

Average Daily Membership Study

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1

Legislation

- Senate Bill 10-008
- CONCERNING A STUDY TO EVALUATE THE FEASIBILITY OF A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE PUPIL ENROLLMENT FOR PURPOSES OF THE "PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE ACT OF 1994" BASED ON THE AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP OF PUPILS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

2

RFP/Timeline/Areas of Study

- Responded to RFP in early November
- Received contract on the 12th of November
- Study to be completed by January 7th
- Areas of Study
 - Review other states' count processes
 - Look at costs to districts and state
 - Work with advisory committee
 - Create recommendations and model impact

3

Definitions

- Counts
 - Single Day, Multi Day or Average
- Membership/Enrollment vs. Attendance
 - Membership is students enrolled and served by districts
 - Attendance is students attending class on a given day/s

4

Colorado's Current System

- Colorado currently uses a “single day” attendance count on Oct. 1
 - The way the count is implemented creates something closer to a **single membership** count
 - Districts allowed to count students in attendance over a period of time.
 - Original funding based on spring estimates and counts reconciled when completed - January adjustments made in supplemental process

5

Process for study

- Committee's work – concerns – ideas - issues
- Literature review – not much available, but some anecdotal “evidence”
- Review of all other states' policies and interviews with a few states
- District/Charter input and survey
- Data analysis from information gathered

6

Review of Other States' Policies

- **Looked at all 50 states to see what type of count:**
 - Single Day Attendance
 - Single Day Membership
 - Multi Day Attendance
 - Multi Day Membership
 - Average Attendance
 - Average Membership
- **Even similarly named counts can be implemented very differently**
 - Example: student count is prior or current year numbers

7

State Interviews – AZ, MN, NE, SD

- **Common Themes**
 - Less rigorous audits
 - Mentioned need for strong data systems
 - States apply counts differently
 - All had definitions of enrollment/membership
 - Trouble counting students in alternative programs
 - Funding and reconciliation varied
 - Many states counted students in quarters or fifths
 - Often count multiple times in the year

8

District/Charter Input

- Eight interviews, a CFO panel and 96 survey responses produced some common themes
 - Definitions for enrollment and attendance
 - Current count high stakes and large burden
 - Most data systems are strong
 - Don't need incentives to keep students enrolled

9

Data Analysis

- Average Membership across the state is about 2% lower than the October count
- Large range of differences – from 27% above to 16% below
 - Very few districts were far outside the norm and those that were are below 500 students
- No clear statistically significant correlation between changes and certain characteristics
 - Rural districts seem to have a higher negative difference between Oct. count and ADM

10

Committee Work

- Advisory committee was made up of 15 members
 - Included legislators, board members, district personnel, union representation and other stakeholders
- Held three meetings over the course of the study
 - Attendance varied

11

Committee Work

- Committee agreed:
 - Districts need to examine enrollment changes during the year and potentially alter funding
 - Need common state definitions – membership/enrollment and attendance
 - District and charters are spending large amounts of time and resources on the Oct. count
 - No research to indicate that one approach is better than another. Many of the incentives members talked about are incorporated in SB 163 because of drop out and graduation rate calculations

12

Committee Work

- Any change needs to be examined to see the impact on all types of districts
- Any change needs to have its benefits measured against the costs to change
- The current fiscal situation would make this a bad year for any change
- The Advisory Committee made no recommendations for changes to the current system

13

Principles

- A number of principles were created:
 - Some that should be included regardless of any change
 - Limit the administrative burden on the state, school districts and charter schools
 - The count method should be fair and equitable
 - The counting method should not restrict a district or charter school in terms of calendars, bell schedules, or ability to innovate

14

Principles

- If changes are made:
 - The counting method should not result in decreased K-12 funding in the state
 - The counting method should be phased in over time
 - District funding should be held harmless for some period of time if changes to the counting method are adopted

15

Principles

- Additional points:
 - Common definitions should be created at the state level for attendance and membership/enrollment. There may need to be a statewide membership form/process to facilitate consistency across the state
 - A strong state student information system must be in place. A “pull” system would allow the CDE to have real time data
 - Growth and decline should be addressed as part of the formula if not addressed in the count

16

Alternatives

- A number of alternatives are possible. They range from staying with the current count to going to a full ADM count.
- The key parameters include;
 - Type of Count
 - Frequency of Count
 - Use in Funding
 - Current or Prior year
 - Reconciliation

17

**Table VII-2
Alternative Recommendations**

	Alternative 1 (Current Count)	Alternative 2 (Using Current Data)	Alternative 3 (New Count Dates)	Alternative 4 (Mix Single day with ADM)	Alternative 5 (ADM)
Type of Count	Attendance	Attendance or Membership	Membership	Membership	Membership
Frequency of Count	Single Day	Multi Day Count Using October Count, Safety and Security Count, and End of Year Count	Multi Day Count Using a date in September/ October, November, January, and March (Perhaps incorporate EOY count)	Use Single Day count for initial funding and then reconcile with an average daily count	Average Daily
Use In Funding - Year Used	Current Year	Current or Prior	Current or Prior	Current	Current or Prior
- Reconciliation	Not Within Year	If Current Year - Yes; If Prior Year - Yes or No	If Current Year - Yes, could adjust throughout year; If Prior Year - Yes or No	Yes, could adjust throughout year	If Current Year - Yes, could adjust throughout year; If Prior Year - Yes or No

18

Recommendations by consultants:

■ Definitions

- Create an enrollment/membership definition based on number of unexcused days absent
- Change the increments students can be counted from halves to quarters or fifths
- Strengthen the definitions of attendance and membership for alternative instructional opportunities

19

Recommendations by consultants:

■ Student Data System

- State should implement a real-time student system that “pulls” from districts
 - Received baseline information from 1 vendor - cost
 - State has federal funds to move toward this system

■ Count Verification and Audit Procedures

- Recommend a review of these procedures, Ensure the least burden possible while maintaining an adequately verified student count

20

Recommendations by consultants:

- Additional count day/s and change to membership
 - The state should switch to a membership count and consider adding an additional day or days. (Safety and Discipline or End of Year)
 - Lessen the high stakes nature of the current count
 - Change only if the burden can be the same or less
 - The statewide data pull system is vital
 - Should rely on current year counts and adjustments

21

Modeling and Cost Analysis

- Model generated current funding amount
 - 15 districts funding went down 5% or more and 15 went up 5% or more
- CDE is currently working to create a “pull” data system, believe they will get close
- Spoke to a student data system vendor and feel that a statewide system cost would range from \$700,000 to \$5.5 million ongoing cost
 - \$5.5 mill. figure would offset current district costs

22