

SESSION E

Budgeting for Equity

Presenters

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Context

1. the use of average salaries in budgeting can led to significant inequity within districts.
2. this practice combined with related polices short change low income students.
3. addressing the problems is challenging but districts can adapt solutions.

Key Points

Make Funding More Transparent

Adapt Transition to local needs

Address teacher sorting challenges

Student based budgeting is the allocation of funds via a weighted student formula based on student characteristics such s ELL PED and poverty. used in 30 districts. Key principles: equitable funding, transparency, portability, school autonomy (principals controlling budget), and accountability. Implementation decisions; degree of autonomy, budgeting tools, principal training and support, developing a formula, accountability framework, and actual vs avg. salaries. Despite paying teachers different amounts, the schools will have average of those salaries charged to their accounts (the school that pays their teacher more will lose money while those being paid less will gain money in budget). Teachers aren't distributed evenly within districts, highly skilled teachers in low income schools tend to transfer or leave. (pay is based off of experience) Research shows that disparities exist in all four districts examined. Largest school loss was almost 1 million (613 per student)

Case study: Spring brook county in Texas: two high schools within 3 miles of each have a huge discrepancy between wealth. Although school with large population of ELL, SPED, and at risk does have more funding, the school is using Title 1 funds to fill in the gaps, not necessarily for accelerated education, for example. Also, the school has less experienced teachers while the wealthier population school had teachers with much more tenure. An average of \$3,365 less in salaries for the less experience teachers. Why still use average salaries? Don't want principals to trade for newer cheaper teachers? What's important is not the principals deciding based on cost" and reasoning why against budgeting actual salaries.

Tradeoffs: lack of short term flexibility (Can't force teachers into low income schools), predictability (easier to budget with average salaries), Political, Salary incentives (Try to get teachers into the low income schools)