



Date: February 4, 2009
To: Dr. J. Brian Sarvis, Superintendent
From: Dr. Davis Hayden, Director of Research, Evaluation, and Technology
Subject: Report on Calculation of Similar School Rankings for Subgroups

Conference Agenda

Background

The Board has asked to include similar school rankings for subgroups as one of its Board Focus Goals. However, the State does not provide us with this statistic, so we will have to calculate it locally. It has been suggested that one approach is to take the current similar schools provided by the state for our "overall" category and see which decile our schools fall into for the subgroups. Although this is a very direct way to calculate subgroup similar schools, it can be problematic as the similar school list is generated by 14 variables, only one (or a portion of one) of which corresponds to each subgroup. In the case of one of our high schools, if we were to take the 100 listed similar schools and order them in terms of the Latino subgroup, we would find that our high school was in the highest ten in terms of the percent of the school population in that subgroup. Most of the schools had very low numbers of Latino students and in their API score and they had very high APIs for the Latino subgroup. To compare our school to a majority of schools with very few Latinos would probably present a false picture.

One way around this would be to first rank order each subgroup in the list of 100 and then to place a band of 10% deviation around that subgroup to form a comparison group. As long as that group had a least 10 schools, we could get a decile ranking for how our school did. Although also problematic (and it would take a little more time to calculate), this method would have greater fidelity to what we are attempting to measure.

There are other methods that I can suggest, but most of the rest would take considerably more time to calculate.

Fiscal Impact

N/A

Recommendation

It is recommended that the board agree to the subgroup sorting process to gather similar school rankings for subgroups.

Attachment(s)?	Yes (if so, please attach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	Powerpoint	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultant
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