

Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign

Successful Schools... Successful Children... Successful Communities

800 North Third Street · Suite 408 · Harrisburg, PA 17102 · 717-260-9900 · www.paschoolfunding.org

For further information contact:
Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign
Ron Cowell, (717) 260-9000, (412) 298-4796 (cell)

PSFC Statement on 2010-2011 Budget Proposal

Harrisburg (February 9, 2010) – The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign (PSFC) today applauded Governor Edward G. Rendell's proposed \$354 million increase in basic education funding in his 2010-11 budget.

“The Governor and General Assembly took historic action in 2008 to put the state back on track toward a fair, equitable, and rational school funding system for the first time in two decades,” said Ron Cowell, president of The Education Policy and Leadership Center and PSFC spokesperson. “The funding reform will help students meet state academic standards, and this budget proposal keeps us moving in the right direction,” he added.

The new school funding formula adopted in 2008 has now been used for two years, and the Governor proposes to continue the formula next year. It was adopted in 2008 with a plan to phase in approximately \$2.6 billion in funding over six years. “We think it is essential that the state maintain its commitment to this funding reform, and we hope the legislature will do so as it works on the budget this spring,” said Joseph F. Bard, executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools.

“For almost 20 years – until the 2008 reform – Pennsylvania funded its schools on the basis of year-to-year political decisions by legislative leaders and Governors. But the reform approved two years ago bases state funding of schools on real data about the children in each community and their individual needs. Every elected official in Harrisburg should be proud of that decision and continue to move Pennsylvania in the right direction,” according to Michele Morrow, president of the Pennsylvania PTA.

The school funding formula is based on an objective study commissioned by the General Assembly that shows how much each district needs to spend to meet the needs of its students so they can achieve the state's academic targets. In 2008-09, the legislature adopted a funding formula that reflected these adequacy gaps and continued to make progress in the 2009-2010 state budget. "We are pleased that the stimulus funds are available to support this progress on school funding reform, but we also recognize that this is an issue that the state will need to face when the federal funds expire in 2011," according to Cowell.

"School districts will need to continue the types of programs they've been able to implement recently in order to help all students meet state standards," said Timothy Allwein, assistant executive director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA). "To do so, they need additional state aid and a reliable source of state funding they can count on from year to year," he added.

The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations representing hundreds of thousands of parents, students, educators, school board members, administrators and other concerned citizens advocating for comprehensive, systemic reform of Pennsylvania's public education funding system. For more information about the Campaign, visit www.paschoolfunding.org.