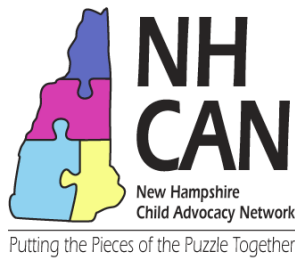


Action Step Fact Sheet 2005 Children's Agenda



Education:

Ensure the right of all New Hampshire students to a high quality public education by:

- a) supporting efforts to define adequacy at a level that ensures high quality education for all children;
- b) supporting efforts to assess the cost of adequacy at a level that ensures state funding of high quality educational services for all students; and
- c) monitoring and opposing legislative efforts aimed at diverting public funds from public schools and/or providing public funds for private purposes while not meeting current funding obligations for public schools.

What is the specific concern or issue affecting NH's children?

State aid to education has historically been under-funded. Since the 1997 Claremont II decision, the State has still not developed a definition of an adequate education. It is thus impossible to accurately develop a cost for providing an adequate education, which leads to the state's chronic under-funding of education.

Current distributions for building and catastrophic special education aids are less than entitlements. State adequacy aid is not keeping pace with costs: the state share in 1999 was \$825 million and has DECREASED to \$805 million six years later in 2005. Recent legislative efforts have focused on diverting funds from public schools to offset the expense of private schools with no fewer than six separate legislative committees this fall studying ways to implement "school choice".

What are the Action Step strategies to address this issue?

- ◆ Support efforts to define adequacy at a level that ensures high quality education for all children;
- ◆ Support efforts to assess the cost of adequacy at a level that ensures state funding of high quality educational services for all students; and
- ◆ Monitor and oppose legislative efforts aimed at diverting public funds from public schools and/or providing public funds for private purposes while not meeting current funding obligations for public schools.

How does this solution meet NH CAN's prioritizing criteria?

- ◆ **How many children are affected?**
All public school children statewide, over 200,000.
- ◆ **What is the severity of the impact?**
Extreme – the underlying philosophy of quality public education being provided to all for the common good is at stake.
- ◆ **What is NH CAN's ability to create or influence change?**
NH CAN's participation is solicited because all children statewide are affected, and support from NH CAN would allow a more comprehensive and coordinated effort to impact the legislative process.

NH CAN 2005 Children's Agenda
Education: High quality education

NH CAN partners are asked to take the following steps:

- a) Actively oppose legislation that seeks to drain resources away from public education
- b) Join in supporting legislation that affirms the right of all children to a quality education.
- c) Share information with fellow citizens regarding the impact of proposed legislative changes to educational funding.

What groups, organizations and individuals are/will be involved?

Organizations with which we will specifically be working include the NH State School Boards Association (NHSBA), the NH School Administrators Association (NHSAA), NEA-NH, and the Citizen Voice Project. Contacts with other associations include the Children's Alliance of NH, the Coalition Communities, and the Coalition for Adequate Education.