

---

# ADEQUACY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

# ADEQUACY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

By

DENNIS PATRICK LEYDEN

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro



Springer

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A C.I.P. Catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 0-387-23360-1 e-ISBN 0-387-23361-X Printed on acid-free paper.

© 2005 Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

All rights reserved. This work may not be translated or copied in whole or in part without the written permission of the publisher (Springer Science+Business Media, Inc., 233 Spring Street, New York, NY 10013, USA), except for brief excerpts in connection with reviews or scholarly analysis. Use in connection with any form of information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed is forbidden.

The use in this publication of trade names, trademarks, service marks and similar terms, even if they are not identified as such, is not to be taken as an expression of opinion as to whether or not they are subject to proprietary rights.

Cover designed by Marc Palmer, Sigil Design.

Printed in the United States of America.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 SPIN 11052715

springeronline.com

## **Dedication**

*To the memory of my beloved father –  
Dennis Roger Leyden (1933-2000)*

# Contents

Preface	ix
Introduction	1
A General Theory of Intergovernmental Grants	15
Theory of Public Education Funding with Court Intervention	43
Assessing the Empirical Validity of the Theory	79
A Legislative and Legal History of Public Education Funding	109
The Future of Public Education Funding	153
Conclusion	197
Acknowledgments	201
References	203
Index	217

## Preface

This book is about public education reform and the future of public education funding. Given the many articles, books, and conferences that have focused on the issue of public education reform, it is reasonable to ask whether the world needs still another volume on this subject. In my defense, I would argue that, although there is a large literature on public education reform, there is precious little that tries to sketch the big picture. Too often, both in research and in practice, it is easy to lose sight of the forest, for all the focus on the individual trees. While such detailed analysis is of critical value, that value derives both from its specificity and from its ability to fit into a larger, coherent whole. Unfortunately, our understanding of the public education process is still incomplete and disconnected, particularly with regard to the connections between research, policy, and practice. This book is an attempt to step back for a moment to get one's bearings before jumping headlong back into the forest.

It is my hope that this book will be of value to a wide variety of readers – researchers in departments of economics and schools of education, policy makers at all levels, and, of course, the practitioners slogging away in the trenches. Unfortunately, the various readers often speak quite different languages, and, as a graduate student friend of mine once observed many years ago, a proof is in the eye of the beholder. As a result, I have attempted to use a variety of approaches so that I might have the chance of reaching this wide range of readers. For those readers who prefer a more verbal and historical approach, I encourage them not to avoid *Chapters 2, 3, and 4* because of the mathematics. While the mathematics may be a bit thick at times, I have tried to provide diagrams and additional verbal arguments to help make sense of the underlying arguments. And certainly, the

introductions and conclusions to those chapters provide verbal distillations of that material which provide the foundation for the verbal and historical analysis found in *Chapters 6* and *7*. Likewise, for those readers who delight in more formal, mathematical approaches, I encourage them to not stop after *Chapter 4*. The issue of public education reform and its connection to public education funding is a complicated one and there are limits to the ability to reduce it to (relatively simple) mathematical and econometric analysis. *Chapters 6* and *7* contain the core of the points I wish to make, and much would be lost if they were ignored.

Finally, I should note that while this book is about the future, the reader will quickly discover that much of this book focuses on the past. As George Santayana observed in his book *Reason in Common Sense*, progress is not simply change, but rather change based on memory and reflection. Public education reform has a long history, much of it seemingly forgotten, and as a result many ideas currently being paraded as new are, in fact, rather old. It is my hope that by better understanding the history of public education reform, we can avoid repeating previous failures. By better knowing the past, we can better chart a better future.