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HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE HEARING

Topic: Education Funding

Hughes Main Library – Stroudsburg, PA

October 31, 2017

AGENDA

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 10:10 a.m. Merlyn Clarke
School Board Member
Stroudsburg Area School District
- 10:30 a.m. Jeff Ney
Vice President
Pennsylvania State Education Association
- 10:50 a.m. Jeffrey Bader
Chief Financial Officer
East Stroudsburg Area School District
- 11:10 a.m. Marc Stier
Director
Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center
- 11:30 a.m. Closing Remarks

JEFF NEY'S TESTIMONY FOR 10/31/17 HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Good Morning, Chairman Sturla, Representative Madden and members of the House Democratic Policy Committee. I am Jeff Ney, Treasurer for the PA State Education Association (PSEA). On behalf of PSEA's 180,000 members, thank you for inviting me here today to share our perspective on the importance of equitable state funding for our public schools and the students we serve.

Throughout my 20 years of teaching at Wilkes-Barre School District, I had the privilege to directly witness the power of a great public education for so many of my students. Now, as an elected statewide leader of PSEA, I have the honor to see that power not only in my own local community but throughout the state as well.

PSEA members know first-hand that public education is a worthy and wise investment—not only for the future of our individual students, but also for society at large. We know this intuitively with the work we do each day with students – the future of the Commonwealth – to help them learn and grow.

But don't just take our word for it - countless studies have also shown that investing in education strengthens the overall state economy. Investing in education increases productivity, ensures a competitive workforce, leads to higher earnings for educated workers, and reduces dependence on public assistance programs. We know too, that the quality of our public schools can have a positive influence on other socioeconomic issues such as property values, crime rates, housing needs, public health, business development, and civic engagement – all of which are critical to the social and economic vitality of our Commonwealth.¹

What does it really mean to invest in education? From our perspective it means providing funds necessary for all public schools in the Commonwealth – regardless of their location or student population – to provide all students with educational opportunities. For years PSEA has called for support of research-based, classroom-proven programs including early childhood education; a safe and secure learning environment; the opportunity for individualized learning through tutoring or smaller class sizes; a well-rounded curriculum of arts, music, and extracurricular activities; and guidance and support for post-secondary opportunities including higher education or the workforce. These programs are the foundation for a quality education and all students in PA should have access to them.

Unfortunately, though, under the prior gubernatorial administration there was a significant *disinvestment* in Pennsylvania's public education system—from early education through higher education—and the effects were truly damaging. The funding cuts of 2011 resulted in 20,000 lost educator positions which resulted in students having larger classes, less individualized attention, little or no tutoring, reduced or eliminated art and music programs, fewer athletic opportunities, shuttered libraries, and fewer adults to turn to such as support personnel,

¹ http://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/BestInvestment_Full_Report_6.27.11.pdf

counselors and school nurses. The cuts not only resulted in lost educational opportunities for students – they also greatly exacerbated already existing longstanding educational and economic disparities, particularly for PA’s lower-income communities.

If we hope to one day end the vicious cycle of academic and economic disadvantage in Pennsylvania, we must start by **adequately and equitably** funding public education. PSEA commends Governor Wolf for his recognition that investing in education is a critical component of Pennsylvania’s economic strategy. He has made investing in quality education for our students his top priority since coming into office, and with the support of you and your colleagues, PA students and the dedicated adults who teach and nurture them every day are cautiously optimistic that PA schools are truly headed for a better future.

PSEA also commends the diligent efforts of the BEF Commission for its two years of hard work and compromise to develop a funding formula that is now enshrined in law and has been utilized in the last 3 budgets under Governor Wolf. And while no formula is perfect, the adoption of this formula was significant and should not be overlooked. PSEA believes that the current formula should continue to be fully supported as the strongest pathway for continuing to move toward a fair, rational, predictable, and adequate funding system that provides all students with equal educational opportunities.

A funding formula, however, is only as good as the amount of money invested in it. Pennsylvania could have the greatest formula ever created and if there isn’t enough money for it, we will never resolve distribution issues that pit school districts against each other in seeking greater basic education funding from the commonwealth. Addressing equity issues are crucial, but addressing equity issues by themselves are not enough. This requires an even greater commitment by the collective toward substantial and sustainable state investments in basic education.

