

COMMISSION TO STUDY SCHOOL FUNDING

Legislative Office Building, Room 210-211

Concord, NH

Monday, January 13, 2020

Committee Members Present

Rep. David Luneau, Chair

Former Sen. Iris Estabrook

Rep. Richard Ames

John Beardmore

Rep. Mary Heath

Dr. Corinne Cascadden

Rep. Rick Ladd

Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu

Sen. Jay Kahn

Dr. David Ryan

Sen. Jon Morgan

William Ardinger, Esq.

(The meeting convened at 10:09 a.m.)

DAVID LUNEAU, State Representative, Merrimack County,
District #10 and Chairman: So calling to order the
organizational meeting of the School Funding Commission. Today
is January 13th, 2010, at 10:09 -- 2020 at 10:09 a.m. Sorry about
that.

I want to start with, again, a little bit of -- a little
bit of housekeeping information. For members of the public,
actually for all of us, rest rooms are just across the hall out
here. Feel free to excuse yourself at any time. Should you need
to take a phone call or make a phone call, we understand, you
know, life is happening while we meet as well.

If you'd like to use electronics, your laptop, your
notebook, please go ahead and do that. We don't want to hold
people back from being able to access information that they find
might help them in this endeavor.

And then, finally, and I've just learned this the other
day, how to use these new fancy microphones. So I'm only going
to say this once. I might have to say it more times. But
the -- but the way these microphones work, as I understand it,
is if you want to speak for a prolonged period of time hands
free, like I'm doing right now, you push the red button down. If

you just want to speak very briefly, like -- like yes, like Senator Kahn, I have a question. Then you can just momentarily hold the blue button, but you have to hold it while -- while talking. Is that fairly clear? Is that a good description? Is that how they work, Representative Heath? So you spend more time in this room than I do.

So -- so -- so anyway, why don't we -- why don't we go around the horse shoe here and introduce ourselves and we can give that microphone a try and that way we're all pros at that. So can we start down here with --

DAVID RYAN, Ed.D., School Superintendent, SAU 16:
Certainly. My name is David Ryan. I'm the Superintendent of Schools in SAU 16 which is headquartered in Exeter.

CORINNE E. CASCADDEN, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools, Littleton, NH: I am Corinne Cascadden, the former retired Superintendent of Berlin Public Schools for ten years and currently am Interim Superintendent for Littleton, New Hampshire.

JANE BERGERON-BEAULIEU, Executive Director, New Hampshire Special-Ed Administrators Association: Good morning. I'm Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu. I'm a resident of Litchfield, New Hampshire. I'm also the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Special-Ed. Administrators Association.

RICK LADD, State Representative, Grafton County, District #04: Good morning. I'm Rick Ladd. I'm a Representative from Haverhill. I've served on the Education Committee for 12 years, chaired it for four years, past school principal, administrator, and I'm pleased to be here. Thank you.

JAY KAHN, State Senator, Senate District #10: Jay Kahn, State Senator from Cheshire County in Keene. I serve as the Chairman of the Senate Education and Workforce Committee, and I'm a member of the Senate Finance Committee.

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CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Dave Luneau. I'm a State Rep from Hopkinton and Concord. I'm in my third term. Currently Vice-Chair of the House Education Committee. Before that I was with the Commerce Committee and also served 12 years on the Hopkinton School Board, eight years as Chair. And in a very much prior life started a tech company here in the Concord area back in the '90s. And so that's my -- the bulk of my career has been in engineering and -- and tech. So thank you.

JON MORGAN, State Senator, Senate District #23: I'm Jon Morgan. I serve on the Education Committee as well with Senator Kahn. I represent Senate District 23. I'm Vice-Chair of the Commerce Committee and also serve on the Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee in the Senate. I live in Brentwood. So Exeter is in my district. Thank you very much, Superintendent Ryan, for being here. And I have a long storied history from way up north in the Berlin area. So this is kind of a pleasure to be here with you as well.

RICHARD AMES, State Representative, Cheshire County, District #09: I'm Dick Ames, and I come from Jaffrey; represent four towns in that area. And I serve on the Ways and Means Committee where I'm Vice-Chair. In a prior life I worked as an attorney, both in the public sector and the private sector. You go way back I was in the Secretary of Education Affairs Office as General Counsel when the first lawsuit in Massachusetts on school finance issues was filed. That's a brief summary.

IRIS ESTABROOK, Former State Senator: Hi, I'm (No audio).

MARY HEATH, State Representative, Hillsborough County, District #14: Hi, my name is Mary Heath. I'm long-time, 42 years, educator. I served on Education for four years, two terms, and currently on Finance Division II, which includes education. So here to carry information back, and I'm an alternate to Representative Ames. I'm also -- I, too, on -- I was working at the Department of Ed during the last -- the last round of this. So I'm looking forward to what we're doing and to pass some legislation this year which brought a lot more funding

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to schools. So I'm anxious to move ahead with what we can do for our public schools.

BILL ARDINGER, ESQ., Concord, NH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Bill Ardinger. I'm an attorney at a law firm in town. My law firm represents clients, including before the Legislature. I am here in my personal capacity. Any of my participation is just mine. I went and graduated from Stevens High School in Claremont. I met my wife there, Cass Spanos Ardinger. I went to UNH. Served, both Cass and I, on the public schools here and I was on a Charter Commission in Concord, and I'm on the Board of the University System, and I can't tell how much I believe that public education is the most important asset that we have in New Hampshire. And I'm very happy to be here to work with this group.

JOHN BEARDMORE, Hopkinton, NH: Good morning. My name is John Beardmore. I'm a resident of Hopkinton. I have two children in public schools there, and I myself am a product of public education K through 18. I previously served the State of New Hampshire for 15 years, including stints at the LBA Office, the Governor's Office, and the Department of Revenue. Interestingly, I staffed Senator Estabrook's second go-round in studying education funding in the state.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Thank goodness.

MR. BEARDMORE: I currently work as an investment analyst at Fidelity Investments and just want to take the opportunity like Mr. Ardinger did to point out that my participation is in my individual capacity and not as a representative -- representative of Fidelity Investments. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Well, thank you. Thank you all. It appears the microphones are working and everybody's been qualified to use them. Representative Ford.

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SUSAN FORD, State Representative, Grafton County, District #03: I just wanted to remind you, Representative Luneau, that if you leave the button down anybody can hear a side conversation.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right.

REP. FORD: So you might want to make sure that the button is not down.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Well, it's down right now. Thank you. Thank you. So with that admonition, we'll proceed with -- with really the big piece of business today which is taking nominations and electing a chair. So right now the floor's open for nominations. Senator Kahn.

****** SEN. KAHN: Thank you, Mr. -- Representative. I'd like to nominate Representative David Luneau to chair the Commission (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you. A nomination's been made. Are there further nominations?

REP. AMES: Second.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Oh, very good. Thanks, Dick. Any other nominations at this point? Then, with that, nominations closed. All in favor? Any opposed?

***** {NOMINATION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you all very much. I appreciate the vote of confidence on this and really look forward to -- to working with each and every one of you as we -- as we move this important work forward.

I'm going to -- before I get -- does everyone -- everybody has a copy of the agenda for today? And did everybody who wanted a copy get one back there 'cause we can make some more

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copies. Let me -- let me just ask. Or can you do that, Dick? Thanks very much. So more copies are coming.

Before I get into some remarks, I'm going to open up the -- open up to the Members of the Commission to give us some thoughts on things. Just a couple of more housekeeping things.

Obviously, I've got a bottle of water here. I fully believe in hydration. So if any of the Members want to have water or coffee or something like that, please feel free to do that. And that, obviously, applies to everybody here.

