



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# Staffing Enrichment Workgroup Recommendations

2019

Authorizing legislation: [RCW 28A.400.007](#)

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## Executive Summary

In Washington, the state is required to provide for a basic education for every student in grades K–12 residing within the state’s borders. The Washington State Supreme Court acknowledges the Legislature has an obligation to review the definition of a basic education program as the needs of the students and the demands of society evolve. In 2017, the Legislature directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a technical workgroup, the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup, to review the allocations of staff that the state funds as part of the program of basic education.

The Workgroup focused its efforts on eliminating opportunity gaps. They found that high supports and high expectations for all students are delivered by a workforce that is diverse, culturally responsive, racially literate, and aware. In addition, they believed Washington’s K–12 students must be served by equity-based policies that support and empower educators, families, and communities.

At a high level, the Workgroup’s recommendations are as follows:

1. Modify current prototypical school level sizes.
2. Meet students’ needs for safety as well as mental, social, emotional, and behavioral health.
3. Provide impactful professional development to all staff.
4. Increase flexibility with transparency and accountability.
5. Raise staffing levels to meet those set in Initiative 1351 and provide additional funds for schools in the Capital Budget.
6. Reconvene the Workgroup.

This report provides a student-focused, phase-in approach over six years to address the evolving needs of the students of our state.

## Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations by the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup focus on the 2020–25 legislative sessions. The recommendations include key ideas with associated funding phased in over six years, beginning in the 2020–21 school year and leading to full implementation in the 2025–26 school year.

### Recommendation 1: Modify Prototypical School Level Sizes

The Workgroup recommends a technical revision regarding the enrollment of each prototypical school level currently in state law. Table 1 shows the current prototypical school sizes as well as the Workgroup’s recommended values.

**Table 1. Recommended Full-Time Equivalent Students Per Prototypical School**

Prototypical School	Grade Grouping	Current Student Enrollment (FTE)	Proposed Student Enrollment (FTE)
Elementary	K–6	400	500
Middle	7–8	432	500
High	9–12	600	500

As shown in Table 1, the Workgroup recommends moving each prototypical school to a basis of 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) students to allow for easier comparison across prototypical school levels, as well as to the historical per-1,000 ratios which existed prior to the prototypical school funding formula.

### Recommendation 2: Meet Students’ Needs for Safety as well as Mental, Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Health

- Invest in social-emotional, safety, and behavioral health needs of students by bringing identified positions up to the levels identified in Initiative 1351 (I-1351) and increasing access to trained professionals, including parent involvement coordinators.
- Improve prototypical school funding model levels for school nurses, school counselors, and principals to exceed the levels set forth by I-1351.

### Recommendation 3: Provide Impactful Professional Development to All Staff

- Provide required professional development for all staff (i.e., Certificated Instructional Staff, Classified Staff, and Certificated Administrative Staff), ensuring key topics of racial literacy and cultural responsiveness are included to help with the elimination of opportunity gaps.
  - Racial literacy involves a discernment of the structural, political, and economic circumstances or past experiences that underlie racism and disadvantage. For a

racially literate person, race functions as a tool for diagnosis, feedback, and assessment of conditions within society and peoples' lived experiences (Skerrett, 2011).

- Add a continuous improvement coach to the prototypical school funding model to assist educators in supporting students through implementation of multiple schoolwide initiatives and increasing the quality of professional development.
- Provide for an overall increase for all staff types to the current allocation for professional development in the prototypical school funding model.

#### **Recommendation 4: Increase Flexibility with Transparency and Accountability**

- Provide for school districts to hire the social and emotional health staff best positioned to serve their students by calculating compliance across the broad category of social and emotional health staff.
- Maintain the funding via individual staffing units in the prototypical school funding model. While compliance calculations are recommended across the broad category of social and emotional health staff, the prototypical school model shall retain the individual positions for allocation purposes only.

#### **Recommendation 5: Raise Staffing Levels to Meet Those Set in I-1351 and Provide Additional Funds for Schools in the Capital Budget**

- Increase staffing levels equally across position types over subsequent biennia, starting with the 2023–24 school year, increasing in the same annual increments.
- Provide additional funds in the Capital Budget to accommodate the addition of classrooms or other spaces for student learning to occur.

#### **Recommendation 6: Reconvene the Workgroup**

Reconvene the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup prior to each biennial legislative session to provide information about progress or necessary updates to the recommendations.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

The recommendations as describe above are to be implemented over six school years, 2020–21 through 2025–26. Costs associated with these recommendations are shown by school year and state fiscal year in millions in Table 2.

**Table 2: Total Cost of Recommendations**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>2020–21</b>	<b>2021–22</b>	<b>2022–23</b>	<b>2023–24</b>	<b>2024–25</b>	<b>2025–26</b>
Cost (in millions)	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,400	\$3,600	\$4,800
<b>State Fiscal Year</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
Cost (in millions)	\$388	\$888	\$1,388	\$2,918	\$3,330	\$4,530

## Background

### Workgroup Charge

House Bill 2242 (2017) directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a technical workgroup (called the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup), including representatives of diverse school districts and education stakeholders, to review the staffing enrichments to the program of basic education detailed in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.400.007.

The Superintendent, together with the technical workgroup, was required to recommend to the Legislature a possible phase-in plan of staffing enrichments that prioritizes the enrichments that are research- or evidence-based strategies for:

- reducing the opportunity gap,
- assisting struggling students,
- enhancing the educational outcomes for all students, or
- strengthening support for all school and school district staff.

This report contains the Workgroup’s recommendations.

### The Prototypical School Funding Model (PSFM)

In Washington, the state uses a funding allocation model called the prototypical school funding model (PSFM) to provide each student in grades K–12 is with a ‘basic education.’ The PSFM is a distribution formula to provide the minimum funding required by the state’s definition of basic education. This formula provides an allocation to local school districts and other local education agencies in support of the operations and minimum instructional program of basic education.

This formula is not intended to direct a school district to implement a particular instructional approach or service or to maintain specific student-to-staff ratios. With limited exception, school districts can determine how to best utilize their state funding to meet the unique needs of their students and community. Mainly, this model allocates funding in two ways: 1) full-time



equivalent (FTE) staffing values determined by student-to-staff ratios, and 2) non-staff operating costs.

Prototypical schools are identified by grade level and are broken out into three school types: 1) elementary, 2) middle, and 3) high. Each school type has an assumed enrollment of students for purposes of standardizing the staffing ratios.

The Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommends the state redefine each prototypical school size at 500 full-time equivalent students in a cost neutral manner to allow improved comparability between levels. All charts and tables embedded in this report will demonstrate the current law ratios, cost neutral ratios based on a prototypical school size of 500 FTE, and the Workgroup's recommendation based on a prototypical school size of 500 FTE.

School districts report their actual student FTE enrollments each month to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), which generates a funded staff-to-student allocation for staffing purposes. These funding formulas can be found with district-specific detail by accessing the [school apportionment reports on OSPI's website](#).

A brief summary of the historical studies around funding basic education is provided in [Appendix A](#).

## **Staffing Units**

The PSFM assumes different classifications of staff, such as principal, teacher, teacher-librarian/media specialist, nurse, instructional aide, and custodian, among others. Additionally, these staff are further categorized as certificated administrative staff, certificated instructional staff, or classified staff based on the statutory definition of responsibility, professional training, and certification requirements.

Below are some examples of specific staffing positions hired by school districts within each broad category as mentioned above:

- **Certificated Administrative Staff (CAS):**
  - Principals, assistant principals, district level program administrators, and superintendents.
- **Certificated Instructional Staff (CIS):**
  - Classroom teachers and teacher-librarians, as well as educational staff associates (ESA) like school counselors, school nurses, and school social workers.
- **Classified Staff (CLS):**
  - Teaching assistants, office support, and custodians.

Staffing ratios for teachers are determined through “class size,” which is a student-to-teacher ratio per grade. In most cases this does not represent the actual class size generated by that ratio in a school. The calculation of student FTE to allocated teacher FTE includes legislative assumptions of planning time. When those assumptions are applied to the funding formula, they are represented as the following percentages: 15.5% for grades K–6 and 20% for grades 7–12. The class size to teacher calculation is shown below:

$$(\text{Student FTE} / \text{Class Size}) \times (1 + \text{Planning Time})$$

There is also an allocation for each 1.0 FTE teacher that includes four state-provided substitute days. (No other staffing category in the PSFM is provided a substitute allocation.)

**Table 3: Teachers Allocated by Grade Grouping (Current Law)**

Grade Grouping	Enrollment	Class Size	Teachers (FTE)
Grades K–3	400	17.00	27.18
Grade 4	400	27.00	17.11
Grades 5–6	400	27.00	17.11
Grades 7–8	432	28.53	18.17
Grades 9–12	600	28.74	25.05
CTE 7–12	600	23.00	31.30
Skill Center	600	20.00	36.00

**Table 4: Teachers Allocated by Grade Grouping per 500 Student FTE**

Grade Grouping	Enrollment	Prototypical School Size	Teachers (FTE)
Grades K–3	500	17.00	33.97
Grade 4	500	27.00	21.39
Grades 5–6	500	27.00	21.39
Grades 7–8	500	28.53	21.03
Grades 9–12	500	28.74	20.88
CTE 7–12	500	23.00	26.09
Skill Center	500	20.00	30.00

The other school-based staffing categories represent a staff to total prototypical school enrollment ratio. For the purposes of this report, the staffing ratios have been adjusted to a per 500 student ratio so equal comparison can be made across the grade levels throughout this report.

**Table 5: School Level Staff by Prototypical School (Current Law)**

Staffing Position	Elementary	Middle	High
Enrollment (FTE)	400	432	600
Principals	1.253	1.353	1.880

Staffing Position	Elementary	Middle	High
Enrollment (FTE)	400	432	600
Teacher Librarians	0.663	0.519	0.523
Guidance Counselors	0.493	1.216	2.539
School Nurses	0.076	0.060	0.096
Social Workers	0.042	0.006	0.015
Psychologists	0.017	0.002	0.007
Teaching Assistants	0.936	0.700	0.652
Office Support	2.012	2.325	3.269
Custodians	1.657	1.942	2.965
Student and Staff Safety	0.079	0.092	0.141
Parent Involvement Coordinators	0.0825	0.000	0.000

**Table 6: School Level Staff Per 500 Student FTE by Prototypical School**

Staffing Position	Elementary	Middle	High
Principals	1.566	1.566	1.566
Teacher Librarians	0.829	0.601	0.436
Guidance Counselors	0.616	1.407	2.116
School Nurses	0.095	0.069	0.080
Social Workers	0.053	0.007	0.013
Psychologists	0.021	0.002	0.006
Teaching Assistants	1.170	0.810	0.543
Office Support	2.515	2.691	2.724
Custodians	2.071	2.248	2.471
Student and Staff Safety	0.099	0.106	0.118
Parent Involvement Coordinators	0.103	0.000	0.000

District-wide staff support is provided in two ways: through a specifically identified staffing ratio and by calculating an additional 5.3% of central administration staff (assuming 25% are certificated administrative staff and 75% are classified staff).

**Table 7: Central Administration Staff FTE per 500 Student FTE**

Staffing Type	Staff FTE
Certificated Administration Staff FTE	0.5
Classified Staff FTE	1.5

**Table 8: District-wide Support Staff FTE per 500 Student FTE**

Staffing Type	Staff FTE
Technology	0.314
Warehouse, Laborers, and Mechanics	0.907
Facilities, Maintenance, and Grounds	0.166

## Non-Staff Operating Costs

Allocations for materials, supplies, and operating costs (MSOC) are generated on a per pupil basis with different rates for different educational programs. The educational programs include regular instruction and additional allocation for grades 9–12, career and technical, and skill centers. MSOC components include basic allocations for technology, utilities and insurance, curriculum and textbooks, other supplies and library materials, instructional professional development for certificated instructional staff and classified staff, facilities maintenance, and staff and student safety and central office. Allocations for MSOC do not vary by prototypical school type.

**Table 9: MSOC Rates per Full-Time Equivalent Student for the 2019–20 School Year**

<b>MSOC Component</b>	<b>Regular Instruction</b>	<b>Grades 9–12 Additional</b>	<b>CTE (7–12)</b>	<b>Skill Center</b>
Technology	\$135.91	\$39.08	\$153.00	\$153.00
Utilities/Insurance	\$369.29	\$0.00	\$443.68	\$443.68
Curriculum	\$145.92	\$42.63	\$168.30	\$168.30
Library Materials	\$20.79	\$5.78	\$30.60	\$30.60
Other Supplies	\$289.00	\$83.04	\$336.60	\$336.60
Professional Development	\$22.57	\$7.11	\$30.60	\$30.60
Facilities Maintenance	\$182.94	\$0.00	\$214.20	\$241.20
District-wide Support	\$126.74	\$0.00	\$153.00	\$153.00
<b>Total Per Student FTE</b>	<b>\$1,293.16</b>	<b>\$177.64</b>	<b>\$1,529.98</b>	<b>\$1,556.98</b>

## Professional Learning Days

Professional learning days are currently funded through the program of basic education in the prototypical school funding formula for state allocated certificated instructional staff only. The current law allocation is two professional development days, which is currently set to increase to three days in the 2020–21 school year. Along with the increased allocation comes companion legislation offering districts guidelines on specific content and frequency. In 2016, the Legislature passed House Bill 1435 (re-codified in 2017 in House Bill 2242), Washington State’s Professional Learning Standards, to provide clear articulation and guidance of what is entailed in quality professional learning (RCW 28A.415.432).

State support for the professional development of educators was provided outside the program of basic education beginning in 1993 with the creation of Student Learning

Improvement Grants (SLIGs). These grants provided training time for educators to understand and implement education reforms. This funding evolved over time. In 1999, SLIGs were replaced with funding for three “learning improvement days (LID)” added to the 180-day school year for certificated instructional staff. Starting in 2002–03 and continuing to 2008–09, the three LIDs were reduced to two. The allocation was further reduced to one LID in 2009–10 and zero in 2010–11. LIDs remained unfunded from the 2010–11 school year until the 2018–19 school year, when one day was implemented for state allocated certificated instructional staff. As mentioned above, the current school year allocation is for two professional learning days. Professional learning days are also currently provided for paraeducators, but that allocation is not addressed in this report as it is currently outside of the PSFM.