PSEA is deeply committed to the success of all students, and therefore believe we need to address the growing opportunity gap between students from poorer districts and their more affluent neighbors. Communities with high concentrations of poverty do not have the local resources to meet the complex educational needs of disadvantaged students. In the absence of adequate state support, the reality for low-wealth school districts year after year is low student achievement, high dropout rates, and great teacher turnover². This is unacceptable.

If the Commonwealth wants to improve its economic strength as a whole, it must commit to providing fair, sustainable, adequate, and equitable funding for all public schools in every community. This investment is essential to support the strategies proven to work for our students – early childhood education, tutoring, maximized instructional time, safe and positive school climate, enrichment activities, effective teachers who are supported through induction,

² http://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/BestInvestment_Full_Report_6.27.11.pdf

mentoring, ongoing professional development and an active role in the school community, and stable leadership at the district and school level.

Clearly, strategic investments in public education for programs proven to help students succeed leads to improved economic and social benefits for society as a whole. Governor Wolf understands this and continues to push for a fiscally responsible path to increase these essential investments in education and the economy. PSEA fully supports his efforts and appreciates his political leadership.

We recognize, however, that obtaining truly significant and sustainable investments in public education takes broader political will and leadership not only in the Governor's Office, but throughout the halls of the state Capitol and the streets and towns of Pennsylvania.

Every day I was in my classroom, I strove to do my best for my students. Now in my role with PSEA, I continue to do my best for our students by joining with my colleagues across the state to do what we can to solidify the growing will and leadership to ensure equitable and sustainable investments in public education become a reality in PA.

Thank you for inviting me to be here today. I am happy to answer any questions you have.

EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



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House Democratic Policy Committee Testimony October 31, 2017

Chairman Sturla, members of the House Democratic Policy Committee, and especially Representative Madden, thank you for extending the invitation to speak with you today about school funding and specifically funding inequities. My name is Jeff Bader and I am the Chief Financial Officer for the East Stroudsburg Area School District.

I would like to begin by telling you a little about the East Stroudsburg Area School District. We are a district of approximately 7,300 students and, although we have seen a decline in enrollments like many of our neighbors, in recent years our enrollment has been relatively stable. The East Stroudsburg Area School District covers 214 square miles and spans Monroe and Pike counties. Being located in the Poconos, one might expect us to be a suburban or rural district, but, in fact, we have many of the same characteristics of an urban district.

Like many urban districts, our local tax base has suffered in recent years. Economic decline coupled with the lack of county-wide reassessments has led the East Stroudsburg Area School District to lose over \$27 million in property assessments over the last 5 years. That translates into almost \$13 million dollars in lost tax revenue.

The most recent PA Department of Labor and Industry unemployment rate for Monroe County is 5.8%, over 18% higher than the statewide average.

The population of the East Stroudsburg Area School District is not a wealthy one. The average median household income over the last 5 years is \$56,800, the lowest in the area with the exception of Pocono Mountain. Over 44% of our school aged children live in moderate or acute poverty, more than in any other school district in the area. Over 53% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch meals.

Our students have many educational needs as almost 20% are identified as Special Education. While our enrollments have remained relatively stable in recent years, there is a high degree of transiency as students move in and out of the District, many from out of state. As much as 20% of our student population may turn over during the course of the school year. Many of those coming into the District require remedial or other transition services so that they may be on pace with their peers.

The District's tax base is overwhelmingly residential. Only 11% of properties are designated commercial or industrial. That means that the tax burden falls most heavily on our residential property owners, many of whom are senior citizens. Almost 16% of residents in the East Stroudsburg Area School District are over the age of 65.

The East Stroudsburg School Board is cognizant of the fine balance between providing a quality educational program for its students and being fiscally responsible to its residents. The East Stroudsburg Area School District has not raised taxes in six years, and in fact has twice had slight tax decreases to help its residents. The District also has what may be the most generous Senior Citizens property Tax Rebate Program in the State with a maximum rebate of \$1,500 in addition to the State rebate program.

