

**Review of the English Language Learners (ELL)  
Adjustment in the Essential Programs and Services  
Funding Formula**

**Report to  
Commissioner Susan Gendron  
Maine Department of Education & Cultural Services  
and the  
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**

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**January 2008**

## **Review of the English Language Learners (ELL) Adjustment in the Essential Program and Services Funding Formula**

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Beginning in 2005-06, Maine implemented a new school funding formula entitled Essential Programs and Services (EPS). Maine's EPS formula is fashioned after, what is called nationally, an Adequate funding model. Adequacy funding models are designed to insure there are adequate funds in a K-12 school funding formula to insure all students have equity of opportunities to achieve some pre-determined level of student performance.

To insure this equity of opportunity most school funding experts believe the funding formula must include measures to insure both horizontal and vertical equity. Horizontal equity is premised on the fundamental precept that equals should be treated equally. In practice this means that children who are similar should have equal funding support (i.e., equivalent per pupil expenditures).

Vertical equity means unequals should be treated unequally. Not all children are alike. For example, some have special education needs, some have limited English proficiency, and some come from higher poverty environments, all of which require additional funds to support them as they strive to achieve common academic standards and performance.

Prior to implementation of EPS, Maine's funding formula had no prescribed levels of adjustment to insure vertical equity. But beginning in 2005-06, three vertical equity adjustments were put into effect (special needs, ELL, and At-Risk), and provisions were included in the law for three year reviews of these adjustments. According, the ELL adjustment was reviewed in Fall 2007.

The EPS model utilizes a weighting system to calculate the additional costs for ELL children. The ELL weights are calculated by dividing SAUs into three groups based on the number of students in the ELL program. The ELL enrollment groups used are 1-15, 16-250, and 251+. Next, mean per-ELL-pupil expenses are calculated for each ELL size group. Each group mean is the simple mean of SAU per-ELL-pupil cost over two years, and the two-year average cost per group is limited to those SAUs that have two years of expenditure and pupil data. The ELL weight for each group is then calculated as the groups mean per-ELL-pupil expenses

divided by the state mean per-pupil operating cost for the two years. Based on the analysis of actual ELL related cost, a weighting matrix was developed for the three different ELL enrollment groups found in Maine’s school administrative units. This weighting matrix appears in Table 1, and this was the weighted adjustment incorporated into the Maine funding formula in 2005-06.

**Table 1: EPS Weight Matrix for ELL Children**

	Per-Pupil LEP Cost by ELL Pupil Count			Per-Pupil Operating Cost
	1 – 15	16 – 249	250+	
2000-01	\$3,062	\$1,531	\$2,762	\$5,164
2001-02	\$2,941	\$1,707	\$3,863	\$5,473
2-year	\$2,800	\$1,607	\$3,311	\$5,319
LEP Weight (Current)	0.5	0.3	0.6	

In fall 2007, the ELL adjustment was reviewed according to statutory requirements. The Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) conducted this analysis using the same methodology as in the previous ELL analysis, and the most recent two-year data available, the 2005-06 and 2006-07 SAU expenditures for ELL. The updated analysis resulted in a new weighting matrix as shown in Table 2. In essence the actual weight has increased for the two lower student categories, and decreased for the largest category.

**Table 2: Preliminary Updated EPS Weight Matrix for ELL Children**

LEP Actual Per Pupil Expenditure Weights				
	Per-Pupil LEP Cost by LEP Pupil Count*			Per-Pupil Operating Cost
	1 – 15	16 – 249	250+	
<b>2005-06</b>	\$7,891	\$4,884	\$2,242	<b>\$8,253</b>
<b>2006-07</b>	\$5,295	\$4,191	\$1,942	<b>\$8,213</b>
<b>2-year</b>	\$5,803	\$4,062	\$2,092	<b>\$8,233</b>
<b>ELL Weight (Update)</b>	0.7	0.5	0.3	

\*2005-06 & 2006-07 per-pupil ELL cost include state expenditures only

A comparison of the two weighted matrices revealed:

1. The new weights present the same problem as the original matrix for SAUs with more than 15 and fewer than 21 ELL children (i.e., a decline in ELL allocations).
2. The weight declined for the largest group (i.e., 251+ ELL children) because it appears in these SAUs regular per pupil expenditures have increased more than ELL expenditures in recent years.

