

Special Education Weighted Category Model for Discussion

GOSA modeled potential special education weights following extensive discussion with GaDOE Special Education leadership and using GoIEP data from the 48 districts that have complete IEP data in the DOE's system.

Currently the FTE funding for students with disabilities is driven by the determination of a primary disability and the service delivery model that best meets the needs for the student based on that disability and reflected in the student's IEP. Any additional disabilities requiring additional services do not impact the funding for that student. The proposed framework was developed to provide a range of weights from higher incidence/lower service levels to lower incidence/higher service levels and take into account the range of services required by all of a student's disabilities, if more than one requires services. This proposal would take into account the range of services resulting from the wide spectrum presented by several disabilities such as autism and learning disorder, as well as the higher levels of funding needed for students with multiple or severe disabilities that require wither full time services or the services of several types of providers (OTP, OHI, SLP, full time para, full time nurse, etc.).

Students receiving services for less than 30 minutes per week would be consultative students served fully in the regular classroom and would not be weighted.

Category A students would receive services from 30 to 360 minutes (6 hours) per week. Category B students would receive services from 361 to 900 minutes (6+ to 15 hours) per week. These are the higher incidence/lower service level categories and make up 41.2% of the students in the sample.

Category C students would receive services from 901 to 1800 minutes (15+ to 30 hours) per week. This category weight would include students receiving full time services from a single provider (paraprofessional or teacher) or in total from a combination of providers (teacher, paraprofessional, OPT, OHI, interpreter, etc.). Students in Category C make up 39.9% of the sample.

Categories D and E could actually be considered sub-categories of C and provide weights to the lowest incidence but highest service levels of students.

Category D students would receive services from 1801 to 3600 minutes (30+ to 60 hours per week). Simply put, these students receive full-time special education services and then some, up to the equivalent of two full time providers. These students account for 14.6% of the sample population.

Category E students would be those that receive the highest level of services, more than 3600 minutes (60 hours) per week, have multiple service providers, and are representative of 4.3% of the sample population.

