

BENCHMARKING STAFFING FORMULAS AND POLICIES

Prepared for Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

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In the following report, Hanover Research discusses the results of a survey it administered to school districts on staffing practices, formulas, and ratios. In addition, the report profiles four of the surveyed districts to examine their practices in more detail.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

Of the 20 largest U.S. school districts by total area, 16 are in Alaska, with total areas ranging from 11,395 (Kuspuk School District) to 88,699 square miles (North Slope Borough School District).¹ Their size affords these districts a unique set of challenges in terms of staffing and funding schools. Not only can enrollment vary by school within districts from under 20 to over 1,000 students, but individual schools may also be hundreds of miles apart and not accessible by road. Additionally, Alaska's current fiscal reality leads districts to expect – and in some cases already experience – reductions in state education funding. As a result, districts require funding and staffing allocation systems that ensure a quality and equitable education for students across schools, even in the context of budget shortfalls.

To support Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (Kenai) in its review of current district staffing formulas, Hanover Research (Hanover) surveyed geographically large districts across Alaska, Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah with interschool enrollment distributions similar to that of Kenai; to provide more detailed insight into district staffing and funding practices, Hanover conducted interviews with districts who indicated their willingness to discuss their survey responses further.

- **Section I** of the report presents the findings of the survey, as well as a brief overview of related secondary literature.
- **Section II** consists of four profiles that examine both district staffing formulas and ratios and non-academic funding formulas, with a focus on how these districts adjust practices across schools of varying enrollment sizes.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Surveyed districts emphasize the importance of staffing and funding flexibility to meet student and programmatic needs across diverse schools.** Ketchikan Gateway Borough SD, Flagstaff USD, and Kern HSD all cited the ability to adjust and supplement staffing ratios as essential to ensuring an equitable staffing distribution across schools of different sizes. Similarly, Lower Kuskokwim SD and Kingman USD emphasized the importance of staffing and funding schools according to demonstrated student and programmatic needs. In these districts, staffing ratios provide an equitable basis from which to make additional adjustments, rather than inflexible staffing requirements to which schools must adhere.
- **While the surveyed districts most commonly vary staffing formulas or ratios by grade level, both profiled Alaska districts use formulas or ratios that vary – as does Kenai's – by school size.** Eight of the 14 of surveyed districts have staffing formulas or ratios based on grade level, all of which increase student-teacher ratios for higher

¹ "School Districts by Geographic Size." Proximity One. http://proximityone.com/schooldistrict_size.htm

grade levels. Both Lower Kuskokwim SD and North Slope Borough SD vary their staffing formula or ratio according to student enrollment tiers. Similar to Kenai, both districts allocate proportionally more staff to smaller schools. Other surveyed districts note that they make exceptions or considerations for small and/or remote schools on an ad-hoc basis.

- **Lower Kuskokwim SD and North Slope Borough SD both modified their staffing formulas or ratios to eliminate sharp changes in staffing and funding when schools move between enrollment tiers.** For Lower Kuskokwim SD, this involved assigning a minimum number of teachers to individual enrollment tiers to prevent the student-teacher ratio from falling as schools move into higher enrollment tiers. North Slope Borough SD, which bases its formula on the Alaska Department of Education’s district funding formula, similarly modified the state’s calculation of adjusted average daily membership to prevent schools with 101 to 425 students from receiving a disproportionate amount of staff and resources.
- **Eight of the 14 surveyed districts mentioned staffing formulas and ratios in the context of reduced funding and budget shortfalls, and four districts recently raised staffing ratios due to reduced funding.** All four profiled districts either adopted staffing formulas or ratios to spread the impact of reduced funding equitably across schools or increased student-staff ratios to accommodate a smaller budget. These districts all review their staffing allocations and formulas or ratios annually and make adjustments depending on student and school needs, as well as on financial constraints.
- **The majority of surveyed districts make a variety of exceptions or special considerations for small and/or remote schools, including allowing for lower student-staff ratios and providing schools with extra resources.** Six of the surveyed districts allowed low-enrollment schools to have lower student-staff ratios at either the class or school level. Districts also allow for multi-grade classes if enrollment reaches a certain low threshold. Similar to Kenai, the two profiled Alaska districts’ staffing formulas allocate proportionally more staff to smaller schools. However, while Kenai has separate sets of staffing ratios for two tiers of schools (e.g., schools with more or less than 200 students), North Slope Borough SD and Lower Kuskokwim SD have more granular enrollment tiers that alter student-staff ratios at smaller intervals.
- **In comparison with the surveyed districts, Kenai has specific staffing ratios for more positions than any of the other districts.** After classroom teachers, surveyed districts were most likely to have staffing ratios for special education teachers and counselors. A small number of districts set formulas or ratios for secretaries, technology specialists, administrators, and custodians, but none indicated formulas or ratios for librarians, athletic directors, reading specialists, or intervention specialists. In cases where both Kenai and one or more of the surveyed districts reported staffing ratios, Kenai’s student-staff ratios were most often lower.
- **The two profiled Alaska districts allocate funding for extracurricular activities partially based on travel costs, rather than strictly by school size or grade level.** For

example, North Slope Borough SD is in the middle of a two-year process of adjusting funding and scheduling for athletics so that remote school teams will have a comparable number of games with respect to other within-district teams. To reduce costs and increase the overall amount of games played, the district is modifying scheduling so that travel is minimized and more teams travel to fewer locations to play each other.

SECTION I: LITERATURE REVIEW AND SURVEY RESULTS

This section first provides an overview of secondary literature related to district staffing and funding practices. The section then continues to present and discuss the results of the staffing practices and formulas survey.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research examining district funding and staffing patterns tends to focus on large, urban areas and highlight inequities between high-poverty, low-performing schools and low-poverty, high-performing schools. For example, a nation-wide analysis of 2008-09 school level expenditures by the U.S. Department of Education found that an estimated 18 to 28 percent of districts receiving Title I funds were not in compliance with the comparability provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which requires districts to provide Title I schools with services comparable to those offered in non-Title I schools. These districts use Title I funds to replace local and state funding, rather than to supplement existing funds to better serve high-needs students.² Still other research has examined the differences in staff tenure and performance at high-performing and low-performing, low-income schools, noting that staffing inequities “consistently impact high-poverty and low-performing schools.”³

With regard to rural districts, experts suggest that districts allocate additional funding to attract quality staff to less-desirable schools in order to promote a more equitable distribution of teachers.⁴ In addition to increased funding for staffing, small schools may require extra funding for transportation, facilities, and supplies. While districts and states may balk at the additional expenses attached to small schools, a 1998 report by the Vermont Department of Education concluded that – at least in Vermont – small schools are worth the additional investment “because of the value they add to student learning and community cohesion.” Additionally, districts and states may have no other option than to fund small schools when there is no opportunity for consolidation.⁵

Recognizing that small schools typically require proportionally more funding than larger schools to provide quality staffing and services and that these small schools are necessary due to district size, the Alaska Department of Education (DOE) includes a School Size

