

# Average Daily Membership Study

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## Legislation

- Senate Bill 10-008
- CONCERNING A STUDY TO EVALUATE THE FEASIBILITY OF A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE PUPIL ENROLLMENT FOR PURPOSES OF THE "PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE ACT OF 1994" BASED ON THE AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP OF PUPILS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

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## RFP/Timeline/Areas of Study

- Responded to RFP in early November
- Received contract on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November
- Study to be completed by January 7<sup>th</sup>
- Areas of Study
  - Review other states' count processes
  - Look at costs to districts and state
  - Work with advisory committee
  - Create recommendations and model impact

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## Definitions

- Counts
  - Single Day, Multi Day or Average
- Membership/Enrollment vs. Attendance
  - Membership is students enrolled and served by districts
  - Attendance is students attending class on a given day/s

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## Colorado's Current System

- Colorado currently uses a “single day” attendance count on Oct. 1
  - The way the count is implemented creates something closer to a **single membership** count
    - Districts allowed to count students in attendance over a period of time.
  - Original funding based on spring estimates and counts reconciled when completed - January adjustments made in supplemental process

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## Process for study

- Committee's work – concerns – ideas - issues
- Literature review – not much available, but some anecdotal “evidence”
- Review of all other states' policies and interviews with a few states
- District/Charter input and survey
- Data analysis from information gathered

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## Review of Other States' Policies

- **Looked at all 50 states to see what type of count:**
  - Single Day Attendance
  - Single Day Membership
  - Multi Day Attendance
  - Multi Day Membership
  - Average Attendance
  - Average Membership
- **Even similarly named counts can be implemented very differently**
  - Example: student count is prior or current year numbers

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## State Interviews – AZ, MN, NE, SD

- **Common Themes**
  - Less rigorous audits
  - Mentioned need for strong data systems
  - States apply counts differently
  - All had definitions of enrollment/membership
  - Trouble counting students in alternative programs
  - Funding and reconciliation varied
  - Many states counted students in quarters or fifths
  - Often count multiple times in the year

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## District/Charter Input

- Eight interviews, a CFO panel and 96 survey responses produced some common themes
  - Definitions for enrollment and attendance
  - Current count high stakes and large burden
  - Most data systems are strong
  - Don't need incentives to keep students enrolled

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## Data Analysis

- Average Membership across the state is about 2% lower than the October count
- Large range of differences – from 27% above to 16% below
  - Very few districts were far outside the norm and those that were are below 500 students
- No clear statistically significant correlation between changes and certain characteristics
  - Rural districts seem to have a higher negative difference between Oct. count and ADM

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## Committee Work

- Advisory committee was made up of 15 members
  - Included legislators, board members, district personnel, union representation and other stakeholders
- Held three meetings over the course of the study
  - Attendance varied

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## Committee Work

- Committee agreed:
  - Districts need to examine enrollment changes during the year and potentially alter funding
  - Need common state definitions – membership/enrollment and attendance
  - District and charters are spending large amounts of time and resources on the Oct. count
  - No research to indicate that one approach is better than another. Many of the incentives members talked about are incorporated in SB 163 because of drop out and graduation rate calculations

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## Committee Work

- Any change needs to be examined to see the impact on all types of districts
- Any change needs to have its benefits measured against the costs to change
- The current fiscal situation would make this a bad year for any change
- The Advisory Committee made no recommendations for changes to the current system

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## Principles

- A number of principles were created:
  - Some that should be included regardless of any change
    - Limit the administrative burden on the state, school districts and charter schools
    - The count method should be fair and equitable
    - The counting method should not restrict a district or charter school in terms of calendars, bell schedules, or ability to innovate

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## Principles

- If changes are made:
  - The counting method should not result in decreased K-12 funding in the state
  - The counting method should be phased in over time
  - District funding should be held harmless for some period of time if changes to the counting method are adopted

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## Principles

- Additional points:
  - Common definitions should be created at the state level for attendance and membership/enrollment. There may need to be a statewide membership form/process to facilitate consistency across the state
  - A strong state student information system must be in place. A “pull” system would allow the CDE to have real time data
  - Growth and decline should be addressed as part of the formula if not addressed in the count

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## Alternatives

- A number of alternatives are possible. They range from staying with the current count to going to a full ADM count.
- The key parameters include;
  - Type of Count
  - Frequency of Count
  - Use in Funding
    - Current or Prior year
    - Reconciliation

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**Table VII-2  
Alternative Recommendations**

	<b>Alternative 1 (Current Count)</b>	<b>Alternative 2 (Using Current Data)</b>	<b>Alternative 3 (New Count Dates)</b>	<b>Alternative 4 (Mix Single day with ADM)</b>	<b>Alternative 5 (ADM)</b>
<b>Type of Count</b>	Attendance	Attendance or Membership	Membership	Membership	Membership
<b>Frequency of Count</b>	Single Day	Multi Day Count Using October Count, Safety and Security Count, and End of Year Count	Multi Day Count Using a date in September/ October, November, January, and March (Perhaps incorporate EOY count)	Use Single Day count for initial funding and then reconcile with an average daily count	Average Daily
<b>Use In Funding - Year Used</b>	Current Year	Current or Prior	Current or Prior	Current	Current or Prior
<b>- Reconciliation</b>	Not Within Year	If Current Year - Yes; If Prior Year - Yes or No	If Current Year - Yes, could adjust throughout year; If Prior Year - Yes or No	Yes, could adjust throughout year	If Current Year - Yes, could adjust throughout year; If Prior Year - Yes or No

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## Recommendations by consultants:

### ■ Definitions

- Create an enrollment/membership definition based on number of unexcused days absent
- Change the increments students can be counted from halves to quarters or fifths
- Strengthen the definitions of attendance and membership for alternative instructional opportunities

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## Recommendations by consultants:

### ■ Student Data System

- State should implement a real-time student system that “pulls” from districts
  - Received baseline information from 1 vendor - cost
  - State has federal funds to move toward this system

### ■ Count Verification and Audit Procedures

- Recommend a review of these procedures, Ensure the least burden possible while maintaining an adequately verified student count

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## Recommendations by consultants:

- Additional count day/s and change to membership
  - The state should switch to a membership count and consider adding an additional day or days. (Safety and Discipline or End of Year)
    - Lessen the high stakes nature of the current count
    - Change only if the burden can be the same or less
    - The statewide data pull system is vital
    - Should rely on current year counts and adjustments

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## Modeling and Cost Analysis

- Model generated current funding amount
  - 15 districts funding went down 5% or more and 15 went up 5% or more
- CDE is currently working to create a “pull” data system, believe they will get close
- Spoke to a student data system vendor and feel that a statewide system cost would range from \$700,000 to \$5.5 million ongoing cost
  - \$5.5 mill. figure would offset current district costs

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