

# *Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign*

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

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## **'No tax increase state budget' a threat to students and local taxpayers**

There is no simple solution to the state's economic woes. Lawmakers who claim problems can be solved simply by cutting state programs are not telling the whole story.

That's according to a statewide coalition of education organizations, which is urging the General Assembly to make public education a top priority in the state budget. The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign (PSFC), representing hundreds of thousands of parents, students, educators, school board members, administrators and other concerned citizens, today warned that in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the budget process, quality teaching and learning are at risk.

"The School Funding Campaign believes that difficult times call for bold and visionary leadership," said Michelle Morrow, president of the Pennsylvania PTA. "Reducing state public education funding is shortsighted and will hurt every Pennsylvanian in the long run. As unpleasant as it is to talk about, the state needs more income. If revenue is not available at the state level to maintain the state's commitment to the six-year school funding reform plan, then school boards will be forced to choose between raising property taxes or cutting critical programs, and the improvements of the last several years will be lost."

The PSFC has been meeting with members of the General Assembly to explain that proposals to cut more than \$711 million of state funding for basic education will result in higher local taxes, job losses and a dramatic reduction in educational opportunities for our students.

"Education is an investment in our economy and our citizens – it is shortsighted to reduce state support for Pennsylvania's schools and students," said Ron Cowell, president of The Education Policy and Leadership Center and PSFC spokesman.

"Congress sent hundreds of millions of dollars to Pennsylvania through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act so that quality teaching and learning would not be a victim of the recession," said Cowell. "It is the General Assembly's responsibility to use it for that purpose -- not grab it and divert it to other purposes."