² “The Potential Impact of Revising the Title I Comparability Requirement to Focus on School-Level Expenditures.” U.S. Department of Education, 2011. p. 1. <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/title-i/comparability-requirement/comparability-policy-brief.pdf>

³ Roza, M. and K. Miles. “Moving toward Equity in School Funding within Districts.” Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, 2002. p. 8. http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/283/files/Towards_Equity.pdf

⁴ Malhoit, G. “Providing Rural Students with a High Quality Education: The Rural Perspective on the Concept of Educational Adequacy.” The Rural School and Community Trust, 2005. p. 18. http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/Providing_Rural_Students.pdf

⁵ “Small School Funding – Vermont.” Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2008. <https://ilsr.org/rule/equity-in-school-finance/2108-2/>

Adjustment (SSA) in its district funding formula. The SSA adjusts a district's average daily membership (ADM) based on the size of individual schools; students at smaller schools are weighted more heavily than students at progressively larger schools.⁶ District-adjusted ADM then partly determines the amount of state funding received by the district. However, Alaska districts do not necessarily allocate funding or staff to schools based on the adjusted school ADMs used in the state funding formula. Nor does research address best practices in staffing across geographically large districts with schools of varying enrollment sizes.

STAFFING PRACTICES SURVEY

Given the limited research addressing staffing practices for geographically large districts, Hanover designed and distributed a survey that asked districts to provide information on their staffing policies and practices, as well as their opinions on the effectiveness of these policies. Specifically, the survey (reproduced in the appendix) addressed the following two main questions:

- **Staffing formula and ratio details:** The first part of the survey asked respondents to indicate whether their district has separate staffing formulas or ratios for schools based on grade level, school size, or other characteristics. Contacts then were asked to provide existing staffing formulas or ratios for a variety of specific positions (classroom teacher, special education resource teacher, counselor, etc.). Additionally, contacts were asked to describe any special considerations or exceptions for small and/or remote schools in their district.
- **Policy effectiveness:** The second part of the survey asked district contacts to describe the effectiveness of staffing formulas and ratios in ensuring an equitable distribution of resources and whether districts had made any adjustments to staffing formulas or ratios due to reduced funding or budget shortfalls.

DISTRICT SELECTION AND SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

Districts were selected for participation based on their geographic size and enrollment distribution characteristics. An initial distribution list of approximately 50 districts in Alaska and the lower 48 states was assembled, and eventually expanded to 77 districts. Hanover sent emails to relevant contacts within these districts (e.g., human resource directors, business officers, superintendents) with requests to take the survey, provide additional documentation, and speak with Hanover regarding their staffing practices. Periodic reminders and requests were sent to contacts throughout the month of July, and Hanover continued to reach out to additional contacts within the selected districts. Of the 77 districts invited to participate in the survey, 14 provided responses. These districts are presented below in Figure 1.1.

⁶ "Public School Funding Program Overview." Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2014. pp. 3–4. <https://education.alaska.gov/news/pdf/FundingProgramOverview.pdf>

The achievement and return on investment (ROI) indices noted in Figure 1.1 are drawn from the Center for American Progress’ 2011 report on education productivity in the U.S.⁷ Unfortunately, this information is not available for Alaska or for certain districts in the lower 48 states.⁸ The achievement index is an average of proficiency rates on state assessments, while the ROI score (1 – highest ROI, 6 – lowest) measures the achievement index in light of district spending. Because these measures rely on individual state assessments, the measures are not directly comparable across states.⁹

The remainder of this section presents the results of the survey. Please note that these results do not incorporate additional responses provided via phone interview and email correspondence, which are presented in Section II of this report.

Figure 1.1: Characteristics of Responding Districts

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STATE	GEOGRAPHICAL SIZE (SQ. MI.)	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	SMALLEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	LARGEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	SETTING	ACHIEVEMENT INDEX (1-100)	ROI SCORE (1-6)
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	NM	2,475	6,420	14	108	1,667	Town: Remote	50	2
Deming SD	NM	2,965	5,412	11	150	1,380	Town: Remote	36	4
Flagstaff USD	AZ	4,413	9,772	20	107	1,538	City: Small	70	2
Iron County SD	UT	3,297	8,892	17	157	1,117	Town: Remote	81	2
Kern Union HSD	CA	3,379	37,100	25	90	2,830	City: Large	-	-
Ketchikan Gateway Borough SD	AK	4,858	2,293	10	81	587	Town: Remote	-	-
Kingman USD	AZ	3,019	6,806	12	78	1,546	Town: Remote	58	5
Lower Kuskokwim SD	AK	21,283	4,293	28	21	522	Rural: Remote	-	-
North Slope Borough SD	AK	88,699	2,006	11	60*	680	Rural: Remote	-	-

⁷ “Return on Educational Investment.” Center for American Progress, 2011. https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/DWW-Education-ROI-2_rev.pdf

⁸ “Return on Educational Investment: FAQs.” Center for American Progress, 2011. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/news/2011/01/19/8901/return-on-educational-investment-faqs/>

⁹ [1] The achievement index represents an average of the “percent of students designated proficient or above on the state assessment in reading and math in fourth grade, eighth grade, and high school for the 2007-08 school year.” Because these assessments differ across states, inter-state comparisons are difficult.

[2] The ROI score measures how much productivity (student achievement) a district gets for each dollar spent, relative to other districts in the state. The measure is adjusted for a myriad of factors out of the district’s control including poverty, non-English speakers, and cost-of-living. The scale is one (highest value for spending) to six (lowest).

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STATE	GEOGRAPHICAL SIZE (SQ. MI.)	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	SMALLEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	LARGEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	SETTING	ACHIEVEMENT INDEX (1-100)	ROI SCORE (1-6)
Pershing County SD	NV	6,036	710	5	14	309	Rural: Remote	66	6
Plumas USD	CA	2,046	2,137	11	102	350	Rural: Fringe	36	5
Roswell ISD	NM	3,182	10,353	22	65	1,374	Town: Remote	51	1
Uintah SD	UT	4,478	7,778	13	60	1,176	Town: Remote	70	5
Yuma Union HSD	AZ	2,449	10,723	7	202	2,598	City: Small	-	-
Kenai PBS	AK	16,079	8,960	43	3	706	Rural: Remote	-	-

*Note that this is a K-12 school with 60 students across all 13 grades.
 Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2013-14 school year), Center for American Progress¹⁰

STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS PRACTICES

The majority of responding districts (n=8, 57 percent) vary staffing formulas and ratios by grade level, rather than using formulas or ratios based on school size (n=3) or single formulas or ratios (n=3). District contacts were first asked to indicate whether their district has separate staffing formulas or ratios for schools based on grade level, enrollment, or “other characteristics.” Of the fourteen districts, only one (Pershing Co. SD) has no set staffing formulas or ratios. The remaining 13 districts either vary staffing formulas and ratios depending on grade level, school size, or other factors, or have a single formula or ratio district-wide. In comparison with Kenai, only one district (Kingman USD) reported also using staffing ratios or formulas based on both grade level and school size. Two of the three districts that use a single formula or ratio are high school districts serving students in Grades 9-12 only. Figure 1.2 lists the districts with staffing formulas or ratios that vary by grade level or school size and those with single formulas or ratios.

