

SUMMARY OF DISTRICT RESPONSES
TO SPECIAL MASTER RECOMMENDATIONS [see ECF 2020]

Recommendations for the Court

1. Student Success Specialists: The District agrees with the Special Master’s support of the decision to reduce funding for Specialists, agrees with his recommendation to reassess the functions served by the Specialists, and agrees with is recommendation to create an external committee of African American and Latino expert educators to provide oversight with respect to culturally responsive practices.

2. Best Discipline Practices Resource: The District does not agree with the recommendation to allocate funding for an activity that the District has determined will not require additional funding. The District has developed, and shared, its plan to implement the online resource using existing allocated resources.

3. Teacher Mentors and CRC Teacher Mentors: The District has provided descriptions of the formulas used for determining the appropriate number of Teacher/CRC Mentors.

The District uses a ratio of one CRC Teacher Mentor for every ten CRC Teachers (1:10 ratio). The District is therefore funding 11 positions to support 110 CRC Teachers in SY 2017-18.

The District applied its 15-point formula to the average number of identified teachers requiring mentoring support for the previous three years and determined it would need 38 mentors. On May 15, 2017, the District shared this calculation with the Special Master and Plaintiffs in response to RFI 1329. The Special Master has indicated that 38 mentors “may be excessive” and he may be correct (38 would have been excessive for SY 2014-15) or incorrect (38 would not have been sufficient for SY 2016-17). The District hires teachers throughout the year. In the spring, as it develops budget allocations, the District cannot identify the precise number of teachers that will require mentoring support (and in what doses) for the upcoming year. The District can – and did – evaluate data from previous years to make an informed allocation.

RFI #1329: [Special Master]: 15 Point Mentor Analysis

Response: See Attachment RFI 1329 Fifteen Point Mentor Analysis. Note this is an Excel document containing four individual worksheets – a cover sheet, and consolidated lists for SY 14-15, 15-16, and 16-17.

Applying the point system to the past three years of NTIP			
	Total Point 15 pts	#Mentors	
14-15	511	15	34.06667
15-16	564	15	37.6
16-17	613	15	40.86667
			37.51111
			38 mentors

4. Research-based Programs: The District has removed the following programs from the USP Budget: Fred Jones, Club Z, Courageous Conversations, and Capturing Kids’ Hearts. The District does not agree to discontinue the use of a book, Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens, to engage students during their time in In-School Intervention.

5. Cluster GATE: The District agrees with the recommendation to implement 12 new cluster GATE programs, and at least four in SY 2017-18. The District will implement five new cluster programs in 2017-18 at sites selected specifically to increase access to GATE for African American and Latino students.

Recommendations for the District

6. Seven-Period Day at Dodge: The District will implement a seven-period day at Utterback MS (a “vulnerable magnet school or a low-performing school”) as recommended.

7. Consultants: The District has developed and implemented a process by which it will share with the Special Master its justification for hiring 910G-funded, outside consultants on an ongoing basis, as recommended.

8. Self-Contained GATE: The District agrees with the recommendation that self-contained GATE may have some integrative effect at Wheeler and that an open GATE program (like the one at Tully) may have an even greater integrative effect. The District will continue to monitor the expanded self-contained programs at Wheeler (K-5) and Roberts-Naylor (K-5). The District has also developed and proposed to the Special Master and Plaintiffs a plan to expand access to open GATE at Roberts-Naylor K-8 beginning in the 2017-18 school year (grades 6-8).

9. Incentives for MTSS Lead: The District does not agree that the \$1,000 stipend (not an incentive) is inadequate. Sites without an MTSS Facilitator already have a designated MTSS Lead, the stipend is designed to compensate leads for the additional responsibilities they have already taken on – not to incentive employees to accept the additional responsibilities.

10. Summer Learning: The District has made summer programming a priority, has increased funding and focus on summer programs for the summer of 2017, and will work to increase its summer offerings for the summer of 2018, as recommended.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO FISHER PLAINTIFFS CONTINUING OBJECTIONS

1. Reduction of Student Success Specialists from the AASSD

2. Increase for a Program Coordinator

The District maintains its position (reduction of seven Specialists, supported by the Special Master) and the reorganization of the AASSD size and function to include a program coordinator. The District has provided the Fisher Plaintiffs with a detailed description of the District’s plans for reorganization (taking into account their feedback) and the specific tasks and activities that would be carried out by the program coordinator (see Cover Letter, section C(1)).

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO MENDOZA PLAINTIFFS CONTINUING OBJECTIONS

1. Allocation of 11 CRC Itinerant Teachers (a.k.a. CRC Teacher Mentors): The District does not agree to allocate funding for an activity that the District has determined will not require additional funding. The District has adopted the proposed allocation of 11 CRC Teacher Mentors to match the identified need (110 CRC teachers supported at a 1:10 ratio).

2. Self-Contained GATE: The District has undertaken the proposed “fuller analysis” of potential self-contained GATE expansion and has determined to continue the expansion at Wheeler and Roberts-Naylor so that it can assess the potential integrative impact after two years of implementation.

3. Self-Contained and Open-Access GATE: The basis for the Mendoza objection is incorrect. Mendoza Plaintiffs assert that, “as they understand it, there currently are no proposed allocations in the 2017-18 budget for the expansion of either self-contained and/or open GATE programs.” The District is expanding self-contained GATE at Wheeler and at Roberts-Naylor in SY 2017-18; and expanding Open-Access GATE to Roberts-Naylor (for 6th grade in SY 2017-18 and for 6th through 8th grade in SY 2018-19).

4. No Allocation for Online Tool for Successful Site-Based Discipline Strategies: The District does not agree with the recommendation to allocate funding for an activity that the District has determined will not require additional funding. See response to Special Master Recommendation #2, above.

5. Failure to Expand the Jump Start Program to Other Schools: The District will consider future expansion of the “Jump Start” program for the summer of 2018, and is currently developing plans to implement the program at Mansfeld in the summer 2018 as recommended by the Mendoza Plaintiffs.

6. Classification of Global Issues Course as a CRC: There is no objection to the allocation for these courses; the question of whether or not the parties ultimately deem this course to be a CRC course does not affect the budget as the District has proposed adequate funding for other CRC expansions beyond this single course.

7. Allocations for Repair/Maintenance: The District will maintain its proposed allocation to fund repairs and preventative maintenance, as no other funds are available for preventative maintenance and repair. This allocation does not “supplant” other funds; no other funds exist for this purpose. These funds “supplement” other, limited facilities funding by ensuring that schools do not fall below safety thresholds on the FCI. Eliminating this allocation will likely result in negative impacts to schools’ FCI scores, thereby frustrating District efforts to implement the USP-required “multi-year plan for facilities repairs and improvements with priority on facility conditions that impact the health and safety of a school’s students and on schools that score below a 2.0 on the FCI and/or below the District average on the ESS.”¹

¹ Note: the District has already made a substantial reduction to its previous funding for Multi-Year Facilities Projects (the elimination of a \$750,000 allocation from previous years). This reduction alone will likely have negative impacts on schools’ FCI scores in the coming years.