Despite not raising taxes, the District has the highest millage rate in the County and one of the highest, if not the highest tax burdens in the State. According to PSBA's 2016-17 State of Education Report, on average suburban school district residents spend 4.0% of their personal income on property taxes. By comparison, East Stroudsburg Area School District residents spend 12.8%, the largest percentage in the State. Another measure of the tax burden placed on residents is the Local Capacity Effort Index, which measures local taxes as a percentage of Household Income relative to the statewide average. It is one of the measures of economic need included in the Basic Education Funding Formula. The funding formula for 2017-18 Basic Ed subsidy shows East Stroudsburg as having the 7th highest tax burden among the 500 school districts. Higher than any of the other school districts in the area and up two spots from the 2016-17 measure all without a tax increase signifying the declining economic condition of the District. Public schools are the educator of last resort. We don't get to pick and choose our students and often educate the most challenging students.

On average, Pennsylvania school districts receive 36% of their funding from the State, but East Stroudsburg receives only 28%. The District receives \$2,164.88 per student in Basic Education Subsidy, the lowest in the area. The statewide average is almost double at \$4,115.22. In comparison, we pay charter schools almost \$12,000 per regular education student and over \$29,000 for special education students.

The East Stroudsburg Area School District has been criticized by some because we do maintain a healthy fund balance. However, that fund balance has declined in recent years to cover operating deficits and projections show that even with moderate growth in wages and benefit costs as well as tax increases to the Index, the District's fund balance will be fully depleted over the next 5 years, leaving the District with a gapping deficit.

Education is the engine of economic development. A well-educated and technically skilled workforce is the number one attraction for businesses relocating or expanding their operations. To adequately meet the needs of public education in Pennsylvania and insure future economic development, education funding needs to be distributed in a fair and equitable manner. The move to a formula based allocation mechanism is a step in the right direction. The new funding formula does take into consideration the measures appropriate for a fair system of funding education, however, it is not an equitable system as it does not address the past inequities in the allocation of State education subsidies. The funding formula only applies to new money. Certainly over the past decade, it has been difficult for the Legislature to find sufficient revenue sources to support additional funding for education and that struggle is likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

In 1991, the State moved away from a formula based system and implemented "Hold Harmless", which provides that no school district will receive less than they had previously even if their economic circumstances change. Hold Harmless is really a misnomer. What it really does is preserve the inequitable funding of school districts, creating a system of haves and have nots.

The funding of education is a joint responsibility between local taxpayers and the State. As Legislators, you have the obligation to create a system that is not only fair, but equitable for all Pennsylvanians. The Basic Education Funding Formula is a step in that direction, but it is not enough. The lack of appropriate funding for school districts like the East Stroudsburg Area School District places an inordinate tax burden on our residents. Hold harmless has forced us to over tax our taxpayers and essentially subsidize taxpayers in other districts who are benefiting from the hold harmless provisions of the current funding process. Estimates show that the East Stroudsburg Area School District is annually underfunded by \$15 million and that for the past 25 years hold harmless has reallocated almost \$1 billion dollars statewide from taxpayers who are over taxed to those who have been under taxed. Equitable funding will allow the East Stroudsburg Area School District to reduce the heavy tax burden our residents face.

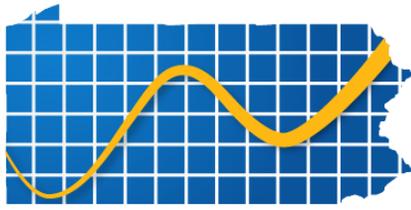
Testimony before the Basic Education Funding Commission noted that when state funding for education remains flat or increases only slightly, hold harmless protects the interests of those districts who are becoming wealthier or whose enrollments are declining at the expense of those districts whose wealth is declining or whose enrollments are increasing. Furthermore, hold harmless prevents State funds from being allocated based on student needs. It creates a bigger gap between the haves and have nots.

The argument you will hear for not addressing hold harmless is that it would result in a redistribution of resources from approximately two-thirds of the school districts, those who have benefited from hold harmless by being under taxed, to one-third of the districts, those who have been over taxed. Clearly that is politically difficult. However, in the absence of massive injection of basic education funding, applying the Basic Education Funding Formula to only new money will never get us to a point where we will have an equitable system of funding education. Instead, we will perpetuate a system that has led to the over taxing of a significant portion of Pennsylvanians.