These two findings suggested additional analyses need to be undertaken, and surfaced new issues related to determining ELL allocations. First, a comparison of SAU data revealed considerable variance in SAU costs, even when comparing two or more SAUs with the same or similar numbers of ELL children. Some examples appear in Table 3, and similar data is reported for all reporting SAUs with ELL children in Appendix A. As may be seen for the Table 3 information, some SAUs are spending considerably more than others for the same number of ELL children.

**Table 3: Examples of Differences in ELL Expenditures**

District	No. of 2005-06 ELL Students	2005-06 ELL Expenditures
Kittery	1	\$24,256
Bucksport	1	\$10,607
MSAD 16	1	\$1,065
Old Town	3	\$15,786
Orono	3	\$4,132
Windham	15	\$7,654
Winslow	14	\$2,597
Sanford	43	\$5,686
Westbrook	45	\$2,374

Second, although some of the differences in SAU expenditures may be attributable to differences in ELL needs, an analysis of expenditures yielded what appear to be differences in program staffing approaches among some SAUs, as shown in Table 4. For example, Bucksport provided staffing for its 1 ELL child through \$10,607 in salaries and benefits for tutors, while Kittery provided programming for its 1 ELL child through \$24,256 in teacher salaries and

benefits. In the case of Winslow (ELL = 14 students), all of the program costs are associated with teacher salaries and benefits, while program costs for Windham (ELL = 15 students) are for teacher salaries and benefits, education technician salaries and benefits, and tutor salaries and benefits.

**Table 4: Examples of How SAUs Use ELL Expenditures**

District	No. 2005-06 ELL Pupils	2005-06 ELL Per Pupil Expenditures	Percent of Expenditures			
			Teacher Salary & Benefits	Ed Tech Salary & Benefits	Tutor Salary & Benefits	Contracted Services
Bucksport	1	\$10,607	-	-	100%	-
Kittery	1	\$24,256	100%	-	-	-
MSAD 72	3	\$4,744	100%	-	-	-
MSAD 34	3	\$7,086	-	-	-	100%
Windham	15	\$7,654	51.8%	37.2%	11%	-
Winslow	14	\$2,597	100%	-	-	-

Third, a review of Maine Department of Education (MDOE) rules and regulations for approving ELL costs revealed the State does not have any recommended guidelines for staffing and providing services in effective ELL programs. For example, there are no guidelines for appropriated teacher-student and teacher aide-student ratios in ELL programs. SAUs just submit ELL expenditures for ELL programs and services, and the State approves all costs associated with providing ELL programming. And the ELL adjustment in the essential programs and services formula is not targeted. That is to say, SAUs are not required to spend the adjustment subsidies on ELL programs and strategies.

These three major issues, coupled with findings related to the calculation of an updated weighting matrix suggest the ELL component may benefit from additional analysis in the future. In the interim, the following is recommended beginning in 2008-09:

1. Consider revising ELL weights;
2. Establish statewide guidelines for delivery of ELL services;

### 3. Convert ELL to be a targeted EPS component

Approval of these recommendations would provide continued recognition and funding for an ELL adjustment in the new EPS funding formula, and provide time to refine the adjustment for future years.

### Appendix A

Unit Code: MEDMS	District	ELL Pupils 2005-06	ELL State and Local Total Expenditure 2005-06
1210	MSAD 16	1	\$1,065
1172	Sabattus School Department	1	\$1,410
1087	Lamoine School Department	1	\$4,716
1077	Hope School Department	1	\$6,168
1197	MSAD 03	1	\$6,266
1107	Millinocket School Department	1	\$8,693
1027	Bucksport School Department	1	\$10,607
1261	MSAD 68	1	\$14,699
1085	Kittery School Department	1	\$24,256
1252	MSAD 58	1	\$57,319
1061	Georgetown School Department	1	<b>NS*</b>
1095	Machias School Department	1	<b>NS*</b>
1286	Maranacook CSD	1	<b>NS*</b>
1199	MSAD 05	1	<b>NS*</b>
1239	MSAD 45	1	<b>NS*</b>
1285	Southern Aroostook CSD	1	<b>NS*</b>
1162	Tremont School Department	1	<b>NS*</b>
1174	West Bath School Department	1	<b>NS*</b>
1189	Woolwich School Department	1	<b>NS*</b>
1017	Blue Hill School Department	1	<b>RNE**</b>
1021	Brewer School Department	1	<b>RNE**</b>
1053	Easton School Department	1	<b>RNE**</b>
1110	Monmouth School Department	1	<b>RNE**</b>