## **How Current Values for the PSFM were Determined**

The Legislature contracted with Miller and Associates in 1975 “to conduct an extensive study of problems related [to] common school financing and operations.” The recommendations of this report, which were adopted into law in the Basic Education Act of 1977 (Washington Laws, 1977 1st Ex. Sess. Chapter 359, section 5 pp. 1610–1611), proposed a new funding formula of 50 certificated instructional staff per 1,000 students and 16.67 classified staff per 1,000 students. These ratios were based upon the actual staffing ratios of a survey of a subset of districts in school year 1974–75.

In 2009, the Funding Formula Technical Working Group (FFTWG) recommended to the Quality Education Council (QEC) a baseline funding formula implementing the current prototypical school funding model used today. This baseline funding model disbursed the staffing ratios determined in the 1975 Miller and Associates report of 50 certificated instructional staff and 16.67 classified staff into this new prototypical school funding model on a cost neutral basis.

The Legislature adopted this baseline model in House Bill 2776 (2010) with the goal to enhance two parts by 2018; a reduction in kindergarten through third grade class size from a teacher to student ratio of 25.32 to 17.00 and to increase the non-staff operating costs provided in the MSOC allocation from \$551 to \$1,082.

In 2010, the QEC recommended to the Legislature an increase for all staffing categories to be phased in by 2018. These recommendations were informed by the FFTWG final report which used a research-based process to determine the final staffing values. Additional PSFM recommendations beyond the K–3 class size reduction and increased MSOC allocation were not adopted by the Legislature. The transition to the prototypical model was a cost neutral structural change to the allocation.

The research basis used to determine the recommendations are documented in the [QEC's 2018 Values Background Information report](#). This background document compiles the research of the legislatively created task forces and expert working groups that preceded the QEC such as the [Joint Task Force on Basic Education Finance](#) (2007) and [Washington Learns](#) (2005), chaired by Governor Christine Gregoire.

## How Staffing Values in RCW 28A.400.007 were Determined

In 2014, Washington's voters approved Initiative 1351 (I-1351) which amended the state's basic education funding formulas through the PSFM by increasing the minimum staffing ratios that drive state basic education funding to local school districts. The staffing values adopted by the voters in I1351, as shown in the tables below, were based on the 2010 QEC recommendations to the Legislature.

**Table 10: Class Size Recommendations from Initiative 1351**

Grade Level	Class Size (I-1351 Values)
Grades K–3	17.00
Grades K–1 High Poverty	15.00
Grades 2–3 High Poverty	15.00
Grades 4–6	25.00
Grades 4 High Poverty	22.00
Grades 5–6 High Poverty	23.00
Grades 7–8	25.00
Grades 7–8 High Poverty	23.00
Grades 9–12	25.00
Grades 9–12 High Poverty	23.00
Career and Technical Education	19.00
Skill Center	16.00
Lab Science	19.00

**Table 11: School Level Staff Recommendations from Initiative 1351**

School-Level Staff	I-1351 Values Current School Size (Elementary/Middle/High)	I-1351 Values School Size 500 FTE (Elementary/Middle/High)
Principals	1.300 / 1.400 / 1.900	1.625 / 1.620 / 1.583
Teacher Librarians	1.000 / 1.000 / 1.000	1.250 / 1.157 / 0.833
Guidance Counselor	0.500 / 2.000 / 3.500	0.625 / 2.315 / 2.917
Health/Social Services	1.000 / 1.000 / 1.000	1.250 / 1.158 / 0.834
Teaching Assistant	1.195 / 1.295 / 1.121	2.500 / 1.157 / 0.833
Office Support	3.220 / 3.029 / 3.382	3.750 / 4.051 / 2.917
Custodian	3.524 / 3.454 / 4.412	2.125 / 2.315 / 2.500

School-Level Staff	I-1351 Values Current School Size (Elementary/Middle/High)	I-1351 Values School Size 500 FTE (Elementary/Middle/High)
Student and Staff Safety	0.099 / 0.506 / 0.723	0.988 / 0.810 / 1.083
Parent Involvement	0.676 / 0.676 / 0.676	1.250 / 1.157 / 0.833

Incrementally, subsequent legislatures have increased the PSFM categories included in Table 12 beyond the baseline values adopted in House Bill 2776 (2010).

**Table 12: Changes to Staffing Allocations Since the 2011–12 School Year**

Allocation Element	Prototypical School Level	Original Value	New Value	Year
Guidance Counselors	High School	1.909	2.539	2015
Guidance Counselors	Elementary/Middle School	Enhancement for 20 schools		2018
Parent Involvement Coordinators	Elementary School	0.000	0.0825	2017
Lab Science Class Size	High School	n/a	19.98	2015
CTE Class Size	CTE	26.57	23.00	2017
Skill Center Class Size	Skill Center	26.57	20.00	2017

Voters approved a phase-in schedule to fund the increased staff by the start of the 2018–19 school year. The 2015 Legislature delayed the implementation of I-1351 by four years (until school year 2022–23) with the enactment of House Bill 2266. Previously, the Washington State Supreme Court acknowledged the Legislature has an obligation to review the definition of a basic education program as the needs of students and the demands of society evolve. However, any reduction from the basic education program must be accompanied by an educational policy rationale and not for reasons unrelated to educational policy. The 2015 Legislature cited two educational reasons to delay implementation of the revised basic education funding formulas enacted by the voters in I-1351:

1. Research reviewed by the QEC and Basic Education Task Force found that the greatest improvements in student outcomes could be achieved in the near-term by targeting additional funding toward priorities already enacted by the Legislature in House Bill 2261 (2009) and House Bill 2776 (2010), which emphasized class size reduction in the earlier grades. The state Supreme Court had identified these reforms as needed to come into compliance with the state’s constitutional basic education funding obligations.
2. Data provided by OSPI and the Professional Educator Standards Board indicated the state’s teacher preparation programs were not estimated to produce enough teachers to achieve the class size reductions identified in I-1351. The Legislature found that implementing class size reductions requires time to plan and build new classrooms.

The 2017 Legislature repealed the delayed phase-in created in House Bill 2266 (2015) with the enactment of House Bill 2242. Section 903 identifies the intent of the Legislature to review and prioritize future staffing ratio increases to focus on reducing the opportunity gap, assisting struggling students, enhancing the educational outcomes for students, and strengthening support for all students through schools and school district staff. This Act also created the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup to recommend a possible phase-in plan for future staffing enrichments and re-established the incremental I-1351 staffing values in RCW 28A.400.007.

The newly created statute re-established the incremental staffing ratios approved by the voters in 2014 from the existing basic education allocation statute and defined these incremental staffing ratios as staffing enrichments to and beyond the program of basic education. No specific phase-in dates are provided for these enhancements. RCW 28A.400.007 states if the incremental staffing ratios are funded in the state budget with specific reference to this law, those units become part of the program of basic education.

## **Other State Basic Education Funding Provided to Districts**

School districts are provided additional basic education funding in other categories beyond the PSFM, including special education, Learning Assistance Program (LAP), Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP), Highly Capable, institutional education, and student transportation. These supplemental funding formulas work with the PSFM to provide additional funding support based on student characteristics and needs, except for institutional education which is addressed separately later in this section.

### **Special Education**

State funding for special education can be provided using two different funding models: 1) excess cost and 2) Safety Net.

The excess cost model provides school districts the basic special education funding for up to 13.5% of students ages 5–21 who are receiving special education services. All students ages birth to 4 or enrolled in an institutional education program (at any age) and receiving special education services are excluded from the 13.5% enrollment cap for purposes of the special education allocation. Based on the per student calculations generated by the PSFM, a school district's basic education allocation (BEA) is determined. The per pupil BEA rate is increased by an excess cost multiplier identified in state law. This excess cost allocation is provided in addition to the allocation generated by the PSFM.



**Table 13: Special Education Excess Cost Multiplier by School Year**

Category	2019–20	2020–21
Birth to Age 2	1.150	1.150
Age 3 to Pre-K	1.150	1.150
Kindergarten to Age 21	0.995	N/A
Kindergarten to Age 21 > 80% General Education Instructional Setting	N/A	1.0075
Kindergarten to Age 21 < 80% General Education Instructional Setting	N/A	0.995

Increased staffing ratios adopted by the Legislature in the PSFM would result in an increase in state special education excess cost funding to local school districts.

The Special Education Safety Net provides funding to school districts that can show special education costs beyond state and federal resources available to the district. School districts must demonstrate expenditures for high-need individuals through an application process determined by OSPI.

### **Learning Assistance Program (LAP)**

Local school districts are provided additional funding support through LAP for remediation assistance to students scoring below grade level in reading, math, language arts, and high school science (RCW 28A.165.015). Funding can also be used for learning opportunities outside of the traditional school day and to provide staff with professional development that focuses on the needs of a diverse student population. School districts must focus first on addressing early literacy skills for students in grades K–4 (RCW 28A.165.005).

State law provides local school districts a certain number of hours of support per week for an assumed class size of 15 students to 1 teacher for students receiving free and reduced-priced meals. Schools with more than 50% of students receiving free and reduced-priced meals receive additional hours of support.

**Table 14: Learning Assistance Program Hours Per Week of Instruction**

School Type	Program Hours
Non-High Poverty Schools	2.3975
Additional High Poverty School Enhancement	1.1000

### **Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP)**

The state provides additional funding to support students whose primary language is not English or whose language acquisition skills need support to achieve proficiency in English.

State law provides school districts a certain number of hours of support per week for an assumed class size of 15 students to 1 teacher for students scoring at a level 1 or 2 on the

state's English Language Proficiency Assessment (RCW 28A.180.080) by grade level. Students recently transitioning out of TBIP are provided ongoing support for up to two years.

**Table 15: Transitional Bilingual Program Hours Per Week of Instruction**

Support Type	Hours per Week of Instruction
Grades K–6	4.778
Grades 7–8	6.778
Transitional Support (Exited TBIP)	3.000

### **Highly Capable Program**

Local school districts are provided an allocation for 5% of their enrolled students for their most highly capable (gifted) students. The state provides local school districts 2.2 hours of support per week for an assumed class size of 15 students to 1 teacher for 5% of their students.

### **Institutional Education**

The state funds a 220-day program for students who are incarcerated or reside in state-run group homes. The state provides local school districts and regional educational service districts differentiated funding based on the type of facility. Minimum staffing ratios are provided for small student populations. On average, the state provided \$16,806 for basic education services per student at the state institutions for the 2017–18 school year.

As a practice, institutional education programs are not provided funding from the PSFM, special education excess cost funding formula, LAP, TBIP, or Highly Capable program. No explicit statutory exclusion is provided for those additional funding programs.

### **Student Transportation**

Local school districts are funded for the transportation of students to and from school. The state provides funding based on a regression analysis of major cost factors that are expected to increase or decrease the prior year's student transportation costs. The cost factors have included the count of basic and special education ridership, district land area/geography, roadway miles, the average distance to school, count of bus stops, and other statistically significant coefficients.

Local school districts are also provided annual school bus depreciation payments to fund the replacement schedule of school buses.

## Enrichment Levies

The Washington State Constitution gives local school districts the authority to levy local property taxes approved by the voters. Districts may use voter-approved local funding to supplement the staff provided through the PSFM. The Legislature allows this for specific purposes that include the maintenance and operation of school districts to enrich the minimum program of basic education provided by the state.

For most school districts, state law defines the maximum allowable enrichment levy as the lesser of \$2.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation or \$2,500 per student. For districts to benefit from enrichment levies, they must gain approval from more than 50% of the voters in their community. Community support or levies can vary across the state, which can make accessing these funds more difficult for some districts than others. Once approved and collected, local school boards direct how these local funds are used, which could include hiring additional staff beyond the state allocation. With the enactment of House Bill 2242 (2017), school districts' levy expenditure plans require pre-approval from OSPI to ensure compliance with the law.

## Workgroup Membership

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) convened a diverse group of skilled educational stakeholders for the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup. [Appendix B](#) includes a complete list of participant names.

### Organizations Represented on the Workgroup

- Association of Washington School Principals
- Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Public School Employees
- Washington State Board of Education
- Washington Association of School Administrators
- Washington Association of School Business Officials
- Washington State School Directors' Association
- Washington Education Association

## Workgroup Process

### Recommendations

The Workgroup was comprised of two types of representative experts. The first type brought a broad amount of expertise in programmatic and personnel issues. The second type brought

school finance expertise with respect to linking specific program funding to staffing positions, as well as a well-rounded view of the allocation of resources with school districts' budgets. The members represented a broad range of educational organizations across the state and brought a wide variety of perspectives and expertise to the table. Workgroup members benefited from discussions with experts within the Workgroup participants and from programmatic experts called in to share content and best practices.

The Workgroup met a total of seven times, beginning in May of 2019 and concluding in November 2019. To establish common background, the first three meetings included a learning component for members and featured guests with specific programmatic expertise. The last four meetings provided the Workgroup with a process to identify their recommendations for phase-in, an opportunity to review a draft of the report, and an opportunity to consider feedback from the public on high-level themes associated with their recommendations. Workgroup participants expressed a desire to engage school districts and educational service districts in building awareness and interest in future public outreach efforts to support workgroups of this nature. Workgroup members want responses to public outreach efforts to be reflective of the diverse student demographics found in schools statewide.

The Workgroup received a series of presentations on the following programmatic issues and strategies for closing opportunity gaps: racial equity from the perspective of Native students, culturally responsive classrooms, mental health and positive behavioral intervention and supports, services for bilingual and migrant students, braiding of funding for transitional bilingual programs, and Washington state's mentor program for beginning educators as a strategy for improving instruction and for retaining a highly skilled workforce. In addition, the Workgroup received fiscal presentations describing the prototypical school funding model (PSFM), its current and historical values, and comparisons between staffing units allocated in the model versus staff units hired by school districts. Throughout the meetings, OSPI fiscal staff provided representations of the Workgroup's recommendations into staffing ratios and cost.

