COMMENTS ABOUT THE EQUITY OF THE RI EDUCATION FUNDING FORMULA by Joanne DeVoe, 67 King Street, Warren, joanned@qis.net, 401-247-3004

State education funding formulas should be both adequate and equitable. The current RI formula has a core instructional amount that is in line with the amounts of the other New England states. However, only about half of the formula's state share is determined by a measure of the local ability to raise funds. The current formula combines an equity measure with the local percentage of poor children using a quadratic mean equation.

The table attached is a comparison of the state share of the current formula for Fiscal Year 2020 with the state share that would have resulted from a formula that uses only the equity measure. This measure is based on a comparison of each city and town's property and income wealth per pupil with the state average property and income wealth per pupil. It has been on the RI books for many years.

The equity formula gives zero state share to some districts because their property and income wealth is so high. The current formula's percentage of poor children factor gives some state funds to every city & town because all have some poor children in their schools. Wealthy cities & towns have many children in private schools which increases the density of poor children in their public schools.

The last two columns on the table show the effect of subtracting the more equitable formula state share from the current formula state share. It shows that 28 cities & towns with 85% of the state's enrollment would have had a greater state share if only the equity measure were used. Only Newport & 10 towns got a greater state share with the current formula.

The RI formula should have its state share completely determined by an equity factor. I imagine that it would be difficult politically to have the General Assembly pass an education formula with an equity factor that would give some districts no funds even if it were phased in over 10 years like the current formula. However, I think that using the density of poor children as a factor in calculating state share makes no sense especially since the current formula calculates the cost of education by a counting of children that gives 40% greater weight to poor children than to all other children.

RI EDUCATION FORMULA 2020: COMPARISON OF STATE SHARE USING THE CURRENT EQUITABLE MEASURE OF PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX BASE TOGETHER WITH THE PERCENTAGE OF POOR CHILDREN (SSR); AND USING ONLY THE SAME EQUITABLE MEASURE OF PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX BASE (SSRC)

