

Public Comments from Regular Commission Meetings

Please note that full notes from Commission meetings and video of proceedings can be found at <https://carsey.unh.edu/school-funding/school-funding-study/resources/meeting-documents-video>

January 27, 2020

- Doug Hall asked the commission to be sure to get community input during this process, and to be sure to gather information from other states. He asked the commission to ask what constitutes an adequate education for students in New Hampshire in 2020 and how to make sure students everywhere in the state have access to that adequate education.

Video link: [http://sg001-](http://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00288/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20200127/-1/21423)

[harmony.sliq.net/00288/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20200127/-1/21423](http://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00288/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20200127/-1/21423)

March 9, 2020

- Jane Ferrini of Portsmouth, NH, advised that the NH Supreme Court may consider the constitutionality of SWEPT at a different time (after declining to do so in the current ConVal case).

Video link: <https://youtu.be/g4P6W4no7Gk>

June 22, 2020

- Jeff McLynch, Project Director for the NH School Fairness Funding Project: Encouraged to see commission examining statewide property tax in depth and glad they will continue. Legislation creating commission charged commission to consider uniform funding rate (also discussed in Claremont court cases). That is not the case today. Comparison of Claremont vs Hanover. Lack of uniformity impedes economic development, hinders young families moving into NH. Urge commission to continue to look at funding sources, note that there is an amendment to NH constitution that allows for differential rates for different properties. Property taxes could be paired with a circuit breaker or other mechanism.
- Doug Hall, member of the board of directors, NH School Funding Fairness Project: Fred Bramante mentioned 1919, also property taxes for education predates the state of NH. Wrote a history of school funding in NH about 15 years ago, will share with commission.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmZoHoYGoOA>

July 7, 2020

- Elizabeth Canada –Interim Director Reaching Higher NH: Provided a brief overview of their organization. Elizabeth then provided some recent findings regarding teacher salary and the step system for salary schedules (negotiated at the local level). Elizabeth

provided a brief overview of their findings, and asked for time with the Commission to present their findings further. Bruce, Jay, and Dave will discuss the calendar and timing.
Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZR61blkNww>

July 20, 2020

- Diane LaChance (Hopkinton, NH): Diane noted she had only recently found the opportunities for public comment and concerned that people may not be aware of their opportunities for input. Doug Hall noted in the Q& A: Following on Phil's presentation, I suggest one other factor to be considered in choosing or using any potential measure regarding income in communities ---how often is it updated? DHHS food stamp data is available monthly. Free/reduced meals is annual. The ACS data is questionable for small populations as Phil points out. The 5-year averages from ACS are updated to most recent 5 years.

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKVrW09s0JU>

July 27, 2020

- John Tobin –the models that AIR is talking about sounds wonderful. Hopes that when you see how revenue is raised and allocated, please look at what the local tax rates will be at the end of the model. So if you are targeting for a portion of adequacy, what will the local districts be asked to pay and what will their tax rates be? Does the model solve the tax rate problem?

Video link: <https://youtu.be/EbgpvrZnGf4>

August 24, 2020

- Doug Hall: The AIR discussion and simulator are assuming that the needed revenue will all come from property taxes, either SWEPT or local. It would be helpful if one of the variables in the simulator is "Other state sources." In page 4 of today's AIR powerpoint, the column "Simulated Remaining State Obligation" could be met with some of the funds coming from non-property taxes. That would change the two right hand columns. It would be helpful if the spreadsheet let one enter a number for the other sources. \$200 million? \$320 million? \$75 million? As I understand the presentation, the assumption right now is that this number is \$0. Doug Hall 04:01 PM The simulator allows transportation to be included or excluded and be funded separately. I think it would be helpful to do the same with Catastrophic Special Education. Fold that existing money in or fund it separately as is done now.
- Jeff McLynch, Project Director of the NH School Funding Fairness Project –thanked Commission and AIR for all the work done. Refinements made to simulator really important. When option 1 was first presented it was not clear what would happen to dollars in communities where excess dollars were generated. Seems as though you would end up with a situation where those communities would have a lower minimum local contribution. In that case, would be concerned that disparities in the current approach would be continued, with some districts having lower rates and others with higher, based on property rates. Would remind Commission of the Claremont II ruling, where property taxes must be uniform in valuation and rate, and option 1 may not lead to that.

Video link: <https://youtu.be/COL2z0cTBZE>

September 21, 2020

- When you say wealthy towns, are you suggesting the average income of the tax payers or are you speaking of at assessed value of that town? In the Town of Carroll we have Bretton Woods, Mt. Washington Hotel, and AMC Highland Hotel, that puts us into a high assessed value, but that does not begin to reflect what the average family makes for income to live to pay taxes. This needs to be looked at before thinking about hitting the “wealthy” towns for more, as was done years ago. Bonnie Moroney

Video link: <https://youtu.be/qvk7lNx3c-w>