

# Classified Staffing Model

## Resource Proposal

For Classified Staff ratios funding:

- a) allocate classified staffing resources in a single allocation from the state to districts;
- b) break the current classified staffing ratio into common-sense categories, to be established in a legislative document; and
- c) identify an increased allocation of staff by category.

Ratio recommendations are as follows:

<i>Staff per 1,000 Students</i>	<b>Current Funding</b>	<b>2007-08 Actual</b>	<b>Picus/Odden Recommended</b>	<b>SPI Recommended</b>
Aides	2.8	3.3	5.3	4.6
School Secretaries	3.0	3.6	4.7	4.0
Supervisors/Cntrl Admin	4.0	4.8	2.6	4.5
Service Workers/Other	0.9	1.1	-	1.1
Student and Staff Safety	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.2
Custodians	4.3	5.1	5.2	5.1
Grounds Keepers	0.5	0.6	1.6	TBD
Maintenance Workers	1.1	1.3	1.8	TBD
Technology	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.9
Graduation Advisor	-	-	-	.32
Total Staff per 1,000 Students	17.1	20.3	21.6	<b>25.1*</b>

\*Total Staff per 1,000 Students assumes Picus/Odden staffing levels for Grounds/Maintenance. A facilities maintenance funding proposals has not been finalized; several policy and study efforts are underway that impact this proposal.

## Background

Basic education funding formulas drive 1 classified staff for each 58.75 students. The 1:58.75 ratio represents an enhancement over the 1:60 ratio that had been in place for nearly 30 years. Districts hire many more classified staff than basic education staffing ratios drive; the state drives 16,546 classified FTE staff as of March 2008; districts employed 19,720 as of October 2007 in basic education (general apportionment).

For the staff that districts hire that are in excess of K-12 staffing ratios, school districts expend \$635 million in the 2007-08 school year. (For the state-funded classified staff units, districts expend an additional \$75 million for salaries in excess of state salary allocations.)

Unblocking the single allocation into categories will allow the state to identify the appropriate number of staff (staff per students) that the state should allocate based on state education system priorities. Further, the state can maintain the formulas over time by comparing how many staff districts must employ to how many the state allocates (are new categories emerging?) and by comparing appropriate

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salary benchmarks to keep salary allocations current with district reality (actual salaries paid, local market drivers, state salary schedule).

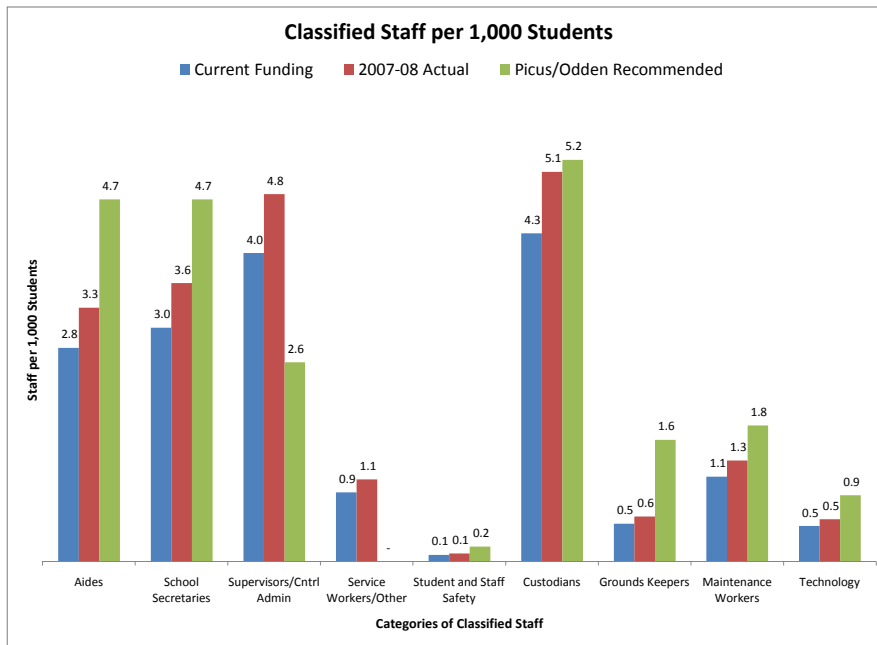
A workgroup of school district staff identified the following categories as the best representation of the staffing that schools must employ:

- Instructional and Non-instructional aides
- School secretaries
- Grounds keepers
- Maintenance workers
- Professional/director/supervisor
- Technology
- Central administration
- Custodians
- Service Workers / All Other
- Student and Staff Safety

Several workgroup members felt that state allocations should be identified at a school level and central administration level, and rolled up to a single allocation from the state to a school district.

