

**Districts' Use of Weighted Student Funding Systems  
to Increase School Autonomy and Equity:  
Findings From a National Study**

**Volume 2 — Technical Appendices**



# **Districts’ Use of Weighted Student Funding Systems to Increase School Autonomy and Equity: Findings From a National Study**

## **Volume 2 — Technical Appendices**

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## **Appendix A. Case Study District Profiles**

## Case Study District Profile: Baltimore City Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2009–10
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	10
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Per-pupil allocation
<b>Base per pupil</b>	E, M: \$5,521 H: \$6,096
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	
High performance	✓
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	
E = elementary school, M = middle school, H = high school.	

Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) adopted its weighted student funding (WSF) system during the 2009–10 school year with the primary goals of principal autonomy, equity of resource allocation among schools, and transparency of budgeting and allocation practices.

### WSF Formula

BCPS provided different base allocations that are adjusted by grade level. In 2018–19, elementary and middle schools received \$5,521 per student and high schools received \$6,096 per student. BCPS uses set per-pupil dollar amounts for funding adjustments in its WSF system. Student weights contained in the district's WSF system included the following:

- **Students from low-income families.** Elementary and middle schools received \$400 for each student who was directly certified as eligible for free lunch. High schools received \$700 per directly certified student. All elementary and elementary/middle schools with at least 80 percent directly certified students also received an additional \$200 per student.

- **Students with disabilities.** Schools received \$641 per student with disabilities (SWD) taught in a self-contained classroom.
- **Performance.** Schools received \$400 for each student identified as high performing or having high potential.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district's general funds and did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]*), grants, or other restricted funds. Charter schools received a higher base per-pupil funding amount but did not receive most weighted funding. Separate public day schools that enrolled profoundly disabled students and alternative options programs or schools that enrolled over-age, under-credited students were funded by the district separately from the WSF system. Locked positions (school-based staff selected and funded centrally) were provided to schools throughout the district.
- **Small-school supplement.** The WSF system in BCPS provided for a baseline level of services for all schools. For schools in which the WSF allocation was lower than the baseline amount, additional funding was provided to offset the difference. In 2018–19, the district allocated roughly \$4 million in baseline funding; 18 schools received supplements of more than \$100,000 each.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** BCPS allocated \$5.2 million in additional funding as a temporary measure to hold all schools harmless for the 2018–19 school year after the significant cuts experienced in the prior year.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** BCPS used average teacher salaries for budgeting under its WSF system.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

The 2018–19 school year marked the first time in 10 years that district leaders and stakeholders had revisited the model. “There wasn’t a lot of review in the past,” one district administrator remarked, adding, “The system [was] now mature enough for us to review the weights.” As part of this review cycle, BCPS used an iterative process that involved internal discussions with various stakeholders and weight modeling provided by an external nonprofit organization. Based on the results of this process, BCPS replaced funding adjustments for students at the basic or advanced level and high school students at risk of dropping out and added in adjustments for poverty and high-potential or high-performing students.

## Case Study District Profile: Boston Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2011–12
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	8
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Weight
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$4,291
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	✓
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	✓
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	✓
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	✓

Boston Public Schools (BPS) fully implemented its WSF system in 2011–12, following a pilot during the 2009–10 and 2010–11 school years. Strongly promoted by the former chief financial officer and superintendent, the district adopted WSF largely in reaction to concerns about the equity of resource allocation among schools.

### WSF Formula

BPS set funding adjustments relative to the base per-pupil funding (\$4,291 in 2018–19). Student weights contained in the district's WSF system included:

- **Grade level.** There were six different grade-level weights, ranging between 1.2 for high schools (grades 9–12) and 1.6 and 1.8 for kindergarten and prekindergarten, respectively. Early elementary (grades 1–2) and middle school (grades 6–8) received a weight of 1.4, and late elementary (grades 3–5) received a weight of 1.3.
- **Students from low-income families.** Students who were directly certified (DC) as eligible for free lunch received a weight of 0.10. In addition, each DC student in a school with more than 50 percent DC students received an additional weight of 0.10.
- **English learners.** English learner (EL) weights varied based on English language proficiency and grade level. Foundational students (at or below

developing proficiency) received a weight of 0.24 in the elementary grades, 0.51 in the middle school grades, and 0.61 in the high school grades. Transitional EL students received a weight of 0.02 regardless of grade level. In addition, students with interrupted formal education — EL immigrant students who had not attended school on a regular basis or who had missed a significant amount of school — received a weight of 0.50 in grades 4 and 5, 0.84 in middle school grades, and 0.94 in high school grades.

- **Students with disabilities.** There were 15 different special education weights. Low-severity students received a weight of 1.0. Moderate-severity students received a weight of 1.4. Thirteen different high-severity weights varied from 1.9 to 6.7.
- **Homeless students.** BPS assigned a weight of 0.10 for the projected number of students experiencing homelessness and an additional weight of 0.10 for the projected number of homeless students above a 5 percent concentration threshold.
- **Performance.** BPS provided an additional weight for high school students in grades 9 and 10 who were identified as having a high risk of dropping out as evidenced by chronic absenteeism, poor academic performance, and insufficient credit accumulation (a weight of 0.2 for 9th-grade high-risk students and a weight of 0.05 for 10th-grade students).
- **Specialized programming.** Students in vocational programs received a weight of 1.0. In addition, students in inclusive settings received a weight of 0.35.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula was responsible for distributing the majority of general fund dollars to schools, and it did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, *IDEA*), grants, or other restricted funds. Additional general funds were distributed to schools

outside of the WSF formula as well as for programmatic supports, including early childhood programs, dual language programming, extended learning time, inclusion, emotional impairment, and other programs. Alternative programs, nontraditional/specialized schools, and special education schools did not receive funds through the WSF system.

- **Small-school supplement.** To ensure provision of a minimum level of services needed to operate the school, each school received a foundation amount of \$210,151. Schools with multiple buildings or sites received an additional allocation.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** Lower-performing schools with declining enrollment received additional funding to help alleviate the impact of the new funding mechanism. The amounts were allocated primarily in relation to the size of the budget decline caused by decreases in enrollment.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** BPS used district average salary figures for most schools when charging for personnel against school budgets. However, schools that were classified as *autonomous* may have chosen instead to use actual salaries. Schools that used actual salaries represented nearly 30 percent of WSF-funded schools and served approximately one-quarter of the students in BPS.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

BPS has reviewed and revised its WSF system annually. As part of this process, the district encouraged conversations about what the appropriate weights are or should be. Since WSF system inception, the weights for EL students have been increased substantially. In addition, BPS has experimented with integrating contextual need factors into its WSF formula. BPS introduced an Opportunity Index for the 2018–19 school year, which “incorporates a range of data representing factors that are outside of the schools’ control but are also predictive of students’ academic outcomes.” These factors consisted of indicators related to students’ neighborhood, including safety, socioeconomic status, education attainment, and physical environment, as well as factors specific to individual students and their families, such as participation in state-administered programs for economically disadvantaged populations, student academic achievement, student behavior, and chronic absenteeism. As of 2018–19, the Opportunity Index was not a part of the WSF system in BPS, although the index may be incorporated into the budget process in future years.

## Case Study District Profile: Cleveland Metropolitan School District

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2013–14
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	5
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Per-pupil allocation
<b>Base per pupil</b>	K–12: \$4,887 PK: \$733
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	✓
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	
Other	<i>Mobility</i>
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	✓
High performance	✓
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	✓

After a one-year pilot in the 2013–14 school year, Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) implemented WSF districtwide in 2014–15. In adopting WSF, the district sought to promote principal autonomy at the school level, with the goal of enabling each school to align its resources with the needs of its own student population and increasing transparency of the budgeting and spending processes.

### WSF Formula

In 2018–19, CMSD provided a base allocation of \$4,887 for each K–12 student and \$733 for each prekindergarten student. Cleveland used set per-pupil dollar amounts for funding adjustments in its WSF system. Student weights contained in the district’s WSF system included the following:

- **Grade level.** Schools serving students in grades K–3 received an additional \$489 per student, and schools serving students in grades 9–12 received an additional \$65 per student.
- **English learners.** Weights for students with limited English proficiency (LEP) varied based on degree of English proficiency and grade level. Schools received \$2,399 per prefunctional LEP student. Per-pupil allocations for beginning-level LEP students were \$2,000 for grades K–8 and \$2,240 for grades 9–12.

Per-pupil allocations for intermediate- or advanced-level LEP students were \$1,600 for grades K–8 and \$2,000 for grades 9–12.

- **Students with disabilities.** SWD weights varied based on a student’s disability type/service model and grade level. SWDs in a self-contained setting received a per-pupil allocation of \$4,524 for grades K–8 and \$2,545 for grades 9–12. SWDs taught in a resource room or inclusion setting received a per-pupil allocation of \$7,918 for grades K–8 and \$5,938 for grades 9–12. Students with emotional disturbances or requiring intensive behavior interventions received a per-pupil allocation of \$729 regardless of grade level.
- **Transfer students.** Cleveland provided a student mobility weight of \$750 to all K–8 schools based on the percentage of students who moved two or more times in the previous year.
- **Performance.** Schools received \$1,500 for students below proficient in reading (based on grades 3 and 8 proficiency). Schools serving students above proficient in reading (based on grades 3 and 8 proficiency) received \$750 for grades K–8 and \$1,500 for grades 9–12. In addition, high schools received \$750 for students identified as chronically absent (10+ days).
- **Specialized programming.** A small portion of WSF funds were reserved for distribution to specialty schools with reportedly more “resource-intensive” models (e.g., career and technical education [CTE]; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and performing arts schools) and for new school transition funding, allocated for four years to aid newly created schools.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district’s general funds and did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, *IDEA*), grants, or other restricted funds.

- **Small-school supplement.** Cleveland established a “baseline services” level for schools serving students in grades K–8 and high schools, which included recommendations for minimum teacher-to-student ratios; administrative, specialty teacher, and support staffing; supplies, textbooks, and materials; substitute teachers; and class size overages and differentials. Baseline services funding for each school was defined as a “minimum set of services the [WSF] allocation will provide for all schools, regardless of their size and characteristics.” Cleveland ensured—through supplements if necessary—that each school had enough funding to meet the baseline services level. The baseline services, however, were merely recommendations; school principals had discretion as to whether they followed these guidelines.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** In introducing WSF, Cleveland provided additional funding to schools facing large budget cuts caused by the reallocation of funds under WSF to help these schools adjust to the new funding system. As of 2018–19, Cleveland was phasing out these protections, gradually increasing both the gains

cap and loss limit (the amount of funding that schools can gain or lose in one year) each year.

- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** Cleveland used average teacher and principal salaries in its WSF system.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

Cleveland has reviewed its WSF system annually. As part of this process, the district has used an external nonprofit organization to provide consultation on remodeling the formula and encourages conversations with key stakeholders about what the appropriate weights are or should be. No notable changes were identified for 2018–19; however, in 2017–18, Cleveland reduced grade-level allocations and special education allocations due to a decline in average teacher salaries and raised EL allocations due to an average salary increase for bilingual paraprofessionals. In addition, the district increased base per-pupil allocations by decreasing funds for small school and gain/loss protections.

## Case Study District Profile: Denver Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2007–08
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	12
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Per-pupil allocation
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$4,283
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	✓
High performance	✓
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	
	✓

Denver Public Schools (DPS) adopted its WSF system in 2007–08. In making the decision to introduce WSF, district administrators cited a desire to provide more autonomy and control to schools, while allowing “money [to] follow the kids,” thereby shifting the focus from personnel to student needs. In addition, the district wanted to empower school communities to make financial and programmatic decisions for their students. Administrators in the DPS central office believed that principals and community members understood the specific needs of their students better than central office staff and that students would be positively impacted by devolving decision-making power to the school level.

### WSF Formula

In 2018–19, DPS provided a base allocation of \$4,283 per DPS. DPS used set per-pupil dollar amounts for funding adjustments in its WSF system. Student weights contained in the district’s WSF system included the following:

- **Students from low-income families.** For each student receiving free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), elementary schools received \$498 and secondary schools received \$537. Additional funds were provided for schools with at least

60 percent FRPL-participating students (\$183 to \$415 per FRPL participant). In addition, all schools received \$80 for each student who was directly certified (DC) as eligible for free lunch, and schools with a high concentration of DC students received an additional \$40 to \$100 per DC student.

- **English learners.** Schools received \$431 per EL student, as identified by the Colorado English Language Acquisition (CELA) program.
- **Students with disabilities.** Schools received \$800 per student above the average caseload of students with mild or moderate disabilities.
- **Performance.** Schools received \$130 per student identified as gifted and talented. In addition, schools received between \$65 and \$115 per student for schoolwide improvement on Colorado’s district and school accountability system, the School Performance Framework (SPF). DPS also offered three to five years of phased funding to schools identified as low performing under the SPF.
- **Specialized programming.** Schools received \$7,480 per Center Program at the school. Center Programs provide individualized support and instruction to students with special needs.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** WSF funding included the district’s general funds, mill levy, and Title I, and it excluded other federal funding, grants, and philanthropic funds and donations. Supplemental budget assistance was available to all schools on an application basis to help fund instruction, administrative needs, and other supports for students. In addition, DPS provided centrally budgeted expenses for services provided directly in schools, such as additional teacher pay (incentives, bonuses, leaves, etc.), school support (human resources, curriculum and instruction, textbooks, library), high school



specific supports (athletics, CTE, dual enrollment), and operations (facilities, custodial, transportation, information technology).

- **Small-school supplement.** As part of its WSF system, DPS ensured all schools had baseline funding to adequately support 217 students. According to a district administrator, the district determined 217 students was the minimum threshold a school would need to justify “fund[ing] teachers, principals, and any other [basic] requirements.”
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** DPS used district average salary figures for most schools when charging for personnel against school budgets. However, schools that were classified as Innovation Schools — select, autonomous schools — were able to choose instead to use actual salaries. Schools that used actual salaries against the budget represented roughly one-third of WSF-funded schools in the district in 2018–19.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

DPS has reviewed its WSF system on a regular basis. Since the adoption of WSF, funding allocations have been added for economically disadvantaged students and ELs. For 2018–19, the district added progressive funding for schools with a high concentration of DC-eligible students, additional funds for schools with an above-average caseload of students with mild or moderate disabilities, and increased per-pupil allocations for FRPL students, ELs, and gifted and talented students. DPS also revised its funding allocations for school accountability. Previously low-performing schools (identified as red or orange) received \$100,000 to \$250,000 in additional funding. Under the revised approach, these schools received three to five years of phased funding so that “funding can be more consistent.” In addition, base funding amounts have been adjusted regularly to reflect changing compensation for teachers and has been tied to inflation.

## Case Study District Profile: Indianapolis Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2017–18
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	2
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Per-pupil allocation
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$3,985
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	✓
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	

Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) implemented WSF during the 2017–18 school year with the primary goals of ensuring equity of resource allocation among schools, the transparency of budgeting and allocation practices, and principal autonomy.

### WSF Formula

In 2018–19, IPS provided a base allocation of \$3,985 per student. IPS used set per-pupil dollar amounts for funding adjustments in its WSF system. Student weights contained in the district’s WSF system include the following:

- **Grade level.** Schools serving prekindergarten students received an additional \$910 per student and schools serving students in grades 7 and 9 received an additional \$400 per student.
- **Students from low-income families.** All schools received \$500 for each student who was directly certified as eligible for free lunch.
- **Students with disabilities.** Schools serving special education students in self-contained classrooms received \$910 in additional funding per student.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district’s general funds, and it did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, IDEA), grants, or other restricted funds. Resources for locked positions, including special education and EL instructors, and custodial and athletic staff, were not included under WSF. Likewise, additional FTEs or funding for specialty schools and school choice programs — including International Baccalaureate, Montessori, visual and performing arts, and early childhood programs — were provided outside of WSF. Innovation Network schools, a mix of charter schools, restart schools, conversions, and new schools were not all subject to WSF.
- **Small-school supplement.** The WSF system in IPS provided funding for a baseline level of services for all schools. For schools in which the WSF allocation was lower than the baseline amount, additional funding was provided to offset the difference.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** IPS established two policies to soften the initial shifts in funding caused by the introduction of WSF. First, for schools identified as “Priority” or “Transformation Zone” schools, the Superintendent’s Strategic Supplement held harmless the loss associated with any formula shift, although not loss of funding due to enrollment declines. The district also implemented a transition policy capping per-pupil dollar losses at 10 percent and per-pupil dollar gains at 3 percent.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** IPS used average staff salaries for the WSF system.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

After its first year of implementation, IPS removed the funding allocation for grades K–2 “due to the fact that all elementary schools have these grades, and reallocating dollars into the formula was another method of ensuring resources” to better reflect the district’s priorities as they relate to student need (Indianapolis Public Schools 2018). The district changed the definition for its funding adjustment for economically disadvantaged students from free and reduced-price lunch participation to direct certification “to more accurately reflect need” (Indianapolis Public Schools 2018).

## Case Study District Profile: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2015–16
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	4
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Weight
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$4,600
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	✓
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	✓
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) began using a WSF system districtwide during the 2015–16 school year, following a two-year pilot.

### WSF Formula

MNPS set funding adjustments relative to the base per-pupil funding (\$4,600 in 2018–19). Student weights contained in the district's WSF system included the following:

- **Grade level.** Elementary schools received a weight of 0.10; middle schools received a weight of 0.05.
- **Students from low-income families.** Students who were directly certified as eligible for free lunch received a weight of 0.05, regardless of grade level. In addition, MNPS applied an extra 0.10 weight for elementary schools (for a total poverty weight of 0.15) as a proxy for prior academic performance because there is no prior performance for incoming students at this level.
- **English learners.** Schools received a weight of 0.24 per EL student, as identified by the WIDA ACCESS assessment.
- **Students with disabilities.** SWD weights varied based on a student's disability type/service model, ranging from 0.50 to 7.25.

- **Performance.** Low-performing students received a weight of 0.10 for middle schools and 0.05 for high schools.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district's general funds, and it did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, IDEA), grants, or other restricted funds. MNPS included several non-negotiables, positions required to be paid through each school's WSF budget. These positions included a full-time literacy specialist; a part-time, advanced academic resource teacher (elementary and middle schools only); a school finance and payroll records administrator; and at least one art, music, and physical education teacher. Essential services such as food, transportation, utilities, facilities, and information technology were provided to schools centrally and were not part of individual school budgets. Charter schools were not subject to WSF.
- **Small-school supplement.** MNPS provided supplemental funds to assist small schools. For schools in which the WSF allocation was lower than the baseline amount, additional funding was provided to offset the difference.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** In introducing WSF, MNPS provided additional funding to schools facing budget cuts caused by the reallocation of funds under WSF to help these schools adjust to the new funding system. As of 2018–19, MNPS was phasing out these protections, gradually increasing both the gains cap and loss limit each year.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** MNPS used average teacher salaries in its WSF system.

### Revising the WSF System

MNPS has reviewed its WSF system annually, revising the system as necessary, based on the

recommendations of the review team, which consisted of district administrators, principals, and teachers. With the hiring of a new superintendent in 2016–17, the district introduced the full-time literacy specialist as an additional non-negotiable.

In addition, MNPS increased the weight for ELs from 0.10 to 0.21 and decreased the top range of special education weight from 8.10 to 7.25 in 2016–17. In 2017–18, the district added a 5 percent poverty weight (based on free and reduced-price lunch eligibility) for all schools and, in 2018–19, increased the EL weight from 0.21 to 0.24.

## Case Study District Profile: Milwaukee Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	2001
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	19
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Per-pupil allocation
<b>Base per pupil</b>	E: \$3,465 K–8: \$3,469 M: \$3,163 H: \$3,294
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	
Homeless	
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	✓

E = elementary school, M = middle school, H = high school.

Milwaukee has used WSF since at least 2001 (as reported by the Reason Foundation’s *Weighted Student Formula Yearbook*; Snell and Furtick 2013), though interviewees during case studies reported the system began in the late 1990s. In the 1990s, MPS had a superintendent who believed strongly in decentralization, suggesting that school leaders are closest to students and thereby can make the best decisions about what they need. In the initial years of WSF, many funds and decisions were moved quickly under principal control. The district implemented a “charge-back/buyback” system, whereby all services that supported a school, even including a portion of the superintendent’s salary, were charged to school budgets (mandatory “charge backs”), and many other decisions, even including mail delivery, were left up to principals to choose or not (buybacks).

Since that time, the district has gradually recentralized several key decisions due to perceptions that varying principal decisions (such as a decision not to offer arts classes) have led to inequity in student experiences.

### WSF Formula

Milwaukee provides different base allocations that are adjusted by grade level. In 2018–19, elementary schools received \$3,465 per student; K–8 schools, \$3,469 per student; middle schools, \$3,163 per student; and high schools, \$3,294 per student. Milwaukee uses set per-pupil dollar amounts for funding adjustments in its WSF system. Student weights contained in the district’s WSF system include the following:

- **English learners.** Schools received \$50 in additional funding per student participating in bilingual programs. In addition, English as a Second Language (ESL) school-based staff were allocated to schools based on a weighted formula that considers the proficiency level of EL students enrolled at that school.
- **Specialized programming.** Milwaukee featured several site allocations for items such as a 1.0 FTE teacher and \$150 per student for specialty schools (e.g., art schools, International Baccalaureate schools, gifted and talented, career and technical education); 2.25 FTE paraprofessionals for Montessori, language immersion, and dual language schools; and a 1.0 FTE teacher for schools with culinary arts and Turnaround Arts programs.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district’s general funds, and did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, *IDEA*), grants, or other restricted funds. Over time, the proportion of district funds distributed directly to schools has declined as Milwaukee has shifted control and funding responsibility of more services (including school counselors, special education services, advanced academics, transportation, assessments, college and career centers, credit recovery,

art and music programs, school nurses, and substitutes) to the central office.

- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** Milwaukee used average teacher salaries in its WSF system.
- **Small-school supplement.** Schools with an enrollment of 350 students or fewer were allocated the dollar value of a 0.5 FTE teacher in addition to base grade-level allocations.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

Milwaukee has reviewed its WSF system annually. Since 2014–15, Milwaukee has reduced base per-pupil funding in three out of four years, citing as explanations declines in available funding and centralization of funding for school-level positions such as assistant principals. In addition, the district has modified funding adjustments for bilingual students over recent years, changing from a 0.059 per-pupil weight to a \$150 per-pupil allocation in 2016–17, which was then reduced to \$50 per bilingual student in 2017–18.

## Case Study District Profile: Prince George's County Public Schools

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2012–13
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	7
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Weight
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$3,060
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	✓
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	
Homeless	
Other	✓
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	✓
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	✓

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) officially adopted its WSF system during the 2012–13 school year, following a one-year pilot. The system was adopted to address financial shifts in the district, while providing more autonomy to school stakeholders to make decisions. With more constrained financial resources, the district determined that the most efficient way to fund their services was to determine how much money was required for central services, while devolving the remaining funding and decision-making down to school principals and communities.

### WSF Formula

PGCPS set funding adjustments relative to the base per-pupil funding (\$3,060 in 2018–19). Student weights contained in the district's WSF system included:

- **Grade level.** Schools serving kindergarten and grade 1 students received a weight between 0.08 and 0.11 per student.
- **English learners.** Schools may receive a weight of 0.27 to 0.66 per EL student, based on new student proficiency scores and English for Speakers of Other Languages enrollment.
- **Non-WSF resource factors.** PGCPS provided a weight to account for differences in teacher salary levels across schools in the district, as

well as the resources that schools receive in addition to their WSF dollars. The weight was based on three components: (1) the number of locked instructional positions (positions funded and staffed by the central district office) in a school, (2) the total of the average salaries of these locked positions, and (3) the three-year average variance between the average and actual salaries from unlocked instructional positions (positions purchased through WSF funds) in the school.

