Classified and Administrative Compensation

HB 2261 requires the state to provide the resources necessary to give every child in Washington the opportunity to learn enough to meet the state's graduation requirements and to be ready for either further education after high school or entry into the world of productive work. It goes on define the resources necessary for this by providing a series of "prototypical schools" for each group of grade levels.

The state recognized that districts would set up their schools differently based on local conditions, but stated that the resources provided in the prototypical school model (PSM) would be adequate to create a school that met the adequacy requirements.

Each prototypical school has a staffing model for certificated teachers, classified staff, and administrators. Teachers have a salary schedule defined in the state budget (called the LEAP schedule) with locally negotiated additional compensation provided through TRI pay. Unlike how we pay teachers, districts get an allocation of state money to pay for administrators and classified staff, and bargain their salaries locally. If they pay more than the state provides they have to make it up with local resources.

While we can't (and should not) set up a system where the state pays whatever districts bargain, the state should provide a reasonable amount of money to pay those employees who are part of the legal definition of "basic education."

The current amount provided by the state has been identified in several studies as being inadequate to meet any reasonable definition of the need for districts to pay these employees. In a study (Taylor, 2012, p. 50) done for the Quality Education Council Dr. Lori Taylor concludes (highlighting mine)

- *As a general rule, non-teaching school district employees receive salaries that are competitive with or well above those received by their counterparts outside of the education sector. The only major exceptions are the instructional aides. Teacher aides earn substantially less than the typical high school graduate throughout the state.*
- *The non-teaching salaries funded by the state are generally not competitive. In the Seattle and Kennewick metropolitan areas, for example, the salary allocation for school district administrators represents less than 63 percent of the prevailing salary for comparable managers, on average.*

These two paragraphs together show that while actual compensation provided to the employee is adequate, the state does not provide enough money to meet these commitments, with the remainder being made up, unconstitutionally, by local taxpayers.

Proposal

Which employees should the state be paying for as part of "Basic Education?"

School districts have many employees outside the definition of basic education. We should only use the employees in the PSM to determine the amount of money the state will provide to the district to meet the basic education obligation.

How much should the state provide to districts for each position in the PSM?

The PSM provides the following categories of workers:

- Teaching assistance
- Office Support
- Student and Staff safety
- Facilities, Custodial, Grounds
- Additional classified
- Central Office CLS

A more useful breakout of the same number of FTEs breaks out some categories that have wildly divergent salaries into their own categories.

- Teaching assistance
- Office Support
- Custodians
- Student and Staff safety
- Technology
- Facilities, Maintenance, Grounds
- Warehouse, Laborers, Mechanics
- Additional Central Office CLS

If we weight the actual average salaries of district employees based on their weights in the prototypical school model we would get a "weighted average classified salary" that could be used to figure out how much we should provide to districts. The data is not finely grained enough to do this, so I propose using the weights of these employees in the overall population of classified employees as a reasonable proxy.

Dr. Taylor computes "comparable 12-month salaries" for these employees, most of which work a year-your schedule.

			2012-13 Average State Allocation	"Comparable 12 month salary"**
	All Units Total for weighted averages		per 1.0 FTE	
school	Teaching Assistance	1,723.609	31,699	41,958
school	Office Support	4,765.046	31,699	36,344
Assume CTE Here	Custodians	4,998.496	31,699	30,353
school	Student & Staff Safety	192.568	31,699	48,221
district	Technology	575.300	31,699	60,901
district	Facilities, Maintenance, Grounds	1,660.861	31,699	45,059
district	Warehouse, Laborers, Mechanics	304.135	31,699	42,572
Assume CTE Here	Additional Central Admin CLS	2,512.243	31,699	56,374
	Weighted Classified Average		31,699	40,099

As you can see, this analysis has the state providing less than 80% of the compensation required to hire employees across the state. Doing the math results in the following cost estimates:

Increase CAS allocations to comparable prevailing salaries for similar positions, as identified in Salaries in the State of Washington 2012 by Dr. Lori Taylor				
		Classified	Administration	Total
CTWG "New" Salary		$40,099	$92,704	
2013-15 Cost		$346,189	$335,370	$681,559
*Assumes ML Budget Drivers. Includes I-732				
2013-15 Cost excluding I-732		$334,056	$323,341	$657,397
I-732 Estimate		$12,133	$12,029	$24,162

The relevant number is $681,559 (in thousands) for the 2013-15 biennium. This includes the I-732 increment over when the data was created.

Should we adjust this to correct for the differences districts face in different regions across the state?

It is computationally difficult to come up with a regional cost difference formula that is fair to districts. We should use If, on further analysis it turns out that the regional differences are substantial we can revisit this decision in the future.

The weighted average classified salary for the state, using current S-275 data, is $43,079 and the weighted average administrative salary is $105,795. The cost of using this data is $948,001 for the 2013-15 biennium.