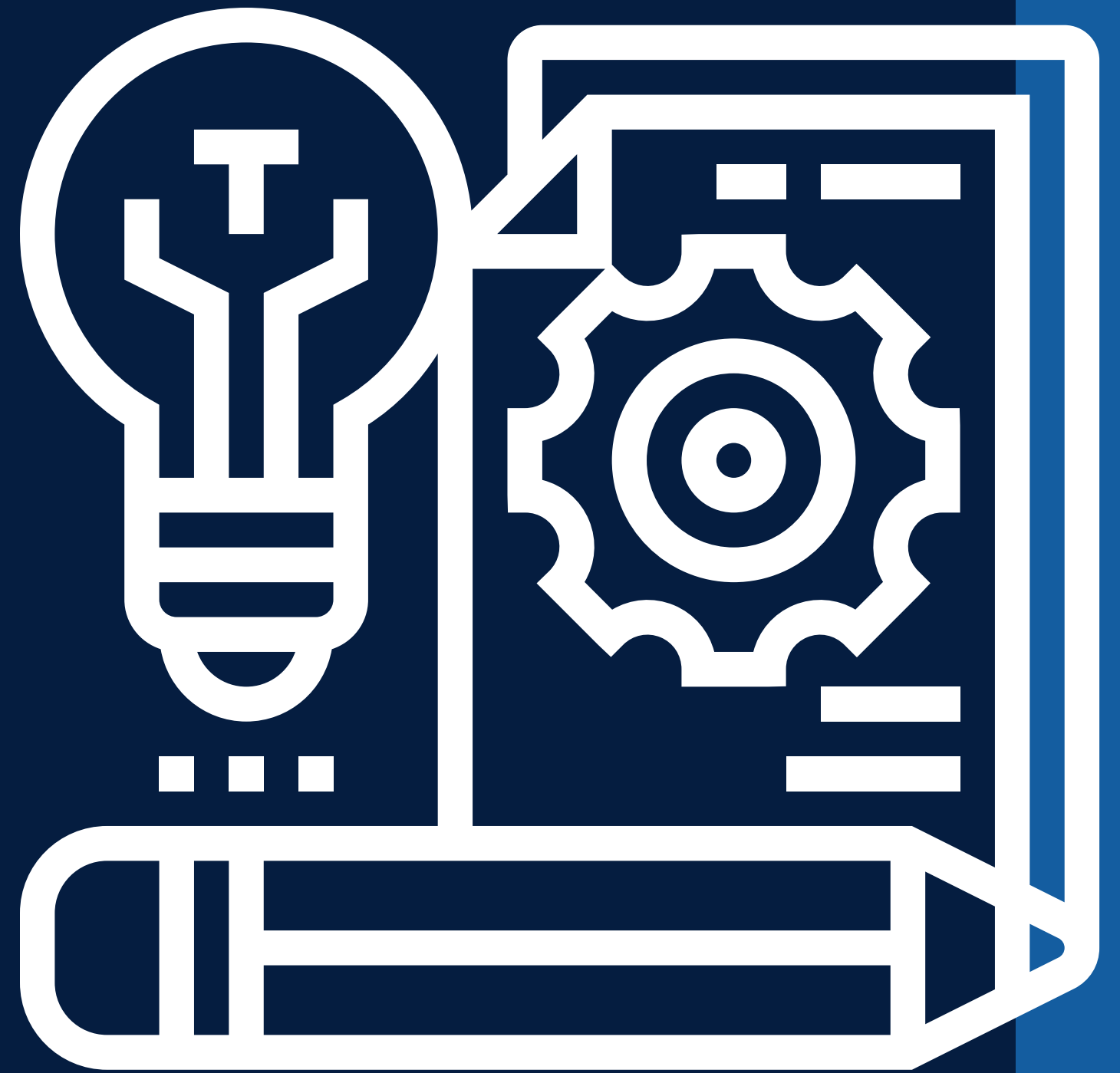


The unit count
system: filling in
the gaps



GOAL:

Increase understanding of the current unit funding system by reviewing how the system has become more strained over time and offering options to fix it.

Assumptions:

There are several other components of the overall system that must also be addressed in order to drive the most change for maximum results for students.

- Referendum reform is critical
- The process for Capital funding needs to be addressed
- The Equalization formula must be unfrozen and updated
- Teacher recruitment & retention will still be an issue
- Stagnant/declining allocations have lost buying power over time