Figure 1.2: Districts with Staffing Formulas/Ratios by Grade Level, School Size, and with Single Formulas

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRADE LEVEL	SCHOOL SIZE	SINGLE FORMULA/RATIO
Carlsbad Municipal Schools (NM)	X		
Deming Public School (NM)	X		
Flagstaff USD (AZ)	X		
Iron County SD (UT)	X		
Kern Union High School District (CA)			X
Ketchikan Gateway Borough SD			X

¹⁰ [1] “Search for Public School Districts.” National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/index.asp>
 [2] “Return on Educational Investment: Methodology and Data.” Center for American Progress, January 19, 2011. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/news/2011/01/19/8912/return-on-educational-investment-methodology-and-data/>

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRADE LEVEL	SCHOOL SIZE	SINGLE FORMULA/RATIO
Kingman USD (AZ)	X	X	
Lower Kuskokwim SD (AK)		X	
North Slope Borough SD (AK)		X	
Plumas USD (CA)	X		
Roswell ISD (NM)	X		
Uintah SD (UT)	X		
Yuma Union High School District (AZ)			X
Total	8	3	3
Kenai Peninsula BSD (AK)	X	X	

A number of districts (n=6, 42 percent) base staffing formulas and ratios on additional characteristics not listed in the table above such as state and federal guidelines, student need, and square footage. Other than Pershing County SD which has no set staffing formulas or ratios, these districts all use staffing ratios or formulas based on grade level or school size in addition to the other characteristics listed in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Districts with Staffing Formulas/Ratios Based on Other Characteristics

SCHOOL DISTRICT	OTHER CHARACTERISTICS THAT DETERMINE STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS
Deming Public Schools (NM)	In addition to modifying staffing formula/ratios according to grade level, Deming Public Schools bases formulas/ratios on State of New Mexico class size restrictions . Additionally, the district uses a ratio based on square footage to staff custodians.
Kern Union HSD (CA)	In addition to single staffing formulas for multiple positions, Kern Union HSD bases formulas/ratios on the California Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) unduplicated student count measure .
Kingman USD (AZ)	In addition to modifying staffing formula/ratios according to grade level and school size, Kingman USD uses a ratio based on square footage to staff custodians.
Lower Kuskokwim SD (AK)	In addition to modifying staffing formula/ratios based on school size, Lower Kuskokwim SD uses a ratio based on square footage to staff custodians.
North Slope Borough SD (AK)	In addition to modifying staffing formula/ratios according to grade level and school size, North Slope Borough SD staffs special education teachers according to individual and aggregate student need by site . Additionally, Early Childhood Education instructors are staffed based on federal statutory staffing requirements . Additionally, the district uses a ratio based on square footage to staff custodians.
Pershing Co. SD (NV)	Pershing Co. SD has no set staffing formulas or ratios . Staffing fluctuates with enrollment and other variables.

STAFFING RATIOS FOR SPECIFIC POSITIONS

This subsection presents the specific ratios that responding districts use to staff a variety of positions, including classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and administrators. In general, Kenai has lower staffing ratios than these districts and appears to provide more flexibility for smaller schools through adjusted staffing ratios.

CLASSROOM TEACHER STAFFING RATIOS

The eight districts (57 percent) that vary classroom teacher staffing ratios by grade level all increase student-teacher ratios for higher grades. Student-teacher ratios for kindergarten classes are lowest (on average 21.8 students per teacher) while those for high school classes are highest (on average 29.8 students per teacher). While Figure 1.4 lists ratios for each district by kindergarten, elementary school (Grades 1-5), middle school (Grades 6-8), and high school (Grades 9-12), many districts have specific ratios for individual grades. Roswell ISD also has specific ratios for English teachers versus other classroom teachers at the secondary level. The majority of the ratios refer to the number of students per teacher in a single classroom, however at the secondary level Kingman USD and Roswell ISD use a ratio of total students taught by a teacher in all classes (either in a day or across days) per teacher.

Figure 1.4: Certified Classroom Teacher Student/Teacher Ratio by Grade Level

DISTRICT	K	GRADES 1-5	GRADES 6-8	GRADES 9-12
Carlsbad Municipal Schools (NM)	18:1	24:1 (Grades 1-2) 26:1 (Grades 3-5)	N/A	N/A
Deming Public Schools (NM)	20:1	24:1	24:1 (Grade 6) 30:1 (Grades 7-8)	30:1
Iron County SD (UT)	N/A	N/A	26.5:1	27.5:1
Kern Union HSD (CA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	32:1
Kingman USD (AZ)	27:1	27:1 (Grades 1-2) 30:1 (Grades 3-5)	N/A	342:1*
Plumas USD (CA)	22:1	22:1 (Grades 1-2) 25:1 (Grades 3-5)	25:1 (Grade 6) 32:1 (Grades 7-9)	32:1
Roswell ISD (NM)	20:1 [¶]	22:1 (Grades 1-3) ^{†¶} 24:1 (Grades 4-5) ^{††}	24:1 (Grade 6) ^{††} 160:1 (Grades 7-8) ^{*†}	160:1 ^{*†}
			135:1 ^{*†} and 27:1 [†] (English, Grades 7-8)	150:1 ^{*†} and 30:1 [†] (English)
Uintah SD (UT)	24:1	24:1 (Grades 1-2) 25:1 (Grades 3-4) 26:1 (Grades 5)	27:1 (Grades 6-7) 28:1 (Grade 8)	28:1 (Grade 9) 29:1 (Grades 10-12)
Average[◇]	21.8:1	24.9:1	27.1:1	29.8:1
Kenai Peninsula BSD (AK)**	20.5:1 [17.5:1]	22.5:1 (Grades 1-3) 24.5:1 (Grades 4-5) [17.5:1]	24.5:1 (Grade 6) 25:1 (Grade 7-8) [17.5:1 (Grade 6)]	25:1

* Ratio of total students taught per teacher over across all classes, either daily or across multiple days, rather than student-teacher ratios by individual classes, likely due to block scheduling at the secondary level.

† The ratios listed for Roswell ISD Grades K-3 and 7-12 are all *maximum* student-teacher ratios.

¶ For Grades K-1, Roswell ISD classes with a student/teacher ratio greater than 20:1 receive a teaching assistant.

†† The ratios listed for Roswell ISD Grades 4-6 are *average* student-teacher ratios.