- **Performance.** PGCPS performance weights ranged from 0.35 to 0.71 based on the proportion of at-risk students. Multiple factors were used to identify at-risk students, including state assessments, at-risk probability ratios for middle schools and high schools (based on grade point average, attendance, suspension and expulsion requests), and student retention.
- **Specialized programming.** PGCPS reserved a limited amount of funds, from which schools were able to request specific, supplemental resources. All requests were submitted in tandem with the school budget and reviewed by the deputy superintendent.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district's general funds, and did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, IDEA), grants, or other restricted funds. Locked positions, such as staffing for specialty programs, special education, food services, and custodial services, were funded and staffed by the central office. Early childhood centers, alternative and specialty schools, charter schools, and regional centers were not subject to WSF.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** PGCPS used average teacher salaries in its WSF system and has introduced the use of actual salaries through its weighting scheme. As explained above, PGCPS provided a base



weight that is constructed, in part, using the three-year average variance between the average and actual salaries from unlocked instructional positions in the school.

- **Hold-harmless provision.** PGCPs has implemented a hold-harmless policy to ensure that potentially large changes in enrollment from year to year do not disrupt the school year and student experience. For the 2018–19 school year, the district capped the per-pupil dollar loss at –1.5 percent.

### ***Revising the WSF System***

PGCPs has reviewed its WSF system annually to ensure, as one district administrator stated, “that they adequately reflect the goals of the school system and [WSF].” In 2016–17, the district transitioned from fixed to relative weights, meaning that each individual weight varies from school to school “to reflect the different student compositions of the district’s various schools” (Miller 2018).

PGCPs also modified the performance weight to reflect relative student need, including performance on state assessments, at-risk probability ratios, grade point average, attendance, suspension and expulsion requests, and student retention. For 2018–19, PGCPs modified the EL weights to include differentiated weights associated with newcomer students and added a variable base weight to account for non-WSF resource factors, as noted above.

## Case Study District Profile: San Francisco Unified School District

### WSF system at a glance, FY 2018–19

<b>First year of implementation</b>	FY 2001–02
<b>Years of full implementation</b>	17
<b>Type of funding adjustment</b>	Weight
<b>Base per pupil</b>	\$3,904
<b>Grade-level adjustment</b>	
<b>Student need adjustment</b>	
Students from low-income families	✓
English learners	✓
Students with disabilities	✓
Homeless	✓
Other	
<b>Performance adjustment</b>	
Low performance	
High performance	
<b>Specialized programming adjustment</b>	

Since 2001–02, San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has been implementing WSF to distribute resources to schools based on individual students' attributes.

### WSF Formula

SFUSD set funding adjustments relative to the base per-pupil funding (\$3,904 in 2018–19).

Student weights contained in the district's WSF system included:

- **Grade level.** Schools serving students in grades K–3 received an additional \$1,030 per student, schools serving students in grades 6–8 received an additional \$625 per student, and schools serving students in grades 9–12 received an additional \$702 per student.
- **Students from low-income families.** Schools received \$351 per student eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
- **English learners.** EL weights varied based on English language proficiency. Per-pupil allocations for beginner and intermediate EL students were \$200 for grades K–5, \$240 for grades 6–8, and \$530 for grades 9–12. Middle and high schools received \$240 per long-term EL student, and all schools regardless of grade level received \$155 per advanced EL student.
- **Students with disabilities.** Schools received \$50 per SWD and \$100 per SWD in

prekindergarten or with moderate to high severity disabilities.

- **Homeless students.** SFUSD provided \$4,000 in floor plan funding plus \$96 per homeless student for schools with more than 25 homeless students.

### WSF Policy Decisions

- **Coverage of the formula.** The WSF formula applied to the district's general funds, and did not include federal funding (e.g., Title I, IDEA), grants, or other restricted funds. Items such as special education staffing, non-instructional support staff, substitutes, athletic coaches, food and nutrition staff and services, custodial and maintenance services, transportation, information technology, and utilities, have been provided centrally.
- **Use of actual versus average salaries.** SFUSD used average teacher salaries in its WSF system.
- **Small-school supplement.** SFUSD has provided "floor plan" funding to allow all schools to achieve required basic staffing levels. For schools in which the WSF allocation was lower than the floor amount, additional funding was provided to offset the difference.
- **Hold-harmless provision.** WSF allocations included a hold-harmless buffer to help absorb potential midyear budget cuts in the event actual enrollments were lower than spring projections. In 2018–19, the buffer amount was \$60,000 and applied to schools facing budget cuts.

### Revising the WSF System

SFUSD's WSF formula has remained largely unchanged since its inception, except for the addition of a weight for homeless students. According to one district respondent, "the values for the base allocation have climbed" due to increased funding from the state.

## Appendix B. Authorizing Legislation for the Student-Centered Funding Pilot

### Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Part E

#### SEC. 1501. FLEXIBILITY FOR EQUITABLE PER-PUPIL FUNDING

(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the program under this section is to provide local educational agencies with flexibility to consolidate eligible Federal funds and State and local education funding in order to create a single school funding system based on weighted per-pupil allocations for low-income and otherwise disadvantaged students.

(b) **AUTHORITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary is authorized to enter into local flexibility demonstration agreements—

- (A) for not more than 3 years with local educational agencies that are selected under subsection (c) and submit proposed agreements that meet the requirements of subsection (d); and
- (B) under which such agencies may consolidate and use funds in accordance with subsection (d) in order to develop and implement a school funding system based on weighted per pupil allocations for low-income and otherwise disadvantaged students.

(2) **FLEXIBILITY.**—Except as described in subsection (d)(1)(I), the Secretary is authorized to waive, for local educational agencies entering into agreements under this section, any provision of this Act that would otherwise prevent such agency from using eligible Federal funds as part of such agreement.

(c) **SELECTION OF LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may enter into local flexibility demonstration agreements with not more than 50 local educational agencies with an approved application under subsection (d).

(2) **SELECTION.**—Each local educational agency shall be selected based on such agency—  
(A) submitting a proposed local flexibility demonstration agreement under subsection (d);  
(B) demonstrating that the agreement meets the requirements of such subsection; and  
(C) agreeing to meet the continued demonstration requirements under subsection (e).

(3) **EXPANSION.**—Beginning with the 2019–2020 academic year, the Secretary may extend funding flexibility authorized under this section to any local educational agency that submits and has approved an application under subsection (d), as long as a significant majority of the demonstration agreements with local educational agencies described in paragraph (1) meet the requirements of subsection (d)(2) and subsection (e)(1) as of the end of the 2018–2019 academic year.

(d) **REQUIRED TERMS OF LOCAL FLEXIBILITY DEMONSTRATION AGREEMENT.**—

(1) **APPLICATION.**—Each local educational agency that desires to participate in the program under this section shall submit, at such time and in such form as the Secretary may prescribe, an application to enter into a local flexibility demonstration agreement with the Secretary in order to develop and implement a school funding system based on weighted per-pupil allocations that meets the requirements of this section. The application shall include—

- (A) a description of the school funding system based on weighted per-pupil allocations, including—
  - (i) the weights used to allocate funds within such system;

- (ii) the local educational agency's legal authority to use State and local education funds consistent with this section;
  - (iii) how such system will meet the requirements of paragraph (2); and
  - (iv) how such system will support the academic achievement of students, including low-income students, the lowest-achieving students, English learners, and children with disabilities;
- (B) a list of funding sources, including eligible Federal funds, the local educational agency will include in such system;
- (C) a description of the amount and percentage of total local educational agency funding, including State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds, that will be allocated through such system;
- (D) the per-pupil expenditures (which shall include actual personnel expenditures, including staff salary differentials for years of employment, and actual nonpersonnel expenditures) of State and local education funds for each school served by the agency for the preceding fiscal year;
- (E) the per-pupil amount of eligible Federal funds each school served by the agency received in the preceding fiscal year, disaggregated by the programs supported by the eligible Federal funds;
- (F) a description of how such system will ensure that any eligible Federal funds allocated through the system will meet the purposes of each Federal program supported by such funds, including serving students from low-income families, English learners, migratory children, and children who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk, as applicable;
- (G) an assurance that the local educational agency developed and will implement the local flexibility demonstration agreement in consultation with teachers, principals, other school leaders (including charter school leaders in a local educational agency that has charter schools), administrators of Federal programs impacted by the agreement, parents, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders;
- (H) an assurance that the local educational agency will use fiscal control and sound accounting procedures that ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, eligible Federal funds consolidated and used under such system;
- (I) an assurance that the local educational agency will continue to meet the requirements of sections 1117, 1118, and 8501; and
- (J) an assurance that the local educational agency will meet the requirements of all applicable Federal civil rights laws in carrying out the agreement and in consolidating and using funds under the agreement.

**(2) REQUIREMENTS OF THE SYSTEM.—**

- (A) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency's school funding system based on weighted per-pupil allocations shall—
- (i) except as allowed under clause (iv), allocate a significant portion of funds, including State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds, to the school level based on the number of students in a school and a formula developed by the agency under this section that determines per-pupil weighted amounts;
  - (ii) use weights or allocation amounts that allocate substantially more funding to English learners, students from low-income families, and students with any other characteristics associated with educational disadvantage chosen by the local educational agency, than to other students;
  - (iii) ensure that each high-poverty school receives, in the first year of the demonstration agreement—

(I) more per-pupil funding, including from Federal, State, and local sources, for low-income students than such funding received for low-income students in the year prior to entering into a demonstration agreement under this section; and

(II) at least as much per-pupil funding, including from Federal, State, and local sources, for English learners as such funding received for English learners in the year prior to entering into a demonstration agreement under this section;

(iv) be used to allocate to schools a significant percentage, which shall be a percentage agreed upon during the application process, of all the local educational agency's State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds; and

(v) include all school-level actual personnel expenditures for instructional staff (including staff salary differentials for years of employment) and actual nonpersonnel expenditures in the calculation of the local educational agency's State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds to be allocated under clause (i).

(B) PERCENTAGE.—In establishing the percentage described in subparagraph (A)(iv) for the system, the local educational agency shall demonstrate that the percentage—

(i) under such subparagraph is sufficient to carry out the purposes of the demonstration agreement under this section and to meet each of the requirements of this subsection; and

(ii) of State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds that are not allocated through the local educational agency's school funding system based on weighted per-pupil allocations, does not undermine or conflict with the requirements of the demonstration agreement under this section.

(C) EXPENDITURES.—After allocating funds through the system, the local educational agency shall charge schools for the per-pupil expenditures of State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds, including actual personnel expenditures (including staff salary differentials for years of employment) for instructional staff and actual nonpersonnel expenditures.

(e) **CONTINUED DEMONSTRATION.**—Each local educational agency with an approved application under subsection (d) shall annually—

(1) demonstrate to the Secretary that, as compared to the previous year, no high-poverty school served by the agency received—

(A) less per-pupil funding, including from Federal, State, and local sources, for low-income students; or

(B) less per-pupil funding, including from Federal, State, and local sources, for English learners;

(2) make public and report to the Secretary the per-pupil expenditures (including actual personnel expenditures that include staff salary differentials for years of employment, and actual nonpersonnel expenditures) of State and local education funds and eligible Federal funds for each school served by the agency, disaggregated by each quartile of students attending the school based on student level of poverty and by each major racial or ethnic group in the school, for the preceding fiscal year;

(3) make public the total number of students enrolled in each school served by the agency and the number of students enrolled in each such school disaggregated by each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2); and

(4) notwithstanding paragraph (1), (2), or (3), ensure that any information to be reported or made public under this subsection is only reported or made public if such information does not reveal personally identifiable information.

(f) **LIMITATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES.**—Each local educational agency that has entered into a local flexibility demonstration agreement with the Secretary under this section may use, for administrative purposes, an amount of eligible Federal funds that is not more than the percentage of funds allowed for such purposes under any of the following:

- (1) This title.
- (2) Title II.
- (3) Title III.
- (4) Part A of title IV.
- (5) Part B of title V.

(g) **PEER REVIEW.**—The Secretary may establish a peer-review process to assist in the review of a proposed local flexibility demonstration agreement.

(h) **NONCOMPLIANCE.**—The Secretary may, after providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing (including the opportunity to provide supporting evidence as provided for in subsection (i)), terminate a local flexibility demonstration agreement under this section if there is evidence that the local educational agency has failed to comply with the terms of the agreement and the requirements under subsections (d) and (e).

(i) **EVIDENCE.**—If a local educational agency believes that the Secretary's determination under subsection (h) is in error for statistical or other substantive reasons, the local educational agency may provide supporting evidence to the Secretary, and the Secretary shall consider that evidence before making a final determination.

(j) **PROGRAM EVALUATION.**—From the amount reserved for evaluation activities under section 8601, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Institute of Education Sciences, shall, in consultation with the relevant program office at the Department, evaluate—

- (1) the implementation of the local flexibility demonstration agreements under this section; and
- (2) the impact of such agreements on improving the equitable distribution of State and local funding and increasing student achievement.

(k) **RENEWAL OF LOCAL FLEXIBILITY DEMONSTRATION AGREEMENT.**—The Secretary may renew for additional 3-year terms a local flexibility demonstration agreement under this section if—

- (1) the local educational agency has met the requirements under subsections (d)(2) and (e) and agrees to, and has a high likelihood of, continuing to meet such requirements; and
- (2) the Secretary determines that renewing the local flexibility demonstration agreement is in the interest of students served under this title and title III.

(l) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ELIGIBLE FEDERAL FUNDS.**—The term 'eligible Federal funds' means funds received by a local educational agency under—

- (A) this title;
- (B) title II;
- (C) title III;
- (D) part A of title IV; and
- (E) part B of title V.

(2) **HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOL.**—The term 'high poverty school' means a school that is in the highest 2 quartiles of schools served by a local educational agency, based on the percentage of enrolled students from low-income families.

## Appendix C. Study Methods

### Introduction

This appendix provides additional details on study methodology to supplement the briefer description provided in Volume 1. First we describe the methods used to select the district and school samples for the surveys and the district sample for the case study component. We then describe the data collection and analysis methods for the three components of the study: surveys of district administrators and principals, interviews and document reviews in the nine WSF case study districts, and school-level expenditure data provided by the nine case study districts.

### Sample Selection

The target population for the nationally representative survey includes all public school districts in the United States serving a large enough number of schools that would make adoption of a WSF system a relevant option. The sample was designed to include all districts known to be currently implementing a WSF system, as well as those known to have previously implemented WSF. A list of 31 current and former WSF districts was developed by consulting with school finance experts, drawing on other research such as the Reason Foundation *Weighted Student Formula Yearbook* (Snell and Furtick 2013) and a presentation at the July 2016 Future of Education Finance Summit (Koteskey and Snell 2016), and examining district websites. These 31 districts, which included 26 districts identified as implementing WSF in the 2017–18 school year and five other districts that had previously implemented WSF, were selected with certainty to guarantee their inclusion in the study sample. The smallest of these identified districts contained six schools in 2014–15; therefore, the target population for the survey was restricted to those districts that had at least six schools.<sup>1</sup> Districts with a mix of charter and noncharter schools were included; however, those districts consisting entirely of charter schools were excluded because they may have governance structures and resource allocation mechanisms that are different from and not applicable to those of traditional school districts.

The sampling frame was based on the 2014–15 Common Core of Data Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey, which provides a complete listing of all public elementary and secondary schools in the United States and includes a rich set of variables on school characteristics. Schools with no student enrollment were dropped from the study frame (5,654 schools), as well as remaining schools that were closed (3) and the following types of remaining schools: school type other than regular or vocational, online/virtual schools, detention/treatment centers, or homebound schools (6,748). As mentioned above, districts composed solely of charter schools and those with fewer than six schools were dropped from the sample; these districts contained a total of 29,834 schools. After all of these exclusions, the final sampling frame included 3,437 districts and 58,662 schools located within those districts.

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<sup>1</sup> The smallest district that we identified as a WSF district at the time of sample selection (New London School District, Connecticut) was later determined to be not in fact implementing WSF; the smallest WSF district in our final set of known WSF districts (Falcon School District 49, Colorado) had 22 schools in 2018–19 (see Exhibit 2 in Volume 1).

The list of districts in the final study frame was stratified by three poverty categories (high, medium, and low, based on the Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates),<sup>2</sup> three National Center for Education Statistics locale categories (city, suburb, and town/rural combined),<sup>3</sup> and two size categories (large and medium/small) to allow for meaningful comparisons across these subgroups.<sup>4</sup> In total, 17 district strata were formed by the three stratifying variables.<sup>5</sup> The district sample size in each stratum was determined proportional to the number of schools within the stratum.

As noted above, the 31 districts identified as current or former WSF implementers, as of the 2017–18 school year, were selected with certainty to guarantee their inclusion in the study (sampling selection probability equal to one).

After district selection, 10 schools<sup>6</sup> were randomly sampled from each of the 31 districts identified as currently implementing, or having previously implemented WSF, and one school was randomly sampled from each of the other selected districts. This approach resulted in a school sample of 306 WSF schools and 369 non-WSF schools.

For the case study component, we selected a purposive sample of nine districts that were implementing WSF systems in 2017–18. To facilitate the selection process, the study team reviewed the list of 26 districts known to be implementing a WSF system, validating the list through documentation scans and follow-up calls to the districts to ensure that each are active WSF implementers with a funding allocation system that uses weights to adjust funding for student needs and is sufficiently different from a traditional model. The nine sites were purposively selected from this list to provide diversity with respect to geographic location, age of WSF system, and formula design.

## Survey Data Collection Methods

The key components of the survey data collection included the following: (1) obtaining district approval to perform research, where required; (2) respondent outreach including a prenotification letter followed by an email invitation to participate with a link to the survey; and (3) systematic follow-up efforts to boost response rates. This section also discusses definitions of survey completion, response rates, and weighting procedures and nonresponse adjustments.

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<sup>2</sup> Poverty levels — high, medium, and low — were determined using enrollment-weighted quartiles of the Census Small Area Income Population Estimates district-level poverty estimates. “High” represents the top quartile, “medium” consists of both the second and third quartiles, and “low” is made up of the bottom quartile. Quartiles were calculated according to PPSS guidelines before excluding districts with fewer than six schools. Less than four percent of districts do not have data on poverty level. Districts with missing data were imputed with the values of the neighboring districts on the list sorted by state, county, city, ZIP code, and district ID. The rationale for this imputation approach is that districts geographically close together are likely to be similar to each other.

<sup>3</sup> Town and remote rural districts were combined into a single locale category for the purpose of stratification due to the exclusion of large numbers of town and rural districts that have fewer than six schools.

<sup>4</sup> PPSS guidelines define large districts as those with at least 10,000 students, medium districts as those with enrollments of at least 2,500 and fewer than 10,000 students, and small districts as having fewer than 2,500 students. The inclusion criterion of at least six schools substantially reduced the number of small districts available for sampling; therefore, small and medium-sized districts were combined into a single size category for the purposes of stratification.

<sup>5</sup> One stratum was collapsed with the neighboring stratum due to its small number of districts (eight).

<sup>6</sup> One of the 26 districts identified as implementing WSF had only six schools in the 2017–18 school year, and all six schools were selected for the sample.



### ***Obtaining District Approval to Perform Research***

Prior to launching the surveys, the study team identified 68 districts in the sample that required research applications. Team members reviewed the application process on the district websites and then completed and submitted applications for the required districts. Upon approval of a research application, district administrators and principals were invited to participate in the study.

Each school district had its own policy on whether an explicit consent question needed to be asked on the survey or if only informed-consent language could be used without requiring the respondent to answer a consent question. If a district required a consent question, it was placed at the beginning of the survey (before the survey items were asked). Respondents who were required to receive a consent question were required to choose “Yes” before they could move on and complete the rest of the survey. All respondents were notified that their participation was voluntary and that their answers would be used in aggregate form for reporting purposes.

### ***Prenotification Letters and Survey Invitation Emails***

Prenotification letters were sent by mail to all sample members to introduce the study and inform them that AIR was conducting the study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education. Invitation emails were next sent under the signature of the survey director via Illume, which included a unique link that enabled sample members to go directly to their individual survey. To encourage participation, respondents were offered an incentive in the form of a \$25 e-gift code from a global retailer. We also prepared a hard-copy PDF version of the survey instrument to accommodate respondents who preferred to complete the survey on paper; a total of 27 surveys were completed using this approach (Exhibit C-1).

**Exhibit C-1. Number of paper surveys sent and completed for the principal and district surveys**

	Sent	Complete
District survey	141	5
Principal survey	322	22
Total	463	27

### ***Follow-Up Efforts to Boost Response Rates***

A variety of reminders and other communications were included in the outreach to study participants:

- *Emails.* Reminder emails were sent to selected sample members who had not submitted a survey. Participants received reminder emails once a week at the beginning of data collection and twice a week afterward. In April 2017, the AIR research team sent emails to district administrators asking them to encourage their staff to participate and to complete their survey if they had not already done so. In addition, reminder emails were sent directly from Department staff email accounts to nonrespondents.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Emails from the U.S. Department of Education were probably more likely to pass security checks and firewalls that might have prevented the original study emails from being received by respondents. In addition, educators may be more likely to open an email from the Department than from a sender they do not recognize.

- *Letters.* Multiple reminder letters were mailed to the offices of district and principal nonrespondents explaining the purpose of the study and including the web address of the survey. Some follow-up letters also include paper copies of the survey along with a “frequently asked questions” document and a preaddressed, postage-paid envelope.
- *Phone calls.* To maximize survey response, the research team attempted to contact each nonresponsive sample member by telephone multiple times, at different times of the day, and on different days of the week.

### **Definitions of Survey Completion**

Labeling a principal survey as complete was based on the following rules:

1. The respondent gave valid responses to survey items 6 and 8. Question 6 asks, *Does your district allocate any funding to schools on a per-pupil basis?* Question 8 asks, *Which of the following best describes the discretionary per-pupil funding your school receives?* Question 8 was asked only of respondents who answered “Yes” to question 6.
2. The respondent demonstrated progress on the survey by accessing items through 34b. This required principal respondents to click through the large majority of survey items (whether or not they actually provided responses to those items). This left only four of the 38 substantive items<sup>8</sup> (excluding the three respondent characteristics items at the end of the survey) for which demonstrated progress was not required to qualify as complete.

If both of the above statements were true for a principal survey respondent, then their survey was considered complete.

Labeling a district administrator survey complete was based on the following rules:

1. The respondent gave valid responses to survey items 3, 5, and 7. Item 3 asks, *Does your district allocate any funding to schools on a per-pupil basis?* Question 5 asks, *Which of the following best describes the discretionary per-pupil funding schools receive?* and presented a list of options. Question 7 asks, *How are per-pupil funds adjusted to account for students needs or demographics?* and presents a list of options from which respondents may choose.
2. Respondents progressed through item 25b or 34, depending on skip patterns. This required district respondents to click through all substantive survey items (whether or not they actually provided responses to those items). This left only four respondent characteristics items at the end of the survey for which demonstrated progress was not required to qualify as complete.

If both of the above statements were true for a district survey respondent, then their survey was considered complete.

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<sup>8</sup> These four items were presented only to respondents who reported that discretionary dollars made up a majority of their school's operational budget.

