

Raising Achievement While Controlling Costs Budget Options for Consideration

DMC has worked with the district over the past year on a variety of initiatives aimed at improving student outcomes and enabling the district in efficiently managing its financial resources. Prominent among these are the design and implementation of the pull out extra time reading intervention model at the elementary level, and development of an integrated, consistent approach to supporting students with disabilities in an inclusion setting based on best practice research. In addition, DMC is helping the district create structures and systems to better manage special education staffing, to understand how staff use their time, and to create a data driven approach to determining staffing needs in each school. Finally, DMC has provided support in improving remediation and intervention at the middle schools, helping support the use of the Montrose school to cost effectively serve more students in the district, and to create systems and structures for managing special education budgeting, spending, and forecasting.

DMC analyzed IEP data, formative assessment data and weekly schedules and workloads of all service providers within special education to develop an in-depth understanding of the current practices around supporting struggling students with or without IEPs and methodology of staffing, budgeting and forecasting of special education services. This report outlines several options that the district may consider in order to more cost effectively manage special education services and at the same time raise student achievement without reducing the necessary support services.

This report is organized in three main sections:

Section I: Options for providing in-class supports

Section II: Staff requirements for implementation of the Reading Intervention Program at the elementary level

Section III: Other budget options

A number of DMC recommendations do not have budget impact, such as expanding remediation and intervention services at the middle schools, and are thus not discussed in the document, but are reviewed elsewhere.

Section I: Options for providing in-class supports (Based on K-5 IEP service data for 2013-14)

Introduction:

The School District of South Orange & Maplewood has an admirable commitment to including students with disabilities in a general education setting. District Management Council (DMC) is supporting the district in designing and implementing a best practice-based approach to supporting struggling students (with or without IEPs) in an inclusion setting and integrating special education services with the district's pull out reading intervention program. Additionally, the aim is to ensure that the district's limited resources are being allocated in a way that leads to enhanced achievement for all students.

This report outlines numerous opportunities for the district to free up funds by re-designing and carefully staffing its in class support model. These opportunities would not have been possible without implementation of the pull out Reading intervention program which has changed the nature and amount of support many students now need. The intervention program has significantly reduced the requirement for in class supports in the grades that the program has been implemented in.

One factor DMC considered during its analysis is the number of students served by each special education teacher in class. Currently, each special education teacher is providing support to an average of **6.2** students, which a much smaller number than what DMC typically sees in similar districts. Typically, special education teachers provide support to between **20 and 30** students. In all of the recommendations, inclusion remains a guiding principal and high priority, the importance of reading is prioritized, and workloads for special education staff will remain well below national norms.

Methodology:

DMC conducted an extensive study analyzing the services outlined in the IEPs (as of November 2013) at the elementary level on a student-by-student basis. The primary aim of the analysis was to gain an in-depth understanding of the academic support services that students with special needs currently receive at the elementary level in the district. We have not included the students in substantially separate or self-contained classrooms for this analysis.

This analysis helped inform future work around how current practices align with best practices on raising student achievement. At the same time, this analysis provided valuable insights around how the district may consider reallocating resources to

efficiently and cost effectively provide equal or higher levels of support to students with special needs.

Terminology used:

An analysis of the IEPs and conversations with district leaders revealed that students with special needs are provided instructional support in three distinct ways:

- **Supports in class or during class:** Most students with IEPs are prescribed in class replacement, in class resource or in class support for individual subjects. For the purpose of our analysis we have classified these as in class supports. It is important to note that these supports might not necessarily take place inside the classroom. Replacement support, for instance may be provided outside of the core instruction classroom in a small group but during class time
- **Reading pull out support:** Students are provided pull out, multisensory support in Reading. We refer to these supports as pull-out supports for Reading
- **Self-contained classrooms:** Students with severe disabilities are provided instructional support in self-contained classrooms. This category of students have been excluded from our analysis

Assumptions:

1. **Teacher workload:** We have assumed that on average, a special education teacher spends 1300 minutes in providing direct service to students per week. This is consistent with current practices in the district. All elementary teachers in South Orange and Maplewood have a 7 hour and 15 minute long contractual work day. For the purpose of this analysis we have assumed an hour of prep time per day, 55 minutes of lunch per day and an additional hour for meetings per day for each teacher. This translates to a total of 1300 minutes spent directly with students per teacher per week (approx. 60% of the contractual working time). It is important to note that this assumption of time allocated in providing direct service to students is somewhat less than the time special education teachers currently spend in providing direct service to students as evidenced by a schedule collection exercise conducted by DMC earlier this year, which indicated that elementary special education teachers spend an average of 63.5% of their time providing direct service, ranging from 41% to 91%.
2. **Group size:** For the purpose of this analysis we have assumed that there can be a maximum of 7 students with IEPs in a general education classroom
3. **Teacher salary:** We have assumed an average annual salary of \$100,000 per teacher (including benefits)

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4. **Number of teachers:** For this analysis, we looked at all special education teachers assigned to provide in class supports to students with IEPs. There were 6 teachers that were assigned to both special education and reading support. For these teachers, we assigned 50 percent of their time to reading, and 50 percent to special education

Options:

DMC has identified three specific options that would allow the district to free up resources to enable increased investment in the elementary reading program:

- **Option 1:** Precisely allocate special education teachers to schools based on current IEP needs
- **Option 2:** Focus support
 - **Part A¹:** Focus in class support exclusively on Literacy (including Reading, Language Arts, Writing) and Math in all elementary grades for most students
 - **Part B¹:** Provide support to all struggling readers with or without IEPs through the extra time pull out Reading intervention program, eliminating the need for in class Reading support
- **Option 3:** Integrate in class support in a flexible, holistic manner, rather than tying support to specific times of day linked to subject specific time blocks.

This would allow, for example, support for social studies and writing to happen at the same time in an integrated fashion, or support for math needn't require that the special education teacher is in the room every minute math is scheduled, such as during math tests, or whole class instruction. IEPs would indicate the subjects/skills to be supported and the total time of support - separately, such as 90 minutes or 120 minutes/ day for support in writing and math. General education and special education teachers would collaboratively determine a flexible schedule of support, rather than fixed time periods every day.

¹ It would also be possible to do Parts A and B together by focusing in class support on Language Arts, Writing, and Math while providing Reading support through the extra time pull out reading intervention program

Option 1: Precisely allocate special education teachers to schools based on current IEP needs.

