

Commission to Study School Funding

Our overriding questions

1. Does every child deserve (have a right to) an equal opportunity to an adequate education, as measured by comparable outcomes (our kids vs. my/their kids)
2. Is total statewide spending enough for an opportunity for adequate/comparable outcomes?
3. Should the state increase its share of education costs? How much?
4. Should all students have the opportunity for statewide average outcomes?
5. Should there be less variation in property tax rates used for education?
6. Should property tax rates used for education be the same statewide?

Questions that have been addressed so far

1. What is the base adequacy formula amount? Should that include transportation or not?
2. What are the desired weights for differential aid? What are the components of differential aid? Should we add new weights for district size and grade level?

Questions we are currently addressing

Adequacy

1. What issues need to be addressed relative to categorical programs (CTE, early childhood, catastrophic aid, transportation, building aid, charter schools)?

Fiscal Policy

2. Must the legislature fund the first and last dollar of school expenditure with state dollars?
3. What circuit breakers/protections for low- and middle-income owners need to be expanded or created for the SPT?
4. Should SPT be sent 100% to the state treasury?

Questions we still need to tackle

Adequacy

1. Do we need to identify additional outcome performance measures as benchmarks for future adjustments to the funding formula?
2. Will we make any comments or recommendations on the funding of public charter schools?
3. How can we build a crosswalk showing the adequacy perspective based on an outcomes model and an adequacy model based on the traditional model (current)?
4. What do these models mean for the elements people think most about? (sports, materials, faculty, PD, retention of staff, etc.)

Fiscal Policy

1. What is the target ratio for revenues relative to local vs. statewide property tax?
2. What is the target statewide property tax rate?
3. Should there be a mandated and constant minimal local property tax contribution?
4. What is the desired ratio of total SPT revenues relative to non-SPT revenues?
5. What are the various non-SPT revenue sources and what is the relative mix of those revenues? Are we proposing any new non-SPT sources that don't currently exist?
6. How do we address the confusion about how the current taxes are labeled? State? Local?

General Policy Questions

1. Will we recommend a phase-in of a new funding formula and revenue mix? Over what period of time?
2. Will we address school administrative structure in the final report (e.g., consolidation, regionalization)?
3. How will we address instructional technology costs and other COVID-related expenses, either one-time or recurring?
4. Should there be permanent accountability structures, mechanisms, processes included in the recommendations?
5. What kinds of recommendations need to be made to local legislators post-December 2020? For example, when local school leaders and state leaders/advocates start thinking about accountability, if the funding may be distributed differently
6. What are the ancillary expectations for the department of education?

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