Also, you know, we're going to try to keep these Committee -- these Commission meetings to inside of two hours. So we're sort of looking at a noontime wrap up. But -- but if you feel like you need to stand up at any point, please just go ahead and do that. We can continue working through it, but I want to make sure everybody's comfortable and hydrated.

Into -- into remarks a little bit. I really see my role in this as in terms of having the Commission work through a process to -- to get to a final report which -- which would then become a recommendation for the Legislature to -- to enact policy with regards to education funding. I've had -- I've had people come up to me over the last few months and say, hey, Dave, I already know the answer, you know. And so what I've been telling these people is, okay, that's great but hold onto that, because we're not there yet.

And, you know, as I -- as I mentioned earlier, my background is in engineering. So -- so, you know, so the way that -- the way that, you know, that I approach problems, and I think it's an engineering approach, is -- is from start to finish, the first -- the first thing is understand the problem. And it's actually the hardest part of the entire process. It gets easier from there on; but understand the problem at hand. And I don't think this is an easy problem to understand.

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Some people might think they already know everything about it, and I think all of us bring a fair amount of experience in terms of education funding, past, present, future, worked at the local level, at the State level, maybe at -- at -- with other states, even nationally, but we need to understand what's going on here in New Hampshire in order for us to be able to move into the second phase of the engineering process, which is considering a variety of different solutions. And -- and we're not going to get to a final answer without considering, hey, what are all the different possible ways of solving this problem? And then we'll -- we'll -- we'll as a -- as a -- as a group select the one that we feel is the best for the Granite State and move forward with that.

And when we -- when we take a look at the timeline to get this work done, we're going to have to pull back on the stick and climb hard and fast. There's no question about that. The -- according to statute, the -- our report is due September 1st. I think that's probably a little unrealistic. There is legislation that -- that is actually coming for a hearing tomorrow in Senate Education to push that report date out. And whether that's pushed out to January or December or November, and there's different, you know, different pros and cons to all that, it's probably something that -- that needs to be considered seriously by this Legislature so that it puts this Commission in the best -- in the best foot forward to be able to be productive, take the time that's necessary to understand the problem, consider the solutions, pick the best one and move policy, you know, move policy forward. Senator Kahn.

SEN. KAHN: Just for clarification. That proposed Senate Bill has an end date of January 10th of 2021. It could be any date but that's the bill as submitted, I believe it's 558; but, in any case, it's on the docket for tomorrow's Senate Education (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right. No, thank you very much, Senator Kahn. And as that makes its way through the legislative process, this Commission will, obviously, be doing its work and

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can inform the legislative process where it thinks maybe the best date could be, whether that's a January 10th date or December date or November date or whatever. So, you know, it will be going through the Senate, it will be going through the House and that will, for sure, take a little longer. Yeah, go ahead.

SEN. KAHN: And just --

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, go ahead.

SEN. KAHN: That the Commission is starting a couple of months later than was anticipated as the bill was originated. Just wasn't signed. Legislation action hadn't --

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right.

SEN. KAHN: It's part of the budget bill and that's why the date is moving at this point.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right.

SEN. KAHN: As you say, what starts in the Senate will end in the House and that date can be refined over the next three, four months by this group.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: So we'll be testing this date as we go forward on that. But, in any case, I want to thank you all for your patience in this process, too. I think this is going to be important. Again, you know, I think a lot of us, you know, have given a lot of thought to school funding in New Hampshire. We've talked with a lot of constituents. We've talked to a lot of people that we work with. And, you know, and we each probably feel that we've got some sort of understanding of the problem from those perspectives. But, again, looking at it across the Granite State and really understanding the scope of the problem, I think, is going to be a significant challenge and important piece as the initial work of the Commission.

Leading that, I am going to, you know -- you know, remarks for everybody, too. Leading to that, we've all probably had meetings with people to, you know, in our various communities about education funding. I mean, I was on School Board for 12 years. I've had a lot of discussions about education funding. I worked very, very closely with Representative Ladd and Senate Kahn this past year on education funding, and I learned a tremendous amount from that -- from that close-working relationship. So even with 12 years on the School Board, it's -- I was blown away by what I learned from working with Rick and Jay on this. And I really appreciate their time and your time of going forward on this.

One of the things that -- that Rick and I did last spring? Summer? Spring? Spring. We sat down with two of your colleagues from Maine and Duke Albanese, and Maine had recently gone through some education. I don't know if you want to talk a little.

REP. LADD: Yes. When I was a school administrator or principal over in the Oakland area, Waterville, in Maine, Duke Albanese was my athletic director. Duke Albanese then went on became Commissioner of Education for the State of Maine. During his time that formula there was looked at and reviewed. A new school building aid formula was put in and we borrowed that to modify our school building aid program. Unfortunately, it's been in moratorium for numerous years and we're now out, thank goodness, for what Finance did this last year. However, those individuals have a lot of background, and Duke is now presently working with the Great Schools Project, which involves all the states in New England and has a wonderful understanding and purview of what's going on in terms of school funding from Rhode Island, Connecticut, up through Maine, and through our state as well. Wonderful resource.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right. Thank you very much, Rick. And, you know, one of the other things that we learned from -- from that conversation was -- was the -- was in Maine they actually worked with the University of Maine to help

coordinate that -- University of Southern Maine to help coordinate that effort. And -- and that has, you know, led to conversations that I've had with -- with Jim Dean, President of UNH, and others at UNH about what sort of capacity our University System may have in being able to help not -- not do all the research, but help to coordinate this effort. So -- so as we -- as we go through the duties of the Commission, let's be thinking about how we can -- how we can work with resources that are here in New Hampshire, that can -- that can let us not only reach into New Hampshire's specific data, but also data across the country, what other states are doing.

And I guess a final comment that I want to make is -- is as we move this -- this -- this Commission work forward, in parallel with our work and, you know, if Mel was here today -- Mel's got a conflict today so -- so that's why he's not here. He would be speaking to this. But he talks about it as the second rail along with what we're doing. And it's really a communication effort that -- that marches in parallel with us. And as we're trying to understand the problem, this second rail, this communications effort, will -- will really begin with a lot of listening and meeting with groups and it's not -- it's not our Commission that's going to be setting up tons of meetings with groups; but, hopefully, who we're working with as partners to help -- to help, you know, coordinate and organize this effort. But really going on a listening tour across the state, understanding what the challenges that different parts of our state have in terms of funding education. I think we all probably, you know, certainly understand what our local challenges are in our own communities, but -- but, you know, being, you know, up in front of -- of in some cases 600 voting members at a Hopkinton School District meeting, I've heard a lot from -- from what -- from what my constituents have said. But you know what? If you go 20 minutes up the road, might be hearing something very different. And that's what we need to -- we need to make sure that we're listening to that, too.

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So, with that, again, I want to thank everybody. Thank you for your patience in advance, and open up the floor for Members who would care to make some remarks. Bill.

MR. ARDINGER: Thank you so much. Yes, you know, Mr. Chair, that I have plenty to say many, many times; but I'd love to hear some of the legislative leaders and others speak first just to hear the setting that we're in, if that's all right. You're right. I do have stuff to say from time to time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: So who wants to -- yeah, Representative Heath.

REP. HEATH: I am so optimistic about this group; but I also want us to think about what is it that we want for New Hampshire children? Because our economic future, the quality of life, all depends on presenting -- giving the opportunity for public education for -- to a certain degree. So that our children are achieving and given the opportunities that they can to really do well and go forward in work, in postsecondary, whatever it is.

