

Funding Formula Working Group Minutes

Monday, November 16th, 2015 5:00-7:00pm

New England Institute of Technology, Room S330, East Greenwich

Attendees- Elizabeth Burke-Bryant, Don Sweitzer, Commissioner Ken Wagner, Andrea Castaneda, Dr. Kenneth Wong, Gregg Amore, Scott Avedesian, Donato Bianco, Nancy Carriuolo, J. Michael D'Antuono, Karen Davis, Kas R. DeCarvalho, Pattie DiCenso, Sean Doyle, Gara Fields, Georgia Fortunato, Victoria Gailliard-Garrick, Jo Eva Gaines, Stephanie Gonzalez, Joseph MarcAurele, Amy Mullen, Julie Nora, Stephanie Ogidan Preston, Adam Ramos, Isadore Ramos, Deborah Ruggiero, Toby Shepherd, Alan Tenreiro, James Vincent, Lisa Tomasso

I. Welcome: 5:03

Elizabeth Burke-Bryant welcomed the group and introduced Public Comment

II. Public Comment

Robert MacDonald, a parent of a student at the Paul Cuffee School speaking on charter schools and special education funding.

Karyn Fink, a parent speaking on charters, maintaining student centered funding and the unique needs of students with disabilities and English learners.

Kristine Donabedien, a member of the Lincoln School Committee speaking on marginal and fixed costs, especially as they pertain to teacher salaries.

Mary Ann Rolle, a member of the Lincoln School Committee speaking on the importance of maintaining a future focus and balancing the needs of many within the context of limited additional resources.

Michael De Matteo, an employee of a charter organization speaking on the unique costs incurred by Blackstone Valley Prep.

Karla Villar, an employee of a charter school speaking about demographics of her school and the services they provide and calling for fairness in the deliberations

Timothy C. Duffy, speaking on behalf of Rhode Island School Committees on the importance of a careful and deliberate process and the procedural challenges traditional districts face when attempting to access housing aid.

Carolyn Sheehan, speaking as a leader of a charter school on their responsibility to provide their students with a full complement of services, regardless of their needs.

III. Andrea Castañeda: “Four Important Concepts of Funding Formula”

Andrea Castañeda reviewed the “Four Important Concepts” sheet, focusing on core mechanics of the Funding Formula

IV. Dr. Kenneth Wong Presentation on Issue Briefs 1, 2, and 3

Dr. Wong reviewed three briefs and their relevance to their future work. The three briefs focused on: (1) Differences in cost profiles, (2) Fixed and Marginal Costs, and (3) Housing Aid.

V. Stakeholder Presentations: Rhode Island School Superintendent’s Association Presentation and the Charter Sector

Dr. Barry Ricci and Dr. Phil Auger presented testimony regarding the current funding formula. They discussed the RISSA position on charter schools and read testimony regarding charter and LEA differences.

Elsa Dure (Rhode Island Mayoral Academies) and Tim Groves (Rhode Island League of Charter Schools) presented data on charter sectors costs on behalf of their organizations.

VI. Working Group Discussion

Elizabeth Burke-Bryant introduced discussion and topics. Discussion focused on topics that included: (1) Special education out of district tuition; (2) the August 15 quarter 1 charter billing date; (3) fundamental fairness of the formula; (4) changes in statewide enrollment independent of charter enrollment; (5) formula requirements for students who exit prior to graduation; (6) the state share ratio; (6) funding for summer school within the formula; (7) the differences in cost by grade span; (7) the responsibilities of charter schools under federal regulation; (8) family motivations for public school choice; (9) local control over local revenue; and (10) English language learners and preserving independence of district-level decision-making;

VII. Conclusion

Elizabeth Burke-Bryant summarized discussion of presentations and comments under the lens of the group’s criteria for a successful formula; that any recommendations promote equity, fairness, and the use of data.

VIII. Overview of Upcoming Meetings

Don Sweitzer announced details for the next meeting and coming meetings.

IX. Adjourn, 7:02