Students are the building blocks of the funding system



Students

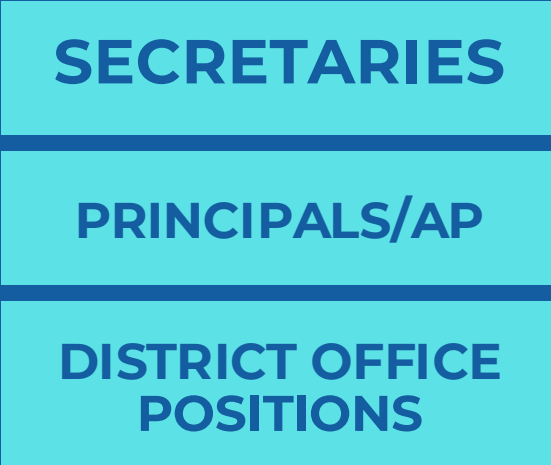
generate



division I units



that generate



key support positions

Division I units have 3 critical pieces



State share of 1 teacher



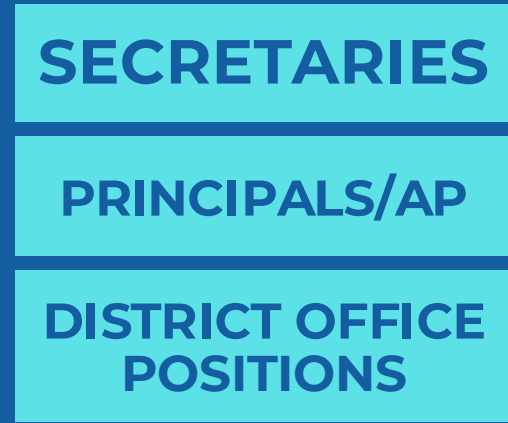
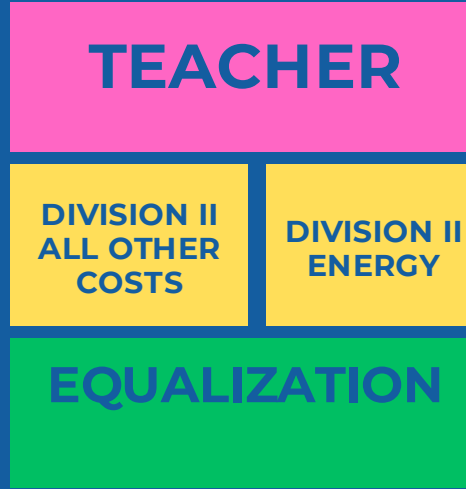
\$\$ for supplies & energy costs



Equalization funds to help support the local cost of the teacher

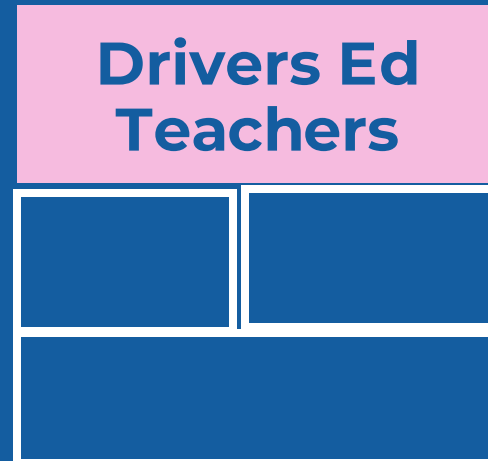


Students



also generate

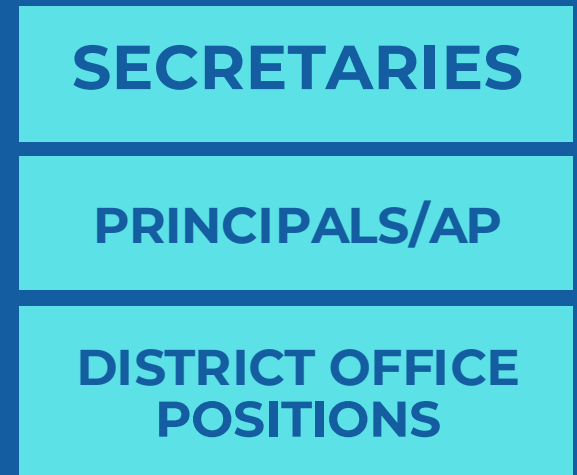
Non-Division I units & funding allocations



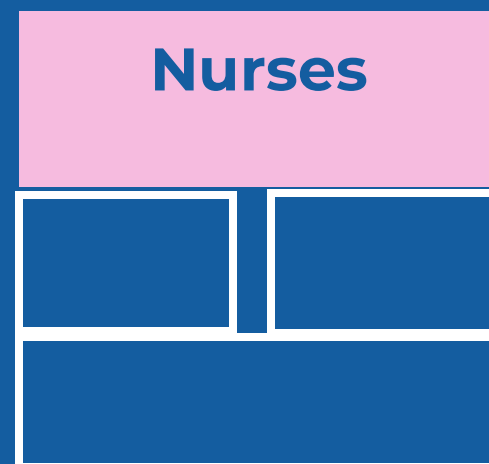
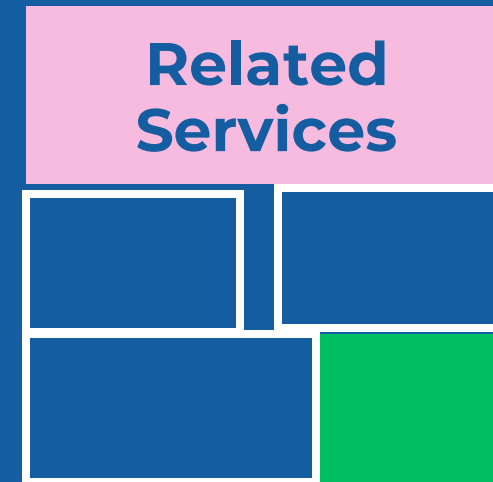
But they don't all include all of the components included with Division I units



