

Resource Materials

Staffing Enrichment Workgroup

The content of this document was recommended by the WEA members on the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup and then was coalesced by WEA staff.

The members of WEA believe there are three basic areas which must be addressed in order to move more quickly and effectively towards eliminating the opportunity gap. As it was difficult to narrow important resources down to just one or two, we have grouped them into three broad issue areas:

Class size and caseload

Professional Development

Planning time and work issues directly impacting students

The research and additional resources connected to these three areas are at the end of the document. *Note: much of the research and resources cited came from previous class size and prototypical model publications, the New York Class Size Matters website, and professional cites recommend by WEA members. It most assuredly is not all inclusive.*

Class size and caseload

Key ideas and Essential information

Extensive research has been done on class size and caseload issues. Educators in the buildings know that small class sizes at all levels make a difference for all students. The ability of any Education Staff Associate (ESA) to meet the needs of all students is greatly impacted by huge caseloads; and caseloads can be impacted by severity of diagnosis sometimes more than by number of students.

Having enough professionals in each building, including classroom teachers, teacher-librarians, specialists, paraeducators and full staffing of ESA positions, specifically school psychologists, social workers, nurses and counselors can close the opportunity gap for all students. Without addressing class size and caseload issues, the hard work being done to address cultural relevancy, racial bias, differentiated learning, and social emotional learning will not be as effective. And, while class size reduction is vitally important, we cannot point out the importance of increasing educators of color across all spectrums of public education and that it is vital towards closing the opportunity gap.

Recommended ratios

WEA continues to support full funding of I-1351's research based staffing values as soon as possible and views it as a baseline/minimum for meeting student basic education needs and eliminating the opportunity gap for all students.

In addition, WEA endorses very specific ratios for ESAs for all grade levels:

School counselors:	1:250
School social workers:	1:250
School psychologists:	1:500-700
School nurses:	1:750
Speech language pathologist, caseload ratio:	1:40
OT/PT, caseload ratio depending on student need:	1:30

Paraeducators are essential members of the education team in the classroom, in special education, ELL and general education settings. The current prototypical model does not come close to funding an adequate number of paraeducators.

Key knowledge or skills

The specific work a general education teacher, a special education teacher, each category of Education Staff Associate and a paraeducator does is well understood and relisting what they bring seems unnecessary.

It is important to note though that the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) undertook an extensive review of national and international literature on paraeducators. The overriding conclusion from eight of the nine studies is that trained and supported paraeducators, either working one-to-one or in a small group of students, can help primary aged children with literacy and language problems make significant gains in learning compared with similar children who do not receive supplemental instructional support.

Professional Development(PD)

Key ideas and Essential information

High quality professional development that is locally determined by school districts and their local education unions will help impact positive changes in regard to racial bias, cultural relevancy, restorative justice, social-emotional learning, inclusion of special education students in the general education classroom, and the many other challenges facing educators today. WEA agrees that closing the opportunity gap will not happen without district wide consistency, implementation with fidelity of systems, specific professional development and time and resources to incorporate the learning from the PD.

Professional development must be assignment specific in addition to meeting broad categorical learnings. The importance of the state fully funding HB 1115, Paraeducators and professional development days for all educators is thus vital to closing the opportunity gap.

Recommended ratios

In order for professional development to be truly effective, Washington State must move assertively to reach I-1351 ratios and reduce caseloads. Priorities as to specific needs, both statewide and in local districts, must be determined so that an effective and funded timeline can be set and then met. Borrowing money from one part of the education budget for another in attempts to address ratios will neither close or eliminate the opportunity gap.

Key knowledge or skills

Classroom teachers, specialist and paraeducators bring direct instruction and academics to our students. ESAs while meeting specific requirements of IEPs, health and wellness issues and academic counseling, also provide the in-house mental health team for students.

Planning/Collaboration Time

Key ideas and Essential information

Planning time is the third leg of the stool in regard to closing the opportunity gap. Educators, including classroom teachers, specialists, paraeducators and ESAs must have quality time both individually and for collaboration to really address the needs of today's students.