	Total	SSR	SSR	SSRC	SSRC	SSR% Minus	SSR\$ Minus
City or Town	Foundation	_%	\$	%	\$	SSRC%	SSRC\$
Α	В	С	D = B x C	E	F=BxE	G = C - E	H = D - F
Barrington	\$33,571,271	17.0%	\$5,707,116	23.5%	\$7,889,249	-6.5%	(\$2,182,133
Bristol	\$21,487,193	25.6%	\$5,500,721	20.6%	\$4,426,362	5.0%	\$1,074,36
Burrillville	\$25,411,902	50.6%	\$12,858,422	62.3%	\$15,831,615	-11.7%	(\$2,973,193
Central Falls	\$35,282,902	94.9%	\$33,483,474	97.5%	\$34,400,829	-2.6%	(\$917,355
Charlestown	\$8,187,007	18.2%	\$1,490,035	0.0%	\$0	18.2%	\$1,490,03
Coventry	\$51,025,173	47.4%	\$24,185,932	58.2%	\$29,696,651	-10.8%	(\$5,510,719
Cranston	\$116,961,479	55.0%	\$64,328,813	65.0%	\$76,024,961	-10.0%	(\$11,696,148
Cumberland	\$49,307,619	43.3%	\$21,350,199	56.9%	\$28,056,035	-13.6%	(\$6,705,836
East Greenwich	\$25,556,019	9.9%	\$2,530,046	11.5%	\$2,938,942	-1.6%	(\$408,896
East Providence	\$60,495,411	58.5%	\$35,389,815	64.8%	\$39,201,026	-6.3%	(\$3,811,211
Exeter	\$7,788,219	25.9%	\$2,017,149	31.5%	\$2,453,289	-5.6%	(\$436,140
Foster	\$6,843,351	41.2%	\$2,819,461	54.5%	\$3,729,626	-13.3%	(\$910,166
Glocester	\$13,402,070	37.1%	\$4,972,168	50.4%	\$6,754,643	-13.3%	(\$1,782,475
Hopkinton	\$11,947,858	42.6%	\$5,089,788	54.8%	\$6,547,426	-12.2%	(\$1,457,639
Jamestown	\$6,767,558	6.3%	\$426,356	0.0%	\$0	6.3%	\$426,356
Johnston	\$38,019,144	46.8%	\$17,792,959	50.5%	\$19,199,668	-3.7%	(\$1,406,708
Lincoln	\$33,592,987	42.1%	\$14,142,648	51.6%	\$17,333,981	-9.5%	(\$3,191,334
Little Compton	\$3,658,193	11.0%	\$402,401	0.0%	\$0	11.0%	\$402,401
Middletown	\$23,933,227	30.7%	\$7,347,501	31.1%	\$7,443,234	-0.4%	(\$95,733)
Narragansett	\$13,069,204	17.0%	\$2,221,765	0.0%	\$0	17.0%	\$2,221,765
Newport	\$25,893,607	47.8%	\$12,377,144	0.0%	\$0	47.8%	\$12,377,144
New Shoreham	\$1,397,734	9.3%	\$129,989	0.0%	\$0	9.3%	\$129,989
North Kingstown	\$40,352,648	24.8%	\$10,007,457	24.2%	\$9,765,341	0.6%	\$242,116
North Providence	\$40,960,702	55.7%	\$22,815,111	64.7%	\$26,501,574	-9.0%	(\$3,686,463)
North Smithfield	\$17,631,580	32.2%	\$5,677,369	40.2%	\$7,087,895	-8.0%	(\$1,410,526)
Pawtucket	\$110,201,818	81.3%	\$89,594,078	87.1%	\$95,985,783	-5.8%	(\$6,391,705)
Portsmouth	\$24,164,208	13.2%	\$3,189,675	0.0%	\$0	13.2%	\$3,189,675
Providence	\$298,917,570	86.8%	\$259,460,451	87.0%	\$260,058,286	-0.2%	(\$597,835)
Richmond	\$12,003,136	38.6%	\$4,633,210	51.4%	\$6,169,612	-12.8%	(\$1,536,401)
Scituate	\$13,598,290	16.6%	\$2,257,316	19.3%	\$2,624,470	-2.7%	(\$367,154)
Smithfield	\$25,174,998	23.9%	\$6,016,825	30.1%	\$7,577,674	-6.2%	(\$1,560,850)
South Kingstown	\$31,370,038	13.9%	\$4,360,435	0.2%	\$62,740	13.7%	\$4,297,695
Tiverton	\$19,179,353	37.1%	\$7,115,540	42.7%	\$8,189,584	-5.6%	(\$1,074,044)
Varren	\$14,512,344	50.2%	\$7,285,197	55.1%	\$7,996,302	-4.9%	(\$711,105)
Varwick	\$98,005,211	38.7%	\$37,928,017	40.6%	\$39,790,116	-1.9%	(\$1,862,099)
Vesterly	\$30,787,649	27.7%	\$8,528,179	0.0%	\$0	27.7%	\$8,528,179
West Greenwich	\$9,318,224	31.9%	\$2,972,513	41.9%	\$3,904,336	-10.0%	(\$931,822)
West Warwick	\$42,520,320	63.4%	\$26,957,883	72.1%	\$30,657,151	-8.7%	(\$3,699,268)
Voonsocket	\$76,638,444	83.0%	\$63,609,909	90.7%	\$69,511,069	-7.7%	(\$5,901,160)
TOTAL	\$1,518,935,661	-	\$838,973,067		\$877,809,470		(\$38,836,403)
Notes:							

<sup>--</sup>Data for Total Foundation (Col. B), State Share Ratio % (SSR%, Col. C) and State Share Ratio Community % (SSRC%. Col E) are from "FY 2020 Formula Calculations, Final", RI Department of Education (RIDE).

<sup>--</sup>Col. D is current formula's state share which uses a quadratic mean equation with equity and percent of poor children.

<sup>--</sup>Col. F is a formula state share which uses only the current equity measure.

<sup>--</sup>Cols G & H are the difference between the current state share and the equitable state share.