To conduct this analysis, DMC created a tool that allows for a more precise calculation of the extent of in class support required by students in different schools and grades in the district and hence a more detailed calculation of staffing needs than was previously possible. Currently, a total of 184 students with IEPs receive in class supports in one or more content areas across all schools. ²

One way that South Orange and Maplewood School District could expand investment in the reading program is by more precisely aligning the staff levels required for providing in class support with student needs (as written in their current IEPs). Based on the extent of supports needed for each student on their IEPs, DMC projected special education teacher staffing levels required in each school as shown in the table below. This option assumes no change in the current IEPs and continuation of thoughtful grouping of students with IEPs such that schools make optimal use of the allotted FTEs.

Current staffing vs. required staffing level:

School	Current Special Education teachers assigned to ICS (2013-2014 SY)	Precise requirement of teachers	Difference between current and precise staffing
Clinton	5	4.5	-0.5
Jefferson	7	5.4	-1.6
Marshall	4	3.8	-0.2
Seth Boyden	4.5	3.3	-1.2
South Mountain	5	5.1	+0.1
Tuscan	4.5	3.9	-0.6
Total	30	26.1	-4.0

Financial impact:

By precisely allocating special education teachers to schools based on the current IEPs the district could free up **\$400,000** (equivalent to the salaries of 4 FTEs).

² For a school-level breakdown of in-class support, see Appendix A

Implementation Requirements

Successful implementation of option 1 will be possible if accompanied by the following:

1. Analyze IEP service requirements data 2-3 times per year, and adjust staffing or scheduling if big swings in student needs arise.
2. Shift teacher assignments between buildings based on changes in student need
3. Assign staff to multiple schools as necessary
4. For staff assigned to multiple schools, engage the principals of both schools when creating staff schedules for shared staff.

Option 2: Focus support

Part A: Refocus in class support exclusively on literacy (including language arts, writing) and math in all grades.

The analysis revealed that the district currently provides in class support in all core content areas at the elementary level. While in class support for science and social studies is more common at the secondary level, it is not a common practice at the elementary level, where the focus generally tends to be on literacy and math.

Currently, the district provides in class supports for science and social studies to 132 students across all schools at the elementary level.³ As shown in the table below, a total of **7.4 FTEs** are allocated to provide this support.

Staff currently allocated towards providing in class supports for science and social studies:

Grade	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan	Total
K	0	NA	0.5	0	0	0	
1	0.2	NA	0.2	0	0.2	0	
2	0.2	NA	0.1	0	0.2	0	
3	0.3	0.5	NA	0.2	0.7	0.2	
4	0.5	0.7	NA	0.2	0.2	0.5	
5	0.2	0.6	NA	0.3	0.2	0.2	
Total	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.8	1.6	0.9	7.4

³ For a school-level break down of in class support for science and social studies, as well as for literacy and math, see Appendix B.

Financial Impact:

Re-aligning supports to focus exclusively on literacy and math will enable the district free up **\$740,000** (equivalent to the salaries of 7.4 FTEs).

Part B: Provide support to all struggling readers with or without IEPs though the extra time pull out reading intervention program, eliminating the need for in class reading support.

Despite the new extra time pull out support model for reading where struggling students receive 30 minutes of extra instruction a day, some students still receive in class reading or language arts support. In addition, it appears that some schools use reading and language Arts interchangeably to signify need for reading support.⁴

As shown in the table below, the district currently allocates a total of **11.1 FTEs** to provide in class supports in reading, writing or language arts across all schools at the elementary level.

FTEs currently providing in class supports in literacy (reading, writing and language arts)

Grade	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan	Total
K	0	NA	1.2	0	0	0.2	
1	0.2	NA	0.5	0	0.2	0.2	
2	0.2	NA	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.2	
3	0.5	0.7	NA	0.7	1.2	0.5	
4	0.2	1.2	NA	0.5	0.2	0.5	
5	0.2	0.7	NA	0	0.2	0.2	
Total	1.4	2.5	2.1	1.4	2.1	1.6	11.1

Since the district has now instituted a best practice based reading intervention program at the elementary level for all struggling readers, the district may consider eliminating in class supports for reading. Additionally, since the term reading and language arts is used interchangeably across schools, we may assume 50% of the students being provided in class supports for language arts are struggling readers.

⁴ For a school-level breakdown of students receiving in class supports in reading, writing, and language arts, see Appendix C.

Based on the number of students requiring in class supports in language arts and writing, and pullout support in reading, the district would only need 7.9 FTEs to provide in class support in literacy and math, as shown in the tables below. ⁵

Staff requirements

School	Current FTEs	in-class writing supports	in-class Language Arts supports	reading pull out support	Total FTEs required	Difference between FTEs required and current FTEs
Clinton	1.4	0	0.7	0.3	1.0	-0.4
Jefferson	2.5	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.7	-0.8
Marshall	2.1	0.9	0.2	0.5	1.6	-0.5
Seth Boyden	1.4	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.9	-0.5
South Mountain	2.1	0.2	0.9	0.4	1.5	-0.6
Tuscan	1.6	0.2	0.7	0.3	1.2	-0.4
Total	11.1	2.5	3.2	2.2	7.9	-3.2

Financial Impact:

By re-aligning supports such that all reading supports are provided through the pull out reading program and continuing to provide in class support for Writing will result in **savings of \$300,000** (equivalent to the salary of 3 FTEs).

The district could also combine Part A and Part B to realize **cumulative savings of \$1,040,000**.

Implementation Requirements

Successful implement of option 2 will only occur if the district also invests in the following:

1. Modify existing IEPs, and ensure that new IEPs are written to reflect the new approach
2. Work with the Child Study Teams to understand and support the new approach
3. Create a review process for any special cases that may require an exception to these general guidelines

⁵ See Appendix C for new estimate of students needing support in Literacy.

Option 3: Integrate in class support in a flexible, holistic manner.

Currently, a total of 184 students with IEPs receive in class supports in one or more content areas with the duration of support ranging from 30 minutes to 240 minutes per day. On average, a student with IEP not in a substantially separate classroom receives 128 minutes of in class supports per day).⁶

While there is no national database of the number of minutes of in class supports provided to students per day, 45-60 minutes of in class support is typical in many school districts. SOMSD's high level of in class support is uncommon when compared to like districts in DMC's experience. A key difference between SOMSD's approach to in class support and that of other districts is their focus on linking support to both specific subjects and the classroom teachers schedule for teaching these subjects. For example a student getting support in math and English, which is common across districts, implies in SOMSD that the special education teacher be present in class every day for the entire English block and the entire math block. This is much less common in many districts.

