

Commission on the Future of Vermont Public Education

[Act 183](#) has given the Task Force a concrete charge to make recommendations in several areas - in other words, the work we need to do is clearly outlined in the law. Based on our conversations, it appears that this work can be organized into four broad (but overlapping) areas:

- **Communication & Engagement:** Design and recommend a public outreach plan for Commission to include engagement sessions associated with each meeting and a process for the Public Comment period in 2025
- **Education Finance System:** Propose recommendations regarding cost containment strategies in the short term and the finance system writ large, so that the Commission can provide preliminary financial recommendations to the General Assembly by December 2024 and more formal recommendations by December 2025.
- **Governance, Resources & Administration:** Propose recommendations regarding the structure of the Agency (and whether an agency or department structure is prudent) and “whether changes need to be made to the composition, role and function of the State Board”
- **Education Delivery System:** Propose recommendations to regarding “the physical size and footprint of the education system,” workforce development, the role of tuition programs (including designation, therapeutic schools and “the legal and financial impact of funding independent schools and other private institutions”, and the role of public schools - “whether Vermont’s vision for education shall include the provision of wraparound supports and collocation of services”

The Steering Group is charged with developing and proposing a work plan to the Commission - which is to say, the Steering Group must recommend *how* to approach the work.

We acknowledged at the last Steering Group meeting that:

- It would be instructive to view existing data as a Steering Group to ground ourselves in the “current state”. This will help to identify the problem statement for each work item and inform sound recommendations about how to complete it. Reviewing data may inform the scope of work needed, whether outside consultant support is needed, and how long the work might take - all of which is important for the proposal of a workplan.
- An exhaustive data review is not necessary or prudent for purposes of developing the work plan. The goal is not to conduct a “deep dive” but rather to make sound decisions about how best to approach the work. Our deadline for adopting a workplan is September 15th.
- The subcommittee charged with preparing recommendations about cost containment strategies must be convened quickly in order to meet the December 2024 timeline. Identifying missing data sets that are crucial to have before making preliminary recommendations is important so that we can make a plan to secure what is needed

Discussion:

1. What additional information do we need to begin work in each area?
2. Do we need this information in order to develop our work plan? Or is that data part of the initial work for that area?
3. How will missing information be obtained?

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	Data Sets	
	Statewide demographic projections (historic and predicted)	
<i>Governance/ Delivery System Data</i>	Supervisory Districts and Unions (# of students served, # of towns served, cost per equalized pupil) Tuitioning (# of districts paying tuition; total paid to independent schools [out of state, in state, religious, special education]) Staffing (staff to equalized pupil ratio by district - instructional, support, administrative) Class size by district Min/Max Salary (teachers and support staff) by district Provisional licensure status Staff retention	
<i>Education Fund Data</i>	Breakdown of \$1.89 billion education payment (by object/function) Education fund sources (homestead tax net of property tax credit; nonresidential tax, sales/purchase & use/rooms & meals) Education fund & uses (education payment, legislative programs [eg. PCBs, universal meals, etc], transportation payment, special education Facility needs assessments	
<i>Student Outcome Data</i>	Student assessment results (disaggregated) Student conditions (absenteeism; discipline; MTSS status) Education Quality Outcomes/Equity Index (correlations between spending per equalized pupil & outcomes? Poverty? Race? District size?	