



Public School Finance Task Force Meeting Minutes

September 29th, 2023 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

[Link to Live Stream Meeting](#) | [SB23-287](#)

Task Force Members Present: Alex Magaña, Brenda Dickhoner, Carrie Zimmerman, Andrea Uhl (alternate for Craig Harper, JBC), Chuck Carpenter, Dan Snowberger, Deborah Hendrix, Jennifer Okes, Kathy Gebhardt, Kermit Snyder, Leslie Nichols, Lisa Weil, Marc Carey, Marty Gutierrez, Riley Kitts, Sarah Siegel, Sarah Swanson, Steven Bartholomew, Terry Croy Lewis, Nick Plantan

Task Force Members Absent: None

Facilitator & Support: Nick Stellitano – Dillinger Research & Applied Data, Patrick Gibson - CT School State Finance Project, Ashley Robles - CT School State Finance Project, Amy Carman - Executive Director of School Finance & Grants, Shelbie Konkell - Senior Legislative Advisor, Melissa Bloom - Principal Policy Advisor, Rich Hull - School Finance Analyst, Tim Kahle - School Finance Program Director, Gene Fornecker - School Finance Senior Analyst, Annette Severson - Manager of Data Services

Welcome and Norms Review

- The task force facilitator, Nick Stellitano, commenced the meeting at 11:07 am MST and welcomed task force members and guests. Nick provided an overview of today's agenda.
- Nick thanked the task force members for reviewing and responding to surveys and pre-reads in preparation for this meeting. Nick noted that due to slight difficulties responding to surveys, he will be available to help task force members walk through items after the task force meeting.
- The task force chair, Chuck Carpenter, thanked staff for switching over to Zoom and thanked task force members for doing the pre-read. Chuck Carpenter reminded task force members to bring their expertise and constituency to the meetings and decisions. Chuck Carpenter understands that members have their own opinions and thanked members for their efforts.
- Nick shared that all meeting materials will be available on CDE website.
- The task force quickly reviewed technical etiquette, guidelines for interaction, deliberation and collaboration, the project plan, and the subject of today's (9/29) meeting.

Administrative Survey Review

- Nick Stellitano provided an overview of the administrative survey, results, and takeaways. Nick provided 5 mins for task force members and the public to dive into survey results and asked for observations, wonderings, and thoughts.
 - Alex Magaña thought the CSI point was a good point, and believes it's important to hear from task force chair Chuck.
 - Steven Bartholomew appreciated the at-risk feedback and appreciated receiving resources. He had thoughts about at-risk in the post-Covid world. Lastly, he questioned whether task force facilitators had sent out the final dates and times for task force meetings.
 - Nick Stellitano responded that calendar links with Zoom links will go out today (9/29) to all task force members. Additionally, Nick Stellitano mentioned that an admin survey will be distributed after each meeting, and will contain questions on recommended resources to be used in pre-reads.
 - Kathy Gebhardt received draft slides and wondered whether final slides were shared out

If you plan to attend a meeting and require accommodations, please notify Amy Carman at carman_a@cde.state.co.us at least one week prior to the meeting date. If you have requested accommodations and are then unable to attend, please provide 72-hour notice if possible.

24 hours in advance.

- Nick Stellitano responded that preliminary slides were shared with task force members, but that info was being received by Wednesday (9/27) PM so facilitators needed additional time to prepare the slides.
- Kathy asked whether they received the final copy of the slides, and Nick responded that the initial link shared with task force members was final.

Adequacy Study Parameters Development

- The task force reviewed work completed to date to finalize the adequacy study parameters. Nick Stellitano reviewed the decision-making process agreed upon by members and where the task force stands in this process for finalizing adequacy study parameters.

