

Public Education Funding Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2025

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

The Public Education Funding Commission (PEFC) meeting was held on June 2, 2025, with the following members in attendance:

Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney

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

[Audio Recording of Meeting](#)

Welcome/Introductions

Chair Sturgeon opened the meeting and invited Anna Sullivan (WestEd) to conduct a verbal roll call. A quorum was confirmed, and the meeting was officially called to order. She welcomed Jason Hale, who is replacing Sara Hale, as a new commission member.

Approval of May 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes from the May 5, 2025 meeting. Representative Williams motioned to approve, and Marcus Wright seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

New Business

The Chair began by reminding members of the five core values guiding the Commission's work and then introduced Mike Griffith from LPI.

Griffith began by providing clarification regarding terminology frequently used by the Commission, noting that while terms such as "framework," "formula," and "model" are sometimes used interchangeably, they refer to distinct components of the funding system.

- A **framework** refers to the overarching structure of the funding system. In this context, the Commission is considering a **hybrid framework** that combines elements of the current resource allocation model with weighted funding mechanisms.
- A **formula** refers to the specific details and mechanisms that would operate within the chosen framework.
- A **model** is used to simulate or project the outcomes of a proposed formula.

Griffith emphasized that should the Commission adopt a hybrid framework, the next steps would involve determining the components of the formula and then modeling those decisions. Griffith then emphasized that the Commission's vote on the hybrid funding framework represents the beginning—not the conclusion—of the funding reform process because even with adoption of a framework, numerous critical decisions remain, including:

- **Exclusions from the Framework:**

Transportation, capital expenditures, and food services are not included in the proposed hybrid funding framework. He noted these areas are traditionally addressed outside the core funding formula due to their unique structures.

- **Local Funding and Equalization:**

The frameworks presented thus far have not included local funding contributions or equalization measures. Griffith emphasized that regardless of the selected formula or framework, both topics must be addressed by the commission in future meetings.

- **Total Funding and Adequacy:**

The Commission will need to define what constitutes "adequate" funding and determine recommended funding levels—both at the state level and in terms of combined state and local contributions. While decisions around funding levels will involve the legislature, the Commission plays a key role in shaping those recommendations.

- **Formula Details to Be Determined:**

A number of formula-level considerations still require deliberation, including:

- Specific weight values for various student populations (e.g., low-income students, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness or in foster care)
- Whether and how to include early learning funding
- Possible concentrated funding for at-risk students
- The approach to defining and funding students with greater needs

Griffith concluded by reiterating that these detailed components are not part of the framework vote and will be addressed in subsequent meetings focused on the development of a formula.

The Commission then proceeded with formal consideration of five recommendations. Prior to the vote, the Chair outlined the discussion and voting process, including procedures for motions, comments, and tracking individual participation. Each recommendation was addressed individually, with open discussion and a formal vote followed.

Recommendation 1:

The Commission recommends a hybrid funding framework that blends elements of the current system with a weighted block grant approach. The Commission supports providing additional weighted funding for students with greater needs, such as low-income backgrounds, English learners, and students with disabilities. The Commission also supports providing dedicated funding for educator positions based on the number and characteristics of students and in accordance with the statewide salary scale. As the Commission seeks to refine a hybrid funding framework, it will continually review its adherence to the five key principles: adequacy, equity, transparency, flexibility, and impact on student outcomes.

A motion to adopt **Recommendation 1** was made by Representative Williams and seconded by Taylor Hawk. Discussion ensued and the recommendation was passed with the follow votes:

- 31 Yes votes (Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney)
- 0 No votes (n/a)
- 0 Abstention (n/a)

Recommendation 2:

The Commission recommends developing an implementation plan to guide the transition to a new funding formula, including a 3–5-year plan that considers the revenue needed to support the phase-in. The Commission is committed to ensuring LEAs* do not receive less funding during a transition to the new funding formula.

*This language was amended from “districts and charters” to “LEAs” during the June 2nd meeting.

A motion to adopt **Recommendation 2** was made by Representative Williams and seconded by Marcus Wright. Discussion ensued and the recommendation was passed with the follow votes:

- 31 Yes votes (Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney)
- 0 No votes (n/a)
- 0 Abstention (n/a)

Recommendation 3:

The Commission recommends that we continue meeting and making recommendations on how to better account for local wealth differences in Delaware’s state and local education funding mechanisms after the reassessment data becomes available, including equalization, referendum reform, and state and local share.

A motion to adopt **Recommendation 3** was made by Emily Falcon and seconded by Marcus Wright. Discussion ensued and the recommendation was passed with the follow votes:

- 31 Yes votes (Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney)
- 0 No votes (n/a)
- 0 Abstention (n/a)

Recommendation 4:

The Commission recommends establishing a standing body of parents, community leaders, educators, and LEA* leaders to continually review Delaware’s education funding system and make recommendations to improve its adequacy, equity, transparency, flexibility, and impact on student outcomes.

*This language was amended from “district” to “LEA” during the June 2nd meeting.

A motion to adopt **Recommendation 4** was made by Jenifer Fuqua and seconded by Emily Falcon. Discussion ensued and the recommendation was passed with the follow votes:

- 30 Yes votes (Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason

Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney)

- 0 No votes (n/a)
- 0 Abstention (n/a)

Recommendation 5:

The Commission recommends engaging the broader public to gather feedback to refine a hybrid funding formula, including but not limited to community town halls and focus groups. The Commission commits to providing the public with accurate data to show the potential impacts of the proposed reforms. The Commission is committed to holding community town halls across the state, including a minimum of one event in every county. Engagement activities will be scheduled at times to allow for maximum school stakeholder participation.

A motion to adopt **Recommendation 5** was made by Marcus Wright and seconded by Representative Williams. Discussion ensued and the recommendation was passed with the follow votes:

- 30 Yes votes (Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Kevin Hensley, Taylor Hawk, Tammy Croce, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose Aviles Riveria, Evelyn Edney, Crystal Nelson, April Albury-Harmon, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Sage Sawhney)
- 0 No votes (n/a)
- 0 Abstention (n/a)

Public Comment

The commission heard public comment from Tika Hartsock, Jackie Wager, Kendall Massett, Monica Moriak, Jenny Howard, and Lacie Spence.

Adjournment

Senator Sturgeon noted that the July meeting would be canceled, and that the commission would reconvene on August 11th from 4:00-6:00. Representative Williams moved to adjourn, and Marcus Wright seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anna Sullivan for WestEd

Updated on 06.06.2025