** Kenai bracketed [] student/teacher ratios for schools with less than 200 students where class ADM is less than 25.

◇ Averages only include ratios with total students per teacher per single class.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND COUNSELING STAFFING RATIOS

Half of the surveyed districts (n=7) noted they do not have set staffing ratios for special education teachers or counselors. For the four districts with explicit staffing ratios for special education resource teachers, the student-teacher ratio ranges from 15:1 to 100:1. In comparison with the districts with set student-counselor ratios, Kenai has the lowest student-counselor ratio at the secondary level by at least 75 students. Additionally, Kenai is unique in varying the student-counselor ratio by grade level. North Slope Borough SD is the only district to staff one counselor per site, which results in an especially low student-counselor ratio for small schools. Figure 1.5 lists the specific ratios for these positions.

Figure 1.5: Special Education and Counseling Staffing Ratios

DISTRICT	SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE TEACHER	SPECIAL EDUCATION SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOM TEACHERS	COUNSELORS
Flagstaff USD (AZ)	N/A	N/A	500:1
Kern Union HSD (CA)	26:1	16:1	415:1
Kingman USD (AZ)	15:1*	10:1*	450:1
Lower Kuskokwim SD (AK)	100:1**	N/A	N/A
North Slope Borough SD (AK)	Based on needs of IEPs	Based on needs of IEPs	One counselor per site
Uintah SD (UT)	Same as student/classroom teacher ratio***	Same as student/classroom teacher ratio***	N/A
Yuma Union HSD (AZ)	N/A	N/A	Based on enrollment
Kenai Peninsula BSD (AK)	17:1 (Elementary) 20:1 (Middle) 20:1 (High)	8:1	350:1 (Grades 7-8) 250:1 (Grades 9-12)

*Kingman USD special education resource classes also receive one paraprofessional per class; contained special education classrooms receive up to three paraprofessionals.

** Likely refers to full caseload rather than class size.

***See Figure 1.4

SECRETARIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND CUSTODIAL STAFFING RATIOS

The majority of surveyed districts did not note set staffing ratios for secretaries, administrators, or custodians. Of all the positions with set staffing ratios, only custodians are staffed according to building size. In comparison with Kenai, Kingman USD is the only other surveyed district to have a fixed student-secretary ratio; however, Kingman has a set ratio of 500:1 while Kenai has overall smaller ratios that vary by grade (included below) and by school size (not listed here). Kingman USD also has a set staffing ratio for assistant principals based on enrollment tiers. However, Kingman USD has two schools with 800 or more students. With regard to custodian staffing ratios, Kenai has similar ratios to those of the other two districts. Again, however, Kenai is unique in varying custodial staffing ratios by grade level and by adding a student-custodian ratio requirement for Grades 6-12. Figure 1.6 presents the specific ratios for the districts below.

Figure 1.6: Secretarial, Administrative, and Custodial Staffing Ratios

DISTRICT	SECRETARY	ADMINISTRATION	CUSTODIAN
Deming Public Schools (NM)	N/A	N/A	1:21,000 Sq. Ft.
Flagstaff USD (AZ)	One per school	N/A	N/A
Kern Union HSD (CA)	N/A	600:1	N/A
Kingman USD (AZ)	500:1	Assistant principals: 0-600:0, 600-900:1, 900-1,300:1.5, 1,300- 1,700:2, 1700+:3	1:25,000 Sq., Ft.
Lower Kuskokwim SD (AK)	Based on enrollment	N/A	Based on square footage
North Slope Borough SD (AK)	N/A	N/A	Based on square footage
Yuma Union HSD (AZ)	N/A	Assistant principals: based on enrollment	N/A
Kenai Peninsula BSD (AK)*	275:1 (Elementary) 200:1 (Middle) 250:1 (High)	Elementary: 450+ = 1.0, 400-499 = 0.5 Secondary: 400+ = 1.0, 350-399 = 0.5	1:20,000 Sq. Ft. (Grades K-8) 1:22,000 Sq. Ft and 125:1 (Grades 6-12) 100:1 (Elementary)

*Kenai has additional ratios for secretaries and custodians in small schools that are not listed.

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

This subsection discusses the surveyed districts’ responses to questions regarding staffing practices for small and remote schools, equitable distribution of resources across schools, and budgetary impacts on staffing practices.

SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS

Eleven of the 14 districts (79 percent) that completed the survey make special staffing considerations or exceptions for especially small and/or remote schools in their district. The most common exception, cited by six districts, involved lowering student-staff ratios to accommodate low enrollment at either the class or school levels. Specific staffing considerations and exceptions for these schools include those listed in Figure 1.7 below.

Figure 1.7: Common Considerations and Exceptions for Small and Remote Schools

- **Combining classes across grade levels into a single class.** For example, Pershing Co. School District staffs Imlay Elementary School (K-6) with one teacher due to low enrollment.
- **Allowing for smaller class sizes and lower student-teacher ratios.** Lower Kuskokwim SD, North Slope Borough SD, and Flagstaff USD all lower their student-teacher ratios for smaller schools. This can include adjusting ratios for front office staff and administrators as well. Specific examples are noted in the profiles of LKSD and NSBSD.
- **Providing additional funding to increase staffing and resources.** For example, small schools in Iron County SD receive supplementary funding for additional staffing and resources.
- **Adjusting counseling, special education, and administrative staffing ratios.** Kern Union HSD staffs its smallest school (450 students) with two full-time counselors, which is well below the district counselor

staffing ratio of 415 students to one counselor. The district makes similar adjustments for special education and administration staffing ratios for its smaller schools.

- **Providing advanced secondary coursework opportunities, despite low student to teacher ratios.** For example, Plumas USD allows small high schools to offer advanced classes, despite small class sizes.

EQUITY IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Twelve of the surveyed districts (86 percent) feel that their staffing formulas and ratios are effective in ensuring an equitable distribution of resources across all schools; the remaining two districts did not answer the relevant question. Deming Public Schools and Iron County SD comment that staffing ratios lead to a more equitable distribution of resources by stabilizing both the student-teacher ratio across school and the cost per student by schools. Ketchikan Gateway Borough SD, Flagstaff USD, and Kern HSD emphasize district flexibility and the ability to adjust and supplement staffing ratios in order to meet the needs of students and staff.

BUDGETARY IMPACT

Eight of the surveyed districts (57 percent) mention staffing formulas and ratios in the context of reduced funding and budget shortfalls. Four districts – Deming PS, Iron County SD, Kingman USD, and Lower Kuskokwim SD – indicated that they have recently raised their staffing ratios to accommodate a reduced budget. While Pershing Co. SD has not officially raised staffing ratios, the district allows higher student-teacher ratios at the high school level to accommodate secondary staffing shortages. Uintah SD is currently discussing the possibility of adjusting staffing ratios in the context of reduced funding. Finally, both Roswell ISD and North Slope Borough School District explicitly stated that current staffing formulas and ratios were adopted to due to funding reductions.