Summary of Proposed Special Education Weights

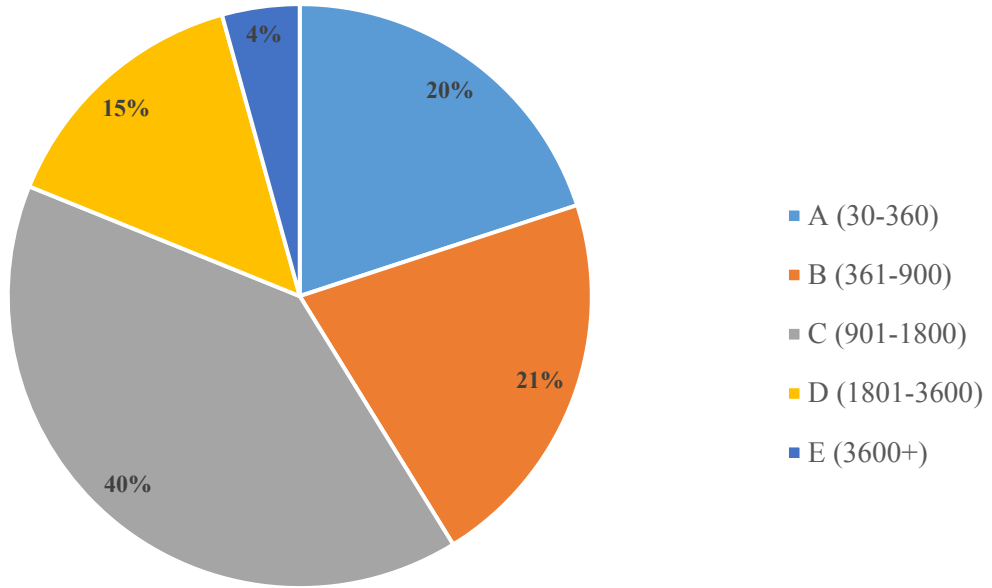
Base student funding 2,046.69

Categories (min./wk.)	Weights	SWD Students	Percent of SWD Students	Funds Per Pupil (Above Base)	Total SWD Funds	Percent of All SWD Funds
A (30-360)	0.5	5,705	20.0%	1,023.35	5,838,183.23	4.2%
B (361-900)	1.5	6,073	21.2%	3,070.04	18,644,322.56	13.3%
C (901-1800)	2.5	11,416	39.9%	5,116.73	58,412,532.60	41.7%
D (1801-3600)	4.5	4,167	14.6%	9,210.11	38,378,507.54	27.4%
E (3600+)	7.5	1,228	4.3%	15,350.18	18,850,014.90	13.5%
QBE Funds Proposed Funds					138,548,285.65	
					140,123,560.82	
Difference					1,575,275.17	

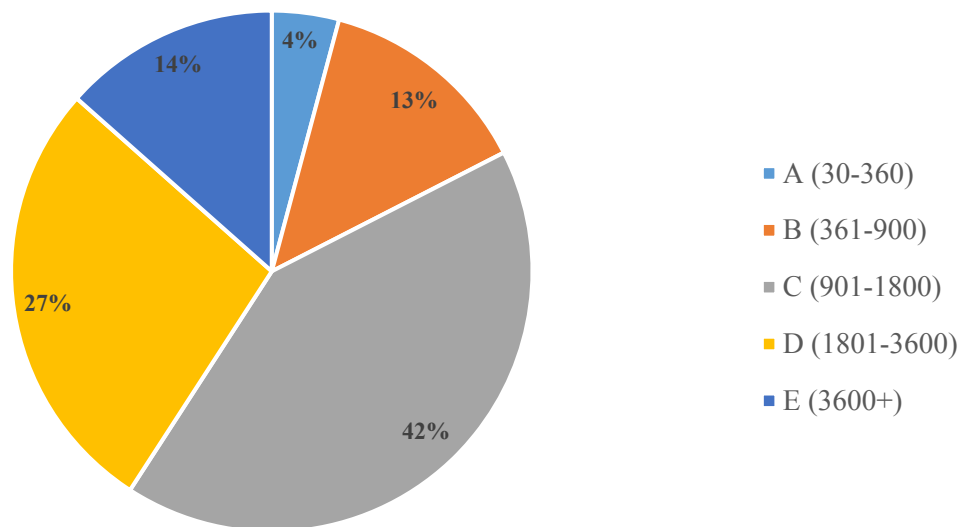
While the IEP for each student should absolutely determine the services provided, which would in turn determine the number of minutes of service per week, the state would be able to monitor the percent of students in a district that go from a lower weight to a higher one in any given year. This would require the addition of a data collection element in student record, which currently collects disability but not the time of service, and should allow the state to monitor districts with a high percentage of change year to year to be certain that the levels of student services are truly being determined by the IEPs and not being manipulated to generate additional funding.

In order to model these categories and weights fully, GOSA and GaDOE would need to survey all districts not currently using GoIEP fully to collect student counts by service level (minutes per week).

Distribution of Students by Category (*Minutes/Week*)



Distribution of Funds by Category (*Minutes/Week*)



Districts using GaDOE's GoIEP that were included in the sample calculations

Appling	Greene
Atkinson	Habersham
Bibb	Hancock
Bleckley	Haralson
Brantley	Jeff Davis
Bremen City	Jefferson
Butts	Jenkins
Cartersville City	Jones
Catoosa	Lamar
Chickamauga City	Lincoln
Clarke	Miller
Cook	Monroe
Coweta	Morgan
Dodge	Oconee
Dooly	Polk
Dougherty	Richmond
Dublin City	Seminole
Early	Terrell
Elbert	Thomas
Evans	Upson
Floyd	Walton
Gainesville City	Wilkes
Gilmer	Wilkinson
Glascok	Worth