

**Public Education Funding Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
October 13, 2025

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

The Public Education Funding Commission (PEFC) meeting was held on October 13, 2025, with the following members in attendance:

Cindy Marten, Ruth Ann Miller, Ann Visalli, Laura Sturgeon, Kim Williams, Eric Buckson, Taylor Hawk, Susan Brown, Kevin Long, David Tull, Jason Hale, Emily Falcon, Nick Johnson, Rachel Valentin, Jose, Aviles Rivera, April Albury-Harmon, Melissa Tracy, Karen Ewing, Cassie Queen, Sarah Celestin, Helen Anderson, Jennifer Fuqua, Britney Mumford, Gary Henry, Madeleine Bayard, Meedra Surratte, Marcus Wright, Lisa Lawson, Tyler Gunter

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

[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 Susan Brown, who is replacing Tammy Croce, as the new commission member representing DASA.

### **Approval of August 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2025 meeting. Marcus Wright motioned to approve and Sarah Celestin seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

### **New Business**

The Chair then introduced Sarah Barzee, who began by reviewing the commission's five guiding values and the five recommendations that the commission came to consensus on in June 2025. She noted that Recommendation 5 called for engaging a broader public to gather feedback to refine the funding formula and then turned the floor over to co-Chair Marcus Wright. Wright shared that he was stepping down as chair of the Public Engagement Working Group and announced Madeleine Bayard (Rodel) as the new chair of the working group.

Dr. Barzee outlined that the agenda and then introduced Mike Griffith to present the model.

Griffith presented a draft of the proposed school funding formula, emphasizing that the data is based on the 2024–25 school year and will be updated with 2025–26 data in the coming weeks. He reiterated that this version is not final, and key decisions on student weights, categories, and formula components remain pending.

### **Key Highlights**

- Scope & Timeline:
  - Draft does not yet include equalization funding, and will not include transportation, capital expenditures, or food services.
  - Target implementation for the new formula is FY28 (SY 2027–28).

- Comparison of Current vs. Proposed Formula:
  - Current system relies heavily on unit counts and includes over 20 categorical funding streams with limited flexibility.
  - Proposed system simplifies and consolidates funding into three main components:
    - Base Funding: Tied to staffing positions (units).
    - Operational Funding: Weighted by student need; flexible use.
    - Opportunity Funding: Also weighted; supports high-need groups such as low-income, multilingual learners (MLL), and special education students.
- Flexibility & Equity:
  - Proposed model increases district-level flexibility while maintaining protections for staffing positions.
  - Provides LEAs with increased sending flexibility while maintaining targeted support for students.
  - Significantly increases funding for high-need student groups, compared to current opportunity funding amounts.
- Examples of Student-Level Funding:
  - Under the proposed model a student identified in more than one category (e.g. MLL, low-income) would receive combined funding from all applicable weights.
- National Comparison:
  - Proposed funding model places Delaware on the higher end nationally of state share funding for low-income and MLL students.

Following the presentation, Dr. Barzee facilitated discussion. After the discussion, Dr. Barzee stated that commission members would receive the draft model on Monday, October 20th and would be asked to provide feedback by the following Monday, October 27th.

### **Public Comment**

The commission heard public comment from Eileen Reynolds, Kendall Massett, Donna Johnson Geist, Erin Bryan, Jenny Howard, Jacqueline Wager, Blair Catlin Brown, and Amber West.

### **Adjournment**

Senator Sturgeon noted that the commission would reconvene on November 10, 2025 from 4:00-6:00 virtually. Marcus Wright moved to adjourn, and Representative Williams seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anna Sullivan for WestEd

Updated on 10.20.2025