SECTION II: PROFILES

This section includes profiles of the four districts who agreed to discuss their survey responses with Hanover in further detail. Their relative lengths vary according to the information provided in interviews and the scope of their staffing formulas and ratios. Figure 2.1, below, lists these four districts, two of which (Lower Kuskokwim School District and North Slope Borough School District) are located in Alaska.

Figure 2.1: List of Profiled Districts

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GEOGRAPHICAL SIZE (SQ. MI.)	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	SMALLEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	LARGEST SCHOOL ENROLL.	SETTING	REVENUE PER STUDENT
Lower Kuskokwim SD (AK)	21,283	4,293	28	21	522	Rural: Remote	\$31,459
North Slope Borough SD (AK)	88,699	2,006	11	60	680	Rural: Remote	\$38,044
Roswell ISD (NM)	3,182	10,353	22	65	1,374	Town: Remote	\$10,262
Kingman USD (AZ)	3,019	6,806	12	78	1,546	Town: Remote	\$7,456
Kenai Peninsula BSD	16,079	8,960	43	3	706	Rural: Remote	\$17,104

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2013-14 school year; Fiscal data from 2011-12)¹¹

LOWER KUSKOKWIM SCHOOL DISTRICT (AK)

Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) is the tenth largest school district in Alaska and the United States in terms of geographic size. Over the past ten years LKSD has implemented staffing ratios for a variety of positions based on enrollment tiers and recently raised minimum staffing ratios in response to budget reductions. The information in this profile comes from LKSD’s survey responses, district budgetary materials, and an interview Hanover conducted with Joshua Gill, LKSD’s Director of Personnel.¹²

Lower Kuskokwim School District

% Highly Qualified Teachers: 82 %

Graduation Rate: 53 %

AMP ELA % Meeting Standards: 5 %

AMP Math % Meeting Standards: 7 %

¹¹ “Search for Public School Districts.” National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/index.asp>

¹² [1] Gill, Joshua. Director of Personnel, Lower Kuskokwim School District. Phone Interview, July, 2016

[2] “State of Alaska Report Card to the Public – District Level, 2014-15 School Year.” Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. <https://education.alaska.gov/ReportCardToThePublic/Report/2014-2015/31>

STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS

HISTORY AND PROCESS

LKSD implemented the majority of its staffing ratios over the past ten years. A dedicated budget assumption committee presents annual recommendations to the school board, which typically accepts the recommendations without making significant changes. The budget assumptions list staffing ratios for a variety of positions, including regular instruction teacher, secretary, and dean of students. Specific ratios may fluctuate from year to year based on district needs and resources. For example, to adapt to reduced funding in 2016-17, the district increased the pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) for schools of all sizes while decreasing the minimum number of teachers for each school-size tier.

FORMULAS AND RATIOS

LKSD staffs regular instruction teachers, special education teachers, deans of students, administrative secretaries and site technology specialists according to average daily membership (ADM) tiers. ADM tiers correspond with a staffing ratio or stipulation and are based on programming needs. Both ADM tiers and staffing ratios and stipulations vary depending on the specific position. For example, there are five tiers for staffing regular instruction teachers, four tiers for deans of students, and six tiers for administrative secretary. This differs from Kenai’s practice of making adjustments only for schools with enrollment less than 200 students. Figure 2.2 lists the tiers and corresponding staffing ratios for regular instruction teachers.

Figure 2.2: Regular Instruction Teacher Staffing Ratios Based on Enrollment

TIERS	AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (ADM)	RATIO
Tier 1	10-49	10.2:1
Tier 2	50-100	15.2:1 with a minimum of 4.8 teachers
Tier 3	101-200	17.2:1 with a minimum of 6.57 teachers
Tier 4	201-300	18.2:1 with a minimum of 11.62 teachers
Tier 5	301+	19.2:1 with a minimum of 16.48 teachers

As regular instruction teacher allocation is based on whole numbers, any fractional amounts that remain from the pupil teacher ratio (PTR) are multiplied by the average teacher cost (\$101,849 in 2016-17) and allocated to the sites. Known as “over-the-PTR” (OPTR), the amount funds additional instructional staff. For special education teachers, LKSD bases staffing on a 100:1 student-teacher ratio. Schools with 50 to 130 students receive one special education teacher; for every additional fifty students, a school receives an additional half-time special education teacher. For schools with high numbers of intensive need students, the district has a separate funding pool (\$3,122,260 in 2016-17) to provide additional staffing on the basis of student need. Schools with less than 50 students typically receive special education services through one of the district’s itinerant special education teachers, who travel between programs and schools.

Other positions that LKSD staffs according to enrollment include administrative secretaries, deans of students, and site technology specialists. Figure 2.3, below, includes the daily hourly allocation for site administrative secretaries based on site ADM. Note that schools with an ADM greater than 350 receive one additional hour for each additional 43 students. Sites that have in excess of eight hours per day may use excess funding to cover the salary and benefits of administrative classified support staff.

Figure 2.3: Administrative Secretary Daily Hourly Allocation Based on Enrollment

TIERS	AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (ADM)	DAILY HOURLY ALLOCATION
Tier 1	10-29	3 Hours/Day
Tier 2	30-49	4 Hours/Day
Tier 3	50-99	5 Hours/Day
Tier 4	100-199	6 Hours/Day
Tier 5	200-299	7 Hours/Day
Tier 6	300-350	8 Hours/Day

Sites to which LKSD does not allocate an assistant site administrator may receive funding to staff a dean of students and an assistant site administrator, depending on site ADM. Figure 2.4, below, lists the ADM tiers and the corresponding staffing ratios.

Figure 2.4: Dean of Students Staffing Ratios Based on Enrollment

TIERS	AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (ADM)	RATIO
Tier 1	175-250	.5 FTE Dean
Tier 2	251-400	1 FTE Dean
Tier 3	400-475	1 Assistant Site Administrator + .5 FTE Dean
Tier 4	476+	1 Assistant Site Administrator + 1 FTE Dean

For Site Technology Specialists, sites with an ADM of 10 to 29 students receive funding for a half hour daily hourly staffing allocation. Sites with an ADM of 30 to 49 received a full hour daily hourly allocation. From there, for every 50 additional students, sites receive an additional half hour per day until sites reach the maximum allocation of five and a half hours per day at an ADM of 450 or more students.

PROMOTING EQUITY

Gill finds that overall the district’s staffing formulas and ratios are effective in promoting equity across all schools. He adds that in addition to the base formulas, sites receive discretionary funding that allows individual schools to increase staffing based on need. Site principals determine the use of site funds, which can fund school supplies, special programs, professional development, and other resources. Additionally, Gill notes that the district did not arrive at the current formulas without experimentation. Originally, schools that moved between ADM tiers experienced disproportional changes in staffing of regular instruction teachers. To prevent schools from losing staff when moving to a higher tier, LKSD implemented minimum staffing levels for each tier (apart from the first) that correspond with the maximum possible number of teachers staffed at schools in a tier below.