Students



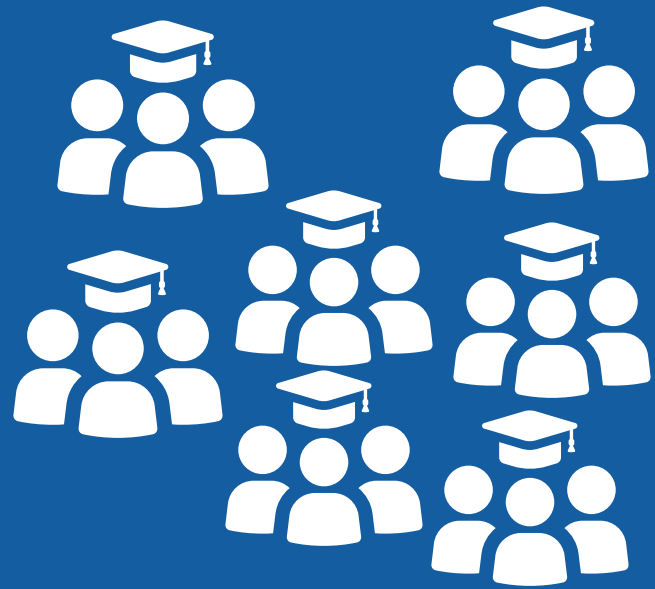
There are also Non-Division I units generated by Division I units, rather than students



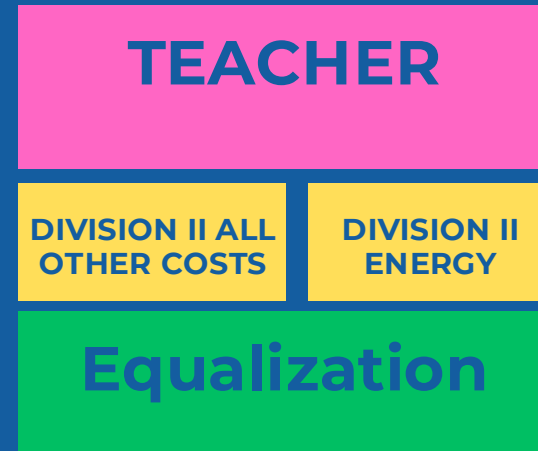
These units also lack all of the components of Division I units

Needs based funding created different student ratios to generate units based on special education needs

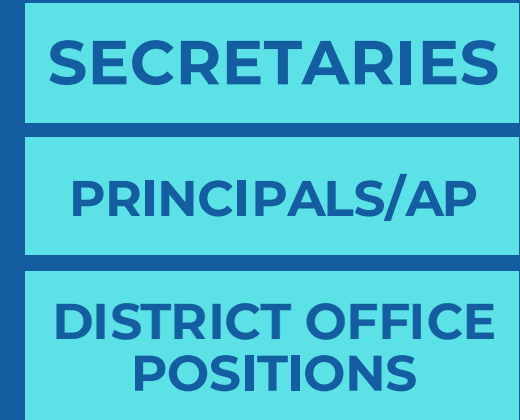
1 for every 20 regular ed students in grades 4-12



Regular Ed Students



division I units



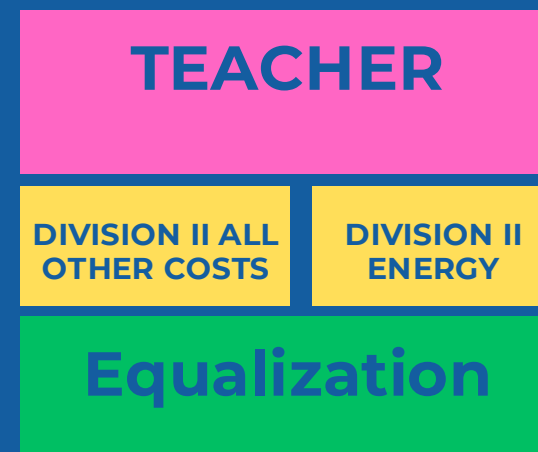
key support positions



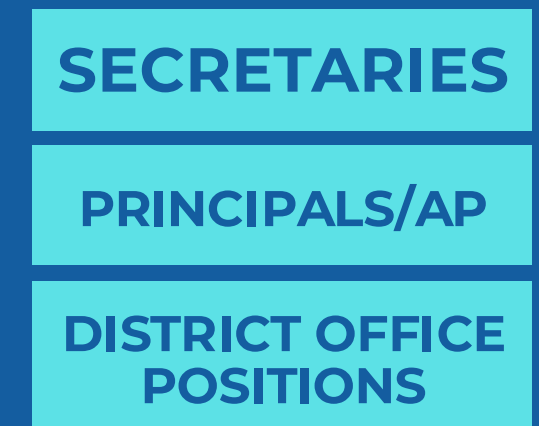
1 for every 2.6 students with complex special ed needs



Special Ed Students



division I units



key support positions

Current Ratios in the needs based system

1 unit for every **20** regular ed students in grades 4-12

1 unit for every **16.2** regular ed students in grades K-3

1 unit for every **8.4** students with basic special ed needs

1 unit for every **6** students with intensive special ed needs

1 unit for every **2.6** students with complex special ed needs

Despite the variety of units that are provided, the ratios are not sufficient to staff all of the positions that you see in schools and districts every day.