1257	MSAD 63	1	RNE**
1265	MSAD 74	1	RNE**
1116	New Sweden School Department	1	RNE**
1142	Richmond School Department	1	RNE**
1287	Schoodic CSD	1	RNE**
1222	MSAD 28	2	\$2,001
1245	MSAD 51	2	\$3,250
1291	Oak Hill CSD	2	\$12,559
1211	MSAD 17	2	\$12,772
1190	Yarmouth Schools	2	\$14,063
1065	Gorham School Department	2	\$19,955
1200	MSAD 06	2	\$36,812
1281	Boothbay-Boothbay Hbr CSD	2	\$62,926
1290	Great Salt Bay CSD	2	NS*
1216	MSAD 22	2	NS*
1253	MSAD 59	2	NS*
1119	Old Orchard Beach School Dept	2	NS*
1126	Palermo School Department	2	NS*
1140	Readfield School Department	2	NS*
1166	Vassalboro School Department	2	NS*
1186	Wiscasset School Department	2	NS*
1033	Caswell	2	RNE**
1289	Deer Isle-Stonington CSD	2	RNE**
1238	MSAD 44	2	RNE**
1242	MSAD 48	2	RNE**
1294	Five Town CSD	3	\$9,982



1123	Orono	3	\$12,395
3105	Peninsula CSD	3	\$24,400
1120	Old Town School Department	3	\$47,359
1037	China School Department	3	<b>NS*</b>
1112	Mount Desert School Department	3	<b>NS*</b>
1223	MSAD 29	3	<b>NS*</b>
1255	MSAD 61	3	<b>NS*</b>
1263	MSAD 71	3	<b>NS*</b>
1221	MSAD 27	4	\$4,100
1153	South Bristol School Department	4	\$7,852
1264	MSAD 72	4	\$18,974
1228	MSAD 34	4	\$28,343
1100	Manchester School Department	4	<b>NS*</b>
1092	Lisbon School Department	5	\$17,935
1191	York School Department	5	\$25,601
1244	MSAD 50	5	\$33,800
1203	MSAD 09	5	<b>NS*</b>
1283	Mt Desert CSD	5	<b>NS*</b>
1196	MSAD 01	6	\$3,006
1028	Calais School Department	6	\$9,849
1229	MSAD 35	6	\$36,278
1013	Bath School Department	9	\$41,892
1056	Ellsworth School Department	9	\$42,252
1209	MSAD 15	9	\$57,951
1249	MSAD 55	10	\$41,069
1237	MSAD 43	11	<b>NS*</b>

1251	MSAD 57	12	\$29,137
1029	Cape Elizabeth School Department	12	\$32,000
1060	Freeport School Department	12	\$52,212
1293	Wells-Ogunquit CSD	13	\$39,048
1012	Bar Harbor School Department	13	<b>NS*</b>
1183	Winslow Schools	14	\$36,358
1097	Madawaska School Department	14	\$423,907
1030	Caribou School Department	15	\$46,173
1248	MSAD 54	15	\$106,785
1181	Windham School Department	15	\$114,813
1057	Falmouth School Department	15	<b>NS*</b>
1170	Waterville Public Schools	17	\$65,927
1297	Gov Baxter School for the Deaf	19	<b>NS*</b>
1266	MSAD 75	20	\$104,140
1246	MSAD 52	23	\$116,764
1146	Saco School Department	24	\$62,180
1254	MSAD 60	32	\$48,854
1231	MSAD 37	33	\$28,348
1026	Brunswick School Department	39	\$78,342
1149	Scarborough School Department	39	\$171,410
1148	Sanford School Department	43	\$244,496
1175	Westbrook School Department	45	\$106,809
1016	Biddeford School Department	49	\$98,689
1008	Augusta Public Schools	49	\$191,849
1011	Bangor School Department	52	\$88,715
1272	Pleasant Point	84	<b>NS*</b>

1155	South Portland School Department	93	\$240,406
1218	MSAD 24	93	<b>RNE**</b>
1007	Auburn School Department	108	\$391,034
1227	MSAD 33	113	<b>NS*</b>
1271	Indian Township	133	<b>NS*</b>
1088	Lewiston School Department	410	\$649,576
1134	Portland Public Schools	1,055	\$3,058,508

\*NS: No Survey Sent

\*\*RNE: Reported No Expenditures