### Response rates

The final response rates for the district administrator and principal surveys were 63 percent and 47 percent, respectively. The numbers underlying these rates are included in Exhibit C-2.

**Exhibit C-2. Response rates for district and principal surveys**

Survey	Sample	Completed survey	Response rate
District	400	253	63%
Principal	675	318	47%

For the majority of survey items, item nonresponse was quite small; this was true for seven of the 10 exhibits in Volume 1 that present survey data (i.e., missing no more than one of the WSF respondents and no more than three of the non-WSF respondents). Three exhibits in Volume 1 have larger item nonresponse:

- **Exhibit 16.** District respondents were asked to report the overall dollar amounts of unrestricted and restricted funding as well as the amounts of unrestricted and restricted funding provided to schools to use at their discretion. This proved to be a difficult question to answer, contributing to the lower response rate for this item (182 out of 253 districts responded to this item, including 10 WSF districts and 172 non-WSF districts).
- **Exhibits 25 and 26.** The principal survey items reported in these charts were only asked of respondents in WSF districts. Several items at the beginning of the survey were intended to identify whether respondents were from WSF or non-WSF districts, but principals in WSF districts often did not answer the filter questions in a way that accurately identified whether they were in a WSF district. Therefore, many principals in WSF districts were skipped out of those survey items even though they were in fact in WSF districts, leading to low principal response rates for the items in these exhibits ( $n = 56$  WSF principals in Exhibit 25 and 57 WSF principals in Exhibit 26, out of 104 WSF principals that responded to the survey).

### Weighting Procedures and Nonresponse Adjustments

This section describes the weighting procedures, discusses the results of the nonresponse bias analysis, and examines the characteristics of respondents in comparison to the selected sample.

Weights were created for analysis so that a weighted response sample was unbiased based on observable characteristics. The district and school weights reflected the sample design by taking into account the stratification and included adjustments for differential response rates among different subgroups. Within each stratum, the district selection probability for district  $i$  in stratum  $h$  was calculated as follows:

$$DISTPROB_{hi} = \frac{n_h}{N_h}$$

where  $n_h$  is the assigned sample size for stratum  $h$ , and  $N_h$  is the total number of districts in stratum  $h$ .

The district base weight is the reciprocal of the district selection probabilities:

$$DISTBW_{hi} = 1/DISTPROB_{hi}$$

Within each district in the sample, the school selection probability for school  $j$  in district  $i$  in stratum  $h$  was calculated as follows:

$$SCHPROB_{hij} = \frac{n_{hi}}{N_{hi}}$$

where  $n_{hi}$  is the sample size in district  $i$  in stratum  $h$  and  $N_{hi}$  is the number of schools in the district  $i$  in stratum  $h$ .

The school base weight is the district base weight times the reciprocal of the school selection probability:

$$SCHBW_{hij} = DISTBW_{hi} * \frac{1}{SCHPROB_{hij}}$$

As is common in many survey data collection efforts, the WSF district administrator and principal surveys observed some nonresponses (147 out of 400 districts and 377 out of 675 schools did not respond to the survey request). The two types of potential nonresponse are unit nonresponse and item nonresponse. *Unit nonresponse* refers to the fact that not all sampled units responded to the survey, whereas *item nonresponse* occurs when units that responded to the survey did not provide responses to some items. Only unit response is evaluated herein; no adjustments were made to account for item nonresponse (which as noted above was very low for most items). In the remainder of this appendix, the term *nonresponse* represents unit nonresponse on both the school district and school surveys.

Nonresponse can threaten the accuracy of survey estimates if any difference in the outcome variable exists between respondents and nonrespondents. This difference can cause a systematic deviation of a survey estimate from the population value. This systematic deviation is called *nonresponse bias*, which can be measured as follows:

$$B(\bar{y}_r) = (n_{nr}/n)(\bar{y}_r - \bar{y}_{nr})$$

where  $B$  is the nonresponse bias,  $\bar{y}_r$  is the mean estimate for the respondents,  $\bar{y}_{nr}$  is the mean estimate for the nonrespondents,  $n_{nr}$  is the number of nonrespondents, and  $n$  is the total number of sampled units. In other words, nonresponse bias may occur if the outcome variables correlate with response propensity (i.e., the likelihood of response) because the formula suggests that nonresponse bias is a function of nonresponse rate and the difference between the responses of respondents and nonrespondents.

However, because information on the outcome variables was not available for nonrespondents, the study team used information on the sampling frame (specifically, the sample design variables) to assess the nonresponse bias and make weighting adjustments to reduce potential nonresponse bias in the analysis sample. The creation of weights relies on the availability of auxiliary information — variables — that are predictive of response propensity. Note that modeling nonresponse using auxiliary information will be effective in reducing nonresponse bias only if the auxiliary information correlates with the survey outcome variables. Furthermore, the auxiliary information is not likely to perfectly predict response propensities. Therefore, there may still be nonresponse bias even after weighting.

Exhibit C-3 shows the distribution of districts in the selected sample and the respondent sample by WSF status (selected with certainty), poverty level, urbanicity, and enrollment size. In general, the distributions of the respondent sample were similar to those of the selected sample, except for district urbanicity. The results suggest that districts in different urbanicity categories responded at different rates, and the

responding sample would therefore have a different distribution than that of the study frame. Response propensity was estimated through a logistic model with response status as the dependent variable and all design variables as the predictors. The estimated response propensities for all sampled, eligible cases were divided into five weighting classes using quintiles by sorting the cases by the predicted response propensity and classifying the cases into five categories, because this produces smoother but still effective weights (see Cochran 1968). For each weighting class, a nonresponse adjustment factor was calculated so that the sum of adjusted weights for the respondents was equal to the sum of original sampling weights of all sampled eligible cases. As the last column of Exhibit C-3 shows, the nonresponse-adjusted percentage is very similar to the selected sample, including that of district urbanicity.

**Exhibit C-3. Comparison of selected sample and respondents for district survey**

District characteristics	District sample (N = 400)		Responding districts (N = 253)		Nonresponse- adjusted percentage
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
<b>By certainty district status</b>					
Certainty	31	7.8	17	6.7	7.6
Other	369	92.3	236	93.3	92.4
<b>By urbanicity</b>					
Urban	145	36.3	77	30.4	35.1
Suburban	171	42.8	118	46.6	44.5
Town/rural	84	21.0	58	22.9	20.4
<b>By district enrollment size</b>					
10,000 or more students	241	60.3	148	58.5	60.6
Less than 10,000	159	39.8	105	41.5	39.4
<b>By district poverty level</b>					
High poverty	133	33.3	77	30.4	33.0
Medium poverty	178	44.5	117	46.3	43.8
Low poverty	89	22.3	59	23.3	23.3

Note: Detail may not sum to total due to rounding.

Similarly, Exhibit C-4 shows the distribution of schools in the selected sample and the respondent sample by district WSF status (selected with certainty), school level, urbanicity, student enrollment, percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, and percentage of non-Hispanic white students. Again, the distributions of the respondent sample were generally similar to those of the selected sample, except for school urbanicity. These results suggest that schools in different urbanicity categories responded at different rates, and the responding sample would therefore have a different distribution than that of the study frame. Using the same nonresponse adjusting strategy as for districts, as the last column of Exhibit C-4 shows, the nonresponse-adjusted percentage is, in general, more similar to the selected sample, including that of school urbanicity.

**Exhibit C-4. Comparison of selected sample and respondents for school survey**

School characteristics	School sample (N = 675)		Responding schools (N = 318)		Nonresponse adjusted percentage
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
<b>By school grade level</b>					
Primary	437	64.7	205	64.5	66.4
Middle	97	14.4	51	16.0	14.3
High	111	16.4	47	14.8	14.8
Other	30	4.4	15	4.7	4.5
<b>By urbanicity</b>					
Urban	353	52.3	144	45.3	55.0
Suburban	199	29.5	103	32.4	28.3
Town/rural	123	18.2	71	22.3	16.7
<b>By school enrollment size</b>					
Above the median	389	57.6	184	57.9	58.6
Less than or equal to median	286	42.4	134	42.1	41.4
<b>By percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch</b>					
Above the median	408	60.4	182	57.2	62.1
Less than or equal to median	264	39.1	135	42.5	37.7
Missing	3	0.4	1	0.3	0.2
<b>By percent of non-Hispanic white students</b>					
Above the median	192	28.4	98	30.8	25.3
Less than or equal to median	483	71.6	220	69.2	74.7

Note: Detail may not sum to total due to rounding.

After the nonresponse adjustment, the study team performed raking adjustments to adjust the nonresponse adjusted weights so that the adjusted weights summed to the marginal totals in the population.<sup>9</sup> Raking, a poststratification method usually employed to avoid the problem of small cell sizes, is an iterative process in which some weights are adjusted up and some are adjusted down to match the sums of the weights in each category of each variable for the respondents to the marginal totals of each variable in population. The final weight was a product of the base weight, the nonresponse adjusting factor, and the raking factor. In general, use of the final weights should reduce nonresponse bias and variability in the survey estimates.

<sup>9</sup> The marginal totals were for school year 2015–16 since newer data were available at the time of post-survey adjustments.

After the survey collection was finalized, we performed a comparison of the characteristics of the group of 13 WSF districts that provided survey responses to the list of 27 districts that represents our best approximation of the population of WSF implementers.<sup>10</sup> The comparison shows that the sample respondents differed somewhat from the larger group. Specifically, the 13 WSF districts responding to our survey tended to be less urban and to have lower levels of both poverty and ELs than the full list of 27 known WSF districts. In contrast, the WSF case study districts tended to be more urban, to be larger, and to have higher levels of student needs than the known population of WSF implementers (Exhibit C-5).

**Exhibit C-5. Distribution of all known WSF districts, districts responding to the survey, and case study districts, by various demographic characteristics, 2015–16**

Characteristic	All known WSF districts ( <i>n</i> = 27)	WSF districts responding to survey ( <i>n</i> = 13)	WSF case study districts ( <i>n</i> = 9)
<b>By urbanicity</b>			
City	78%	50%	89%
Suburb	22%	50%	11%
Town	0%	0%	0%
Rural	0%	0%	0%
<b>By district enrollment size</b>			
Very large (50,000 or more students)	63%	64%	78%
Large (25,000–49,999)	30%	30%	22%
Medium (10,000–24,999)	7%	7%	0%
Small (less than 10,000)	0%	0%	0%
<b>By poverty rate</b>			
Highest poverty quartile (25% or more)	48%	32%	56%
Second highest poverty quartile (17–24%)	15%	16%	22%
Second lowest poverty quartile (10–16%)	11%	30%	22%
Lowest poverty quartile (less than 10%)	26%	22%	0%
<b>By percentage of English learners</b>			
High EL (20% or more)	26%	16%	33%
Medium EL (5–19%)	59%	71%	56%
Low EL (less than 5%)	15%	12%	11%

Note: Classification of districts as WSF is based on the list in Exhibit 3 found in Chapter 1 of the main report. It is possible that some additional WSF districts exist that have not been identified; however, these are likely to be few in number. The reported percentages defining poverty quartiles are rounded approximations of the actual cutoffs between quartiles.

Sources: Urbanicity, enrollment, percentage of ELs, and number of schools are based on data provided from the National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey Data (2015–16). Poverty is based on the 2016 Census Small Area Income Poverty Estimate (SAIPE) data for school districts.

<sup>10</sup> At the time of sample selection, we had identified 26 districts that we believed were WSF districts. We later learned (during data collection) that two of those districts were not in fact implementing WSF (New London, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C.). Through the survey, we learned of one additional WSF district (Prince William, Virginia) that indicated that it had been implementing WSF for over 20 years. This randomly selected district self-identified as WSF on the survey, and the study team confirmed through review of district documentation that it was indeed a WSF district. In addition, two additional districts began implementing WSF systems in the 2018–19 school year (Atlanta, Georgia, and Shelby County, Tennessee). Thus, we started with 26 districts, subtracted two, and added three, resulting in our current tally of 27 known WSF districts.

## Survey Analysis Methods

For the survey analysis, we conducted statistical significance testing between WSF and non-WSF districts using simple regression models with the survey item response as the outcome variable and a binary WSF indicator as the predictor variable. For continuous outcome variables, we used ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to do the statistical significance test. For binary outcome variables, we used logistic regression to perform the statistical significance test. For a small number of items, a statistical significance test using the preferred approach could not be performed. Specifically, for two of the subitems presented in Exhibit 18, the logistic regression perfectly predicted the outcome for WSF district administrators (meaning that all WSF district administrators provided the same response on a binary response outcome). In these cases, we resorted to using OLS to conduct the statistical significance test because the logistic regression model would not run.

In six additional cases, regression models would not run as specified due to the presence of a single response in certain survey strata (this was the case in three subitems presented in Exhibit 17 and three subitems in Exhibit 19). In these cases, we were able to conduct a statistical significance test by dropping the offending observations (the observations were not dropped in the reported averages). The dropped observations were all non-WSF districts, and the maximum number of observations dropped for any given subitem was three.

Note that in none of the cases described above did use of OLS or the dropping of responses change the percentages reported in Exhibits 17, 19, or 21.

## Case Study Data Collection and Analysis Methods

### *Interviews and Collection of Extant Documentation*

In each WSF case study district, research staff conducted interviews with up to seven respondents:

- District program officer
- District finance officer
- Three school principals<sup>11</sup>
- Respondents in two of the following three groups — union representative, school board member, or additional district administrator — depending on the union's presence in the district and which respondents were most knowledgeable about the WSF system

A total of 59 interviews were conducted, and most were done in person during site visits. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. When necessary, research staff also conducted follow-up telephone interviews to obtain missing information. The protocols used for these interviews can be found in Appendix E.

In addition, research staff collected a variety of documents and data from the case study districts, including documentation of the weighted student funding formula, documents describing how funding and other (personnel and nonpersonnel) resources were allocated to schools, and documents describing

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<sup>11</sup> For each case study district, the three principal interviewees were purposively selected from the 10 randomly selected schools included in the survey sample, with the aim of including variation in school grade levels.



the school-level budgeting process or other district budgeting guidelines (see “District Request for Documents” in Appendix E for further information).

### ***Analysis of Interview Data and Extant Documentation***

To analyze the interview data and extant documentation, the study employed the following three-phase approach.

***Phase I: Preliminary data capture.*** The first phase of analysis consisted of initial site-specific data aggregation based on the data collected through the case study site visits alone. Site visitors completed the preliminary data capture using Microsoft OneNote, a flexible platform that enables site visitors to capture audio, enter interview notes, and code data. The purpose of the preliminary data capture was to ensure that the team’s first impressions and key data points were systematically documented while they were still vivid. These debriefs facilitated future analyses, ensured that site visitors communicated key features of the site visit to other study team members, highlighted unanticipated challenges encountered in the field, and noted gaps in the data collection that would require follow-up. The preliminary data capture template asked site visitors to report case study information related to four topics: (1) goals and structure of the WSF system, (2) school autonomy over and stakeholder engagement in resource allocation decisions, (3) stakeholder perceptions regarding WSF implementation, and (4) challenges related to WSF. Site visitors were encouraged to complete all preliminary data capture activities while on-site but were required to finalize the preliminary data capture within three days of each site visit.

***Phase II: Coding.*** Guided by the study’s research questions, the study team developed a preliminary draft code list in summer 2018, which were piloted with a subset of interview data to determine whether they covered the topics reflected in the data, were of an appropriate grain size, and had clear definitions.

To ensure the consistency and reliability of the coded data, the coding phase involved a multistep process that included coder training, regular debriefing, and review of coded data by senior staff. To train staff for the coding process and to assess interrater agreement, prior to coding, all coders independently tagged a small sample of the same document or transcript and then examined the results collectively to assess interrater agreement. In cases of disagreement, the team revisited the issue, referenced any applicable data sources, and refined the code definition for the item in question. To pass the interrater agreement check, analysts had to match at least 75 percent of their codes to a key created by the two senior staff, while limiting any additional codes added beyond those in the key to no more than 25 percent of the total number of codes in the key.

Research staff then coded the transcripts for all interviews, with senior researchers double-coding 20 percent of all transcripts. The unit of coding was a segment of text reflecting a given construct, ranging in size from one or two sentences to one or two paragraphs. Research staff were trained to capture comparable segments of text for each coded passage, including enough adjacent text to enable a researcher to understand the data when a coded passage was retrieved from an interview. Prior to their use in the next stage of analysis, all coded data were reviewed by other research staff. Where inconsistencies were identified, the case study task lead communicated with the original analyst to make the necessary revisions.

***Phase III: Cross-case analysis.*** In the final phase of analysis, the study team reviewed the data across sites to assess the prevalence of various practices across the case study districts and to identify

examples of WSF practices that might be interesting or illuminating for practitioner and policy audiences. These activities enabled the study team to explore and examine themes and patterns across the WSF case study districts, as well as to more closely examine certain patterns we had observed in the survey data.

## **Fiscal Data Collection and Analysis Methods**

### ***Collection of School-Level Expenditure Data and Other Fiscal Data***

From each of the nine case study districts, we collected detailed data on school-level expenditures for all schools in each district. As described in the “District Request for Documents” in Appendix E, we asked for end-of-year audited fiscal data according to each district’s chart of accounts. We asked for data from five years before WSF implementation and all years after implementation. However, due to the age of some districts’ WSF systems and changes in data collection and record keeping procedures over time, three districts were unable to provide us with any data prior to WSF implementation. In addition, one district had just one year of postimplementation data because it had recently adopted its WSF system.

We also asked each district to provide us with documentation of their chart of accounts. The chart of accounts is a series of account codes that provide information on what particular expenditures were used for, what funding source the dollars came from, and to which building (a particular school or the central district) expenditures should be attributed. In most cases, these chart of account codes clearly distinguished between expenditures coming from unrestricted funding sources (general funds) and from restricted funding sources (categorical funds). In the few cases where this distinction was not clear, we followed up with the districts to ensure that all spending was properly coded. After coding expenditures as restricted and unrestricted, we summed up the spending attributed to each school in each school year of data provided according to those categories and also calculated total spending by school and school year (i.e., summed together both unrestricted and restricted spending). Because WSF systems are most commonly used to distribute unrestricted (general fund) dollars to schools, our primary analyses included only spending from unrestricted funding sources. However, we also conducted analyses on total spending.

Last, we collected data on school-level total enrollment and enrollment by student need category (poverty, English learners [ELs], and students with disabilities [SWDs]). Using school enrollment, we converted all school-level spending figures to spending per student using total school enrollment as the denominator. We also converted student counts by need category to shares of total school enrollment by dividing the count in each individual need category by total enrollment. The shares of school enrollment by need category were the measures of school-level student needs used to determine the relationships between school spending per student and student needs.

Several data anomalies are worth noting. First, one district (labeled District 1 in Volume 1) did not provide data on restricted spending; therefore, this district was omitted from analyses of total spending (unrestricted plus restricted). District 4 indicated that their school-level expenditure data did not represent audited expenditures, because fiscal auditing in this district is performed on aggregate district expenditures and not school-level expenditures. Finally, in District 8, charter schools were omitted from the analysis due to unreasonably low per-pupil spending data for those schools, suggesting that spending on charter schools in this district is not fully captured in the district’s expenditure data.

## **Fiscal Analysis Methods**

To examine the extent to which student-needs factors are related to school-level per-pupil spending within districts, we used two approaches. The first approach was simply to divide schools in each district for each year into three equally sized groups — or terciles — based on the level of a specific student-need characteristic (percent poverty, EL, and SWD) and then calculate the percentage difference in average per-pupil spending between the highest and lowest terciles.

The second approach used regression analysis to estimate models that directly relate school-level, per-pupil spending to various measures of student need and other school characteristics.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, we estimated the following regression equation for each district in each school year of data that was provided to us:

$$(1) \text{ Spending}_s = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Poverty}_s + \beta_2 \text{EL}_s + \beta_3 \text{SWD}_s + \beta_4 \text{Middle}_s + \beta_5 \text{High}_s + \beta_6 \text{Enroll}_s + \varepsilon$$

In Equation 1,  $\text{Spending}_s$  represents spending per pupil in school  $s$  from unrestricted funding sources in our preferred model and represents total spending per pupil in our secondary model;  $\text{Poverty}_s$  represents the proportion of students in poverty (represented by free and reduced-price lunch eligibility);  $\text{EL}_s$  represents the proportion of English learners;  $\text{SWD}_s$  represents the proportion of students with disabilities;  $\text{Middle}_s$  represents the proportion of students in middle school grades (6–8);  $\text{High}_s$  represents the proportion of students in high school grades (9–12);  $\text{Enroll}_s$  is the mean-centered natural log of total enrollment; and  $\varepsilon$  is a random error term. The subscript  $s$  is an index denoting individual schools within the district. The school observations included in each regression used were weighted by total school enrollment.

The coefficient  $\beta_0$  in Equation 1 is the constant term and represents the estimated school-level spending for a school of average enrollment with all other coefficients set at zero. This means it represents the estimated school-level spending for a school with no students in poverty, no EL students, no SWDs, all students served in elementary grades, and average enrollment. The coefficients  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ , and  $\beta_3$  represent the differential spending for a school where all students are in poverty, are ELs, or are SWDs, respectively. Using the coefficient on poverty as an example, an alternative interpretation of the poverty coefficient is the additional spending for the average impoverished student compared with spending for the average nonpoverty student attending an otherwise similar school. This student-level interpretation is particularly policy relevant because it has the same interpretation as explicit weights specified in WSF formulas.

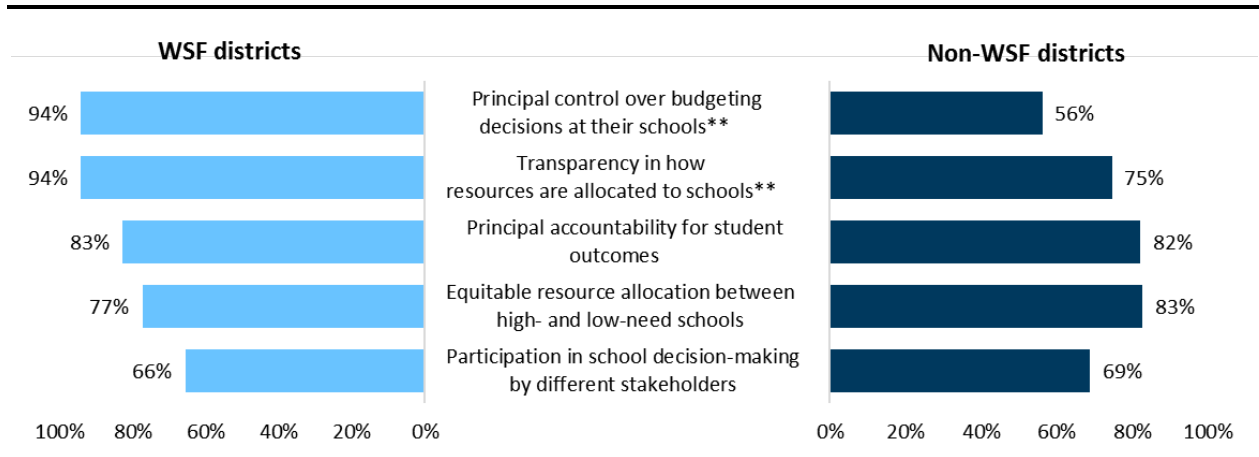
To convert the regression results into implicit weights, the estimated student need coefficients were divided by the estimated constant term, providing a measure of the additional amount spent in a given district on an elementary student with a particular need relative to the amount spent on the average student who has no additional needs. In the case of student poverty, the implicit poverty weight is represented as  $\beta_1$  divided by  $\beta_0$ . As an example, for values of  $\beta_0$  equal to 5,000 and  $\beta_1$  equal to 1,250, the implicit poverty weight would equal 0.25, which can be interpreted as the additional expected expenditure on a student in poverty relative to spending on an otherwise similar student who was not in poverty.