But I'm very concerned that we get stuck on the financial piece and I want us to think about which should our system look like? And then what is it we need to do in terms of finances to go forward with that? I'm very impressed with the work that I've seen Massachusetts do in terms of looking at early education, preschool, extended school year, after school time, but also the quality of the instruction that we provide in our classrooms. And I think that's something that, you know, as a past teacher, it's so important we give our educators the tools and the training that they need in order to be the very best teachers that our children in New Hampshire deserve.

So I just want to make that statement just because I've spent so many years in the classroom, I've been an administrator, worked at the Department of Ed, and our teachers are a strong force; but they also need the tools. And our students come from different places, and they come to the table with different needs.

So we have a big job ahead of us, but I just want us to remember to focus on why we're here. It's not just about money. It's about the quality of education, ultimately, our New Hampshire kids deserve.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Representative Heath. Very well said. Any other thoughts while we're here? Senator Kahn.

SEN. KAHN: Well, I think teed up was some interest from other legislators that are here. And I think, you know, this is my second term in the Legislature. Bill knows my past from the University System where we -- I worked at Keene State College for 28 years. He and I interacted for many of those. The funding issue is, though, what is so ingrained in the minds of New Hampshire's residents and people who take an interest in our local school districts, and the annual budgeting process that takes place in those school districts. We have an incredible number of school districts. We have a citizen-based government in the state that relies on our citizenry being a part of that decision-making process.

So when Representative Luneau says we have a communication process, I understand that in that light. That there are many people working hard to address the quality of schools over 235 towns in the State of New Hampshire and like 600 plus schools. It's an enormous infrastructure that doesn't easily get amalgamated into a single system. That -- that's for sure. School District superintendents understand that.

Second is, I think, that we tried very hard in this legislative session to grapple with the funding inequities. And it's unavoidable to -- to not acknowledge that based on property assessments we struggle with that as a part of our funding structure in the state; a significant part of that funding structure. So I think what the Legislature attempted to do is to try to recognize that there are some stabilization factors and equalization factors that we could address in school

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budgets. It wound up costing a significant amount of money using some one-time funds to do it.

So it's -- the sustainability of that thought in the numbers may not be as possible as the concepts that were used. So I think going back to what were the foundational concepts that were looked at that came out, in part, from a Study Commission that took place just the last legislative session and offered some ideas, and I think that is going to be a useful source for us as well.

And, finally, I think we have a number of funding levels that we need to address. I think I'd be -- it would be a wonderful thing to come out of this with a single solution; but we may find ourselves with a couple of "if then" that are going to be useful for us that a single model might be desirable, but there are alternatives that this study maybe should lead to so that we don't feel handcuffed by a single solution.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Senator Kahn. Representative Ladd.

REP. LADD: Thank you very much. I'll leave this mic on after Jay spoke here. I've been on a number of studies dealing with this issue of school funding for the 12 years since I first came on and with Emma Rous, who was chairing our Committee back then with Senator Estabrook, and Dave Hess, and Randy Foose, and a number of folks. Since then we've chipped away at this formula in different ways, and I don't believe we've made a whole lot of progress. In fact, I think in some regards we've made it more difficult for our school districts to function.

As regard with reference to all this chipping, we do have some real issues and if you've read many articles, *A Rural Crisis in Funding* in this state, put together years ago by the Center for Public Policy and others, there's significant issues. They're dealing with disparity between Districts. Equity for all students in our state. And, for me, the shrinking gap between our State funding formula and that -- that reflects on actuality

on the Department of Education DOE Form 25, the reality factor, there's a huge gap.

That gap is hurting our schools. You can go from one District to a neighboring abutting District where one District has AP courses, the other doesn't. One may have a lot of enrichment courses, the other doesn't. And we're going through a demographic decline in this state and we need every student, every student for our workforce. And if we're missing these students, we're going to be chasing various industries and economies out our state.

So I think in terms of our workforce, we've got to look at this. Just prior to this meeting, I was attending a Career Technical Education Advisory Committee downstairs. And they're all saying, "Wow! Don't forget us." And then also School Building -- Building Aid, "Don't forget us." We have some real issues. So chipping away at this old formula isn't the way to go. We've got to go back, redefine, and march forward with a funding formula that's going to serve all.

Yes, our teachers do a wonderful job in this state. We have a 97% graduation rate. And, yes, we have some problems in teaching of mathematics in school -- at some schools; but we're making a lot of gain, moving forward. But this education formula is the key to it all. And so, hopefully, over the next year, and I'm willing to work as many hours as necessary with the group right here to make this thing work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Representative Ladd. Representative Ames.

REP. AMES: I hope I've done this right. The button, I mean.

Well, I completely agree with Representative Ladd's remarks. They are right on. This is a tremendously difficult, tremendously serious issue that we're embarking on. I think it's important to set aside as best as each of us can do our predilections on which way to go and things and listen and learn

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as we go through this process. And remember always that we are impelled forward by a Constitutional imperative. That's really why we're here. Let's be honest. That Constitutional duty that we have to ensure that every child have an opportunity for an adequate education. And we all know that there are inequities, that there are failures in meeting that -- that goal.

So going forward I see -- I see the task in a way as two-fold. The first, and arguably the most important, is determining what we mean by an adequate education, giving content to that. Because we really can't deal with the cost side unless we have fleshed out the programmatic side, the obligation. And then the educational side, if you will, and then where we know there's the how to pay for it side, and that's a very, very difficult issue. Both are extraordinarily difficult, and maybe on the revenue side politics intrudes, but we need to -- we need to just go at it, deal with the facts, deal with the imperatives, and come out in a good -- I hope in a very good place. I'm really encouraged by membership of this Commission and it's clearly, I think, we're up to the task. Let's go forward. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Great. Thank you very much, Representative Ames. Senator Morgan.

SEN. MORGAN: It's really just a privilege to be serving on this Commission, both as a father with -- with three little boys, all of whom will enter the public school system, two of them are already there; but also as a representative of all nine of my towns in the southeastern corner of the state. You know, this Commission has the potential to address some of the most fundamental challenges that the State of New Hampshire faces going forward and that's really a big part of the reason why it's such an honor to serve with the folks on this Commission to be looking at this incredibly challenging issue. Whether we're talking about the economy, economic development, workforce, affordable housing, even access to health care in the second oldest state in the country, all of these issues are tied to our schools, and how strong our public school system is, and how we

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decide as a state to fund that. And the opportunity that we have here is to find a more sustainable path forward and determine the legacy that -- that our generation leaves to future generations of the state.

So I'm really optimistic, cautiously so, but I'm optimistic that we can find that more sustainable path forward.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Terrific. Thanks so much, Senator Morgan. We still have some more time for some comments or remarks, anybody that would like to jump in. Bill, you ready? All right.

MR. ARDINGER: I was one to watch her leadership on the last commission. I'm very pleased to be on a Commission with you, Senator.

I thank you, Mr. Chair, for offering the chance to speak about this. I think you've definitely put your finger on an important thing for success for a Committee like this, because we've all touched on it. It's an unbelievably complicated thing. Public education is so important to every community, and it has stakeholders that are diverse. You know, in Concord, New Hampshire, right now I was chatting with someone and talking with Doug Hall, you know, almost 30% of our students in Concord are new Americans. This is a pathway that public education wasn't serving in Claremont when I was a kid going to Stevens. It's remarkable how -- how important this institution is. So I'm very happy to be here.

I would also say when we come to the table that New Hampshire's public school systems are pretty good. So if you just kind of say, well, we're, you know, let's take stock. Do we have problems? Okay, we always talk -- you know, we spent last year according to the DOE, you know, \$3.2 billion of all sources of revenue in New Hampshire on public education. It is by far the most important expenditure that we do as a public sector, as a government. We are 13th highest in the country on spending when measured by the number of pupils in our system.