The Workgroup also learned about the history and current methods of Washington's education funding. Topics included the history of education funding in Washington state, current funding methodology, actual staffing hired by districts compared with what's funded in the PSFM, funding for programs outside the PSFM, and costs of changes to the metrics in the PSFM. Workgroup members evaluated and built upon the work of earlier commissions.

## **Workgroup Interests and Guiding Values**

In preparation of drafting the recommendations, the Workgroup's energy shifted to discussions of values, unmet or underfunded student needs, and considerations of how

recommended resources would close persistent opportunity gaps. A summary of the values of the group are below.

### **Value 1: Prioritize Whole Child and Racial Equity**

Serve students through a more just and racially equitable educational system that prioritizes the whole child—a system that unapologetically seeks to abolish disparate outcomes based on race, gender, orientation, and socioeconomic status and to support school staff in their endeavors to this end. The recommendations are a call to action, crafted by experts dedicated to the education and well-being of **all** students. The Workgroup's desire is for these values to be visible in the legislated priorities, policies, and resource allocation.

### **Value 2: Provide Social, Emotional, and Mental Health and Safety Staffing Flexibility**

Support effective teaching and learning by creating and promoting a physically, emotionally, socially, behaviorally, and academically secure climate for students, staff, families, and communities. Leverage and optimize all funding streams and build on previous prototypical school recommendations so local school boards can respond to the needs of their students and individual circumstances. Create a model that allows flexibility, maintains accountability for state-level priorities, and ensures critical decisions are made at the community level.

### **Value 3: Transform via Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

Ensure all schools create conditions for each student to be educated in racially literate, culturally sustaining, positive, and predictable environments that intentionally prioritize the instruction and support of pro-social behavior, emotional skills, and mental health. Accomplish this by implementing a multi-tiered system of supports that integrates positive behavioral interventions and supports, as well as a response to intervention and interconnected systems framework to support academic, social, emotional, and mental health.

### **Value 4: Fund and Support Professional Development for All Staff with Impactful Content**

Dedicate significant resources for professional development for all school staff, to include the topics of racial literacy and cultural responsiveness. Require evidence-based content that builds on prior learning and allows local flexibility for content delivery. Build this knowledge to eliminate opportunity gaps and prepare staff to develop students' skills and knowledge to thrive in a global society. Fund experts in each school who are focused on continuous improvement to provide professional development that is job embedded and aligns with Washington Professional Learning Standards Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.415.432.

## Recommended Revisions to the Prototypical School Model

To be responsive to a current understanding of roles and the important work they do in supporting students, the Workgroup recommends: (1) changes to the titles of some staff groups, and (2) adding a new type of staffing category in the prototypical school funding model (PSFM) to better describe current delivery. The following were changed throughout the document:

- “Security” was changed to “Student and Staff Safety.”
- “Parent Involvement Coordinator” was changed to “Family Engagement Coordinator.”
- “Continuous Improvement Coaches” should be added as certificated instructional staff to each school level of the PSFM.
- “Guidance Counselors” should be changed to “School Counselors.”
- “Teaching Assistants” should be changed to “Paraeducators.”

The Workgroup recommends a six-year phase-in to the full level of school staffing allocations included in Initiative 1351 (I-1351) for all categories of the PSFM with the priority of the first biennium being safety and students’ mental, social, emotional, and behavioral health needs in closing opportunity gaps.

Additionally, the Workgroup recommends allocation enhancements specified in I-1351 for school principals, nurses, school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists; essential professional development for all staff; and a new category of allocation for continuous improvement coaches to align with current research models for best practice and national standards.

The six-year phase-in recommended by the Workgroup will conclude in the 2025–26 school year and will be broken into two phases.

Phase I must be fully implemented by the 2022–23 school year. In this phase, student needs will be met through the following actions and investments:

- Increase staffing ratios related to the safety and social, emotional, mental, and behavioral health of students within a new model of local flexibility by increasing the funding for school counselors, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, family engagement coordinators, and student and staff safety.
- In order to better serve all students, ensure additional professional development that is essential to closing achievement gaps and for building racially literate, culturally responsive practices in all adults serving schools.

- Add continuous improvement coaches to the PSFM for implementation of initiatives and professional learning to benefit all students.
- Increase the ratio of school principals to promote school cultures of learning and growth, support students by regularly meeting social-emotional and mental health needs, and address increased responsibilities in supervisory duties of their staff members.

Phase II must be fully implemented by the 2025–26 school year. In this phase, student needs will be met through the following actions and investments:

- Increase all remaining PSFM staffing ratios not addressed in Phase I, including the class size reductions needed for teachers to meet the needs of all their students.
- Further enhance the allocation of school principals in order to support supervision of the increased staff.
- Build on the professional learning in Phase I by providing additional, necessary professional learning days for all staff to support their learning and growth and improve their ability to serve all students.

## **Phase I (Must be Fully Implemented by the 2022–23 School Year)**

### **Component 1: Social-Emotional Health and Safety Staff**

The staff allocations in the prototypical school funding model to be increased in this phase include school counselors, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, family engagement coordinators, and student and staff safety. Except for middle and high school counselors, none of these allocations have been adjusted since the PSFM was implemented in the 2011–12 school year. These initial values were based on research and analysis from the mid-1970s, without consideration for the evolving changes in student needs or more effective educational practices.

When considering these increases, the Workgroup recommends providing for school districts to hire the social and emotional health staff best positioned to serve their students by calculating compliance across the broad category of social and emotional health staff. However, the Workgroup recommends maintaining the funding via individual staffing units in the prototypical school funding model. While compliance calculations are recommended across the broad category of social and emotional health staff, the prototypical school model shall retain the individual positions for allocation purposes only. Current law prototypical school allocations for these positions are shown in Table 16.

**Table 16: Current Law Allocations for Social-Emotional Health Staff**

Staff Position	Elementary (400 FTE)	Middle (432 FTE)	High (600 FTE)
School Counselors	0.493	1.216	2.539
Counselor Enhancement	0.307	0.512	0.000
School Nurses	0.076	0.060	0.096
Social Workers	0.042	0.006	0.015
Psychologists	0.017	0.002	0.007
Family Engagement Coordinators	0.000	0.000	0.000
Student and Staff Safety	0.079	0.092	0.141

The conversion of Table 16 to show how many full-time equivalent (FTE) students would be needed to generate 1.0 FTE staff at each position is provided in Table 17.

**Table 17: Number of Student FTE Needed to Generate One Staff FTE**

Staff Position	Elementary	Middle	High
School Counselors	811	355	236
School Nurses	5,263	7,200	6,250
Social Workers	9,524	72,000	40,000
Psychologists	23,529	216,000	85,714
Student and Staff Safety	5,063	4,696	4,255

In order to provide more appropriate allocations to ensure students are in healthy, safe, and productive learning environments, the Workgroup proposes that these allocations change to values that were approved by the voters in Initiative 1351. The Workgroup recommends a linear phase-in until the proposed ratios are provided for the 2022–23 school year. The phase-in values based on the current prototypical school definitions are shown in Table 18.

**Table 18: Recommended Fully Phased-in Values for Social-Emotional Health and Safety Staff**

Staff Position	Elementary	Middle	High
Prototypical School Size	400 FTE	432 FTE	600 FTE
School Counselors	0.500	2.000	3.500
Counselor Enhancement (provided for 20 schools)	0.512	0.512	0.000
School Nurses	0.585	0.888	0.824
Social Workers	0.311	0.088	0.127
Psychologists	0.104	0.024	0.049
Family Engagement Coordinators	1.000	1.000	1.000
Student and Staff Safety	0.790	0.700	1.300



A translation of current law and fully phased-in values to a uniform prototypical school size definition of 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) students is provided in Table 19.

**Table 19: Current and Recommended Fully Phased-in Values for Social-Emotional Health and Safety Staff Per 500 Student FTE**

Prototypical School	Elementary Current	Elementary Proposed	Middle Current	Middle Proposed	High Current	High Proposed
School Counselors	0.616	0.625	1.407	2.315	2.116	2.917
School Nurses	0.095	0.731	0.069	1.028	0.080	0.687
Social Workers	0.053	0.389	0.007	0.102	0.013	0.106
Psychologists	0.021	0.130	0.002	0.028	0.006	0.041
Family Engagement Coordinators	0.103	1.250	0.000	1.157	0.000	0.833
Student and Staff Safety	0.099	0.988	0.106	0.810	0.106	1.083

The values in Table 19 will be phased in until the 2022–23 school year according to the schedule shown below, based on the prototypical school size of 500 student FTE.

**Table 20: Linear Phase-in Values for Social-Emotional Health and Safety Staff on a per 500 Student FTE Basis**

Staff Position/Category	School Year (Elementary/Middle/High)		
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
School Counselors	0.619 / 1.710 / 2.383	0.622 / 2.012 / 2.650	0.625 / 2.315 / 2.917
School Nurses	0.307 / 0.389 / 0.282	0.519 / 0.708 / 0.484	0.731 / 1.028 / 0.687
Social Workers	0.165 / 0.039 / 0.044	0.277 / 0.070 / 0.075	0.389 / 0.102 / 0.106
Psychologists	0.058 / 0.011 / 0.018	0.094 / 0.019 / 0.029	0.130 / 0.028 / 0.041
Family Engagement Coordinators	0.485 / 0.386 / 0.278	0.868 / 0.772 / 0.566	1.250 / 1.157 / 0.833
Student and Staff Safety	0.395 / 0.341 / 0.439	0.691 / 0.576 / 0.761	0.988 / 0.810 / 1.083

## Justification

Building-level leadership works in tandem with school counselors, school nurses, school social workers, school psychologists, family engagement coordinators, and with student and staff safety to provide the support consistent with the Workgroup’s interests and guiding values.

Recommended ratios in Tables 21–27 were calculated by taking the total number of students across the prototypical schools divided by the number of staff allocated across that group of students.

### Component 1a: School Counselor

"Beyond academic achievement, research has also found an association between lower student-to-counselor ratios and fewer disciplinary incidents, less misbehavior, reduced suspension rates, higher attendance rates, and greater reported connection to school" (Lapan et al., 2012; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Carrell & Hoekstra, 2014).

Compared to national research, the Workgroup's recommended ratio for students to school counselors is as follows:

- National Association of School Counselors ratio = 250:1
- Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommended ratio = **239:1**

### Component 1b: School Nurse

When a full-time school nurse is available, fewer children check out of school during the day (Hill & Hollis, 2012). In addition to greater student attendance, the presence of a full-time nurse within in a school may substantially reduce the amount of time other school staff members spend dealing with student health issues (Baisch et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2014).

Compared to national research, the Workgroup's recommended ratio for students to school nurses is as follows:

- National Association of School Nurses ratio = 750:1
- Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommended ratio = **613:1**

### Component 1c: School Social Worker

According to the National Association of School Social Workers, "school social workers are an integral link between school, home, and community in helping students achieve academic success. They work directly with school administrations as well as students and families, providing leadership in forming school discipline policies, mental health intervention, crisis management, and support services. As part of an interdisciplinary team to help students succeed, school social workers also facilitate community involvement in the schools while advocating for student success. School social work is a specialized area of practice within the broad field of the social work profession. These individuals bring unique knowledge and skills to the school system and the student services team. These individuals have a master's degree in social work and are trained mental health professionals who can assist with mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic and classroom support, consultations with teachers, parents, and administrators as well as provide individual and group counseling" ([School Social Work Association of America](#)).

Compared to national research, the Workgroup's recommended ratio for students to school social workers is as follows:

- National Association of Social Workers ratio:
  - General student population = 250:1
  - "Intensive" student population = 50:1
- Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommended ratio = **2,722:1**

### **Component 1d: School Psychologist**

A meta-analysis of school-based interventions found that school social and emotional learning programs may have an impact on academic performance as well as emotional skills, attitudes, and behavior (Durlak et al., 2011).

Compared to national research, the Workgroup's recommended ratio for students to school psychologists is as follows:

- National Association of School Psychologists ratio = 400:1
- Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommended ratio = **8,090:1**

The greatest need for school psychologists is to serve students with disabilities. The recommended ratio is only for the program of general education and will not align with the program where many of these staff are hired. During the 2017–18 school year, 78% of the approximately 1,500 individuals hired as psychologists were specifically assigned to work with students with disabilities.

### **Component 1e: Family Engagement Coordinator**

The family engagement coordinator works with the guidance and counseling team to engage and assist families in participating as full partners in their children's education. "... Research indicates that a welcoming school environment and information communication from the school are strongly associated with family involvement in high school, and informative communication is also associated with family support of students at home" (Park & Holloway, 2013).

Furthermore, "Family involvement coordinators should not be charged with delivering specialized social services, rather they are in a position to leverage the strengths of families and the benefits that they can bring to schools. For example, the family involvement coordinator does not do 'home visits' in the way that a social worker would, rather they may schedule 'meetings with families' in their homes if that is the best way to connect with them and begin to build relationships" (OSPI and Office of Education Ombuds, n.d., pp. 8).

The Workgroup recommends a ratio of students to family engagement coordinators of **477:1**.

### **Component 1f: Student and Staff Safety**

“School safety is a priority because students cannot learn, and teachers cannot teach effectively if they feel unsafe” (Memorandum Staffing Ratio Research; Education Northwest, [Appendix C](#)). A 2009 study of school resource officers (SROs) found that schools experienced fewer arrests overall as well as fewer arrests for serious crimes after an SRO was assigned to the school (Theriot, 2009).

The Workgroup discussed which staff best address school safety and whether that is always security personnel. The Workgroup recommends that along with a student-to-staff ratio change, the language used for this line item be updated to “Student and Staff Safety.” The reason for this change is that not all schools will be hiring security personnel in response to the needs of their students. Consistent with this decision, the research on school security is varied.

The Workgroup recommends a ratio of students to student and staff safety of **521:1**.

### **Component 1g: Principals, Assistant Principals, and Certificated Building Level Administration**

Being a school principal requires skillful leadership of all initiatives and adoptions as well as the recruitment, retention, and capacity building of staff. Principals are responsible for the health, and safety, as well as academic and social-emotional growth of each student. School leadership and improved student achievement are connected (Wallace Foundation, 2011, pp. 3); and school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010).

The Workgroup recommends a ratio of students to principals, assistant principals, or other school level administrators of **300:1**.