<sup>12</sup> The regression modeling used is consistent with the body of research on school finance equity analysis (Chambers et al. 2008; Duncombe and Yinger 2005, 2011; Gronberg et al. 2004; Gronberg, Jansen, and Taylor 2011; Imazeki 2008; Levin et al. 2013; Taylor et al. 2018).



## Appendix D. Supplemental Tables

**Exhibit D-1. Predicted percentages of district administrators reporting that various goals are a high priority for their district's system of allocating resources to schools, in WSF and non-WSF districts**



Note: Predictions generated from estimated regression models of probability of principal responding goal was a high priority for their district controlling for district-level characteristics including enrollment size, urbanicity, and incidence of FRPL and using average WSF covariate values. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference between WSF and non-WSF districts (\*\* $p < .05$ ).  
 Source: District survey, Q20 ( $n = 12$  WSF, 229 non-WSF).

**Exhibit D-2. Base per-pupil allocations and funding adjustments used to allocate funds to schools, by case study district**

	Base per-pupil allocation	Grade-level adjustments	Students from low-income families	English learners
Baltimore <sup>1</sup>	\$5,521 (E, M) \$6,096 (H)		Student directly certified (DC) as eligible for free school lunch: 0.07 (E, EM) or 0.11 (H) Additional weight for each DC student in school with at least 80% DC students: 0.04 (E, EM)	
Boston	\$4,291	PK: 1.8 K-2: 1.6 1-2: 1.4 3-5: 1.3 6-8: 1.4 9-12: 1.2	DC student: 0.10 Additional weight for each DC student in a school with more than 50% DC students: 0.10	Student with limited or formal education (SLIFE): 0.50 (4-5), 0.84 (6-8), or 0.94 (9-12) Foundational English Learner (EL) student: 0.24 (K-5), 0.51 (6-8), or 0.61 (9-12) Transitional EL student: 0.02
Cleveland <sup>1</sup>	\$4,887 (K-12) \$733 (PK)	K-3: 0.10 9-12: 0.01		Prefunctional Limited English Proficiency (LEP) student: 0.49 Beginning-level LEP student: 0.41 (K-8) or 0.46 (H) Intermediate- or advanced-level LEP student: 0.33 (K-8) or 0.41 (H)
Denver <sup>1</sup>	\$4,283		FRPL-eligible student: 0.12 (E) or 0.13 (H) Additional weight for each FRPL-eligible student in a school with at least 60% FRPL students: 0.04-0.10 per student (with cut points at 60%, 65%, and 90%) FRPL-eligible student who was directly certified: An additional weight of 0.02 Additional weight for each DC student in a school with a high concentration of DC students (at or above 50th percentile): 0.03 to 0.045 per DC student	English language learner (ELL) student (as identified by the Colorado English Language Acquisition [CELA] program): 0.10
Indianapolis <sup>1</sup>	\$4,985	PK: 0.23 7, 9: 0.10	DC student: 0.13	
Milwaukee <sup>1</sup>	\$3,465 (E) \$3,469 (K-8) \$3,163 (M) \$3,294 (H)			Bilingual program participant: 0.01 (E, K-8) or 0.02 (M, H)
Nashville	\$4,600	E: 0.10 M: 0.05	FRPL-eligible student: 0.15 (E) <sup>2</sup> or 0.05 (M, H)	ELL student (as identified by WIDA ACCESS assessment): 0.24
Prince George's	\$3,060	K-1: 0.08-0.11		ELL student (based on new student proficiency scores and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) student projections): 0.27-0.66
San Francisco	\$3,904	K-3: 0.26 6-8: 0.16 9-12: 0.18	FRPL-eligible student: 0.09	Beginner/intermediate English learner (EL) student: 0.0512 (E), 0.0615 (M), 0.1358 (H) Long-term EL student: 0.0615 Advanced EL student: 0.0397

**Exhibit D-2. Base per-pupil allocations and funding adjustments used to allocate funds to schools, by case study district (continued from previous page)**

	<b>Students with disabilities</b>	<b>Homeless students</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Performance adjustments</b>
Baltimore <sup>1</sup>	Student with disability (SWD) taught in a self-contained classroom: 0.12 (E, M) or 0.11 (H)			Student identified as high performing or having high potential: 0.07
Boston	SWD with low-severity disability: 1.0 SWD with moderate-severity disability: 1.4 SWD with high-severity disability: 1.9–6.7	Homeless student: 0.10 School with 5% or more homeless students: 0.10 per homeless student		High-risk student <sup>3</sup> : 0.20 (grade 9) or 0.05 (grade 10)
Cleveland <sup>1</sup>	Student with emotional disturbances or requiring intensive behavioral interventions: 0.15 SWD taught in a resource room or inclusion setting: 1.63 (K–8) or 1.22 (H) SWD taught in a self-contained classroom: 0.93 (K–8) or 0.52 (H)		Student who moved two or more times in the previous year: 0.15 (K–8)	Chronically absent student (10+ days) in grades 9–12: 0.15 Student below proficient in reading (based on proficiency in grades 3 and 8): 0.30 Student above proficient in reading (based on proficiency in grades 3 and 8): 0.15 (K–8) or 0.30 (9–12)
Denver <sup>1</sup>	SWD above the average caseload of students with mild/moderate disabilities: 0.19			Gifted and talented student: 0.03 School identified as low performing under School Performance Framework (SPF): 3- to 5-year phased funding Student in school showing schoolwide improvement under SPF: 0.02–0.03
Indianapolis <sup>1</sup>	SWD in self-contained classroom within an alternative school: 0.23			
Milwaukee <sup>1</sup>				
Nashville	SWD: 0.50–7.25 (varies by disability type)			Low-performing student: 0.10 (M) or 0.05 (H)
Prince George's				0.35–0.71 per student (based on multiple factors including state assessments, at-risk probability ratios, grade point average, attendance, suspensions/expulsion requests), and student retention <sup>4</sup>
San Francisco	SWD with low-severity disability: 0.0128 SWD with moderate- or high-severity disability or in prekindergarten: 0.0256	Homeless student: \$4,000 plus \$96 per homeless student for schools with more than 25 homeless students		



**Exhibit D-2. Base per-pupil allocations and funding adjustments used to allocate funds to schools, by case study district (continued from previous page)**

	Specialized programming	Miscellaneous adjustments	Average or actual salaries	Hold harmless	Small schools
Baltimore <sup>1</sup>			Average	Yes	Yes
Boston	Vocational program: 1.0 per student Student in inclusive setting: 0.35		Both <sup>6</sup>	Yes	Yes
Cleveland <sup>1</sup>	Additional funding for specialty schools (CTE, STEM, and performing arts schools) and newly created schools		Average	Yes	Yes
Denver <sup>1</sup>	Center Program at a school <sup>5</sup> : \$7,480		Both <sup>6</sup>		Yes
Indianapolis <sup>1</sup>			Average	Yes	Yes
Milwaukee <sup>1</sup>	Specialty schools: 1.0 full time-equivalent (FTE) teacher and \$150 per student Montessori, language immersion, and dual language: 2.25 FTE paraprofessionals Culinary arts, Turnaround Arts: 1.0 FTE teacher		Average		Yes
Nashville			Average	Yes	Yes
Prince George's		Non-WSF resource factors (based on number of locked instructional positions, total of average salaries of these locked positions, and 3-year average variance between average and actual salaries from unlocked instructional positions): 0.86–1.22 per student	Both <sup>6</sup>	Yes	
San Francisco			Average	Yes	Yes

Note: WSF system descriptions are based on information for 2018–19.

<sup>1</sup> For districts that reported funding adjustments as additional per-pupil amounts (Baltimore, Denver, Indianapolis, and Milwaukee), we mathematically converted them to equivalent weights in order to show a consistent metric across districts.

<sup>2</sup> For middle and high schools, Nashville applied a weight based on prior academic performance. Because there is no prior performance for incoming students at the elementary level, Nashville applied an extra 0.10 poverty weight to elementary schools as a proxy for prior academic performance in addition to the 0.05 poverty weight applied to all schools in the district.

<sup>3</sup> Boston defined high-risk students as high school students at high risk of dropping out as evidenced by chronic absenteeism, poor academic performance, and insufficient credit accumulation.

<sup>4</sup> Prince George's calculated the performance weight by standardizing and normalizing each factor by grade and then averaging all data points by school. The district then added 0.25 to the resulting value to ensure all schools received a performance weight to support their students.

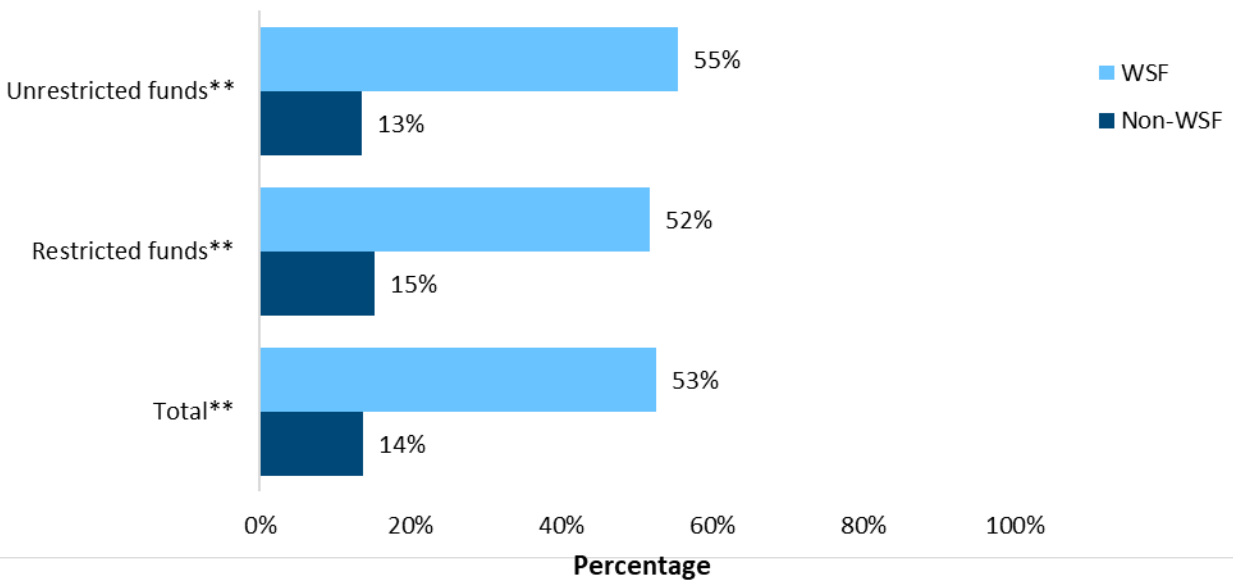
<sup>5</sup> Center Programs were defined as programs that provide individualized support and instruction to students with special needs.

<sup>6</sup> In Boston and Denver, select autonomous schools were provided the option to use actual salaries rather than average salaries for charging expenditures against their budgets. Prince George's provides a base weight that is constructed, in part, based on the three-year average variance between the average and actual salaries from unlocked instructional positions in the school.

E = elementary school, EM = elementary/middle school, M = middle school, H = high school.

Source: Extant documentation from case study districts.

**Exhibit D-3. Predicted average percentage of unrestricted and restricted funding provided to schools to use at their discretion, in WSF and non-WSF districts**



**Exhibit reads:** On average, WSF districts were predicted to provide 55 percent of their unrestricted funds to schools to use at their discretion, compared with 13 percent in non-WSF districts; this difference was statistically significant.

Note: Predictions generated from estimated regression models of percentage of funding used at school discretion controlling for district-level characteristics including enrollment size, urbanicity and incidence of FRPL and using average WSF covariate values. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference between WSF and non-WSF districts (\*\* $p < .05$ ).

Source: District survey, Q12 ( $n = 9$  WSF, 165 non-WSF).

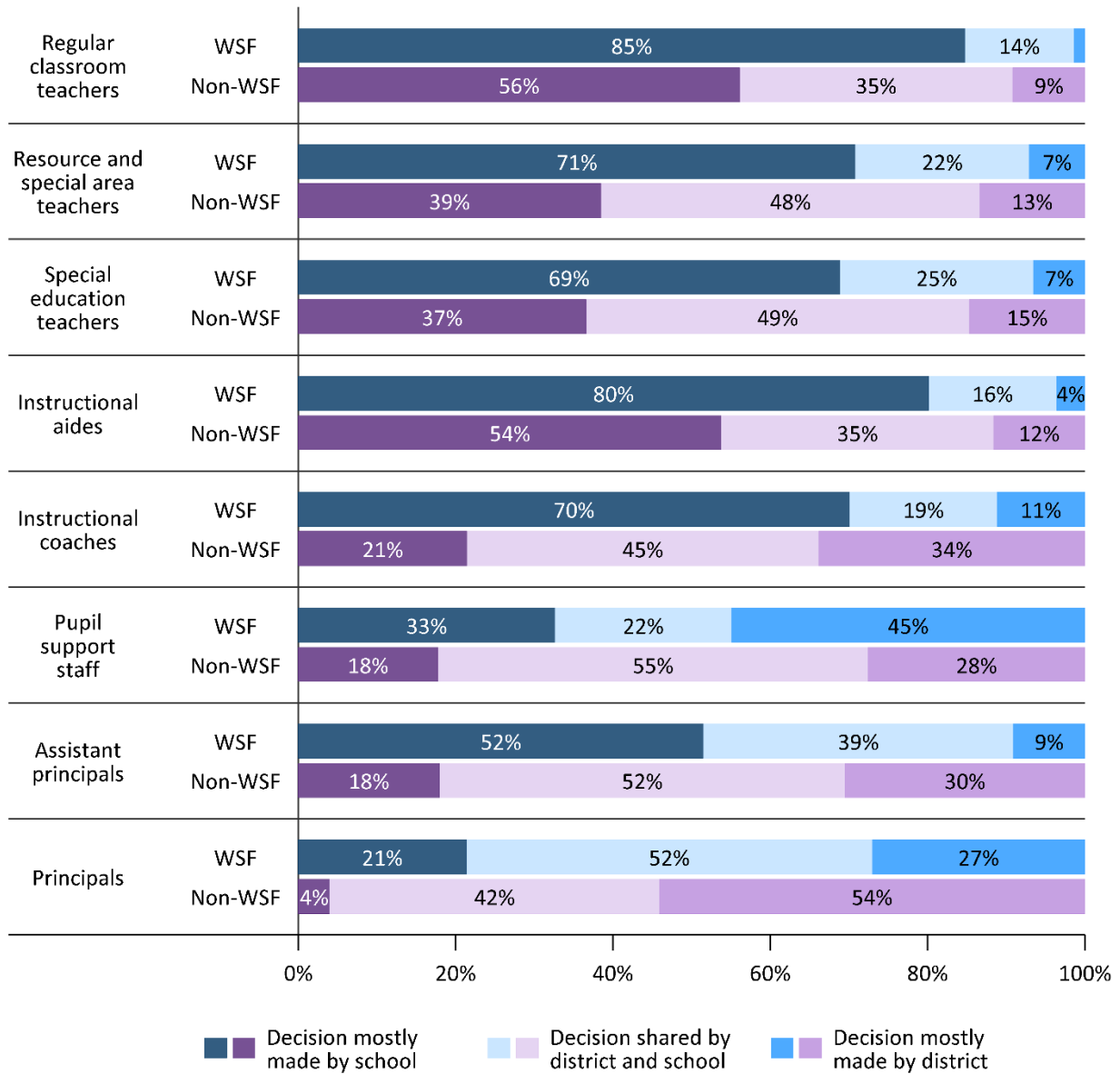
**Exhibit D-4. Predicted percentage of principals and districts that reported that decisions about hiring staff were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders, in WSF and non-WSF districts**

	Principals		District administrators		
	WSF	Non-WSF	WSF	Non-WSF	
Regular classroom teachers	85%	77%	95%	81%	*
Resource teachers and other special area teachers (e.g., music, technology)	70%	59%	78%	59%	
Special education teachers	70%	71%	10%	43%	**
Instructional aides	83%	86%	75%	81%	
Instructional coaches	71%	40%	65%	21%	**
Pupil support staff	31%	30%	40%	23%	
Assistant principals	52%	29%	43%	19%	
Principals	16%	8%	8%	1%	

Note: Predictions generated from estimated regression models of probability of respondent reporting that decisions about hiring and selecting staff were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders controlling for district-level characteristics including enrollment size, urbanicity and incidence of FRPL, and using average WSF covariate values. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference between WSF and non-WSF districts. Values for WSF and non-WSF respondents are estimated at WSF average values for district size, poverty, and urbanicity (\*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$ ).

Source: Principal survey, Q10 ( $n = 104$  WSF, 213 non-WSF); District survey, Q13 ( $n = 13$  WSF, 237 non-WSF).

**Exhibit D-5. Principal reports on degree to which decisions about hiring and selecting staff were made by districts versus school staff and stakeholders**



Source: Principal survey, Q10 (n = 104 WSF, 213 non-WSF).

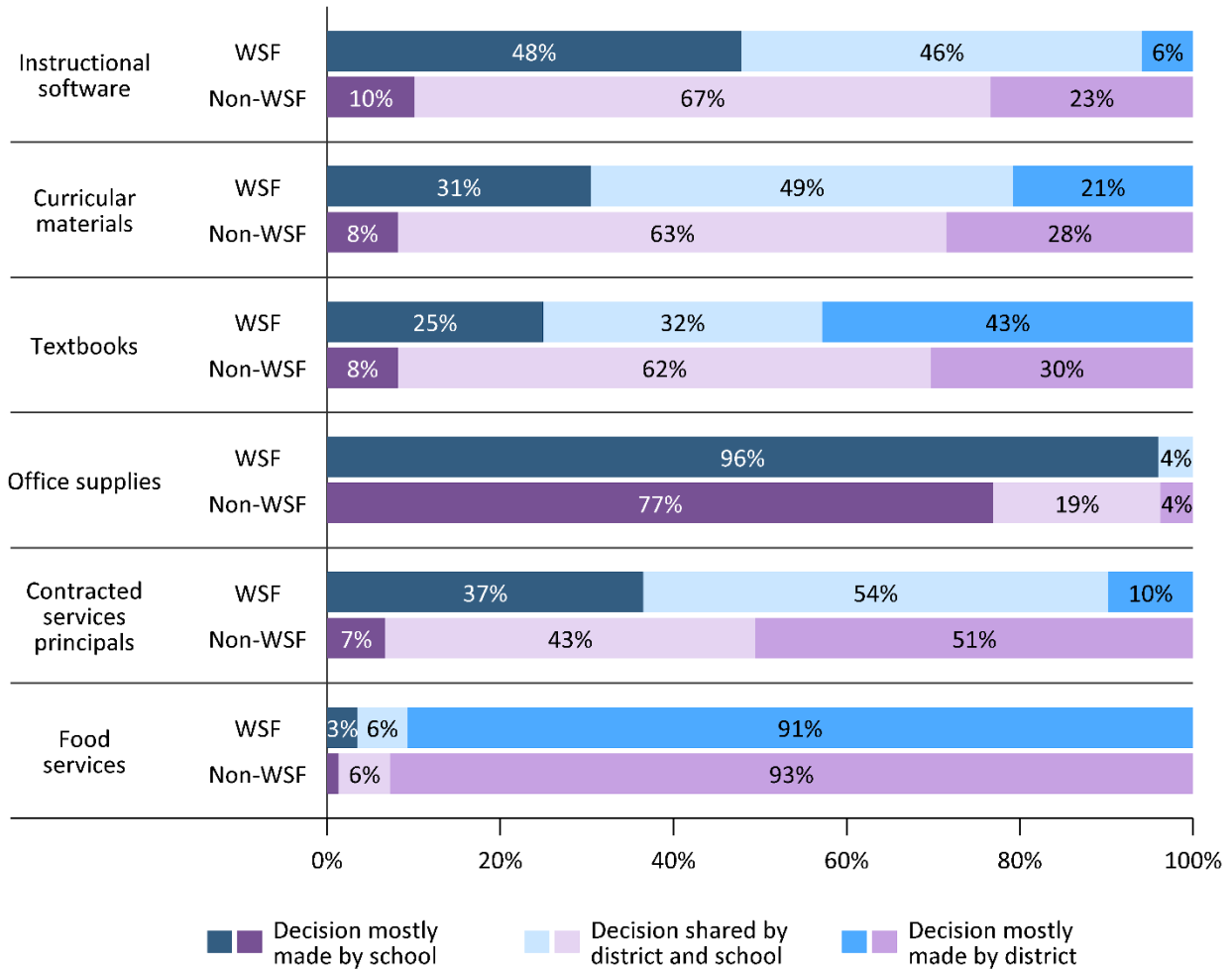
**Exhibit D-6. Predicted percentage of principals and district administrators reporting that decisions about selecting instructional materials and other nonpersonnel resources and services were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders, in WSF and non-WSF districts**

	Principals			District administrators		
	WSF	Non-WSF		WSF	Non-WSF	
Instructional software	45%	7%	**	53%	10%	**
Curricular materials	31%	7%	**	31%	10%	
Textbooks	25%	6%	**	24%	7%	
Office supplies	96%	84%		100%	94%	
Contracted services	36%	9%	**	65%	18%	**
Food services	1%	0%	**	0%	2%	

Note: Predictions generated from estimated regression models of probability of respondent reporting that decisions about instructional materials and other nonpersonnel resources and services were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders controlling for district-level characteristics including enrollment size, urbanicity and incidence of FRPL and using average WSF covariate values. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference between WSF and non-WSF districts (\*\* $p < .05$ ).

Source: Principal survey, Q11 ( $n = 99$  WSF, 207 non-WSF); District survey, Q14 ( $n = 13$  WSF, 237 non-WSF).

**Exhibit D-7. Principal reports on degree to which decisions about selecting instructional materials and other nonpersonnel resources were made by districts versus school staff and stakeholders**



Source: Principal survey, Q11 (n = 104 WSF, 213 non-WSF).

