

A LONG ROAD TO ADEQUACY

There is a very real education funding adequacy gap in Pennsylvania - a \$4.6 billion gap - and our poorest students are paying for that by heading to school each day in chronically underfunded schools. Each additional dollar that is added to the education budget narrows that gap, but a big investment is needed if we ever want to move the needle.

In years past, stopgap funding was used to address school districts in dire need, but we can't keep throwing Band-Aids on giant wounds.

In a more sensical approach last year, \$100 million of additional funding was introduced into the state budget in order to "Level Up" the 100 most underfunded school districts in the commonwealth. This year, an additional \$300 million has been proposed.

These incremental increases of Level Up funding can eventually carry our districts to adequacy, but the road to true adequacy will be a long and slow ride.

Level Up delivers hope for Pennsylvania's most underserved students and the superintendents and school boards facing the daunting task of raising property taxes year after year. Keep in mind, PA continues to rank among the lowest in the nation for its share of public education funding - just 38.5% - while local school districts pay the lion's share of education costs through rising property taxes. Across the state, school districts frequently have had to raise local property taxes to fill the budget gap, due to chronic underfunding by the state.

With a historical budget surplus this year, we cannot miss the opportunity to use these resources to bring more balance to education funding in Pennsylvania.



CLOSE PENNSYLVANIA'S **\$4.6B** PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING GAP

Property taxes are rising, and public schools are struggling.

A major down payment in the FY 2022-23 budget is an urgent necessity.