

AUTUMN 2008 COMMON FUNDING FORMULA CONSULTATION

Analysis of Consultation Responses

1. A total of 446 schools responded to the consultation on possible changes to the current LMS Common Funding Formula, which represents 37.86% of all schools.
2. Below is a summary of the number of schools that responded broken down by Funding Authority and School Phase.

Funding Authority

Funding Authority	Total number of Schools	Number of Schools who Responded	Percentage of Schools who Responded
BELB	136	55	40.44%
NEELB	256	92	35.94%
SEELB	192	105	54.69%
SELB	278	97	34.89%
WELB	225	87	38.67%
VGS	52	3	5.77%
GMI Primary	23	7	30.43%
GMI Secondary	16	0	0%

School Phase

Phase	Total number of Schools	Number of Schools who Responded	Percentage of Schools who Responded
Nursery	98	54	55.10%
Primary	857	376	43.87%
Post-Primary	223	16	7.17%
All Schools Total	1,178	446	37.86%

3. A summary of the tick-box responses by all schools to each proposal is contained in the following paragraphs.

4. AGE WEIGHTED PUPIL UNITS (AWPU) FACTOR

Proposal: That there should be an increase in the primary pupil Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) weighting from 1.04 to 1.05

Question 1.1 – Do you agree that there should be an increase to the current AWPU weighting applied for primary school pupils?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	46	85.19%	1	1.85%	7	12.96%
Primary	376	375	99.73%	0	0	1	0.27%
Post-Primary	16	14	87.50%	2	12.50%	0	0%
All Schools	446	435	97.53%	3	0.67%	8	1.79%

Question 1.2 – Do you agree that the AWPU weighting applied for primary school pupils should be increased to 1.05?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	29	53.70%	16	29.63%	9	16.67%
Primary	376	78	20.74%	295	78.46%	3	0.80%
Post-Primary	16	13	81.25%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%
All Schools	446	120	26.91%	313	70.18%	13	2.91%

4.1 Almost 98% of all those schools that responded support the proposal to increase the AWPU weighting for primary school pupils. It is significant that over 85% of nursery school respondents and over 87% of post-primary school respondents supported the proposal, whilst indicating in their written comments that any such increase should not be at the expense of any other school phases.

4.2 A large proportion (204) of the written comments from primary schools indicated that the primary AWPU weighting should be increased to 1.4 in 2009/10. These comments are broadly in line with those received during last year's consultation exercise with schools about a proposed increase in the primary AWPU weighting. Other respondents (76) suggested that a higher increase than that currently proposed should be applied to the primary AWPU weighting in 2009/10.

5. FOUNDATION STAGE FACTOR

Proposal: That a new Foundation Stage factor should be included in the Common Funding Formula to distribute resources to support primary schools in the delivery of the Foundation Stage of the primary curriculum

Question 2.1 – Do you agree that a new Foundation Stage factor should be introduced within the Common Funding Formula?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	48	88.89%	0	0%	6	11.11%
Primary	376	361	96.01%	9	2.39%	6	1.60%
Post-Primary	16	11	68.75%	1	6.25%	4	25.00%
All Schools	446	420	94.17%	10	2.24%	16	3.59%

Question 2.2 – Do you agree with the proposed methodology to distribute funding under a new Foundation Stage factor?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	32	59.26%	15	27.78%	7	12.96%
Primary	376	134	35.64%	229	60.90%	13	3.46%
Post-Primary	16	9	56.25%	2	12.50%	5	31.25%
All Schools	446	175	39.24%	246	55.16%	25	5.61%

5.1 Whilst the vast majority of schools agreed with the introduction of this new factor, a large proportion of primary schools (229 responses) disagreed with the proposed methodology for the allocation of funding under this factor. Some 68 primary schools suggested in their written comments that the minimum lump sum ought to be £8,000 with the variance of £4,000 being distributed through the additional per pupil amount mechanism.

5.2 10 nursery schools commented that the guaranteed minimum lump sum of £12,000 was not sufficient, and 6 primary schools suggested that such funding should be extended to year groups beyond Year 2.

6. PRIMARY PRINCIPALS' RELEASE TIME FACTOR

Proposal: That a new Primary Principals' Release Time factor should be included in the Common Funding Formula to distribute resources to smaller primary schools to help ensure that at least two days per week release from teaching duties is available for the Principals of these schools

Question 3.1 – Do you agree that a new Primary Principals' Release Time factor should be introduced within the Common Funding Formula?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	45	83.33%	3	5.56%	6	11.11%
Primary	376	356	94.68%	13	3.46%	7	1.86%
Post-Primary	16	14	87.50%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%
All Schools	446	415	93.05%	17	3.81%	14	3.14%

Question 3.2 – Do you agree with the proposed methodology to distribute funding under a new Primary Principals' Release Time factor?

Phase	Total Response	Yes	%	No	%	No View	%
Nursery	54	32	59.26%	16	29.63%	6	11.11%
Primary	376	129	34.31%	225	59.84%	22	5.85%
Post-Primary	16	11	68.75%	1	6.25%	4	25.00%
All Schools	446	172	38.57%	242	54.26%	32	7.17%

6.1 The vast majority of schools agreed with the introduction of this new factor, although just over 50% of schools (approximately 60% of primary schools that responded) disagreed with the proposed methodology for the distribution of funding under this factor.

6.2 Written comments (20 overall) also referred to the need for effective monitoring provision to be in place, including sign-off arrangements with Boards of Governors, to ensure that Principals would be assured of cover for non-teaching time. Some of these comments suggested that this funding should be removed from delegated budgets if such cover is not provided for. However, a circular has already issued to that school Board of Governors ensure that the necessary conditions exist in which the Principal may avail of this time to concentrate on their leadership, management and administrative duties. In addition, there were 14 written comments suggesting that the funding should relate only to Teaching Principals, together with a further 6 comments indicating that consideration should be given to reducing the

pupil band threshold within the proposed tapering methodology for funding calculations.

6.3 There were a relatively large number of written comments (49) from Nursery Schools requesting that this factor should be extended to include provision for Nursery School Principals.

Other Responses received

7. Responses were also received from two Education & Library Boards (ELBs), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), along with responses from a number of other organisations, including 3 District Councils: and these can be made available on request.