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We're doing okay; but when you talk about, Mr. Chair, defining the problem, I think there exists the same problem that caused some incredible lawyers, like Attorney Tobin, to take on the case in 19 -- late eighties, early 1990s, there is an inequity between Districts that are not able to exercise the same property tax power as others. Claremont is one.

When I was a kid they had two really good manufacturing plants in Claremont. We had an excellent public school system, a great population, and -- but they closed. And when they closed, Claremont's situation shifted to where it wasn't able to raise as much local tax as it had in the past to support great teachers and great community support.

I would say that today, you know, I've read reports by Attorney Tobin and Doug Hall that says even with all the work that the Legislature has done since 1993 and '99, Claremont I and II, the inequities still remain between Claremont and other wealthier -- property wealthier towns. Berlin, you know, where I used to play baseball underneath the mill. And I think that -- and for me, when you talk about what is the most important problem to define, it is a laser-like focus on directing State resources to remedy the inequity that is suffered by property poor communities. That is, to me, the number one thing in my mind as I start out; and as I start out, I am very excited to be working with the membership of this Committee. I'm actually feeling like we have a chance to do that. But defining the problem upfront, there's literally I can think of, you know, hundreds of problems raised in an examination of public education because it's so vital. But, to me, as one member starting out with my background, which is very much rooted in Claremont, I think that job needs to be to look to other states, like Massachusetts. When Massachusetts had the exact same problem with their *McDuffy* case, what they did as a state was drive resources to Lowell, not to Wellesley. And I think, you know, I'm very much open-minded, but I wanted to disclose you were nice to let me to have the opportunity. I have a bias and it's about my background which is rooted in Claremont.

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I also was a State Rep when I was at UNH when I was 18 years old, represented Cornish and Croydon, and I remember how important it was for Croydon to have support, not just through the single foundation aid formula which was a fiscal equity component, but special-education support. I was unbelievably pleased to see the Legislature change the name of that program from Catastrophic Aid, which was unforgivable for years, to Special-Education Aid. And also Building Aid which is another thing that really contributes to inequities.

I would hope that we take a holistic approach, taking all the State resources that are devoted to public education into account and not just get lost in the minutia of what the word Adequacy means. When, in fact, we're spending close to, you know, on median, you know, 15, 16, 17,000 per pupil already across the entire state.

So I'm very excited to do it. I have a bias which is focused on solving that equity issue that has been just recently re-identified by work of the same lawyer who found the problem in the first place, and look forward to working with you.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Terrific. Thanks very much, Mr. Ardinger. Any other comments? Senator Estabrook.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Sure, by invitation. I'm here with the knowledge having learned this through experience that lasting solutions to issues as big as this are not arrived at with a one-time look. So -- hum -- I am happy that I've been able to be there for the past looks at this issue and really am excited, as others, to see how we can improve upon that work.

Having said that, I think that there are certain things that remain the same. I think you've identified one of them, the issue of inequity was big on our minds in the past. And we were constrained in many ways by the Court's ruling of what we were and were not allowed to consider in addressing the issue of Adequacy. And in the end, we realized that you cannot address

those issues of inequity without going beyond Adequacy. And so I am interested to see how this Commission is going to tackle that very same problem.

I also agree with Represented Ladd that the work of the 708 Commission has been chipped away at almost from the minute it was enacted when the collar was adopted to prevent certain Districts from experiencing a sudden shift in funding. And since then, though, I haven't been keeping up-to-date.

I appreciate the research that we've been provided which will enable me to do that; but I do have the impression that not only the collar, but then the subsequent loss of Building Aid and the substitution of Fiscal Capacity Disparity Aid, the Stabilization Grants, and on, and on, there have been so many amendments to the original approach that I would be interested to see how we can take a look back at that, learn from that, where we may have gone wrong, and where it points us in the future. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Terrific. Thanks. Thanks so much, Senator Estabrook. Any other thoughts while we're -- while we're at this point? Yeah, yeah. Go ahead, Representative Ladd.

REP. LADD: I think -- I think we need to look back as the Senator just mentioned. But one of the things that I'd like to encourage this Committee to do is that our entire formula's based upon per capita. We need to start looking in a different direction. Per capita is definitely going to be part of any mix, but you know, weighted formulas, et cetera.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: All right. Hang on a second. Hang on a second. That -- we're just not there yet.

REP. LADD: Yeah, I understand we're not there. I understand. So that's a lot of hard work there and we've got to do our research.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah. No, no, and I appreciate the comment on that. Push the red button so I don't have to --

What I heard going around the table here was fantastic and both from a -- from a I've got stuff to contribute, and I've got a lot to learn about this. So I really, really appreciated sort of that -- that sentiment coming through. I guess if I were to boil it down to a single term, it would really be open mindset. And I'm really glad that -- that as members of a Commission we're all approaching this -- this challenge with, you know, with that type of like growth, with a growth mindset that's really going to be necessary, I think, for us to be successful.

And, you know, little bit of the early research -- I shouldn't say early research. I mean, just sort of, you know, things that you run into when -- when -- whether it's attending, you know, NCSL, you know, forums, or ECS meetings, or talking with -- with people and with legislators in other -- in other states. There have been some -- some states that have -- have dedicated a lot of time and effort and energy towards to try to develop education funding models in their states. In a lot of cases they haven't succeeded to turn into -- to manifest into durable policy within their legislators -- within their legislatures. And I'm really -- I think, more than anything else, I don't want that to happen here. And, you know, I think we -- we understand that there's significant challenge, a significant problem, and we need to do something. Doesn't matter if you're running for State Rep, or State Senator, or School Board member. When you're knocking on doors, the first thing our constituents say is what are you doing about property taxes? What are you doing about education funding? The first thing -- it's the first thing we hear. And so -- so that's what we're here to do. And I appreciate everybody's growth mindset in doing this forum.

With that, I'd like to introduce everybody to this. And this probably isn't the only documents that we're going to be getting over the next, let's just say, you know, year or so; but -- but it's a starting point. And -- and the first thing

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that's in here, I'm not going to go through -- well, actually, on the -- on your agenda, there's a list of documents and really talks about what -- what's in here and there's some -- some supplemental documents that you may want to -- you may want to slip inside this notebook. But on -- and I've got put a shout out and thanks to the Legislative Budget Assistant Office in helping in assembling this and preparing this. But even though we're an independent Commission, a lot of the logistics around here doesn't happen without -- without support from -- from our State House team. And so many thanks to Mike Kane and Mickey Landrigan and their team for helping to -- and Jennifer Foor, our Education Committee Assistant, and Janet Clayman, the Finance Assistant, for helping to pull all of these things together.

But if you could just sort of open it up to the very first page, I think the first thing that should be on there is the statute that was signed into law in the State Budget that establishes this Commission, and it just sort of goes through the logistics of it. But I really wanted to get down to -- well, let's just sort of go through it for -- from the top. Talks about members of the Commission, and I believe all but one member of the Commission would be a member of the public to be appointed by the President of the Senate has been seated; is that correct? I believe that's correct. Yeah, terrific. I was just looking for confirmation on that. So -- 'cause I hadn't seen an update on that. I checked yesterday afternoon.

So -- so we're still waiting on another member of the public to be appointed by the President of the Senate. And that we'll be appointing three more members of the -- of the public to be appointed by the Chair. And we'll be -- I'll be working on that in the next -- in the next couple of days.