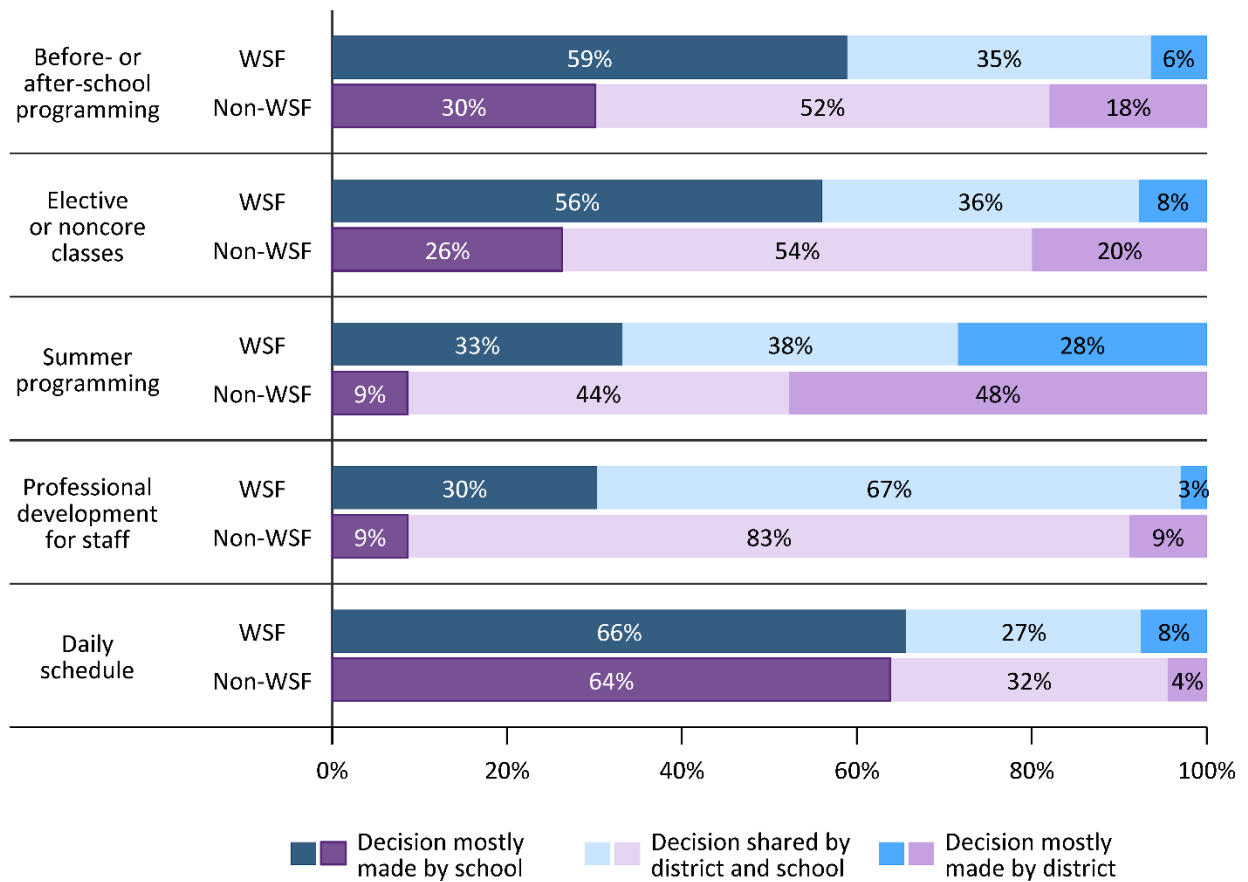
**Exhibit D-8. Predicted percentage of principals and district administrators reporting that instructional programming and professional development decisions were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders, in WSF and non-WSF districts**

	Principals			District administrators		
	WSF	Non-WSF		WSF	Non-WSF	
Before- or after-school programming	57%	23%	**	51%	30%	
Elective or non-core classes	54%	20%	**	83%	26%	**
Summer programming	34%	4%	**	11%	4%	
Professional development for staff	28%	9%	*	25%	3%	
Daily schedule	65%	56%		55%	43%	

Note: Predictions generated from estimated regression models of probability of respondent reporting that decisions about instructional programming and professional development were mostly made by school staff and stakeholders controlling for district-level characteristics including enrollment size, urbanicity and incidence of FRPL and using average WSF covariate values. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference between WSF and non-WSF districts (\*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$ ).

Source: Principal survey, Q12 ( $n = 99$  WSF, 207 non-WSF); District survey, Q15 ( $n = 13$  WSF, 237 non-WSF).

**Exhibit D-9. Principal reports on degree to which instructional programming and professional development decisions are made by districts versus schools**



Source: Principal survey, Q12 (n = 104 WSF, 213 non-WSF).



**Exhibit D-10. Regression results used to generate implicit weights for each case study district**

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Student poverty percentage	1,426.2** (375.4)	-1,289.9 (879.2)	-507.1 (891.0)	-1,649.6** (686.0)	-225.7 (283.4)	-1,426.8 (1,076.8)	-1,720.7** (661.4)	2207.6** (818.4)	-2,310.5* (1,336.4)
EL percentage	-502.4 (487.0)	2,284.3** (898.0)	901.1 (606.7)	2,015.3** (798.8)	266.9 (301.5)	-1,233.2 (1,044.1)	-264.3 (853.5)	-1,219.1 (1,056.0)	716.8 (828.1)
SWD percentage	1,781.2** (892.4)	14,790.7** (2,383.1)	17,098.9** (2,275.9)	17,277.5** (860.0)	-3,325.6** (1,084.9)	7,316.2** (3,399.0)	11,834.7** (2,241.4)	5,180.2* (3,020.1)	12,236.1** (1,537.0)
Middle school proportion	-506.3** (174.7)	4,789.0 (3,273.9)	257.7 (505.4)	992.5** (232.0)	154.2 (138.6)	-2,428.1** (1,178.3)	-377.7 (621.2)	-1,373.5** (480.1)	124.1 (459.9)
High school proportion	874.8** (309.5)	2,228.0** (1,015.4)	344.7 (320.2)	1,880.0** (324.6)	1,084.4** (199.4)	2,072.8** (553.6)	492.7 (370.0)	-260.4 (327.0)	589.7 (453.7)
Enrollment (ln)	-1,564.2** (235.7)	-3,100.6** (357.3)	-931.6** (260.9)	-1,913.9** (218.6)	-624.7** (129.0)	-1,740.5** (402.6)	-65.27 (309.2)	-42.08 (270.3)	-1,415.1** (364.8)
Constant term	5,487.0** (175.7)	5,115.8** (949.8)	6,108.3** (598.3)	6,429.4** (363.6)	4,667.6** (194.0)	5,921.3** (923.7)	8,623.0** (452.5)	5,451.9** (355.8)	7,726.2** (946.9)
<i>n</i>	126	91	114	187	94	63	159	154	127
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.684	0.568	0.713	0.735	0.485	0.530	0.271	0.261	0.535

Notes: The constant term represents the base amount, which is the amount that elementary students with no additional needs receive. The regression coefficients represent the additional dollar amounts received for a one-unit increase. For the student-need variables, this can be interpreted as the increase for a student with that particular characteristic. The implicit weights are calculated as the coefficient divided by the constant term. Data are for 2016–17 for eight districts and 2015–16 for one district. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference from zero (\*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$ ). Standard errors are in parentheses.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-11. Estimated base per-pupil amounts, additional per-pupil amounts, and implicit weights for poverty, English learners, and students with disabilities using the implicit weight approach and using only unrestricted spending**

School district	Base amount	Poverty		English learners		Students with disabilities	
		Additional amount	Implicit weight	Additional amount	Implicit weight	Additional amount	Implicit weight
District 1	\$5,487	\$1,426	0.26**	-\$502	-0.09	\$1,781	0.32*
District 2	\$5,116	-\$1,290	-0.25	\$2,284	0.45**	\$14,791	2.89**
District 3	\$6,108	-\$507	-0.08	\$901	0.15	\$17,099	2.80**
District 4	\$6,429	-\$1,650	-0.26**	\$2,015	0.31**	\$17,278	2.69**
District 5	\$4,668	-\$226	-0.05	\$267	0.06	-\$3,326	-0.71**
District 6	\$5,921	-\$1,427	-0.24	-\$1,233	-0.21	\$7,316	1.24*
District 7	\$8,623	-\$1,721	-0.20**	-\$264	-0.03	\$11,835	1.37**
District 8	\$5,452	\$2,208	0.40**	-\$1,219	-0.22	\$5,180	0.95
District 9	\$7,726	-\$2,311	-0.30**	\$717	0.09	\$12,236	1.58**

Notes: For the implicit weight analysis, "base amount" represents the amount that elementary students with no additional needs receive. "Additional amount" represents the additional dollar amount received for students with a particular need (free and reduced-price lunch, special education, or English learner). "Implicit weight" represents the proportional change from the base amount for a student with a particular need. Additional adjustments to the base amount included in the implicit weight analysis but not included in this table include adjustments for students in middle and high school grades and adjustments based on school size. Data are for 2016–17 for eight districts and 2015–16 for one district. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference from zero (\*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$ ).

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-12. Estimated base per-pupil amounts and additional per-pupil amounts and implicit weights for poverty, English learners, and students with disabilities using the implicit weight approach and using total spending (unrestricted and restricted)**

School district	Base amount	Poverty		English learners		Students with disabilities	
		Additional amount	Implicit weight	Additional amount	Implicit weight	Additional amount	Implicit weight
District 1	\$5,487	\$1,426	0.26**	-\$502	-0.09	\$1,781	0.32*
District 2	\$4,900	-\$900	-0.18	\$1,640	0.33	\$21,279	4.34**
District 3	\$6,104	\$335	0.05	\$854	0.14	\$17,171	2.81**
District 4	\$5,890	-\$1,060	-0.18	\$2,403	0.41**	\$21,885	3.72**
District 5	\$4,337	\$477	0.11	\$568	0.13	\$662	0.15
District 6	\$6,814	-\$827	-0.12	-\$951	-0.14	\$9,173	1.35*
District 7	\$8,455	-\$215	-0.03	-\$42	-0.01	\$12,898	1.53**
District 8	\$5,687	\$2,843	0.50**	-\$1,606	-0.28	\$6,761	1.19*
District 9	\$7,153	\$198	0.03	\$245	0.03	\$12,381	1.73**

Notes: For the implicit weight analysis, "base amount" represents the amount that elementary students with no additional needs receive. "Additional amount" represents the additional dollar amount received for students with a particular need (free and reduced-price lunch, special education, or English learner). "Implicit weight" represents the proportional change from the base amount for a student with a particular need. Additional adjustments to the base amount included in the implicit weight analysis but not included in this table include adjustments for students in middle and high school grades and adjustments based on school size. Data are for 2016–17 for eight districts and 2015–16 for one district. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference from zero (\*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$ ).

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-13. Estimates of the relationship between English learners and students with disabilities and per-pupil spending from unrestricted funds and total funds (unrestricted plus restricted), in eight WSF districts**

	English learners				Students with disabilities			
	Tercile difference		Implicit weight		Tercile difference		Implicit weight	
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted + restricted	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted + restricted	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted + restricted	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted + restricted
District 2	4%	-2%	0.45**	0.33	30%	40%	2.89**	4.34**
District 3	8%	9%	0.15	0.14	41%	39%	2.80**	2.81**
District 4	-7%	-4%	0.31**	0.41**	22%	24%	2.69**	3.72**
District 5	2%	14%	0.06	0.13	-2%	9%	-0.71**	0.15
District 6	-18%	-14%	-0.21	-0.14	20%	19%	1.24*	1.35*
District 7	-5%	-6%	-0.03	-0.01	18%	19%	1.37**	1.53**
District 8	14%	17%	-0.22	-0.28	18%	24%	0.95	1.19*
District 9	-7%	-10%	0.09	0.03	23%	24%	1.58**	1.73**

Notes: "Tercile difference" represents the percentage difference between per-pupil spending in the highest and lowest poverty terciles of schools. "Implicit weight" represents the relative difference from the base amount associated with each FRPL student. District 1 is not included in this table because it did not provide data on school-level spending from restricted revenue sources. Data are for 2016–17 for eight districts and 2015–16 for one district. Asterisks denote a statistically significant difference from zero (\*\* $p < .05$ ).

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-14. Difference between high- and low-poverty schools generated by tercile analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	6%								
Pre -6	4%					-6%			
Pre -5	7%					-15%			
Pre -4	8%	4%	18%			-18%			
Pre -3	10%	4%	3%	9%		-15%			
Pre -2	7%	5%	-1%	5%	-6%	-23%			
Pre -1	9%	6%	0%	-1%	-5%	-15%			
Post +1	16%	13%	13%	-3%	6%	-22%			
Post +2	18%	18%	3%	-6%	8%				
Post +3		15%	10%	-5%	7%				
Post +4		20%	11%	-6%	10%		-8%		
Post +5			22%	-4%	8%		-10%		
Post +6			20%		4%		-10%	15%	
Post +7					5%		-13%	32%	
Post +8					2%		1%	30%	
Post +9					1%		-5%	25%	
Post +10					0%			18%	
Post +11					-1%				
Post +12					0%				1%
Post +13					2%				4%
Post +14					5%				6%
Post +15									6%
Post +16									7%
Post +17									5%

Notes: For the tercile analysis, we defined high-poverty schools as the top third of schools and low-poverty schools as the bottom third of schools based on the percentage of students eligible for FRPL.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-15. Implicit weights for students in poverty generated by regression analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	0.09								
Pre -6	0.04					0.62			
Pre -5	-0.02					-0.24			
Pre -4	0.11	-0.22	-0.30			-0.23			
Pre -3	0.13	-0.05	-0.47	-0.12		-0.24			
Pre -2	0.18	-0.32	-0.54	-0.24	-0.32	-0.04			
Pre -1	0.21	-0.21	-0.46	-0.21	-0.15	-0.26			
Post +1	0.31	-0.21	-0.24	-0.23	-0.03	-0.24			
Post +2	0.26	-0.17	-0.22	-0.23	-0.05				
Post +3		-0.36	-0.08	-0.19	-0.05				
Post +4		-0.25	-0.03	-0.25	-0.01		-0.18		
Post +5			-0.05	-0.26	-0.17		-0.28		
Post +6			-0.08		-0.08		-0.29	0.21	
Post +7					-0.07		-0.31	0.56	
Post +8					-0.11		-0.21	0.39	
Post +9					-0.23		-0.20	0.27	
Post +10					-0.22			0.40	
Post +11					-0.17				
Post +12					-0.19				-0.15
Post +13					-0.16				-0.08
Post +14					-0.05				-0.09
Post +15									-0.15
Post +16									-0.17
Post +17									-0.30

Notes: The implicit weight represents the relative change from the base spending for students in poverty. The implicit weight analysis also includes additional spending adjustments not shown in this table for EL, SWD, total school enrollment, and shares of enrollment in the middle and high school grades.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-16. Difference between high- and low-English learner schools generated by tercile analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	-9%								
Pre -6	-14%					1%			
Pre -5	-12%					4%			
Pre -4	-12%	6%	3%			-10%			
Pre -3	-11%	-1%	8%	2%		-5%			
Pre -2	-13%	4%	3%	-5%	0%	-3%			
Pre -1	-12%	4%	-1%	-5%	1%	-7%			
Post +1	-7%	1%	1%	-6%	8%	-18%			
Post +2	-12%	-1%	4%	-9%	9%				
Post +3		1%	6%	-12%	7%				
Post +4		4%	7%	-9%	9%		-2%		
Post +5			6%	-7%	12%		-5%		
Post +6			8%		5%		-5%	9%	
Post +7					9%		-7%	22%	
Post +8					4%		-6%	23%	
Post +9					2%		-5%	15%	
Post +10					5%			14%	
Post +11					2%				
Post +12					1%				5%
Post +13					1%				2%
Post +14					2%				-2%
Post +15									-3%
Post +16									-5%
Post +17									-7%

Notes: For the tercile analysis, we defined high-EL schools as the top third of schools and low-EL schools as the bottom third of schools based on the percentage of EL students.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-17. Implicit weights for English learner students generated by regression analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	-0.20								
Pre -6	-0.22					-0.08			
Pre -5	-0.06					-0.01			
Pre -4	-0.24	0.54	0.24			-0.03			
Pre -3	-0.30	0.44	0.33	0.43		0.12			
Pre -2	-0.32	0.27	0.38	0.34	0.07	-0.07			
Pre -1	-0.32	0.21	0.11	0.18	0.02	0.07			
Post +1	-0.15	0.31	-0.04	0.26	0.03	-0.21			
Post +2	-0.09	0.49	0.02	0.27	0.07				
Post +3		0.53	0.03	0.28	0.03				
Post +4		0.45	0.02	0.29	0.10		0.36		
Post +5			0.04	0.31	0.18		0.18		
Post +6			0.15		0.03		0.16	-0.01	
Post +7					0.07		0.10	-0.21	
Post +8					0.04		-0.02	-0.01	
Post +9					0.12		-0.03	-0.04	
Post +10					0.13			-0.22	
Post +11					0.10				
Post +12					0.11				0.15
Post +13					0.12				0.08
Post +14					0.06				-0.01
Post +15									0.03
Post +16									0.01
Post +17									0.09

Notes: The implicit weight represents the relative change from the base spending for ELs. The implicit weight analysis also includes additional spending adjustments not shown in this table for student poverty, SWD, total school enrollment, and shares of enrollment in the middle and high school grades.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.



**Exhibit D-18. Difference between high- and low-students with disabilities schools generated by tercile analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	21%								
Pre -6	25%					-3%			
Pre -5	23%					4%			
Pre -4	24%	9%	31%			6%			
Pre -3	20%	8%	33%	28%		7%			
Pre -2	17%	13%	28%	29%	1%	5%			
Pre -1	14%	15%	31%	32%	-6%	24%			
Post +1	12%	18%	30%	25%	-9%	20%			
Post +2	18%	25%	27%	27%	-5%				
Post +3		31%	31%	28%	-4%				
Post +4		30%	28%	22%	-6%		20%		
Post +5			38%	22%	-7%		16%		
Post +6			41%		-7%		16%	29%	
Post +7					-6%		13%	31%	
Post +8					0%		15%	22%	
Post +9					3%		18%	23%	
Post +10					0%			18%	
Post +11					-2%				
Post +12					0%				28%
Post +13					-3%				30%
Post +14					-2%				22%
Post +15									26%
Post +16									24%
Post +17									23%

Notes: For the tercile analysis, we defined high-SWD schools as the top third of schools and low-SWD schools as the bottom third of schools based on the percentage of SWDs.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit D-19. Implicit weights for students with disabilities generated by regression analyses, for each case study district, for all years with available data pre- and post-WSF implementation**

Year	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	District 8	District 9
Pre -7	0.59								
Pre -6	0.96					0.10			
Pre -5	1.51					0.02			
Pre -4	1.33	1.90	2.58			-0.24			
Pre -3	1.07	1.36	2.47	2.79		0.31			
Pre -2	0.18	1.85	2.28	3.52	-0.33	-0.06			
Pre -1	0.36	1.63	2.39	3.39	-0.72	0.98			
Post +1	0.01	1.77	2.87	2.50	-0.88	1.24			
Post +2	0.33	2.01	1.59	2.58	-0.51				
Post +3		3.67	1.71	2.46	-0.77				
Post +4		2.91	0.92	2.97	-0.92		1.10		
Post +5			2.88	2.69	-0.67		0.79		
Post +6			2.80		-0.92		1.03	4.29	
Post +7					-0.96		0.89	2.91	
Post +8					-0.70		0.90	2.09	
Post +9					-0.39		1.37	1.89	
Post +10					-0.80			0.95	
Post +11					-0.45				
Post +12					-0.11				2.21
Post +13					-0.51				2.20
Post +14					-0.71				1.85
Post +15									2.01
Post +16									1.93
Post +17									1.59

Notes: The implicit weight represents the relative change from the base spending for SWDs. The implicit weight analysis also includes additional spending adjustments not shown in this table for student poverty, ELs, total school enrollment, and shares of enrollment in the middle and high school grades.

Source: Calculations based on district-provided data on school-level expenditures from unrestricted revenue sources, student enrollment, and other demographic characteristics.

## Appendix E. Data Collection Instruments

## District Administrator Survey

**1. What is the total number of schools in your district?**

Please provide a number in the box below.

Number of schools in your district

**2. Are there policies in place that enable students and their families to apply for enrollment in schools of their choice that are within the district but outside of their neighborhood?**

Please select all that apply, or check "No, there is no school choice mechanism in this district".

- No, there is no school choice mechanism in this district.
- Yes, but parents may only apply for their child to transfer to another district school outside of their neighborhood under certain circumstances.
- Yes, parents can choose from schools throughout the district (open enrollment), and students are assigned based on parent choices and other factors such as availability of seats.
- Yes, they can apply to magnet schools based on the student's interests and/or qualifications.
- Yes, they can apply to charter schools that the district operates.
- Yes, they can apply to charter schools in the area that are not run by our district.
- Yes, there is a local or state voucher program to support students' attendance at private schools.
- Yes, we have another type of public school choice program. Please specify:

**3. Does your district allocate any funding to schools on a per-pupil basis?**

Please select only one answer

- Yes, **GO TO QUESTION 4**
- No, **GO TO QUESTION 12**

**4. For the current school year (2017-18), what percentage of your total district operational budget is distributed in the form of dollars to schools on a per-pupil basis?**

Your best estimate is fine. Please enter a percentage greater than 0 using a whole number in the box below.

% Percentage of total district budget distributed as dollars on a per-pupil basis

**5. Which of the following best describes the discretionary per-pupil funding schools receive?**

Discretionary funds are those over which school leaders have authority to make spending decisions.

Please select only one answer

- Discretionary per-pupil funding covers the majority of the school-level operational budget, including core staff. **GO TO QUESTION 6**
- Discretionary dollars are largely for purchasing supplies and materials and/or supplemental staff positions. Core staff positions are determined by staffing formulas maintained by the district. **GO TO QUESTION 12**

**6. What is the base per-pupil allocation amount for schools in your district?**

Please enter a dollar amount in the box below. Your best estimate is fine.

\$ Base per-pupil allocation amount

**7. How are per-pupil funds adjusted to account for student needs or demographics?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- A base per-pupil amount is weighted according to student needs (for example, economically disadvantaged students count as an additional 0.5 students for funding allocations.) **GO TO QUESTION 8a**
- An additional flat per-pupil allocation is provided for certain types of students (for example, \$1,000 of additional funding is provided for each economically disadvantaged student.) **GO TO QUESTION 8b**
- They are not adjusted. The per-pupil allocation is the same regardless of student needs. **GO TO QUESTION 9**

**8a. We are interested in the weights used by your district to allocate funds for the student needs categories that receive additional resources (for example, economically disadvantaged students, English learners, or students with disabilities).**

**Do you already have a document available that you can upload that provides the weights used by your district, or would you prefer to enter the information into the table at Question 8a.1 below?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes, I have a document with this information that I will attach with my completed survey. **GO TO QUESTION 9**
- No, I do not have a document that I can upload; I will fill in the table below. **GO TO QUESTION 8a.1**

**8a.1. Please enter the weights used to allocate funds to schools for each of the following student needs categories that receive additional resources.**

*Please enter a value between 1 and 10, or select "Not applicable" in each row. For example, 1.5 means students in this group generate 50% more funding than the base student amount.*

	Weight Used	Not Applicable
a. Economically disadvantaged students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
b. English learners	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
c. Students with disabilities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
d. Students in foster care	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
e. Homeless students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
f. Students with low academic performance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
g. Gifted and talented students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
h. Elementary school students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
i. Middle school students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
j. High school students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
k. Other; please specify: _____	<input type="text"/>	
l. Other; please specify: _____	<input type="text"/>	
m. Other; please specify: _____	<input type="text"/>	

**8b. We are interested in the additional dollar amount allocated by your district for each of the following student needs categories that receive additional resources (for example, economically disadvantaged students, English learners, or students with disabilities).**

**Do you already have a document available that you can upload that provides the additional dollar amount certain student groups receive, or would you prefer to enter information into the table at Question 8b.1 (see below)?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes, I have a document with this information that I will attach with my completed survey. **GO TO QUESTION 9**
- No, I do not have a document that I can attach; I will fill in a table on the next screen. **GO TO Question 8b.1**

**8b.1 Please enter the additional dollar amount allocated to schools for each of the following student needs categories that receive additional resources.**

*Please enter a value or select "Not applicable" in each row. For example, \$100 means that students in this group generate an additional \$100 dollars of funding on top of the base student amount.*

	Additional Dollar Amount	Not Applicable
a. Economically disadvantaged students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
b. English learners	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
c. Students with disabilities	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
d. Students in foster care	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
e. Homeless students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
f. Students with low academic performance	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
g. Gifted and talented students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
h. Elementary school students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
i. Middle school students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
j. High school students	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
k. Other; please specify: <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	
l. Other; please specify: <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	
m. Other; please specify: <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	

**9. Does your system of school-level per-pupil funding provide additional dollars to small schools?**

Please select only one answer.