There are no discrete units provided for the following:

School Level Positions:

- Art Teachers
- Music/Choir Teachers
- Health/PE Teachers
- Librarians
- Technology support
- Constables

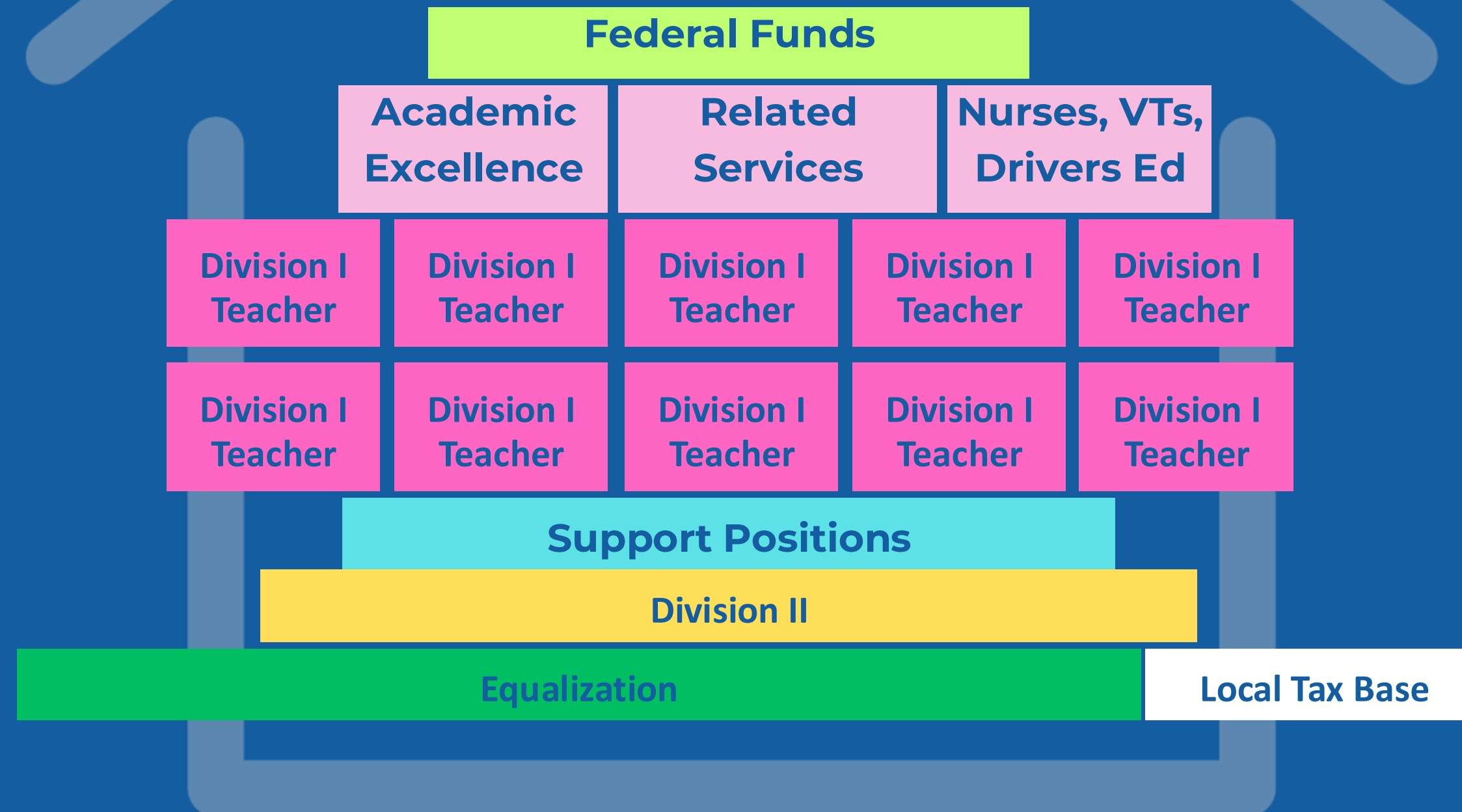
District Level Positions:

- Technology support
- Payroll
- Benefits
- Accounting

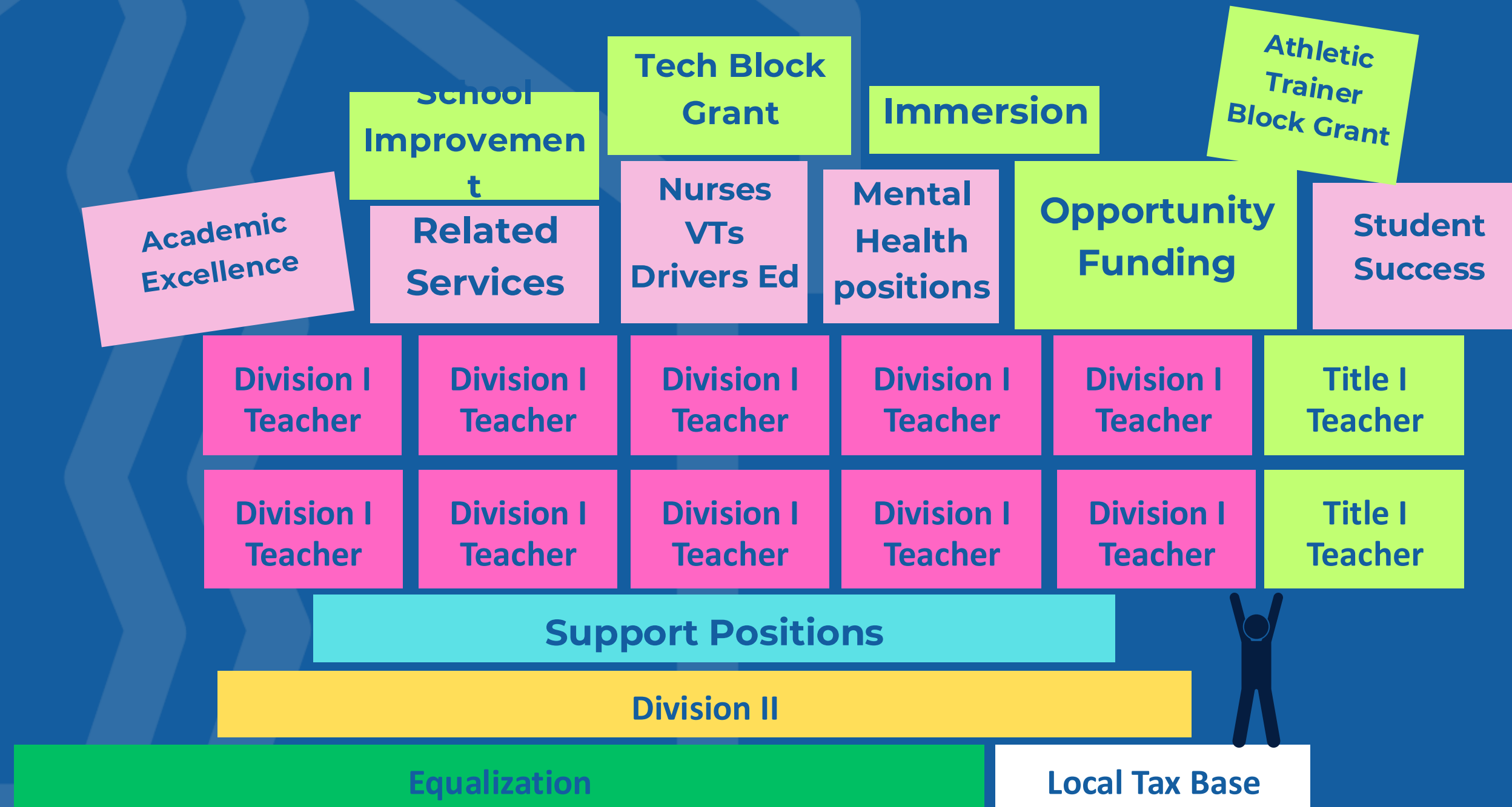
In order to try to address all of the needs/demands, districts have developed several strategies:

- Distribute Academic Excellence units to higher needs schools.
- Utilize federal and local funds to ensure that all schools are staffed appropriately
- Minimize staffing in programs like music, arts, library etc.

The system was originally designed to provide the same resources to all students. Special Education was addressed through categorical, placement based allocations. This was sufficient at one point in time.



The resources added to the system over time have not kept pace with the increased level of student need and were added on top of stagnant base funding, which creates stress and strain on the overall system



The only student characteristic currently in the unit count system is Special Education.

Ratios can be modified to include low-income and ML/EL

CURRENT UNIT SYSTEM

Wilbur Elementary

Enrollment - 1063

Demographics

- Special Education - 10.44%
- Low-Income - 28.69%
- English Language Learners - 9.78%

Units earned: 103.39

Opportunity Funds: \$403,833

Div II & III earned: \$907,963

Laurel Elementary

Enrollment - 1134

Demographics

- Special Education - 13.32%
- Low- Income - 43.12%
- English Language Learners - 22.4%