Finalize Adequacy Studies Parameters

- The task force facilitator, Nick Stellitano, provided an overview of the adequacy study parameter survey results and how to navigate the results in the Google Sheet. The task force went through the different adequacy study parameter components (Educational Outcomes, Methods, Parameters, Additional Considerations, and Highest Prioritization), and were encouraged to provide their feedback as to language changes for each proposal.
- The following inputs and thoughts were discussed regarding the “Educational Outcomes” component:
 - Wanted to be more specific in regards to outcomes and college/career readiness, recommended to reference the 12-15 report in the language
 - Worry using Colorado performance framework - it was noted by task force members that the performance framework was not equitable, and that there are other indicators that can measure success. Additionally, it was mentioned that simply using the performance framework would end up with a narrow definition of what success looks like, there are many different demographics to account for
 - Wanted the educational outcomes to be more growth focused, did not want to use proficiency alone
 - State standards should be used in some way since that is the requirement from the legislature - want to ensure that the study focuses on what is needed to get every student to proficiency regardless if the student is an ELL, eligible for FRPL, etc.
 - Some task force members wanted to include other requirements for students and schools, such as school safety requirements, requirements for parent engagement, district accountability, climate, etc. - reaching state standards requires more
 - It was decided that these additional requirements would be best fit in another component of the adequacy study.
 - Wondered if education outcomes should be measured/grouped by different districts, but ultimately decided that this would be best fit under the successful school model
 - Mentioned that another task force is charged with Colorado’s accountability system, and that task force should not be dealing with accountability
- The following inputs and thoughts were discussed regarding the “Methods” component:
 - Break up the second line, so that parents, students, and community members were included on the professional judgment panels
 - Language change from “educators” to “Licensed educators, support staff, and administrators” - educators typically refer to only teachers, but task force members want to ensure that anyone who works in schools and with students are included in the professional judgment panels
 - Include innovation schools for both studies

- Language change from “individuals” to “school Professionals and community members across all stakeholders” - again, want to ensure anyone who works in schools and with students are included
- Language to be more broad for the first proposal - want to ensure that some direction is given for the evidence-based study
- Remove successful schools method from the second proposal given the uniqueness of so many schools
- The following inputs and thoughts were discussed regarding the “Parameters” component:
 - Include the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel
 - Include the impact of state, district, and school requirements - task force wants to ensure that all costs associated with operating a school are included in the studies
 - Include the impact of additional school and district requirements established by the legislature, such as security, attendance, social and emotional supports, climate, etc. - task force wants to ensure that all costs associated with operating a school are included in the studies
- The following inputs and thoughts were discussed regarding the “Additional Considerations” component:
 - Some expressed concerns over including any additional considerations to the adequacy study. The adequacy study already includes many parameters that may already cover these additional components.
 - General agreement with including an analysis evaluating the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Possibly remove an analysis of the compounding effect of the budget stabilization factor, but ultimately decided keeping the language
 - Disagreement with including an analysis of the impact of choice schools
 - Some task force members expressed concern over including choice schools because it appears political
 - Some task force members wanted to include choice schools because of the different costs of operating different types of schools
 - The language of choice schools was often confused with charter schools, and task force members reminded each other that choice schools are more than just charter schools
 - The task force facilitator recommended moving the impact of choice schools to “Parameters.” Some task force members agreed with the move, however some did not want any language regarding choice in the study. This was ultimately moved to the “Parameters” section.
- The following inputs and thoughts were discussed regarding the “Highest Prioritization” component:
 - Concern over the \$100,000 limit for the study, quality of the study with a limit, and RFI process
 - Given the importance of the adequacy study, task force members wanted to ensure that if additional funds were needed for the study that they could recommend it to the legislature
 - Jennifer Okes shared the RFI and RFP process, including timeline, and she mentioned that the concerns from task force members can be addressed in the RFI
- Kathy Gebhardt motioned to approve the Adequacy Study Parameters, and Leslie Nichols seconded the motion. Steven Bartholomew made a subordinate motion to remove choice from the Adequacy Study Parameters, and Dan Snowberger seconded the motion. Nick Stellitano recorded the votes by roll call (detailed below). The subordinate motion passed by majority vote, while the original motion passed unanimously.

