

**NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE**  
**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM**

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**RESEARCH RESOURCES**

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**1. Basic Issues in Education Funding**

**A. School Finance: A Primer**

Prepared by John Augenblick of Augenblick, Van de Water & Associates, and Mary Fulton and Chris Piphio of the Education Commission of the States, April 1991.

A guide to the structural components of, alternative approaches to, and policy questions about state school finance systems.

**B. Educational Adequacy: Building an Adequate School Finance System**

Prepared by the Education Partners Project, National Conference of State Legislatures, July 1998.

This report is intended to encourage and assist state policymakers who are challenged to craft statewide school finance systems that meet the constitutional requirements of their respective jurisdictions and that also build public support for public school investments that are rational and effective.

**C. Principles of a Sound State School Finance System**

Prepared by the Education Partners Project, National Conference of State Legislatures, July 1996.

This booklet is designed to give policymakers broad principles for the design of state school funding systems.

**D. Policy Brief – State Education Funding Formulas & Grade Weighting**

Prepared by the Education Commission of the States, May 2005.

Brief descriptions of the different ways that the 50 states and the District of Columbia allocate education funding: foundation/base formula; modified foundation/base formula; teacher allocation; dollar funding per student; and other systems.

**E. A Costing Out Primer**

Prepared by the National Access Network, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 2006.

Describes the concept and history of costing out (which determines the amount of money actually needed to make available all of the educational services required to provide

every child an opportunity to meet the applicable state education standards) and offers an overview of the four methodologies used for this purpose.

#### **F. Determining the Cost of a Basic or Core Education**

Prepared by the Education Commission of the States, April 1999.

Describes state activity in Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wyoming on “what does an adequate education cost?”

#### **G. State Notes – Examples of State Approaches to Special Education Finance**

Prepared by the Education Commission of the States, October 2003.

Provides examples of different ways states have incorporated the higher cost of educating a special education student into their financing formulas; highlights the approach taken in seven states – Iowa, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Missouri.

### **2. New Jersey Funding**

#### **A. “Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996” (CEIFA)**

P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-1 et al.)

A copy of the current State law on school funding.

#### **B. Brief Explanation of CEIFA**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services.

#### **C. Background Paper: State School Aid and Educational Outcomes for Abbott Districts**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services, 2003.

Provides a description of some of the significant factors involved in the provision of State school aid to Abbott districts, the purposes for which the aid has been provided and a table describing the scores of Abbott district students and students in the District Factor Groups “I” and “J” districts on the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA).

#### **D. Background Paper: Special Education: State and Federal Requirements and Aid**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services, 2004.

Provides a brief history of the development of the State legislative and regulatory framework under which special education aid was initially provided and a brief overview of the federal regulatory framework which now preempts state law. The backgrounder also provides a detailed description and analysis of State and federal aid covering the 8 years since State special education aid was first calculated under CEIFA.

#### **E. Funding Education Under the Quality Education Act of 1990**

Prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Finance, June 1991.  
Booklet prepared to increase understanding of the QEA enacted in July 1990, with amendments in March 1991.

#### **F. Draft Report of the CEIFA Ability-to-Pay Subcommittee**

Prepared by the CEIFA Ability-to-Pay Subcommittee, September 1999.  
This group was brought together by Governor Whitman and the legislative leadership to study the impact of CEIFA on local school communities. The Department of Education provided the subcommittee with a report comparing the equalized property tax paid in each public school district, for its base T & E budget, to the median income in each of the communities served by the districts. Based on the report, the subcommittee found that the CEIFA formula does not adequately measure a district's ability to pay and compensate districts fairly through the application of State aid. Includes 9 recommendations.

#### **G. Report and Recommendations of the Commissioner's Summer Work Group – Special Education**

Prepared by the Summer Work Group, September 10, 1999.  
This group was brought together by Governor Whitman and the legislative leadership to study the impact of CEIFA on local school communities. The report discusses issues related to CEIFA and its approach to funding special education. Ten findings and recommendations are included.

#### **H. Report of the Stabilization Aid Committee to the Commissioner of Education**

Prepared by the Stabilization Aid Committee, September 8, 1999.  
This group was brought together by Governor Whitman and the legislative leadership to study the impact of CEIFA on local school communities. The report discusses stabilization aid under CEIFA which was to provide a gradual reduction in State aid in order to move districts from enrollment and wealth figures that were several years old to current data. Stabilization aid was designed to be phased out over the first few years of CEIFA. Includes a recommendation on State school aid entitlement for districts.

#### **I. CEIFA Transportation Study Group Final Report – Executive Summary**

Prepared by the CEIFA Transportation Study Group, September 10, 1999.  
This group was brought together by Governor Whitman and the legislative leadership to study the impact of CEIFA on local school communities. The report discusses CEIFA transportation aid formula and possible changes to that calculation; the school transportation efficiency plan contained within CEIFA; the busing of children for safety reasons who live less than remote from their school; nonpublic school transportation issues; retirement of school vehicles; subscription busing; and the renewal of transportation contracts. Includes six recommendations.

## **J. A School Funding Proposal of the Education Task Force**

Prepared by the Education Task Force, March 21, 1994.

This task force was appointed by Governor Whitman. This proposal provides for a permanent funding formula. The cornerstone of the general school aid program would consist of a two-tiered formula which would include a moderate foundation program and a guaranteed tax base approach to support limited local leeway spending. The aid formula additionally addressed: pension/FICA issues; special needs districts; spending caps; categorical aid programs; and annual total aid increases.

## **K. Beginning Discussions on School Funding Reform**

Prepared by various education interest groups, March 27, 2006.