Units earned: 106.75

Opportunity Funds: \$733,724

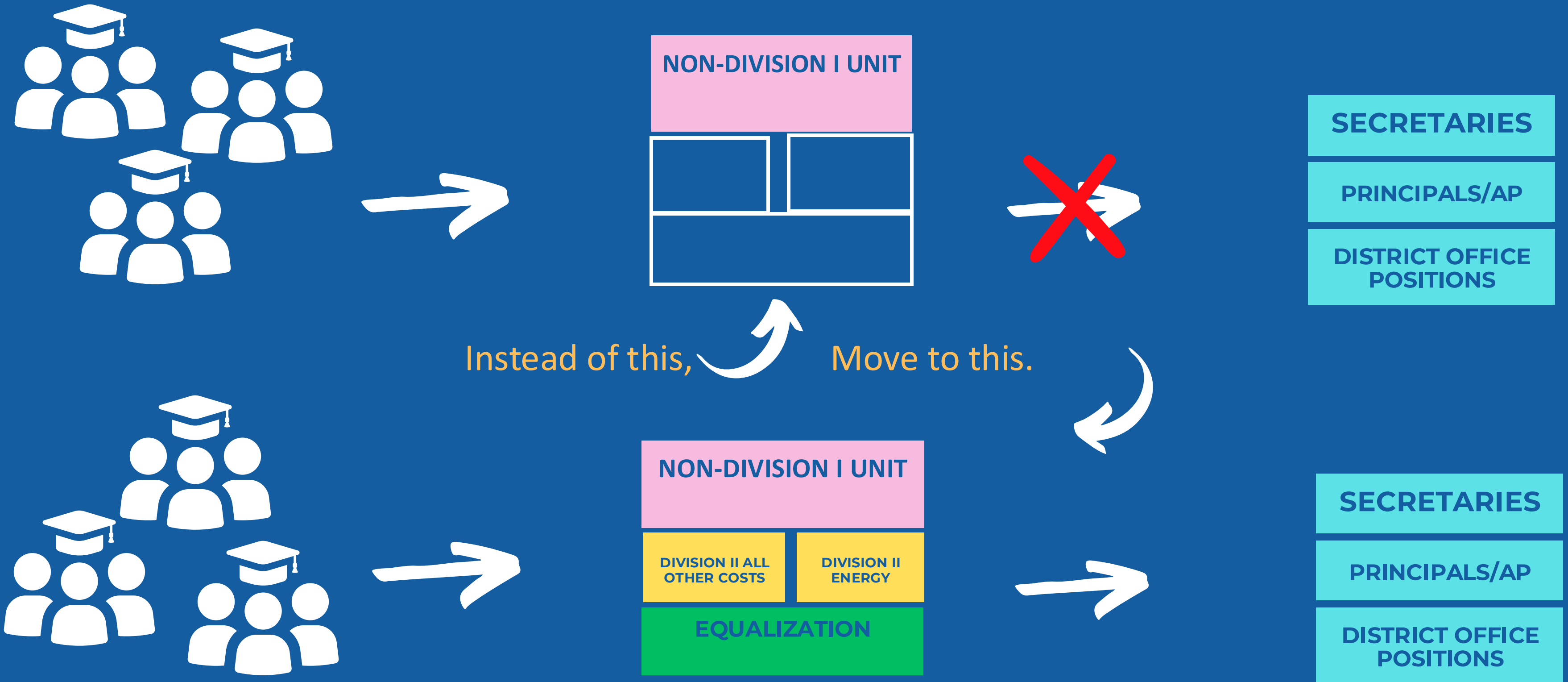
Div II & III earned: \$1,744,023

Despite having 71 additional students and more EL and Low Income students, Laurel only earns 3 units beyond what Wilbur earns. The additional Opportunity funding provided to Laurel is helpful but not enough to meet the needs of 334 additional high need students

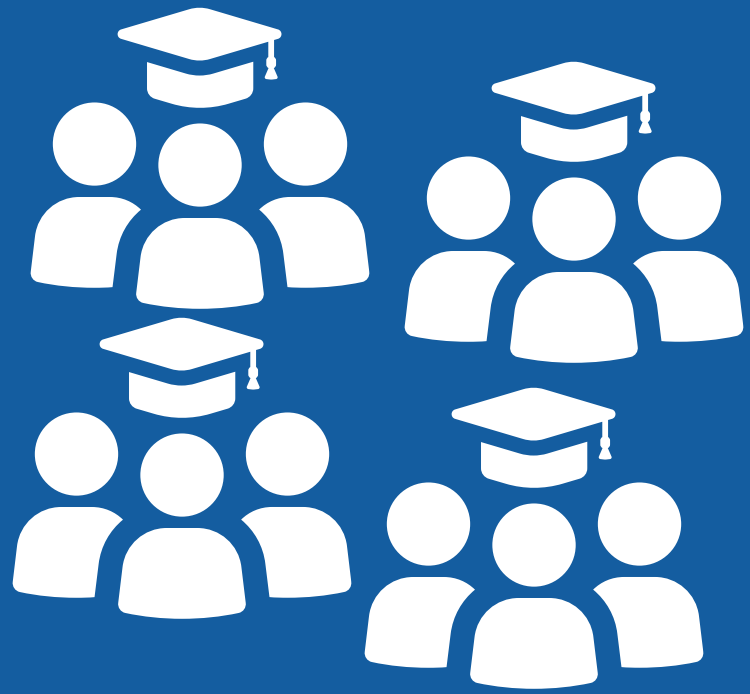


We can fix this within the current system

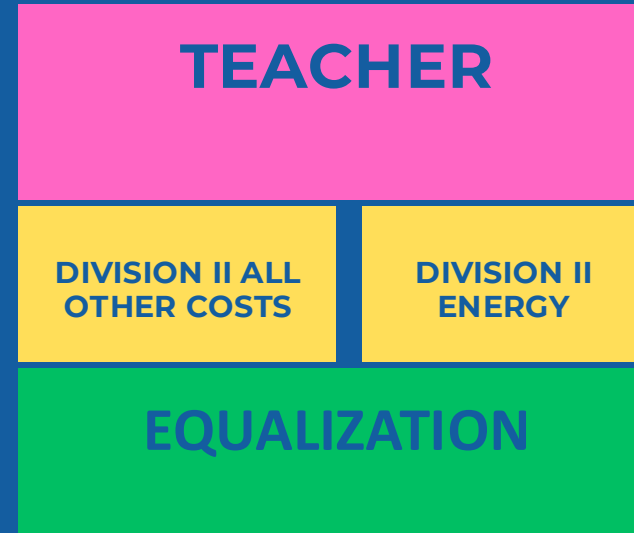
The first step is ensuring that every unit earned is provided Division II and III funding and is generating critical support positions.



