



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

May 17, 2021

Approved unanimously at an ECC Legislative Committee Meeting on May 17, 2021

Approved unanimously by the ECC Membership on May 17, 2021

Approved unanimously by CEC15 Membership on May 17, 2021

RESOLUTION ON ADJUSTMENTS OF FAIR STUDENT FUNDING WEIGHTS

The District 15 Community Education Council (CEC15) held a Special Session on Monday, May 17, 2021. After reviewing all the evidence and facts, CEC15 passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, for the reasons set forth below, CEC15 hereby resolves to support adjustments to Fair Student Funding (FSF) weights;

WHEREAS, the members of CEC15 present at this meeting consisted of Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro Martinelli, Tia Schellstede, Bess Abrahams, Kimmerly Scott, Jaime Ivan Banda, and Mark Bisard;

WHEREAS, in 2006 the NYS Court of Appeals found that New York State was violating students' constitutional rights to a "sound, basic education" and, through this final court order, in 2007, a statewide settlement of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case committed to provide \$5.5 billion annually in Foundation Aid;

WHEREAS, 14 years after this court ruling, NYC public schools have never received the total funding due from NYS;

WHEREAS, in school year 2020-2021 more than 1,000 NYC public schools were funded at less than 100% of the Fair Student Funding¹ formula largely because of the lack of funding from the State, negatively impacting class size, provisions for robust programming and/or adequate social emotional supports;

WHEREAS, for the past several years the City of New York committed additional resources to raise the floor for the FSF funding, so that no school is funded below 90%;

WHEREAS, the lack of Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) funding, coupled with a series of NYC budget cuts in 2008, has had real impact on students through increased class sizes, elimination of programming such as art or music, advanced courses, after school programs and reduction in essential non-instructional

¹ https://www.nycenet.edu/offices/finance_schools/budget/DSBPO/allocationmemo/fy20_21/fy21_docs/fy2022_FSF_CEC_Deck_English.pdf

personnel, such as guidance counselors;

WHEREAS, the lack of CFE funds contributes to an opportunity gap;

WHEREAS, New York State has a constitutional responsibility to provide a “sound, basic education” for all, regardless of race, disability, language proficiency or zip code and must address the opportunity gap;

WHEREAS, New York City public schools are primarily funded on a per student basis through the Fair Student Funding,

WHEREAS, the 2020 Fair Student Funding Guide² states that,

FSF weights provide adequate funding for schools to meet legal and policy requirements. Beyond that, these weights reflect funding for academic needs of students across New York City. In particular, the weights are designed to do two things:

- *Meet the needs of students who need the greatest support; and*
- *Reflect objective, transparent funding methodologies that can be applied evenly across schools.*

The weights are designed to provide transparent levels of funding for every child’s education.

WHEREAS, each school’s FSF allocation is calculated based on the number of students enrolled at each school and the specific needs of those students³. This budgeting method, called a “weighted pupil-funding model,” has remained the same for the last 4 years;

WHEREAS, more than 90% of the FSF is used to pay salaries for teachers and support staff;

WHEREAS, when FSF was originally implemented in 2007-2008, the DOE’s initial decision to not allocate the same percentage of FSF funds to all schools maintained prior funding disparities through the present day;

WHEREAS, many schools have never been funded at 100% of the FSF formula, starting the school year annually with a 10% deficit at 90% funding, where over 100 schools have received 150%, and at least 2 schools have received 200% and 201% of FSF⁴;

WHEREAS, long standing inequities are being amplified due to the world-wide crisis brought on by Covid-19, and for the first time in 14 years, New York State is acknowledging the necessity for fully funding NYC schools;

WHEREAS, the pandemic has caused an inordinate amount of homelessness due to loss of employment from closures of businesses, coupled with closures of schools. Students living in temporary housing are increasing daily, but there is currently no individual weight assigned to these students, who certainly meet

²https://www.nycenet.edu/offices/finance_schools/budget/DSBPO/allocationmemo/fy19_20/fy20_docs/FY2020_FS_F_Guide.pdf

³<https://nycdoe.sharepoint.com/sites/PEPArchive/Shared%20Documents/PEP/2020-2021/May%2019,%202021%20Panel%20for%20Educational%20Policy/FY2022%20Budget%20Weights/FY%202022%20Proposed%20Weights.pdf>

⁴<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/financial/financial-data-and-reports/new-york-state-school-funding-transparentcy-forms> see worksheet Part E: FSF % funded

the definition of those in need of the greatest support;

WHEREAS, students who experience homelessness require both academic and social emotional support, as they experience great trauma that continues for years, even after they settle in a permanent location;

WHEREAS, the designated FSF weights fall under the defined reporting categories: Academic Intervention, Special Education, English Language Learners and Portfolio High Schools;

WHEREAS, FSF weights that fall under the category Portfolio High Schools attach themselves to “schools” and not “students”, and where a Specialized Audition weight of 0.25 and a Specialized Academic weight of 0.35 exists where only 19 of 471 High Schools qualify citywide⁵;

AND WHEREAS, there are almost 1 million students in the NYC school system that all deserve the best education that can be offered;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that while NYS has agreed to fully phase-in \$4.2 billion in foundation aid over 3 years, an adjustment of weights must be made throughout to reflect our current level of need;

BE IT RESOLVED, that DOE include a new weight recognizing students in temporary housing and allow for the fact that their need does not end after adequate housing is acquired;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the funded weights also be reapportioned with greater attention to students living in poverty who have been historically and systematically neglected;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the weights used to fund Portfolio High Schools be re-evaluated as they relate to “schools” and not to “students”;

AND BE IT RESOLVED, that the Department of Education addresses this opportunity gap that has caused a systemic impact on our schools’ ability to provide a sound basic education for all children in the City of New York by modifying the weights to service students with the most need.

cc:

The Honorable Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
The Honorable Mayor Bill de Blasio
New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer
New York City Public Advocate, Jumaane D. Williams
New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
New York State Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie
Education Committee Chair, New York State State Senator Shelley Mayer
Education Committee Chair, New York State Assembly Member Michael Benedetto
New York City Education Committee Chair, New York State State Senator John Liu
New York City Council Member and Education Committee Chair Mark Treyger
New York City Schools Chancellor Meisha Porter

⁵ This is counting only schools with a current OR planned 12th grade which are non charter

New York City Department of Education Chief Financial Officer Lindsey Oates
Deputy Chancellor of Community Empowerment, Partnerships, and Communications Adrienne
Austin
AQENY Legislative Director & Statewide Education Advocate Jasmine Gripper