MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Business Managers
FROM: Secretary Daniel M. French, Ed.D.
            Emily Byrne, CFO
SUBJECT: Equalized Pupil Counts and Budget
DATE: January 11, 2019

Delays with the rollout of the SLDS data collection have impacted the collection of the fall public student census and the fall tuitioned student census. This is preventing the Agency from freezing equalized pupils, which has an impact on forecasting budgets. This memo contains guidance on how to estimate equalized pupil counts with the data that are available, for use in setting FY 2020 budgets.

The Statewide Data Longitudinal System (SLDS) is being used to collect student data for the most recent spring census (SY2017-2018), and both the fall public student census and tuitioned student census for the current school year (SY2018-2019).

a. The SLDS rollout was delayed.
b. Data from the two censuses for the current year are used to calculate equalized pupils. The data load process is entirely different from what it has been in previous years. Data are being loaded into the SLDS by different people this year at most every SU – i.e., not by registrars and business managers. This is causing delays and issues as these people do not know the student data and also as files need to be created to load into the SLDS. This in turn sets up its own set of issues, as SLDS was not designed for uploads that are generated individually.
c. Due to 1b above, a good estimate of equalized pupils cannot be calculated. Part of the equalized pupil calculation is dependent on data from every school district and SU in the state. Therefore, final equalized pupils cannot be calculated until all data are in. A handful of SUs are still experiencing problems submitting data. Other SUs are currently reviewing and revising their data, but while such revisions are being done, the data are decertified and pulled from the system and cannot be used.

Guidance

There are two categories of SUs submitting data: 1) those which have submitted both sets of census data and been certified at one point, and 2) those which have not submitted either one or both censuses or have yet to be certified on both collections, due to partial submissions.

1. SUs that have been certified at least once:
   a. If revisions of your data are finalized, then the most recent version of the equalized pupil runs will be the best estimate. The most recent version was v05.
   b. If revisions of your data have not been completely finalized or your data were being revised when I had data pulled, use the numbers from the most recent version that had your most complete data.
   c. If you know that you are missing a fairly specific number of students:
      i. For secondary students (7-12), divide by 2, multiply by 1.13, and then multiply by the most recent equalization ratio (0.94650 from v05) and add to your total:

         Estimate secondary = $[(X \div 2) \times 1.13] \times 0.94560$
      ii. For elementary students (K-6), divide by 2 and multiply by the most recent equalization ratio (0.94650 from v05) and add to your total:

         Estimate elementary = $(X \div 2) \times 0.94560$
      iii. For prekindergarten students, both regular education and special education, divide by 2, multiply by 0.46, and then multiply by the most recent equalization ratio (0.94650 from v05) and add to your total:

         Estimate preK = $[(X \div 2) \times 0.46] \times 0.94560$
   d. Following the directions above in c will not account for any additional weights due to English language learners nor from the poverty factor. Therefore, if doing the above, estimated equalized pupils should increase somewhat.
2. SUs that have yet to be certified on one or both student censuses:
   a. The totals you have seen are based on the hold-harmless calculation that allows an FY2020 count no less than 96.5% of the actual FY2019 calculation, prior to applying the hold-harmless provisions in FY2019.
   b. This means your FY2020 count will not be lower than totals you have seen, even if you have submitted no data.
   c. If you have some ideas of what your total counts are for prekindergarten, elementary, and secondary FY2019 ADM (the data we are trying to collect), follow the steps in 1c above. As stated in 1d, these estimates will not include weighting from other factors.

We will send further updates and a more concrete timeline as more information becomes available. Please contact Brad James with questions about estimating equalized pupils. Please contact SLDS team for updates on the SLDS data collection.

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