

**ERS**

Education Resource Strategies



*Rethinking Resources for Student Success*



# Compensatory Weights

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# Who We Are

- ERS is a non-profit consulting firm, head-quartered in Boston
- We work with leaders of public school systems to rethink the use of district and school-level resources
- We analyze district spending, human resources, school organization and performance data to generate insight around resource strategies
- We leverage this insight to design new ways to allocate and organize resources at the district and school level
- Our work is grounded in over a decade of experience, working with school districts across the country



**“ERS is good at comparing one district to other districts and at providing context for reform. They are expert on how to align dollars to resources. They get it.”**

*—Rosa Blackwell, Superintendent,  
Cincinnati Public Schools*

# Refining a state compensatory education formula



**How much:** How many dollars should flow through compensatory education?



**Who:** Which districts, schools, and students should receive compensatory education?



**How well:** How can the state ensure that resources are used well? And should we?



**A cautionary tale of two school districts**

# How Much:

## Approaches

- **Replace inputs method:** Spend money sufficient to replace the experiences eligible students didn't or don't receive in their home environment
- **Outputs method:** Spend money sufficient to ensure that all students attain high standards
- **Benchmark method:** Spend similarly to other locations (states) within constraints of available pot of money

## Discussion points

- **Program costing: (illustrative)**
  - 2 years of Pre-K = \$16,000 per child – (1x)
  - Extended day = \$3K/student/yr
- **Link spending to outputs**
  - Statistical or “expert” (not conclusive)
  - Adequacy court cases
- **Easy and practical, but not particularly defensible**

# How Much: Investment in compensatory education varies (includes federal)

## Ratio of Regular Ed. Students to Other Student Types Cross District Comparison

	Expenses Per Regular Ed Student (1.0)	Poverty	ELL	SWD Resource	SWD Self- Contained	All Students
NY District	\$14.8K	1.1	1.5	2.0	2.4	1.3
GA District	\$10.2K	1.1	1.4	2.4	3.4	1.2
NE District	\$10.6K	1.1	0.9	1.5	2.3	1.3
Atlantic District	\$9.3K	1.1	1.3	2.3	3.9	1.3
East Coast	\$9.1K	1.3	1.3	1.6/2.5*	2.5*/4.3	1.3
NE District 2	\$8.0K	1.2	1.9	2.0	3.1	1.5
Midwest 1	\$7.9K	1.4	1.1	2.4	4.4	1.6
West Coast	\$6.9K	1.1	1.1	2.2	3.7	1.3
Midwest 2	\$6.2K	1.3	1.1	2.6	4.3	1.3

# Who & How Well: Some Lessons Learned

- **State mandated “uses” (eg: K-3 class-size reduction)**
  - Avoid symbolic politics
  - Consider both research base and cost efficiency
- **Even well intentioned mandates can limit flexibility and create inefficient use of resources**
  - Midwest versus West Coast

# Midwest had a nationally recognized EL program at the elementary level and ratios that were similar to West Coast – though funding per pupil differed

	Midwest	West Coast
% EL enrollment	42%	38%
\$/pupil	\$8.8K	\$7.7K
Ratio	1.13	1.08
Specified \$/pupil	\$1,121	\$565

