

Staffing and Administrator Formulas

The project team was unable to identify any examples of staffing or administrator formulas utilized in Pennsylvania.

Tennessee

Public Education System Overview

As of fall 2015, there were 1,001,235 students in the Tennessee public school system⁸³ and 1,766 public elementary and secondary schools (2014–15 school year).⁸⁴ School districts are primarily organized by county and municipality, although some other types exist. In the 2015–16 school year, there were 146 school districts operating in the state.⁸⁵

During the 2014–15 school year, public education was primarily funded from local sources (53.6%), followed by state (39.9%) and federal (6.5%).⁸⁶ Tennessee utilizes a similar funding system to both North Carolina and Delaware by determining formula allocations based on the cost to provide the service (staff costs, materials, etc.). In addition, “low-income students generate supplemental funding in Tennessee. The state does not provide supplemental funding to cover the additional cost of educating other specific categories of students. However, Tennessee considers specific grade levels, population of English-language learners, services for students with disabilities, and students enrolled in career and technical education programs in the allocation of funding for staff costs.” At the local level, “very few school districts directly impose local property taxes. Counties and municipalities impose property taxes. Revenue from county property taxes is distributed to school districts in proportion with the student count of each district. Separately, certain school districts may levy their own local property taxes, but the rate must be approved by the General Assembly.” Standards regarding the expected local contribution to public education are set by the state.⁸⁷

⁸³ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

⁸⁴ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016)

⁸⁵ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

⁸⁶ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

⁸⁷ (EdBuild, 2018)

Staffing and Administrator Formulas

Tennessee provides state funding for administrator position allotments such as Superintendent, Technology Coordinator, Principal, Assistant Principal, and multiple supervisor positions. According to the *Tennessee Basic Education Program Handbook for Computation*,⁸⁸ the following formulas are utilized to determine position allotments:

- Superintendent: “Each county is allocated one superintendent. Each system within a county receives a proportional share of the position based upon the system’s proportion of the county ADM (average daily membership).”
- Principal
 - School enrollment between 0–224 receives 0.5 of a position
 - School enrollment above 225 receives 1.0 position
 - Elementary schools with less than 100 enrolled students do not receive a principal allocation
- Elementary Assistant Principal
 - School enrollment below 660 does not receive an allocation
 - School enrollment between 660–879 receives 0.5 of a position
 - School enrollment between 880–1,099 receives 1.0 position
 - School enrollment between 1,100–1,319 receives 1.5 positions
 - School enrollment above 1,319 receives 2.0 positions
- Secondary Assistant Principal
 - School enrollment below 300 does not receive an allocation
 - School enrollment between 300–649 receives 0.5 of a position
 - School enrollment between 650–999 receives 1.0 position
 - School enrollment between 1,000–1,249 receives 1.5 positions
 - School enrollment above 1,249 receives 2.0 positions, “plus 1 for each additional 250 pupils rounded to nearest 0.5”

⁸⁸ (Tennessee Department of Education Office of Local Finance, 2016)

- Regular Supervisors
 - System ADM below 500 receives 1.0 position
 - System ADM between 500–999 receives 2.0 positions
 - System ADM between 1,000–1,999 receives 3.0 positions
 - System ADM above 1,999 receives 3.0 positions “plus 1 for each additional 1,000 pupils”
- Special Education Supervisors: “Special Education Supervisors are calculated at the ratio of 1 per 750 identified and served students.”
- Vocational Education Supervisors: “Vocational Education Supervisors are calculated at the ratio of 1 per 1,000 vocational education students.”
- Technology Coordinator: “Systems receive a base of one technology coordinator plus an additional coordinator for every 6,400 pupils.”

Virginia

Public Education System Overview

As of fall 2015, there were 1,283,590 students in the Virginia public school system⁸⁹ and 1,860 public elementary and secondary schools (2014–15 school year).⁹⁰ School districts are organized by county and city. In the 2015–16 school year, there were 130 school districts operating in the state.⁹¹

During the 2014–15 school year public education was primarily funded from local sources (53.6%), followed by state (39.9%), and federal (6.5%).⁹² The state “has a hybrid funding formula incorporating both resource-based and student-based elements. It determines the cost of delivering education to a student with no special needs or services based on costs associated with the programs and resources mandated through the state’s statutory standards of quality [to set a base amount].” It provides additional funding for student characteristics such as special education needs, low-income status, and career and technical education participation. In addition, staffing allocation increases are provided for ELL and gifted students. This funding is also differentiated by grade level. Similar to Maryland, at the local level, school districts

⁸⁹ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

⁹⁰ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016)

⁹¹ (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

⁹² (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017)

do not impose taxes, they receive their funding from county or city government. Standards regarding the expected local contribution to public education are set by the state.⁹³

Staffing and Administrator Formulas

In Virginia, the state has mandated some standards via *Title 22.1 Chapter 13.2 Section 22.1-253.13.2. Standard 2. Instructional, administrative, and support personnel* of the Code of Virginia⁹⁴ regarding administrator staffing. This section of the code specifies that “each local school board shall employ, at a minimum, the following full-time equivalent positions for any school that reports fall membership, according to the type of school and student enrollment:”

- Elementary School Principal: “one half-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students”
- Middle School Principal: “one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis”
- High School Principal: “one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis”
- Elementary School Assistant Principal: “one half-time at 600 students, one full-time at 900 students”
- Middle School Assistant Principal: “one full-time for each 600 students”
- High School Assistant Principal: “one full-time for each 600 students”
- Note: “school divisions that employ a sufficient number of assistant principals to meet this staffing requirement may assign assistant principals to schools within the division according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether such schools are elementary, middle, or secondary.”

