

Washington School Finance Next Steps

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- School finance equity & adequacy
- Linking school finance to student results
- Teacher quality & teacher compensation
- Bi-partisan work for policymakers
- NCSL/A&M experience
 - John Myers - 18 years experience

School Finance Equity & Adequacy

- From the 1970's to 1990, equity issues were central to school finance discussions
 - taxpayer and student equity
 - differential treatment of differences (size, students needs, etc.)
 - inputs to processes, outputs & outcomes

School Finance Equity & Adequacy

- Since 1990, questions of adequacy have become much more important
 - Historically adequacy was determined politically using input measures
 - Modern adequacy is technically determined and output orientated. Relies on:
 - Advent of standards-based reform
 - Adoption of state accountability measures
 - Availability of multi-year student achievement records
 - Is reinforced by the federal NCLB legislation

School Finance Adequacy

- Adequacy relies on “standards-based” reform to answer the “adequate for what” question
 - State sets student expectations
 - State creates ways to measure those expectations
 - State holds education providers accountable for student performance
- States and the federal government have implemented policy that supports this approach

School Finance Adequacy

- Building on policy associated with standards-based reform, it is reasonable to expect that each state would provide sufficient resources to allow districts to meet the state's standards
- Adequacy studies identify the amount of resources districts need to meet state standards

Foundation or Base Cost Level with Adjustments

- Today the base cost should reflect what is needed for a student with no special needs to meet standards in a district with no special circumstances
- Adjustments can be made to the base cost for special education, at-risk, English language learners, district size and cost-of-living

Calculation of the Base Cost

- States interested in the modern definition of adequacy have chosen from a short list of alternative approaches to determine the base cost
- These approaches are designed to reflect either a particular set of services, a particular level of performance, or a combination

Alternative Methods Used to Set the Base Cost

- **Professional Judgement** assumes educators can specify the resources needed to meet state standards
- **Successful School District** assumes a cost can be inferred from past successful practice
- **Evidence Based** assumes research exists in enough cost areas to estimate a base cost.
- **Statistical Modeling** uses multiple regression techniques to predict the cost

Studies Done in States

- State study-no court case
- Court case and coalition studies
- Coalition study leading to court case
- State study-court case

State study-no court case

- Maryland-Bridge to the Excellence
 - Thornton Commission
 - Multiple Adequacy Studies
 - Consolidating Categorical Programs
 - Six year Phase-in

Court case and coalition studies

- New York and Campaign for Fiscal Equity
 - Court Finds State Needs Adequacy Study
 - State Uses Successful Schools
 - Plaintiffs Adequacy Study
 - Three Judge Panel Recommended a Plan
 - District Judge Approves \$5.3 Billion

Coalition study - court case

- Nebraska-Coalition led by Omaha Public Schools
 - Lincoln part of study
 - Rural/Small schools case
- Montana Quality Education Coalition
 - Education association led study-MQEC lawsuit
 - Defining state standard

State study-court case

- Kansas Legislative Study
 - Defining a “suitable” education
 - Court case coalition & new grassroots group
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
 - Legislative action?

Two Recent Washington Studies

- Rainier Institute Study: *What will it take?*
- WASA: Ample School Funding Project

Rainier Institute Study

The Goal

- Determine staff, program and material needs to meet:
 - 1) HB 1209 standards
 - 2) WA public school federal standards (NCLB)
 - 3) What Washingtonians want from their schools
- **The Washington Quality Education Model (WQEM)**
 - Created as an allocation model
- **WQEM Methodology**
 - Combination of effective School-wide program and professional judgment models

Rainer Study: What was found

- Prototype Elementary School
 - \$3,465,714,606
 - Increase of \$905,189,028
- Prototype Middle School
 - \$1,724,579,051
 - Increase of \$424,956,049
- Prototype High School
 - \$2,157,021,585
 - Increase of \$428,160,348
- Total
 - \$7,347,315,242
 - Increase of \$1,758,305,426

WASA: Ample School Funding Project

- Why
 - Ample funding education is in state constitution
 - New standards due to HB 1209
- What
 - To document the under funding of basic education
 - To build a coalition to support adequate funding for K-12 education

The Bottom Line

- Special Education Funding
 - An additional \$180.2 million is needed from the state
- Pupil Transportation Funding
 - An additional \$132.5 million is needed from the state
- General Apportionment
 - an additional \$482 million is needed form the state.

Next Steps

- Full adequacy study or study the gaps
- Simulation of new formula
- Coalition needed for success

Questions and Answers