Individual planning time is critical in order to incorporate SEL and cultural relevancy into all instruction. For teachers with several different subjects and/or levels one planning period a day

maybe inadequate. Paraeducators need time to prepare for their work and time to communicate and collaborate directly with the teachers they work with. ESAs can be more effective as a team if they too have time to confer on a regular basis.

Recommended ratios—N/A

Key knowledge or skills

The OSPI School Day Work Group delved deeply into schedules and systems used internationally and in other states to meet the needs all educators have for planning and collaboration. Student learning improves when educators have time to plan, reflect and collaborate. We would refer you to the many resources that work group utilized.

Research and Resources

Class Size Issues

Class Size Matters is a non-profit organization that advocates for smaller classes in NYC's public schools and the nation as a whole. Their website, <https://www.classsizematters.org/>, contains a wealth of information and research addressing inequities in class size, especially in direct relation to closing the opportunity gap.

Here is a link to specific research addressing the issue:

<https://www.classsizematters.org/research-and-links/#opportunity>

This list contains recent research on the issue:

- **Baker, B. D., Farrie, D. and Sciarra, D. G. (2016), Mind the Gap: 20 Years of Progress and Retrenchment in School Funding and Achievement Gaps. ETS Research Report Series, 2016: 1–37.** “...ample research has indicated that children in smaller classes achieve better outcomes, both academic and otherwise, and that class size reduction can be an effective strategy for closing racially or socioeconomically based achievement gaps . Although it is certainly plausible that other uses of the same money might be equally or even more effective, there is little evidence to support this ... Smaller class sizes and reduced total student loads are a relevant working condition simultaneously influencing teacher recruitment and retention); that is, providing smaller classes may partly offset the need for higher wages for recruiting or retaining teachers.” The authors’ analysis shows that states with higher teacher/student staffing ratios in higher poverty districts tend to have lower than expected achievement gaps in Grade 4 and Grade 8 on the NAEPs.
- **Mathis, William J. (2016). Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking: The Effectiveness of Class Size Reduction. National Education Policy Center, University of Colorado.** With past research and policy considerations in mind, the brief concludes “class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy.” This is especially crucial for populations which are most effected by large class sizes, such as low-income and minority students. The research brief outlines the benefits of smaller classes in terms of student achievement, graduation rates and non-cognitive skills. Mathis recommends class sizes between 15-18 (with room for variation based in subject), and argues that while class size reduction can be costly, it could prove to be the most cost-effective policy in the long run.

- **Jackson, C. Kirabo., Johnson, Rucker C., Persico, Claudia. (forthcoming) The Effects of School Spending on Educational And Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*. Analyses of school finance reforms reveal that a 10 percent increase in per-pupil spending each year for all twelve years of public schooling leads to 0.31 more completed years of education for students, about 7 percent higher wages, and a 3.2 percentage-point reduction in the annual incidence of adult poverty; with effects more pronounced for children from low-income families. Higher spending increases were associated with notable improvements in measured school inputs, including reductions in student-to-teacher ratios, increases in teacher salaries, and longer school years.**
- **Zyngier, David. (2014). Class size and academic results, with a focus on children from culturally, linguistically and economically disenfranchised communities. *Evidence Base, issue 1, 2014*. In this research summary, the author examined class size reduction and its effect on student achievement by analyzing 112 peer-reviewed studies, and showed that the overwhelming majority of these studies found that smaller classes have a significant impact on student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap. The author writes, “Noticeably, of the papers included in this review, only three authors supported the notion that smaller class sizes did not produce better outcomes to justify the expenditure.”**
- **Schanzenbach, D. W. (2014). Does Class Size Matter? *National Education Policy Center Policy Brief*. “This policy brief summarizes the academic literature on the impact of class size and finds that class size is an important determinant of a variety of student outcomes, ranging from test scores to broader life outcomes. Smaller classes are particularly effective at raising achievement levels of low-income and minority children. Policymakers should carefully weigh the efficacy of class-size policy against other potential uses of funds. While lower class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall.”**

And the STAR research project remains relevant today and also is the research basis for WA State’s most recent K-3 class size reductions:

