
ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Draft Final Report Feedback

Instructions

1. Complete the following two sections accordingly:
 - The General Comments section addresses issues that may apply to more than one section of the report or to issues not currently covered in the report.
 - The Specific Comments section should include comments directed at a particular section or wording of the report. These might be suggested line edits or new language, for example.
2. In the specific comments section, indicate any page numbers and/or sections related to the comment.
3. In both sections, describe in a few words the topic your comment addresses in the "Topic of Comment" field.
4. Record your comment/feedback in the "Comment" field.
5. If additional comment space is needed, right click in any row and select "insert" > "insert rows" to add an additional row(s). Additional rows can be added at the bottom of the table or in between rows.
6. Save your document and email to **Katie Lynne at katie_lynne_morton@hcmstrategists.com**. **All final comments are due by 5pm CT on February 20, 2024.**

General Comments

Topic of Comment	Comment
Total Cost	I believe the \$1.4B cost discussed does not take into account additional inflationary costs. I had asked about this before and was told the cost would be greater once inflation is factored in to the model. Therefore, I believe it is more accurate to say it would cost \$1.4B in 2024 dollars. If I am wrong, then I need more explanation.
Endowment	While we present three options for endowment, we continue to use option 1 as the default or placeholder, even though none of us on the Other Resources subgroup thought that was a good idea. I think it would make more sense to remove it completely for now and lay out the options for including it.

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Cost to Students	Frequently throughout the document, we do not do a good job of making the distinction between tuition revenue to the universities and what is paid by students and their families. These are not the same at all, as I have discussed frequently, and it is important that we are consistently clear about this. The first example is at the beginning of the document when we say 40% would come from students. 40% would come from tuition revenue, much of which may be covered by grants and scholarships. There is another example on p. 32 (Table 7).
I ran out of room below, so the following comments are additional specific comments.	
p.33, paragraph 3	It would be more accurate to say the CSU's high appropriations per student were "partially" driven by recent declines in enrollment. Their funding per student was higher than the average at before the declines of the last 15 years and they recently received additional support from the state beyond the percentage increase that went to all institutions.
p. 38-39	While I understand the accountability process is still a work in progress, I am concerned that we would be using percentage of adequacy to set expectations for universities as opposed to just using new funding. It would be unrealistic to expect greater improvements at institutions like SIUC and UIUC, which would be receiving less new funding relative to other institutions.
p. 41, paragraph 3	<p>Presenting the endowment dollars per student will likely lead readers to misunderstand the resources actually available. As soon as they see \$35,600, they will wonder why that institution even has to charge tuition since this amount is much larger than the published tuition. It also suggests they have access to more resources than they actually do since they do not spend the endowment principle. It would be more helpful to the reader to present what the average endowment spend per student would be (4.2% of that amount or \$1,495 per student). Since both would be restated, the gap will remain large.</p> <p>We also made the point that not only would it discourage future donations, it would anger all past endowment donors who certainly did not expect their donation to be used to reduce future state appropriations for their university. That point needs to be added.</p>

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p. 42, paragraph 5	<p>The nationally averages being used for the cost of medical education are simply wrong and I do not know why we insist on presenting them.</p> <p>On page 43, we cite the residency issue very briefly, but it might be helpful to note they also cost about \$160,000 per resident and they are not included in the model simply because residents are not enrolled student, so they are not in our headcount (even though we are educating them).</p>
p. 82, SIU special appropriations	Belleville is misspelled.

Specific Comments

Page Number, Paragraph, Section, etc.	Topic of Comment	Comment
p.2, paragraph 3	Agreement	I believe the statement “not every Commission member agrees with every element of the formula” is not an accurate reflection of our discussions. This suggests that only a few disagreed with a few elements. As we discussed at the TWG, it was never clear when we reached consensus and on many items, there is more than just a few who disagreed. This needs to be worded differently.
p. 9, paragraph 3	Agreement	This is a good example of the comment above. This suggests that there was widespread agreement that following the K-12 approach made sense. I do not recall a moment when “The Commission chose to pursue...” this approach and there were many of us, including those of us with the most higher education funding experience who believed, and continue to believe, this was the wrong approach. This also needs to be worded differently.

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p. 11, top of page	Special appropriations	Many of our special appropriations are related to community outreach and support. This should be added to the list.
p.11, paragraph 1	Concentration	I believe the way the word "concentrated" is used in this document is very misleading, particularly in the statement "These students are concentrated at particular institutions..." That would suggest most of them are at these institutions, which is not accurate. For example, UIUC and SIUC, the two institutions that do the worst in the formula have considerably more of the state's underrepresented and underserved students (i.e., the total numbers of Black/African-American, Hispanic, and Pell Grant students are more concentrated there) than are at the small institutions the model favors (CSU, GSU, and NEIU). However, those institutions do have a higher percentage of those students, so it would be accurate to say the model makes a greater investment in those institutions with the higher percentage of these groups.
p. 11, paragraph 2	Tuition costs	This section could be misleading if it is not clear we are talking about the increased in the published tuition rates as opposed to the tuition amount that students pay. The College Board report, which is cited here, makes it clear the actual amount of tuition paid by students and their families has actually declined over the last 15-20 years.
p. 14, paragraph 2, Equitable funding	Reference to data supporting the model	I was surprised Appendix D, that is referenced here, did not include data on the enrollment of Black/African-American, Hispanic, or Pell Grant students. It seems this would be important to include. We also need to add "percentage of" before "enrollment" in the next sentence for the reason I discussed above.

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p. 15, paragraph 4	Student share	I think we need to be clear here that when we refer to the student share we are talking about the revenue from tuition revenue, not what students may actually pay.
p. 18, paragraph 1	FTE vs. Headcount	I know I suggested using degree headcount enrollment as opposed to total headcount. Did we switch from that? If not, we need to be clear that we used degree headcount enrollment. If we did, we should at least share this was another approach considered.
p. 23, top of page	URM	The sentence that states “Thirteen percent of URM students are in high-cost/high-priority programs compared to 19 percent of other students” is confusing. Do we mean 19% of the students in other programs are URM students?
p. 29, paragraph 3	Affordability	I do not believe this statement is accurate “This is a brand-new concept and way to address affordability and state responsibility for funding higher education.” We state that ESS is agnostic about how tuition is covered and it does not direct in any way how the funding will be used. It states the goal is to ensure the state is taking responsibility for its share of the funding, but does not really address affordability.
p. 33, top of the page	Targeted	It would be accurate to say “The new investment by the state required to fill the Adequacy Gap will be highly targeted to institutions that serve a higher percentage of historically underserved students” as opposed to “The new investment by the state required to fill the Adequacy Gap will be highly targeted to historically underserved students.” The money goes to the institutions, not the students. Also, the point I made earlier about the number of students served at different institutions, as opposed to the percentage served, applies here.

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