NON-ACADEMIC FUNDING

LKSD partially funds athletics, enrichment opportunities, and extracurricular activities from a district funding pool. For athletics, funding is limited to airfare, ground transportation, and lodging for participation in the following activities: cross-country, wrestling, basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, and Native Youth Olympics (NYO). Certain funding goes only towards high school athletics. Additionally, schools receive funds depending on their distance from Bethel, AK and the relevant costs of travel. For enrichment opportunities and extracurricular activities, the district funds certain activities based on ADM; for example, LKSD funds a certain number of students per site based on enrollment to participate in the state band competition. To send additional students, sites must cover the cost themselves. For other activities, such as high school and middle school speech competitions, the district will fund as many students who wish to participate in certain speech competitions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LKSD recommends that districts which face budget reductions staff schools according to programmatic needs to ensure equity across schools. For example, a charter school with a focus in science and math will have different staffing and funding needs than a high-poverty school in an urban area. Accordingly, LKSD plans to introduce separate staffing formulas for K-8 dual language schools to account for staffing needs based on programming, in addition to ADM. Districts may also need to embrace creative means to meet the needs of students attending small schools; Gill sites as an example the Platinum School, which has a K-12 enrollment of less than 20 students. As LKSD cannot afford to fund highly qualified teachers in multiple subject areas, high school students receive partial instruction from teachers at Bethel Regional High School, the district's largest school, via teleconferencing technology.

NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (AK)

North Slope Borough School District (North Slope) is the largest district in the United States by nearly 30,000 square miles. As such, North Slope faces the challenges that other Alaskan and large, rural districts face, but on a magnified scale. The superintendent introduced a new staffing and funding formula for the 2016-17 school year in order to address rising enrollment and decreased funding. The district is also improving equity in athletics in this budgetary context by implementing new athletics schedules. The information in this profile

North Slope Borough School District

% Highly Qualified Teachers: 97 %

Graduation Rate: 70 %

AMP ELA % Meeting Standards: 9 %

AMP Math % Meeting Standards: 12 %

comes from the district’s survey responses and an interview that Hanover conducted with Brian Freeman, North Slope’s Coordinator of Grants, Foundations, and Partnerships.¹³

STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS

HISTORY AND PROCESS

Several years ago, North Slope began to predict that district funding would decrease in the near future due to the depreciation of district infrastructure and the price of oil falling steadily since 2014 to under \$40 a barrel in late 2015. In 2015, North Slope’s new superintendent Glen Szymoniak faced a unique situation: a decreasing budget accompanied by increasing enrollment. Historically, when district enrollment increased, so did the district budget. Until this point, North Slope did not have explicit staffing formulas; instead, determining school staffing allotments was a flexible, informal process that depended on presenting arguments to the school board. To distribute funding cuts equitably across the district, Szymoniak decided that funding and staffing formulas were necessary. Subsequently, Brian Freeman, the district’s Coordinator of Grants, Foundations, and Partnerships, developed with Lincoln Saito, the Chief Operations Officer, a staffing and funding system based on enrollment and school need. Szymoniak presented this proposal in his first budget to the school board; the changes went into effect for the 2016-17 school year.

In addition, due to reduced funding, several years ago North Slope cut several Central Office staff positions. However, the district rehired these positions soon after when the impact was realized. In 2016-17, North Slope instead reduced funds for school supplies and travel, which left additional funding for instructional staff.

FORMULAS AND RATIOS

North Slope based their new funding and staffing formulas on a modified version of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DOE) district funding formula (Figure 2.4). The Alaska DOE allocates state funds to districts partially based on an adjusted ADM. Figure 2.5 lists eight tiers based on enrollment and the corresponding formulas that the Alaska DOE uses to determine adjusted ADM. North Slope has modified the school size bands and funding formulas to provide a more equitable distribution of district funds to schools (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.5: Alaska Adjusted ADM Formulas Based on School Size

SCHOOL SIZE	FORMULA FOR ADJUSTED ADM
10-19.99	39.60
20-29.99	$39.60 + (1.62 * (ADM - 20))$
30-74.99	$55.80 + (1.49 * (ADM - 30))$
75-149.99*	$122.85 + (1.27 * (ADM - 75))$
150-249.99*	$218.10 + (1.08 * (ADM - 150))$

¹³ [1] Freeman, Brian. Coordinator of Grants, Foundations, and Partnerships, North Slope Borough School District. Phone Interview, July, 2016

[2] “State of Alaska Report Card to the Public – District Level, 2014-15 School Year.” Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. <https://education.alaska.gov/ReportCardToThePublic/Report/2014-2015/36>

SCHOOL SIZE	FORMULA FOR ADJUSTED ADM
250-399.99*	$326.10 + (.97 * (ADM - 250))$
400-749.99*	$471.60 + (.92 * (ADM - 400))$
Over 750	$793.60 + (.84 * (ADM - 750))$

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development¹⁴

* Communities with 101 – 425 students calculated adjusted ADM based on K-6 and 7-12 enrollment separately.

At the state level, for the smallest schools with an ADM from 10 to under 20 students, the Alaska DOE includes a small school factor so that all these schools receive funding as if they had 20 students (an adjusted ADM of 39.6, the lowest level possible under the formula). From there, enrollment bands and the corresponding formulas determine state funding. For a community with an ADM from 101-425, ADM for grades K-6 and 7-12 are adjusted as two separate schools. As a result, while school adjusted ADM increases by 1.27 if a school goes from an enrollment of 99 to 100, when school enrollment increases from 100 to 101 students, the adjusted ADM increases by 18.09 (this assumes an even student distribution between grades K-6 and 7-12). However, for communities with an ADM greater than 425, ADM is adjusted as a single school. As a result, schools of middling enrollments received adjusted ADMs that are more heavily weighted than schools with below 101 or above 425 students.

North Slope adjusted the state formula to meet the needs of district communities and to prevent the adjusted ADM from increasing more than tenfold as school enrollment changes from 100 to 101. North Slope decided that Barrow – the largest community with over 750 students – should have an ADM calculated by doubling the 400-749.99 enrollment band. Similarly, the district increased funding for the smallest schools by increasing the small school factor, funding all schools with less than 75 students as if they had 75 students. To compensate for these adjustments, the district eliminated the school size adjustment factor for splitting schools with ADMs of 101-425 into two. Figure 2.6 lists the funding formulas for the North Slope adjusted ADM.