This options suggests taking a more flexible and holistic approach to providing in class support and no longer rigidly linking support to 100% of the teaching time. For example, a student could receive support in writing, math, and social studies and be provided 90 minutes a day of in class support across these three subjects. The special education teacher, in conjunction with the general education teacher would build a flexible schedule such that writing help could be provided during social studies, if the assignment is to write about colonial times, and the special education teacher might be present during some of math instruction such when working in small groups, but not during a whole class lecture or while a test is being taken.

It is important to note that some elementary schools have already embraced this flexible and holistic model in varying degrees, with Tuscan School well down this path. In fact, each school has a slightly different approach to linking special education teacher time in class and the general education classes schedule for teaching each subject. This approach would bring consistency to the district, and be a very small change in some schools, but a change in others.

The following tables depict the projected need for Special Education teachers to provide a maximum of 90 or 120 minutes of in class supports per day. The calculation assumes efficient grouping of students with IEPs in the general education classrooms and that multiple subjects continue to be supported but in a more holistic and flexible manner.

⁶ For district level and school level breakdowns of minutes of in class support per day, see Appendix D.

Current staffing vs. required staffing level for in class support (maximum in class support of 90 minutes/day)

School	Required teachers			Current Staffing (2013-14 SY)	Difference between required and current
	K-2	3-5	Total		
Clinton	0.7	1.7	2.4	5	-2.6
Jefferson	0	2.4	2.4	7	-4.6
Marshall	1.4	0	1.4	4	-2.6
Seth Boyden	0.3	1.2	1.5	4.5	-3.0
South Mountain	0.7	1.6	2.3	5	-2.7
Tuscan	0.7	1.3	2.0	4.5	-2.5
Total	3.8	8.2	12.0	30	-18.0

Current staffing vs. required staffing level for in class support (maximum in class support of 120 minutes/day)

School	Required teachers			Current Staffing (2013-14 SY)	Difference between required and current
	K-2	3-5	Total		
Clinton	1	2.2	3.2	5	-1.8
Jefferson	0	2.9	2.9	7	-4.1
Marshall	1.8	0	1.8	4	-2.2
Seth Boyden	0.5	1.6	2.1	4.5	-2.4
South Mountain	1	2.2	3.2	5	-1.8
Tuscan	1	1.7	2.7	4.5	-1.8
Total	5.3	10.6	15.9	30	-14.1

Financial Impact:

Providing up to 90 minutes of in class support per day for all students with IEPs, the district could **free up \$1,800,000** (equivalent to the salaries of 18 FTEs). If the district were instead to provide up to 120 minutes of in class support per day, the district could free up **\$1,410,000** (equivalent to the salaries of 14.1 FTEs). In both cases support would be provide across a wide range of subjects and needs.

Implementation Requirements

In order to successfully implement Option 3, the district would also have to be mindful of the following:

1. Ensure Child Study Teams and Special Education teachers adopt a uniform interpretation of IEPs and a consistent means of writing IEPs
2. Provide professional development for special education teachers on how to provide support holistically, perhaps sharing the experiences of staff who currently provide services this way
3. Provide help from central office and principals to build flexible schedules for special education teachers

Section II: Staff requirements for Reading intervention program

Introduction:

For a school system, few tasks are more important than teaching children to read. Reading is the gateway to all learning – writing, social studies, and science cannot be mastered without strong reading skills. Even modern math is full of word problems; reading and math success are highly correlated. Research has shown overwhelmingly that early intervention in reading can change the trajectory of a student’s life; helping low-income students to read at grade level by third grade closes the graduation gap with their wealthy peers and all but assures that they will graduate on time. Early and targeted support strategies for students who struggle in reading, therefore, create long term benefits in secondary and post-secondary outcomes.

Based on DMC’s recommendation, the district has now formulated and rolled out a pull out Reading intervention program that provides 30 minutes of extra time in Reading (in addition to core instruction) to all struggling readers (with or without IEPs).

This section outlines the staffing requirements to further roll out the intervention program across all grades in all elementary schools in the district. To complete this analysis, DMC created a tool that allows the district to quickly explore different models for reading intervention and determine their impact on staffing. In this report, DMC provides 4 different scenarios, but the district could quickly and easily consider others if desired.

Assumptions and Variables:

There are several variables that impact the staffing requirements for reading intervention. Below is a summary of these variables, and the assumptions made for this analysis.

1. **Data used to estimate the number of struggling readers across schools:** One key variable is the number of students who struggle in reading. For the purpose of this analysis, we have used results from the first formative assessment administered in the fall of school year 2013-14 to determine the number of students who need support.

However there was concern that the assessment is over-identifying students at the Kindergarten level. Thus, the number of students identified for support will depend on how the district chooses to evaluate the kindergarten data. We have determined the staffing requirement using the two different number of struggling students in Kindergarten:

- a. Using number of struggling readers as identified by the formative assessment results
 - b. Assuming an average of 20% (which was typical in grades 1-5) of the total enrolled students in Kindergarten will not meet the assessment benchmark, because there is concern that the kindergarten assessment is over identifying students.

2. **Group size:** How students are grouped can have significant impacts on the number of staff required for reading intervention. Larger groups require fewer teachers, but different group sizes may be more appropriate at different grade levels. For Grades K-2, we calculated the staffing requirements for a group size of 3 and a group size of 4. In all scenarios, we used a group size of 5 for Grades 3-5. District principals have favored smaller groups in the younger grades, while many districts have found groups of 5 to be effective, if students are grouped with like needs.

3. **Teacher load:** All elementary teachers in South Orange and Maplewood have a 7 hour and 15 minute long contractual work day. However, the district has flexibility in determining how many reading sessions each reading teacher teaches per day, which is another variable used to determine how many teachers are necessary. This report outlines 2 different scenarios for the total time spent by a reading teacher in providing small group Reading intervention support to struggling students per day:
 - a. 60 minutes of prep time, 55 minutes of lunch and 60 minutes for meetings per day, translating to eight 30 minute pull out intervention blocks per teacher per day, a model that is similar to special education teacher's workload.
 - b. 60 minutes of prep time and 55 minutes of lunch per day, translating to ten 30 minute pull out intervention blocks per teacher per day, a model that is similar to elementary classroom teachers, who do not get the extra hour a day for meetings, beyond their prep period. In districts that provide the extra hour on non-teaching time to reading teachers, there is often an expectation for coaching or managing/supporting collecting or analyzing reading data.

