

LAWMAKERS MUST HEED COMMONWEALTH COURT CHARGE – OUR KIDS ARE COUNTING ON THEM

The recent Commonwealth Court ruling in the historic school funding lawsuit declared the funding system in Pennsylvania to be unconstitutional. The governor and the legislature are now charged with correcting that and ensuring that all students, no matter where they live, have the resources necessary to receive an adequate and equitable public education.

HERE'S WHAT THE COURT RULED:

“Educators credibly testified to lacking the very resources state officials have identified as essential to student achievement, some of which are as basic as safe and temperate facilities in which children can learn,” the court wrote in its decision. “Educators also testified about being forced to choose which few students would benefit from the limited resources they could afford to provide, despite knowing more students needed those same resources.”

LAWMAKERS MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE MANDATE FROM THE STATE APPELLATE COURTS.

- The \$12 billion available in state surplus and reserves this year offers a rare opportunity to pass a budget that does more than keep up with inflation. The wide, unconstitutional funding gap is estimated to be more than \$4 billion. Closing that gap won't happen overnight, but attempting to merely keep up with inflation is a decision to continue to leave many students behind.
- One tool for closing the gap is the [Level Up supplement](#). The Level Up supplement accelerates funding to the 100 school districts with the greatest need – and guarantees that it will be recurring.
- **There is no new Level Up funding included in Governor Shapiro's budget proposal.** That's why PA Schools Work is calling for the General Assembly to distribute another \$300 million through Level Up this year, on top of, not instead of, a proposed increase in Basic Education Funds distributed through the fair funding formula.
- A budget that doesn't make sizeable investments to shrink our public school funding gap is a lost budget. With the available funds mentioned above, this is a year to make progress on closing our gap. Earlier this year, [PA Schools Work proposed increasing school funding by \\$2.3 billion this year](#), including

\$700M

for
Basic Education
Funding

\$300M

for
Level Up

\$237M

for
special
education

\$500M

investment
in school
facilities

\$214M

in career and
technical
education

THIS SHOULD BE THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE INVESTMENT FOR OUR KIDS.