

Potential Additional Recommendations

Formula Factors and Data

1. **Poverty:** Use free or reduced price lunch data as a measure of poverty in the ECS formula.
2. **Income:** Use Connecticut adjusted gross income (AGI) as the income measure in the ECS formula. Consider requiring other income to be added back to AGI, provided the process is relatively easy.
3. **Wealth:** Give income greater weight in the ECS wealth factor.
4. **Educational Need (student weighting):** Include special education and English language learners as an additional student weight.
5. **Foundation:** Increase the foundation level to reflect the real cost of adequately educating students and index the foundation for changing costs over time.
6. **Foundation:** Define adequate education to include both fiscal responsibility and academic expectation.
7. **Resident Students:** Ensure that the formula accounts for enrollment changes and adjusts aid depending on the changes.
8. **Guaranteed Wealth Level:** Increase the state guaranteed wealth level (SGWL) with the goal of reaching 2.0 (i.e., twice the median town wealth).

Funding

1. In the absence of full-funding, use a scheduled phase-in approach to increase funding over time rather than imposing freezes or other arbitrary limits on funding changes.
2. Fully fund the ECS formula.
3. If ECS funding remains frozen, do not change current allocations.
4. Eliminate the minimum budget requirement (MBR) and instead build into ECS the necessary funding commitments.

Performance Factors

1. Consider designating a portion of ECS dollars to award successful districts or schools. Make funding available to others to replicate the successful model.
2. Funding formula should be tied to increased student performance (not just test scores, but also demonstrated skills attainment), as well as growth from year to year and from September to June.
3. Increase accountability and competition for funding, including consideration of the education commissioner's "Three C's."
4. Provide additional funding, available by invitation, to high poverty districts willing to embrace the State Department of Education's educational reforms.

District Finances

1. Ensure that towns spend money allocated for education on education.
2. Ensure each district's allocation of funding is equitably distributed to the neediest schools.
3. Establish a universal reporting system to better track school district spending. Require all school districts to use the same school budget line item language and methods.
4. Take precautions against district year-end spending to protect entitlements.
5. Establish a user-friendly system that allows the state to review local education expenditure data that is updated on a regular basis.
6. Require districts to submit quarterly reports on expenditures of state and aid and local resources for education.
7. Send education funding directly to the school districts.

Regionalization/Collaboration

1. Review the possibility and impact of regionalization or county system of funding.
2. Provide incentives to regionalize, such as higher school construction grant reimbursement levels.
3. Increase collaboration between high schools and higher education to find out how to better prepare high school students for college. Identify models that work and use grant opportunities to encourage others to adopt the models.

School Choice

1. Provide ECS grants to all types of public schools.
2. Make regional agricultural science center funding equitable with other school choice options.
3. Provide necessary resources to vocational-technical schools so they can educate all students, including low performing students, special education students, and behaviorally challenged students.
4. Require state aid to immediately follow a student who leaves a district during the school year to attend another district.
5. Reject proposals to fold choice schools into the ECS formula.
6. Ensure financial resources are available to the vocational-technical schools to meet workforce training needs.
7. Create a separate board of education for the vocational-technical system.

Early Childhood Education

1. Provide funding for all-day kindergarten in high poverty communities.
2. Steer additional funds to early education by giving greater weight to early childhood education students.

3. Establish a process to make available quality early childhood education to more children.
4. Increase Pre-K offerings by increasing funding for school-readiness grants.
5. Examine the impact of all-day kindergarten and preschool programs on funding.

Special Education

1. Reject proposals to fold special education into ECS.

Data Collection/Surveys

1. Increase data collection and sharing for all schools to learn from (i.e. five-year graduate surveys for high schools gather feedback on how (1) well their graduates were prepared for their future and (2) to improve course selections, teaching methods, graduation rates, and other indicators of a successful high school.)

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