The total number of teachers currently allocated towards the reading intervention program is a combination of the special education teachers assigned as Reading teachers as well the academic interventionists that also provide reading support. In the event that a teacher was assigned to both special education and reading, DMC

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assumed that 50 % of their time was spent providing reading support. There are currently six such teachers.

Options

Based on which options are selected, the district could need as **few as 14.8 FTEs** or as many as **25.7 FTEs** for pull out reading intervention in grades K-5 in all schools. As a result the district would have an excess of up to **3.4 FTEs** or could require as many as **7.5 additional FTEs**.

The following table summarizes the findings for each scenario explored in the analysis, illustrating the staffing requirements and additional staff necessary for each configuration of group size and sessions per day, using both the actual and adjusted kindergarten assessment data.

Staffing Requirements for Reading Teachers

Case 1: All kindergarten students identified by current assessments

Option	Group size		Staffing requirements		Additional reading staff	
	K-2	3 to 5	8 sessions/day	10 sessions/day	8 sessions/day	10 sessions/day
Option A	3	5	25.7	20.6	7.5	2.4
Option B	4	5	21.3	19.4	3.1	-1.2

Case 2: 20% of kindergarten students identified

Option	Group size		Staffing requirements		Additional reading staff	
	K-2	3 to 5	8 sessions/day	10 sessions/day	8 sessions/day	10 sessions/day
Option C	3	5	22	17.6	3.8	-0.6
Option D	4	5	18.5	14.8	-0.3	-3.4

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Section III: Other budget options

Introduction:

The District Management Council (DMC) has been working with the school district of School District of South Orange & Maplewood to expand upon the work completed in 2012 with the Special Education Opportunities Review. As part of this work, all special education staff, including paraprofessionals, were asked to complete an online sharing of their schedules in October 2013. Analysis of the staff survey data revealed a number of possible opportunities for better management and budgeting of special education staff, creating a number of opportunities for the district to free up funds without reducing services to students (or actually increasing them).

Assumptions:

- **Salaries:** We have assumed an average salary of \$100,000 (including benefits) for each of the special education service providers whose schedules were analyzed in the staff surveys, except for paraprofessionals. For paraprofessionals, we have assumed an average annual salary of \$28,000
- **Sub-contracted services costs:** We have assumed that an average special education service provider in a school district typically spends 1080 work hours in a year. Additionally, we've assumed an hourly rate of \$80 for each sub-contracted service provider, except for paraprofessionals. The vast majority of current subcontractors are paid \$80 an hour, but for paraprofessionals.

Option 1: Provide more oversight to paraprofessionals.

The district may consider the following recommendations in managing paraprofessionals:

Option 1 a. Provide partial day support through the careful identification of student needs and “micro scheduling.”

The analysis of paraprofessional schedules highlighted the prevalence of full day every day supports in the district. Although paraprofessionals reported spending almost all of their time in direct service to students, a sizeable majority of paraprofessionals (70%) reported spending the entire day on one activity – either following an individual student or group of students.

Although paraprofessionals serve the needs of various students, there can be a conflict between short term help by paraprofessionals to get through the day and long term help to get through life. When students graduate, their paraprofessional support ends, but their needs may not.

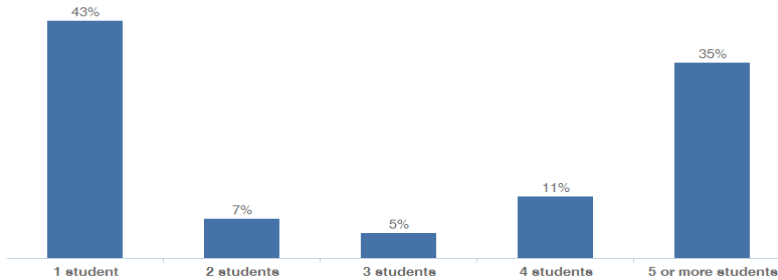
Therefore, the district needs to find a balance between these supporting students but creating a focus on increasing student independence and developing coping skills. In a practical sense, this means:

- Providing help during targeted, specific times and activities in an effort to foster student independence
- Developing micro schedules for paraprofessionals such that paraprofessional support is allocated in 30 minute increments, moving paraprofessionals across many classrooms when appropriate

Option 1b. Reduce one on one support from paraprofessionals.

In the district currently, almost half of all paraprofessional time is spent working one-to-one with a student.

Paraprofessional Group Size



In the spirit of enhancing student independence and reducing over-reliance of paraprofessionals among student with special needs, the district has an opportunity to more effectively schedule student time with paraprofessionals such that students with similar needs may be grouped together.

Option 1c. Appoint a half time coordinator to manage and schedule paraprofessionals.

The school district of South Orange and Maplewood currently has 82 sub-contracted paraprofessionals for an annual cost of \$2,300,000. Despite being such a large group of

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support providers within special education, they are directly managed by the Special Education director.

Lack of a middle layer between the Special Education Director and the paraprofessionals not only puts strain on the Director but also leads to insufficient time devoted to carefully reviewing staffing needs and reviewing schedules on a student by student and paraprofessional by paraprofessional basis.

Tight management of paraprofessionals under a dedicated manager is not only important to ensure the efficient and timely provision of services to students with special needs but is also necessary to ensure cost effective management of paraprofessional expenses through detailed scheduling, grouping and re-thinking the menu of services provided by the professionals. All of these activities are extremely time consuming.

Financial impact

Unlike many of the options provided in the report, a change in managing paraprofessionals requires a small investment and a short leap of faith. The investment in a part time, dedicated coordinator would likely cost \$50,000 a year. Based on our experience with other districts, micro scheduling can reduce paraprofessional staffing by 10-15%, while still meeting 100% of student needs.

Since over 40% of paraprofessional time is devoted to 1:1 support, a figure that is much higher than in many other districts, over time if this number was reduced to 20%, which is still above average in our experience, total savings of 10% would be possible (a negative number implies savings).

