



News Release

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Property tax report no excuse for school funding status quo

Reacting to this morning's briefing by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy on its property tax report, NEA-New Hampshire President Rhonda Wesolowski urged members of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Costing an Adequate Education not to use the document as the basis for keeping the status quo in education funding.

Wesolowski issued the following statement:

The Lincoln Institute report comes at a time when the Legislature is under a New Hampshire Supreme Court order to define an adequate education, determine its cost, fund it, and ensure its delivery through accountability. NEA-NH supported the Legislature's passage of HB 927 (2007) defining adequacy, the Supreme Court's first step. HB 927 also established the joint committee to determine the cost of an adequate education, the second step. The joint committee must issue its report on costing soon.

It would be a disservice to the citizens and children of New Hampshire to use this report either as an excuse to underestimate the true cost of adequacy or as a stalking horse for a constitutional amendment. To do so would undermine the state's duty to provide an adequate education for every child.

This association will be watching closely the final product of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Costing an Adequate Education. We will support the committee in making good-faith efforts to cost out an adequate education, but we need to make sure the result fairly represents the actual cost. Our major concern has been that, instead of using the standards it set for an adequate education to determine the actual cost, the Legislature might decide how much the state wants to spend and then plug that amount into a formula.

Now is *not* the time for the Legislature to consider yet another constitutional amendment on school funding. Now *is* the time to provide the adequate education the constitution promises.

NEA-NH looks forward to working with the Legislature to meet the goals set by the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

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