The East Stroudsburg Area School District is not advocating for the abolition of the current funding formula or taking money back from those districts that have benefitted from hold harmless. We do advocate continuing the bi-partisan work of the Basic Education Funding Commission that established a fair funding mechanism by taking a portion of additional education funding each year and distributing it to help offset those districts that have been under funded for many years and whose residents have been over taxed. While not correcting the inequities of the past, it will accelerate movement toward a more equitable system of funding education and meeting the Constitutional requirement of a system that is fair and equitable. Our taxpayers deserve it.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to meet with you today to discuss this critical issue of education funding.

Jeffrey S. Bader, PRSBA, CSRSM
Chief Financial officer



PENNSYLVANIA

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October 31, 2017

Testimony of Marc Stier, Director Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center
House Democratic Policy Committee
Public Hearing on Education Spending
Stroudsburg, PA

Mr. Chairman, Representative Madden, members of the committee,

I'm very pleased to be here today to testify on behalf of the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center about the state of education funding in Pennsylvania.

There is so much that can be said about education funding in this state. But I will try to briefly cover three topics. I will point to some overall features of education funding in our state and give a local example of the impact of how we fund our schools. I will then look at the recent history of that funding.

Before I turn to those topics, however, I want to say something about the importance of education in this history of our country and this Commonwealth.

The Importance of Education in Our History

Even at times of economic trouble, when we worry about how fast our economy is growing – and even more, whether we are sharing the fruits of our economy fairly – we recognize that we are blessed to be living in this country at this time. Despite our economic problems, we are far more prosperous than our grandparents, and our standard of living is beyond anything people at earlier times in human history could imagine.

We should stop for a moment and recognize the critical role that the efforts we Americans have long made to create an educated citizenry have played in generating that prosperity. There are many reasons that America is prosperous today. We can attribute some it to our market economy, some to the public investments we make in research and infrastructure, some to the enterprising spirit of our people and especially the founders of businesses, and some to the vast natural resources and national market in huge country. But everyone who has studied our prosperity, whether they are liberal or conservative in political bent, attributes a great deal of our economic success to the early efforts to spread the benefits of education to our whole population. I won't cite the large literature here, but I do want to mention that the father of what economists call human capital theory, which points to the importance of the education and skills of the work force to our productivity, was the late economist Gary Becker. Becker was educated and taught at the University of Chicago, the home of Milton Friedman and other right-leaning economists. And while one can also find some economists somewhere who will disagree with the general consensus, there is an enormous body of research that demonstrates that not only the success of individuals but the collective prosperity, which benefits all of us, is in large part the product of our public investment in education. For additional confirmation of this basic truth, look across the world to Japan, a country very

different from our own. It is a small country with a limited market and few natural resources, and with a government that regulates that economy far more than our own government. Yet it is also extraordinarily prosperous today. What it has in common with the United States – and where in recent years it has exceeded our country – is in providing all its young people with a thorough and rigorous education.

Finally, before moving on to the next point, I want to add that Pennsylvanians were among the leaders in making education widely available to young people. Horace Mann and Massachusetts gets a great deal of the credit. But before Thaddeus Stevens went on to glory as the United States Senator who did so much to end slavery and enshrine equality in our Constitution through the 13th amendment, he was a crusading member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives who led the way to establishing free, non-sectarian public schools in our Commonwealth and providing state funds to support them. Stevens argued at the time that the equality promised in the Declaration of Independence required that all children, no matter whether their parents were rich or poor, deserved to have an education that would enable them to reach their full potential.

Education Funding in Pennsylvania: Basic Facts

How well have we lived up to the legacy of Thaddeus Stevens? Unfortunately, I think the answer is that we have in many ways fallen short.

Unequal Funding

First, we continue to have the most unequally funded schools in the country. The richest school districts spend 33% more per student than the poorest school districts. The national average is a 15.6% disparity. And there are some states where there is no gap at all. Indeed, the poorest school districts in Massachusetts and New Jersey spend a bit more per student than the richest ones.

There are right-wing extremists in Harrisburg who will respond to these numbers by saying that on average Pennsylvania does quite well. The average amount we spend per student does put us among the top ten states. But a high overall average hides the terrible injustice we do to students in the least well-funded schools. What we spend in the third of schools with the highest level of poverty is roughly equivalent to what West Virginia, a less prosperous state, spends. Massachusetts spends 46% more than we do in the highest poverty school districts. New Jersey spends 82% more.