- **Word, Elizabeth et al. (1990) *The State Of Tennessee’s Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) Project Technical Report Part I and Part II*. Commissioned by the Tennessee State Dept. of Education. This report contains the results of Tennessee’s ground-breaking 4-year longitudinal randomized class size experiment. The study analyzed student achievement and development in three class types: small classes with 13-17 students per teacher; regular classes with 22-25 students per teacher, and regular classes with 22-25 students per teacher assisted by a full-time teacher aide. Project STAR followed students from kindergarten through third grade, starting in 1985-1986 and ending in 1988-1989. The study found significant gains in test scores in every subject and every grade, including reading, math, word study and listening, and lower grade retention rates for students who were in smaller classes; but no significant gains for those in classes with an aide.**

Research specific to importance of class size reduction across all levels:

- **Fredriksson, P., Öckert, B. & Oosterbeek, H. (2013). Long-Term Effects of Class Size. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 128 (1). “Analysis of administrative data from Sweden shows Smaller classes in the last three years of primary school (age 10 to 13) are not only beneficial for cognitive test scores at age 13 but also for non-cognitive scores at that age, for cognitive test scores at ages 16 and 18, and for completed education and wages at age 27 to 42. The estimated effect on wages shows the economic benefits outweigh the costs.”**
- **Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., & Brown, P. (2011). Examining the effect of class size on classroom engagement and Teacher-pupil interaction- Differences in relation to pupil prior**

attainment and primary vs. secondary schools. Learning and Instruction, 21. *An observational study involving nearly 700 students in 49 schools in the UK finds that in both the early and later grades, smaller classes leads to students receiving more individual attention from their teachers and having more positive interactions with them. Classroom engagement decreases in larger classes, and this is particularly marked for struggling students at the secondary level. Students are engaged in active interactions with their teachers two to three times more often in a class of 15 compared to class of 30, and for low achievers at secondary level there is more than twice as much off task behavior in classes of 30 compared to 15. A five student increase in class size is associated with the odds of off task behavior increasing by 40% for this group. No threshold effect was observed; in other words, there is no particular class size that must be attained for positive benefits to accrue to students in smaller classes.*

- **Malloy, C., Ph.D., & Vital Research, LLC., (2010). Lessons from the Classroom: Initial Success for At-Risk Students. California Teachers Association.** *“An ongoing evaluation of the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) This report includes a comparative analysis of Academic Performance Index data for QEIA schools and non-QEIA schools as well as findings from an action research project in 22 QEIA schools statewide... most common goal noted by schools was class size reduction: at least one interviewee at all but one of the regular program schools cited class size reduction as a key goal of QEIA at their school...higher API growth schools cited class size reduction as one of the key factors that contributed to changes in teaching practices at their schools...spend more time with the “neediest, at-risk” students, differentiate instruction, and spend less time on classroom management issue.”*

Educational Staff Associates

School Nurses (RN-ESA)

<https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-workload>

www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/chronic_conditions/pdfs/2017_02_15-FactSheet-RoleOfSchoolNurses_FINAL_508.pdf

There are concerns that current workload requirements for school nurses may not be met by a 1:750 ratio. We would also note that some school districts are utilizing Health Assistants, paraeducators specifically trained to work in the health room (first aid/CPR certified, delegation for medications, etc.), to assist with the shortage of school nurses.

School Counselors

1:250

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Publications/Research-Release-Parzych.pdf>

School Psychologists

In 2010, NASP released for the first time the **Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services**, also known as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Practice Model. Almost everything done in practice reflects the NASP Practice Model in at least one of the 10 domains of school psychology practice. The competencies identified within these 10 domains represent the knowledge and skills that school psychologists are prepared to have. The model is intended to show the alignment between competencies and the services provided. Often, the challenge is to reframe the thinking about services in this context, identify other areas of practice where growth is possible, and begin to use the model to define the work and its value when communicating with others. Importantly, working towards the recommended ratio (1:500-

700) enables a school psychologist to more effectively provide a comprehensive range of services. The goal remains enhancement of practice to better serve students, families, and schools.