I'd really like to be at full steam, full strength, so to speak, come our next meeting, which is probably going to be on if we're looking to meet Mondays -- we'll get in the calendar a little bit, but I think it's probably two weeks out so we'll have time to get those members appointed, get them copies of

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this information so that -- so that we can all hit the ground running at the next meeting.

Jumping down to -- to Roman IV, I just wanted to review what the Commission's charge is, some of the duties are. And they're really -- they're really identified right on the -- this section of the law, and I think they reflect what much of the remarks contained that, you know, looking about an equitable funding design. So we heard, you know, equitable brought up several times by several members. Determine whether the school funding formula complies with court decisions.

So we've got some -- some -- I don't know, what do you want to call it? Some -- some -- some points here. I don't want to call them guardrails, but to some extent they are, that really say, hey, you've got to -- you've got to comply with these -- with these things. So -- so those documents, the Claremont I and II decisions, and the recent ConVal decisions are contained in this -- in this notebook for reference.

Trends and disparities across the state in terms of student performance. So this is item (c). Another really important thing and I think ties in with this second rail of going around and holding meetings across the state. Not Commission meetings, but listening posts, community forums, and finding out what's going on, hearing from community members, stakeholders, everybody in the Granite State is a stakeholder in this. So -- so and, clearly, there's changes. I mean, Mr. Ardinger laid it out, too. It's very different in Claremont than it is in Bow, than it is in Concord, Hopkinton, Newport, Berlin, you know, Weare, Pittsfield. And, you know, all of these stakeholders -- stakeholders deserve a voice in this -- in this study.

Let's see. On (d), re-establish the baseline for costs and programs. So that's really the defining the adequate education. And so now we're getting into -- into, you know, some of the -- some of the proposal development or policy development on that.

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Anyway, I'm not going to go through -- go through all of it here. But this really takes us through and I don't think we should feel that -- that if the -- if the statute doesn't specifically talk about things like Special-Education Aid or Building Aid or -- or -- or support for behavioral health and professional development of our staff that we shouldn't not consider these things. So -- so as the Commission's work moves forward, I think let's make sure we're looking at, and I think this reflects what Mr. Ardinger was saying, the big umbrella of what public education means in New Hampshire. I think that's the intent of -- of this statute.

Let's see. On the -- on the back side of that -- that page, Commission shall establish a budget and hire staff with an understanding of school finance options. Such staff shall be independent of government agencies. I'm sort of like I -- I had some questions to the prime sponsor of this legislation when it was -- before it was rolled into the budget. It was part of House Bill 551 sponsored by Representative Myler. So, Mel, what did you mean by that? And -- and we've had some confirmation from the House attorney, Jim Cianci, who said really what that is saying that you're not leaning on the Department of Education to do all the work for you here. So really the work that we're doing is -- is independent of -- of the agency. We're certainly going to be relying on input from various State Agencies, but they're not the ones doing the, you know, the collection, the analysis, and the policy development going forward.

As far as a budget, we do have a budget or I should say we have an appropriation which was very interesting and Mary's heard me -- actually, Mel has been the one that's really talked about it. So not to steal any of his thunder on this, but -- but when -- when the legislation was first -- was first put in, it was -- it was suggested to appropriate \$500,000. So not a -- not an -- not an inexpensive type of thing by -- certainly by any comparison, but certainly for the State Budget. And then subsequent to the -- to the work, and this being signed into -- into law, we really did receive -- we

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received confirmation that, yeah, that's right around how much this should -- should be talking with -- talking with the Charitable Foundation, and how much effort's going to go into -- into this. And so -- so we have that budget to or we have that amount of funding to work from for this for going to the shall -- shall establish a budget and hire staff.

(Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yes. Absolutely, Senator.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Thanks. Yeah, I wondered about that half million dollar appropriation. Are we going to discuss how that will be used or will that just be a decision of the Chair?

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: No, thanks very much for the question. We'll definitely be discussing how that is to be used. And I think it's probably going -- we're not going to discuss it today because we're not at full strength here. We've still got four more members to join us around the table. But I'm hoping that's going to be a discussion at our next meeting, if that's okay -- if that's okay. Great. Thanks very much. So -- so any thoughts or questions going through the duties of this Commission?

All right. I'm going to keep rolling through the agenda. How we doing on time? So we're just beyond 11. So I do want to be respectful of people's time, make sure we're sort of, you know, wheels up by noon today because I know everybody's got other stuff, too. But I want to make sure we get through all of this.

We've sort of already talked about, I think, the process framework which, you know, number one, teeing up, understanding the problem. And -- and that's something that I think we'll -- we'll get into more discussion of at our -- at our next meeting. And, you know, and I think one of the -- one of the groups who -- who may be able to help us with -- with talking about the -- the process, probably are, you know, State

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University, UNH, in particular the Carsey School, and also I would suggest we also hear from NCSL who has worked with -- with many, many other states in facing very, very similar challenges. Maybe with different outcomes and, you know, different situations on the ground, but -- but to be able to really give us a picture of -- of, you know, what it looks like across -- across 50 states and what a timeline would be to getting this -- getting this work done. Obviously, the timeline's very important, because that ties right into what Senator Kahn was talking about earlier with the legislation that's moving through the Senate and then the House.

Any further thoughts on framework, timeline? People want to hear from University System, Carsey School, NCSL at our next meeting? Does this make sense? Anybody else that we might want to hear from at the next meeting with regards to that particular type of thing?

SEN. ESTABROOK: Isn't that a lot for one meeting?

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: It is.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Can we hear from one at one and one at another?

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: I just wanted -- anyway, if you've got thoughts of more organizations that you want to hear from, please let me know. We can spread them out on there, you know, to different meetings. But I just want to make sure that we're addressing, Commission Members, the people you've run into. There's not a -- so, you know, in a conversation with I think it's -- is it Dan Baxter over at NCSL who heads up the education. Thatcher, Dan Thatcher. He basically said, you know, there's -- there's not a whole lot of groups that get into the -- the education funding expertise and business so, you know, NCSL, ECS are a couple of them. There's certainly some others.

What do -- what do members think about -- about adopting a mission statement for our Commission? Is this something you want to consider? Rick?

REP. LADD: I think our mission is the statute that was passed. And we could spend days in here quibbling over, you know, this word or that word. I think we all know where we've got to go. I'd like to really, due to the shortness that, you know, we talk about possibly like January 10th, we may if it's extended but if not, we're under a real short fuse here. So I would -- I would rather start digging in and doing what you initially talked about, you know, I like to always refer to it's like STP. What is the situation? What's our target? Where we want to go? And the proposal, the P, how we going to get there? What are we going to do? I'd like to get down and really define what our situation is and start like why we here? Well, we know why we're here. But to identify some of these many, many, as Bill references, there's probably a hundred type elements within it which all need address so let's start working on this.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thanks, Rick. I mean, that's fair enough. The reason I put it on there was because we, obviously, heard a lot of -- a lot of thoughts during the remarks that went around the table and a lot of those -- a lot of those thoughts don't necessarily -- are not necessarily encompassed by the specific words in the statute. For instance, Representative Heath talks about, you know, the importance of education and children and -- and I don't even think -- I don't even think some of those words are even in the statute.

So -- so I'm not suggesting that we spend a lot of time working on mission development because I agree that can take -- that can take a lot of time. But let me just sort of take this off to the side and see if there's something that could be done on it. And maybe I will bring something forward for the Commission to consider, maybe I won't. So -- but we'll just sort of take that offline if that's --

(Inaudible.)

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CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, absolutely. You're talking about -- yeah, yeah. Absolutely, absolutely. No, fully understand that.

