Question 1. To what extent did resource allocation change after the introduction of student-based budgeting?

Question 2. After meeting essential staffing needs, how did personnel allocation change?

Question 3. To what extent has student-based budgeting improved student achievement in the years since its implementation? Which types of spending allocations improved outcomes most?

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Many districts throughout the United States have adopted student-based budgeting (SBB) programs. These programs distribute funds to schools based on student-level weights that incorporate the differential costs of educating diverse groups of students according to their educational needs (Chambers, Levin, & Shambaugh, 2010; Malen, Dayhoff, Egan, & Croninger, 2017).

Student-based budgeting has been studied in various district contexts with mixed results. In addition, determining how to weight student needs has proven challenging and inconsistent across schools and districts (Malen et al., 2017; Furtick & Snell, 2013). For example, in Prince George's County Public Schools, the variability in per-pupil funding decreased across schools, but the formula took funds away from large populations of low-performing students (Malen et al., 2017). In the San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts, per-pupil spending became more equitable after the introduction of SBB, but the results varied across schooling levels (Chambers et al., 2010).

While the impact of SBB systems on schools and students often depends on district-specific factors (Ladd & Fiske, 2011; Plank & Smith, 2008), the limited literature and lack of consensus on its associated benefits and costs highlight the need for greater exploration of SBB in other district contexts. Studying the implementation of SBB in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) provides a unique opportunity to contribute to the limited literature on SBB.

REFERENCES