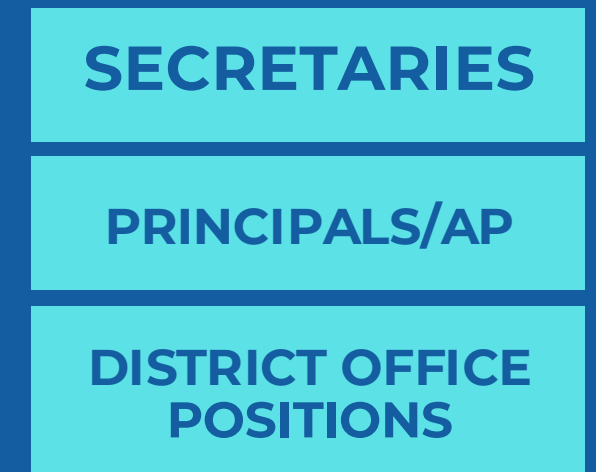
Unit ratios can be adjusted to account for low income and EL needs



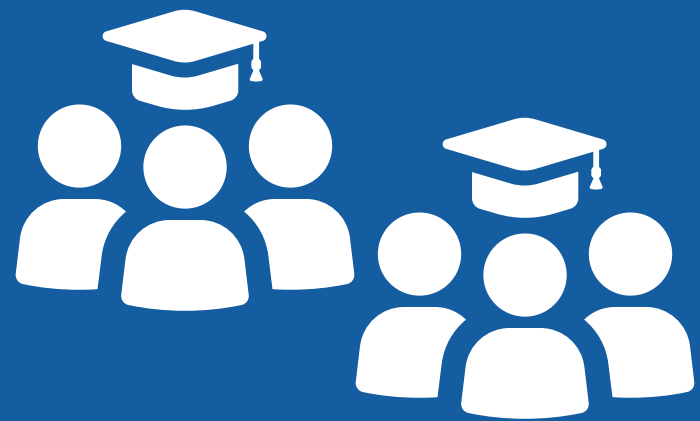
Regular Ed Students



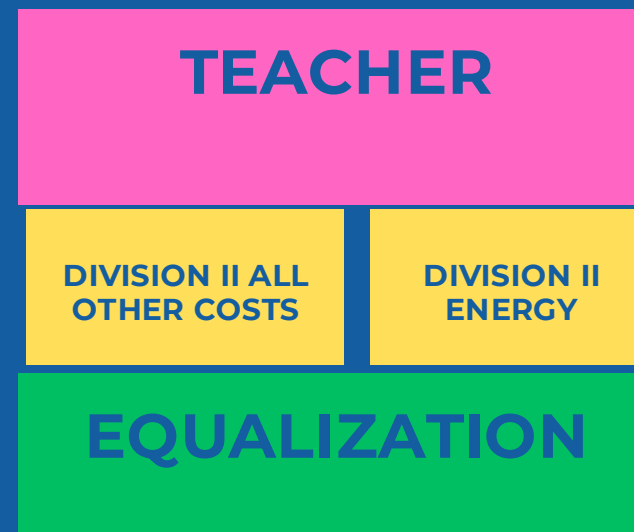
division I units



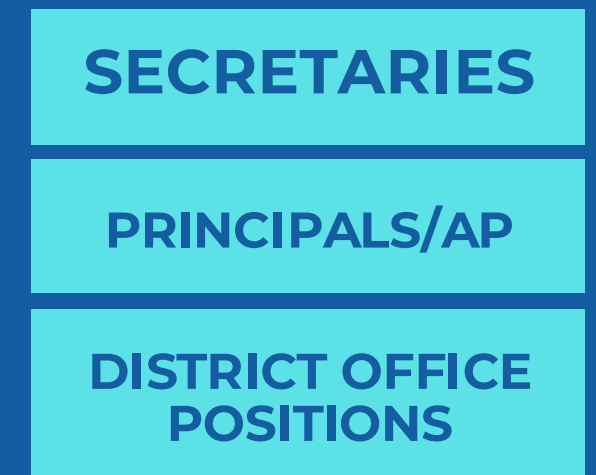
key support positions



Low Income and/or ML Students



division I units



key support positions

To provide an example, we have adjusted the unit calculations to include the weights for Low Income (.81) and EL (.15) from the ECM model in the AIR report. We have also included Division II and III funds with every unit earned.