The important role of school principals and assistant principals in serving students was an element of Workgroup discussion. The ability of any school level personnel to perform their work is impacted by the support and leadership provided by their building principal and assistant principals.

### **Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification**

The June 25, 2019 Workgroup meeting included a presentation from national Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) expert, Dr. Jessica Swain-Bradway, Executive Director of the Northwest PBIS Network. She reported the following:

- School is, in effect, a mental health provider.
- Social-emotional learning needs to be deliberate and explicit in teaching prosocial behavior, coping strategies, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills.
- The goal of promoting and responding to mental health is to blend resources, training, systems, data, and practices in order to improve outcomes for all students.
- Family and community partner involvement is critical to this framework.

## **Component 2: Professional Development**

The Workgroup recommends investing in mandatory professional development (or professional learning) on racial literacy and cultural responsiveness to close persistent opportunity gaps. Training on racial literacy and cultural responsiveness is critical for serving all students, regardless of race. Racial literacy and cultural responsiveness prepare students to contribute to and participate in a global society. Professional development for racial literacy will be expected of all district personnel statewide on an annual and ongoing basis (i.e., certificated instructional staff, classified staff, and certificated administrative staff).

The Workgroup provides the following definition of racial literacy by Dr. Allison Skerrett: “Racial literacy involves a discernment of the structural, political, and economic circumstances or antecedents that underlie racism and disadvantage. For a racially literate person, race functions as a tool of diagnosis, feedback, and assessment of conditions within society and peoples’ lived experiences. Relationships between race and power, and the psychological, interpersonal, and structural dimensions race are emphasized. While acknowledging individual agency, a racial literacy perspective admits the institutional and environmental constraints on individuals’ actions” (Skerrett, 2011).

The recommended investments in professional development include, but are not limited to, these topics. The delivered content should be evidence-based and should be adjusted over time to build on prior learning. The Workgroup recommendations do not include a prescribed curriculum.

The Workgroup’s recommendation for phasing in additional professional development spans both Phase I and Phase II of the recommended timeline, reaching a total allocation equal to 10 divided by the assumed number of contract days per staff classification. For example, 10 days for certificated instructional staff would be calculated as  $10/180$  or  $1/18$  of the allocation for salary and fringe benefits. Phase I would provide a minimum increase of 1.67% of salary and fringe benefits, or three additional days, of professional development allocation for certificated instructional staff. The total number of days and total percentage of salary and benefits are shown in Tables 21A and 21B. Racial literacy and cultural responsiveness content are required to help schools close opportunity gaps.

**Table 21A: Recommended Professional Development Days Allocation (Spans Both Phases)**

Staff Type	Workgroup Phase I (by School Year)			Workgroup Phase II* (by School Year)		
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Certificated Instructional Staff	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
Classified Staff	3.0	4.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
Certificated Administrative Staff	1.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	7.0	10.0

*\*to be included later in the report narrative*

**Table 21B. Recommended Professional Development Allocation Percentage Basis (180 Day Assumption)**

Staff Type	Workgroup Phase I (by School Year)			Workgroup Phase II* (by School Year)		
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
CIS	2.22%	2.78%	3.33%	3.89%	4.44%	5.56%
CLS	1.67%	2.22%	3.33%	3.89%	4.44%	5.56%
CAS	0.56%	1.11%	1.67%	2.78%	3.89%	5.56%

*\*to be included later in the report narrative*

These funds will be allocated using the current professional learning allocation structure (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 28A.150.415) as salary and fringe benefits through the apportionment model. Ten days of professional development equates to 5.56% of the total salary and fringe benefit allocation when fully phased in for the 2025–26 school year. The Workgroup did not recommend a specific allocation methodology of either days or percentage. The Phase I costs only include the additional professional development allocation through the 2022–23 school year. This allocation for professional development does not have to be delivered in full-day sessions.

Adding professional development for certificated and classified school district staff may not result in additional time in all instances. Some of these staff members are on a year-round (i.e., 260-day contract). The Workgroup recommends these year-round staff participate in the essential professional development topics for the benefit of all students. The Workgroup recommends an increase to professional development allocations, which could also provide, for example, access to professional development through trainers or attending conferences.

## Justification

The Workgroup values high-quality professional learning to shift the practice of school district staff to meet student needs. The Workgroup discussed the need for greater emphasis to be placed on the quality of professional learning when evaluating the effectiveness of the overall investment. Washington State's Professional Learning Standards (RCW 28A.415.432) provide clear articulation of what quality professional learning entails. In addition, information on the importance of effective professional learning can be found below:

Learning Forward, the national professional learning association, states the following about professional learning:

- "The purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions they need to help students perform at higher levels."
- "High quality professional learning signifies the importance of educators taking an active role in their continuous development and emphasizes learning."
- "Impactful professional learning leads to increased educator effectiveness and a shift from current reality to preferred outcomes of enhanced student learning results" ([Learning Forward](#)).

High-quality professional development benefits students through changes in practice and honors staff time away from students. The table below highlights the impact of pairing theory with demonstration, feedback, and coaching through professional development.

## Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification

A presentation from the Washington Education Association's Human and Civil Rights Coordinator, Ben Ibale, included information about a model of educator-led professional development on culturally responsive classroom management. The professional development "engages members into Association activity around professional practice, equity, and social justice; promotes the culturally responsive classroom management series for their schools, program, and district; creates a network of educators interested in issues related to equity ... the effectiveness of the training increases when staff can focus on strengthening the adult culture in the building in order to impact the student culture" (Ibale, 2019).

## Component 3: Professional Development—Continuous Improvement Coaches

The Workgroup identified a need for a new certificated instructional staff position in the prototypical school funding model (PSFM): Continuous improvement coach. Classroom teachers implement their new learning, acquired through training, with higher fidelity with the addition of coaching in the classroom (see Table 22). A continuous improvement coach is a

skilled educator who regularly delivers professional development consistent with the Washington State Professional Learning Standards (RCW 28A.415.432).

In addition, this professional will identify successful strategies, needs, and patterns between classrooms. School and district leaders must have timely information to organize supports and address areas of learning. Similarly, the state can learn through convening continuous improvement coaches and sharing information accordingly.

Research provided in 2009 as part of the Funding Formula Technical Workgroup recommended a ratio of 1.0 instructional coach per prototypical school.

**Table 22: Impact of Coaching on Staff Application of Knowledge and Skills**

<b>Outcomes</b> (% of Participants who Demonstrate Knowledge and Demonstrate Skills in a Training Setting and Use New Skills in the Classroom)			
<b>Training Components</b>	<b>Demonstrate Knowledge</b>	<b>Demonstrate New Skills in Training</b>	<b>Use New Skills in Classroom</b>
Theory & Discussion	10%	5%	0%
<i>Plus</i> Demonstration in Training	30%	20%	0%
<i>Plus</i> Practice and Feedback	60%	60%	5%
<i>Plus</i> Coaching in the classroom	95%	95%	95%

**Source:** [Joyce and Showers, 2003.](#)

The phase-in values of this new certificated position as part of Phase I are shown in Table 23, based on the current prototypical school sizes.

**Table 23: Phase-in Values for Continuous Improvement Coaches**

<b>Continuous Improvement Coach</b>	<b>2020–21 School Year</b>	<b>2021–22 School Year</b>	<b>2022–23 School Year</b>
Elementary School (400 FTE)	0.333	0.666	1.00
Middle School (432 FTE)	0.333	0.666	1.00
High School (600 FTE)	0.333	0.666	1.00

Table 24 shows these proposed values based on the recommended prototypical school sizes of 500 student FTE at each of the elementary, middle, and high school levels.



**Table 24: Phase-in Values for Continuous Improvement Coaches per 500 Student FTE**

Continuous Improvement Coach	2020–21 School Year	2021–22 School Year	2022–23 School Year
Elementary School (500 FTE)	0.417	0.833	1.250
Middle School (500 FTE)	0.386	0.772	1.157
High School (500 FTE)	0.278	0.556	0.833

The Workgroup recommends continuous improvement coaches as an enhancement to the PSFM versus redirecting existing proviso or program dollars funding similar activities and positions.

### **Justification**

Continuous improvement coaches serve alongside school staff as they apply and reflect upon their own learning in their service of students. Coaches build the capacity of school staff to implement multiple initiatives, build skills to support each other's growth through collaboration, and strengthen professional learning communities.

### **Using Learning Time Effectively for Students and Teachers**

A report from the Learning Policy Institute indicates, "Other research finds that teacher professional learning is most likely to be effective when it is collaborative and job-embedded, of sustained duration, and with opportunities for feedback and reflection" (Burns & Darling-Hammond [2014] as quoted in Darling-Hammond, Hyler, et al., 2017). In addition, greater frequency of teacher professional collaboration is associated with increased teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction (OECD, 2014b), which are associated with higher retention and greater effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002). "Collaboration can help buffer against the emotional exhaustion that can lead to teacher burnout" (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

### **Continuous Improvement Coaches/Instructional Facilitators**

There is a significant body of research suggesting the work of continuous improvement coaches and instructional facilitators is beneficial to teacher retention, teacher-student interactions, and student achievement (Allen, et al., 2011; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Gray & Taie, 2015; Lockwood, et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

The Workgroup recommends a ratio of students to continuous improvement coaches of **477:1**.

## Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification

The Workgroup's discussion on professional learning stressed the importance of serving students through district and school implementation, which includes appropriate personnel. Impactful implementation of multiple initiatives requires staff expertise. The Workgroup also recognized that an inadequate amount of attention has been dedicated to the quality, fidelity, and implementation of professional learning strategies that are research-based.

### Component 4: Increase in Principal Allocation

The Workgroup recommends increasing the allocation for principals within the prototypical school funding model (PSFM) to an overall ratio of 300:1. Table 25 shows the current law allocation for principals along with a re-statement of those ratios based on a prototypical school size of 500 full-time equivalent (FTE) students.

**Table 25: Principal Ratio by Current School Definition and Per 500 Student FTE**

Staff Position/ Category	2019–20 School Year	2019–20 Values Based on Prototypical School Size of 500 FTE
	(Elementary/Middle/High)	(Elementary/Middle/High)
Principal	1.253 / 1.353 / 1.880	1.567 / 1.567 / 1.567

In order to achieve a ratio of 300:1 by the 2022–23 school year, the Workgroup recommends the phase-in values for elementary/middle/high schools included in Table 26.

**Table 26: Recommended Principal Ratio on a Per 500 Student FTE Basis**

Staffing Position	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
Principal	1.600 / 1.600 / 1.600	1.633 / 1.633 / 1.633	1.667 / 1.667 / 1.667

## Cost Estimate of Phase I

The overall cost of the components described in Phase I are shown in Table 27.

**Table 27: Estimated Cost of Phase I (in millions)**

School Year	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
Estimated Cost	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500
State Fiscal Year	2021	2022	2023
Estimated Cost	\$388	\$888	\$1,388

## Component 5: Reconvene Workgroup

The Workgroup recommends the Legislature reconvene the Workgroup prior to each biennial legislative session to provide information about progress or necessary updates.

### Phase II (Must be Fully Implemented by the 2025–26 School Year)

This phase focuses on class size reduction, further increasing school principal allocations, and increasing the prototypical school ratios for school level staff that were not addressed in Phase I. Further commitments for professional development for all school staff are also included in this phase. These increases recognize the important role that all school district personnel play in serving students and their learning.

#### Component 1: Class Size and Additional Funds for Schools in the Capital Budget

The Workgroup recommends an equal annual linear phase-in until the Initiative 1351 (I-1351) class sizes are realized, no later than the 2025–26 school year. The phase-in schedule for class size is shown in Table 28. High-poverty class size allocations are provided to schools whose three-year average of free or reduced-priced lunch students is greater than 50%. New schools do not need to wait to establish a three-year average. Along with increased professional development and increased emphasis on the social-emotional and behavioral health of students, the Workgroup recommends continued investments to address class size and caseload. Such investments support Phase I commitments to all students.

#### Investment in Capital Budget

Phasing in lower class sizes in the prototypical school funding model should be preceded by a corresponding investment in the Capital Budget for school construction.

**Table 28: Recommended Phase-in Values for Class Size Reduction**

Grade/Program	2023–24 School Year		2024–25 School Year		2025–26 School Year	
School Classification	Regular	High Poverty	Regular	High Poverty	Regular	High Poverty
Grades K–3*	17.00	16.33	17.00	15.67	17.00	15.00
Grade 4	26.33	25.33	25.67	23.67	25.00	22.00
Grades 5–6	26.33	25.67	25.67	24.33	25.00	23.00
Grades 7–8	27.35	26.69	26.18	24.84	25.00	23.00
Grades 9–12	27.49	26.83	26.25	24.91	25.00	23.00
CTE Grades 7–12*	21.67	21.67	20.33	20.33	19.00	19.00
Skill Center Grades 9–12*	18.67	18.67	17.33	17.33	16.00	16.00

\*K–3 regular class size is already allocated at the I-1351 value of 17.00. There is no differentiated class size for regular versus high poverty class size for CTE or skill center programs.

## Justification

These investments support student learning as they are prepared to participate and contribute in a global society. Reductions to caseload and class size increases the ability of educators to individualize instruction or supports, provide timely feedback to students and families, and keep students actively engaged in learning. Additional benefits include improved attendance and greater academic growth, especially for students who are the furthest away from educational justice. All students benefit from reductions to caseload and class sizes.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) invited Workgroup members to solicit and then share information from their state or national associations on recommended staffing ratios. Below are examples from two of the associations that provided information in response to the invitation.

Washington Education Association (WEA) members of the Workgroup provided information addressing three primary topics of importance for the Workgroup. One of the topics was caseload and class size, which the WEA addressed as follows:

- "Without addressing class size and caseload issues, the hard work being done to address cultural relevancy, racial bias, differentiated learning, and social-emotional learning will not be as effective. And, while class size reduction is vitally important, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of increasing educators of color across all spectrums of public education and that it is vital towards closing the opportunity gap."
- "The ability of any education staff associate (ESA) to meet the needs of all students is greatly impacted by huge caseloads; and caseloads can be impacted by severity of diagnosis sometimes more than by number of students."

The Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) provided the following information to address the ratios of school principals to students:

- "We *must* change the way the principal position is staffed and ensure a proper number of school-leaders are hired to do the work. It has become abundantly clear we have a systems problem being placed on the backs of individuals. Simply put, *the prototypical funding model does not provide an adequate number of principals.*"
- "... in addition to the student-to-principal ratio, the *staff-to-principal ratio* has a profound effect on a principal's workload ... [and] directly influence a principal's opportunity to impact teaching and learning."

## Justification for Investment in Capital Budget

Current student space allocations for construction projects by grade level have not changed since the late 1970s. Those student space allocation rates are provided on a square foot basis. Reductions to class size and caseload require school districts to incur capital expenditures to accommodate additional classrooms or other spaces for student learning. Building smaller classrooms in an existing footprint, as defined by square footage, is more expensive than building larger classrooms at the beginning of a project.

For this reason, the Workgroup recommends an investment in the Capital Budget for school construction to fully support reductions to caseload and class size. In addition, school districts must pass a bond in order to be eligible for school construction assistance from the state, and state funding assistance for renovation or modernization is limited for schools fewer than 50 years old. Several communities have difficulty passing bonds in the amount necessary to generate state support for their projects. In other instances, there are communities whose voters do not pass bonds in any amount.

## Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification

The Workgroup's discussion on caseload and class size stressed the importance of ensuring school and district norms and practices for addressing student needs are aligned with research-based practices, such as multi-tiered systems of support. Workgroup discussions also recognized that caseload and class size impact the ability of staff to more fully serve students and eliminate opportunity gaps.

## Component 2: Other School-Level Staff

The Workgroup recommends an equal annual linear phase-in of the remaining school level staff referenced in section 904 of House Bill 2242 (2017) to reach full implementation no later than the 2025–2026 school year. This phase-in will take three school years until the target values in the bill are funded in the 2025–26 school year. The prototypical school values for these positions in the 2019–20 school year are included in Table 29.

**Table 29: Other School Level Staff Ratios Based on Current Law and Per 500 Student FTE**

Staff Position/Category	2019–20 School Year (Elementary/Middle/High)	2019–20 Values Based on Prototypical School Size of 500 FTE
Teacher Librarians	0.663 / 0.519 / 0.523	0.829 / 0.601 / 0.436
Paraeducators	0.936 / 0.700 / 0.652	1.170 / 0.810 / 0.543
Office Support	2.012 / 2.325 / 3.269	2.515 / 2.691 / 2.724
Custodians	1.657 / 1.942 / 2.965	2.071 / 2.248 / 2.471

The year-by-year values of the phase-in for each position are shown in Table 30 by prototypical school using the universal school size of 500 full-time equivalent students.

**Table 30: Other School Level Staff Phase-in Values Per 500 Student FTE**

Staff Position/ Category	School Year (Elementary/Middle/High)		
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Teacher Librarians	0.969 / 0.786 / 0.568	1.109 / 0.971 / 0.700	1.250 / 1.157 / 0.833
Paraeducators	1.613 / 0.926 / 0.640	2.056 / 1.042 / 0.737	2.500 / 1.157 / 0.833
Office Support	2.927 / 3.144 / 2.788	3.339 / 3.597 / 2.852	3.750 / 4.051 / 2.917
Custodians	2.089 / 2.270 / 2.481	2.107 / 2.292 / 2.491	2.125 / 2.315 / 2.500

### Justification

Workgroup membership represented diverse expertise and experience with previous Washington state efforts on prototypical staffing and funding. The Workgroup reached consensus that initial phase-in priorities should be focused on increased support of students' social-emotional needs and the needs of staff to receive additional, effective training in anti-racist and culturally responsive strategies for serving students and families. Workgroup members also reached consensus that subsequent phases should raise prototypical staffing to I-1351 levels, increasing at the same rate incrementally.

### Teacher Librarians

Libraries provide students with access to engaging reading materials, the foundation of literacy. Teacher-librarians serve to connect classroom teachers and students to state learning standards, supporting real-world connections for learners. If our system is aligned to educate students for more than entry-level positions, then students must be educated to identify information problems, gather the right information, use information to develop solutions, and then communicate the process and outcome to implement solutions.

"The presence of school librarians is associated with positive outcomes for students" (Dow, McMahon Lakin, & Court, 2012; Lance & Hofshire, 2012). A 2012 study concluded in Kansas recommended that schools should have at least one full-time and certificated school librarian (Dow, et al., 2012). The study also suggested that school size and student poverty level should be considered when determining librarian staffing allocation.

### Paraeducators, Office Support, and Custodians

Office support staff assist school building leadership, counselors, and librarians in the operation of schools, signaling much about the school's culture and climate through their service of students and families. In addition, office support staff maintain databases for attendance, course schedules, grades and test scores; and field inquiries from parents,

guardians, students, teachers, and community members. Non-instructional aides are responsible for the welfare of students during breaks, lunchtime, and outside of school hours. School office aides and non-instructional aides often work together as a team, managed by a school office manager.

Paraeducators are critical members of a student’s learning and instructional support team. This team includes teachers, school counselors, administrators, the student’s family, and community. Many of our state’s paraeducators serve as the primary instructional support for our most vulnerable student populations. Recognizing the important role paraeducators play, House Bill 1115 (2017) set common statewide standards for paraeducators. Paraeducators represent more racial diversity in Washington’s schools than the diversity in the state’s certificated teaching population.

There are several studies documenting the possible impact of school facilities on school climate and student outcomes (Uline, et al., 2010; Higgins, et al., 2005). These findings support the employment of an adequate custodial staff for maintaining a clean and safe school facility.

**Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification**

Workgroup members had experience with school and district operations, staffing, and direct service to students and families. Workgroup discussion included a consistent focus on the important role that all district staff play. Workgroup phase-in recommendations reflect this recognition.

**Component 3: District-wide Staff Allocations**

As part of Phase II, the Workgroup recommends increasing the allocation for the district-wide support staff, specifically staff to provide services in the areas of technology; facilities, maintenance and grounds; and warehouse, laborers, and mechanics. Current law allocates the staff positions in the tables 31 and 32 through ratios per 1,000 annual average full-time equivalent (FTE) students. There are no differential values for areas of high poverty. The Workgroup recommends the values in Table 32.

**Table 31: Recommended District-wide Staff Allocations per 1,000 Student FTE**

Staff Category Ratios per 1,000 Student FTE	2023–24 School Year	2024–25 School Year	2025–26 School Year
Technology	1.352	2.076	2.800
Facilities, Maintenance, and Grounds	2.542	3.271	4.000
Warehouse, Laborers, and Mechanics	0.855	1.378	1.900

After applying the recommendation that the PSFM be based on 500 FTE students, the target values change as shown in Table 32.

**Table 32: Linear Phase-in Values of District-wide Staff Based on 500 Student FTE**

<b>Staff Category Ratios per 500 Student FTE</b>	<b>2023–24 School Year</b>	<b>2024–25 School Year</b>	<b>2025–26 School Year</b>
Technology	0.676	1.038	1.400
Facilities, Maintenance, and Grounds	1.271	1.636	2.000
Warehouse, Laborers, and Mechanics	0.428	0.689	0.950

**Justification**

Workgroup members acknowledged the importance of all school and district staff in the safe and efficient maintenance and operations of the district’s facilities and technologies.

Several studies document the possible impact of school facilities on school climate and student outcomes (Uline, et al., 2010; Higgins, et al., 2005). These findings support the employment of an adequate operational staff in the work of maintaining safe school grounds and facilities. Newly constructed or modernized schools contain sophisticated electrical and mechanical systems that require the expertise of well-qualified staff. Appropriate funding for these essential services prevents districts from diverting resources from other areas to cover these costs—supporting the quality and safety of student learning environments.

Using research from the expert contributions of previous efforts on prototypical staffing and funding, the Workgroup recommends that subsequent phases should raise prototypical staffing to I-1351 levels, increasing at the same rate incrementally.

**Workgroup Learning Consistent with Justification**

The Workgroup’s discussion included a consistent focus on the important role all district staff play in providing direct service to students and families. The recommendations focused on quality professional development for all district personnel are consistent with this value.

**Component 4: Remaining Professional Development Days**

As referenced in Phase I, the increased allocation for professional development spans both phases of the Workgroup’s recommendations.



**Table 33A: Recommended Professional Development Days Allocation (Spans Both Phases)**

School Year	Workgroup Phase I*			Workgroup Phase II		
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Certificated Instructional Staff	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
Classified Staff	3.0	4.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0
Certificated Administrative Staff	1.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	7.0	10.0

\*previously addressed in the report narrative.

**Table 33B: Recommended Professional Development Allocation Percentage Basis**

School Year	Workgroup Phase I			Workgroup Phase II		
	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Certificated Instructional Staff	2.22%	2.78%	3.33%	3.89%	4.44%	5.56%
Classified Staff	1.67%	2.22%	3.33%	3.89%	4.44%	5.56%
Certificated Administrative Staff	0.56%	1.11%	1.67%	2.78%	3.89%	5.56%

The context and justification provided in Phase I of this report extends to the Phase II recommendation to fund remaining professional development for all district staff.

## Cost Estimate of Phase II

The overall cost of the components included in Phase II are provided in Table 34.

**Table 34: Estimated Cost of Phase II (in Millions)**

School Year	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Estimated Cost	\$2,400	\$3,600	\$4,800
State Fiscal Year	2024	2025	2026
Estimated Cost	\$2,918	\$3,330	\$4,530

## Conclusion

The members of the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup were highly engaged and aware of the responsibility of the task laid out in House Bill 2242, Sections 903–905 (2017). Similarly, Workgroup members were aware of, and interested in, building upon previous efforts in Washington. Members provided ongoing feedback to Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) staff about their needs and concerns, so planning (for subsequent meetings) could be responsive to those interests. Workgroup members explored and considered these issues and recommendations, taking their valuable time away from providing direct service to students, schools, or school districts. Workgroup members helped to construct and provide input to OSPI staff on this report as a reflection of their collective effort. They demonstrated leadership on behalf of their respective stakeholders and constituencies across Washington state.

[A complete library of Workgroup meeting materials and presentations can be found on the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup page of OSPI's website.](#)

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# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Recent Education Funding History

[Senate Bill 5627 \(2007\)](#) created a joint task force to review the current basic education definition and funding formulas and develop a new definition and funding structure that aligns with the final report of the Washington Learns steering committee and the basic education provisions in current law. That [final report](#) is located on the Washington State Institute for Public Policy's website.

[House Bill 2261 \(2009\)](#) built upon the work done by Washington Learns and the Basic Education Finance Task Force and aimed to make reform a reality. The bill redefined the state's "Program of Basic Education" and the funding amounts and methods needed to fully support it. Full implementation of the bill was required by 2018.

House Bill 2261 (2009) included the following enhancements to our state's education system:

- increased instructional hours,
- enhanced high school graduation requirements,
- new transportation funding formula,
- all-day kindergarten added to basic education, and
- new finance structure for transparency.

House Bill 2261 (2009) also created the Funding Formula Technical Working Group. The Funding Formula Technical Working Group was responsible for developing details of the funding formulas used to allocate state funds to school districts, recommending an implementation schedule for phase-in of increases in programs and funding, and examining possible sources of revenue to support increases. A [final report](#) was submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2009.

[House Bill 2776 \(2010\)](#) authorized the first steps for implementation of the new funding system.

[Senate Bill 6696 \(2010\)](#) set in motion transformative change in four areas—more rigorous academic standards, improvements in teacher effectiveness and equity in teacher distribution, better use of data to drive improvement in student learning, and intervention in schools with persistently low student learning and graduation rates.

[Senate Bill 6552 \(2014\)](#) intended to improve student success by modifying instructional hours and graduation requirements.

[Senate Bill 5919 \(2017\)](#) clarified that the number of instructional hours and the minimum number of credits for high school graduation will be increased no sooner than the 2014–15 school year; adjusted the pupil transportation formula that is scheduled to go into effect September 1, 2011; and specified that the allocations for the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program be scaled to provide a larger allocation for students needing more intensive intervention and a commensurate reduced allocation for those needing less intensive intervention beginning in the 2012–13 school year.

# Appendix B

## Workgroup Membership

**Table B1: Workgroup Participant Names and Organizations**

Represented Organizations	Participant Names
Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kurt Hatch; Associate Director of AWSP</li> <li>Ted Howard; Principal, Seattle School District</li> </ul>
Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC)	Julie Kang, National Board Certified Teacher; Director of Professional and Continuing Education, Seattle University; Committee Member, EOGOAC
Public School Employees (PSE)	Dawna Hansen-Murray; Paraeducator- Library Technician, Yelm School District, PSE Legislative Council Member
Washington State Board of Education (SBE)	Holly Koon; National Board Certified Teacher, Mt. Baker School District; Board member, SBE
Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tammy Campbell; Superintendent, Federal Way Public Schools</li> <li>Marcus Morgan; Superintendent, Reardan-Edwall School District</li> <li>Jennifer Priddy; Assistant Superintendent, Fiscal and Operations, Olympia School District</li> <li>Wade Smith; Superintendent, Walla Walla Public Schools; WASA Regional Representative ESD 123</li> </ul>
Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kate Davis; Chief Financial Officer, Highline School District</li> <li>Simone Sangster; Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Bellingham School District</li> </ul>
Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tim Garchow; Executive Director, WSSDA</li> <li>Abigail Westbrook; Director of Policy and Legal Services, WSSDA</li> </ul>
Washington Education Association (WEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joshua Boe; Paraeducator, Olympia School District</li> <li>Glenn Jenkins; Teacher, Auburn School District, Member WEA Executive Board</li> <li>Lorrell Noahr; Lobbyist, WEA</li> <li>Liz Pray; School Nurse, Moses Lake School District</li> <li>Lupe Wolfe; School Counselor, Central Valley School District</li> </ul>



## **Appendix C**

### **Professional Association and Technical Assistance and Research Center Submittals**

#### **Education Northwest**

##### **Memorandum**

##### **Staffing Ratio Research**

School staffing ratios are a primary component of school funding allocations in states across the nation. It is important that these ratios are based on evidence in order to support efficient and effective schools. At the request of the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest conducted a preliminary review of the research on recommended staffing ratios for several school-related positions. OSPI will use these findings to inform the state's funding allocations.

