

ECS TASK FORCE PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERIM REPORT

December 15, 2011

Please indicate 10 choices from the total list and email back to Chris Calabrese

Recommendation		Proposed By	Choices (10 max for whole list)
No.	FORMULA FACTORS AND DATA		
1.	Property Wealth/Poverty: Use a more accurate system for calculating a town/municipality's wealth and poverty level.	Bonner Davenport Loftus Levine	
2.	Resident Students: Ensure that the formula accounts for enrollment changes and adjusts aid depending on the changes.	Bonner Davenport	
3.	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.	Miller	
4.	Poverty: Use Free or Reduced Price Lunch data as a measure of poverty in the ECS formula.	Miller Loftus Levine	
5.	Wealth (population): Exclude students residing in dormitories at universities and colleges and prison inmates from the population count used to calculate per capita income.	Miller, Nunez, Davenport, Benigni	
6.	Wealth (income): In calculating ECS wealth factor, give income greater weight.	Molgano	
7.	Foundation: Increase the foundation level to reflect the real cost of adequately educating students and index the amount for changing costs over time.	Loftus Levine	
8.	Foundation: Define adequate education to include both fiscal responsibility and academic expectation.	Bonner	
9.	Guaranteed Wealth Level: Increase the State Guaranteed Wealth Level (SGWL) with the goal of reaching 2.0.	Loftus Levine	
10.	Educational Need (Student Weighting): Include special education and English language learners as an additional student weight.	Bonner	
11.	Formula Adjustments: Eliminate or significantly alter stop losses, grant caps, and phase-ins of ECS. Devise another process to assist towns whose per student share would decrease.	Miller	
	FUNDING		
12.	In the absence of full-funding, using a scheduled phase-in approach to increase funding over time rather than imposing	Loftus	

Recommendation		Proposed By	Choices (10 max for whole list)
	freezes or other arbitrary limits on funding changes.	Levine	
13.	If ECS funding remains frozen, do not change current allocations.	Loftus Levine	
14.	Fully fund the ECS formula.	Miller	
15.	Eliminate the minimum budget requirement (MBR) and instead build into ECS the necessary funding commitments	Stillman	
PERFORMANCE FACTOR(S)			
16.	Consider designating a certain portion of ECS dollars to award to successful districts or schools. Make funding available to others to replicate the successful model.	Miller Davenport	
17.	Increase accountability and competition for funding, including consideration of the commissioner's "Three C's."	Davenport	
18.	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.)	Davenport	
19.	Establish a portion of ECS for competitive grants based on SDE's priorities.	Barnes	
20.	Establish a higher level of accountability for poor performing districts as a condition for higher funding levels.	Barnes	
21.	Provide additional funding, available by invitation, to high poverty districts willing to embrace State Department of Education's educational reforms.	Benigni	
DISTRICT FINANCES			
22.	Ensure that towns spend money allocated for education on education.	Bonner Miller	
23.	Ensure district's allocation of funding is equitably distributed to the neediest schools.	Bonner	
24.	Require the state to create a standard chart-of-accounts.	Molgano Davenport	
25.	Take precautions against district year-end spending to protect entitlements.	Molgano	
26.	Require towns to report to the state on how state education dollars are being spent. Establish a user-friendly system to allow the state to review data continuously.	Miller	
27.	Require districts to submit quarterly reports on expenditures of state and aid and local resources for education.	Nunez	
28.	Send education funding directly to the school districts.	Davenport	
29.	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.	Davenport	
REGIONALIZATION/COLLABORATION			
30.	Review the possibility and impact of regionalization or county system of funding	Bonner	
31.	Provide incentives to regionalize, such as higher school construction grant reimbursement levels	Davenport	
32.	Increase collaboration between high schools and higher ed to find out how to better prepare high school students for college. (Find models that work and encourage others to learn from them with grant opportunities.)	Davenport	

Recommendation		Proposed By	Choices (10 max for whole list)
33.	Increase data collection and sharing for all schools to learn from (i.e. five year graduate surveys for high schools to see how well their grads were prepared for their future and to gather feedback on how to improve course selections, teaching methods, graduation rates, and other indicators of a successful high school.)	Davenport	
CHOICE			
34.	If a student leaves the district for schooling elsewhere, require the state aid to go to the new district during the same academic year.	Nunez	
35.	Provide ECS to all types of public schools.	Nunez	
36.	Reject proposals to fold choice schools into the ECS formula.	Loftus Levine	
37.	Fund magnet schools more equitably. Level the amount of support that Sheff district magnets and other magnets receive.	Benigni Stillman	
38.	Make funding for magnet, charter, and other schools of choice more coherent and predictable.	Loftus Levine	
39.	Ensure financial resources are available to the Vocational-Technical schools to meet workforce training needs.	Loftus Levine	
40.	Give the V-T system its own separate school board.	Loftus Levine	
41.	Provide necessary resources to vo-tech schools who educate all students, including low performing students, special education students, and behaviorally challenged students.	Benigni	
42.	Make regional agricultural science center funding equitable with other school choice options.	Davenport Stillman	
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION			
43.	Discuss the impact of all-day kindergarten and preschool programs on funding.	Bonner	
44.	Steer funds to early education by assigning higher weightings to early childhood education students.	Molgano	
45.	Establish a process to make available quality early childhood education to most children.	Miller	
46.	Provide funding for all-day kindergarten in high poverty communities	Benigni	
47.	Increase Pre-K offerings by increasing funding for school-readiness grants.	Benigni	
SPECIAL EDUCATION			
48.	Establish a goal of reimbursing districts for the full excess cost of providing a student with special education when such costs exceed local per pupil expenditures.	Loftus Levine	
49.	Reject proposals to fold special education into ECS.	Loftus Levine	

Task Force Activities are recommendations for further task force review. Do not rank.

TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES	
Ask CAPSS to present a summary of their recently announced ideas for education reform.	Davenport
Use a scoring model to decide the ECS recommendations.	Molgano
The task force must prepare strong arguments to support the reallocation of grants a revised formula will cause. Those underfunded should benefit and those overfunded should be awarded fairly.	Molgano
It is fairly early in this process to make even preliminary recommendations. There is a great deal more to learn, study, and discuss before we are all in the position to hopefully come up with a fair and lasting process for the distribution of state education funding to the cities and towns of Connecticut.	Miller
A complete analysis of how funding for magnets and charters is determined should be undertaken before recommendations concerning this issue are made. Review what is presently being done, whether Sheff and non-Sheff magnets, charters, regional agricultural science centers, and vocational-technical schools belong in the same category, to what extent need-based funding should be considered, and what would be the appropriate and equitable funding mechanisms.	Miller Bonner Molgano Loftus Levine Davenport Stillman
Determine how choice programs (charters, magnet schools, regional agricultural science centers, and vocational-technical schools) fit into the final version of ECS formula, giving consideration to effect on funding levels of both host and sending school districts.	Davenport Stillman
Strive for transparency and simplicity in developing the formula.	Miller
How will the task force determine the cost of educating a child in Connecticut? Past studies?	Molgano
Ask CCJEF to make a presentation to the task force	Molgano
Hold a task force public hearing in lower Fairfield County	Molgano