

GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO HAS PROPOSED A PUBLIC EDUCATION BUDGET WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

- It is a significant and positive step towards achieving adequate and equitable public school funding in the state, responding to a ruling that the current funding system is unconstitutional.
- It is specifically designed to begin closing the massive \$5.4 billion funding gap that has been identified by the state's Basic Education Funding Commission (BEFC).
- It includes a substantial investment of \$1.8 billion in public schools this year, with a specific focus on improving school facilities and providing additional financial support for students who are currently disadvantaged by the existing school funding system.

The governor's public education proposal must be accompanied by a legislative mandate to lock in the BEFC's seven-year timeline for completely eliminating that funding gap and implementing the Commission's other recommendations to deliver a quality education for every child in our public schools.

- The BEFC recommended a formula to measure how much is needed to adequately fund all public schools, identified state and local funding responsibilities, and recognized that other unmet needs like facilities and pre-K education are critical to ensuring meaningful opportunity for all students. It also laid out a reasonable timeline to meet the constitutional mandate.
- Years of underfunding have set PA districts back. Rural, urban, and suburban districts alike have been unable to meet their obligations to students and families, and these districts now need budget certainty and a commitment from the General Assembly that the funding gap will be closed on a reasonable, seven-year timeline.

Every dollar that goes to unaccountable private schools is a dollar that won't be used to close the unconstitutional public education funding gap.

- The state must not introduce any new voucher programs for private and religious schools, which would divert resources from the primary goal of complying with the constitutional mandate to close the education funding gap.
- When taxpayer dollars go to unacceptable, discriminatory private schools, it means: **less money for public schools** with finite resources available; **higher property taxes** when districts receive less from the state; and **taxpayer dollars being diverted to wealthy families** to send kids to private and religious schools because the programs are not based on need.
- The current voucher program (EITC/OSTC) is devoid of any accountability or oversight of existing or future private and religious schools that would ensure they're improving outcomes for students or following anti-discrimination laws, which means, for example, that those schools could discriminate in admission against students with disabilities.

PA Schools Work plans to work with Governor Shapiro and every member of the General Assembly who is committed to ensuring educational opportunity for every child to secure the full \$1.8 billion investment for public school students.

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