The following chart displays the number of staff districts employ in the basic education program, compared to state funding (distributed across the categories proportionally) compared to recommendations by school finance researchers Picus and Odden for Washington Learns in 2006.

**Chart 1: Classified Staff per 1,000 Students Funded, Employed and Recommended by Category**



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In most categories, current state funding is the lowest data point. In total, current state funding totals to 17.1 staff per 1,000 students; districts actually employ 20.3 staff per 1,000 students; and Picus/Odden recommend about 21.6 staff per 1,000 students.

## **Background and Recommendations by Category**

### **School Security Staff** (see separate recommendations on this issue, Part III, 1, B)

In summary the Superintendent recommends .5 FTE for each prototypical middle school (750 students) and 1.0 FTE prototypical high school (1,000 students) for districts to employ school security officers (salary allocations would be at the school security officer salary, districts could augment state funds to contract with local law enforcement officers).

In addition, .75 FTE per 1,000 students would be allocated for district-wide support of staff and student safety planning. Of this amount, .5 FTE per 1,000 students would be used to make resources available for supplemental contracts related to emergency planning and drills; a district would utilize .25 FTE to hire central safety staff.

These levels total to 1.23 staff per 1,000 students, and is well above the levels recommended by Picus and Odden and above what districts are hiring now.

### **Maintenance Workers and Grounds Keepers**

This staffing category includes the staff who maintain school facilities and grounds, including equipment repair, building repair, and preventive maintenance. Districts spend far more on facilities maintenance than the state funds; districts need to spend far more than they do spend. The staffing level recommendation for this category of staffing is critical to having a safe and healthy school environment for staff and students.

The recommendation for these categories of staff is not complete. There are currently several groups conducting interim work around this topic, and any recommendation will benefit from such work.

### **Custodians**

The custodian category is an integral part of facilities maintenance; cleaning carpets, minor repairs, preventing the need for maintenance all are routine job tasks for custodians. Therefore, the facilities maintenance work efforts that are underway may impact the requirements for custodial staff. For time-being, and based on workgroup input, the custodial recommendation is for a ratio of 5.1 custodians for each 1,000 students. This provides 2 custodians in an elementary school of 500 students; provides 3 custodians in a middle school of 750 students; 4 custodians in a high school of 1,000 students; and 4 custodians at the district central office (for a 3,500 student district). This recommendation is consistent with the number of custodians that districts currently employ and slightly less than the level recommended by Picus/Odden.

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## **School Secretaries**

On a day-to-day basis, school secretaries typically manage enrollment of students and data entry into student systems, daily attendance and accompanying absentee tracking, phones, activities scheduling, orient substitute teachers, maintain cumulative files, answer phones, greet visitors, compile lunch counts, distribute/collect immunization forms, assist with minor injuries and administers student medications, handle cash deposits (field trips, student store, fines), compile truancy (BECCA bill) data, monitor students sent to office for discipline, and assist with emergency drills.

The school secretary recommendation is for 4 staff per 1,000 students. This provides 2 school secretaries in an elementary school of 500 students; provides 2 in a middle school of 750 students; 2 in a high school of 1,000 students. This recommendation is less than the level recommended by Picus/Odden.

## **Instructional and Non-instructional Aides**

Aides perform critical functions in schools. In a typical day a school must have coverage for lunch and recess, transitions to and from buses, and classroom help for small groups that need help but do not qualify for special programs. Aides maintain playground equipment, assist with behavior issues, and assist teachers by copying, preparing materials, gathering supplies, helping with classroom displays, and correcting papers. Aides often contact parents on behalf of educators, coordinate volunteers in the building, and assist school secretaries as needed.

The aide recommendation is for 4.5 aides per 1,000 students. This provides 2 instructional aides and 1 non-instructional aide in an elementary school of 500 students; provides 2 instructional aides and 1 non-instructional aide in a middle school of 750 students; 2 instructional aides and 1 non-instructional aides in a high school of 1,000 students. These recommendations include 1 library aide per prototypical school.

