



## **PRESS RELEASE: House Education Committee Makes Bipartisan Recommendation for Modest Increases to State Education Funding**

February 14 – The House Education Committee today advanced proposals for modest increases to State funding for education. Combined, these proposals will increase state funding by about \$130 million per year and help move the State closer toward meeting its constitutional responsibility to fund education.

“This legislation represents a step in the right direction for the State, and I hope the full House will follow the committee’s recommendation and advance these bills,” said Zack Sheehan, NHSFFP Executive Director. “While these bills still fall short of bringing the State in line with the recent *ConVal* ruling, the additional targeted funds to students with greater needs and communities with lower property values will provide much needed resources for students and property tax relief in those communities.”

The strong bipartisan votes on HB 1583 (16-4) and HB 1656 (19-1) send these bills to the full House with a recommendation of Ought to Pass as Amended. These bills, as amended, would add \$35 million to differentiated aid for students receiving special education services using weighted values based on different levels of support students need, add \$39 million in fiscal capacity disparity aid that directs more funding to communities with low property values, and \$25 million for districts with high proportions of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch.

This roughly \$100 million increase will take effect July 1, 2024, while an increase to base adequacy from \$4,100 to \$4,404 per pupil, per year, will start on July 1, 2025. The recent *ConVal* ruling determined that base adequacy must be at least \$7,356.01 per pupil, per year.

The committee also voted to recommend HB 1586 for interim study, promising more serious study of this issue ahead of the 2025 budget process, while not sacrificing taking some action now.

HB 1686, the bill that would require any excess SWEPT revenues collected by municipalities to be remitted to the State and ban the use of negative tax rates to offset SWEPT, bringing the State in line with the summary judgement decision from the *Rand* case, left the committee with no recommendation, meaning its first vote in the full House will be a motion of Ought to Pass.

“The testimony on these bills showed overwhelming public support for an increase to State funding for education, and these bills moving forward is a promising sign that some concerns will be addressed” Sheehan said. “I hope this discussion continues as these bills advance through the legislature, and that they get to work on taking the next step and bringing the State in line with the *ConVal* and *Rand* rulings.”

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*The mission of the NHSFFP, a registered 501(c)(3), is to inform the public about the condition of New Hampshire public schools and their funding; to advocate for changes to make the system more equitable*



*for students and taxpayers alike; and, if necessary, to prosecute, manage, control, and/or participate in a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the system for funding education in New Hampshire.*