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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Contoocook Valley School District, widely known as ConVal, filed a Complaint and Motion for a Preliminary Injunction today in Cheshire Superior Court. Twenty-six years ago, the Supreme Court of New Hampshire, in the landmark Claremont decision, determined that it is a State obligation to ensure a constitutionally adequate education for New Hampshire children. Subsequent decisions by the Court also determined that the State cannot shift that responsibility to the local communities.

Efforts on the part of the New Hampshire Legislature have been ongoing since 1993 to resolve the funding shortfalls. Regrettably, the Legislature to date has been unable to provide adequate funding to the local communities so that all children in New Hampshire receive a fair and equitable education, forcing local taxpayers to choose between supporting the children in their communities and being overwhelmed by increasing local taxes.

The Complaint lays out, using the State's own formula and the State's own data, how the State's base adequacy funding falls far short of constitutionally sufficient funding for the children of either the ConVal School District or New Hampshire. The State's current funding of only \$3,636.06 per child does not fund the actual transportation costs incurred by districts, does not apply the actual teacher-student ratios, does not accurately reflect the actual benefits required by the State, does not provide any funding for school nurses, superintendent services, or food services as required by state law and provides less than 20% of the actual statewide average facilities operations and maintenance costs. The current proposed legislation does little to provide permanent, guaranteed adequacy and while it may provide temporary relief to some communities, it is not a permanent solution to an ongoing problem.

The ConVal School Board has not taken this step lightly, it is time for the State to fulfill its promise to our children and to bring relief to the local taxpayers.