Year 1	Option	Financial impact
	Half time manager to manager and schedule paraprofessionals	50,000
Year 2	Micro scheduling	-\$230,000 plus
	Reduce one on one support	-\$230,000

Implementation requirements

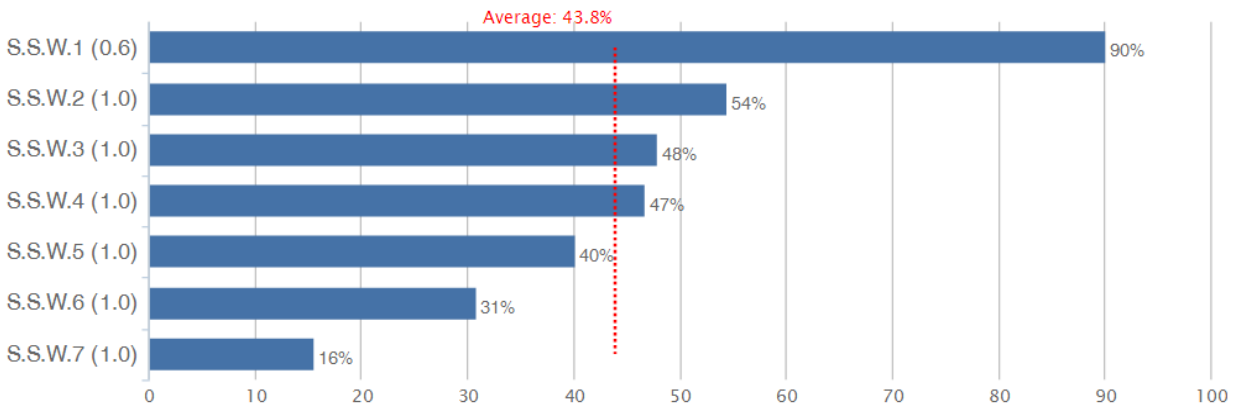
This option is perhaps best considered over a two year window.

I year 1, there is a small investment coupled with a strong accountability system that carefully tracks the impact of the new role. If the benefits emerge and can be recognized in future budgets, the position would continue and its benefits clearly understood. If the new position failed to produce the desired results, it could be discontinued.

Option 2: Revise school social workers’ schedules to increase the amount of time spent with students while reducing 1 FTE.

School social workers spend less than 50% of their time providing direct service to students, including crisis intervention and direct counseling. Given that the CST team has 8 full time social workers who should be able to provide all of the other nonstudent needs, there is an opportunity to provide more counseling services to students with fewer FTEs.

School Social Worker Direct Service (excludes CST social works)



This trend is similar to what we observed in last year’s data.

School Social Worker: 2012 vs. 2013

	2012	2013
% Direct Service	47.4%	43.8%

School Social Worker: Allocation of Time

Activity	Average Hours/Week per FTE	% of Time Spent
Direct Service		
Direct service with student(s)	13h 28m	37.20%
Crisis intervention	1h 56m	5.40%
Mediation	0h 28m	1.30%
Total Direct Service	15h 53m	43.80%
Indirect Service		
Collaboration with colleagues	2h 28m	6.80%
Anti-bullying initiatives	2h 19m	6.40%
Supervising/mentoring interns	2h 10m	6.00%
Personal lunch	2h 7m	5.80%
Meeting - IEP/eligibility	2h 6m	5.80%
Planning/preparation	2h 1m	5.60%
Report writing/paperwork	1h 26m	3.90%
Meeting - other	1h 2m	2.80%
Parent coordination of services	0h 51m	2.30%
Meeting - program planning	0h 20m	0.90%
Assigned school duties	0h 10m	0.50%
Travel	0h 9m	0.40%
Not Reported	6h 59m	9.0%
Total Indirect Service	24h 7m	56.20%

Financial impact

Currently, a total of 6.6 social worker FTEs, spending 44% of their time (1080 annual work hours) in providing direct service to students amounts to 3136 hours in direct service to students in a year (6.6 FTEs x 44% x 1080 hours).

A reduction of 1 social worker FTE with a simultaneous increase in % of direct service to 60% would result in 3628 hours of direct service to students (5.6 FTEs x 1080 x 60%).

This will result in the provision of 15% more hours of direct service to students and **saving of \$100,000** (equivalent to the salary of 1 FTE) for the district.

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Implementation requirements

The savings from revision of social workers' schedule will be realized only when the following are also implemented:

1. Set explicit expectations for hours/ week that counseling services are provided.
2. Collect and review schedules 2 – 3 times a year
3. Assign accountability for meeting the higher level of service to students to a specific administrator or to building principals.

Option 3: Manage in a greater level of detail sub-contracted related service providers (i.e. occupational therapists, physical therapists and speech and language therapists).

The budget for contracted services is \$1.2 million for related service providers such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and physical therapists.

Selected Contracted Services Budget

Role	Budget allocated
Occupational Therapists	\$600,000
Speech and Language Therapists	\$398,000
Physical Therapists	\$210,000
Total	\$1,208,000

Based on data provided, the district pays \$80 an hour for these services, which makes these contracts cost effective. This equates to roughly \$80,000 a year per FTE, which is somewhat less than the fully loaded costs of an average teacher in the district.

Based on the budget allocated to each of the service providers in the district and assuming a per hour rate of \$80 and 1080 work hours per year, we calculated the estimated FTEs that can be funded using the current budget allocation.

Additionally, DMC conducted a comparison with like districts (based on poverty level and per pupil spending) in order to determine how the staffing levels in the district related to OTs, PTs and SLPs compare to others.

For instance, the district is on the 85th percentile when compared to like districts in terms of the staffing levels of occupational therapists. This implies that only 15% of the like districts have a staff level of occupational therapists greater than South Orange and Maplewood.

Estimated FTEs for subcontracted related services based on budget allocations

Role	Budget allocated	Estimated FTEs*			Percentile relative to like districts
		Sub-contracted	In-house	Total	
Occupational Therapists	\$600,000	7.0	0	7.0	85 th percentile
Physical Therapists	\$210,000	2.4	0	2.4	64 th percentile
Speech and Language Therapists	\$398,000	4.6	6	10.6	57 th percentile

*Assuming \$80 per hour and 1,080 hours per year per FTE

The district, like many, has more systems and structures in place to manage internal staff, than a host of external vendors. The district’s current internal systems makes it very difficult to manage, track, or control spending. Moreover, the responsibility for budgeting, managing, and scheduling these contractors is much diffused with no one in the district with primary responsibility. This can lead to inefficiency in two ways. 1) Budgeting more than is needed, thus requiring budget sacrifices elsewhere in the budget and 2) less than optimal schedules for related service providers, which increase spending without increasing services to students.