So keep going here. I want to talk calendar for a little bit. The -- we talked a little bit earlier how we're going to have to sort of pull back on the stick and climb hard in order to get things started. Today's the 13th of January. Next Monday is -- is a State holiday and State Offices are going to be closed. Following Monday is January 27th and wow, we're already through the month of January and we're at our second meeting.

So -- so first question is how do people feel about Mondays? Yeah. Don't like them? Like them? There's a song about that, right?

DR. RYAN: Yes, there is, Mr. Chairman. Mondays work fine for me. Nothing like starting the week off with education funding discussion.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Okay, fantastic. Thanks very much. Thank you very much, Superintendent Ryan. No, really good. So Monday 10 o'clock. Yeah, John.

MR. BEARDMORE: I would like to put a pitch in for maybe some Friday meetings, perhaps. My understanding is legislative business is typically Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. I understand those don't work.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah.

MR. BEARDMORE: Monday is not a good day for me. I'll do my very best, if Monday is what it is; but just one vote against Monday for what it's worth.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Okay. No, thanks very much, Commissioner Beardmore. I -- I think there might be a way to do that, too. So -- so for this particular room, Mondays work really well.

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Fridays can be problematic in this room with other things that get scheduled on Fridays through -- I think through the Finance Committee or Fiscal Committee. And -- but this isn't the only room that works and we might be able to find other rooms that breakdown into large formats so that's possible. But let me -- let me sort of swing into the next question that I have with the calendar, and maybe this is a way to incorporate Fridays. But how would people -- how would Members feel about -- about taking our -- certainly not every week but occasionally taking our Commission meetings on the road? I mean, people generally like that idea? I mean, Corinne's, you know, driving down from, you know, from Berlin for these.

DR. CASCADDEN: (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, Yeah. No, but I -- thank you very much, Dr. Cascadden, because I think, you know, that -- I think we would benefit from being on-site in some -- in a variety of Districts across the state, and it would also provide a level of transparency and access to our meetings. Representative Heath.

REP. HEATH: Will you allow for public testimony during these meetings, especially when we're going on various sites? Seems like it would be good to hear from the issues and concerns that people out there have, and we'd probably get different voices if we could have, you know, something set aside for public testimony.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, absolutely. I think that's a great idea. You'll actually see that on this agenda, too. And it's something that -- that we -- that I always did when I chaired a School Board and I think it helped inform our School Board when we -- when we heard public comments. So, you know, I think, unless anybody objects, I think all of our meetings will probably have a public comment.

REP. LADD: Senator Estabrook, please explain to us how it was done in 2008 and whether you had went through all this process?

SEN. ESTABROOK: Oh, yeah, we went on quite a road trip. Yeah, yeah. We were way up north. We were all over the state. We had at least a half dozen meetings, hearings, whatever you might call them, they were really a combination, a lot taking public input around the state was the idea. Not so much for them to witness our meetings but for us to hear from them. Yeah. And just back to the Chair's original question about calendar. Mondays or Fridays are fine with me. I just, unfortunately, can't be here on the 27th. I already have something planned.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Superintendent Ryan.

DR. RYAN: I just wanted to make sure that as we went through the remarks and we listened to everyone's reason for being here, I want to remind as I learned from Jon's father that years ago that 80% of the folks who live in my community, and I suspect around the state, don't have children currently in our schools, and I want it to be explicitly stated that while our number one reason for being here, at least for myself and I know, also, for Representative Heath is for our children because they're our future, I also want to make sure that our taxpayers are understanding that the work that we're doing is also on their behalf, given that 80% of our population needs to hear what we have to say, but we also really need to hear what they have to say.

So I would strongly urge the Commission to consider taking this around the state to listen to what folks have to say with some possible solutions in that conversation.

SEN. ESTABROOK: The other thing is I also recall there were some logistics involved. I mean, there's a lot of planning that goes into it and setting up microphones and things like that so just keep that in mind. Hum -- yeah.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Senator Kahn.

SEN. KAHN: So just for the order of going through a planned agenda and also being present for hearing from a variety of State constituents, I'd hope that we would separate the two ideas. Combine them on a day and a place, although even the place might vary. But the notion that we try to march through an agenda efficiently and not short shrift what work needs to be done, at the same time use the day and the times, just separate times, for public testimony.

SEN. ESTABROOK: The other memory is that I think some of these were held in the evening so that people would have an opportunity to attend, and that's another logistical issue.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right. So -- so I think all good thoughts there. The -- the -- I think what we're -- what we're also talking about here are two different things. There's Commission meetings where we will have public content, comment, where we will also be conducting the business of the Commission which will be hearing reports and coming to some determination on identifying the problem, identifying solutions, they'll be reports based on research that's being done, based on this -- from the work being done by this staff that we're hiring, working with experts here in the state and across the country and that -- and that group also providing this second rail of listening and communication across the state. So these are going to be forums, not Commission meetings, that are taking place.

I mean, you know, between now and when our report's due we're probably looking at -- I mean, I don't know how many Commission meetings Senator Estabrook had in 2007, but maybe 18. I mean, but it's something like that. It's not going to be 50. So -- but I mean, am I right on this as far as the size? But -- but it's going to be somewhere on the 18 meetings or so. We're going to need a lot more than that as far as -- as far as meetings with community members across -- across the state as we -- as we research -- as our research team really understands the challenges that we're facing.

So -- so certainly hope that Commission members will go to these forums, these community forums; but those won't be commission meetings. But I do want our Commission meetings to have a public comment section -- section in the agenda, not necessarily for collecting information about what's going on specifically in a District but it could be. But, really, we'll be looking at the forums for being the comprehensive data collection of that information.

So I guess what I'm hearing is Mondays are generally good. Let's have -- let's have some Friday meetings in there, too. People like the idea of -- of going around and having some on-site meetings, recognizing that there's logistics that have to go along with that, because we are being live-streamed. We want to make sure we provide that level of access to people around the Granite State who we know feel how important this is. So we want to make sure that -- that even when we're on the road we're accessible. Yeah.

MR. ARDINGER: Mr. Chair, listening to this and listening to how you're organizing it, I'm thinking that you of all people, you need support from this group to encourage you to get a chief of staff engaged, however that process works. And you all in the Legislative Branch will know how it should work. But the sooner you can get a chief of staff, the more time you'll have to sleep. Because right now I'm listening to it. I don't hear a lot of time to eat and sleep in your schedule. So, if at all, unless the Commission feels differently, trying to move towards that chief of staff being presented to however the process works, like by next meeting, it seems like it be really smart. And then that person can start handling some of Senator Estabrook's identified logistics.

SEN. ESTABROOK: I would second, third, fourth that. I don't think we could have survived without a staffer dedicated to it. So I would highly encourage some of that funding be used for that.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Okay. Thanks very much for both those comments. I think that's -- that's the intent is for our next meeting for -- for there to be a presentation on a statement of work that -- that can be done here and how that would be accomplished along with -- with, you know, really details on that and the detailed budget that goes along with that. So -- so at our next meeting, knock on wood, we'll be at full strength and we'll have 16 members that can hear from that, consider that, and that there'll be an action item on the agenda to approve such a thing. Yes, Superintendent Cascadden.

DR. CASCADDEN: Just a question, whether the time, if you feel -- the Commission feels the time always needs to be 10 to 12 or if they would consider a different time, and I only throw it out because it hasn't been talked about in terms of times.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah. Thanks very much. Rick, you have some thoughts on that?

REP. LADD: Yes. And for those of us that drive a significant way to get here, from either Berlin or from Haverhill or from the southern part of the state up, I found that our advisory meetings for the Career Technical Education, which starts at 9 o'clock in the morning, I don't mind getting up earlier to get down here and then I can constructively spend maybe two, three hours in the Committee here together and that three hours, you know, it may help. So I'm not objecting to, even though we live farther away, to starting earlier than 10 o'clock in the morning.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Any other -- yeah -- thoughts on that.

