

COMMISSION TO STUDY SCHOOL FUNDING

Adequacy/Distribution Workgroup

Notes June 15, 2020, 3-5pm

Present: Jay Kahn, Val Zanchuk, Bill Ardinger, Jane Bergeron, Barbara Tremblay, Iris Estabrook. Also Present: Bruce Mallory, Rick Ladd, Drew Atchison, Dick Ames, Mel Myler, Matt Gerding, Carrie Portrie, Kim Firth, Debra Nelson. 10 public attendees.

At 3pm Adequacy chair Jay Kahn called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

Kim Firth, Early Childhood Program Director with the Endowment for Health, and Debra Nelson, NH Department of Health & Human Services, Administrator, Division for Children, Youth & Families, Head Start State Collaboration Office introduced themselves. Jay laid out some of the relevant considerations the commission is reviewing and then the presentations began.

Video of the presentations and relevant documents can be found on the Carsey-Commission website: <https://carsey.unh.edu/school-funding/school-funding-study/resources/meeting-documents-video>. Points of emphasis during the Q/A portion of the discussion included timelines for projects, data, collaboration with UNH/DHHS/DOE, clarifying data visualizations in the presentations, stabilizing care during the pandemic, employment in early childhood education, disability education, increasing costs and complexities, upcoming reports, how early childhood education fits into the NH DOE vs DHHS, and distribution of pre-K programs.

Following the presentations, the group reflected on the June 8 full commission meeting's impact on the group's adequacy work briefly, before turning to a discussion of two of AIR's briefs sent to the commission. Drew outlined AIR's plan to start simpler and grow more complex through the brief series. Chart 2 in the Evaluating State School Finance Systems brief was a focus of conversation, with discussion of New Hampshire's lack of a broad-based tax, adequacy being a different dollar amount in different districts, the constitutionality of state aid distribution that allows for variance in spending, how SWEPT fits in, gradual vs cliffed funding levels, and concentration of poverty considerations. Bruce encouraged commission members to read all the briefs from AIR. The conversation then turned to needs of communities and how to arrive at a total cost for an adequate education and then figuring out how to distribute state and local dollars to arrive at that amount for communities.

Dave noted that we are in a reverse situation of what Bill has been suggesting during this meeting, with wealthier districts paying less and poorer districts paying more. He also mentioned that an interim report will be drafted in the near future. Bill gave some ideas for how the interim report could be structured. Bruce then gave an overview of the Commission and Adequacy's calendar moving ahead.

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