

The PJP Approach

Justin Silverstein and John
Augenblick

Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)

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APA and New Jersey

- APA founded in 1983 – has worked primarily with state policy makers on school finance issues
- Has worked in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, and New York – is now working in Pennsylvania
- Worked for NJ Department of Education in 2002 and again in 2006-07 (original PJP and SSD, PJP update)

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- One of the approaches states use to estimate the cost districts face in meeting state standards
- Assumes that experienced educators can identify the resources hypothetical schools and districts need to meet a given standard
- Produces a base cost and adjustments (weights) for some student and district characteristics

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- In all cases, including NJ, hypothetical schools and districts are designed to reflect characteristics of those in the state
- One purpose is to examine impact of district size
- Information is used to develop formulas that can be applied to districts with any demographic characteristics

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- The purpose of the approach is to estimate costs that districts face to reach state specific goals
- Adjustments need to be made for use in a state aid formula – to deal with availability of federal support and students with multiple weights
- State aid should be viewed as a “block grant” and decisions about how funds are to be used should be left to districts

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- The state should hold each district accountable for results, not for how funds are spent
- State allocates funds, not people or programs

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- Some districts may choose to spend funds differently – different programs, more or less personnel, higher or lower salaries – which are district decisions about how best to meet the standard

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- APA uses multiple professional judgment panels to specify resources
 - School-level
 - District-level
 - Statewide
- School-level uses grade spans and sizes based on district size groups
- District-level reviews schools and adds district resources

Characteristics of the PJP Approach

- Statewide reviews costs, resolves inconsistencies, and addresses other issues
- Panels include teachers, specialists, principals, business managers, and superintendents (6-8 people per panel)
- Costing out of resources is not done by panels – they do not know the costs

Application of the PJP in NJ

- In NJ, school-level panels used Dept. of Ed. Personnel
 - Panel included seven members
- District panels used outside educators
 - APA determined type of individuals to be selected
 - Many NJ professional organizations and other interest groups nominated individuals for the panels
 - 40 participants

Application of the PJP in NJ

- Statewide panel included eight members
 - Included a number of superintendents, a school business official, a school board member and a professor
- Costing out was done by the NJ Dept. of Ed. and reviewed by APA
- Salary and benefits were the main cost drivers

Application of the PJP in NJ

- Vocational costs created by looking at current cost relationships
- Benefits equal about 20% of salaries, based on NJ data
- The Geographic Cost of Education Index was used to account for cost differences between districts

Application of the PJP in NJ

- APA developed formulas so that we could estimate the cost in any school district
- Cost estimates were made by NJ Dept. of Ed. using APA formulas