

## **Summary of Comments from Public Forums on SES and Choice**

March 29, 2016, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Grant Wood AEA, Cedar Rapids

- 1. What does it look like locally to “maintain effort” with students who previously accessed SES and School Choice services? (e.g. Require districts to set aside some percentage of their Title I budget? If so, what percentage should that be? Other ideas?)**
  - No concerns about School Choice – we can maintain those with the current Choice. Could those districts that have waivers be allowed to continue to offer SES, just as a District provider? Can do more with less funding – then building of need could use more money – we would not need our current set aside – we would do for less.
  - Allow districts option to spend the money during the regular school day to close the achievement gap. (Why is after school the best time as we’re required now?)
  - Appropriate to allow them to remain in Choice school – less disruption to their educational plan.
  - SES – Continue to offer supplemental services outside of the regular school day. (School Choice didn’t really apply to us.)
  - Modify 20% set aside to 10%?
  - Stay with current percentage so that interventions occur outside of school day. If we pull back on the percentage then the assurance that we reach the current SES students may not be as great.
  
- 2. What specific ideas do you have about providing students “alternative support and improvement activities?” (e.g. When should they be provided? By whom? How should they be structured? Other ideas?)**
  - Could we look at more staff in our higher needs school so more support/services can be provided within the school day – some families have through with access after school.
  - Flexibility in determining certified teachers.

- Services should be provided during the day by certified teachers with expertise in reading. There should be flexibility of doing “push-in” and “pull out” based on student’s needs. For example, regular 90 minute block of reading may have regular classroom teacher and Title I teacher working with students. But all money to support more time with Title I teacher during another part of the day.
- Allow more resources to early childhood and to students in poverty.
- Partnership help fill gaps (ex. Zach Johnson, Kids on Course) but we need an education system in Iowa that fully funds our public education system with public monies for “basic needs.” To support students, you must also support teachers, especially those who deal with disadvantaged populations. Mental Health Supports?
- Outside of the regular school day/school year – before/after. Could it tie into the new early literacy laws and summer reading programs?
- Create criteria with rigor for such programs to make sure they meet Iowa Core Standards. Outside providers – IN HOUSE? = No more “outside” support.
- Employee current Title 1 teachers and stagger their day in order to support the interventions during the school day with additional opportunities before or after the school day. Some buildings may need to hire additional FTE. These new hires should also be highly qualified with reading endorsements.

**3. What concerns do you have about the proposed direction for Iowa and are there other considerations for us with this SES and School Choice transition plan?**

- Concerns about using outside providers with SES.
- We’ve experienced fraudulent billing from four different companies. We’ve had people who have no educational background tutoring kids. We want the ability to provide tutoring ourselves with NO outside providers.
- Please don’t make SES set-aside funds. Please allow local districts flexibility in how to use the funds (although it’s OK to build in accountability). (What will happen to SINA specific dollars for 2016-17? Great News! Thanks.) How do we use funds to support teacher and administrator growth and learning? The last indicator for State is “other indicator of school quality or success” – consider using AASA’s work on Redefining Readiness and the indicators that predict career and college readiness.

- Expansion of evaluators of student success – (this will be more in final plan) but there is a short timeline for development.
- Current “turnaround” programs with DINA funds, should be maintained when possible, especially through transition – particularly if having positive impact. Let’s be growth mindset and not punitive – Equity will not be numerically equal!
- Please stop the “list of approve SES Providers (outside providers)” they are just out to make money and are not worried about our students. We can provide great learning opportunities for our kids in our own school setting. Having to provide the list of approved providers was very confusing for most of our families. We can do it cheaper than other companies and we are currently providing transportation.
- None. We believe this is a move in the right direction and will help with continuity/alignment and better meet student needs.