- Yes
- No

**10. In your district, are school funding levels adjusted during the year to account for increases or decreases in school enrollment?**

Please select only one answer.

- Yes
- No

**11. In which school year did your district begin its current system of distributing per-pupil funding to schools?**

Please enter the start of the School Year using the following format. Example 1999 or 2012.

Start of the school year district began distributing per-pupil funding to schools

**12. Please indicate your district's total general/unrestricted and categorical/restricted operational spending in the previous school year (2016-17), and the amount in each category that was provided to schools for their discretionary use.**

*General / Unrestricted* refers to state and local funding that is not intended for a specific program or student group. **Categorical / Restricted** refers to state and federal funding that is intended to be used on a specific program or set of students.

Please enter your best estimate in each box below. Enter \$0 if applicable. The amount for discretionary use by schools should be less than the amount for the total operational spending.

	General / Unrestricted	Categorical / Restricted	Total
a. Total operational spending (district + schools in total)	\$	\$	
b. Amount for discretionary use by schools (amount should be less than the total operational spending)	\$	\$	

**13. How much influence does the district have with respect to hiring the following staff compared with schools and their communities (principals, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

Please select one answer in each row. If hiring decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Unsure
a. Regular classroom teachers (core grades/subjects)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Special education teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Special area or resource teachers (e.g., English learner, art, music, technology)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Instructional aides	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Instructional coaches	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Pupil support staff (e.g., counselors, psychologists, social workers)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Assistant principals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Principals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**14. How much influence does the district have with respect to selecting the following materials or services compared with schools and their communities (principals, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

Please select one answer in each row. If hiring decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Unsure
a. Textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Curricular materials	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Instructional software	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Office supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. External non-district service providers (contracted services)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Food services	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4



**15. How much influence does the district have with respect to making the following decisions about school instructional programs, compared with schools and their communities (principals, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

*Please select one answer in each row. If hiring decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."*

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level</u> staff and/or stakeholders	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level</u> staff and/or stakeholders	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level</u> staff and/or stakeholders	Unsure
a. Daily schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Elective or non-core classes offered	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Before/after school programming	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Summer programming	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Professional development for staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**16. Which of the following types of services and materials, if any, are schools in your district permitted to purchase from external (non-district) vendors?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- Professional development services
- Pupil support student services (such as mental health, nursing)
- Supplemental educational services (such as before/after school program, tutoring)
- Facilities/janitorial services
- Food services
- Security services
- Technology/communications services
- Computer software/hardware/equipment
- Instructional materials
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above

**17. Thinking about the schools in your district that serve the highest proportion of economically disadvantaged students, please indicate whether those schools receive less or more resources than other schools to support the following areas?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Substantially less	Somewhat less	About the same amount	Somewhat more	Substantially more
a. School operational budget per pupil	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
b. Provision of high-quality, rigorous courses	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
c. Access to more experienced teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
d. Access to more effective teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
e. Smaller class sizes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
f. Timely professional development opportunities for staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
g. Up-to-date curricular and instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
h. Computers and other technology to support student learning	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
i. Safe and adequate facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

**18. Which of the following types of information do you provide to principals regarding the resources their school will receive?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, select "None of the above."*

- The amount of discretionary funding the school will receive from general unrestricted funding sources.
- The amount of discretionary funding the school will receive from restricted funding sources (such as Title I, Title II, Title III and/or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).
- The number of staffing positions the school will receive from the general budget.
- The number of staffing positions the school will receive from restricted funding sources (such as Title I, Title II, Title III, and/or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).
- The cost of district-provided services received by the school.
- The total school-level operational budget consisting of all discretionary and non-discretionary resources from all funds.
- A general description of how funding or staffing levels for their school were determined.
- The specific calculation of how funding or staffing levels were determined for their school (e.g. a spreadsheet showing how the calculations were made).

OR

- None of the above.

**19. How does your district communicate information to schools about the resources they will receive?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- A meeting with principals once a year
- Multiple meetings with principals
- Training for principals
- Training for other school staff
- E-mails or other written notices
- Posting information on internal district website
- Posting information publicly on district website
- Other, please specify:

**20. To what extent are each of the following a priority in your district's system of allocating resources to schools?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Not a priority	Low priority	Moderate priority	High priority
a. Transparency in how resources are allocated to schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Principal control over budgeting decisions at their schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Principal accountability for student outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Equitable resource allocation between high- and low-needs schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Participation in school decision-making by stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, community members)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**21. To what extent are each of the following a districtwide challenge?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Major challenge
a. Inequity in resource allocation across schools in the district	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Insufficient transparency in how resources are allocated to schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Concerns from school-level staff about the process of allocating resources to schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Unpredictable levels of student needs that could affect the allocation of resources to schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**22. With regard to principals, to what extent are each of the following a districtwide challenge?**

Please select one answer in each row.

	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Major challenge
a. Principals need additional training on how to make effective decisions regarding <u>instructional programming</u> for their school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Principals need additional training on how to make <u>budgeting and resource allocation decisions</u> for their school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Principals need additional training on <u>compliance with regulations</u> surrounding the <u>use of categorical funding</u> for particular student populations (e.g., English learners, special education, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**23. During the previous school year (2016-17, including summer 2017), which of the following best describes the professional development offered to school-level staff involved in budget development/management?**

Please select only one answer.

- Professional development on budget development/management was not offered to school-level staff.
- Professional development on budget development/management was offered on an optional basis to school-level staff.
- Professional development on budget development/management was required for staff from some (but not all) schools.
- Professional development on budget development/management was required for staff from all schools.

**24. Other than formal professional development, what additional training or support on budget development/management are available to schools from the district?**

Please select all that apply, or if none of the statements apply, select "None of the above."

- There is a specific district staff person assigned to each school to assist with budget development/management.
- District-level staff are available for in-person technical assistance as needed.
- District-level staff are available by phone to provide technical assistance as needed.
- Online resources are available, including documents, videos, and/or training modules.
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.

**25. How many full-time equivalent staff in total in your district office support schools with their budget development/management?**

*Enter number of full-time equivalent staff (FTEs)*

**25a. Please refer back to Question 3. Did you answer “yes” or “no” to the question “Does your district allocate any amount of funding to schools on a per-pupil basis?”**

- Yes [My district allocates funding to schools on a per-pupil basis.] **GO TO QUESTION 25b**
- No [My district does not allocate funding to schools on a per-pupil basis.] **GO TO QUESTION 35**

**25b. Please refer back to Question 5. Which option did you select?**

- Discretionary per-pupil funding covers the majority of the school-level operational budget, including core staff. **GO TO QUESTION 26**
- Discretionary dollars are largely for purchasing supplies and materials and/or supplemental staff positions. Core staffing positions are determined separately. **GO TO QUESTION 35**

**26. How much of a challenge are each of the following with respect to the per-pupil funding system in your district?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Not a Challenge	Minor Challenge	Moderate Challenge	Major Challenge
a. Inadequate data to help inform principal decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Inadequate communication from the district to principals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Insufficient training for principals (e.g., none available, poor quality training)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Inadequate principal knowledge/skill to make <u>budgeting decisions</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Inadequate principal knowledge/skill to make <u>instructional decisions</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Difficulty predicting school resources from year to year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Difficulty obtaining buy-in from school-level staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Difficulty obtaining community buy-in	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
i. Unsteady commitment to the system from district-level staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**27. What could happen if a school’s spending is more than its discretionary per-pupil budget?**

*Please select all that apply, or the “Not Applicable” option. If none of the statements apply, please select “None of the above.”*

- As a penalty, the amount overspent could be deducted from the school’s budget the following year.
- Principal could receive additional training on budget development.
- Principal could receive additional training on budget monitoring.
- Principal could be given control over a smaller portion of their school’s total budget the following year.
- Other, please specify:

- Not Applicable. Administrative budgeting and accounting system safeguards are in place that prevent schools from spending more than their discretionary budget.
- None of the above.

**28. What could happen if a school's spending is less than its discretionary per-pupil budget?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, select "None of the above."*

- Funds could roll over to the next year.
- Schools could lose the funds that were not spent.
- The principal could receive additional training on budget development.
- The principal could receive additional training on budget management.
- The principal could be given control over a smaller portion of their school's total budget the following year.
- Other, please specify:
- None of the above.

**29. What could happen if a school does not meet performance targets?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- Principals could be given less autonomy over hiring and personnel decisions.
- Principals could be given control over a smaller portion of their school's total budget.
- The district could more closely evaluate the school's proposed budget and site plans.
- The district could more closely monitor the implementation of next year's budget and site plans.
- Other, please specify:
- None of the above.

**30. Comparing the current school year (2017-18) with the school year before your per-pupil funding system was implemented, please indicate the extent to which the following changes occurred in your district.**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Decreased Substantially	Decreased Slightly	Stayed About the Same	Increased Slightly	Increased Substantially	Unsure
a. Level of funding in schools with a greater proportion of high-needs students relative to schools with fewer high needs students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
b. Level of funding for small schools relative to larger schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
c. Level of funding for charter schools relative to traditional schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
d. Quality of the instructional program in schools with higher concentrations of high-needs students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
e. Share of total school-level resources under principals' control	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
f. Principals' ability to use their school resources to address the needs of their students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
g. Principals' ability to implement new and/or innovative approaches to educate their students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
h. Teacher involvement in decisions about how to use staff and funding at their schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
i. Parent involvement in decisions about how to use staff and funding at their schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**31. Please indicate whether your district used a hold-harmless provision to protect schools from a sudden decline in funding level at the time of initial implementation or your per-pupil funding system?**

*A hold-harmless provision ensures that no school is funded at a lower level than the prior year.*

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes      **GO TO QUESTION 32**  
 No      **GO TO QUESTION 33**

**32. For how many years are schools in your district held harmless, or gradually phased out of being held harmless, under this provision?**

*Please enter a number in the box below, or if there is no defined number of years check the box that the hold-harmless provision will continue indefinitely.*

Years schools held harmless.

OR

Hold-harmless provision will continue indefinitely

**33. Has your district discussed or engaged in applying actual rather than average teacher salaries to school budgets?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- No, this has not been discussed. Our district applies average teacher salaries to school budgets.  
 Yes, this has been discussed, but there are no firm plans to do so. Our district applies average teacher salaries to school budgets.  
 Yes, this has been discussed and there are plans in place to move from average to actual teacher salaries in the near future.  
 Yes, this has been discussed and we currently apply actual teacher salaries to school budgets.

**34. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding school-level per-pupil funding systems and school choice systems.**

*Please select only one answer per row.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. In districts with school choice, having a school-level funding system helps ensure schools of different types are funded fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Having a school-level per-pupil funding system promotes increased use of school choice policies.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4



**34a. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement regarding your district's school-level per-pupil funding system and charter schools.**

*Please select only one answer per row.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know	Not Applicable
Charter schools receive funds through the school-level per-pupil funding system according to the same formula that other schools do.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**35. Please select the title that best represents your primary position within your district.**

*Please select only one answer. If you have more than one job title, please select the title for the job in which you spend a majority of your time.*

- Assistant Superintendent
- Budget Director
- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief Budget Officer/Chief Financial Officer
- Communications or Public Information Director
- Federal Program Administrator
- Finance Director
- Non-Federal Program Administrator
- Research Administrator
- Superintendent
- Other, please specify:

**36. How long have you held this position in this district?**

*Please count the current school year as one full year. Please select only one answer.*

- 1 year or less
- 2 - 3 years
- 4 - 6 years
- 7 - 10 years
- More than 10 years

**37.** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) authorizes the U.S. Department of Education to support up to 50 school districts in piloting new or revised weighted student funding systems that provide resources to schools largely in the form of dollars allocated on a per-pupil basis, using funding adjustments for certain student subgroups in order to provide more resources to schools with greater needs. In such systems, school principals typically have discretion (in consultation with other staff and stakeholders) over how these dollars are used, giving schools more autonomy regarding the instructional programming and services provided to students.

**Might your school district be interested in applying to participate in piloting new or improved weighted student funding systems?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure at this time

**38. Please select the titles of all of the staff that assisted you in completing this survey.**

*Please select all that apply. If no one provided assistance, please select "None of the above."*

- Administrative Assistant/Secretary
- Assistant Principal/Vice Principal
- Assistant Superintendent
- Budget Director
- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief Budget Officer/Chief Financial Officer
- Communications or Public Information Director
- Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Finance Director
- Non-Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Principal
- Research Administrator
- School Board President/Member
- Superintendent
- Other, please specify:

- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.

## Principal Survey

### 1. Which of the following best describes your school?

Please select only one answer.

<input type="checkbox"/> Regular elementary and/or secondary school (a public elementary or secondary school that does <b>not</b> focus primarily on vocational, special, or alternative education) <input type="checkbox"/> Magnet school <input type="checkbox"/> Charter school <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation school (or other public school with more flexibility given) <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational/technical school (a public elementary or secondary school that focuses primarily on vocational or career and technical education and provides education in one or more semiskilled technical operations) <input type="checkbox"/> Special education school <input type="checkbox"/> Adult day school <input type="checkbox"/> Other alternative school <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool or early childhood education center that does not serve grades above kindergarten <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input style="width: 200px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content;"> <p><i>Thank you for responding to the survey.</i></p> <p><i>This is the only question we have for adult day schools, alternative schools, or preschools/early childhood education centers that do not serve upper grades at this time.</i></p> <p><i>Please return this survey using the return envelope.</i></p> </div>
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### 2. On or around the first of October 2017, how many students in total were enrolled in your school?

Please provide a number in the box below.

	Total number of students enrolled
--	-----------------------------------

### 3. Of all the students enrolled in your school on or around the first of October 2017, how many were in each of the following categories?

Please provide a number for each row. If "0," select the box "None." Students can be counted in more than one category. However, the total number of students in each row should not exceed the number of students enrolled that you provided in question 2).

	Number of Students	
a. Eligible for free or reduced-price lunches	<input style="width: 80px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if this school is implementing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).	<input type="checkbox"/> None
b. Students with individualized education plans (IEPs)	<input style="width: 80px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> None
c. English learners (ELs)	<input style="width: 80px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> None

**4. Does your school enroll any students from outside the school's attendance area (i.e., students who applied or chose to attend)?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes      **GO TO QUESTION 5**
- No        **GO TO QUESTION 6**

**5. In the current school year (2017-18), how many students are enrolled in your school from outside the school's attendance area (i.e., who applied or chose to attend)?**

*Your best estimate is fine. Please provide a number in in the box below.*

*Total number of students that choose to attend your school in school year 2017-18*

**6. Does your district allocate any funding to your school on a per-pupil basis?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes      **GO TO QUESTION 7**
- No        **GO TO QUESTION 10**

**7. For the current school year (2017-18), what percentage of your school budget was provided on a per-pupil basis?**

*Your best estimate is fine. Please enter a percentage greater than 0 using whole numbers in the box below.*

 %

*Percentage of funds provided to your school on a per-pupil basis*

**8. Which of the following best describes the discretionary per-pupil funding your school receives?**

*Please select only one answer. Discretionary funds are those over which school leaders have authority to make spending decisions.*

- Discretionary per-pupil funding covers the majority of the school-level operational budget, including core staff. **GO TO QUESTION 9**
- Discretionary dollars are largely for purchasing supplies and materials and/or supplemental staff positions. Core staff positions are determined by staffing formulas maintained by the district. **GO TO QUESTION 10**

**9. How are per-pupil funds distributed to schools in your district adjusted to account for student needs or demographics?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- A base per-pupil amount is weighted according to student needs. For example, economically disadvantaged students count as an additional 0.5 students for funding allocations.
- An additional flat per-pupil allocation is provided for certain types of students. For example, \$1,000 of additional funding is provided for each economically disadvantaged student.
- They are not adjusted. The per-pupil allocation is the same regardless of student needs.

**10. How much influence does the district have with respect to hiring the following staff compared with your school community (school administrators, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

Please select one answer in each row. If decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Unsure
a. Regular classroom teachers (core grades/subjects)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Special education teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Special area or resource teachers (e.g., English learner, art, music, technology)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Instructional aides	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Instructional coaches	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Pupil support staff (e.g., counselors, psychologists, social workers)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Assistant principals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Principals	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**11. How much influence does the district have with respect to selecting the following materials or services compared with your school community (school administrators, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

Please select one answer in each row. If decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Unsure
a. Textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Curricular materials	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Instructional software	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Office supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. External (non-district) service providers (contracted services)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Food services	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**12. How much influence does the district have with respect to making the following decisions about school instructional programs, compared with your school community (school administrators, teachers, other school staff, and committees including parents and/or community members)?**

*Please select one answer in each row. If decisions are made at a level above the district (e.g., by the state), please select "Decision mostly made by district-level staff and/or stakeholders."*

	Decision mostly made by <u>district-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision shared by <u>district and school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Decision mostly made by <u>school-level staff and/or stakeholders</u>	Unsure
f. Daily schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Elective or non-core classes offered	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Before/after school programming	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
i. Summer programming	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
j. Professional development for staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**13. Which of the following types of services and materials, if any, is your school permitted to purchase from external (non-district) vendors?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- Professional development services
- Pupil support services (such as mental health, nursing)
- Supplemental educational services (such as before/after school program, tutoring)
- Facilities/janitorial services
- Food services
- Security services
- Technology/communications services
- Computer software/hardware/equipment
- Instructional materials
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above

**14. Thinking about the schools in your district that serve the highest proportion of economically disadvantaged students, please indicate whether those schools receive less or more resources than other schools to support the following areas.**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Substantially less	Somewhat less	About the same amount	Somewhat more	Substantially more
a. School operational budget per pupil	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
b. Provision of high-quality, rigorous courses	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
c. Access to more experienced teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
d. Access to more effective teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
e. Smaller class sizes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
f. Timely professional development opportunities for staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
g. Up-to-date curricular and instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
h. Computers and other technology to support student learning	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
i. Safe and adequate facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

**15. Does your school have a school site council (including parents, teachers, and/or other community members) that provide input on budget or programming decisions for the school?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Yes      **GO TO QUESTION 16**  
 No        **GO TO QUESTION 17**

**16. On which of the following decisions does the school site council (including parents, teachers, and/or other community members) provide input?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- Budget allocations
- Curriculum
- School scheduling
- Hiring teachers
- Hiring administrators
- Library resources
- After school activities
- School events
- Other decisions; please specify below.

**17. How much influence do each of the following stakeholders have on budget decisions at your school?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	No Influence	Limited Influence	Moderate Influence	Significant Influence
a. District staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Principal (you)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Other school administrative staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Other school support staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Parents	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Other community stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**18. How clear to you are the following in your district?**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Not at all clear	Somewhat clear	Moderately clear	Extremely clear
a. How the amounts of funding distributed to each school is determined by the central district office.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. How the numbers of different staff types are allocated to schools.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. How specific staff are assigned to particular schools.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Where to obtain details about how my school's budget allocation was calculated this year.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Who I can ask for more information about how my school's budget allocation was determined.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4



**19. Which of the following types of information do you receive from the district regarding the resources provided to your school?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- The amount of discretionary funding your school will receive from general unrestricted funding sources.
- The amount of discretionary funding provided to your school from restricted funding sources (such as Title I, Title II, Title III and/or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).
- The number of staffing positions your school will receive from general unrestricted funding sources.
- The number of staffing positions provided to your school from restricted funding sources (such as Title I, Title II, Title III, and/or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).
- The cost of district-provided services received by your school.
- Your total school-level operational budget consisting of all funding from discretionary and non-discretionary sources.
- A general description of how funding or staffing levels for your school were determined.
- The specific calculation of how funding or staffing levels were determined for your school (e.g. a spreadsheet showing how the calculations were made).

OR

- None of the above.

**20. How does your district communicate information about your school budget to your school?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- Annual principal meeting
- Ongoing principal meetings
- Training for principals
- Training for other school staff
- E-mails or other written notices
- Posting information on internal district website
- Posting information publicly on district website
- Other, please specify:

**21. Is the primary responsibility for developing your school budget handled by your school, the district, or is this responsibility shared by your school and the district?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- School **GO TO QUESTION 22**
- District **GO TO QUESTION 24**
- Shared by school and the district **GO TO QUESTION 22**

**22. Which staff member in your school assumes primary responsibility for developing your school budget?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Principal
- Assistant principal
- School budget officer, bookkeeper, or secretary
- Another staff member, please specify:

**23. For the current school year (2017-18), how many hours did all staff at your school spend developing your school budget?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Less than 5 hours
- 5 - 10 hours
- 11 - 15 hours
- 16 - 30 hours
- More than 30 hours

**24. Is the primary responsibility for managing the budget handled by your school, the district, or is this responsibility shared by your school and the district?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- School **GO TO QUESTION 25**
- District **GO TO QUESTION 27**
- Shared by school and the district **GO TO QUESTION 25**

**25. Which staff member in your school assumes primary responsibility for managing your school budget?**

*Please select only one answer.*

- Principal
- Assistant principal
- School budget officer, bookkeeper, or secretary
- Another staff member, please specify:

**26. What is the expected number of hours all staff at your school will spend managing your school budget in the current school year (2017-18)?**

*Please select only one answer. Your best estimate is fine.*

- Less than 5 hours
- 5 - 10 hours
- 11 - 15 hours
- 16 - 30 hours
- More than 30 hours

**27. During the previous school year (2016-17, including summer 2017), did you receive any hours of professional development in school planning/program design?**

*Only include workshops, coursework, and conferences offered or paid for by your district or state. Please select only one answer.*

- Yes **GO TO QUESTION 28**
- No **GO TO QUESTION 29**

**28. How many hours of professional development in school planning/program design did you receive during the previous school year (2016-17, including summer 2017)?**

*Only include workshops, coursework, and conferences sponsored by your district or state. Please select only one answer.*

- Less than 5 hours
- 5 - 10 hours
- 11 - 15 hours
- 16 - 30 hours
- More than 30 hours

**29. During the previous school year (2016-17, including summer 2017), did you receive any hours of professional development on budget development/management?**

*Only include workshops, coursework, and conferences offered or paid for by your district or state. Please select only one answer.*

- Yes      GO TO QUESTION 30  
 No      GO TO QUESTION 31

**30. How many hours of professional development in budget development/management did you receive during the previous school year (2016-17, including summer 2017)?**

*Only include workshops, coursework, and conferences sponsored by your district or state. Please select only one answer.*

- Less than 5 hours  
 5 - 10 hours  
 11 - 15 hours  
 16 - 30 hours  
 More than 30 hours

**31. What additional training or support is available to your school from the district on budget development/management outside of formal professional development?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- There is a specific district staff person assigned to our school to assist with budget development/management.  
 District-level staff are available for in-person technical assistance as needed.  
 District-level staff are available by phone to provide technical assistance as needed.  
 Online resources are available, including documents, videos, and/or training modules.  
 Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.