The research team reviewed four main types of research: correlational (non-causal) studies, quasi-experimental studies, longitudinal studies, and randomized controlled trial studies. There is a significant body of high-quality research evidence available for some staff positions, while others have limited or inconclusive research that does not support precise recommendations on staffing quantities. Our review focused on research that was published within the last 12 years (with some exceptions) and that directly addresses the student-to-staff ratios that are likely to lead to improved instructional practices, student supports, and student outcomes.

As a supplement to the research, the research team also collected data on the staffing ratios recommended by relevant professional associations. The staffing ratios provided by these organizations sometimes provide the most specific and relevant recommendations currently available. However, only some of these recommended ratios appear to be based on research evidence. The professional organizations typically are membership organizations, which may have an incentive to overestimate staffing levels because their membership consists of those in the profession.

This memo provides a brief overview of the research on each position, research on staffing levels for each position, any staffing ratios recommended by professional associations, and a synthesis when the research is consistent. The following is a list of the staff positions that we researched:

1. School administrators
2. Elementary school teachers
3. Secondary school teachers
4. Continuous improvement coaches/instructional facilitators
5. Teaching assistants/paraeducators
6. Librarians
7. Social workers
8. Psychologists
9. Counselors
10. Nurses
11. Family involvement coordinators
12. Technology staff
13. School security personnel
14. Clerical support staff
15. Custodial staff
16. Facilities, maintenance, and grounds
17. Warehouse, laborers, and mechanics

### 1) School Administrators

There is a moderate amount of research on the impact that school principals can have on teacher instructional practice and student academic achievement (Brockmeier, Starr, Green, Pate, & Leech, 2013; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010; Dhuey & Smith, 2014). However, there is no research comparing the performance of students at schools with a principal to students at schools without a principal because nearly all schools in the United States and abroad have a principal.

Similarly, this review did not find any research studies on the impact of assistant principals on instructional practice or student outcomes. In fact, studies of assistant principals' roles have found that their duties are primarily assigned by the principal and often focus heavily on student discipline or management instead of instructional leadership (Oleszewski, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012).

### 2) Elementary School Teachers

In 1985, Tennessee initiated the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio project (Project STAR) to determine the effects of smaller class sizes on student achievement through a randomized controlled trial study in grades K–3. Due to the difficulty of conducting randomized controlled trial studies in education settings, this research continues to provide the basis for numerous studies on class size. Subsequent research based on the data produced from Project STAR supports the study's initial findings that smaller class sizes have beneficial academic outcomes for students (Konstantopoulos & Chung, 2009). Specifically, the research supports class sizes of 13 to 17 students for grades K–3. There is also evidence to suggest that the characteristics of the students in a classroom should be considered when determining class sizes. Students of color, low-income students, and low-achieving students appear to benefit even more when enrolled in classes within this size range (Dynarski, Hyman, & Schanzenbach, 2013, Konstantopoulos & Chung, 2009; Krueger & Whitmore, 2001; 2002).

Another body of research using Project STAR data documents the association between small class sizes and a range of student outcomes, including high school graduation, ACT/SAT participation, college attendance, college degree attainment, probability of majoring in a higher earnings field, earnings at age 27, and the amount students save for retirement. (Dynarski et al., 2013; Chetty et al., 2010; Finn, Gerber, & Boyd-Zaharias, 2005).

A 2010 study of a California policy that limited classes to 25 students for grades 4–12 in schools with large at-risk student populations found that these schools were subsequently more successful in meeting learning outcome goals (Malloy & Nee, 2010).

Results from a multistate convening of more than 2,000 National Board-Certified Teachers from North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Washington include a recommendation to determine class sizes by the actual number of students in a classroom, rather than using an average. Specifically, the workgroup recommends a maximum of 18 students in elementary grades (Berry, 2007). Although their recommendation is not directly based on research, it does provide a professional association recommendation from a group that understands instructional practice at the ground level.

The research on elementary school teachers suggests that smaller class sizes at the elementary school level and particularly in K-3 classrooms may improve student outcomes

### 3) Secondary School Teachers

Less rigorous research on class sizes is available for middle and high schools, although studies that include higher grades concur with elementary grade research that smaller class sizes are associated with positive outcomes for students in all grades (Dee & West, 2011; Frederickson, Öckert, & Oosterbeek, 2013). A study of grade 8 students, using nationally representative data, found positive effects of smaller class size on noncognitive skills (Dee & West, 2011). Further, the study's findings indicate that reductions in class sizes for classrooms with large proportions of higher risk students may be especially effective.

The research on secondary school teachers suggests that smaller class sizes at the middle and high levels are associated with positive outcomes.

#### 4) Continuous Improvement Coaches/Instructional Facilitators

There is a significant body of research that suggests the work of continuous improvement coaches and instructional facilitators is beneficial to teacher retention, teacher-student interactions, and student achievement (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Gray & Taie, 2015; Lockwood, McCombs, & Marsh, 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010).

For example, research documents the association between instructional coaching and student reading gains at both the elementary and middle school levels (Lockwood et al., 2010; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011). The quantity and frequency of coaching meetings appears in some cases to be positively related to student academic outcomes (Marsh, McCombs, & Martorell, 2010; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011). In addition, a randomized controlled trial study at the secondary level found that one year of daily coaching support improved student achievement test scores compared to the students of non-coached teachers (Allen et al., 2011).

There is however no research that documents the ratio of continuous improvement coaches to students necessary to produce the associated effects listed above.

#### 5) Librarians

The presence of school librarians is associated with positive outcomes for students (Dow, McMahon Lakin, & Court, 2012; Lance & Hofschire, 2012). In Colorado, a seven-year study found that students in schools that either maintained or hired an endorsed librarian were more likely than those that lost a librarian or never had one to have high standardized reading scores and to experience high growth in advanced reading proficiency rates (Lance & Hofschire, 2012). These results were similar even when student poverty was controlled for (Lance & Hofschire, 2012).

A 2012 study concluded in Kansas recommended that schools should have at least one full-time and certificated school librarian (Dow et al., 2012). The study also suggested that school size and student poverty level should be considered when determining librarian staffing allocation.

Overall, there is a positive association in the research between having a full-time librarian at every school and student outcomes.

## 6) Teaching Assistants/Paraeducators

There is very little research on the effectiveness of teaching assistants/paraeducators. The existing limited research is both older and does not suggest that teaching assistants have a positive impact on student achievement (Gerber, Finn, & Achilles, & Boyd-Zaharias, 2001). In 2012, teaching aides/assistants made up 12 percent of the teaching force nationally (Kena et al., 2015). However, there is no indication that this proportion is recommended.

## 7) Social Workers

Research on social workers and their impact on student outcomes is relatively limited. Social workers often serve as part of a comprehensive team, along with support staff such as counselors, nurses, and/or psychologists, which makes it difficult to isolate their impact on student outcomes. Social workers who do work alone often provide targeted services to a small group of students, which also makes it difficult to generalize to a broader group. However, two studies found a positive association between the number of high school social workers in a district and high school graduation rates after controlling for district size and student poverty rate (Tan, Battle, Mumm, Eschmann, & Alvarez, 2015; Alvarez, Bye, Bryant, & Mumm, 2013). These studies did not study student-to-social worker ratios specifically.

Two advocacy organizations have issued recommendations on social worker ratios for schools. Both are professional membership organizations. The National Association of Social Workers issued standards for school social work services in 2012. These standards suggest a ratio of 250 general education students per social worker and a 50-to-1 ratio for intensive-need students (National Association of Social Workers, 2012). "Intensive needs" are not defined in the standards. In 2013, the National Association of School Psychologists recommended a ratio of 400 students per school social worker as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to school psychological services (National Association of School Psychologists, 2013). It is unclear if either of these two sets of standards are based on research.

The literature does not indicate an adequate ratio of school social workers but suggests that having more social workers may be beneficial to high school graduation rates.

## 8) Psychologists

School psychologists provide emotional support, behavior support, and support for mental health within schools. There is some research completed in the last 10 years on the impacts of school mental health supports. In one study, school-based mental health services were associated with decreased suspensions and increased grade promotion (Kang-Yi, Mandell, & Hadley, 2013). Several rigorous studies have found reductions in behavior problems as a result of comprehensive mental health services (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Wolpert et al., 2011). A meta-analysis of school-based interventions found that school social and emotional learning programs may have an impact on academic performances as well as emotional skills, attitudes, and behavior (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). The research appears to show positive impacts associated with school mental health programs. However, the content of these programs is varied, and the research recommendations are not specific to psychologists or psychologist staffing ratios.

The only specific recommendations on staffing ratios for school psychologists come from the National Association of School Psychologists, which recommends a student-to-psychologist ratio of 500–700-to-1 (National Association of School Psychologists, 2013).

## 9) Counselors

There is a significant body of research documenting the positive effects of school counseling. Researchers have found that schools with comprehensive counseling programs had higher proficiency rates in English language arts and math (Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013). Researchers in Utah found that schools that achieved fully attained adequate yearly progress (AYP) status had significantly lower student-to-counselor ratios than schools that did not attain AYP (Carey & Harrington, 2010). One study found that one additional counselor in a school was associated with an increase of one percentage point in boys' academic achievement (Carrell & Carrell, 2006).

Beyond academic achievement, research has also found an association between lower student-to-counselor ratios and fewer disciplinary incidents, less misbehavior, reduced suspension rates, higher attendance rates, and greater reported connections to school (Lapan, Gysbers, Stanley, & Pierce, 2012; Dimmitt & Wilkerson, 2012; Carrell & Hoekstra, 2014). State-adopted maximum student-to-counselor ratios in one study were associated with a reduction in the number of teachers reporting student misbehavior (Reback, 2010). Lower student-to-counselor ratios at the high school level are associated in the literature with higher high school graduation rates, as well as higher college application and enrollment rates (Lapan, Gysbers et al., 2012; Bryan, Moore-Thomas,

Day-Vines, & Holcomb-McCoy, 2011; Hurwitz & Howell, 2014; Lapan, Whitcomb, & Aleman, 2012; Pham & Keenan, 2011).

Another study found that reducing the student-to-counselor ratio from 544-to-1 to 250-to-1 at the elementary level resulted in a 59.1 percent decrease in the percentage of students with one or more disciplinary occurrences (Carrell & Carrell, 2006). In high-poverty high schools in two different states, researchers found that schools with a 250-to-1 student-to-counselor ratio had higher graduation rates, better school attendance rates, lower suspension rates, and lower disciplinary incidents (Lapan, Gysbers et al., 2012; Lapan, Whitcomb et al., 2012).

The American School Counselor Association issued a national model for school counseling in 2019 that includes a recommended student-to-counselor ratio of 250-to-1 (American School Counselor Association, 2019). This recommended ratio appears to align with research on school counselors.

Overall, the body of research and recommendations on counselors indicates that lower student-to-counselor ratios are beneficial for student outcomes. Specifically, a ratio of 250-to-1 has been shown to be positively associated with some student outcomes at both the elementary and high school levels.

## 10) Nurses

There is a significant body of research documenting the impact that a school nurse may have on health (Gottfried, 2013). School nurses may improve attendance by reducing illness and improving chronic disease management (DeSocio & Hootman, 2004).

Students in school districts that meet the student-to-nurse ratio of 750-to-1 miss fewer school days than students in other schools, even when those districts have high concentrations of poverty (Smith & Sherrod, 2013). Other likely benefits of lower student-to-nurse ratios include higher immunization rates, better identification of serious health conditions, more complete health records, and improved management of health conditions such as diabetes, vision problems, asthma, and depression (Baisch, Lundeen, & Murphy, 2011; Guttu, Engelke, & Swanson, 2004; Wang et al., 2014).

Employing a full-time nurse within a school is associated with fewer absences, especially among students with chronic health conditions such as asthma (Gottfried, 2013; Telljohann, Dake, & Price, 2004). When a full-time school nurse is available, fewer children check out of school during the school day (Allen et al., 2011; Hill & Hollis, 2012). In addition to greater student attendance, the presence of a full-time nurse within a school may substantially reduce the amount of time other school staff members spend



dealing with student health issues (Baisch et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2014). These same two studies found cost savings associated with having a full-time nurse at each school (Baisch et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2014), and one of these studies documented savings of \$2.20 for every dollar invested in school nurses (Wang et al., 2014).

Two organizations offer guidance on student-to-nurse ratios. The National Association of School Nurses recommends daily access to a registered nurse at every school (Dolatowski et al., 2015). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends having one full-time nurse in every school with oversight from a physician at the district level (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016). This is a policy change from AAP's previous recommendation of 750 students for every nurse, and the change is due to the increasing number of students with chronic health care needs (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016). AAP is a member-based organization for pediatricians, rather than nurses. The recommendation for a nurse in every school appears to align with research.

Research on school nurses concludes that lower student-to-nurse ratios are likely to improve student health outcomes and improve attendance. Most of the studies on school nurses document the importance of having a full-time nurse available at each school. Two professional associations have issued staffing guidance that aligns with these findings.

### 11) Family Involvement Coordinators

There is a copious amount of research on the positive impact of family involvement on students' educational experiences and achievement across grade levels and race/ethnicity (Wilder, 2014; Castro et al., 2015). For example, research indicates that a welcoming school environment and informative communication from the school are strongly associated with family involvement in high school, and informative communication also is associated with family support of students at home (Park & Holloway, 2013). Meanwhile, a study of kindergartners found that schools' efforts to communicate with and engage families predicted greater family involvement and higher levels of achievement in reading and math (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012). Direct requests from schools to parents make parents more likely to become involved in their children's school and in supporting their children's education at home (Lavenda, 2011; Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2011). All these findings are in line with the work of school-based family involvement coordinators.

In addition to the research, there are numerous guides and reports on effective strategies to engage families in support of their children's school and education. Despite the wealth of information, the research team could not find research literature that

specifically examined the effectiveness of family involvement coordinators or recommended staffing ratios for these positions.

## 12) Technology Support

There is little research on the appropriate staffing levels necessary to support the effective use of technology in schools. Guidance on this topic comes from common practice across technology industries, which measures technology load by the number of devices that staff members need to manage, rather than the number of students at a school. Precise staffing ratios for technology are not present in the research literature. General guidance in education technical forums suggest that one technology staff per 200–300 technology devices is a recommended ratio (Kotilap, 2012).

