

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, with a higher tier of intensive case management services for traumatized students needing intensive, comprehensive services.

Design Assumptions:

1. Funds will be distributed via categorical program requiring implementation plans from school systems at two tiers:
 - a) Tier 1 will be every school in which 75% of students are living at or below 185% of federal poverty guidelines.
 - b) Tier 2 will be a very limited set of students within these schools requiring a much more intensive set of services because of the trauma they have experienced.
 - c) Eligible schools can apply for both tiers of funding.
2. For Tier 1:
 - a) Plans that successfully secure funding will develop community schools that coordinate access to social and health services as well as offer afterschool and summer tutoring and enrichment activities for students
 - b) All students in community schools will be assessed at the grade when they enter public school for health, mental health, family support and social service needs, in addition to their need for support and enrichment of literacy and numeracy skills.
3. For Tier 2:
 - a) Plans that successfully secure funding will work with health, mental health, and social services agencies and providers to develop an intensive case management team to oversee supports for a set of very high-need students in the school.
 - b) The design of the program will be informed by the medical trauma model, which monitors patients very closely for changes in circumstances that impact other services and supports. The team should be led by a medical professional trained in trauma support.
 - c) The partners will develop a screening tool to assess which students are in need of this level of case management.
 - d) The program will be school-based and involve school staff and teachers, but medical and other professionals will be responsible for diagnosis and service provision.

Implementation Considerations:

1. The State will make funds available to school systems that submit implementation plans that use funds for the purpose of implementing the Design described above.
2. After two years, districts will be required to show that their plan for serving students in concentrated poverty is working in order to continue receiving funding under the concentrated poverty weight.

Other Options:

1. Maryland might consider offering grants to schools to pilot models of the Tier 2 intensive case management that can then be a model for other schools in the State.

Element Detail 4b

Element: Train school staff in all schools to recognize mental health issues as well as other issues related to trauma and coordinate access to needed mental health and other services for students, as part of effort to increase school safety (see SB 1265 – signed into law as Chapter 30)

Design Assumptions:

1. Staff in all schools will be trained to recognize student mental health issues, as well as students experiencing trauma or violence outside of school
2. Schools will organize response plans to ensure that all students are connected to mental health and other services, as needed
3. Schools will be required to develop partnerships with available community resources and experts in order to develop an active and comprehensive referral network
4. School staff will also be trained in protocols for how to support any student needing these services while he/she is enrolled in school

Implementation Considerations:

1. Staff will collect information on state models for this work, as there is work being done in several states, including Massachusetts and Oregon, to create “trauma-sensitive” schools

Element Detail 4c

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

Design Assumptions:

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.
2. Children should be screened 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 if teachers think a screening is needed
3. Any child identified with a severe physical or mental handicap at pre-school or pre-K age should immediately be placed in early intervention services and an individualized plan should be developed
4. 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.
5. The overall goal is to provide necessary supports as quickly as possible.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Review APA's recommendations for special education weights against design assumptions
2. Additional staff (both teachers and paraprofessionals) should be assigned to elementary and middle schools to flexibly provide supports identified by teachers.

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. APA report recommends lowering the weight, while raising the base cost

Implementation Considerations:

1. Many of the recommendations for targeted and differentiated supports would broadly give LEP students more services
2. Currently 11% of elementary students are LEP but only 4% of high school students are, which suggests the current program is helping students transition into mainstream school. Proposed additional supports could help even more.

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

Element: Tutoring for all K-3rd grade students identified as needing support. 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.

Design Assumptions:

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
3. Students 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

Implementation Considerations:

1. 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 passed the General Assembly and is awaiting the Governor's signature, 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. 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