**32. On which of the following topics do you feel you need additional training or information?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- Technical aspects of budget development/management  
 Rules and regulations surrounding use of categorical funds  
 Conducting a needs assessment  
 Using resources more efficiently  
 Selecting programs/resources for at-risk students  
 Selecting programs/resources for English learners  
 Selecting programs/resources for special education students  
 Other, please specify:

**33. How much of a challenge is each of the following with respect to the system of school-level funding in your school?**

Please select one answer in each row.

	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Major challenge
a. Insufficient training for principals (e.g., lack of availability or poor quality training)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
b. Inadequate data to help inform principal decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
c. Inadequate communication from the district	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
d. Difficulty predicting school resources from year to year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
e. Difficulty coordinating with district staff regarding resource allocation decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
f. Difficulty obtaining community buy-in	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
g. Difficulty obtaining buy-in from school staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
h. Unsteady commitment to the system from district-level staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

**34a. Please refer back to Question 6. Which option did you select?**

Yes [My district allocates funding to schools on a per-pupil basis.] GO TO QUESTION 34b



No [My district does not allocate funding to schools on a per-pupil basis.] GO TO QUESTION 39

**34b. Please refer back to Question 8. Which option did you select?**

Discretionary per-pupil funding covers the majority of the school-level operational budget, including core staff. GO TO QUESTION 35

Discretionary dollars are largely for purchasing supplies and materials or supplemental staff positions. Core staff positions are determined by staffing formulas maintained by the district. GO TO QUESTION 39

**35. What could happen if your end-of-year spending is more than your school's discretionary budget?**

Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."

As a penalty, the amount overspent could be deducted from my school's total budget the following year.

I could receive additional training on budget development.

I could receive additional training on budget management.

I could be given discretion over a smaller part of my school's total budget the following year.

Not Applicable. Administrative budgeting and accounting system safeguards are in place that prevent schools from spending more than their discretionary budget.

Other, please specify:

OR

None of the above.

**36. What could happen if your end-of-year spending is less than your school's discretionary budget?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- Funds could roll over to the next year.
- I could lose the funds that were not spent.
- I could receive additional training on budget development.
- I could receive additional training on budget management.
- I could be given discretion over a smaller part of my school's total budget the following year.
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.

**37. What could happen if your school does not meet its performance targets?**

*Please select all that apply. If none of the statements apply, please select "None of the above."*

- I could be given less autonomy over hiring and personnel decisions.
- I could be given control over a smaller portion of my school's total budget.
- The district could more closely evaluate my school's proposed budget and site plans for next year.
- The district could more closely monitor the implementation of next year's budget and site plans.
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.

**38. Comparing the current school year (2017-18) to the school year before your per-pupil funding system was implemented, please indicate the extent to which the following changes occurred in your district.**

*Please select one answer in each row.*

	Decreased substantially	Decreased slightly	Stayed about the same	Increased slightly	Increased substantially	Unsure
a. Level of funding in schools with a greater proportion of high-needs students relative to schools with fewer high-needs students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
b. Level of funding for small schools relative to larger schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
c. Level of funding for charter schools relative to traditional schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
d. Quality of the instructional program in schools with higher concentrations of fewer high-needs students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
e. Share of total school-level resources under principals' control	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
f. Principals' ability to use school resources to address the needs of their students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
g. Principals' ability to implement new and/or innovative approaches to educate their students	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
h. Teacher involvement in decisions about how to use staff and funding at their schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
i. Parent involvement in decisions about how to use staff and funding at their schools	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**39. Please select the title that best represents your primary position within your district.**

*Please select only one answer. If you have more than one job title, please select the title on the job that you spend a majority of your time.*

- Principal
- Assistant Principal/Vice Principal
- Bookkeeper
- Budget Director at the District office
- Budget Director at your school
- Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Finance Director
- Non-Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Research Administrator
- Teacher
- Other, please specify:

**40. How long have you held this position in this district?**

*Please select only one answer. Please count the current school year as one full year.*

- 1 year or less
- 2 - 3 years
- 4 - 6 years
- 7 - 10 years
- More than 10 years

**41. Please select the titles of all of the staff that assisted you in completing this survey.**

*Please select all that apply. If no one provided assistance, please select "None of the above."*

- Administrative Assistant/Secretary
- Assistant Principal/Vice Principal
- Assistant Superintendent
- Bookkeeper
- Budget Director at the district office
- Budget Director at your school
- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief Budget Officer/Chief Financial Officer
- Communications or Public Information Director
- Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Finance Director
- Non-Federal Program Administrator/Manager
- Principal
- Research Administrator
- School Board President/Member
- Secretary
- Superintendent
- Teacher
- Other, please specify:

OR

- None of the above.



## District Request for Documents (RFD)

We are requesting the following documents and materials:

- 1. Materials describing the annual school-level budgeting/planning process.** We are interested in any documents you can share that explain how school budgets in your district are developed annually, who is involved, and how resource allocation decisions are made. Ideally, this information would include a description of the weighted student funding formula, the types of services and staff/nonpersonnel resources the central district office provides to schools, a list of personnel and nonpersonnel resources that are under the discretion of the school principal, and any guidance to principals regarding budgeting and planning. If this has changed over the past *five years*, please include historical as well as current documents.
- 2. Documentation of the weighted student funding formula.** We are interested in any documents that describe how funds are distributed to schools, including base per pupil amounts, funding weights for particular groups of students or other factors related to the cost of services, the identification of revenue sources that are distributed through the WSF system, any hold harmless agreements/provisions that have been established, and any other information you think might be helpful for us to understand your system and processes. If any of these have changed over the past *five years*, please include historical as well as current documents.
- 3. Complete school-level budgets** for three years before WSF implementation, and all years since WSF implementation. We are interested in understanding planned spending in schools in your district before and after WSF implementation. If your district is small (i.e., fewer than 10 schools), we would like to request budgets from all schools. If your district is larger, we will work with you to request budgets from a sample of schools representing different levels of student need and schooling levels. If your district began implementing WSF *before 2010*, we will work with you to request budgets from a sample of WSF years.
- 4. Audited expenditure files** for your district for five years before WSF implementation, and all years since WSF implementation. In these files, please include the standard codes used in your chart of accounts (object, function, etc.) and site codes that identify individual schools. We are interested in understanding expenditures overall and by school in your district before and after WSF implementation.
- 5. Chart of Accounts.** Lists of the chart of accounts codes for your district covering all budget and expenditure file years requested. To interpret and analyze budgets and audited expenditures, we are requesting from schools in your district who are participating in the study, we would like to request the account codes used by your district (e.g., State Accounting Manual) and/or district — particularly the revenue and fund codes, object of expenditure codes, and function codes. If the current chart of accounts differs from the fiscal years covered in the expenditure and budget files you share with us, please provide a chart of accounts for prior years as appropriate.
- 6. School Enrollments.** School enrollment figures for each of the schools in your district for each school year for which you are providing a budget and/or audited expenditure files, by student category. We would like to know total student enrollment for these schools so that we can understand budgeted expenditures (being requested from schools directly) in per-pupil terms. We are also interested in counts of students in each category that your WSF formula considers in allocating funds.
- 7. Any other written documentation.** It would also be useful for us to see any other written planning documentation, budget narratives, or funding applications related to your district's weighted student funding system.

## District Pre-Interview Survey

**1. We are interested in the structure of your funding formula to distribute funds from the district to schools.**

a. What is the base per-pupil allocation amount for schools in your district?

*Please enter dollar amounts in the box below.*

<b>Elementary school:</b>	\$	<i>Base per-pupil allocation amount</i>
<b>Middle school:</b>	\$	<i>Base per-pupil allocation amount</i>
<b>High school:</b>	\$	<i>Base per-pupil allocation amount</i>

- b. Please attach a copy of your funding formula documentation.
- c. Please indicate the student needs categories that receive additional resources in the school funding allocation formula by entering the weights used (in Column A) OR additional dollar amounts prescribed by the formula (in Column B). Then in Column C, please provide the definition of each applicable student needs category. If a category is not applicable, please check "Not Applicable in Column D.

*Please enter a value in **either** column A, column B, or select "Not applicable" in column D for each row. Enter the definition in column C for all applicable categories*

	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
	Weight Used (for example, 1.5 means students in this group generate 50% more funding than the base amount)	Additional Dollar Amount (for example, \$100 means that students in this group generate an additional \$100 dollars of funding on top of the base student amount)	Definition of student needs category	Not applicable
Economically disadvantaged students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
English learners				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Students with disabilities				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Students in foster care				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Homeless students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Students with low academic performance				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Gifted and talented students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Elementary school students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Middle school students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
High school students				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Other, please specify: <input type="text"/>				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Other, please specify: <input type="text"/>				<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable

d. Please add any explanations or additional notes on your student weights here:

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**2. Are there other factors that generate additional funding for schools? Please explain:**

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## Interview Protocol for District Finance Officer and District Administrator

**Note to interviewer:** Items marked with ‘\*’ indicate topics that require the respondent to reflect on circumstances and activities before and around the initial implementation of the WSF system. If the respondent was not employed by the district at the time or does not recall historical details, consider reframing the item to focus on *current* implementation or skip the item, as appropriate.

### WSF Goals and Strategies

Question	
<p><b>1. As we understand, your district adopted a WSF system in [list school year]. Is that correct?</b></p> <p><b>Are you aware of how the WSF system came about in your district? Were school leaders or other school-level staff involved in the decision-making process about the design and/or launch of the WSF system? If so, how? *</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which particular school staff were involved?</li> <li>• [If applicable] What, if any, role did the teachers’ union have in the process? The school board? External stakeholders?</li> <li>• Were you involved in the process? Who else at the district level was involved? How?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. In introducing a WSF system, what issues was your district intending to address? *</b></p> <p><i>[For districts with mature WSF systems only] Have the aims of the system changed at all since then? If so, how and why? *</i></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility/autonomy of general funds, categorical funds; equity with which general or categorical funds are distributed to schools</li> <li>• School choice</li> <li>• Per-pupil allocations; actual versus average teacher salaries; staff mobility</li> <li>• Transparency, predictability; innovation</li> <li>• Staff and community engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. How does your district’s WSF system relate to the issues you mentioned?</b></p> <p><i>[If respondent indicated changes in aims of the system in Q2] Have you adapted the system to respond to its shifting aims? If so, how and why? *</i></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the most important components of your district’s WSF system?</li> <li>• Do you think these pieces make/will make a difference in addressing these issues? Why or why not?</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. How [do/will] you know if your district is successful in reaching these goals?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benchmarks or indicators [are/will] be used to measure progress toward these goals? What are the data sources? How [do/will] you use the data?</li> </ul>

## Initial Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>5. What was the original reaction from schools about implementing the WSF system? Has this reaction changed over time? If so, how? *</p> <p>6. [If information on the WSF formula is collected prior to the interview in pre-interview survey or elsewhere] I understand that [summarize basic structure of the WSF formula, including the base per-pupil amount and weights included].</p> <p>Do you know how the weights for different students were originally determined? Have the weights changed since their original development? *</p> <p>[If information on the WSF formula is NOT collected prior to the interview] Can you describe how the WSF formula is structured, including what the base per-pupil amount is, what weights are included, and if there any other foundational amounts?</p> <p>Do you know how the weights for different students were originally determined? Have the weights changed since their original development?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did the district experience a problem of schools feeling like there were “winners” and “losers” under the WSF system, as some schools got more money and others got less?</i></li> <li>• <i>Was there any opposition to the new WSF system? If so, from whom (principals, teachers, parents)? What were their objections?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How was the base funding amount determined?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>How did the district develop the weights? *</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What data or information (literature, student outcome data, emulation of federal or state formula to districts) did you use to develop the weights?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there weights included in the formula other than those for specific student needs (e.g., based on school size, location, student outcomes)?</i></li> <li>• [For districts with mature WSF systems] <i>How often are the weights reviewed and modified?</i></li> <li>• [For districts with new WSF systems] <i>Are there plans to review and adjust the weights, as necessary? If so, how frequent will these reviews be?</i></li> </ul>
<p>7. Which federal and state funds are distributed to schools through the WSF?</p> <p>8. What other funding sources can schools receive outside of funds received through the WSF?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal funds like Title I, II, or III?</i></li> <li>• <i>State categorical funds?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Examples, if needed:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Private education foundations that support schools?</i></li> <li>– <i>Federal grants?</i></li> <li>– <i>Private grants?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>How do these other funding sources interact with the WSF? Does it affect how much schools might get through the WSF?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p>9. How are funding allocation decisions different under the WSF system compared to the previous system? *</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which services, if any, were devolved to the schools? Why?</li> <li>• How did the distribution of funds to schools change after WSF implementation?</li> <li>• How did changes in the distribution of funds affect small schools and other less traditional schools such as charters?</li> </ul>

## Successes, Challenges, and Effects of the WSF System

Question	
<p>10. What successes has your district experienced in implementing the WSF system? Can you describe any factors that may have enabled these successes?</p> <p>11. What challenges has your district faced in implementing a WSF system? How well has your district been able to address these challenges, and how? *</p> <p>12. How has the distribution of funding under the WSF system affected the opportunities of students with particular educational needs to succeed relative to others?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b>  <b>[For districts with mature WSF systems] Have the successes in implementation changed over time? If so, in what ways? *</b></p> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtaining buy-in from district- or school-level staff, unions, school board, parents, other community stakeholders?</li> <li>• Technical capacity?</li> <li>• Challenges for small schools or charter schools?</li> <li>• Were there any unpredicted challenges?</li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For which groups of students?</li> <li>• Has the budgeting/planning process created an incentive for schools to attract students who require additional resources to educate? Why or why not? Has it created any disincentives?</li> </ul>

## Ongoing Implementation of WSF / Decision-making Process

Question	
<p><b>13. Could you please walk me through your district's annual planning and budgeting process, from when it begins to when key decisions are made?</b></p> <p><b>14. How would you describe your district's approach to giving principals autonomy in decision-making?</b></p> <p><b>Over what proportion of their total school budgets do principals typically have decision-making autonomy? Are there any limitations or guidelines on how they may use these funds? If so, what?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When does this process begin?</i></li> <li>• <i>When and how is information on school allocations provided to schools?</i></li> <li>• <i>When are schools' initial spending plans due? How does the amount of planning time compare to the amount before WSF was introduced? *</i></li> <li>• <i>When and how does the district review these initial plans and work with schools to revise the plans?</i></li> <li>• <i>When are schools' final plans due?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are the key stakeholders involved in the process? What are their roles?</i></li> <li>• <i>As part of the process, do you conduct a needs assessment? What other data are used?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Autonomy for all: All principals have autonomy</i></li> <li>• <i>Earned autonomy: Autonomy granted to higher-performing, but not lower-performing schools; district more active in managing resources for lower-performing schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Tiered autonomy: Tiered levels of autonomy based on performance, growth, and school capacity; struggling schools provided more support, resources, and guidance</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How consistent is the level of discretion across schools? Are there any differences in the district's approach to autonomy for smaller schools and other less traditional types of schools such as charters?</i></li> <li>• <i>How does the level of discretion and autonomy under the WSF system compare to the level under the previous system? Has it changed since the beginning of the WSF system? *</i></li> <li>• <i>Would you like to see the district or schools have more control over school-level expenditures?</i></li> <li>• <i>Which revenue sources are pushed through the WSF formula and what share of these sources does the amount flowing through the WSF represent?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>15. What kinds of accountability mechanisms, if any, has your district implemented in conjunction with the WSF system?</b></p> <p><b>How does the district review and monitor school plans and budgets?</b></p> <p><b>16. How transparent is the current resource allocation process to stakeholders, including school board members, principals, teachers and other school staff, parents, and other community members?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What tracking systems, if any, does the district have in place to understand how funds are spent at the school level?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there any consequences for particular budget decisions made by schools? For declines in student outcomes (such as decreased autonomy)?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are the consequences consistent across schools?</i> [If applicable] <i>Are charter schools held to the same accountability standards?</i></li> <li>• [If applicable] <i>How has principal accountability changed under the WSF system, if at all?</i> [If not implemented] <i>Why were new accountability mechanisms not implemented?</i></li> <li>• [If applicable] <i>Does the district require modifications of plans to ensure resources are being used responsibly?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to increase transparency?</i></li> <li>• [If applicable] <i>What successes or failures have you encountered in attempting to increase transparency?</i></li> <li>• <i>Have changes in transparency affected the degree to which schools are held accountable for results?</i></li> <li>• <i>What kinds of questions have you and your staff received from schools about fund allocations?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are school budgets sufficiently predictable or stable for schools to effectively plan and budget from year to year?</i></li> </ul>

## Support and Training on WSF

Question	
<p><b>17. How well do principals, teachers, and school leadership team members understand the WSF system? How prepared are they to make decisions about program planning, budgeting, and resource allocation?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [If not clear understanding] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What do they know? What do you wish they knew?</i></li> <li>– <i>What perceptions or misperceptions do they have?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• [If not prepared] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What additional resources or supports do you think schools need to successfully implement the WSF system? Are there any plans to provide these?</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Question	
<p><b>18. How would you characterize the district's approach to supporting schools with making resource allocation decisions?</b></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Providing schools directives versus disseminating best practices</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Has your department provided any technical assistance or training to the schools in your district on budgeting? If yes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>If yes: Who was the intended audience for the training (principals, other school administrators, school leadership teams, teachers)? What was the focus?</i></li> </ul> </i></li> <li>• <i>Has the role of the district in assisting schools around budgeting changed at all since implementation of the WSF system? If yes, how? *</i></li> </ul>

## Concluding Questions

Question	
<p><b>19. Are there any district-, state-, or federal-level policies that promote or create barriers to more effective implementation of the budgeting/planning policy for your school? If so, what are they?</b></p> <p><b>20. What changes would you make to the budgeting/planning process or the funding formula to improve its implementation or its benefits to schools? Why?</b></p> <p><b>21. Is there anything I haven't asked you about your district's budgeting/ planning process or the WSF system that you would like to comment on?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there an impact from:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>[If applicable] The district's collective bargaining agreements?</i></li> <li>– <i>District mandates and policies, such as:</i></li> <li>– <i>[If applicable] School choice policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Hiring and placement policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Use of average versus actual salaries in charging against school budgets?</i></li> <li>– <i>State school finance system?</i></li> <li>– <i>State charter school policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Other federal or state policies (e.g., accountability, curriculum and standards)?</i></li> </ul> <i>If so, what do you feel is the impact?</i> </i></li> <li>• <i>For those policies that have created barriers, have you been able to find ways of overcoming the issues they present?</i></li> <li>• <i>What, if anything, would you like to see changed about these policies?</i></li> </ul>

## Interview Protocol for District Program Officer

**Note to interviewer:** Items marked with ‘\*’ indicate topics that require the respondent to reflect on circumstances and activities before and around the initial implementation of the WSF system. If the respondent was not employed by the district at the time or does not recall historical details, consider reframing the item to focus on *current* implementation or skip the item, as appropriate.

### District Context

Question	
<p>1. How would you describe your district to someone who has never been there before, including your district’s strengths and challenges?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are the district’s recent successes?</i></li> <li>• <i>How would you describe the degree of teacher and staff turnover? How does this compare to other nearby districts?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are your students’ greatest or most unique needs?</i></li> </ul>

### WSF Goals and Strategies

Question	
<p>2. In introducing a WSF system, what issues was your district intending to address? *</p> <p>[For districts with mature WSF systems only] Have the aims of the system changed at all since then? If so, how and why? *</p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flexibility/autonomy of general funds, categorical funds; equity with which general or categorical funds are distributed to schools</i></li> <li>• <i>School choice</i></li> <li>• <i>Per-pupil allocations; actual versus average teacher salaries; staff mobility</i></li> <li>• <i>Transparency, predictability; innovation</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff and community engagement</i></li> </ul>
<p>3. How does your district’s WSF system relate to the issues you mentioned?</p> <p>[If respondent indicated changes in aims of the system in Q2] Have you adapted the system to respond to its shifting aims? If so, how and why? *</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are the most important components of your district’s WSF system?</i></li> <li>• <i>Why do you think these pieces [make/will make] a difference in addressing these issues?</i></li> </ul>
<p>4. How [do/will] you know if your district is successful in reaching these goals?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What benchmarks or indicators [are/will] be used to measure progress toward these goals? What are the data sources?</i></li> <li>• <i>How [do/will] you use the data?</i></li> </ul>

### Initial Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>5. As we understand, your district adopted a WSF system in [list school year]. Is that correct?</p> <p>Are you aware of how the WSF system</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Which particular school staff were involved?</i></li> <li>• [If applicable] <i>What, if any, role did the teachers’ union have in the process? The school board?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p>came about in your district? Were school leaders or other school-level staff involved in the decision-making process about the design and/or launch of the WSF system? If so, how? *</p> <p>6. What was the original reaction from schools about implementing the WSF system? Has their response changed over time? If so, how? *</p> <p>7. I understand the following categories of students are given weights under your WSF system: <a href="#">[list student weight categories]</a></p> <p>Are there categories of student needs (e.g., at-risk, English learners, special education) that you think should be included in the formula, but are not? Why?</p> <p>8. How are funding allocation decisions different under the WSF system compared to the previous system? *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Were you involved in the process? Who else at the district level was involved? How?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did the district experience a problem of schools feeling like there were “winners” and “losers” under the WSF system, as some schools got more money and others got less?</i></li> <li>• <i>Was there any opposition to the new WSF system? If so, what were their objections?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [For <u>all</u> WSF districts] <i>How were the values of the weights determined? *</i></li> <li>• [For districts with mature WSF systems] <i>How often are the weights reviewed and modified?</i></li> <li>• [For districts with new WSF systems] <i>Are there plans to review and adjust the weights, as necessary? If so, how frequent will these reviews be?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How did the distribution of funds to schools change after WSF implementation?</i></li> <li>• <i>How did changes in the distribution of funds affect small schools and other less traditional schools such as charters?</i></li> </ul>

## Successes, Challenges, and Effects of the WSF System

Question	
<p>9. What successes has your district experienced in implementing the WSF system? Can you describe any factors that may have enabled the successes?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [For districts with mature WSF systems] <i>Have the successes in implementation changed over time? If so, in what ways? *</i></li> </ul>
<p>10. What challenges has your district faced in implementing a WSF system? How well has your district been able to address these challenges, and how? *</p> <p>11. How has the distribution of funding under the WSF system affected the opportunities of students with particular educational needs to succeed relative to others?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Obtaining buy-in from district- or school-level staff, unions, school board, parents, other community stakeholders?</i></li> <li>• <i>Technical capacity?</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges for small schools or charter schools?</i></li> <li>• <i>Were there any unpredicted challenges?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>For which groups of students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Has the budgeting/planning process created an incentive for schools to attract students who require additional resources to educate? Why or why not?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>12. What, if anything, did the budgeting/planning process allow schools to do that they would not have been able to do otherwise? We are specifically interested in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting students with special subgroups</li> <li>• Using different programs or instructional practices</li> </ul>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Were any additional non-academic supports added?</i></li> <li>• <i>How much have these changes varied across schools within your district?</i></li> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to promote different programs or instructional practices? Are there any future plans?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there any specific instructional or related services needed to meet the needs of the students in your district that are lacking?</i></li> </ul>