Wilbur Elementary

Enrollment - 1063

Demographics

- Special Education - 10.44%
- Low-Income - 28.69%
- English Language Learners - 9.78%

Laurel Elementary

Enrollment - 1134

Demographics

- Special Education - 13.32%
- Low-Income - 43.12%
- English Language Learners - 22.4%

Adjusted

Units earned: 127.81 - increase of 24 positions including 4.3 additional support positions

Opportunity Funds: converted to weighted units

Div II and III earned: \$1,131,703 - increase of \$223,739

Adjusted

Units earned: 145.99 - increase of 39 positions including 7 additional support positions

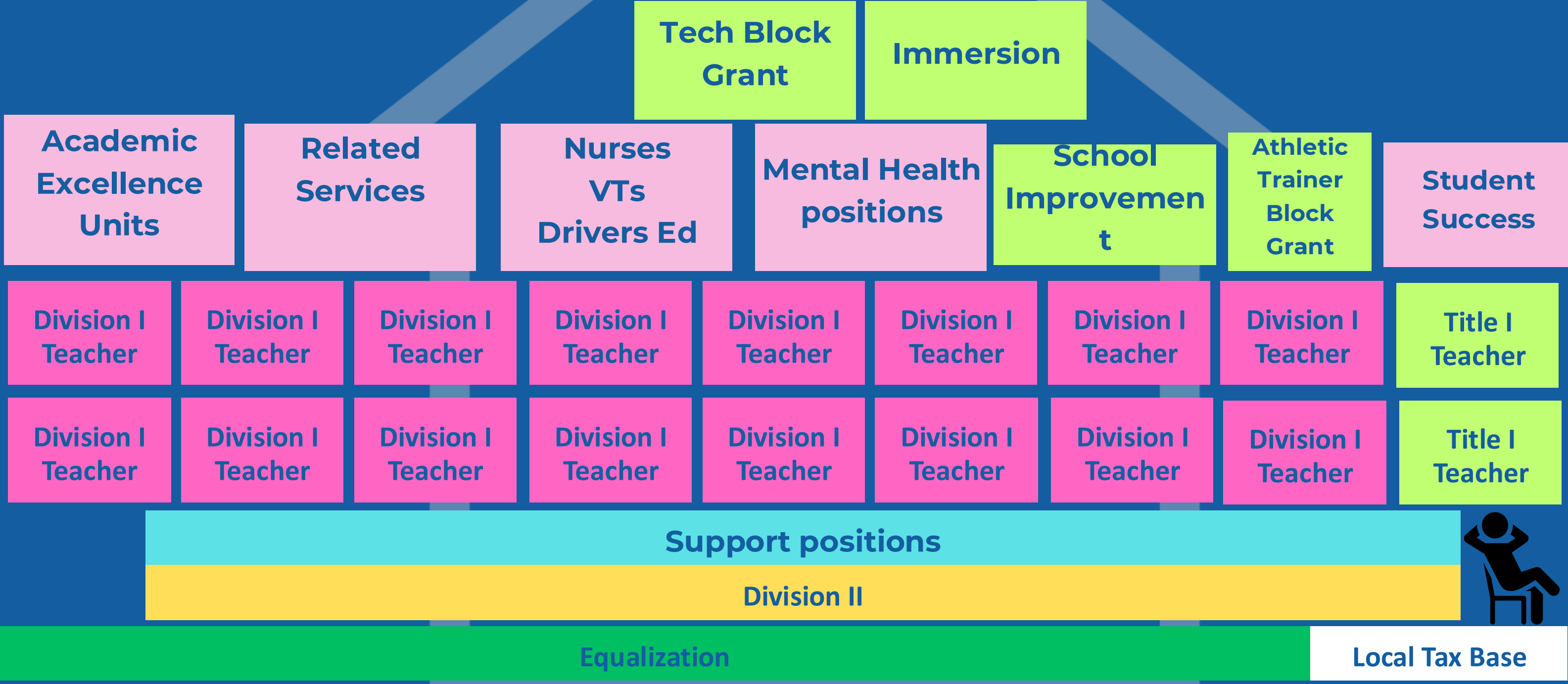
Opportunity Funds: converted to weighted units

Div II and III earned: \$3,191,002 - increase of \$1.45 million

EXAMPLE OF RATIOS THAT COULD BE USED BASED ON THE AIR REPORT

Student Characteristics	Ratio	Student Characteristics	Ratio
Regular ed students, 4-12	20	Basic Spec Ed & Low Income	4.6
Regular ed & MLL	17.4	Intense Spec Ed & Low Income	3.3
Regular ed students, K-3	16.2	Basic spec ed, LI & MLL	2.9
Regular ed & Low Income	11	Complex Spec Ed	2.6
Regular ed- LI & MLL	10.2	Complex spec ed & MLL	2.3
Basic Spec Ed	8.4	Intense spec ed, LI & MLL	1.6
Basic Spec Ed & MLL	7.3	Complex spec ed & Low Income	1.4
Intense Spec Ed	6	Complex spec ed, LI & MLL	0.4
Intense Spec Ed & MLL	5.2		

As ratios are changed or weights are added to account for more student needs, Div II and III need to be included



By fixing the existing funding structure, these changes can be implemented quickly.
Weights for different needs can be added over time and re-evaluated as needed.



FY 2025



FY 2026



FY 2027

Thanks and Questions



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