Perspectives #3

Weighted Student Formula (WSF) and Restructuring Schools

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[Perspectives are quick takes on Reinventing Education (Act 51) issues that are in transition. These issues will be revisited periodically as new developments warrant.]

If the proposed weighted student formula with a K-2 weight of .20, an ESLL weight of .19, a poverty weight of .10 and a small school adjustment were used to allocate money (using FY 04-05 appropriations) to the 24 schools currently undergoing restructuring, the results show 75% of these schools would lose money.

**McKinley/Roosevelt Complex**

**Central Middle**
- Total enrollment: 516 (461 regular education students; 55 special education students)
- Poverty Students: 75% of total enrollment
- ESLL: 32% of total enrollment
- Result: Loss of 7% funding

**Farrington/Kaiser Complex**

**Dole Middle**
- Total enrollment: 782 (678 regular education students; 104 special education students)
- Poverty Students: 73% of total enrollment
- ESLL: 19% of total enrollment
- Result: Loss of 3% funding

**Kaimuki/Kalani Complex**

**Jarrett Middle**
- Total Enrollment: 330 (266 regular education students; 64 special education students)
- Poverty Students: 63% of total enrollment
- ESLL: 18% of total enrollment
- Result: Loss of 24% funding

**Palolo Elementary**
- Total Enrollment: 269 (252 regular education students; 17 special education students)
- Poverty Students: 95% of total enrollment
- ESLL: 43% of total enrollment
- Result: Loss of 2% funding
Aiea/Moanalua/Radford Complex
Aiea Elementary
Total Enrollment 413 (371 regular education students; 42 special education students)
Poverty Students 88% of total enrollment
ESLL 17% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 1% funding

Leilehua/Mililani/Waialua Complex
Wahiawa Middle
Total Enrollment 979 (825 regular education students; 154 special education students)
Poverty Students 54% of total enrollment
ESLL 8% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 4% funding

Nanakuli/Pearl City/Waipahu Complex
Nanaikapono Elementary
Total Enrollment 976 (867 regular education students; 109 special education students)
Poverty Students 86% of total enrollment
ESLL 6% of total enrollment
Result: Gain of 17% funding

Nanakuli High and Intermediate
Total Enrollment 1343 (1082 regular education students; 261 special education students)
Poverty Students 71% of total enrollment
ESLL 4% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 11% funding

Waipahu Intermediate
Total Enrollment 1361 (1228 regular education students; 133 special education students)
Poverty Students 58% of total enrollment
ESLL 15% of total enrollment
Result: Gain of 2% funding

Campbell/Kapolei/Waianae Complex
Waianae Intermediate
Total Enrollment 1137 (940 regular education students; 197 special education students)
Poverty Students 69% of total enrollment
ESLL 4% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 9% funding

Castle/Kahuku Complex
Hauula Elementary
Total Enrollment 271 (242 regular education students; 29 special education students)
Poverty Students 75% of total enrollment
ESLL 3% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 7% funding
Kahaluu Elementary
Total Enrollment 202 (178 regular education students; 24 special education students)
Poverty Students 70% of total enrollment
ESLL 5% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 14% funding

Waiahole Elementary
Total Enrollment 117 (93 regular education students; 24 special education students)
Poverty Students 68% of total enrollment
ESLL 5% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 30% funding

Hilo/Laupahoehoe/Waiakea Complex
Hilo Intermediate
Total Enrollment 643 (542 regular education students; 201 special education students)
Poverty Students 60.2% of total enrollment
ESLL 3% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 14% funding

Kau/Keaau/Pahoa Complex
Keaau Middle
Total Enrollment 594 (487 regular education students; 107 special education students)
Poverty Students 79% of total enrollment
ESLL 3% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 14% funding

Naalehu Elementary and Intermediate
Total Enrollment 395 (332 regular education students; 63 special education students)
Poverty Students 78% of total enrollment
ESLL 18% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 9% funding

Pahoa High and Intermediate
Total Enrollment 812 (640 regular education students; 172 special education students)
Poverty Students 71% of total enrollment
ESLL 45% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 13% funding

Honokaa/Kealakehe/Kohala/Konaawaena Complex
Kealakehe Elementary
Total Enrollment 978 (874 regular education students; 104 special education students)
Poverty Students 50% of total enrollment
ESLL 9% of total enrollment
Result: Gain of 15% funding
Hana/Lahainaluna/Lanai/Molokai Complex

Hana High and Elementary
Total Enrollment 384 (306 regular education students; 78 special education students)
Poverty Students 65% of total enrollment
ESLL 0%
Result: Loss of 27% funding

Maunaloa Elementary
Total Enrollment 69 (60 regular education students; 9 special education students)
Poverty Students 81% of total enrollment
ESLL 0%
Result: Loss of 27% funding

Molokai High
Total Enrollment 413 (324 regular education students; 89 special education students)
Poverty Students 34% of total enrollment
ESLL 2% of total enrollment
Result: Loss of 38% funding

Molokai Intermediate
Total Enrollment 215 (180 regular education students; 35 special education students)
Poverty Students 67% of total enrollment
ESLL 0%
Result: Gain of 24% funding

Baldwin/Kekaulike/Maui Complex

Kahului Elementary
Total Enrollment 850 (765 regular education students; 85 special education students)
Poverty Students 45% of total enrollment
ESLL 17% of total enrollment
Result: Gain of 12% funding

Paia Elementary
Total Enrollment 212 (196 regular education students; 14 special education students)
Poverty Students 100%
ESLL 2% of total enrollment
Result: Gain of 2% funding

Does it make sense that 75% of the restructuring schools are projected to lose money? Is there an explanation for the projected loss/gain under WSF?

The DOE suggests the possibility that schools losing money, even restructuring ones, have received more and more money (more accurately, FTE positions) over the years but have not leveraged their money/positions well. Another explanation is that the projected figures under WSF expose inequities from school to school that have been “cast in stone” over the years. The DOE weighted student
funding feasibility study submitted to the legislature in 2003 says: “Clerical and other office staffing is determined based on the level of staffing that has historically been established at each school. At different periods of time attempts to provide equity in this area have been made but the leveling up has never been fully completed. While it is beyond the scope of this study to determine the adequacy or fairness of these allocations, the wide disparity in classified office staffing among schools is conspicuous.”

Under a weighted student formula, the funding schools receive and the formula that determines the funding become transparent, and that’s good. Yet, the question remains. Does it make sense to expect “failing” schools to do more with less?