

RECOVERY

School District

Excellence.Equity.Community.



Ensuring Excellence and Equity for Students with Disabilities

Our Commitment to Students with Disabilities



As a city, New Orleans has made great progress, but more must be done to ensure an excellent education for all of our students with disabilities.

The RSD is revising its differentiated funding formula to ensure that RSD schools have the financial resources necessary to serve their neediest students well.

Our new funding formula supports our core values of **excellence** and **equity** by providing for a more fair and accurate distribution of funding.

What is Differentiated Funding?

- Differentiated funding allocates money based on student needs – to ensure the right amount of money follows each student.
- The RSD applies a differentiated funding formula based on individual student needs and services to the total amount of MFP funding received by all RSD schools in New Orleans.
- This funding formula adjusts the amount of per pupil MFP funds received by schools up or down based on the needs of each individual student.

Why Use Differentiated Funding?

- The differentiated funding formula is **equitable, transparent, and efficient** – it rewards schools for serving the neediest students.
- Differentiated funding for students with disabilities is a **national best practice**, and the RSD is at the forefront of this work.

Historical RSD Funding Framework

The RSD has historically funded special education students with a differentiated model based on diagnosis alone.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Approx. Additional Funding per Pupil	\$1,400	\$8,000	\$15,000
Disability Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech or Language Impairments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Delay • Intellectual Disabilities (Mild/Moderate) • Other Health Impairments • Orthopedic Impairment • Specific Learning Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism • Emotional Disturbance • Hearing Impairment • Intellectual Disabilities (Severe) • Multiple Disabilities • Traumatic Brain Injuries • Visual Impairments • Deaf-Blindness

Current State: Diagnosis-based Funding

Students diagnosed with the same category of disability may require dramatically different levels of special education service, as measured by the total number of special education service minutes they need per week

Joey

Diagnosis: Autism

Total Weekly Service Minutes: 1,650

Approx. Additional Funding: \$15,000

Joey requires full day, small group instruction in a pull out learning environment with designated adult support.

Sasha

Diagnosis: Autism

Total Weekly Service Minutes: 135

Approx. Additional Funding: \$15,000

Sasha thrives in a regular classroom environment with appropriate supports and technology.

Under the old differentiated funding framework, the schools serving Joey and Sasha received the same amount of money even though the services that Joey needs are much more time and cost-intensive.

Solution: Fund Services, Not Just Diagnoses

Our new formula uses both diagnoses and services to ensure that sufficient funding goes to the neediest students.

Joey

Diagnosis: Autism

Total Weekly Service Minutes: 1,650

Approx. Additional Funding: \$20,000

Joey requires full day, small group instruction in a pull out learning environment with designated adult support.

Sasha

Diagnosis: Autism

Total Weekly Service Minutes: 135

Approx. Additional Funding: \$13,000

Sasha thrives in a regular classroom environment with appropriate supports and technology.

As shown above, differentiating funding by disability diagnosis and services provides Joey's school with an additional \$7,000 to support his additional service needs.

New Differentiated Funding Model Framework

Introduces a more dynamic funding formula based on **disability diagnosis** and **total weekly service minutes**.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Approx. Additional Funding per Pupil	\$1,500	\$8,000	\$13,000	\$15,000	\$20,000

Examples:

Disability Diagnosis	Total Weekly Service Minutes				
Autism			Below 421	421-1260	1261+
Developmental Delay		Below 421	421-1260	1261+	
Multiple Disabilities				Below 1261	1261+
Speech/Language	All				

Analysis & Development



- The RSD conducted a cross-functional analysis of over 3,500 IEPs to determine the appropriate tier distribution and weights.
- Studies of multi-weight differentiated funding models in other districts and states informed the process.
- The RSD conducted extensive financial modeling to ensure that the formula changes wouldn't cause undue stress to any school budgets.
- School and CMO leaders have had the opportunity to review the proposed changes and offer feedback.

Conclusions

- These revisions to the differentiated funding formula are part of the RSD's commitment to ensuring the success of the neediest students in Orleans Parish.
- This new model supports our core values of **excellence** and **equity** by providing for a more fair and accurate distribution of funding.
- The RSD remains committed to improving the way students with disabilities are funded in New Orleans, and we welcome all suggestions and ideas.

Thank you!



Thank you to the many special education coordinators, charter school leaders, and other educators who have worked with the RSD throughout this process.

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