The 2012- 2013 budget makes the point. Actual spending in the district on contracted services was less than what was budgeted.

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Expenditure and budget

Role	Actual expenditure	Total budget allocated	Budget dollars in excess of actual spending
Occupational Therapists	\$483,329	\$600,000	\$116,671
Physical Therapists	\$233,565	\$210,000	NA
Speech and Language Therapists	\$387,818	\$398,000	\$10,000

Currently, data on the district’s contracted services is not housed in a single centralized location and the data required to determine their cost effectiveness is not readily available. This leads to a lack of deeper understanding of expenses and FTEs related to contracted services in the district.

Based on experience in other districts, the relatively high level of staffing, and the likelihood that detailed scheduling would reduce the number of hours required from outside vendors, DMC recommends **creating a part time position to better budget, schedule and manage contracted services.**

This position (Special education budget analyst) will be responsible for keeping track of expenses related to contracted services and ensure accurate budgeting and forecasting. He/she should be housed in the business office but should have a working knowledge of special education in order to clearly understand the services provided. His/her responsibilities will include ensuring adherence to contracts, following up on outstanding invoices and generate recommendations on efficient scheduling and allocation of staff (including speech and language therapists employed directly by the school) across buildings.

Financial impact

Tighter management and effective budgeting of contracted services should result in savings of \$150,000 or more, based on the current excess of budget allocated over actual expenditures and some greater efficiency from staffing and scheduling. Assuming a salary of \$30,000 for a part time budget analyst will result in a **net savings of \$120,000.**

Implementation requirements

1. Success should be based on cost reductions without any reductions in services to students. As with the coordinator of paraprofessionals, continuation of this position could be contingent on demonstrated savings. It is unlikely that current staff have the time to provide management and scheduling in such fine detail. The time requirements are very cyclical, with peaks during budget development, and just before the start of the school year.
2. The position requires a working knowledge of special education, a knack for scheduling, an analytical approach to staffing, and comfort managing providers cost effectively.
3. Collect and review staff schedules periodically. Given the small number of providers and DMC's dmPlanning technology, this could be a relatively quick effort. Data from staff schedules allows the district to manage group sizes and gives more visibility to district leadership into the activities provided by different staff providers, ultimately enabling tighter management and accurate budgeting and scheduling.

Appendix

Appendix A: In class support

Number of students receiving in class supports

Grade	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan
K	0	NA	10	0	0	0
1	2	NA	6	0	3	2
2	4	NA	3	1	7	3
3	10	8	NA	7	16	6
4	12	15	NA	7	5	11
5	7	20	NA	8	5	6
Total	35	43	19	23	36	28

Number of students per grade receiving in class supports in Literacy or Math or both

Grade	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan
K	0	NA	10	0	0	0
1	2	NA	6	0	2	2
2	4	NA	2	1	7	3
3	10	5	NA	4	15	6
4	12	14	NA	3	3	8
5	6	14	NA	6	4	5
Total	34	33	18	14	31	24

Number of students per grade receiving in class supports in science or social studies or both:

Grade	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan
K	0	NA	9	0	0	0
1	1	NA	5	0	2	0
2	2	NA	1	0	3	0
3	7	5	NA	7	6	3
4	9	10	NA	6	4	9
5	7	18	NA	8	4	6

Students receiving in class supports in Literacy

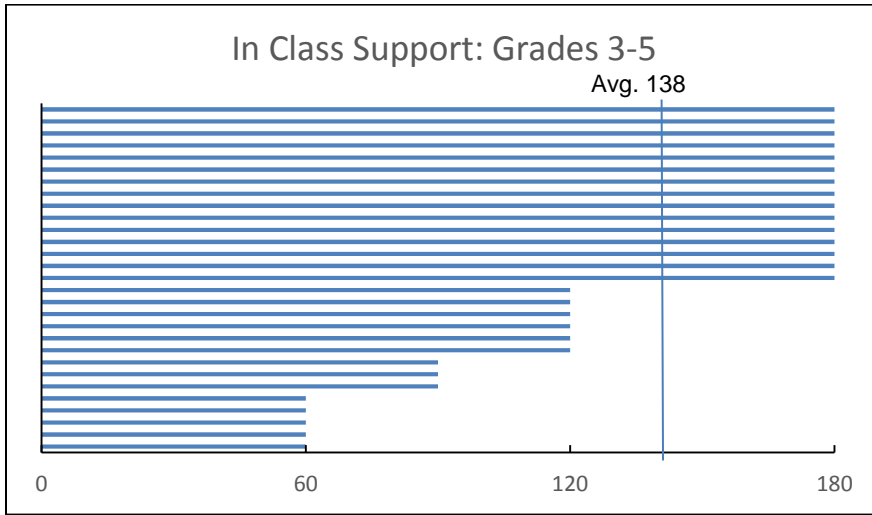
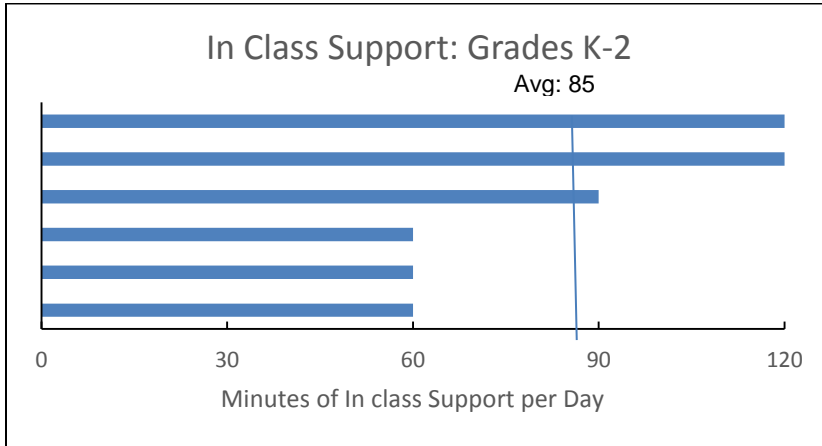
	Clinton			Jefferson			Marshall			Seth Boyden			South Mountain			Tuscan		
	Reading	Writing	Language	Reading	Writing	Language	Reading	Writing	Language	Reading	Writing	Language	Reading	Writing	Language	Reading	Writing	Language
K	0	0	0	N A	N A	N A	9	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	1	N A	N A	N A	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
2	0	0	1	N A	N A	N A	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	3
3	0	0	7	3	3	1	N A	N A	N A	2	2	1	1	1	12	0	1	5
4	0	0	7	6	5	3	N A	N A	N A	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	8
5	0	0	6	4	4	3	N A	N A	N A	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	5
Total	0	0	22	13	12	7	15	15	1	4	4	2	1	1	22	0	1	23

