Technical Supplement: To Explain the Need Targeting Matrix

The legislation authorizing Contracts for Excellence (C4E) requires that Contract funds predominantly benefit pupils with the greatest educational needs, to include (but not be limited to) those in poverty, or are disabled, are English-language learners, or are not achieving at a proficient level. In order to operationalize this requirement we have created a measure of pupil need at a school level of analysis.

We create a need index for each of the four variables or factors that the statute requires targeting to: percentages of English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, poverty, and achievement; these data reflect the 2009-'10 school year.

The achievement data is from SED and its composition depends on the grade level; for elementary and middle schools, the non-achievement variable is calculated as: (1 – (% of pupils scoring at a level of at least 'proficient')).

Each of these four percentage values is then multiplied by the school's enrollment and then summed to yield a pupil weighted need value for each school and the school's share of the total pupil weighted need for the district as a whole. This example displays how these weights are applied:

	Total Enrollment	Poverty %	Poverty Count	ELLs %	ELLs Count	Non-Achievement %	Non-Achievement Count	Special Ed %	Special Ed Count	Total Need Pupil Count	Share of Needy Pupil Count	Needs Ranking
School A	600	80%	480	15.0%	90	70%	420	15%	90	1080	79.2%	1
School B	300	40%	120	7.5%	22.5	35%	105	12%	36	283.5	20.8%	2
Total	900									1363.5		

We then rank schools by their pupil-weighted need counts from highest to lowest (with higher scores reflecting greater educational need). Moreover, we generate a concentrated need index equal to the sum of the needy pupil weights (for each of the four need populations) divided by the school's enrollment.

The district's allocation of its Contract amount should reflect these need weights in a rough if not necessarily, perfect manner. That is, a district that is in compliance with the intent of the statute will, as a matter of course, allocate a larger share of its Contract funds to higher-need schools than to lower-need ones. Moreover, we would expect a positive correlation or relationship between the need weight shares (as a percentage of the district total) and the share of the district's total Contract fund amounts.