- Subordinate Motion to Remove Choice from the Adequacy Study Parameters - Passed (12 Yes, 5 No)

Task Force Member	Vote
Alex Magaña	Yes
Brenda Dickhoner	Yes
Carrie Zimmerman	Yes
Charles Carpenter	Yes
Dan Snowberger	Yes
Deborah Hendrix	Yes
Kathy Gebhardt	No
Kermit Snyder	Yes
Leslie Nichols	No
Lisa Weil	No
Marty Gutierrez	No
Nicholas Plantan	Yes
Riley Kitts	Yes
Sarah Siegel	No
Sarah Swanson	Yes
Steven Bartholomew	Yes
Terry Croy Lewis	Yes

- Motion to Approve Adequacy Study Parameters - Passed (17 Yes)

Task Force Members	Vote
Alex Magaña	Yes
Brenda Dickhoner	Yes
Carrie Zimmerman	Yes
Charles Carpenter	Yes
Dan Snowberger	Yes
Deborah Hendrix	Yes
Kathy Gebhardt	Yes
Kermit Snyder	Yes
Leslie Nichols	Yes
Lisa Weil	Yes
Marty Gutierrez	Yes
Nicholas Plantan	Yes
Riley Kitts	Yes
Sarah Siegel	Yes
Sarah Swanson	Yes
Steven Bartholomew	Yes

Task Force Members	Vote
Terry Croy Lewis	Yes

At-Risk Measure for School Finance Working Group Review

- After finalizing the adequacy study parameters, Jennifer Okes was scheduled to provide an overview of the At-Risk Measure for School Finance Working Group. However, due to time constraints, the task force facilitator asked the task force if they were comfortable moving the conversation. The task force agreed, and Nick Stellitano mentioned that the at-risk overview would be shared as a pre-read for the next task force meeting.

Student Need in the State Funding Formula

- The task force reviewed what the task force has done to date to prioritize student need in the state funding formula. Again, Nick Stellitano reviewed the decision-making process agreed upon by task force members and where the task force stands in this process for prioritizing student need in the state funding formula.
- Prior to today's (9/29) meeting, task force members completed a pre-read survey related to student need, and the task force facilitator shared the results (on Google Sheet), how to read and interpret the results, and reviewed common questions asked in the survey. This included the following:
 - Reviewing the [CO School Finance Formula Simulator](#)
 - How can I better understand the "order of operations" of the funding formula?
 - Why is the task force focusing on student needs before the adequacy studies are complete?
 - How do concentrations currently work in the funding formula?
 - What is "categorical" funding in the context of Colorado's funding formula, and special education?
 - What is the difference between socioeconomic status (SES) as compared to At Risk or free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL)?
- Task force members were then given an opportunity to review the survey results and ask any additional questions.
 - Questions were asked regarding Amendment 23, admin units for special education funding, categorical funding, adopting a new at-risk factor, and the budget stabilization factor.
 - Nick Stellitano, Patrick Gibson, and Jennifer Okes addressed most of the questions from task force members. Jennifer Okes also provided a quick overview of the at-risk working group and the new at-risk measure.
- The task force facilitator provided a summary of the student need survey results, and the task force started the development of initial proposals for modeling. The task force reviewed the different student need types, whether to add/modify/remove, mechanism to distribute funds, and specific input. Task Force members were then given the opportunity to share their feedback. The following were general thoughts and comments from task force members:
 - Request to view the impact of changes in a model
 - Trade off of concentration and higher weighting
 - Extend ELL funding for 5 years regardless of ELL status (NEP vs. LEP vs. FEP)
 - Ensure that additions/changes made create a simpler formula, task force does not want to add more complexity
 - Concentration weight for ELL would be interesting to see included in the formula, but would like to see what other states are doing

- Concentration weight for ELL for districts with an ELL percentage over the state average
- Include language in task force report that adequacy study is needed, but recommendations are the best informed decisions at this point

Next Steps & Closing

- Nick Stellitano covered the next steps for the task force including completing the cost of living pre-read survey and compiling/modeling student need changes. Nick concluded the meeting at 2:57 PM MST, but stayed on to review how to best complete the pre-read surveys.