

## **PA SCHOOL DISTRICTS NEED PREDICTABLE FUNDING AND A STABLE BASE**

**Running a school district is tough - one of the most difficult jobs for school district administrators and school board members is budgeting.** The state provides just 36% of public school district funding, and, in most cases, school district budgets must be submitted prior to the state budget being finalized. Imagine being forced to balance your checkbook before you know how much you'll be paid! These budgets are largely built on local tax dollars, and crossed fingers, counting on a state budget process that often results in a number that is inadequate, delayed, or both.

**IT'S TIME FOR STATE LAWMAKERS TO DO THEIR JOB TO PROVIDE MORE CERTAINTY FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS. THE PENNSYLVANIA COURTS FOUND THAT THE WAY THE STATE FUNDS ITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL.**

House Democrats recently laid out a proposal for a seven-year commitment to closing the funding gap, providing certainty for school districts across the state, and giving relief from high property taxes. If this proposal – putting into law the recommendations of the Basic Education Funding Commission – is adopted, our public schools will begin to have some certainty in budgeting. They will be able to commit resources to hire and keep great teachers, reduce class sizes, repair and upgrade schools, provide mental health support and special education – a remedy to the unconstitutional public school funding system that has failed too many students for too long.

**IMPORTANTLY, THE PROPOSAL PROVIDES MORE PREDICTABLE FUNDING TO ALL 500 DISTRICTS WHILE PROTECTING DISTRICTS THAT HAVE SEEN DECLINING ENROLLMENT—SO-CALLED “HOLD HARMLESS” DISTRICTS—FROM FUNDING CUTS.**

The proposal **“resets the base”** to lock in state funding levels for fiscal year 2023-24 and guarantees districts never receive less than they do now, ensuring that more funding is stable and guaranteed for each district. This is the revenue certainty that school districts need in order to be better stewards of local property tax dollars and to have more confidence in responsible medium- and long-term budgeting.

**The goal of the seven-year proposal is for everyone to have a stable base of funding that meets their students' needs. As constructed, the plan focuses on all districts: it ensures more stable, guaranteed funding for every district - wealthy and poor - and fills in the gaps created by our unconstitutional school funding system.**

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