Figure 2.6: North Slope Adjusted ADM Formulas Based on School Size

SCHOOL SIZE	FORMULA
10-74.99	122.85
75-149.99	$122.85 + (1.27 * (ADM - 75))$
150-249.99	$218.10 + (1.08 * (ADM - 150))$
250-399.99	$326.10 + (.97 * (ADM - 250))$
400-749.99	$471.60 + (.92 * (ADM - 400))$
Over 750	$471.60 + (.92 * (ADM - 400)) * 2$

With an adjusted set of formulas for calculating ADM based on community or school enrollment, the district can calculate a district total ADM to create individual school funding and staffing allocations (known as “shares” within the district). As district enrollment has remained stable over the past several decades, the district has consistently had a pool of 125 teachers. The implementation of school ratios does not affect the size of the district teacher pool, but which schools receive what number of teachers. For example, if Barrow community

¹⁴ Figure adapted from: “Public School Funding Program Overview,” Op. cit., p. 4.

has 800 students, then its ratio will be 1,679.2/district ADM. As the district funds 125 teachers, then Barrow receives $125 \times (1,679.2/\text{district ADM})$ teachers. The small school weighting factor allows for larger fluctuations of students between Barrow, larger villages, and smaller villages while maintaining an equitable formula.

The district staffs positions funded by North Slope Borough – or that have accompanying statutory requirements – outside of the formula. For example, North Slope Borough funds counselors, as well as at the minimum a principal, at every school. Iñupiat language teachers are also outside of the formula, but still based on school size. North Slope Borough additionally funds (with minor federal assistance) early childhood education programs which are also staffed outside of the formula and in accordance with federal staffing requirements (programs with three students must have at least one teacher, programs with 11 students require a teacher and an aid, and no class may have more than 20 students). Additionally, special education teachers are staffed based on individual and aggregate need by site.

PROMOTING EQUITY

North Slope's district-adjusted ADM ratios helps to ensure an equitable distribution of both staff and funding across diverse schools. Specifically, the district's enrollment-based formula does the following to promote staffing equity:

- **ADM adjustments for small and large schools:** The changes made to the Alaska DOE adjusted ADM formula promote equity by weighting schools on either end of the enrollment distribution more heavily, according to their need.
- **Smooth transitions for schools with fluctuating enrollments:** By not counting schools with an ADM of 101-425 students as two schools, North Slope eliminated the potential for large staffing and funding jumps for schools entering this enrollment band.
- **Annual recalculations of district-adjusted ADM:** The district plans to calculate adjusted ADM for each school on an annual basis to accommodate annual enrollment fluctuations and adjust staffing allocations accordingly. Within individual school years, enrollment fluctuations will not affect staffing as North Slope cannot move teachers between schools during the year.

The district-adjusted ADM ratios also guide the distribution of district funding for school supplies. However, the district adjusts funding amounts to account for higher expenses at the high school level due to specific programming needs (e.g., career and technical education programs, science labs, etc.). Initially, schools that lost funding in comparison with the previous distribution schedule pushed back against these district-level changes. To bring these schools onboard, the district cited cases where, under the previous funding distribution, a school with almost twice as many students received less than half the supply budget than another school. Case examples illustrated the historical inequities and promoted district-wide consensus.

NON-ACADEMIC FUNDING

North Slope is currently in the middle of a two-year process of adjusting athletics schedules and requirements that aims to increase equity for student-athletes across diverse schools. To take into account differences in travel costs, North Slope does not use the ratios derived from district-adjusted ADM to fund athletics. Due to the distances between schools, teams must fly between communities to play each other. As a result, the district funds sports travel based on distances and the availability of commercial flights (many village schools need to charter planes which is more expensive). Historically, remote village schools would have considerably less scheduled games than Barrow schools. For example, the Barrow High School volleyball team might have eight weekends of play while village high school teams would only have two. Similarly, until recently, the Barrow High School basketball team would play in 24 games, while the village school teams played in 14.

To minimize travel expenses, the district plans to adopt new scheduling that creates the shortest aggregate routing options that are cheapest for the district. The district also decided to cut the football program in the villages due to low participation and concentrate on the cross-country program, which allows top ten runners to run with students in Anchorage and Fairbanks where competition is greater. This year the district supported a change made by the state association to eliminate regional meets, which were more expensive than state meets for western Alaska. For western Alaska, regional meets were estimated to cost \$250,000; North Slope estimated that the tournament change is saving them \$60,000 a year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Freeman stresses the importance of implementing a staffing and funding allocation system that all communities find fair and equitable. Regardless of whether students attend a small or large school, or come from a poor or wealthy neighborhood, students should have similar opportunities. In cases where funding is limited and programming sacrifices are necessary, community consensus should determine priorities and guide policy.

ROSWELL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (NM)

Roswell Independent School District (ISD) is geographically the seventh largest district in New Mexico. The district primarily uses staffing ratios based on grade level for classroom teachers. The information in this profile comes from Roswell ISD's survey response and an interview with Eddie Ramirez, Roswell ISD's Director of Human Resources.¹⁵

Roswell Independent School District

% Teachers with Emergency Credentials: 1 %

Graduation Rate: 67 %

ELA % Proficient: 25 %

Math % Proficient: 18 %

¹⁵ [1] Ramirez, Eddie. Director Human Resources, Roswell Independent School District. Phone Interview, July, 2016

STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS

HISTORY AND PROCESS

Roswell ISD originally adopted staffing ratios to accommodate reduced funding and facility limitations. The district administrative cabinet and other district leadership now review formulas annually. In the past, the district increased staffing ratios in the face of budget cuts and enrollment growth. As the state of New Mexico is tightening the allowable FTE funding based on contact hours, the district is currently examining formulas for special education ancillary services (OT, PT, Speech, etc.).

FORMULAS AND RATIOS

Roswell ISD chiefly uses staffing ratios to determine the number of classroom teachers in district schools. When there is not a district formula in place for a staff position, the district follows state requirements. Figure 2.7 lists the student-teacher ratios according to grade level and subject.

Figure 2.7: Roswell ISD Student-Teacher Ratios for Classroom and English Teachers

GRADES	STUDENT-TEACHER RATIOS
Kindergarten*	Maximum of 20:1
Grades 1-3*	Maximum of 22:1
Grades 4-6	Average of 24:1
Grades 7-12	Maximum 160:1 (total enrollment across classes)
Grades 7-8 (English)	Maximum 135:1 (total enrollment across classes) and 27:1 (single class)
Grades 9-12 (English)	Maximum 150:1 (total enrollment across classes) and 30:1 (single class)

* For Grades K-1, if the student-teacher ratio exceeds 20:1, the class receives an assistant teacher.

Additionally, campuses with student enrollment greater than 500 are entitled to an additional Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), who provides administrative assistance to the building principal and guidance for staff.

PROMOTING EQUITY

Roswell ISD makes exceptions to the maximum teacher-student ratios when enforcement leads to extremely small class sizes for a single teacher. For example, consider a grade where the ratio is 22:1. If enrollment is 225, then the grade needs 10.22 teachers. Rather than having 10 teachers with 22 students and one teacher with one, the student-teacher ratio for the first ten teachers will lower to 21:1 so that the last class has a ratio of 15:1 instead of 5:1. For certain classes with high numbers of intensive-needs students, the district may provide additional teaching assistants. For specialized courses at the high school level, the district allows for reduced staffing ratios due to student interest.

