

Public Education Funding Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2025

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

The Public Education Funding Commission (PEFC) meeting was held on April 28, 2025, with the following members in attendance:

Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Emily Falcon, Sara Hale, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Evelyn Edney, April Albury-Harmon, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson

Also participating were Sarah Barzee, WestEd, and Michael Griffith, Learning Policy Institute.

[Audio Recording of Meeting](#)

Welcome/Introductions

Senator Sturgeon opened the meeting and asked Anna Sullivan from WestEd to conduct a verbal roll call. Anna confirmed a quorum was present, and the meeting was called to order.

Approval of April 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2025 meeting. Marcus Wright motioned to approve and Representative Williams seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

New Business

Senator Sturgeon began by reminding the public that comment could be heard only at the end of the meeting. She noted that the next meeting will be in one week, on May 5th, and that the May 19th meeting is tentative. She reviewed the five core values guiding the Commission's work.

Secretary Marten introduced Denise Carter, who has joined the Delaware Department of Education as Deputy Secretary for Strategic Initiatives.

The Chair then introduced co-chair, Marcus Wright.

Mr. Wright reviewed topics shared by committee members that have been placed in a "parking lot" to be revisited at future meetings. He then reviewed a proposed timeline for addressing those items that spanned between April 2025 and March 2026. The Chair invited members to share any additional items in meetings and/or by email to her.

The Chair then reviewed the agenda for the meeting and introduced Mike Griffith.

Mr. Griffith presented an initial modeling of the proposed hybrid funding formula, emphasizing that all figures shared are preliminary, illustrative, and subject to change. He reiterated that the goal of this meeting was not to finalize decisions but to support informed discussion and exploration of different funding scenarios.

Key points included:

- The models are meant to visualize possible outcomes under a hybrid formula combining elements of current funding with a weighted, student-focused approach.
- All scenarios presented excluded local and federal funding, focusing solely on state funding, as per federal requirements.
- Models compared existing funding distributions with projections under the proposed formula, including scenarios with increased state allocations of \$600 million and \$1 billion, based on AIR study benchmarks.
- Funding was organized into three main components: base funding (e.g., positions), an "Opportunity Fund," and a "Flex Fund," collapsing over 20 existing funding streams into two more flexible categories.
- Transportation and food services were excluded due to separate funding mechanisms.
- Seven schools were selected as examples to reflect a range of geographies and school types (e.g., VoTech, charter).
- Weighted student counts were based on AIR study averages, though Mr. Griffith acknowledged these may not reflect desired or final weight values.
- He invited further input on weights and categories, noting any adjustments would result in shifts in funding allocation ("winners and losers").

The presentation concluded with a reminder that all decisions regarding weights and categories remain under discussion and that further data, including equalization models, will follow. Following the presentation, committee members posed questions and open discussion followed.

After the discussion, the Chair outlined that although preferences vary—some members favor a hybrid funding model combining resource- and student-based elements, while others advocate for a fully student-based approach—there is consensus around the values driving the proposal. These include equity, flexibility, transparency, and adequacy.

Secretary Marten thanked Senator Sturgeon and co-chair Marcus for their leadership. She proposed that participants be provided the opportunity to submit questions in writing about funding models or topics they believe should be discussed before formal action is taken. She suggested that WestEd could support this process by creating a form or survey to facilitate structured input. Sarah Barzee, representing WestEd, affirmed their willingness to assist with this effort.

Public Comment

The commission heard public comment from Kendall Massett.

Adjournment

Senator Sturgeon reiterated the May 5th meeting would be held in-person from 4:00-6:00 pm in Legislative Hall. Representative Williams moved to adjourn, and Marcus Wright seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anna Sullivan for WestEd

Updated on 04.29.2025