

SENATE BUDGET FAILS PENNSYLVANIA STUDENTS

This year, the Commonwealth Court ruled that Pennsylvania's inadequate and inequitable public school funding system did not meet the state's constitutional obligation to deliver a "thorough and efficient system of *public* education."

In response, the State Senate passed a budget that not only failed to address the problem but, by proposing a private school voucher program to take money away from public schools, makes it worse.

When you're in a hole, stop digging. The Senate's solution to the unconstitutional public school funding system is to pull out the shovels and dig some more.

The Senate budget makes dramatic cuts totaling more than \$668 million in the public education budget passed by the State House last month, a budget that Governor Shapiro praised for "adding to our shared priorities." That includes:

- \$100 million cut in Basic Education Funding for all public schools
- \$93 million cut in Special Education Funding for all public schools
- \$125 million cut in Level Up, funding which goes to about 100 school districts that need help the most and serve most of the state's low-income students
- \$350 million cut in funding to repair and upgrade school facilities

CLICK HERE FOR HOW MANY OF THESE CUTS AFFECT EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE STATE.

From those cuts, the Senate wants to fund a radical new \$100 million private school voucher program and to reportedly expand an existing program for private schools by another \$150 million. And what's worse, they are holding students hostage, saying that **if their voucher plan is not approved, they will cut out more public school funding.**

To sum up, this Senate budget:

- Makes deep cuts of more than \$668 million for public schools from the House budget while giving \$250 million more to private schools, right after a court ruling that the state is not meeting its constitutional obligation to provide for a "public education."
- Combines special education cuts with new funding for private schools that largely do not accept students needing special education.

It's time for Governor Shapiro and the House and Senate to come together and pass a state budget that invests more in public schools and doesn't divert precious state funding to private schools.