Projected number of students to be provided in class supports for language arts and writing and pull out reading support

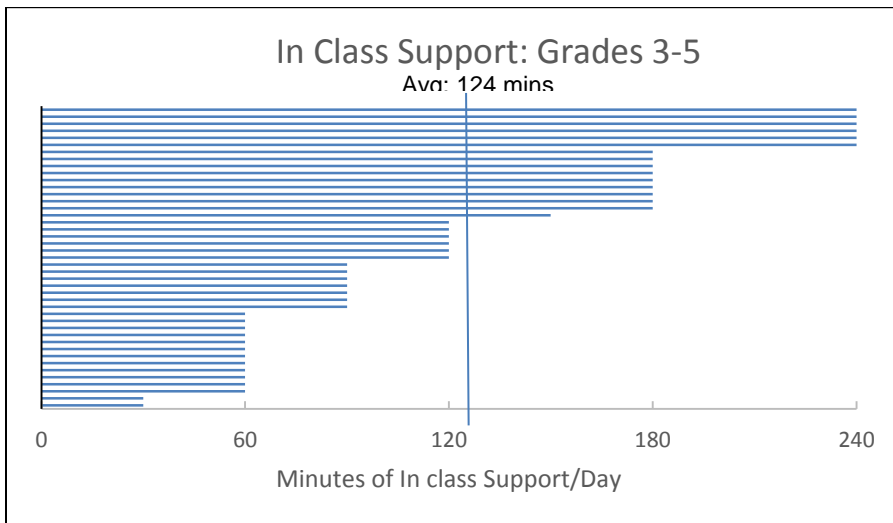
Clinton			Jefferson			Marshall			Seth Boyden			South Mountain			Tuscan		
Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts	Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts	Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts	Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts	Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts	Reading Pull out	Writing	Language Arts
11	0	11	16	12	4	15	15	1	5	4	1	12	1	11	11	1	12