School Social Workers

Links to the main page of the National Association of Social Workers and specifically their standards section.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Practice-Standards-Guidelines>

Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologists

While these positions are typically required for students with IEPs and school districts must provide those required services, the professional associations do have recommendations for case load limits so that the professional can actually meet the needs of the students in their care. When occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided as educational services, decisions regarding what type of therapy is provided, how it is provided and who is to provide it are directly tied to the student's overall educational program. All team members support the attainment of these educational goals. Thus, therapy and other related services become a means or method to attain educational goals and objectives/benchmarks, rather than the focus of separate therapy goals or objectives/benchmarks. School-based therapy is not intended to meet all the therapy needs of a student but is intended to meet needs of the student to promote success in the educational environment. Links to each specific group are below:

SLP's

<https://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589934681§ion=Overview>

PT's

<https://www.apta.org/>

OT's

<https://www.aota.org/>

Paraeducators

Paraeducators are an essential member of the education team in the classroom, in special education, ELL and general education settings. The current prototypical model does not come close to funding an adequate number of paraeducators. Two excellent resources include the December 2010 OSPI Classified Adequacy Staffing Reports and the Paraeducator Board website which includes current laws WACs and the 2015-16 work group project which defined the skills, standards and professional development paraeducators will need to meet the needs of their students. www.pesb.wa.gov

Professional Development, Planning and Collaboration Issues

Racial equity, bias, ethnicity and education issues:

Yosso, T.J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? Race, Ethnicity and Education, 8(1), pp. 69–91.

https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cree20?open=5&year=2002&repetition=0#vol_5_2002

The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers, Source <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf>

An article presenting what we already know as to the important of planning and collaborative time backed up with research references. While this article references teachers and specialists, paraeducators should also be included.

<https://www.kappanonline.org/time-teacher-learning-planning-critical-school-reform/>

Social-Emotional Learning

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/social-and-emotional-learning-case-study-san-jose-state-report>

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/mental-social-behavioral-health/social-and-emotional-learning-sel>

Planning and Collaboration

The Prevalence of Collaboration Among American Teachers -

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9178/4e7923c2b8419d6ab4f2b2628c217c46de57.pdf>

1. A Theoretical and Empirical Investigation of Teacher Collaboration for School Improvement and Student Achievement in Public Elementary Schools

https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/casei/collaboration_studentachievement.pdf

This study was referenced multiple times in other studies.

Results: Results of HLM analyses indicate that fourth-grade students have higher achievement in mathematics and reading when they attend schools characterized by higher levels of teacher collaboration for school improvement.

Conclusions: The authors suggest that the results provide preliminary support for efforts to improve student achievement by providing teachers with opportunities to collaborate on issues related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development. The authors also discuss the need for more research on the effects of different types of collaborative practices using more representative samples.

2. A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis of the Roles of Instructional Leadership, Teacher Collaboration, and Collective Efficacy Beliefs in Support of Student Learning

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1102657>

Abstract: Principals' instructional leadership may support the degree to which teachers work together to improve instruction, and together leadership and teacher collaboration may contribute to school effectiveness by strengthening collective efficacy beliefs. We found a significant direct effect of leadership on teacher collaboration. Further, leadership and collaboration predicted collective efficacy beliefs. Finally, achievement differences among schools were predicted directly by collective efficacy beliefs and indirectly by instructional leadership and teacher collaboration. These findings suggest that strong instructional leadership can create structures to facilitate teachers' work in ways that strengthen organizational belief systems, and, in concert, these factors foster student learning.

3. Collective Pedagogical Teacher Culture and Mathematics Achievement: Differences by Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0038040712472911>

Abstract: Scholars have not adequately assessed how organizational cultures in schools differentially influence students' mathematics achievement by race and socioeconomic status (SES). We focus on what we term collective pedagogical teacher culture, highlighting the role of professional communities and teacher collaboration in influencing mathematics achievement. Using cross-classified growth models, we analyze data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study and illustrate that schools where teachers perceive the presence of professional communities and teacher collaboration foster greater mathematics achievement throughout elementary school. Furthermore, achievement gaps by race and socioeconomic status are lessened in schools with professional communities and teacher collaboration.

4. Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning

https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/140885/Learning-from-Leadership_Final-Research-Report_July-2010.pdf

Conclusion: Where teachers feel attached to a professional community, they are more likely to use instructional practices that are linked to improved student learning.

And, this report addresses the link between student outcomes and the amount of time a teacher collaborates: <https://aquila.usm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1755&context=dissertations>