

Basic Education Finance Joint Task Force

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M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: March 12, 2008
TO: Members, Task Force
FROM: Dan Grimm
SUBJECT: March 24/25 Meeting –Policy and Budget Questions

Attached is a third list of questions for the March 24/25 meeting, all related to policy and budget issues.

As described in my January 08, 2008 memo, the March 24/25 meeting will be devoted to giving members an opportunity to make preliminary decisions on Task Force issues. No one is obligated to answer any specific question and all decisions will be preliminary. Everyone will retain the right to revise or reverse any decision based on subsequent findings and discussion, and no preliminary decision will preclude later consideration of issues proposed by members.

The purpose of the exercise is to identify issues of the greatest interest to members and allow staff time to conduct research and prepare options.

Please feel free to suggest additional questions, either to members directly or through me.

Policy and Budget Questions

1. RCW 28A.150.210 defines basic education goals in the state of Washington.

The goal of the basic education act for the schools of the state of Washington set forth in this chapter shall be to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible and respectful global citizens, to contribute to their economic well-being and that of their families and communities, to explore and understand different perspectives, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives. Additionally, the state of Washington intends to provide for a public school system that is able to evolve and adapt in order to better focus on strengthening the educational achievement of all students, which includes high expectations for all students and gives all students the opportunity to achieve personal and academic success. To these ends, the goals of each school district, with the involvement of parents and community members, shall be to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills essential to:

(1) Read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences;

(2) Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness;

(3) Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems; and

(4) Understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

Are any revisions to this definition necessary?

2. Should the Basic Education Act be amended to clarify that the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP), Learning Assistance Program (LAP), and special education are included?

3. Should the Basic Education Act be amended to expand the definition to include programs such as Promoting Academic Success (PAS), highly capable students, K-4 ratio enhancements, student achievement program (I-728), learning improvement days (LID), and levy equalization (local effort assistance)?

4. Should the state expand its definition of Basic Education to include pre-school?

5. **Should the state specify the content of professional development that determines teachers' progress on the salary allocation model?**
6. **Should the state specify the content of categorical professional development programs such as Learning Improvement Days, math and science days, and other categories?**
7. **Should the state increase the minimum length of the school year (currently 180 days and 1,000 hours district-wide average)?**
8. **Currently, the state funds certificated, classified, and administrative staffing units at specific ratios set in the Basic Education Act and operating budget. Should the state fund more or fewer staff per FTE student?**
9. **Should the state expand LAP or PAS to fund additional extended learning opportunities (such as summer school) for struggling students?**
10. **Should the state revise funding for bilingual education (the TBIP)?**
11. **Should the state revise funding for special education?**
12. **Should the state fund voluntary all-day kindergarten?**
13. **Should the state estimate and fund the costs of current health and safety requirements?**
14. **Should the non-employee related costs (NERC) funding allocation be revised?**
15. **Should the Task Force make recommendations about school facilities funding?**
16. **Should the Task Force make recommendations about school transportation funding?**
17. **Should the state fund an individual-level student data system linked to specific school resources, including individual teachers?**