## 13) School Security Personnel

Nationally, 4 percent of 12- to 18-year-old students in 2017 reported being afraid of attack or harm at school and 2 percent reported being victims of violence at school (Musu, Zhang, Wang, Zhang, & Ouderkerk, 2019). In addition, 12 percent of public schools reported bullying incidents at least weekly in 2017 (Musu et al., 2019). School safety is a priority because students cannot learn, and teachers cannot teach effectively if they feel unsafe. Visible security measures, such as security personnel, are designed to decrease student misbehavior and make schools safer by deterring and responding to criminal activity (Tanner-Smith & Fisher, 2016).

The research on school security personnel is varied. A 2009 study of school resource officers (SROs) found that schools experienced fewer arrests and fewer arrests for serious crimes after an SRO was assigned to the school (Theriot, 2009). Other research has found little evidence that higher school security staffing levels are associated with positive academic or school climate outcomes (Brady, Balmer, & Phenix, 2007; Na & Gottfredson, 2011). A study triangulating data from two national surveys found no evidence that visible security measures, including security personnel, were consistently associated with positive academic outcomes, while it did find evidence of possible negative associations between those security measure and outcomes (Tanner-Smith & Fisher, 2015).

The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) recommends that every school have at least one school resource officer (National Association of School Resource Officers, 2018). NASRO provides training to school law-enforcement officers. This recommendation is consistent with some but not all the research.

#### 14) Clerical Support Staff

The research team found no research on the direct or indirect impact of school clerical support staff on instructional practices or student outcomes. While these staff members may play important roles in the operation of schools, they have not been a focus of research.

#### 15) Custodial Staff

There is no research on the direct or indirect impact of custodial staff on instructional practice or student outcomes. Nonetheless, there are several studies that document the possible impact of school facilities on school climate and student outcomes (Uline, Wolsey, Tschannen-Moran, & Lin, 2010; Higgins, Hall, Wall, Woolner, & McCaughey, 2005). These findings support the employment of an adequate custodial staff for maintaining a clean and safe school facility, but they do not provide staffing recommendations per building site.

#### 16) Facilities, Maintenance, and Grounds Staff

The research does not identify any association between a maintenance and grounds staff and instructional practices or student outcomes. However, as noted in the section on custodial staff above, there is a relationship between school facilities and both school climate and student outcomes. Thus, it is important that school buildings and grounds are maintained and that there is adequate staffing to complete these tasks.

#### 17) Warehouse Laborers and Mechanics

There are no recent research studies on the role of warehouse laborers and mechanics within a school system.

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# Washington Education Association

## **Resource Materials**

### **Staffing Enrichment Workgroup**

*The content of this document was recommended by the WEA members on the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup and then was coalesced by WEA staff.*

The members of WEA believe there are three basic areas which must be addressed in order to move more quickly and effectively towards eliminating the opportunity gap. As it was difficult to narrow important resources down to just one or two, we have grouped them into three broad issue areas:

Class size and caseload

Professional Development

Planning time and work issues directly impacting students

The research and additional resources connected to these three areas are at the end of the document. *Note: much of the research and resources cited came from previous class size and prototypical model publications, the New York Class Size Matters website, and professional cites recommend by WEA members. It most assuredly is not all inclusive.*

#### **Class size and caseload**

##### *Key ideas and Essential information*

Extensive research has been done on class size and caseload issues. Educators in the buildings know that small class sizes at all levels make a difference for all students. The ability of any Education Staff Associate (ESA) to meet the needs of all students is greatly impacted by huge caseloads; and caseloads can be impacted by severity of diagnosis sometimes more than by number of students.

Having enough professionals in each building, including classroom teachers, teacher-librarians, specialists, paraeducators and full staffing of ESA positions, specifically school psychologists, social workers, nurses and counselors can close the opportunity gap for all students. Without addressing class size and caseload issues, the hard work being done to address cultural relevancy, racial bias, differentiated learning, and social-emotional learning will not be as effective. And, while class size reduction is vitally important, we cannot point out the importance of increasing educators of color across all spectrums of public education and that it is vital towards closing the opportunity gap.

### *Recommended ratios*

WEA continues to support full funding of I-1351's research based staffing values as soon as possible and views it as a baseline/minimum for meeting student basic education needs and eliminating the opportunity gap for all students.

In addition, WEA endorses very specific ratios for ESAs for all grade levels:

School counselors: 1:250

School social workers: 1:250

School psychologists: 1:500-700

School nurses: 1:750

Speech language pathologist, caseload ratio: 1:40

OT/PT, caseload ratio depending on student need: 1:30

Paraeducators are essential members of the education team in the classroom, in special education, ELL and general education settings. The current prototypical model does not come close to funding an adequate number of paraeducators.

### *Key knowledge or skills*

The specific work a general education teacher, a special education teacher, each category of Education Staff Associate and a paraeducator does is well understood and relisting what they bring seems unnecessary.

It is important to note though that the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) undertook an extensive review of national and international literature on paraeducators. The overriding conclusion from eight of the nine studies is that trained and supported paraeducators, either working one-to-one or in a small group of students, can help primary aged children with literacy and language problems make significant gains in learning compared with similar children who do not receive supplemental instructional support.

## **Professional Development (PD)**

### *Key ideas and Essential information*

High quality professional development that is locally determined by school districts and their local education unions will help impact positive changes in regard to racial bias, cultural relevancy, restorative justice, social-emotional learning, inclusion of special

education students in the general education classroom, and the many other challenges facing educators today. WEA agrees that closing the opportunity gap will not happen without district wide consistency, implementation with fidelity of systems, specific professional development and time and resources to incorporate the learning from the PD.

Professional development must be assignment specific in addition to meeting broad categorical learnings. The importance of the state fully funding HB 1115, Paraeducators and professional development days for all educators is thus vital to closing the opportunity gap.

#### *Recommended ratios*

In order for professional development to be truly effective, Washington State must move assertively to reach I-1351 ratios and reduce caseloads. Priorities as to specific needs, both statewide and in local districts, must be determined so that an effective and funded timeline can be set and then met. Borrowing money from one part of the education budget for another in attempts to address ratios will neither close or eliminate the opportunity gap.

#### *Key knowledge or skills*

Classroom teachers, specialist and paraeducators bring direct instruction and academics to our students. ESAs while meeting specific requirements of IEPs, health and wellness issues and academic counseling, also provide the in-house mental health team for students.

### **Planning/Collaboration Time**

#### *Key ideas and Essential information*

Planning time is the third leg of the stool in regard to closing the opportunity gap. Educators, including classroom teachers, specialists, paraeducators and ESAs must have quality time both individually and for collaboration to really address the needs of today's students.

Individual planning time is critical in order to incorporate SEL and cultural relevancy into all instruction. For teachers with several different subjects and/or levels one planning period a day maybe inadequate. Paraeducators need time to prepare for their work and time to communicate and collaborate directly with the teachers they work with. ESAs can be more effective as a team if they too have time to confer on a regular basis.

#### *Recommended ratios—N/A*

### *Key knowledge or skills*

The OSPI School Day Work Group delved deeply into schedules and systems used internationally and in other states to meet the needs all educators have for planning and collaboration. Student learning improves when educators have time to plan, reflect and collaborate. We would refer you to the many resources that work group utilized.

## **Research and Resources**

### ***Class Size Issues***

Class Size Matters is a non-profit organization that advocates for smaller classes in NYC's public schools and the nation as a whole. Their website, <https://www.classsizematters.org/>, contains a wealth of information and research addressing inequities in class size, especially in direct relation to closing the opportunity gap.

Here is a link to specific research addressing the issue:

<https://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#opportunity>

This list contains recent research on the issue:

- **Baker, B. D., Farrie, D. and Sciarra, D. G. (2016), [Mind the Gap: 20 Years of Progress and Retrenchment in School Funding and Achievement Gaps](#). ETS Research Report Series, 2016: 1–37.** *"...ample research has indicated that children in smaller classes achieve better outcomes, both academic and otherwise, and that class size reduction can be an effective strategy for closing racially or socioeconomically based achievement gaps . Although it is certainly plausible that other uses of the same money might be equally or even more effective, there is little evidence to support this ... Smaller class sizes and reduced total student loads are a relevant working condition simultaneously influencing teacher recruitment and retention); that is, providing smaller classes may partly offset the need for higher wages for recruiting or retaining teachers." The authors' analysis shows that states with higher teacher/student staffing ratios in higher poverty districts tend to have lower than expected achievement gaps in Grade 4 and Grade 8 on the NAEPs.*
- **Mathis, William J. (2016). [Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking: The Effectiveness of Class Size Reduction](#). National Education Policy Center, University of Colorado.** *With past research and policy considerations in mind, the brief concludes "class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy." This is especially crucial for populations*

which are most effected by large class sizes, such as low-income and minority students. The research brief outlines the benefits of smaller classes in terms of student achievement, graduation rates and non-cognitive skills. Mathis recommends class sizes between 15-18 (with room for variation based in subject), and argues that while class size reduction can be costly, it could prove to be the most cost-effective policy in the long run.

- **Jackson, C. Kirabo., Johnson, Rucker C., Persico, Claudia. (forthcoming) [The Effects of School Spending on Educational And Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms](#) *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*.** Analyses of school finance reforms reveal that a 10 percent increase in per-pupil spending each year for all twelve years of public schooling leads to 0.31 more completed years of education for students, about 7 percent higher wages, and a 3.2 percentage-point reduction in the annual incidence of adult poverty; with effects more pronounced for children from low-income families. Higher spending increases were associated with notable improvements in measured school inputs, including reductions in student-to-teacher ratios, increases in teacher salaries, and longer school years.
- **Zyngier, David. (2014). [Class size and academic results, with a focus on children from culturally, linguistically and economically disenfranchised communities](#). *Evidence Base, issue 1, 2014*.** In this research summary, the author examined class size reduction and its effect on student achievement by analyzing 112 peer-reviewed studies, and showed that the overwhelming majority of these studies found that smaller classes have a significant impact on student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap. The author writes, "Noticeably, of the papers included in this review, only three authors supported the notion that smaller class sizes did not produce better outcomes to justify the expenditure."
- **Schanzenbach, D. W. (2014). [Does Class Size Matter?](#) *National Education Policy Center Policy Brief*.** "This policy brief summarizes the academic literature on the impact of class size and finds that class size is an important determinant of a variety of student outcomes, ranging from test scores to broader life outcomes. Smaller classes are particularly effective at raising achievement levels of low-income and minority children. Policymakers should carefully weigh the efficacy of class-size policy against other potential uses of funds. While lower class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall."

And the STAR research project remains relevant today and also is the research basis for WA State's most recent K-3 class size reductions:



- **Word, Elizabeth et al. (1990) [The State Of Tennessee's Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio \(STAR\) Project Technical Report Part I and Part II](#). Commissioned by the Tennessee State Dept. of Education.** *This report contains the results of Tennessee's ground-breaking 4-year longitudinal randomized class size experiment. The study analyzed student achievement and development in three class types: small classes with 13-17 students per teacher; regular classes with 22-25 students per teacher, and regular classes with 22-25 students per teacher assisted by a full-time teacher aide. Project STAR followed students from kindergarten through third grade, starting in 1985-1986 and ending in 1988-1989. The study found significant gains in test scores in every subject and every grade, including reading, math, word study and listening, and lower grade retention rates for students who were in smaller classes; but no significant gains for those in classes with an aide.*

Research specific to importance of class size reduction across all levels:

- **Fredriksson, P., Öckert, B. & Oosterbeek, H. (2013). [Long-Term Effects of Class Size](#). The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 128 (1).** *"Analysis of administrative data from Sweden shows Smaller classes in the last three years of primary school (age 10 to 13) are not only beneficial for cognitive test scores at age 13 but also for non-cognitive scores at that age, for cognitive test scores at ages 16 and 18, and for completed education and wages at age 27 to 42. The estimated effect on wages shows the economic benefits outweigh the costs."*
- **Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., & Brown, P. (2011). [Examining the effect of class size on classroom engagement and Teacher-pupil interaction- Differences in relation to pupil prior attainment and primary vs. secondary schools](#). Learning and Instruction, 21.** *An observational study involving nearly 700 students in 49 schools in the UK finds that in both the early and later grades, smaller classes leads to students receiving more individual attention from their teachers and having more positive interactions with them. Classroom engagement decreases in larger classes, and this is particularly marked for struggling students at the secondary level. Students are engaged in active interactions with their teachers two to three times more often in a class of 15 compared to class of 30, and for low achievers at secondary level there is more than twice as much off task behavior in classes of 30 compared to 15. A five student increase in class size is associated with the odds of off task behavior increasing by 40 percent for this group. No threshold effect was observed; in other words, there is no particular class size that must be attained for positive benefits to accrue to students in smaller classes.*



- **Malloy, C., Ph.D., & Vital Research, LLC., (2010). Lessons from the Classroom: Initial Success for At-Risk Students. California Teachers Association.** *"An ongoing evaluation of the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) .... This report includes a comparative analysis of Academic Performance Index data for QEIA schools and non-QEIA schools as well as findings from an action research project in 22 QEIA schools statewide... most common goal noted by schools was class size reduction: at least one interviewee at all but one of the regular program schools cited class size reduction as a key goal of QEIA at their school...higher API growth schools cited class size reduction as one of the key factors that contributed to changes in teaching practices at their schools...spend more time with the "neediest, at-risk" students, differentiate instruction, and spend less time on classroom management issue."*

## **Educational Staff Associates**

### **School Nurses (RN-ESA)**

<https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-workload>

[www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/chronic\\_conditions/pdfs/2017\\_02\\_15-FactSheet-RoleOfSchoolNurses\\_FINAL\\_508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/chronic_conditions/pdfs/2017_02_15-FactSheet-RoleOfSchoolNurses_FINAL_508.pdf)

There are concerns that current workload requirements for school nurses may not be met by a 1:750 ratio. We would also note that some school districts are utilizing Health Assistants, paraeducators specifically trained to work in the health room (first aid/CPR certified, delegation for medications, etc.), to assist with the shortage of school nurses.