MR. ARDINGER: Also on -- in the afternoon on the tail end of the day, also, I think, works for similar reasons. It allows you to kind of start or finish the day. I had a -- I just really think I'm interested in -- that those folks who've got -- you have days built, that one side or the other will work better with times and we should do that. And also, you know, with my colleague here, I call him Commissioner, because I can't do

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otherwise, but I know that I'm thinking of the investment calendar and how his job works. So afternoon sometimes works better than morning.

DR. RYAN: As long as you're bringing a lot of caffeine.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: So, no, that's great. So we'll -- we'll take a look at -- at maybe, you know, sometimes having some earlier starts, maybe sometimes having an afternoon start, maybe sometimes having a Friday meeting. We'll have to, obviously, see as far as the availability of these facilities for those -- at those times and then, obviously, at any of the off-site locations that we may want to meet in, and I suspect those would be, you know, School District auditorium or something like that, so.

But -- and I definitely hear you when talking about a chief of staff and how we really need to get up to speed quickly. We do need to pull back on the stick hard, climb fast, and that's the way to get this done. So I really, really appreciate the Members of the Committee suggesting that. Because I -- I certainly didn't want to be presumptuous about this first meeting, but we'll bring forward something for you all to consider at the next one. Superintendent Cascadden.

DR. CASCADDEN: Just want to reiterate with Representative Ladd. I'm very used to travelling. Earlier is better. And, certainly, later in the afternoon also, as he had mentioned, allows for probably work. I work part-time. So work a half day and then come down or the reverse, come really early, work the other half of the day. Just a suggestion.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Great, great. Fantastic. I like that very much. All right. Are we done with -- anybody else have any thoughts on calendar while we're -- yes, Senator Kahn.

SEN. KAHN: Decide about February 24th. Every other week gets us to February 24th eventually and that is school vacation week,

and it's okay for me. In fact, it might even be better; but if you're going to lose members, you should know today.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, so we'll -- let's -- let's -- we'll consider that more a little bit more at the next meeting on that. We don't need to quite get into that. Rick.

REP. LADD: It might be noted that there are two vacation weeks in the state.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So let's -- I'll take a look at that. We'll see what we do about there. You know, when we talk about this Commission's, you know, calendar, and that we're probably going to have 18 or so, you know, meetings over -- over at least, you know, the time to get -- to get our report out, probably looking at a lot of, you know, fairly frequent meetings in the beginning, a little more spread out in the middle, and then sort of frequent again at the end. Does that sort of make sense?

So -- so -- so I think next week as we -- as we, you know, hear a proposal to help with the coordination and logistics, I'll also take a look at -- at timeline on that and what they expect to be able to help us accomplish over this -- over this, you know, say 12-month period. So good. Anything else on calendar? Rick.

REP. LADD: It's not quite calendar, but how did the Senator handle it back in 2007-8, was somebody taking notes and minutes of these meetings? I notice -- I don't know --

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: So, yeah, let me talk about that. We are going to have minutes for the meeting. We are being live-streamed right now and that will be recorded. The AV on this is going to be up on a -- we've got a Committee -- sorry -- a Commission website that -- that House Legislative Services is operating for us. The Legislative Budget Assistant has been very, very kind to lend their assistance in terms of transcribing that. So we'll have a full transcription

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of this meeting, and we'll also have minutes of this meeting, too, which will, obviously, be less than a full transcription. More of a high-level summary of remarks that went -- went through. But once we -- once we have a -- once we have staff on board, I suspect those things are going to be easier to do.

We don't necessarily need to discuss this right now, but I'm very concerned that we -- that not only that we have our meetings live-streamed and available for viewing later, but that those live -- that live-stream and the audio video on that is fully accessible, too. So -- so I'm sort of thinking about, and with your permission, I'd like to talk with some people about -- about how we might may be able to have those -- those videos also transcribed. We see this stuff on social media all the time, and it's not -- it's not court reporting detail, but it's enough that somebody that has hearing impairments would be able to follow along and sort of understand what's being -- what's being said.

So -- so I'd like to look into that a little bit. I don't think we typically do that with Committee meetings. Finance does a transcription, but they don't do -- I don't think it's dovetailed with -- with -- with the audio/video recording, so. So anyway I want to look at that. You know, access is obviously something very important in public education, and I want to make sure that these Commission meetings are accessible. Anything else while we're on this stop? No? Then I'm going to --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Well, we're not there yet.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, but next meeting is the last thing we're going to do. So it's just the way I wrap things up. But what I'd like to do right now is -- is open the floor up to our stakeholders here and -- and hear from members of our community, members of the public, to let us know what they think about what

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they've heard today and where you might want to, you know, see us going. If there's anything we missed -- sorry -- if there's anything we missed today, let us know so we can make sure we take that up.

Just for -- just for leading into this, I know we've got a lot of, you know, people that I see regularly here in the LOB. We've got a representative from the Department here who I would very much like at some point to come present the current world of school funding. Is that something members would like to hear? We don't need to hear it today, because we're not -- we're not at full, you know, full strength yet. But -- but would people like to hear it earlier rather than later? Yeah. Okay.

So -- so, Miss Davis, we'll -- I'll be reaching out to -- we'll be reaching out to get you on the agenda soon. Other members of the public like to -- like to -- please come up and -- and introduce yourself. And did you -- were you here during the button explanation, how to operate the microphone.

CAROLINE MCCARLEY, Mayor, City of Rochester, NH: Oh, no, I missed that. I'm really loud though by nature.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Well, no, because we're being live-streamed.

MS. MCCARLEY: Gotcha.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: So press the red button down and you're on. Or hold the blue button down and you're on.

MS. MCCARLEY: How's that?

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: I don't know.

MS. MCCARLEY: How's that? We'll see what happens. My name is Caroline McCarley. And I was a former State Senator from '97 till 2002. That should give you a window into my time and involvement on education funding. If it doesn't, God bless you,

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consider yourself lucky perhaps; but I was very, very much involved. By the way, I'm also the Mayor of Rochester. I'm sorry. I should have mentioned that. And I invested a lot of years during that time on adequacy and funding. I was also on the Rochester School Board for 17 years. Public education is my passion.

I also spent some time in Governor Lynch's office with an education plan that I thought was particularly interesting, did not end up going forward for very political reasons. You all know how that all works. But I suddenly found myself in Concord this morning for a BEA meeting and saw that you were meeting for your first time and decided I could not skip the opportunity to come listen. It's been fascinating and because I don't follow all the rules, I would love to be one of your public members. That's all I've got to say. And there'd be a few people here that know I know a little bit about this.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Madam Mayor, for sharing that this morning. Yes.

SEN. ESTABROOK: I just have to share that when the duty came to me to chair this type of Commission, the first thing I did was go and visit Senator McCarley to get her advice.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Fantastic. Any other members of the public like to bring forth some -- some experience, share some information? Representative Horn.

WERNER HORN, State Representative, Merrimack County, District #02: Good morning. For the record, I'm Representative Werner Horn, resident of Franklin. I have a keen interest in seeing this go forward. And one of the things that hasn't been touched on is the concern about the membership of the Committee. I see Senator Kahn who sits on the Fiscal Committee and has voted twice on strictly partisan lines. There is \$500,000 being spent on this Commission. It cannot be allowed to become a partisan tool for somebody's agenda. The importance of the students in this state is too important.