### Ongoing Implementation of WSF / Decision-making Process

Question	
<p><b>13. Could you please walk me through your district's annual planning and budgeting process, from when it begins to when key decisions are made?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When does this process begin?</i></li> <li>• <i>When and how is information on school allocations provided to schools?</i></li> <li>• <i>When are schools' initial spending plans due? How does the amount of planning time compare to the amount before WSF was introduced? *</i></li> <li>• <i>When and how does the district review these initial plans and work with schools to revise the plans?</i></li> <li>• <i>When are schools' final plans due?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who are the key stakeholders involved in the process? What are their roles?</i></li> <li>• <i>As part of the process, do you conduct a needs assessment? What other data are used?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>14. At the school level, are school-level stakeholders other than principals—school leadership teams, teachers, other school staff, parents, students, and other community members—involved in the budgeting and program planning process? How would you describe their level of involvement?</b></p> <p><b>15. How would you describe your district's approach to giving principals autonomy in decision-making?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How has the level of involvement of these stakeholders changed in response to the WSF policy?</i></li> <li>• <i>How does the level of involvement of these other school-level stakeholders vary across schools in your district? Why?</i></li> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to promote the involvement of school staff in the WSF process? Parents and community members? Are there any future plans? [If respondent indicates parents are involved] How do the district and schools ensure the involvement of a diverse and representative set of parents?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are benefits and challenges of involving school-level staff and community stakeholders in the process?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Autonomy for all: All principals have autonomy</i></li> <li>• <i>Earned autonomy: Autonomy granted to higher-performing, but not lower-performing schools; district more active in managing resources for lower-performing schools</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>16. What kinds of accountability mechanisms, if any, has your district implemented in conjunction with the WSF system?</b></p> <p><b>How does the district review and monitor school plans and budgets?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tiered autonomy: Tiered levels of autonomy based on performance, growth, and school capacity; struggling schools provided more support, resources, guidance</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How consistent is the level of discretion across schools? Are there any differences in the district's approach to autonomy for smaller schools and other less traditional types of schools such as charters?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are there any consequences for particular budget decisions made by schools or for declines in student outcomes (such as decreased autonomy)?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are the consequences consistent across schools? [If applicable] Are charter schools held to the same accountability standards?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If applicable] How has principal accountability changed under the WSF system, if at all?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If not implemented] Why were new accountability mechanisms not implemented?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If applicable] Does the district require modifications of plans to ensure resources are being used responsibly?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>17. What educational services or decisions are provided to schools by the district? Which are available for them to purchase from your district, and which can schools purchase from outside vendors? Why?</b></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Complexity of state and federal law (e.g., special education)</i></li> <li>• <i>Economies of scale</i></li> <li>• <i>School leadership capacity and preference</i></li> <li>• <i>District philosophy</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Does your district have a "central services" market—that is, a menu of network and central services where you can choose whether to buy services from the district or from outside vendors? If so, what services are included? How does it operate?</i></li> <li>• <i>How would you describe the current balance between district and school control?</i></li> <li>• <i>Would you like to see the district or schools have more control over school-level expenditures?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>18. How transparent is the current resource allocation process to stakeholders, including school board members, principals, teachers and other school staff, parents, and other community members?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to increase transparency?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If applicable] What successes or failures have you encountered in attempting to increase transparency?</i></li> <li>• <i>Have changes in transparency affected the degree to which schools are held accountable for results?</i></li> <li>• <i>What kinds of questions have you and your staff received from schools about fund allocations?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>19. Are school budgets sufficiently predictable or stable for schools to effectively plan and budget from year to year? Why or why not?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are school budgets sufficiently predictable or stable for schools to effectively plan and budget from year to year?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are schools able to retain staff from year to year?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If respondent was in the district prior to the start of WSF] How does the level of stability compare to the process prior to the new WSF system?</i></li> </ul>

## Support and Training on WSF

Question	
<p><b>20. How well do principals, teachers, and school leadership team members understand the WSF system? How prepared are they to make decisions about program planning, budgeting, and resource allocation?</b></p> <p><b>21. How would you characterize the district's approach to supporting schools with making resource allocation decisions?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>[If not clear understanding]</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What do they know? What do you wish they knew?</i></li> <li>– <i>What perceptions or misperceptions do they have?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>[If not prepared]</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What additional resources or supports do you think schools need to successfully implement the WSF system? Are there any plans to provide these?</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Providing schools directives versus disseminating best practices</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Has your department provided any technical assistance or training to the schools in your district on budgeting? If yes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Who was the intended audience for the training (principals, other school administrators, school leadership teams, teachers)?</i></li> <li>– <i>What was the focus?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Has the role of the district in assisting schools around budgeting changed at all since implementation of the WSF system? If yes, how? *</i></li> </ul>

## Concluding Questions

I would like to end this conversation with a few questions about “lessons learned” to date about the implementation of the WSF policy.

Question	
<p><b>22. Are there any district-, state-, or federal-level policies that promote or create barriers to more effective implementation of the budgeting/planning policy for your school? If so, what are they?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there an impact from:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>[If applicable] The district’s collective bargaining agreements?</i></li> <li>– <i>District mandates and policies, such as:</i></li> <li>– <i>Hiring and placement policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Use of average versus actual salaries in charging against school budgets?</i></li> <li>– <i>State school finance system?</i></li> <li>– <i>State charter school policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Other federal or state policies (e.g., accountability, curriculum and standards)?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><i>If so, what do you feel is the impact?</i></li> <li>• <i>For those policies that have created barriers, have you been able to find ways of overcoming the issues they present?</i></li> <li>• <i>What, if anything, would you like to see changed about these policies?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>23. Does your district have a school choice policy? How is it structured? Are there ways in which the WSF system supports or discourages school choice? If so, please describe.</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In what ways, if any, does the district consider school choice in the implementation of the WSF system?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do the following enter into school assignment decisions?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Sibling preference (if student has a sibling in school already)</i></li> <li>– <i>Neighborhood school (if school is close to home)</i></li> <li>– <i>Other</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>24. What changes would you make to the budgeting/planning process to improve its implementation or its benefits to schools? Why?</b></p>	
<p><b>25. Is there anything I haven’t asked you about your district’s budgeting/planning process or the WSF system that you would like to comment on?</b></p>	

## Interview Protocol for School Board Member

**Note to interviewer:** Items marked with ‘\*’ indicate topics that require the respondent to reflect on circumstances and activities before and around the initial implementation of the WSF system. If the respondent was not employed by the district at the time or does not recall historical details, consider reframing the item to focus on *current* implementation or skip the item, as appropriate.

### District Context

Question	
<p>1. How would you describe your district to someone who has never been there before, including your district’s strengths and challenges?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are the district’s recent successes?</i></li> <li>• <i>How would you describe the degree of teacher and staff turnover?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are your students’ greatest or most unique needs?</i></li> </ul>

### Initial Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>2. Are you aware of how the WSF system came about in your district? If so, how was the school board involved? *</p> <p>3. As far as you know, what issues was your district intending to address by introducing a WSF system? *</p> <p><i>[For districts with mature WSF systems only]</i> Have the aims of the system changed at all since then? If so, how and why? *</p> <p>4. How did other members of the board react to this proposed change? District staff? School staff? Others in the community? Has the response changed over time? If so, how? *</p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flexibility/autonomy of general funds, categorical funds; equity with which general or categorical funds are distributed to schools</i></li> <li>• <i>School choice</i></li> <li>• <i>Per-pupil allocations; actual versus average teacher salaries; staff mobility</i></li> <li>• <i>Transparency, predictability; innovation</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff and community engagement</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did the district experience a problem of schools feeling like there were “winners” and “losers” under the WSF system, as some schools got more money and others got less?</i></li> <li>• <i>Was there any opposition to the new WSF system? If so, from whom (principals, teachers, parents)? What were their objections?</i></li> </ul>

### Ongoing Implementation of WSF / Decision-making Process

Question	
<p>5. What, if any, involvement [does/will] the school board have in reviewing and modifying the weights in the WSF formula?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>[If school board has involvement in reviewing the WSF formula] What recommendations has the school board made?</i></li> </ul>



Question	
<p><b>6. What is the school board's role in your district's annual planning and budgeting process?</b></p> <p><b>Who are the key stakeholders involved in your district's annual planning and budgeting process? What are their roles?</b></p> <p><b>7. How well do district-level staff, school-level staff, and the public understand the WSF system? How prepared are they to make decisions about program planning, budgeting, and resource allocation?</b></p> <p><b>8. How transparent is the current resource allocation process to stakeholders, including school board members, principals, teachers and other school staff, parents, and other community members?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [If applicable] <i>How do your responsibilities compare to those you had:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Under the previous system? *</i></li> <li>- <i>Since the WSF system was implemented? *</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>As part of the process, do you conduct a needs assessment? What other data are used?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [If not clear understanding] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What do they know? What do you wish they knew?</i></li> <li>- <i>What perceptions or misperceptions do they have?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• [If not prepared] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What additional resources or supports do you think schools need to successfully implement the WSF system? Are there any plans to provide these?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>What training has the district provided to school staff? Are there other supports from the district or other sources that you think would be helpful for school staff? If yes, on what topics?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to increase transparency?</i></li> <li>• [If applicable] <i>What successes or failures have you encountered in attempting to increase transparency?</i></li> </ul>

## Effect of the WSF System

Question	
<p><b>9. How has the distribution of funding under the WSF system affected the opportunities of students with particular educational needs to succeed relative to others?</b></p> <p><b>10. What, if anything, did the budgeting/planning process allow schools to do that they would not have been able to do otherwise? We are specifically interested in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting students with special subgroups</li> <li>• Using different programs or instructional practices</li> </ul>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>For which groups of students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Has the budgeting/planning process created an incentive for schools to attract students who require additional resources to educate? Why or why not? Has it created any disincentives?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Were any additional non-academic supports added?</i></li> <li>• <i>How much have these changes varied across schools within your district?</i></li> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to promote different programs or instructional practices? Are there any future plans?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there any specific instructional or related services needed to meet the needs of the students in your district that are lacking?</i></li> </ul>

## Concluding Questions

I would like to end this conversation with a few questions about “lessons learned” to date about the implementation of the WSF policy.

Question	
<p><b>11. What has gone well with the current WSF system? Can you describe any factors that may have enabled these successes?</b></p> <p><b>12. What challenges has your district faced in implementing a WSF system? How well has your district been able to address these challenges, and how? *</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>[For districts with mature WSF systems] Have the successes in implementation changed over time? If so, in what ways? *</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Obtaining buy-in from district- or school-level staff, unions, school board, parents, other community stakeholders?</i></li> <li>• <i>Technical capacity?</i></li> <li>• <i>Were there any unpredicted challenges?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>13. Are there any district-, state-, or federal-level policies that promote or create barriers to more effective implementation of the budgeting/planning policy for your school? If so, what are they?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there an impact from:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>[If applicable] The district’s collective bargaining agreements?</i></li> <li>– <i>District mandates and policies, such as: Hiring and placement policies? Use of average versus actual salaries in charging against school budgets?</i></li> <li>– <i>State school finance system or charter school policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Other federal or state policies (e.g., accountability, curriculum and standards)?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>If so, what do you feel is the impact?</i></li> <li>• <i>For those policies that have created barriers, have you been able to find ways of overcoming the issues they present?</i></li> <li>• <i>What, if anything, would you like to see changed about these policies?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>14. Does your district have a school choice policy? How is it structured? Are there ways in which the WSF system supports or discourages school choice? If so, please describe.</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In what ways, if any, does the district consider school choice in the implementation of the WSF system?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do the following enter into school assignment decisions?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Sibling preference (if student has a sibling in school already)</i></li> <li>– <i>Neighborhood school (if school is close to home)</i></li> <li>– <i>Other</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>15. What changes would you like to make to the budgeting/planning process or the funding formula to improve its implementation or its benefits to schools? Why?</b></p>	
<p><b>16. Is there anything I haven’t asked you about the district’s budgeting/ planning process or the WSF system that you would like to comment on?</b></p>	

## Interview Protocol for Principal

**Note to interviewer:** Items marked with ‘\*’ indicate topics that require the respondent to reflect on circumstances and activities before and around the initial implementation of the WSF system. If the respondent was not employed by the district at the time or does not recall historical details, consider reframing the item to focus on *current* implementation or skip the item, as appropriate.

### School Context and Interviewee Background

Question	
<p>1. How would you describe your school to someone who has never been there before, including your school's strengths and challenges?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the school's recent successes?</li> <li>How would you describe the degree of teacher and staff turnover?</li> <li>What are your students' greatest or most unique needs?</li> </ul>
<p>2. How long have you been the principal at this school? In this district?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What were your professional roles before this one? In which districts, schools, or organizations?</li> <li>Who do you see as other leaders at this school?</li> </ul>

### WSF Goals and Strategies

Question	
<p>3. In introducing the new budgeting/planning system, what issues was your district intending to address? *</p> <p><i>[For districts with mature WSF systems only] Have the aims of the system changed at all since then? If so, how and why? *</i></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility/autonomy of general funds, categorical funds; equity with which general or categorical funds are distributed to schools</li> <li>School choice</li> <li>Per-pupil allocations; actual versus average teacher salaries; staff mobility</li> <li>Transparency, predictability; innovation</li> <li>Staff and community engagement</li> </ul>
<p>4. How does your district's budgeting/planning system relate to the issues you mentioned?</p> <p><i>[If respondent indicated changes in aims of the system in Q3] Has the system been revised to respond to the shifts in aims? If so, how and why? *</i></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the most important components of your district's new budgeting/planning system?</li> <li>Do you think these pieces make/will make a difference in addressing these issues? Why or why not?</li> </ul>

### Initial Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>5. Are you aware of how the new budgeting/planning system came about in your district? If so, how would you describe the involvement of school</p>	

Question	
<p>staff in the decision-making process about the design and/or implementation of the WSF system? *</p> <p>6. What was your original reaction to this change? What was your staff's reaction? Have these reactions changed over time? If so, how? *</p>	

## Ongoing Implementation of WSF / Decision-making Process

Question	
<p>7. Could you please walk me through the general process for how your school's annual site-level plan and budget are developed?</p> <p>8. We realize that each school may implement the budgeting/ planning process under WSF slightly differently. At your school, what has gone well with the new budgeting/planning system? Can you describe any factors that may have enabled these successes?</p> <p>9. What challenges has your school faced in implementing the budgeting/planning process? How well has your school been able to address these challenges, and how? *</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are your specific roles and responsibilities in the process?</i></li> <li>• <i>Who is involved in the decision-making process? How would you describe the role and level of involvement of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Teachers?</i></li> <li>– <i>Other school administrators?</i></li> <li>– <i>District administrators?</i></li> <li>– <i>Parents or community members?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>When is the initial projected budget provided by your district? When are your initial and final spending plans due? How does the amount of planning time compare to the amount before WSF was introduced?</i></li> <li>• <i>As part of the process, do you conduct a needs assessment? What other data are used?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Have the successes in implementation changed over time? If so, in what ways? *</i></li> </ul>

## Effects of the WSF System

Question	
<p>10. How does the level of funding under the current budgeting system compare to the previous system?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In general, has it gone up or down under the new system?</i></li> <li>• <i>How did changes in the distribution of funds affect small schools and less traditional schools such as charters?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>11. How well do the resource allocations in your site plan for this year align with your student outcome goals?</b></p> <p><b>12. At your school, how has the distribution of funding under the WSF system affected the opportunities of students with particular educational needs to succeed relative to others?</b></p> <p><b>13. What, if anything, did the budgeting/planning process allow you to do in your school that you would not have been able to do otherwise? We are specifically interested in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting students with special subgroups</b></li> <li>• <b>Using different programs or instructional practices</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>For which groups of students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Has the budgeting/planning process created an incentive for schools to attract students who require additional resources to educate? Why or why not?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What specifically was it about the WSF policy that stimulated you to better support high need students or to offer different programs?</i></li> <li>• <i>Were these changes for specific grade levels? Specific groups of students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Were any additional non-academic supports added?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there any specific instructional or related services needed to meet the needs of the students in your district that are lacking?</i></li> </ul>

## Dimensions of WSF Implementation and Decision-making Process

Question	
<p><b>14. How would you describe your district's approach to giving principals autonomy in decision-making?</b></p> <p><b>Over what proportion of your school's total budget do you and your staff have decision-making autonomy? Are there any limitations or guidelines on how you may use these funds? If so, what?</b></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Autonomy for all: All principals have autonomy</i></li> <li>• <i>Earned autonomy: Autonomy granted to higher-performing, but not lower-performing schools; district more active in managing resources for lower-performing schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Tiered autonomy: Tiered levels of autonomy based on performance, growth, and school capacity; struggling schools provided more support, resources, guidance</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Has the amount of budgetary discretion and autonomy changed over time? Do you think this amount of discretion your school has over budgets <u>should</u> change? If so, why? * Do you see any drawbacks to autonomy?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>15. What educational services or decisions are provided by your district? Which are available for purchase from your district, and which do you purchase from outside vendors? Why?</b></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Complexity of state and federal law (e.g., special education)</i></li> <li>• <i>Economies of scale</i></li> <li>• <i>School leadership capacity and preference</i></li> <li>• <i>District philosophy</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Does your district have a "central services" market—that is, a menu of network and central services where you can choose whether to buy services from the district or from outside vendors? If so, what services are included? How does it operate? Can you choose to purchase outside of this menu?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you ever meet operational resistance when trying to make purchases? When and in what ways?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>16. What roles do teachers, parents, and community members play in the budgeting and planning process?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What steps, if any, has the district taken to promote the involvement of school staff in the WSF process? Parents and community members? Are there any future plans? [If respondent indicates parents are involved] How does your school ensure the involvement of a diverse and representative set of parents?</i></li> <li>• <i>What steps have you taken within your school?</i></li> <li>• <i>Has the new budgeting/planning policy increased school staff involvement? Parent and community involvement?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you see any limitations in involving school staff and community involvement in the process? If so, what?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>17. What kinds of accountability mechanisms, if any, has your district implemented in conjunction with the new budgeting/planning process?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are there any consequences for particular budget decisions you make? For declines in student outcomes (such as decreased autonomy)?</i></li> <li>• <i>[If applicable] How have accountability mechanisms changed under the new budgeting/planning process, if at all?</i></li> </ul>

Question	
<p><b>How does the district monitor your school's plan and budget?</b></p>	
<p><b>18. How transparent is the current way in which revenues are distributed to your school?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [If principal was in the school prior to the start of WSF] <i>How does the level of transparency compare to the process prior to the new budgeting/planning system?</i></li> <li>• <i>How clear are weights for different students?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is your school budget sufficiently predictable or stable for you to effectively plan and budget from year to year?</i></li> </ul>



## Support and Training on WSF

Question	
<p>19. What communication has the district provided to you about the budgeting/planning system? How adequate or helpful has this communication been?</p> <p>20. How would you characterize the district's approach to supporting schools with making resource allocation decisions?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What improvements do you think the district can make?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Providing schools directives versus disseminating best practices</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Can you describe any technical assistance or training you or your staff have received from the district this school year around planning, budgeting, allocating resources, or aligning spending decisions with new instructional strategies?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Who was the intended audience for the training (Principals, other school administrators, school leadership teams, teachers)?</i></li> <li>– <i>What was the focus?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>[For districts with mature WSF systems] Has the role of the district in assisting schools around WSF changed at all over the past X years since implementation of the WSF? If yes, how? *</i></li> </ul>

## Concluding Questions

I would like to end this conversation with a few questions about “lessons learned” to date about the implementation of the WSF policy.

Question	
<p><b>21. Are there any district-, state-, or federal-level policies that promote or create barriers to more effective implementation of the budgeting/planning policy for your school? If so, what are they?</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there an impact from:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>[If applicable] The district’s collective bargaining agreements?</i></li> <li>– <i>District mandates and policies, such as:</i></li> <li>– <i>Hiring and placement policies?</i></li> <li>– <i>Use of average versus actual salaries in charging against school budgets?</i></li> <li>– <i>State school finance system?</i></li> <li>– <i>Other federal or state policies (e.g., accountability, curriculum and standards)?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>If so, what do you feel is the impact?</i></li> <li>• <i>For those policies that have created barriers, have you been able to find ways of overcoming the issues they present?</i></li> <li>• <i>What would you like to see changed about these policies?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>22. Does your district have a school choice policy? How is it structured? Are there ways in which the WSF system supports or discourages school choice? If so, please describe.</b></p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do the following enter into school assignment decisions?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Sibling preference (if student has a sibling in school already)</i></li> <li>– <i>Neighborhood school (if school is close to home)</i></li> <li>– <i>Other</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>23. What changes would you make to the budgeting/planning process or the funding formula to improve its implementation or its benefits to schools? Why?</b></p>	
<p><b>24. Is there anything I haven’t asked you about your school’s budgeting/planning process that you would like to comment on?</b></p>	

## Interview Protocol for Teacher Union Representative

**Note to interviewer:** Items marked with ‘\*’ indicate topics that require the respondent to reflect on circumstances and activities before and around the initial implementation of the WSF system. If the respondent was not employed by the district at the time or does not recall historical details, consider reframing the item to focus on *current* implementation or skip the item, as appropriate.

### District Context

Question	
<p>1. How would you describe your district to someone who has never been there before, including your district’s strengths and challenges?</p> <p>2. Can you tell me a bit about your background in schools, including your position and responsibilities within the teacher’s union?</p> <p>3. How would you describe the union’s relationship with the district? How has this changed in recent years?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are your district’s recent successes?</i></li> <li>• <i>How would you describe the degree of teacher and staff turnover?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are your students’ greatest or most unique needs?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are the biggest strengths and challenges in this relationship?</i></li> <li>• <i>How much do district and union officials collaborate?</i></li> </ul>

### Initial Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>4. Are you aware of how the WSF system came about in your district? If so, how was the teachers’ union involved? *</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What was the nature of the discussions between the union and the district?</i></li> <li>• [If union was not involved] <i>Did the union ask to be involved in these decisions?</i></li> </ul>
<p>5. As far as you know, what issues was your district intending to address by introducing a WSF system? *</p> <p><i>[For districts with mature WSF systems only] Have the aims of the system changed at all since then? If so, how and why? *</i></p>	<p><b>Listen for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flexibility/autonomy of general funds and/or categorical funds</i></li> <li>• <i>Equity with which general and/or categorical funds are distributed to schools</i></li> <li>• <i>School choice</i></li> <li>• <i>Per-pupil allocations; actual versus average teacher salaries; staff mobility</i></li> <li>• <i>Transparency, predictability; innovation</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff and community engagement</i></li> </ul>
<p>6. What was the response of the teachers’ union? Has the union’s response changed over time? *</p>	

## Ongoing Implementation of WSF

Question	
<p>7. What ongoing communication has your district provided to you about the budgeting/planning system? How adequate or helpful has this communication been?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What improvements do you think your district can make?</i></li> </ul>

## Concluding Questions

Question	
<p>8. From the union's perspective, what has gone well with the current WSF system? Can you describe any factors that may have enabled these successes?</p> <p>9. From the union's perspective, are there any aspects of the new budgeting/planning system that are concerning? If so, what?</p> <p>10. Does your union factor the WSF system into your negotiations around your collective bargaining agreement with the district? If so, how? Were changes made to the bargaining agreements for other types of staff when WSF was implemented?</p> <p>11. Does your district have a school choice policy? How is it structured? Are there ways in which the WSF system supports or discourages school choice? If so, please describe.</p> <p>12. What changes would you make to the budgeting/planning process or the funding formula to improve its implementation or its benefits to schools or students?</p> <p>13. Is there anything I haven't asked you about your school's budgeting/planning process or the WSF system that you would like to comment on?</p>	<p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [For districts with mature WSF systems] <i>Have the successes in implementation changed over time? If so, in what ways? *</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Probe for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do the following enter into school assignment decisions?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Sibling preference (if student has a sibling in school already)</i></li> <li>– <i>Neighborhood school (if school is close to home)</i></li> <li>– <i>Other</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>





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