Design Thinking – Definition of the Problem

Empathize → Define → Ideate → Prototype → Test

Commission to Study School Funding
June 8, 2020

The problem the Commission is trying to solve is--

1. to "review the education funding formula and make recommendations to ensure a uniform and equitable design for financing the cost of an adequate education for all public school students" (RSA 193-E:2e)

2. to achieve fiscal neutrality in the way revenues are raised at the local and state level in order to fund public schools in an equitable manner

3. to affirm in narrative form the definition of an "adequate education" as set out in NH judicial opinions and statutory law, including identification of relevant variables related to student, school, school district and community characteristics

4. to determine the unit costs of providing an "adequate education," including costs or "differentiated aid" needed to be responsive to relevant variables related to student, school, school district and community characteristics

5. to develop a modern distribution formula that directs state aid to districts that are determined to be most-in-need and does not direct aid to better-resourced districts.

6. to equalize educational opportunity by improving education funding in districts that are property (and otherwise) poor.

7. to reduce the state's reliance on local property taxes to fund education in the process.

8. to reduce the gap between opportunities and outcomes.

#3-8 are taken from the "top three" definition of the problem homework created on March 9.

Given these definitions of the problem(s) we are trying to solve, what would be your 2-3 sentence version?

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_____

_____

_____

The definition of the problem requires the Commission to develop a common definition (or understanding) of—

Educational disparities related to--

1. Inputs
    a. Student characteristics (intellectual, emotional, physical, social, _____)
    b. Family characteristics (structure, income, capacity to support learning, _____)
    c. Community characteristics, including
        i.   capacity to raise funds for local schools
        ii.   concentrations of poverty
        iii. density of population
        iv.   social/cultural diversity of population
        v.   taxpayer capacity and will
        vi.   _____
    d. School characteristics, including
        i.   School size
        ii.   Classroom size and/or student-teacher ratios
        iii. Teacher qualifications
        iv.   Breadth and depth of curriculum
        v.   _____

2. Outcomes
    a. Student success
    b. Workforce needs
    c. Community well-being
    d. _____

3. Equity of student experience

4. Equity of opportunity

5. Equity of student outcomes

6. Equitable financing system

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____