[2] "School District Report Card 2014-2015 – Roswell Independent Schools." New Mexico Public Education Department.
http://webed.ped.state.nm.us/sites/conference/DRC/004_ROSWELL_INDEPENDENT_SCHOOLS_DRC2015_.pdf

KINGMAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (AZ)

Kingman Unified School District (USD) is geographically the ninth largest school district in Arizona. While the district uses staffing ratios by grade level for a variety of positions, district leadership use the ratios as a starting point and

Kingman Unified School District

Graduation Rate: 74 % %

ELA % Passing: 24 %

Math % Passing: 27 %

adjust for programmatic and student need as necessary. The information in this profile comes from Kingman USD’s survey responses and an interview that Hanover conducted with Chris Nutt, the Director of Human Resources at Kingman USD.¹⁶

STAFFING FORMULAS AND RATIOS

HISTORY AND PROCESS

Kingman USD conducts an annual review of staffing formulas which ends with the school board’s approval of the staffing ratios for the following year. The review process starts in October, after the fortieth day of school. The district bases staffing decisions for the following year on school enrollment figures from the fortieth day. During the recession of 2008-2010, Kingman USD increased staffing ratios due to reduced funding.

FORMULAS AND RATIOS

In Kingman USD, grade-based ratios guide staffing decisions for classroom teachers while single ratios guide the staffing of positions such as special education teachers, counselors, and secretaries. For classroom teachers, at the high school level Kingman USD uses a total-students-taught per teacher ratio, rather than a classroom student-teacher ratio. Figure 2.8, below, presents staffing ratios for all district staff positions that have an established student-teacher ratio.

Figure 2.8: Kingman USD Staffing Ratios

POSITION	RATIO
Certified Classroom Teachers	27:1 (Grades K-2), 30:1 (Grades 3-5), 32:1 (Grades 6-8), 342:1 (9-12)
Special Education Resource Teachers	15:1
Special Education Self-Contained Classroom Teachers	1:10
Counselors	450:1
Secretaries	500:1

¹⁶ [1] Nutt, Chris. Director of Personnel, Kingman Unified School District. Phone Interview, July, 2016

[2] “Arizona Report Cards – Kingman Unified School District.” Arizona Department of Education. <https://www.azreportcards.org/ReportCard>

Additionally, every special education resource class receives one paraprofessional, while self-contained special education classrooms receive up to three paraprofessionals. The district also has a staffing ratio based on enrollment tiers for assistant principals: schools with 600 to 900 students receive 1.0 FTE assistant principal, schools with 900 to 1,300 receive 1.5 FTE, schools with 1,300 to 1,700 receive 2.0 FTE, and schools with more than 1,700 receive 3.0 FTE. The district does not typically staff schools with less than 600 students with an assistant principal.

For custodians, grounds, and other maintenance staff, Kingman USD staffs according to facility size. For example, the district staffs one custodian for every 25,000 square feet of school space.

PROMOTING EQUITY

Kingman emphasizes that, while staffing ratios are the starting point for district staffing decisions, district leadership is perceptive of programmatic and student needs and makes adjustments accordingly. Based on the superintendent's perception of school issues related to culture and climate and/or student growth, as well as input from school-level leadership, the district targets additional funds to schools on an ad hoc basis. For example, due to student need, this year all district middle schools have teachers on assignment to decrease the student-teacher ratio.

The district also adjusts staffing ratios for a low-enrollment rural K-6 school that is 45 miles out of town. If the school has 150 students or more, each grade receives at least one classroom teacher. If the enrollment falls below 150 students (as it did for the first time this year), the district consolidates grade levels into single classes (e.g., one Grades 4-5 class and one Grades 5-6 class).

NON-ACADEMIC FUNDING

All funding for extracurricular activities comes from activity-specific district funding pools and is allotted proportionally based on student enrollment or participation. The two district high schools receive special consideration due to increased travel costs.

APPENDIX

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Thank you for choosing to participate in this benchmarking survey! If you have any questions about how to complete the survey please contact [Hanover Analyst].

Save this file and e-mail your completed survey to [Hanover e-mail address]. Please attach any relevant files and documentation as well.

We are interested in learning more about formulas or ratios (e.g., 1:25 student/teacher ratio, 1.0 FTE Librarian per school) that your district uses for staffing schools.

1. Does your district have separate staffing formulas or ratios for schools based on the following characteristics? Place an “X” next to your selection. Select all that apply.

Note: If you have this information compiled in another format please feel free to send us those files instead of completing this question.

- No, district only has one set of staffing formulas or ratios
- Grade level (please list groups used in the space below)
- School Size (please list groups used in the space below)
- Other characteristics (please describe in the space below)

2. Does your district have set staffing formulas or ratios for the following positions? If so, please provide details on the formulas or ratios used for each position in the right column of the table. Place an “X” next to your selection.

Note: If you have this information compiled in another format please feel free to send us those files instead of completing the table below.

POSITION	No	Yes	STAFFING FORMULA OR RATIO INFORMATION (E.G., KINDERGARTEN 1:20, GRADE 1-5 1:23, ETC...)
Certified Classroom Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Certified Specialists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Certified Interventionists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Special Education Resource Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Special Education Self-Contained Classroom Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Counselors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Assistant Counselors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Librarians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Read 180 Teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

POSITION	NO	YES	STAFFING FORMULA OR RATIO INFORMATION (E.G., KINDERGARTEN 1:20, GRADE 1-5 1:23, ETC...)
Program Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
AD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Custodians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Library Aides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Secretaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bookkeepers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3. Are there any other positions not listed in the table above that your district has staffing formulas or ratios for? If so, please use the table below to describe.

Note: If you have this information compiled in another format please feel free to send us those files instead of completing the table below.

POSITION	STAFFING FORMULA OR RATIO INFORMATION (E.G., KINDERGARTEN 1:20, GRADE 1-5 1:23, ETC...)
Enter Position(s) Here...	

4. Does your district make any special considerations or exceptions for especially small or remote schools in your district? If so, please describe in the space below.

EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICIES

We would like your opinion on your district’s current policies related to staffing ratios. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be attributed directly to you or your district in the summary results provided to participating districts.

5. Do you believe that the staffing formulas and ratios at your district are effective in ensuring an equitable distribution of resources across all schools? Place an “X” next to your selection.

- No (please explain further in the space below)
- Yes (please explain further in the space below)

6. Has your district made any adjustments or changes to staffing formulas or ratios in order to mitigate reduced funding or budget shortfalls? If so, please describe in the space below.

FOLLOW-UP

7. Would you or another representative of your district be willing to discuss your responses to this survey with an analyst from Hanover Research? Place an "X" next to your selection.

- No
- Yes (please list preferences below)

Which would you prefer?

- Conversation via phone
- E-mail correspondence
- No preference

Please list your preferred contact information:

Name:
Phone Number:
E-mail Address:

Thank you for your participation! Please save this file and e-mail your completed survey to [Hanover e-mail address]. Attach any relevant files and documentation as well.

PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

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