Given a recommendation of 3 aides in an elementary school of 500 students (with a class size of 25, there are 20 classes/teachers), what level of service does this really buy for teachers? One of the aides is assumed to be a library aide. This aide will assist the librarian with checking in and checking out at least 500 books per week, shelving this many or more books, binding and repairing materials, cataloging new materials, assisting library volunteers, assisting with equipment maintenance, helping students with research, and being a resource for teachers and students. This aide will assist with moving at least 4 classes in and out of the library each day of the week, leaving 1 hour for open library time, and 1 hour of time in the library with no students.

The remaining 2 aides will be able to provide the 20 teachers in the building with 3.5 hours of assistance per week. Correcting papers, working in small groups while the teacher assists struggling students, copying, creating displays, helping parent volunteers, coordinating student conferences, answering e-mail for a teacher.

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This recommendation, at 4.6 staff per 1,000, is greater than the number of aides that districts currently employ and less than the aides recommended by Picus/Odden (5.3 staff per 1,000).

The recommendations do not cover paraprofessionals serving in a classroom for English Language Learners, working with an assigned group of students who are struggling, and assisting teachers with students eligible for special education services. These tasks are typically paid for by the associated categorical program and funding recommendations are covered elsewhere.

## **Directors, Supervisors and Central Administration**

This category includes the supervisors of staff across all other categories (e.g., Maintenance Supervisors); the category also includes directors of programs and departments who are not certificated staff (e.g., Family Involvement Coordinator) and the personnel, accounting, and budget and finance staff in central office.

The proposed resource level is 4.5 staff per 1,000 students; an increase of .5 FTE per 1,000 staff from current funding levels.

*Note: The salary levels of staff in this category may be very diverse. The category could be broken into Supervisors/Directors and Central Administration to more precisely allocate salaries based on state employee job classifications.*

## **Service Workers/All Other**

This category of staff includes primarily warehouse, motor pool, and mail delivery staff. Picus/Odden do not have a category of staff associated with this function of a school district. Clearly, school districts employing nearly 100,000 staff and serving 1,000,000 students do need to store materials and deliver materials to schools, including mail.

The proposed resource recommendation is to fund the staff that districts currently employ, at 1.1 staff per 1,000 students.

## **Technology**

This category includes the staff to maintain hardware, software, and building infrastructure for administrative and instructional technology. Picus/Odden recommended that districts be funded at \$250 per student for all technology costs. In addition, they recommend 3 technology workers for a district of 3,500 students (.9 FTE per 1,000 students).

The SPI proposal has a similar construction related to technology funding; staffing is included in the Classified Staff ratio, hardware and software costs are covered by a per student funding allocation for instructional technology.

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The proposed classified staffing level is set at the Picus/Odden recommendation. This is a preliminary recommendation that requires further study.

E2SSB 5843 Section 6 (2007) requires OSPI to complete a Data Feasibility Study by November 2008. For this study, OSPI will estimate the cost of development and implementation of new requirements, including the staffing and related impacts, on schools and school districts for the collection of data elements needed to produce state and federal reporting. The study outcome will inform a final recommendation regarding technology-related staffing.

## **Graduation Advisor**

New graduation requirements for high school students has placed a significant burden on staff to ensure that they are assisting students in meeting new requirements. Students must now accumulate credits, complete a High School and Beyond Plan, complete a Culminating Project, and meet standard on the reading, writing, and mathematics portions of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Specifically, students must meet standard on two WASL assessments (reading and writing), they must meet standard on the WASL mathematics assessment or keep taking courses, and soon students will also have to meet standard in science. Students can take each assessment up to five times, and pursue any one or all of six alternatives to the WASL, for one more of the WASL components. A 10th grader who does not meet standard in a content area has at least twenty opportunities in the 11th and 12th grade to demonstrate they have met standard in that content area (4 retakes, 4 COE submissions, 1 or 2 WASL/Grades comparison, and 13 college admission tests).

The proposed classified staffing level includes 1 Graduation Advisor per 1,000 high school students. This averages to .32 staff per 1,000 K-12 students. (More information about how the Advisor is integrated into a system of guidance is contained in Part I, 3, C.)