MINUTES

EDUCATION FUNDING TASK FORCE

January 31, 2025
Room 159-S—Statehouse

Committee Members Present

Senator Renee Erickson, Chairperson
Representative Susan Estes, Vice-chairperson
Senator Beverly Gossage
Senator Pat Pettey
Representative Jason Goetz
Representative Scott Hill
Representative Nikki McDonald
Representative Kristey Williams
Cory Gibson
Frank Harwood
Bert Moore
Brad Neuenswander
Jim Porter
Adam Proffitt
Melissa Rooker

Members Absent

All members present.

Staff Present

Elaina Rudder, Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD)
Jennifer Light, KLRD
Julia Kofoid, KLRD
Matthew Willis, KLRD
Nicole Fielder, KLRD
Jason Long, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Nick Myers, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Tamera Lawrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Cyndie Rexer, Committee Assistant

Friday, January 31
Afternoon Session

Introduction of Task Force Members and Staff

Chairperson Erickson opened the meeting and asked members of the Task Force to introduce themselves and provide their relevant education experience. The Task Force is composed of 11 voting members appointed by House and Senate leadership and the State Board of Education, and 4 ex-officio non-voting members. Eight members are legislators and seven members are experts in their field. (Attachment 1)

Statutory Charge of the Education Funding Task Force

Staff from the Office of Revisor of Statutes reviewed the Task Force's statutory charge, stating it is to develop a new school finance formula by reviewing the current school finance system, determining and dispersing special education state aid, and submitting recommendations for a new school formula by January 2027. In doing so, the Task Force is expected to consider equity considerations and provide meaningful accountability measures. (Attachment 2)

Overview of Types of Education Funding

Staff from the Kansas Legislative Research Department provided an overview of the different types of school funding. The school finance formula consists primarily of three broad areas: in-statute finance formulas, broader statutory funding authority, and funding through appropriations, which are adjusted twice a year though the consensus estimate group and are subject to legislative approval. Funding for specific programs, such as professional development and school food assistance, are not part of the finance formula but are subject to appropriations. (Attachment 3) (Attachment 4)

Task Force members asked questions regarding estimates for supplemental state aid that were attributable to the special education weighting, as well as the history for BASE aid increases in recent years.

Discussion of Task Force Timeline

Chairperson Erickson discussed the timeline necessary to accomplish the Task Force's charge. The Task Force will meet monthly until it completes its charge, and a report is due to the Legislature and Governor on January 11, 2027. The report is to include recommendations for a new school finance formula that is reasonably calculated to have all students meet or exceed the Rose Standards; provide adequate, consistent, and reliable funding; and establish meaningful accountability measures.

Discussion of Committee Requests and Needed Information

Members also discussed other considerations to be studied, including reviewing the current school finance system, methods for determining and dispersing special education state aid, inputs and outputs of the funding system and achievement goals, state formulas that tie policy to funding and their impact on student outcomes, working with districts to understand how the funding formula impacts their budgeting process, and providing support and training. Members were encouraged to contact other states to obtain their formulaic weightings for comparison as well as information on special education funding, school choice and its impact, cash balances, and general financial health of schools.

Members also provided staff with additional topics and requests, which included, but were not limited to, the general financial health of school districts; census numbers for student enrollment and special education students; comparisons with other states; education programs funded within the last 15 years that are currently not funded; school finance components that interact well with school choice initiatives; commonalities between states that perform well on standardized assessments, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress; and any history or rationale as to why the current weightings and factors that determine them were chosen.

Discussion of Future Meeting Schedule

Members discussed future meetings of the Task Force to be held during the legislative session, and it was noted that the Task Force will meet monthly for the duration of their task.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Prepared by Cyndie Rexer

Edited by Matthew Willis

Approved by the Committee on:

August 14, 2025
(Date)