

Senate Education Finance Committee

Karen Davis 271-7875

HB 1121, defining the cost of an adequate education.

Hearing Date: April 1, 2026

Time Opened: 1:00 p.m.

Time Closed: 1:21 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Murphy, Carson, Ward, Rosenwald and Altschiller

Members of the Committee Absent: Senator Innis

Bill Analysis: This bill defines specific elements to be used to calculate the cost of an adequate education.

Sponsors:

Rep. Ladd
Sen. Ward

Rep. Peeples

Rep. D. McGuire

Who supports the bill: Rep. Daniel Popovici-Muller, Cory Stone, Cindy Deal, Eric Pauer

Who opposes the bill: 190 people were in opposition. Full sign in sheets are available upon request by contacting the Legislative Aide, Karen Davis (karen.davis@gc.nh.gov).

Who is neutral on the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented in support:

- **Representative Rick Ladd**, Haverhill, NH – Prime Sponsor

Rep. Ladd said that this bill defined the specific elements used to calculate the cost of an adequate education. He explained that there were personnel and non-personnel components that made up the base costs, or universal costs, as they were previously called.

In 2008, the *Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Costing an Adequate Education* was chaired by Senator Iris Estabrook. The Committee worked to answer the following questions – what were the universal costs? What were the elements which make up these universal costs?

Rep. Ladd shared the following list of cost components from the Joint Legislative Committee's report: teachers, principals, administrative assistant, guidance counselor, library media specialist, technology coordinator, custodian, instruction materials, supplies, technology, teacher professional development, facilities operation and maintenance, and transportation.

Some have urged for Superintendents to be considered a costing factor, but he said this was not included on the Joint Legislative Committee's list. They also did not include other administrative staff, school nurses, teacher aides, and food service personnel.

He contended that since the definition of an adequate education was school and curriculum based, administrative costs did not fit within that definition. Local school districts had the option to provide additional services, but this should be done at their discretion. These elements were not part of adequacy.

He concluded by stating that the cost components identified by the Joint Legislative Committee have been used successfully since 2008. There was no need for the state to pay for the management and administrative costs of the central school office.

Q: Sen. Cindy Rosenwald – She raised operation and maintenance of school facilities and asked if the state should be obligated to increase funding for building aid?

A: Rep. Ladd - He replied that the building aid portion of the funding formula was for reconstruction and new construction. He estimated that around \$356 per pupil was included in the base cost for the maintenance and operation of a school. Local school districts needed to have created a capital reserve account if they had to replace a boiler. "They can't think that if something breaks, the state is going to bail me out. They must project and save for that", he said.

Q: Sen. Rosenwald – She asked about children who have complex medical conditions that required having a nurse on staff in order to attend school?

A: Rep. Ladd - He acknowledged that there were students who had specific needs, but he wondered where adequacy money started and stopped in relation to Medicaid. However, he stated that if an IEP called for it, the school must provide it such as special equipment for a physically handicapped child.

Q: Sen. Debra Altschiller – She asked whether this bill would be repeal a legal requirement that the General Court must periodically determine what substantially contributed to an adequate education. This was put in place in 2012, four years after the Joint Legislative Committee completed their report.

A: Rep. Ladd - He acknowledged that the Legislature was required to look at the thirteen categories of what comprised an adequate education and that they needed to assess the funding formula often. He also asserted that school nurses should be certified in how to teach health and wellness in addition to providing medical services.

Q: Sen. Altschiller – She reiterated that her question involved whether this bill would repeal the ten-year review period for assessing the specific resources elements essential to providing an adequate education.

A: Rep. Ladd - He replied that the intention was not to get rid of the review and that the list in this bill identified specific resources that comprise an adequate education. School districts could make changes to their teacher-student ratios in the classroom and that could be changed at any time.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

Neutral Information Presented: None

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 8, 2026