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Clinton In Class Support

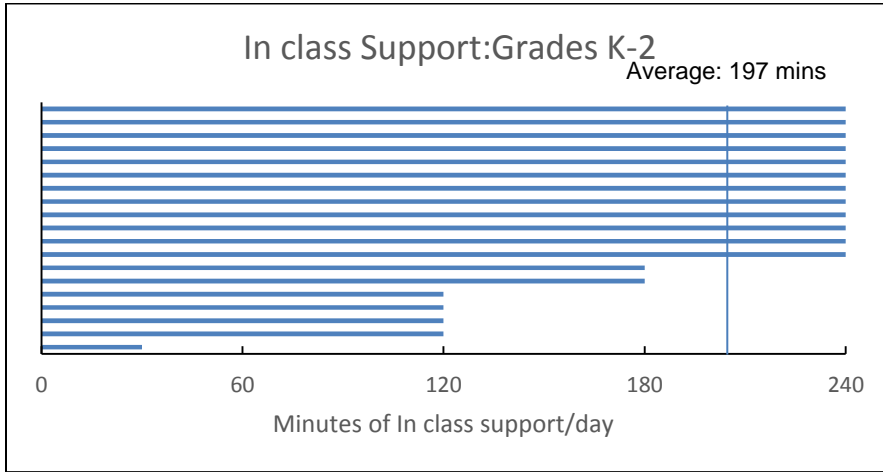


Jefferson In Class Support

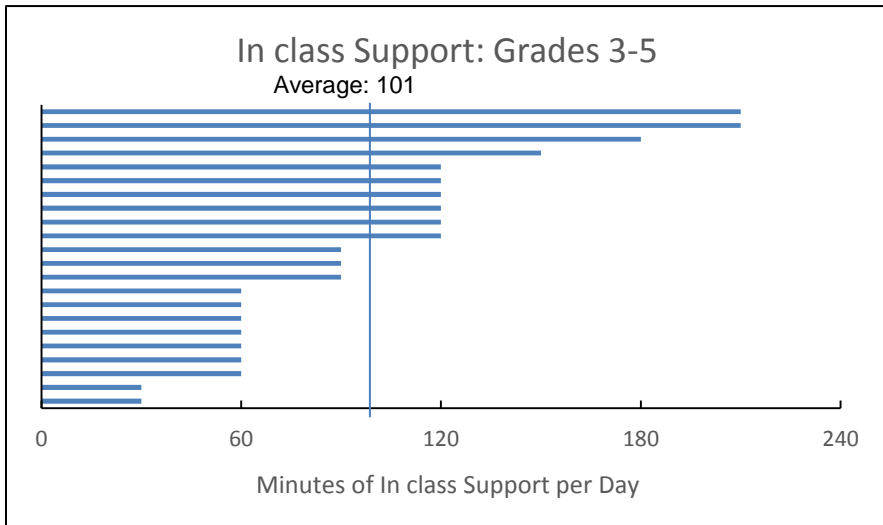


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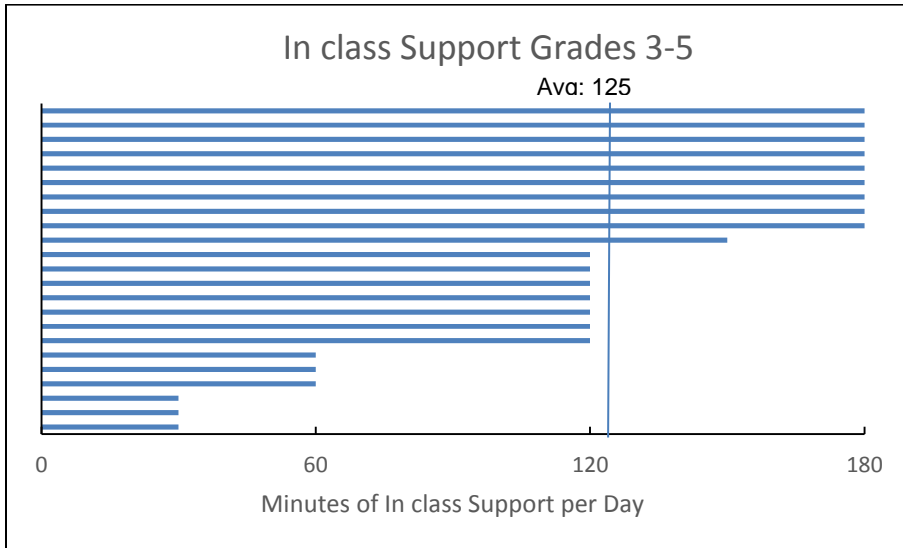
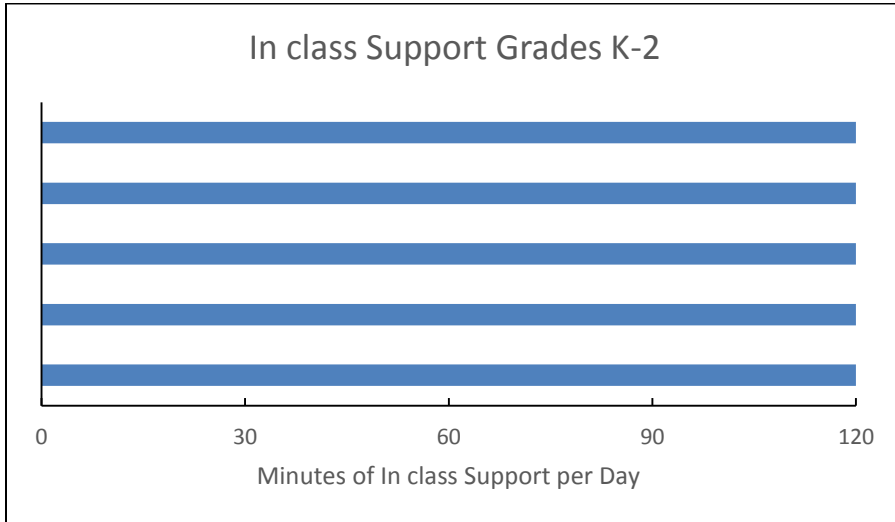
Marshall In Class Support



Seth Boyden In Class Support



Tuscan In Class Support



Appendix B: Reading teachers

Difference between actual and projected staff requirements actual data (K-2 Group Size 3, 8 sessions per day)

School	# Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	5.6	3.5	2.1
Jefferson Elementary	2.3	1.7	0.6
Marshall Elementary	4.8	3.0	1.8
Seth Boyden Elementary	5.7	5.5	0.2
S. Mountain Elementary	3.1	2.0	1.1
Tuscan Elementary	4.2	2.5	1.7
Total	25.7	18.2	7.5

Difference between projected and actual staffing actual data (K-2 Group Size of 4, 8 sessions per day)

School	# Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	4.8	3.5	1.3
Jefferson Elementary	2.3	1.7	0.6
Marshall Elementary	3.6	3.0	0.6
Seth Boyden Elementary	4.7	5.5	-0.8
S. Mountain Elementary	2.5	2.0	0.5
Tuscan Elementary	3.4	2.5	0.9
Total	21.1	18.2	3.1

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Difference between actual and projected staff requirements actual data (K-2 Group Size of 3, 10 sessions per day)

School	# Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	4.5	3.5	1.0
Jefferson Elementary	1.8	1.7	0.1
Marshall Elementary	3.9	3.0	0.9
Seth Boyden Elementary	4.5	5.5	-1.0
S. Mountain Elementary	2.5	2.0	0.5
Tuscan Elementary	3.3	2.5	0.8
Total	20.6	18.2	2.4

Difference between actual and projected staff requirements actual data (K-2 Group Size of 4, 10 sessions per day)

School	Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	3.8	3.5	0.3
Jefferson Elementary	1.8	1.7	0.1
Marshall Elementary	2.9	3.0	-0.1
Seth Boyden Elementary	3.8	5.5	-1.7
S. Mountain Elementary	2.0	2.0	0.0
Tuscan Elementary	2.7	2.5	0.2
Total	17	18.2	-1.2

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**Difference between actual and projected staff requirements adjusted data
(K-2 Group Size of 3, 8 sessions per day)**

School	Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	4.8	3.5	1.3
Jefferson Elementary	2.3	1.7	0.6
Marshall Elementary	3.5	3.0	0.5
Seth Boyden Elementary	4.9	5.5	-0.6
S. Mountain Elementary	2.7	2.0	0.7
Tuscan Elementary	3.9	2.5	1.4
Total	22.0	18.2	3.8

Difference between actual and projected staff requirements (K-2 Group Size of 4, 8 sessions per day)

School	Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	4.1	3.5	0.3
Jefferson Elementary	2.3	1.7	0.6
Marshall Elementary	2.6	3.0	-0.4
Seth Boyden Elementary	4.1	5.5	-1.4
S. Mountain Elementary	2.2	2.0	0.2
Tuscan Elementary	3.2	2.5	0.7
Total	18.5	18.2	-0.3

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**Difference between actual and projected staff requirements adjusted data
(K-2 Group Size of 3, 10 sessions per day)**

School	Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	3.8	3.5	0.3
Jefferson Elementary	1.8	1.7	0.1
Marshall Elementary	2.8	3.0	-0.2
Seth Boyden Elementary	4.0	5.5	-1.5
S. Mountain Elementary	2.2	2.0	0.2
Tuscan Elementary	3.1	2.5	0.6
Total	17.6	18.2	-0.6

**Difference between actual and projected staff requirements adjusted data
(K-2 Group Size of 4, 10 sessions per day)**

School	Projected Reading Teachers (K-5)	Current Reading Teachers	Projected requirement
Clinton Elementary	3.3	3.5	-0.2
Jefferson Elementary	1.8	1.7	0.1
Marshall Elementary	2.1	3.0	-0.9
Seth Boyden Elementary	3.3	5.5	-2.2
S. Mountain Elementary	1.8	2.0	-0.2
Tuscan Elementary	2.5	2.5	0.0
Total	14.8	18.2	-3.4

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