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So people who are on this Commission, please hold each other accountable if you suspect some of your fellow Commission Members may be sticking to party lines rather than the welfare of the students and those legislators present. I've paid attention over the last year. I know who introduced legislation that was disingenuous. I know who voted along party lines without regard for the benefit of the students. And I will be very attentive to ensure that this Commission doesn't fall into those traps.

I hope that members of the media take note of who says what to who, when, and why. \$500,000 on a Commission, staffed partly with people who have been on previous commissions who haven't solved this problem, is a very big concern for me.

I implore you to take that value seriously and that at the end of the year we can produce something that will be a building block for solutions in the future. Because I'm under no illusion that the challenges of education today are the same as the challenges of education 25 years ago or will be the same as challenges in 25 years. There's no silver bullet to solving education funding, but I hope that this Commission can produce something we can build on for the next ten years. Thank you very much for your time.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Representative. I think we all share your interest in recognizing the importance and that we need to -- we need to be successful. So thanks very much. Yes, Senator.

SEN. KAHN: I don't want to let an insulting remark go past. This is an independent Commission. I approach this independently. And I assume that all members on this Commission are going to take their task seriously and independently and evaluate information, learn from each other, and produce the best product.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thanks very much, Senator. I apologize for not addressing that directly. But any other -- any other thoughts while we're at this -- this point in the -- in the agenda? Members of the community want to speak? And we'll be hearing more next time? All right.

So -- uh -- on to the final topic, which is next meeting. Rick.

REP. LADD: (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yes. All right. Let's go through that very quickly. The -- the documents listed here, including the three that have not been inserted are, you know, are altogether here. So, Rick, one of the things that -- that we printed up this morning was the -- was the accountability for an adequate education coming from the 2008 report which you showed me. So -- so I suggest a good place to put that would be, I don't know if they're all tabulated the same way, but it's on the green tab. There's the 2008 Cost of an Adequate Education, and then the companion to that is the Accountability for an Adequate Education, which would -- which would go along side it.

In addition to that, we've got the FY 2019. So it's a couple years out of date, but it was of the adequate education aid document presented by the Department to the House Education Committee. So -- so that's here, although we'll be hearing from -- from Ms. Davis very shortly about -- about what's going on now in terms of Adequacy funding. And also copied a report. It's -- it's right off their website from the Education Commission in the states on a 50 state K-12 comparison. So can you see what other states are doing.

It's not a deep dive. I wouldn't call it research, you know, in terms of -- oh, well, why don't we just do what other -- some other states are doing. It really doesn't get into it in any level of detail. Certainly not what we'll have to be getting into as the work goes forward. But -- but I think it

sort of provides a little bit of a blueprint about how New Hampshire compares with other states.

In addition to -- to those documents, we've got -- and I only took it back to 1984 with the Augenblick Report which really, you know, talks about fiscal disparity and some of the things that -- that we currently talk about today, and -- and bring it through the court decisions, Claremont I and II, ConVal, the 2008 Adequacy report, accountability report that we just talked about in 2018. Representative Ladd, Representative Myler. Senator, were you on the Study Committee or (Inaudible). I guess Senator Birdsell was -- yeah. So that report is also in here.

So this wasn't a Study Commission. This was a Study Committee. And, actually, I think some of the -- some of the work that the Legislature did this past year which resulted in an additional, I don't remember the number, but a significant increase, \$160 million increase, 168 -- \$138 million over the biennium over and above existing Adequacy spending. Some of that came out of what I believe the work that was done in that Committee. Rick and I worked on this together in the House Education Committee.

So all that's in here. It's -- it's a lot of information. I don't want to scare people off with a ton of homework. But -- but, hopefully, you know, some of this stuff we'll be able to answer some questions that you might have now. And -- and it can be used as reference documents as we -- as we go forward. And I'm sure there's going to be a lot more documents coming our way as -- as we -- as we move ahead. Representative Heath.

REP. HEATH: Mr. Chair, with these documents coming forward, I hope that even through NCSL or Reaching Higher or the University System that we can look at states that have evidence by working with funding they have showed a direct correlation to student achievement. I think there's better information than we ever had before. And I think back on our recent visit to

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Arizona when we heard from Massachusetts as one state and their achievements in relation to the funding that they provided to the state. So if we could look at some states and look at that direct correlation, because I think that's what we're about here. It's about providing the best education we possibly can, and what are the measures by which we're going to address that, because I think that's a critical element. Because we want our money to show results.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Thank you very much, Representative Heath. Senator Estabrook.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Thank you. I just wanted to ask in addition to all of the information that you've given us, which is great, I don't see a spreadsheet of the current State Grants by District and I'd like to get that information, if I could.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah. You know what, I -- I --

SEN. ESTABROOK: That's Special-Ed. (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right. No, no, that will be next time. I -- there may be some information in this, the 2019. So it's not -- it's not current current. But -- but -- but --

SEN. ESTABROOK: That explains current (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: There are -- no, because obviously -- yeah, I'm sorry. The 2019 does not -- does not -- would not include the Fiscal Disparity Aid and the enhanced associated --

SEN. ESTABROOK: Yeah (Inaudible).

REP. AMES: If I may? I think that the -- that's -- that's precisely what the Department of Education can be providing and bring us up to date, and what's in Fiscal Year 19 would be, you know, it's not the full picture as it is today.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right, right. So -- so that's something we'll be able to bring forward when -- when the Department comes here to talk about the current picture, so. But you know what, I can -- we can probably -- let me work offline with -- with Caitlin on that. I can certainly e-mail Members of the Commission that information. We can have that information put up on the website. Would that be fair?

SEN. KAHN: Yeah (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yeah, but if somebody's -- let me take -- let me go offline on this and if we pop it up on the web side I'll make sure we let everybody know. Uh --

(Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Yes. Representative Ames.

REP. AMES: This is just, I guess, a note that the ConVal decision, District Court decision is here in this material. I think it's important to understand that that's on appeal and there are briefing -- briefing is ongoing as we sit here. So it's a moving target. Bear that in mind.

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: Right, right. No, thanks. And all of these documents, I think, could be -- there are supplemental documents that would go behind all of them. So there's only so much -- like I said, there's only so much homework I want to throw at people on the first -- on the first meeting. And -- and, again, it's really here, hopefully, to -- to -- to fuel other questions. And -- and that will help us to make sure that we're, you know, bringing forward all the material that people really -- really need and want to see as we consider -- as we, you know, consider the problem that we're facing, understanding the problem, and then a variety of different solutions going forward, so. Jane, did have you a question? All right. Okay.

So good. Next meeting. January 27th. It's a Monday. How about 9:00 a.m.? People like that. Yeah, is that good, 9:00 a.m.? Is that getting thumbs up. How about from the Senator from Cheshire?

SEN. KAHN: We'll be here (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: All right. John, you're good on that? Monday, September (sic) 27th, 9 a.m. And did everybody get a chance to -- to fill out this? Because I want to make sure that everybody has -- has, you know, contact information. And anybody needs to reach me, please go ahead and do that. You've all got my e-mail address. And we can make sure that -- that the 27th has everything that you expect to get out of it next time we meet, so. Anything else for the good of the cause? Senator.

SEN. ESTABROOK: Are you going to go meeting by meeting scheduling or we going to have any discussion of planning ahead?

CHAIRMAN LUNEAU: You know, I think we had a little bit of a discussion now in terms of maybe some Friday meetings, some 9:00 a.m. starts. Let me pull out a calendar and come up with some so that I can suggest that rather than, you know, having to go through that right now. But, anyway, anybody else have anything else for the good of the cause? Well, I thank you all very much. And we're at 11:53. So -- so we'll call this meeting adjourned.

(The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.)