

Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force
March 28, 2017
Breakout Group: At-risk Working Group

What are the issues, possible solutions, and additional data required?

- High concentrations of at-risk students in schools
 - What is the tipping point percentage? At what point does the concentration affect school performance?
 - DCPS looked at this and found a 20% threshold: schools with under 20%, at-risk students performed better than at-risk students at schools with higher concentrations
 - There are outliers – copy their best practices
 - 20% is too low – 35%-40% is more realistic
 - Possible solutions:
 - Incentivize schools to take more at-risk students so there is a more equal distribution
 - Aim for a school to have a certain percentage of at-risk students – whatever that “tipping point” is
 - However, that is requiring at-risk students to take an even higher risk by attending another school
 - Focus more on providing the necessary services and highly desired programming. Incentivize non at-risk students to travel rather than the other way around.
 - Incentivize schools to provide programs for at-risk students
 - Additional data needed:
 - More details on the table in appendix
 - What is the relationship with school performance?
 - Where are they in the city? Many of the schools are East of the River, but they also have a lot of programs for at-risk students there as well
 - What are the grade bands?
 - What programs are in those schools and what can be replicated (differentiated by grade levels)?
 - At-risk concentration by ward of school they are attending
 - Teacher retention data – theory that schools with higher concentrations of at-risk students see higher turnover
 - True at DCPS; the data is collected for PCS
- At-risk funding might not be not adequate
 - At-risk UPSFF funding isn’t completely supplemental; some of that funding is being used for day-to-day operations

- The UPSFF working group focused on at-risk a lot, but the ultimate recommendation was to increase the base, not the at-risk weight
 - Possible solutions:
 - Reallocation of resources
 - Revisit an at-risk weight in the lottery
 - Evaluate the true cost of serving an at-risk student
 - Differentiation of at-risk funding depending on the concentration of at-risk students in the school (stepped weighting)
 - But the other UPSFF weights (i.e. sped), already get at this idea, since many at-risk students are also special education
 - Additional data needed:
 - What are the fixed costs and variable costs for serving an at-risk student, particularly in those schools with high concentrations of at-risk students?
- Inefficiencies due to program/agency silos
 - Many schools are serving their at-risk students well, and either the best practices aren't being shared or there is an opportunity for shared services (that isn't happening)
 - Possible solutions:
 - Greater sharing of services between schools (cross-sector) and more collaboration with the early childhood sector and CBOs
 - More professional opportunities for school leaders to have a best practices exchange and find opportunities to share services
 - Cross-sector Communities of Practices (OSSE is also thinking of providing these opportunities)
 - Leverage other agencies that are already working to serve at-risk students
 - TANF; Safer Stronger DC; Neighborhood Collaboratives
 - Some Collaboratives are better than others; need to bring them up to the same level as each other and utilize them more.
 - Additional data needed:
 - What are the highly desirable programs (IB? Language? Montessori?) that would incentivize students to travel (to redistribute students). What about desirable school environments/cultures?