) Early childhood development in elementary schools with linkages to Judy Centers serving families of children 0–5 who will attend the school;
   e) Student enrichment experiences; and
   f) Improvements to the learning environment at the school

Funding:

6. Tiered levels of weight should be provided beginning with schools with 50% of students eligible for free and reduced price meals

7. The additional weight for the tiers could be applied as follows (*Note: this is a suggestion. It was not discussed fully)*
   a) 50% of the weight for schools with 50% of students eligible for free and reduced price meals
   b) 75% of the weight for schools with 67% of students eligible for free and reduced price meals
   c) 100% of the weight for schools with 75% or more of students eligible for free and reduced price meals

8. The additional weight should be applied and made available to schools that have a concentration population of students who have experienced trauma associated with conditions of extreme poverty who may need much more intensive health and behavioral health services.
   a) This additional funding would be used to support services to diagnose and coordinate the services provided these high-need students, with a required implementation plan similar to that required for community schools.
   b) Staff numbers and positions should be tiered in relation to school enrollment.

9. Funding would be based on eligibility after approval of an implementation plan

10. Local school system must demonstrate that funds provided under the weight are being provided to the schools in which the weight is applicable and are being used for the purpose of implementing the approved community school plans

11. Local governments would be expected demonstrate support through meaningful partnership and support that is supplemental to and does not supplant existing efforts.

12. Partner agencies such as local management boards should participate at the State level and provide necessary funding and support to enable local agencies to participate as partnering organizations. [JS1]

13. Accountability should focus on metrics that include, but are not limited to: successful implementation of the plan, number of students served and not served, time to receive services, attendance, enrichment opportunities, reduction in disciplinary actions, teacher self-efficacy, student and principal satisfaction, meaningful family involvement.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Every year, districts will be required to report on their program and submit progress on indicators.
2. ~~2.~~ Failure to successfully ~~implement~~ utilize the funding provided through the weight should be addressed in the Governance and Accountablity Element ~~the Community Schools approach may prompt State intervention to ensure that funds are being spent appropriately.~~ [JS2]
3. ~~3. Explore the option of different weights for different concentrations of poverty. There is concern with creating a "cliff effect" of just one set level of poverty.~~
2. Schools with a lower poverty threshold could still organize Community School programming using their 97% weight for compensatory funding.
3. Determine effect of direct certification when using FARM as the indicator for poverty.
4. Determine what should be included in accountability system for implementation (components listed in 6, for example, could be part of accountability measures.

~~4.~~

Element Detail 4c

Element: Revise funding formula weight for **special education students**

Design Assumptions:

1. State and federal law require school systems to identify, locate, and evaluate all students who have or are suspected of having disabilities and in need of special education and related services.
2. To ensure students are not misidentified as being disabled, the law defines a list if eligible disabilities and students must meet one of those criteria.
3. The timeline for identifying, locating and evaluating students for special education and related services is established in State and federal law and regulation. Parental consent is required for students to be evaluated. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be developed within 30 days of the date a student is identified as a student with a disability.

~~1. Children should be identified screened[JS3] for special educational needs as soon as they enter public school (at pre-K or K), at other points when they enter the school system, and at key developmental milestones, or if teachers think a screening is needed[JS4][GV5][GV6]~~

~~2. Any child identified with a severe physical or mental disability at pre-school or pre-K age should immediately be placed in early intervention services and an individualized plan should be developed~~

~~3. Children with mild to moderate needs identified as soon as they enter public school should be offered support services and small group tutoring; the purpose is to determine which students need a one-time intervention to get to grade level and which students need on-going support and what type[GV7].[JS8]~~

~~4. The overall goal is to provide necessary supports as quickly as possible.~~

4. Differentiated weights are recommended in principle, but it is anticipated that the special education study required by HB 1415 will propose those weights. In the meantime, the Commission will propose a single placeholder weight[JS9].
5. Staffing requirements in preK-2nd grade that required certification in Special Education and literacy / reading.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Because a special education study required by HB 1415 is due by December 2019, the new weight may be revised again at that time; we anticipate that this study will recommend a differentiated weight at that time.
2. Review APA's recommendations for special education weights against design assumptions

3. Additional staff (both teachers and paraprofessionals) should be assigned to elementary and middle schools to flexibly provide supports identified by teachers[GV10]. [JS11]

Element Detail 4d

Element: Revise funding formula weight for **Limited English Proficiency** students

Design Assumptions:

1. No recommendations about LEP in the Commission's preliminary report specifically, although it does say to increase support for at-risk students, including special education, low-income and LEP
2. Weight funding must ~~include~~be used to provide:
    - Family/Parent supports
    - Cost for translation and translation services
    - Bilingual liaisons
3. EL teachers must have specialized training, have proficiency in the other language(s), and cultural competency.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Many of the recommendations for targeted and differentiated supports would broadly give LEP students more services
2. How does design align to requirements of State ESSA plan, particularly in terms of accountability, student exiting and services provided post-program exit?
3. ~~1.~~Should certain services be required to be funded when a school's percentage of LEP students reaches a certain threshold

Working Group 4 Version

Element Detail 3c (jointly considered with Working Group 3)

Element: Intervention for all K–8th grade students identified as struggling learners. Transition this role to school teachers as time is freed up and training is added to teacher prep; students who continue to need tutoring beyond third grade should be provided with this support[GV12].[JS13]