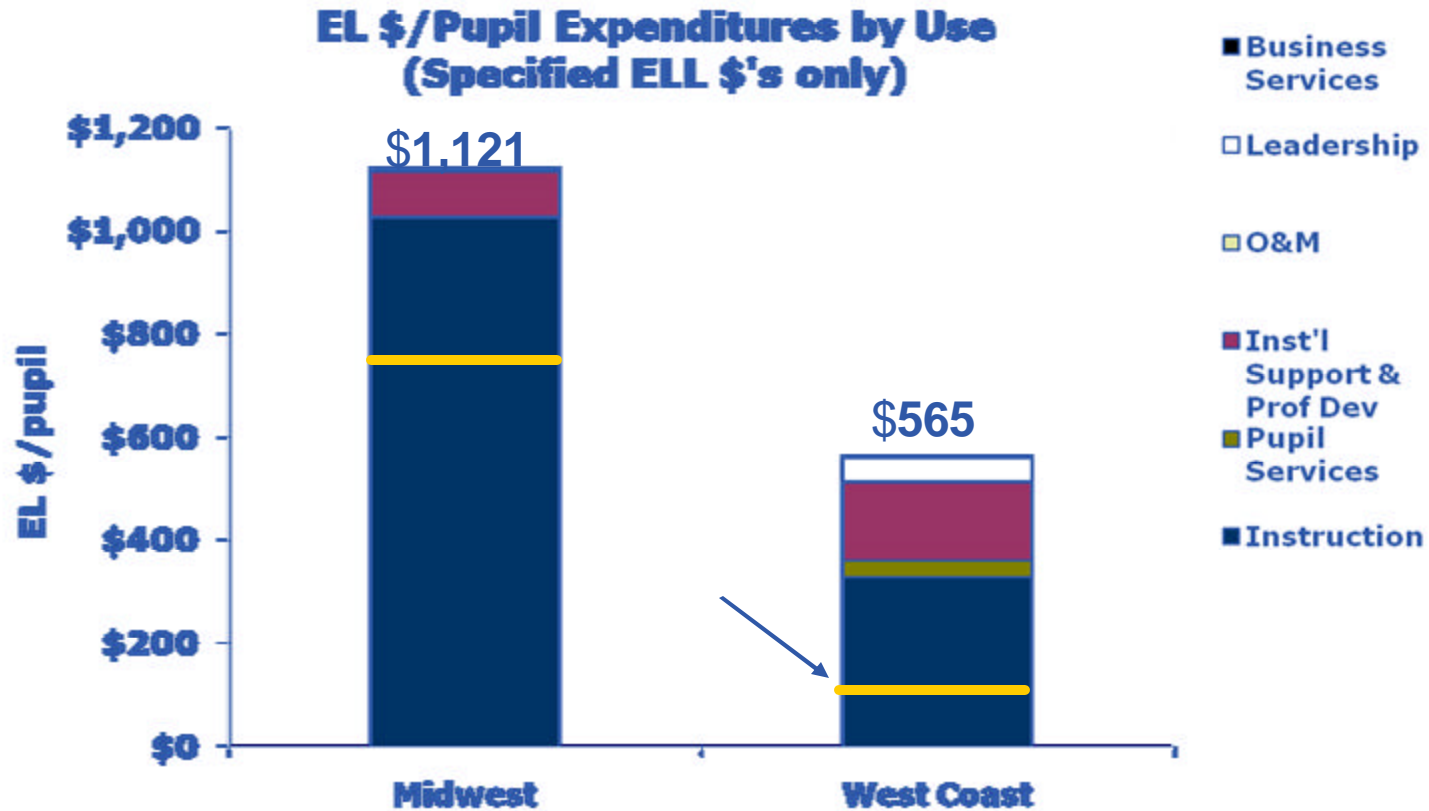
Midwest has been able to integrate its additional EL investment with its core instructional program. How does this dictate how EL students are served? How does this compare to West Coast?

# Funding restrictions and program requirements constrained West Coast's options for serving the EL population

- State provided \$30 million for after-school or summer/intersession programs for EL students, but this money could not be used for other strategies \*
- Reporting/compliance requirements generated need for school-based program support (bilingual coordinators)
- Federal and State funding restrictions made it difficult for West Coast to spend all available funds
- State mandates investment in instructional aides if teachers lacked EL authorization (~3000 West Coast teachers still lacked authorization) but other aides were hired at school discretion\*\*



# As a result, West Coast spent less on instruction and more on program mgt for English Language Learners



Total EL Budget:	\$19M	\$150M
Total EL \$/Pupil:	\$8.8K	\$7.7K

State requirements drove West Coast's investment in instructional aides and summer/afterschool programs.  
In their absence, would West Coast allocate these resource differently?