In addition, the code states (as it pertains to district administrator positions) that “each local school board shall provide those support services that are necessary for the efficient and cost-effective maintenance of its public schools. For the purposes of this title, unless the context otherwise requires, support services positions shall include the following: 1. Executive policy and leadership positions, including school board members, superintendents, and assistant superintendents; 2. Fiscal and human resources positions, including fiscal and audit operations.”

⁹³ (EdBuild, 2018)

⁹⁴ (Commonwealth of Virginia)

Key Findings

Key findings from the study include:

- Each of the school districts and schools in Delaware is a complex organization that has different service delivery methods and scopes of responsibility. However, some commonalities regarding functions do exist.
- School district- and building-level administrations in Delaware are responsible for performing a variety of tasks. In many cases, a single administrator will be responsible for tasks in multiple function areas; this is more common in smaller school districts.
- **With most decisions about public education being made at the state and local levels, rather than the federal level, it is difficult to compare data across school districts and across state lines. Variations in position definitions, funding models, legislation, regulations, and community needs exist regionally and nationally.**
- The vast majority of district office administrators are funded through the unit allocations provided by state entitlement formulas instead of discretionary sources such as local funding raised in referendums. **This means that the number of district office administrators in Delaware school districts is predominantly determined by state formulas and policies. Of the 236.78 district office administrator positions in Delaware, over 82 percent (194.28 positions) are funded through units provided by state entitlement formulas (which cover approximately 70 percent of the salary; the balance is covered by a mix of local, federal, and other state funding).** Federal funding from sources such as Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports over 10 percent (25 positions) of district office administrator positions, while other state funding sources account for over 6 percent (16.5 positions). Only one district office administrator position is funded through the tuition tax (local funding).
- Funding for building-level administrators follows a similar trend. **Of the 459.25 building-level administrator positions in Delaware, over 98 percent (453 positions) of principals and assistant principals are funded through units provided by state entitlement formulas.** Federal funding from Title I and Title II of ESSA (4.25 positions) and local tuition tax and current expense funding (2 positions) fund the rest of building-level administrator positions.
- Of the 9,664.63 teaching positions (building level) in Delaware, Division I funding supports the vast majority of personnel (over 85%). **However, there are 1,439.21 teaching positions that are funded from sources other than Division I. This means that over 14 percent of teaching positions are not included in the calculations that determine the number of principal, assistant principal,**

assistant superintendent, director, 11-month supervisor, visiting teacher, nurse, and secretary positions to which a school district is entitled.

- Primary funding sources for paraprofessionals (building level) are similar to those of teachers; of the 2,396.98 paraprofessional positions in Delaware over 66 percent are funded through Division I units. **The remaining 33 percent (791.14 positions) are funded from other state, federal, and local sources and are not included in the formulas that determine unit allocations by the number of Division I units. Note that a single Division I unit can fund 2 paraprofessional positions.**
- In addition to administrators (district and building level), teachers (building level), and paraprofessionals (building level) there are also 521.16 district-wide instructional staff positions and 3,669.84 operational support staff positions in Delaware. Data were not collected on the number of contractors employed by school districts; however, many personnel are also employed in this category, especially for districts that operate special schools.

Conclusions

As the key findings of the study demonstrate, public education finance and staffing are complex subjects. This report is intended to initiate a conversation that leads to further exploration of these topics. Areas for further discussion and consideration include:

- **Each of the 19 school districts in Delaware has its own unique span of responsibility and community demands, although some commonality regarding key functions does exist. The current discussion regarding public education administrators in Delaware typically focuses on the number of individuals employed without factoring in the scope of work they are responsible for undertaking.** Understanding the work demands created by state and federal policies and community expectations is critical to determining appropriate staffing numbers.
- Due to the fact that state allocation formulas have the greatest role in determining staffing of public schools, further research related to whether or not state allocation formulas need to be modified to better accommodate the current needs of students should be considered. Are there additional positions, supports, or services that should be included in the unit system to address critical needs as determined by the State?
- Currently, a reliance on utilizing Division I units to determine staff allocations creates a situation in which 1,439.21 teaching positions and 791.14 paraprofessional positions are not accounted for in the formulas that determine the number of principal, assistant principal, assistant superintendent, director, 11-month supervisor, visiting teacher, nurse, and secretary positions allocated to a school district. **In essence, administrator counts are being determined by units of pupils, as opposed to the number of personnel under their span of responsibility.** Further research on how this is impacting education service delivery should be considered.
- Further discussions regarding how staffing data are reported in the state are recommended. For example, a disconnect exists between many stakeholders regarding the definition of a district administrator. This situation is exacerbated by the collection of staffing data in which counts can differ greatly depending on the definition that is used: some data include administrative support staff in the administrator counts while other data only includes management positions.

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