#### **Comments Shared:**

- Allow flexibility on how we use these funds for SES
- More rigorous standards for SES providers that are aligned with the Iowa Core
- Not enough rigor for SES providers. District teachers know their students and families best and it would be nice to offer their own. Choice kids should be allowed to follow through with their schools. There is only one building not on the SINA list, which is a problem because it is the only school parents can send their kids to.
- Some schools are able to provide SES because they are an approved provider. Would there be flexibility to offering SES within the school day because of transportation, more can participate. Choice- no longer a choice because all are SINA schools. Very concerned about the outside SES providers, the quality and rigor is questionable. They would like to expand their SES services offered by the districts.
- Outside SES providers offer a lot of confusion. Hope the outside provider is eliminated.
- Want to know if Iowa will use Iowa Assessments in the transition year.
- During the transition it should be straight forward, continue what we have done. Start looking at creative ways of looking at things like fine arts and PE in the ESSA. Look

at resources, equal is not fair. More resources for kids in poverty. Look at early childhood and brain research. Need these things in the transition and not just in 17-18.

- Need to offer support for teacher growth to help them deal effectively with the changing population.
- When the ombudsman is appointed to assist with private school issues, please put this person on the nonpublic advisory board and appoint this person sooner rather than later.

## **Summary of Comments from Public Forums on SES and Choice**

March 30, 2016, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Callahan Middle School, Des Moines

- 1. What does it look like locally to “maintain effort” with students who previously accessed SES and School Choice services? (e.g. Require districts to set aside some percentage of their Title 1A budget? If so, what percentage should that be? Other ideas?)**
  - Students who have used student choice can remain; however no new students starting 2016-2017.
    - Continue to provide transportation
    - Continue to set aside funds (20% for SES)
    - Schools must use at least 10% of that for SES Services
  - No new School Choice for schools/students beginning 2016-2017. Continue to provide transportation to students currently placed three School Choice, three matriculation to the next level.
  - Continue to set aside 20% of Title I for alternative services (ex. after school tutoring by schools, etc.); transportation, meals/snacks for students/parents attending services. Allow money to be used for some personalized professional development.
  - As much as possible...full autonomy for districts
  - Let schoolwide programs determine the students eligible. School control – aligned with best practice that the district is developing currently with State guidance. Teacher/admin training. Communication with parents aligned with school practice. No new School Choice.
  - Carlisle routinely sets aside funds, offers SES to families and then amends the budget because there are unspent funds. Typically families do not take advantage of SES.

Carlisle does not have an optimal school for families to take advantage of School Choice. Jeff indicated \$11,000,000 of set aside goes unspent. Clearly Carlisle is not unlike other districts. To that end, don't require districts to set aside for SES and transportation but make it optional. Do require districts to be accountable on how the funds are spent to ensure students have access to high quality, impactful supplemental instruction within the district (through Title) if the money isn't used for SES or Choice.

- Districts calculate 3 years average of number of students accessing SES – calculate average expenditure and spend at least that amount by:
  - Using teachers to provide MTSS interventions outside the school day (afterschool, Saturdays, summer).
  - Using paid or volunteers from community for “study table” or “homework help”
  - Using vendors AS NEEDED and as PARENTS REQUEST (if parent does not want teacher doing this) but districts decide this not parents.
- Maintain letter for SD and At Risk levels to parents and this includes compact. Set aside 5% - 10% for SES for 15-16 SINA Schools. Not provide SES, Trans School Choice for new students to the district. The current plan/application to provide SES services written by a district carry-over to 16-17. No new application process. Use SES money towards PD for all staff. Maybe 5%-10% of Title allocation.
- Students who previously accessed SES and School Choice should be monitored to show “maintained effort.” However, school choice services could be maintained for the remainder of time within the building, yet no new School Choice should be done. Can maintain effort be a building wide initiative with data collection or does it have to be district wide?

**2. What specific ideas do you have about providing students “alternative support and improvement activities?” (e.g., when should they be provided? By whom? How should they be structured? Other ideas?)**

- SES services are provided to the bottom 10% of students (not related to free and reduced lunch) based on academic criteria. SES provided by district personnel, district approved personnel, district selected providers. State provides data at year end on provider effectiveness. State does not provide approved list. Providers cannot market until chosen by the district. Be able to use the money to hire tutor during the school day. Money can be used for transportation to and from tutoring.
- In schoolwide programs:

- Before/after school tutoring program – district developed
  - No SES provided as currently offered
  - Identify students for services based on academic need, not only low income status.
- After school tutoring, extended school year, summer school provided by school with mandatory attendance for students. Parent classes/education be part of services provided.
  - Having local service providers/supports for these activities.
  - Before/After School with transportation. Improve application on process to be a provider. Disagree with retention of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade but – summer program with summer experiences - student/parent activities.
  - Alternative support and improvement activities can be purposeful and impactful. They should be provided at the early grade levels (K-3) first and intermediate (4-5) as a second option. I believe they are most effective when they support the work in the building – offer in building, taught by highly-qualified teacher. Summer extended day, and parent engagement.
  - I see SES and MTSS interventions as an overlap of sorts. Best approach is to have child’s teacher or interventions from child’s school providing this. Open to after school, Saturdays, summer. Make the application process for Districts to be own provider simpler; but evaluations more rigorous.
  - Maybe looking at time spent in non-core activities and build in time and allocate to literacy. This really seems to tie into Q #1 maintaining service we are transitioning.
  - When after school, before school, ordering the school day – depending on the schools day – targeted groups based on learning style. The schools should decide who the provider is. The schools know the students and their needs the best, as well as the curriculum spirals. Alternative support should be targeted and data driven based on school needs. Teacher PD to improve instruction.
    - Can parents support – e.g. Parent/English classes be considered alternative support?
    - Can it be used for transportation for after school activities? An extensions after school?

**3. What concerns do you have about the proposed direction for Iowa and are there other considerations for us with this SES and School Choice transition plan?**

- There should be a connection to ELI requirements and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention (i.e. a portion of funding can be used for summer school.)
  - What are the other waiver states doing?
- Plan language needs to be concise and direct so schools/districts can use it as a communication tool with the public to provide clarity that the general plan is a State plan – not a decision that can be negotiated with the district. District will allocate Title I funds to schools to operate school before/after school programming. 5% minimum set aside with latitude for districts to increase to meet their specific needs.
- I would like to see more parent’s engagement opportunities within the SES services. Based on academic need also, not just SES.
- Many current teachers and principals have never operated in a pre-NCLB world. Therefore, a major concern is how do we operate in a much more non-prescriptive world? That teachers, school administrators, etc. won’t be heavily involved in crafting the State plan.
- Continue to use choice within the new system. Not one size fits all. Analyze how money is spent - realign. Work smarter then harder.
- No concerns. I am excited about the opportunity for what the changes can bring for students. As this plan moves forward I hope we (Iowa educators) stay focused on best-practices, the used of multiple data points to make decisions about instruction. One assessment or measure should not drive the decision making process about programs. Focus on teacher quality.
- None – I am very glad this is the direction the State is going! I feel there is a “disconnect” between school and student learning when 3<sup>rd</sup> party is involved.
- I think it gives the district more freedom to build plans to impact students learning. I do feel that we need to maintain SES/School Choice/Transportation, but they should be done at the district level – how they budget for those. Districts should be able to be the provider and not pay parents to go somewhere else.
- Whatever data is used should also take into count the language acquisition process. Our State is increasing in EL and if a district or state focuses on fluency the date will be

skewed. EL cannot be measured by standardized statewide tests. Movement within the ELPA21 is more of an indicator than Iowa Assessments to show growth. A concern is that gains for EL will be lost under Title I management. How will the State track “maintain effort” without creating more paperwork?

**Comments Shared:**

- More parent engagement/training for parents as well as the students
- Provide extra support to non-proficient kids by the district teacher outside the school day (after, before, summer, Saturday)
- In schoolwide programs, not solely based on FRL, but on need
- Focus in on teacher quality, and build skill set
- Extend professional learning to administrators also
- No more school choice
- Approved SES provider application – there is a lot of paperwork involved to become an approved SES provider for schools. Do not ask for an application to be an approved provider as a district
- Schools should be forced to use money for student services
- Could alternative support for students be used for student and family education or for Saturday school? Could money be used for activity buses so transportation was provided?
- Work smarter rather than harder at the state and local level

**Summary of Comments from Public Forums on SES and Choice**

March 31, 2016, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Mississippi Bend AEA, Bettendorf

**1. What does it look like locally to “maintain effort” with students who previously accessed SES and School Choice services? (e.g. require districts to set aside some percentage of their Title I budget? If so, what percentage should that be? Other ideas?)**

