

# Weighted Funding for Exceptional Children SL2023-134, Section 7.7

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*updated: January 3, 2024*

# LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

## WEIGHTED FUNDING FOR EC STUDENTS

### SL 2023-134, SECTION 7.7.

The Department of Public Instruction shall develop a model, based on the study conducted pursuant to Section 7.44 of S.L. 2021-180, for funding children with disabilities services on the basis of the reported cost of the services provided. The Department shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 15, 2024, on the model of funding developed pursuant to this section and a comparison by public school unit of funds provided under the existing model and the model developed pursuant to this section.

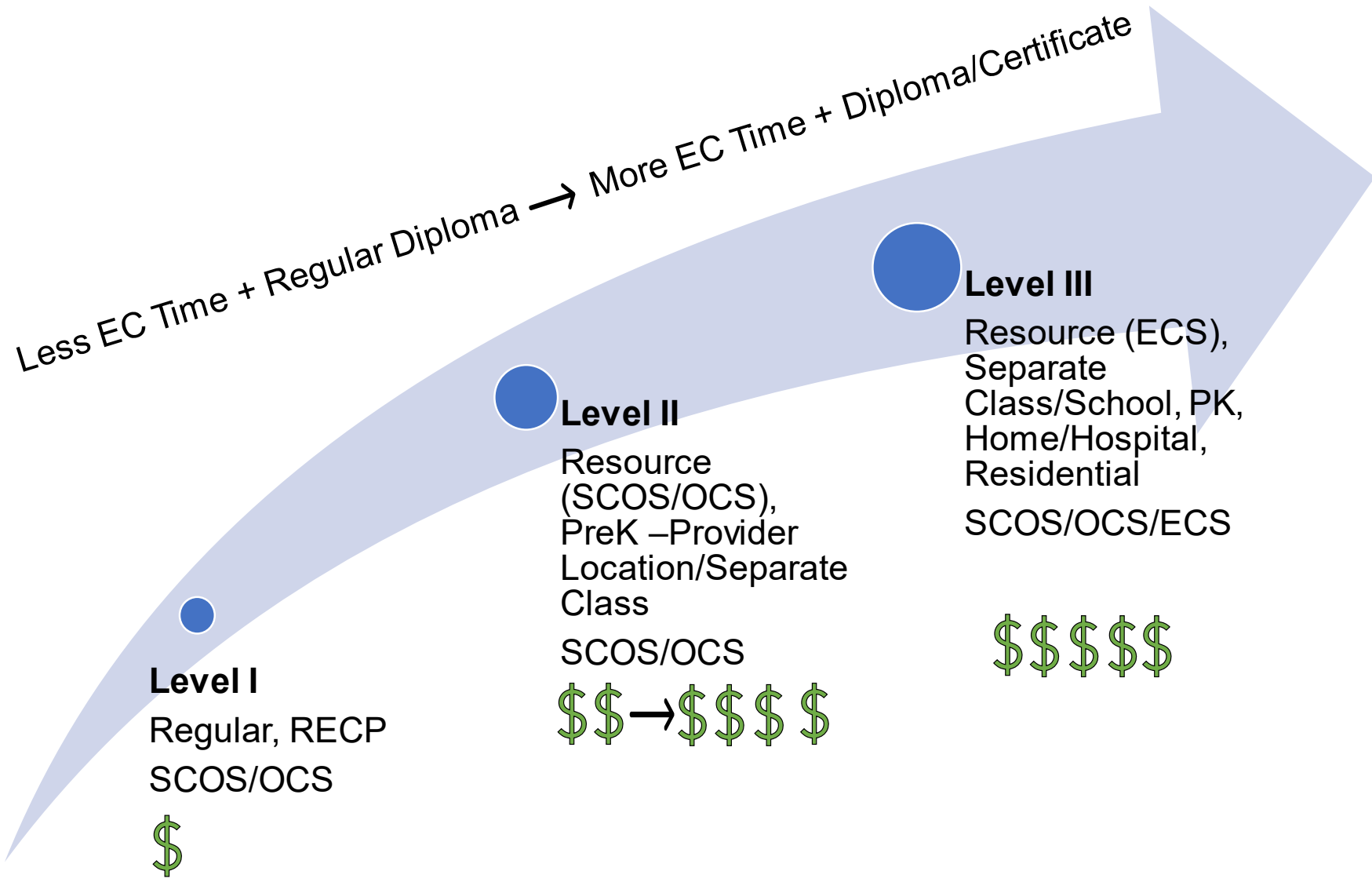
# Current Funding Model

*§ 115C-111.05. Funding for children with disabilities. To the extent funds are made available for this purpose, the State Board shall allocate funds for children with disabilities to each local school administrative unit on a per child basis. Each local school administrative unit shall receive funds for the lesser of (i) all children who are identified as children with disabilities or (ii) thirteen percent (13%) of its allocated average daily membership in the local school administrative unit for the current school year.*

- Flat dollars per pupil (\$PP)
  - \$5,309.31 per funded child count for FY 23-24.
- Child count is comprised of the lesser of the April 1 handicapped child count or a 13% cap of the allotted ADM. (from ECATS)
- Capped at 13% of the total ADM

# Proposed Model Key Elements

- Based on December 1<sup>st</sup> EC Child Count from ECATS, consistent with federal funding
- Removes the 13% funding cap
- Establish a Base for the state funding model by applying the Title VI-B federal funding methodology
- Adding Weighted factors for:
  - Environment: based on Placement Code in ECATS
  - Intensity of Service: based on the Course of Study



# DATA SOURCES

- Student Numbers from **ECATS**: We have identified a report in **ECATS** that has these metrics that all PSUs will be able to run to support this model:
  - Case Management Report
- The Average Salary data is same as published and used by DPI as well as OSBM and the General Assembly for all the other funding categories and posted on our website.

*Note: ECATS is the authoritative database for the services provided to EC and is monitored by DPI for compliance.*

# The Base within the State Model

- The intention of having a State Base level of funding within the model is to provide a stable base-line source of funding to cover the various costs such as contracted services, technical training and supports, supplies & materials, etc.
