Once the level of unfunded FTES has been reduced to the optimum range, the district, its instructional administrators, department chairs and faculty must endeavor to avoid a repeat of the circumstances that contributed to the current situation. Specifically, it is essential that future increases in class sections offered be made based on sound evidence (such as recent enrollment histories) that sufficient student demand exists to warrant their creation and that future enrollment growth does not significantly exceed the likely rate of state growth funding. The district must discontinue the practice of adding sections to the schedule simply to try and capture state-funded growth where insufficient evidence of student demand for class sections exists. Instead, section increases should be targeted toward disciplines and classes with high existing WSCH: FTEF rates, newly emerging programs or classes deemed by the college to be mission-critical. Further, as new instructional facilities come on line the district should endeavor to phase in the offering of classes in the new buildings to coincide with projected student demand and likely levels of state growth funding. Without adhering to these principles there is a significant risk that the district may once again find itself with above optimal levels of unfunded FTES in the future.

Enrollment Management Principles and Guidelines

Decisions concerning effective enrollment management should be based on an agreed upon set of principles and guidelines. Principles upon which enrollment management decisions are based may include the following:

- **The level of the organization at which enrollment management decisions are to be made.** In general, except under extraordinary circumstances, enrollment management decisions should be made at the college, as opposed to the district level. Within overall parameters established by the district through collaborative processes outlined later in this report, colleges should be charged with making operational decisions such as the number of class sections to be scheduled and the distribution of these sections across the college curriculum. Class schedules should be built by those in the best position to ascertain likely student demand (i.e. college instructional administrators in consultation with their faculty).

- **Student Academic Needs Should Drive Enrollment Management Decisions.** As a general rule, student academic needs (curriculum balance, quality of instruction, availability of courses, etc.) should be the primary factors guiding enrollment management decisions.

- **The need to practice responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.** Enrollment management decisions should be based on the principle of providing students access to courses and programs and fostering their success while optimizing the use of financial resources. Student-centered schedules should be planned, efficient and responsive to the communities served.
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In addition to the above principles, district- and college-level decision-makers can benefit from a set of guidelines to assist them in making enrollment management decisions. Several suggested guidelines will be discussed below in the context of the functions to be performed by the district and the colleges in managing student enrollment.

District-Level Functions

Three main functions are best performed by the district in support of its enrollment management strategies: 1) Setting overall enrollment targets and assigning projected growth to the constituent colleges; 2) Allocating sufficient resources to the colleges to support planned enrollment growth; and 3) Providing research and analysis to assist the colleges in making informed enrollment management decisions.

1) Establishing District and College Enrollment Targets

At the district-level, decisions need to be made regarding overall enrollment targets as well as the distribution of planned enrollment among the constituent colleges. The district enrollment target for the next academic year is established by the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Administration and Finance in collaboration with the District Educational Services Office based upon a) the level of funding proposed by the Governor in his/her January budget message; and b) the level of enrollment necessary to maintain the district’s “cushion” of unfunded FTES. The distribution of planned enrollment among the colleges is established by the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Educational Services. In determining this distribution, this office takes the following factors into consideration:

- The need for the district to adhere to the 75:25 law (which encourages districts to move toward delivering 75% of all instruction using full-time faculty);
- The need for the district to adhere to the 50% law (which requires that 50% of all district expenditures be allocated toward direct instructional costs);
- The “full-time faculty obligation” assigned to the district each year by the state (this number specifies the minimum number of full-time faculty members a district is required to employ);
- District and College Strategic, Educational and Facilities Master Plans and scheduled build out of new instructional facilities at each college; and
- Total costs of instruction, including the need for adequate facilities and student services to serve the planned student population.

While enrollment targets have always been established at the district-level and assigned to the colleges by the district office, the Task Force is recommending some enhancements to this process geared toward facilitating improved transparency and
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consultation intended to result in greater awareness of and adherence to the enrollment targets at the college level. With this in mind, the following process is proposed:

- During the fall semester, instructional vice presidents will confer with their respective faculties, student services administrators and support staff and review their Educational Master Plans and program review documents in anticipation of their participation in the enrollment management process.

- In late January, District Educational Services staff will meet with instructional vice presidents from each of the colleges to confer with them regarding the appropriate distribution of planned enrollment growth or contraction among the colleges.

- Based on this consultation, as well as on an analysis of the factors listed above, the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Educational Services will issue preliminary enrollment targets to each college in early February. These preliminary targets will be accompanied by a written rationale for the proposed distribution of planned enrollment between the colleges.

- In mid-February, each college instructional administrator will consult with representatives of the faculty in an effort to provide the district with feedback and suggestions concerning the enrollment targets.

- In late February, the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Educational Services, relying primarily upon input provided by the colleges, will issue revised enrollment targets to each college.

2) Resource Allocation

In the spring of each year, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance will determine the preliminary allocation of budgetary resources to each college in accordance with the district Budget Allocation Model, which will take into consideration the costs associated with meeting the district and college enrollment growth targets. This process culminates with issuance of the Tentative District Budget in mid-June. The final distribution of budgetary resources is reflected in the adoption of the Final District Budget, which typically occurs in mid-September.

3) Research and Analysis

Over the course of the schedule-building process, the District Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Office of Institutional Reporting will respond to the needs of the colleges for research, data and analysis needed to guide them in enrollment management decision-making.