- NO – maintain control over our own funds (20%).
- District set percentages based on how the program would look – LEA discretion. LEA creates criteria for student who will receive SES services.
- Rather than setting it aside as is and not use it, we can put it where we know we can use it to impact student learning and teacher development.
- Set aside not so restrictive – have “set aside” plan written within the Title I plan and budget accordingly.
- Allow districts to “maintain effort” in house, to determine what interventional supports should be used, developed and/or included, instructional staff and or program that we purchase. Currently NO students are receiving SES. SES Should NOT be made to be requirement!
- Identify Students through Districts MTSS/PLL process. Provide additional opportunities for those students “in-house.” May need to designate (prior) set-aside funds for this to occur – NOT 20%. No (current) students previously assessed and utilizing services.

**2. What specific ideas do you have about providing students “alternative support and improvement activities?” (e.g., when should they be provided? By whom? How should they be structured? Other ideas?)**

- Best practices like CIM to meet needs of student to supplement core curriculum. Interventions, MTSS, summer school.
- Need assessment based on student behavior, transportation home for after school services, exposure to opportunities not usually accessed by low poverty students. When – before, after or during the school day.
- Why not make it a program similar to required summer school for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders? Intensive summer school that would include any student that needs it.

- Why can't we decide how to allocate money in Title I; will this be a possibility in the future?
- Summer school, after school – certified staff plan written to show length/duration/what happening/data to be looked at.
- Should be tied to MTSS; focus on kids who are struggling. Should be/district discretion to determine what “alternative supports and improvement activities” are needed, selected, developed, provided and by whom.
- Provide interventions and subsequent resources as necessary: extended day, summer school.

**3. What concerns do you have about the proposed direction for Iowa and are there other considerations for us with this SES and School Choice transition plan?**

- Any law changes that take away control over what is best for our students. Looking at one data point to make BIG decisions for our kids.
- Tried to address with our feedback.
- The loss of local control in education. Lack of funding.
- For smaller schools with no other choice option, don't restrict us to set aside funds for transportation or budget for this when it can never happen.
- The State will step in and tell local districts what they will have to do. If it isn't broke, our system is successful, why should we have to change it?
- Losing the opportunity to maintain local control. Current SES is not working, so let's do something that actually helps students attain proficiency via MTSS/PLL

**Comments Shared:**

- School choice is totally different for large and small districts.
- It could be a game changer if local districts were able to offer their own after school SES programing
- No suggestion for the required % set aside

- One district would like to continue to do what it is already doing because it is seeing success.
- One district reported finding success with MTSS.
- They do not want any specific required set aside if there isn't a choice and parents are not requesting SES services.
- Coaching and TLC are successful and they want to continue to develop a system that works for their kids. Local control. Tie this with the C4K work with the approved interventions. They do not like looking at one data point (low-income) to determine what is needed for their kids. They believe we all need to look at multiple data points.

## **Summary of Comments from Public Forums on SES and Choice**

April 7, 2016, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Northwest AEA, Sioux City

### **1. What does it look like locally to “maintain effort” with students who previously accessed SES and School Choice services? (e.g. require districts to set aside some percentage of their Title I budget? If so, what percentage should that be? Other ideas?)**

- To maintain effort the school can provide similar tutoring services for students at identified schools with the Title I appropriation. I believe the services will actually improve with the eliminations of SES vendors. The issue of school choice and transportation effects a very small number of student. Our transfer policy allows these students that are currently being bused to continue on a district transfer. These students would be allowed to continue at their current school under the existing transfer.
- We would like to deliver after school tutoring to our own students. If we are not paying outside providers we would be able to afford busing the student's home after their tutoring session.

### **2. What specific ideas do you have about providing students “alternative support and improvement activities?” (e.g., when should they be provided? By whom? How should they be structured? Other ideas?)**

- The school will offer tutoring for student after school to ensure students at Title I schools are getting the support they need in compliance with maintenance of effort.
- Our district would consider using 10-15% of our Title I allocation to provide their own SES services.

**3. What concerns do you have about the proposed direction for Iowa and are there other considerations for us with this SES and School Choice transition plan?**

- SES tutors at best provide minimal services and often fleece taxpayer dollars with limited services for very high fee and often have very little evidence to show student progress.