  - These metrics made the prior versions of the model too complex for annual application of the funding model.
- Using the value of the funding already calculated under the Federal Title VI-B funding model and applying a % to obtain the state base value for the model, we will have the base grounded in federally approved logic/research and we are using the same headcount data for both our state and federal funding streams.

# Weighted Factors

- Environment (Placement Code)
  - Items from Homebound, to Resource, Separate Classroom and School, Regular and the various PreK settings
- Intensity of Services (Course of Study)
  - Standard Course of Study, Occupational Course of Study, Future Course of Study, and Extended Course of Study
- Using those factors then grouping by Service Level 1, 2 and 3 (3 being most intensive services required)

# The Weights

- Considers staffing as the largest financial burden for the PSUs and most important for service delivery. We are using a staffing ratio as the primary weighting:
- Level 1: 1:30 Ratio for Teachers and Related Services (RS) staff
- Level 2: 1:XX Ratio for Teachers, RS, Paraprofessionals
- Level 3: 1:8 Ratio for Teachers, RS, and Paraprofessionals
- The formula uses statewide average salaries & benefits for the funding based on the ratios

# What it is. What it is not.

## It is:

- A different funding model that generates a pool of funds for the PSUs to serve EC students needs
- Generated based on the service level required for the student, instead of distributing based on a fixed amount per student

## It is:

- Not a reimbursement model
- Not directing the PSU on how to use the funds.
- Not determining of a specific student's required services
- Not requiring the PSU to expend a specific amount for a student
- Not a model that transfers funding with student movement during the school year

# Next steps

- Calculate the potential total costs compared to the current year funding (FY23-24)
- Compare to current year and projected 2024-25
- Look at the financial impact by PSU
- With the state's obligation related to Maintenance of Effort we will be considering any potential fluctuations in funding by PSU and how those costs may need to be handled to ensure districts avoid being at risk of not meeting this effort requirement

**We are currently still developing and updating the model based on the BETA PSU feedback and to ensure that the proposed model can be implemented fairly and consistently.**

**We will continue to examine the costing and how that may compare to current funding allocated by the State and any impacts.**

**QUESTIONS ??**



