

Educational Equity in a Generation

The Generational Educational Equity Fund and the Capitol Capital Fund

*Richmond, Virginia
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Best Practices make it clear that educational attainment can be significantly affected by additional resources: Personnel, methodology, social and economic support, pay, and student time. The greater the distance from educational equity, the greater the need for resources. In a commitment to overcome 400 years of systematic and structural inequity in education, Virginia will provide state funding to overcome jurisdictional tax segregation and honor best practices for the achievement of educational equity in a generation.

1. The state, operating by the Dillon Rule, will assume responsibility for the entire funding of the educational **Standards of Quality**¹ for all jurisdictions. In addition, the state will insure full funding to support Educational Equity in a Generation.
2. **The Generational Educational Equity Fund** will be allocated to local school systems on a sliding scale, based on the educational starting point of each student's household of origin.² This represents a replacement of the current discriminatory state sliding scale funding based on a nominal – but not actual – “ability to pay” criterion. That scale takes no notice of differences in aggregate local cost [need] or of local effort [tax rates] and perpetuates the discriminatory systems of segregationist funding of public education.
3. The Generational Educational Equity Fund will be managed so that the education of students in the highest level of need for educational equity – as measured by their educational starting point – will be funded at 200% of the Standards of Quality funding. The education of students at the highest starting point will be fully funded for the full achievement of the Standards of Quality.

¹ The Commonwealth currently funds an average of 55% of the Standards of Quality, with the percentage for each jurisdiction based on a formula, called the Local Composite Index, which purports to shape the actual state contribution according to the locality's “ability to pay.”

² It is suggested that this is the most reliable indicator of educational need to reach equity. Other criteria, such as income of household of origin, may be needed to augment or replace this indicator. The purpose is an accurate and objective measure of educational need to identify additional resources needed to achieve educational equity.

4. The cost of the full funding of the Standards of Quality and the Generational Educational Equity Fund will be borne in this way: The current state expenditures for the Standards of Quality will be maintained from current sources. The cost of completing the full funding of the Standards of Quality and of the Educational Equity Fund will represent a flat levy³ against the real estate tax revenue of the state's jurisdictions. This levy will of course obviate the levy which localities must currently pay to complete the Standards of Quality in their own systems, and will insure that the additional costs of Generational Educational Equity are levied in a way that is free of racial or economic segregation which is jurisdictionally enforced.

5. In the calculation of the Educational Equity Funding levels, the sliding scale based on household of origin will be addressed as well by a factor reflecting the concentration of low starting points in a school. Where students whose below median starting points are concentrated at more than 50% in a school, the ranking of need will be increased by 20%.

6. Since public education started in Virginia, schools serving black persons have been funded at a lower level than schools serving white persons. When starting point and educational need are factored in, the funding levels of predominantly white schools are as much as 300% higher than predominantly black schools. This is one of the strongest artifacts of structural racism remaining in Virginia, and Virginia's Generational Equity Fund is intended to end it.

7. The Capitol Capital Fund. Richmond's Public Schools have a deferred capital need estimated at \$600 million. The city does not have the bonding capacity to meet this need. Since it is the capital city, its largest single employer – the Commonwealth --pays no real estate taxes and therefore its base for capital bonds is significantly and artificially limited. Virginia intends for its capital city to be a leader in educational equity and quality. In order to provide Generational Equity in Education, the state will, in lieu of taxes, provide the funding for bonds to build and maintain the capital assets of the Richmond Public Schools within this generation.

Statistics of interest

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Household inc</u>	<u>Real estate tax</u>	<u>State ed funding</u>	<u>Poverty rate</u>
Hanover	\$88,652	\$0.81	53.74%	5.6%
Chesterfield	\$80,214	\$0.95	64.16%	7.1%
Henrico	\$68,572	\$0.87	57.21%	10.0%
Richmond	\$45,117	\$1.20	53.12%	24.5%

³ This levy is specifically intended to equalize the contribution to public education of citizens statewide, offsetting the inequalities of burden established by the economic segregation of funding for public education through the real estate taxes of local jurisdictions. Equity of education cannot be achieved if the sources of revenue directly match the inequity of the educational effort.