Design Assumptions:

1. Identify interventions that are working and learn how those programs are designed and delivered; this will form basis of the groups design assumptions.
2. All K–8th grade students identified by teachers as needing literacy or numeracy support should be provided with intervention in small groups of students (a successful design will indicate proper ratios to effectively deliver to students)
3. The aim of the tutoring is to get the students on grade level before 3rd grade
4. Students can transition out of tutoring support as soon as it is determines they are ready
5. Students in upper elementary school who continue to need tutoring should continue to get these services

Implementation Considerations:

1. What is the phase–in period to full implementation?
    - Time needed to scale up training?
    - What is mix of tutors (certified, assistants, volunteers)?
    - What is ratio of tutors to students? Does this differ based on severity of learning gap?
    - During phase–up what is prioritized (i.e., by grade of student, by severity of learning gap, by subject matter)?
2. What is the average time a student will need tutoring?
    - Based on severity of learning gap? (i.e., PARCC 1 means x time for tutoring, PARCC 2 means y time for tutoring, etc.)
    - Learning gap measured by what (PARCC, KRA)?
    - Goal of tutoring, what is success? (i.e., PARCC 4 or 5)?
3. Subjects for which tutoring should be provided? Does this differ based on grade level of student?
4. Potential cost savings?
    - Savings in special education needs?

~~1.~~5. HB 1415, which authorizes funding for evidence–based early literacy intervention in grades K-8 with a priority for K-3rd graders, in a school with a high concentration of students living in poverty has been enacted, so implementation of reading tutors will likely begin this year. The bill mandates $2.5 million in each of fiscal 2019 through 2022 for the program.

~~2.~~6. HB 1415 funding expires after fiscal 2022, with a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of the program at that time. Because tutors are considered a transitional program, needed until teachers have time and capacity to provide this support themselves, it is not anticipated that funding will be renewed.

Other Options:

1. Current legislation (HB 1415) funds reading tutors; could expand to include math tutors as well
2. Many students should be able to transition from tutoring by 3rd grade
3. As expertise in diagnosing and supporting learning difficulties is added to teacher preparation and schools are organized in ways to allow teachers time to provide this support directly, this activity can be phased out

Working Group 3 Version

Element Detail 3c — as revised by Working Group 3 at their June 21 meeting

Element: Commission's Preliminary Report calls for the reorganization of schools so that teachers trained to diagnose and address students learning needs can work collaboratively to monitor students and intervene when a student is struggling. Teachers would meet regularly to monitor student progress, decide on an intervention —academic or referral to services— and assign a single teacher to take responsibility for following the student until he or she is back on track. (See Working Group 2 elements)

As it will take several years to put this system in place, it will be necessary to develop a transitional program to address the needs of struggling learnings. This will be a **tutoring program** for all K-3rd grade students identified as needing support. Students who continue to need tutoring beyond 3rd grade should be provided with this support. Over time, the role of tutoring and monitoring students will be assigned to regular teachers as their time is freed up to do this work and they are trained in diagnosing and addressing learning difficulties. [Note: Suggest to WG #2 that they include teacher PD and sufficient time in the school day for this purpose]

Just as the Commission's Interim Report proposed several measures to greatly reduce the proportion of students falling behind, it also proposed measures for enriching the curriculum for students who need and could benefit from challenges that go beyond the standard curriculum. Those challenges will be provided not by accelerating their curriculum, but by enriching or deepening it. But here, as in the case of students falling behind as they go through school, it will take time to put that curriculum in place for all the students who could benefit from it. In the meantime, the supports now provided for students identified as gifted and talented should continue to be provided. [This needs to be "meatier" for the purpose of serving advanced learners. What is currently being done is not enough (Finn).] There is ongoing discussion about this paragraph.

Design Assumptions for Transitional Program:

1. All K-3rd grade students identified by teachers as needing literacy or numeracy support should be provided with tutoring in small groups of students
2. The aim of the tutoring is to get the students ~~on grade level before 3rd grade~~proficient at every grade level
3. Students will~~can~~ transition out of tutoring support as soon as their teacher determines they are ready
4. Students in upper elementary school who continue to need tutoring should continue to get these services
5. Tutors should be trained reading and math specialists
6. As a new system is implemented, school leaders and teachers should be trained in new approach to supporting students. This will involve three strands of training: training for school leaders on the system of supports; training for veteran teachers in schools; and training for new teachers in teacher prep institutions on the pedagogy as well as the new system.
7. The special education system would remain in place for students with disabilities, but as more students are supported early, fewer students will be referred for special education services

Implementation Considerations:

1. HB 1415 (Chapter 361) authorizes funding for evidence–based early literacy intervention in grades K-8 with a priority for K-3rd graders in a school with a high concentration of students living in poverty. The bill mandates $2.5 million in each of fiscal 2019 through 2022 for the program.
2. HB 1415 funding expires after fiscal 2022, with a requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of the program at that time. Because tutors are considered a transitional program, needed until teachers have time and capacity to provide this support themselves, it is not anticipated that funding will be renewed.

Other Options:

1. Current legislation (HB 1415) funds reading tutors; could expand to include math tutors as well
2. Many students should be able to transition from tutoring by 3rd grade
3. As expertise in diagnosing and supporting learning difficulties is added to teacher preparation and schools are organized in ways to allow teachers time to provide this support directly, this activity can be phased out