Contributors include the New Jersey School Boards Association, New Jersey Education Association, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, New Jersey Association of School Administrators, New Jersey Parent Teachers Association, Garden State Coalition of Schools, and the Education Law Center.

Explains why a new funding formula is needed, suggests some principles for a fair and equitable formula, and recommends a process that might be used to develop a new school funding formula.

## **L. Final Report of the Assembly Task Force on the Funding of Education**

Prepared by the Assembly Task Force on the Funding of Education, July 16, 1996.

Task force was required to develop recommendations as to how the State could fulfill its constitutional mandate of a thorough and efficient education in the most economical and equitable fashion possible, but rather than reinvent the wheel the task force chose to accept the Commissioner of Education's proposal (the precursor to CEIFA) as the basis of its analysis and make recommendations to that proposal.

## **M. Financing New Jersey Public Schools**

Prepared by the Education Funding Review Commission, July 1994.

The Education Funding Review Commission was established pursuant to the "Public School Reform Act of 1992," P.L.1993, c.7, to examine the issue of school finance and to make recommendations for the reform of school funding.

The controversy surrounding the QEA was the initial catalyst for the creation of the commission, but the suspension of certain provisions of that law following the 1992-1993 school year meant that the commission was confronted with the task of crafting a new funding statute. The report includes general recommendations on: the type of formula; various specific aid categories; budget caps; timing of pupil counts; grade weighting; wealth measure; regional adjustments; phase-in of parity aid; required local effort; elimination of the budget vote for a budget which does not exceed the district's foundation level; teachers' pension and social security.

#### **N. Report of New Jersey Legislative Task Force on Special Education**

Prepared by the New Jersey Legislative Task Force on Special Education, December 22, 1995.

Issues associated with the funding and the delivery of services for special education. Contains an analysis of factual information concerning the existing status of special education in NJ and 62 specific recommendations for the improvement of the system.

#### **O. Final Report of the New Jersey State and Local Expenditure and Revenue Policy (SLERP) Commission – Executive Summary**

Prepared by the SLERP Commission, 1988.

The SLERP Commission was established by P.L.1984, c.213, to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review of the State and local tax structure, the structure of State and local expenditures, and mandated spending formulas.

Report finds that significant improvements in educational performance will not occur until we reduce spending disparities among school districts. Recommendations include: reducing disparities among districts and improving student performance; improving the quality of physical facilities; enhancing the attractiveness of teaching as a profession; addressing the need for early childhood education; and a change to current year funding in the equalization aid program and increased compensatory and debt service aid.

#### **P. School Funding Bills Introduced in the 2006-2007 Legislative Session**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services, July 2006.

### **3. Litigation**

#### **A. Background Paper: New Jersey Supreme Court Abbott Decisions**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services, 2006.

Provides a brief overview of each of the Supreme Court's Abbott decisions, from Abbott I decided in 1985 to an order issued by the court on May 22, 2006.

#### **B. Education Finance Litigation: History, Issues, and Current Status**

Prepared by the National Conference of State Legislatures, 2006.

Primer on the history of school finance litigation on the federal level and on the state level.

#### **C. State Notes - School Funding Adequacy Cases**

Prepared by the Education Commission of the States, February 2005.

Chart providing information on the 50 states on: whether adequacy suits have been filed; the name of the most recent case; final court decision; and whether adequacy studies were initiated.

#### **D. Litigation Overview**

Prepared by the National Access Network, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 2006.

Provides brief national historical background on lawsuits challenging state methods of funding public schools.

### **4. Regionalization and Shared Services**

#### **A. Background Paper: Regional School Districts: Apportionment of Costs in the Constituent Municipalities.**

Prepared by the Office of Legislative Services, 2005.

#### **B. Finding Opportunities for Improvement: Ideas on Regionalization and Shared Services**

Prepared by the Regionalization Consortium and the Commission on Business Efficiency of the Public Schools, December 1995.

Provides recommendations in the areas of regionalization and shared education and support services.

#### **C. Findings and Recommendations of the Assembly Task Force of School District Regionalization**

Prepared by the Assembly Task Force of School District Regionalization, February 25, 1999.

Explores issues such as: apportionment of costs; incentives and disincentives for regionalization; the financial impact of State aid on regionalization; and costs savings to taxpayers. Includes 27 recommendations.

### **5. Education Statistics**

#### **A. Public Education Finances 2003**

Prepared by the United States Census Bureau, March 2005.

Contains financial statistics relating to public elementary-secondary education and includes national and state financial aggregates and displays data for each public school system with an enrollment of 10,000 or more.

#### **B. Vital Education Statistics 2004-2005**

Prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education, 2006.

Includes: local district and school organization data, charter schools, and selected program enrollments; student enrollments Statewide; student dropouts and dropout rates; high school graduate data; certificated staff data; non-certificated support staff data by position; and school count, enrollment, and program data for identified nonpublic schools.

### **C. Finance Snapshots**

Prepared by Education Week, "Quality Counts." Vol. 24, Issue 17, p. 62-73.  
Provides information on the 50 states regarding their school finance formula.

## **6. Miscellaneous**

### **A. "Property Tax Solutions."**

Prepared by Monmouth University Polling Institute. July 23, 2006.  
Results of a recent poll asking New Jersey residents how willing they were to accept a mix of 11 potential mechanisms for lowering property taxes.

### **B. "Runaway Pay."**

Prepared by The Record. July 2006.  
Results of a recent poll commissioned by The Record to assess both public opinion on government-worker compensation and voters' knowledge of what people in the public sector make.