MONDAY • June 16, 2014

2:00 – 5:30PM: Registration Open

3:00 – 3:30PM: Welcome and Introduction to the Meeting [Gallery I/II]
  • Christine Campbell, Policy Director, Center on Reinventing Public Education
  • Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University

  Each year, more and more districts are shifting to a decentralized resource allocation model. Why is this shift important for districts, schools and students and how does the finance strategy matter in the context of the district’s other reform efforts? Whether the push is for equity, productivity, accountability, choice, or innovation, the finance strategy sits at the heart of the district’s efforts. In this conversation, finance experts, school leaders, and private funders will share their thinking on why a district’s resource allocation strategy is so important.
  • Introduction: Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
  • Joe Siedlecki, Program Officer, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
  • Karen Hawley Miles, President and Executive Director, Education Resource Strategies
  • Mark Smith, Chief Student Support Officer, Houston Independent School District

4:30 – 4:45PM: Break

4:45 – 5:15PM: Measuring Progress [Gallery I/II]
  Edunomics Lab staff will share analysis of 10 urban districts on the percent of dollars allocated to schools on the basis of students. Why did the findings surprise districts and what opportunities did they reveal to further decentralize dollars?
  • Cory Edmonds, Director of Operations and Finance, YES Prep Public Schools Memphis, and Research Affiliate, Edunomics Lab

5:15 – 6:00PM: Key Elements of a Financial Strategy [Gallery I/II]
  Every district’s financial strategy should connect to its core mission—academic success for all students—and consider the unique role each school brings in achieving that success. We will share a set of key elements to ground the strategy and explain how participants can use this meeting to develop a roadmap to better align spending and outcomes.
  • Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
  • Libuse Binder, Research Analyst, Center on Reinventing Public Education

6:00 – 7:30PM: Welcome Reception – Drinks and Appetizers [Fresco Terrace]
  Come enjoy hearty snacks, refreshments, and good company. Please check out this list of Chicago restaurants we recommend for dinner options.
TUESDAY • June 17, 2014

7:00 – 8:15AM: Breakfast [Sable Restaurant]

8:15 – 8:30AM: Opening of Day [Gallery I/II]

• Introduction: Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University

8:30 – 9:30AM: Hindsight and Insight [Gallery I/II]

There are hurdles and challenges to implementing and expanding decentralized funding models. Plan your implementation or transitions by leveraging the experiences and lessons learned by peer districts. Take advantage of their hindsight to design your next efforts.

• Introduction: Shannon Murtagh, Research Analyst, Center on Reinventing Public Education
• Kate Kotaska, Executive Director of Budget, Denver Public Schools
• Ginger Ostro, Budget Officer, Chicago Public Schools
• Carrie Stewart, Managing Director, Afton Partners

8:30 – 10:45AM: The View from the School [Gallery I/II]

What changes at the school level when principals have more flexibility with their funds? What kind of training do they need? This session will share the kinds of changes that principals can and should consider with their new financial flexibility, highlight promising opportunities for principals to redesign their schools, and offer options for training principals so that they are able to rise to the challenge.

• Introduction: Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
• Laura Kiesler, Specialist – Office of New Initiatives, Baltimore City Public Schools
• Seth Racine, Chief Redesign Officer, Lawrence Public Schools
• Larry Miller, Senior Research Fellow, Center on Reinventing Public Education

10:45 – 11:00AM: Break (coffee and snacks available)

11:00AM – Noon: Moving More Money: Making Progress [Gallery I/II]

Districts decentralize dollars at varying levels: some at a minimal level that buys not much more than field trips, while on the high end, others are allocating 40% on the basis of students. This interactive conversation will highlight how some districts have expanded student-based allocation (SBA) to further decentralize dollars to the school level and where they want to go next.

• Introduction: Laura Anderson, Associate Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
• Alvin David, Data and Strategy, Louisiana Recovery School District
• Kate Kotaska, Executive Director of Budget, Denver Public Schools
• Cory Edmonds, Director of Operations and Finance, YES Prep Public Schools Memphis, and Research Consultant, Edunomics Lab

Noon – 1:00PM: Lunch [Sable Restaurant]

1:00 – 1:45PM: Consultancy with District [Contemporary Room]

This whole-group problem-solving conversation will generate specific feedback for John Scanlan, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, addressing a specific challenge his district faces. The selected challenge will be shared and district participants will join through structured question and answer segments to reveal solutions and inform next steps for Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

• Larry Miller, Senior Research Fellow, Center on Reinventing Public Education
• Laura Anderson, Associate Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University
1:45 – 2:00PM: Break (coffee and snacks available)

2:00 – 3:00PM: Working Session: Central Office, Charters and SBA [Contemporary Room]
How do districts manage decentralizing the funds and services provided by the Central Office? What about charter schools and what can or should be done to equalize funding in a decentralized model? We will outline general concepts related to managing these relationships and other cultural shifts within a decentralized model, sharing examples from participating districts. Participants will divide into small working groups to explore technical aspects of incorporating central services and charter schools into your model.

- Introduction: Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University

3:00 – 4:00PM: Getting it done together [Contemporary Room]
We will reflect on what we learned, identify topics that need more review, and share district plans for the next 6 to 12 months.

- Christine Campbell, Policy Director, Center on Reinventing Public Education
- Marguerite Roza, Director, Edunomics Lab, Georgetown University