### **School Counselors**

1:250

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Publications/Research-Release-Parzych.pdf>

### **School Psychologists**

In 2010, NASP released for the first time the **Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services**, also known as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Practice Model. Almost everything done in practice reflects the NASP Practice Model in at least one of the 10 domains of school psychology practice. The competencies identified within these 10 domains represent the knowledge and skills that school psychologists are prepared to have. The model is intended to show the alignment between competencies and the services provided. Often, the challenge is to

reframe the thinking about services in this context, identify other areas of practice where growth is possible, and begin to use the model to define the work and its value when communicating with others. Importantly, working towards the recommended ratio (1:500-700) enables a school psychologist to more effectively provide a comprehensive range of services. The goal remains enhancement of practice to better serve students, families, and schools.

### **School Social Workers**

Links to the main page of the National Association of Social Workers and specifically their standards section.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Practice-Standards-Guidelines>

### **Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologists**

While these positions are typically required for students with IEPs and school districts must provide those required services, the professional associations do have recommendations for case load limits so that the professional can actually meet the needs of the students in their care.

When occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided as educational services, decisions regarding what type of therapy is provided, how it is provided and who is to provide it are directly tied to the student's overall educational program. All team members support the attainment of these educational goals. Thus, therapy and other related services become a means or method to attain educational goals and objectives/benchmarks, rather than the focus of separate therapy goals or objectives/benchmarks. School-based therapy is not intended to meet all the therapy needs of a student but is intended to meet needs of the student to promote success in the educational environment. Links to each specific group are below:

#### **SLP's**

<https://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589934681&section=Overview>

#### **PT's**

<https://www.apta.org/>

#### **OT's**

<https://www.aota.org/>

## **Paraeducators**

Paraeducators are an essential member of the education team in the classroom, in special education, ELL and general education settings. The current prototypical model does not come close to funding an adequate number of paraeducators. Two excellent resources include the December 2010 OSPI Classified Adequacy Staffing Reports and the Paraeducator Board website which includes current laws WACs and the 2015-16 work group project which defined the skills, standards and professional development paraeducators will need to meet the needs of their students. [www.pesb.wa.gov](http://www.pesb.wa.gov)

### ***Professional Development, Planning and Collaboration Issues***

*Racial equity, bias, ethnicity and education issues:*

Yosso, T.J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? Race, Ethnicity and Education, 8(1), pp. 69–91.

[https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cree20?open=5&year=2002&repitition=0#vol\\_5\\_2002](https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cree20?open=5&year=2002&repitition=0#vol_5_2002)

The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers, Source <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf>

An article presenting what we already know as to the important of planning and collaborative time backed up with research references. While this article references teachers and specialists, paraeducators should also be included.

<https://www.kaplanonline.org/time-teacher-learning-planning-critical-school-reform/>

*Social-Emotional Learning*

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/social-and-emotional-learning-case-study-san-jose-state-report>

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/mental-social-behavioral-health/social-and-emotional-learning-sel>

*Planning and Collaboration*

The Prevalence of Collaboration Among American Teachers -

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9178/4e7923c2b8419d6ab4f2b2628c217c46de57.pdf>

### **1. A Theoretical and Empirical Investigation of Teacher Collaboration for School Improvement and Student Achievement in Public Elementary Schools**

[https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/casei/collaboration\\_studentachievement.pdf](https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/casei/collaboration_studentachievement.pdf)

This study was referenced multiple times in other studies.

**Results:** Results of HLM analyses indicate that fourth-grade students have higher achievement in mathematics and reading when they attend schools characterized by higher levels of teacher collaboration for school improvement.

**Conclusions:** The authors suggest that the results provide preliminary support for efforts to improve student achievement by providing teachers with opportunities to collaborate on issues related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development. The authors also discuss the need for more research on the effects of different types of collaborative practices using more representative samples.

## **2. A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis of the Roles of Instructional Leadership, Teacher Collaboration, and Collective Efficacy Beliefs in Support of Student Learning**

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1102657>

**Abstract:** Principals' instructional leadership may support the degree to which teachers work together to improve instruction, and together leadership and teacher collaboration may contribute to school effectiveness by strengthening collective efficacy beliefs. We found a significant direct effect of leadership on teacher collaboration. Further, leadership and collaboration predicted collective efficacy beliefs. Finally, achievement differences among schools were predicted directly by collective efficacy beliefs and indirectly by instructional leadership and teacher collaboration. These findings suggest that strong instructional leadership can create structures to facilitate teachers' work in ways that strengthen organizational belief systems, and, in concert, these factors foster student learning.

## **3. Collective Pedagogical Teacher Culture and Mathematics Achievement: Differences by Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status**

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0038040712472911>

**Abstract:** Scholars have not adequately assessed how organizational cultures in schools differentially influence students' mathematics achievement by race and socioeconomic status (SES). We focus on what we term collective pedagogical teacher culture, highlighting the role of professional communities and teacher collaboration in influencing mathematics achievement. Using cross-classified growth models, we analyze data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study and illustrate that schools where teachers perceive the presence of professional communities and teacher collaboration

foster greater mathematics achievement throughout elementary school. Furthermore, achievement gaps by race and socioeconomic status are lessened in schools with professional communities and teacher collaboration.

#### **4. Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning**

[https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/140885/Learning-from-Leadership\\_Final-Research-Report\\_July-2010.pdf](https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/140885/Learning-from-Leadership_Final-Research-Report_July-2010.pdf)

Conclusion: Where teachers feel attached to a professional community, they are more likely to use instructional practices that are linked to improved student learning.

And, this report addresses the link between student outcomes and the amount of time a teacher collaborates:

<https://aquila.usm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1755&context=dissertations>

## **Association of Washington School Principals:**

TO: Education Stakeholders of Washington State

FROM: Association of Washington School Principals

DATE: November 1, 2019

RE: Ensuring Equitable and Sustained Leadership for All Students and Staff

Representing the collective voice of 98 percent of public-school principals and assistant principals, the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) has spent over forty years analyzing the paradigm of school leadership. We have come to understand the principalship as being critical to the success of the entire educational system while also unique to all other roles in the profession. Additionally, we have witnessed the number and complexity of leadership tasks and outcomes principals are responsible for rise in direct proportion to ongoing increases in local, state and federal policies, mandates and laws.

As the multiplier of positive outcomes, the principalship requires skillful leadership of all initiatives and adoptions as well as the recruitment, retention and capacity-building of all staff. Principals are linked to all stakeholders and charged with ensuring the health and safety of all who enter the school as well as the academic and social/emotional growth of each child. The leadership of culture, systems and learning within the schoolhouse rests squarely on principals' shoulders.

During the past ten years updated concepts of effective leadership, emerging evidence-based practices, refined systems-change theory and well-intended legislation have rapidly added complex, nuanced and time-consuming tasks to the principalship. Please refer to the appendix for a partial list of examples.

Considering the vast array of responsibilities added to the principalship, and drawing from an acute understanding of school leadership as well as current data and testimony from the field, AWSP has reached the following assertion for the first time in our history:

***In its current iteration, the role of the public-school principal in Washington state is untenable.***

Principal sustainability is becoming an increasing concern. A Wallace Foundation study confirms that, nationally, only 1:4 principals are in the same building after five years. In 2018-19 Washington state experienced a 25 percent turnover in principal positions. This "churn" is an alarming reality for our entire education system and should be addressed

immediately. A revolving door of leadership results in massive disruption to school culture, the persistence of ineffective and antiquated systems and a negative impact on student outcomes. Furthermore, schools targeted for “required action” suffer twice the rate of churn. All students, staff and communities, regardless of zip-code, deserve equitably consistent leadership.

Research indicates it takes 3-5 years to implement lasting change in elementary schools, 5-7 years in middle schools, and 7-10 years in high schools. Closing opportunity gaps and dismantling historically inequitable systems requires sustained leadership. *Principal churn negatively impacts equity-centered leadership.*

The Learning Policy Institute, sponsored by the National Secondary School Principals Association, determined five primary reasons why principals leave the principalship:

- Inadequate preparation and professional development
- Poor working conditions
- Insufficient salaries
- High-stakes accountability
- Lack of decision-making authority

High accountability and low control workplaces are the most likely to lead to burnout.

Principal stability is necessary to increase teacher effectiveness and capacity. Recent research found principal turnover is impactful for three reasons:

1. High principal turnover often leads to greater teacher turnover (Béteille et al., 2011) which, in turn, can have a negative impact on educational outcomes (Ronfeldt et al., 2011), as well as increased fiscal costs (Levy et al., 2006). For instance, Ronfeldt found that teacher turnover has a significant and negative effect on student achievement in both numeracy and literacy.
2. Principal turnover has direct negative effects on achievement, and the strongest impact appears immediately after turnover occurs (Burkhauer et al. 2012).
3. Regular principal turnover can lead to teachers not investing in any change effort and learning to simply “wait [principals] out.” (Hargreaves et al. 2003, p. 8). As a result, the probability of school improvement decreases (Fullan 1991).

Principals are on the “front lines” dealing with highly challenging, extremely consequential, complex and unpredictable situations involving the health, well-being, safety and education of staff, students and community stakeholders throughout each day. By comparison, most emergency room physicians will experience lulls during the day where they can decompress, reflect on their practice and plan strategically.

Principals, however, function in the red-zone for the vast majority of time each day engaged in continual high-stakes triage.

According to the 2017 Principal Health and Wellbeing survey, compared to the general population, principals report:

- 1.5 times higher job demands
- 1.6 times more burnout
- 1.7 times more stress
- 2.2 times more difficulty sleeping
- 1.3 times more depressive symptoms

*One in three principals were flagged as so distressed their physical and mental health were seriously at risk. The two largest sources of stress have consistently been the quantity of work and lack of time to focus on teaching and learning.*

The unhealthy state of the principalship is also evident in the following 2018 AWSP survey data:

- 70 percent of principals report their job negatively impacts their personal relationships.
- 65 percent of principals work 6 to 7 days per week.
- 72 percent of principals work 56 hours per week or more.

A recent National Association of Elementary School Principals survey shows the number of hours principals are working per week has increased to **over 60-hours per week**.

Note - The US Department of Health and Human Services indicate:

- Little productive work occurs after 50 hours per week.
- There is a 60 percent increase risk of heart disease when working >10 hours per day.
- Working >40 hours per week is associated with:
  - Increased alcohol and tobacco consumption.
  - Unhealthy weight gain in men.
  - Depression in women.

The data is clear and compelling. We *must* change the way the principal position is staffed and ensure a proper number of school-leaders are hired to do the work. It has become abundantly clear we have a systems-problem being placed on the backs of individuals. Simply put, ***the prototypical funding model does not provide an adequate number of principals.***

Therefore, AWSP strongly recommends the following student-to-principal staffing ratios:



Implementation to Occur During Phase One	
Year	Student-to-Principal Ratio
2020–21	300:1
2021–22	285:1
2022–23	275:1
2023–24	265:1
2024–25	260:1

It is critical to understand that, in addition to the student-to-principal ratio, the *staff-to-principal ratio* has a profound effect on a principal's workload and contributes to the survey data referenced above. Likewise, categorical programs such as LAP and ELL directly influence a principal's opportunity to impact teaching and learning.

Therefore, AWSP also strongly recommends the following improvements in order to provide equitable and sustained leadership and support to all students and staff:

- **Principal FTE should increase at the same percentage-rate as staff FTE.**
- **A portion of LAP and ELL funding should be dedicated to increasing principal FTE.**

Lastly, with regard to what works best for improving schools, please reference the six-year (2011-2016) *Principal Pipeline* study funded by the Wallace Foundation and lead by Dr. Susan Gates, Senior Economist and Director of the Office of Research Quality Assurance at the RAND Corporation. The study uncovered a specific, strategic approach to the hiring, preparation, evaluation and support of school leaders. The approach is feasible, affordable and effective with outcomes including higher math and reading achievement for students and improved principal retention.

AWSP's professional learning continuum currently replicates aspects of the RAND research for hundreds of leaders each year. The positive impact is measurable and significant. With additional resources we can bring our systems to scale. We are poised and ready to support each and every aspiring, new and experienced school leader across the state in order to positively impact the entire system.

*"In order to fix the system, focus on supporting the principals. They are the multiplier of positive outcomes."*

AWSP's aim in providing this report is to explicitly represent the current state of the principalship, illuminate a critically urgent need within the educational system of Washington state and provide tangible and efficient solutions for policy makers.

## Appendix

### **Recent Initiatives that Heavily Impact the Principalship (a partial list)**

- Revised discipline policies and procedures
- Increased graduation requirements (24 credits)
- On-time graduation rates through 9th grade success
- Introduction of and continual changes to the Smarter Balanced Assessment
- WAKids Assessment
- Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment
- Introduction of and continual changes to the Common Core State Standards and the Washington State Learning Standards
- Next Generation Science Standards
- Increased safety planning including threat assessments and drills such as:
  - Active Shooter
  - Shelter-in-Place
  - Earthquake
  - Lahar
  - Tsunami
- Revised policies related to School Resource Officers
- Shrinking budgets coupled with increasing expectations
- Lower class sizes in grades K-3 resulting in higher number of staff that principals evaluate
- All-day Kindergarten
- New rules for BECCA and Community Truancy Boards
- Teacher and Principal Evaluation Protocols and Frameworks
- LGBTQ+ safety and support
- Policy changes related to Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying
- Ensuring the proper use of student restraint and isolation
- Opioid overdose medication
- Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Epi-Pens
- Medical marijuana
- Vaping and Juuling
- Youth suicide prevention
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Behavioral and Mental Health Screening
- Supervision of an increasing number of extra-curricular and sports activities

- Teacher and substitute shortages affecting both hiring needs and day-to-day building operations
- Implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Positive Behavior Intervention Supports
- Ensuring equitable outcomes for all students including those mandated to receive the following categories of support:
  - Autism
  - Visual Impairment and Blindness
  - Emotional Disturbance
  - Hearing Impairment and Deafness
  - Intellectual Disability
  - Specific Learning Disability
  - Orthopedic Impairment
  - Speech or Language Impairment
  - Traumatic Brain Injury



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