MEETING MINUTES

Commission to Study School Funding (RSA 193-E:2-e)

Organizational Meeting

January 13, 2020 10am LOB 210-211

Members:

David Luneau - House (first named)  Mel Myler - House (absent from this meeting)
Richard Ames - House  Rick Ladd - House
Jay Kahn - Senate  Jon Morgan - Senate
Iris Estabrook - Appt. by Senate President  David Ryan - Appt. by Senate President
Corinne Cascadden - Appt. by Speaker  Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu - Appt. by Speaker
John Beardmore - Appt. by Speaker  William Ardinger - Appt. by Governor

Rep. Luneau called the meeting to order and welcomed the commission members and members of the public in attendance. The members introduced themselves.

Nominations and elect chair


Remarks

Luneau thanked the members for their support and for their commitment to the work ahead. Luneau remarked that the commission will need to accelerate quickly in order to understand the problems at hand, develop solutions and issue a final report. Luneau talked about the need to engage people from across the state in this effort.

Rep. Ladd noted that we have some real issues, the most significant issue is disparities between schools. Chipping away at the old formula is not the way to go. We need to go back and redesign. Coming up with a new funding formula and system that is different from the current one that has not produced much help to the most needy schools.

Mr. Ardinger noted all the work that has been done since the two Supreme Court Claremont education decisions in the 1990s has not changed the disparities in the system. The commission needs a laser-like focus on how to direct state resources to the communities that suffer under the current system.

Rep. Heath said the focus needs to be on students as well.
Sen. Khan said there are a number of funding levels that need to be addressed and suggested recommending a number of models so people don't feel handcuffed on a single solution.

Review duties of the commission

The commission reviewed the duties in the statute.

Discussion of process framework, work path and timeline

Luneau discussed a process that begins with an understanding of the problem before moving on to solutions. The process would include public forums around the state to engage stakeholders – all Granite Staters.

Mr. Ardinger advised Luneau to engage a “chief of staff” and services to assist the commission. Luneau offered to bring a statement of work and proposal to the next meeting.

Mission Statement

Rep. Ladd suggested the statute is enough and not to let the commission get slowed down. Luneau agreed and said he may bring back a proposal.

Calendar

The members discussed availability, and interest in either 9am or 2pm start times on Mondays or Fridays. Members supported the idea to hold some commission meetings in other parts of the state. Luneau will work on a calendar.

Public Comment

Rep. Horn cautioned that the commission should not act in a partisan way.

Former Sen. Caroline McCarley, mayor Rochester, offered to assist the commission.

Next meeting January 27, 2020 in LOB 210-211 at 2pm

Documents:

Commission Established RSA 193-E:2-e

1984 Augenblick Report

Court decisions from Conval, Claremont 1 and Claremont 2

2008 Commission Report and Accountability Report

2018 Study Committee Report
2019 ECS National Comparison of School Funding

2019 NHDOE Adequate Education Aid

Respectfully submitted,

David Luneau