The importance of adequate funding

Money is not the only factor that leads to successful schools. But there is a clear relationship between how much money schools spend and how much students in those schools learn and how well they do on standardized test. Thus it should come as no surprise that the two states with the schools that do extremely well on international tests are found in Massachusetts and New Jersey. Pennsylvania lags behind. And a study by the Rand Institute concluded that the difference between overall student performance on these tests in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts is the result of racial and socio-economic differences in those scores inside our state.¹ Those gaps are, in part, the result of the inequality of education spending in our state. And, if we could eliminate gaps in achievement between different groups of kids, we would see a substantial increase in the income of individual Pennsylvanians. Closing the socio-economic gap in test scores would add between 3% and 7% to the state's gross domestic product (GDP).

The Pattern of unequal funding

¹ Karoly, Lynn A, "The Economic Impact of Achievement Gaps in Pennsylvania's Public Schools," (RAND Corporation, 2015) http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1159.html

When we talk about inequality in funding and in the performance of students in Pennsylvania we are talking in part about racial differences, but not racial differences alone. Many the schools that are least well-funded and that perform more poorly as a result are in urban communities with a high number of African-American students. But there are also rural communities around the state with mainly white students that are also poorly funded and in which students do not do well on standardized tests. Indeed, as I travel around the state meeting with citizens, I make a point of looking at school spending and performance in individual state representative districts. And I'm often struck that different schools in even a small geographic unit like a county or a state representative district are funded at strikingly different levels and, sometimes, although not always, perform very different on standardized tests.

Lack of state funding is the source of our problems

The fundamental source of the extraordinary inequality in school spending in Pennsylvania is our lack of state support for our schools. In the last year for which we have complete data, 2014, state funding contributed only 37% of all funding for elementary and secondary education in the state. The national average was 47% and Pennsylvania ranked 46th of 50 states in the percentage of school funding provided by the state. Higher levels of state funding would go a long way to reducing the inequity of school funding in Pennsylvania. And that would especially be true if we distributed those funds in accordance with the fair funding formula.

A local example: School districts in the 115th House District

I mentioned before that differences in funding levels and student achievement can be found in small geographic units like the schools in a state House district. That is certainly true for the 115th district served by Representative Madden.

In the 2014-2015 school year, the East Stroudsberg area school district spent \$24,681 per student, which was 20% more than the Pocono Mountain school district, which was \$20,535. The average percentage of students who were scored proficient or better across math, science, and English was 20% higher in the East Stroudsberg area school district than the Pocono Mountain school district. (58% scored proficient or better in East Stroudsberg while vs 51% did in Pocono Mountain.) None of these differences can be explained by variation in demographics or the poverty rate of the two districts, as they are quite similar to one another.

The extra money spent on the schools in the East Stroudsberg district, however, comes at a cost to the local community. For the difference in funding in these two districts is largely a matter of how much the local school district raises. Both the East Stroudsberg and Pocono school districts rank high in terms of local tax effort, but East Stroudsberg ranks 7th out of 500 school districts while Pocono ranks 55th. Another way to see this difference is that 78% of school funding for East Stroudsberg comes from the local community while 21% comes from the state. But for Pocono School District, 72% comes from the local school district while 26% comes from the state.

I don't know why the East Stroudsberg school district is able or willing to spend more from local resources than the Pocono Mountain school district. It doesn't have a larger tax base, although perhaps that tax base draws on sources that are easier to tax.

What I think we all know, however, is that the quality of education received by students in the 115th House District and in Monroe County shouldn't vary so much based on the zip code in which they live.

Trends in State Support of our Schools

Schools in Pennsylvania have been under-funded and unequally funded for a very long time. But there

have been increases and decreases over time. In this section of my testimony I want to point to some of the recent trends in funding of our schools.

[PBPC analyzes state education spending in two ways](#), overall spending on PreK-12² education and what we call “classroom funding,” which for the most part is the general-purpose state subsidy provided to local school districts to fund education.³

PreK-12 funding

Figures 1 and 2 provide an overview of PreK-12 spending since 2010-2011. After spending increased during the Rendell administration, the state responded to the Great Recession and the end of federal government stimulus support for education by deeply cutting spending on PreK-12 education. In the years since then, spending increased again, first slowly and then, under Governor Wolf, by larger amounts.

Figure 1

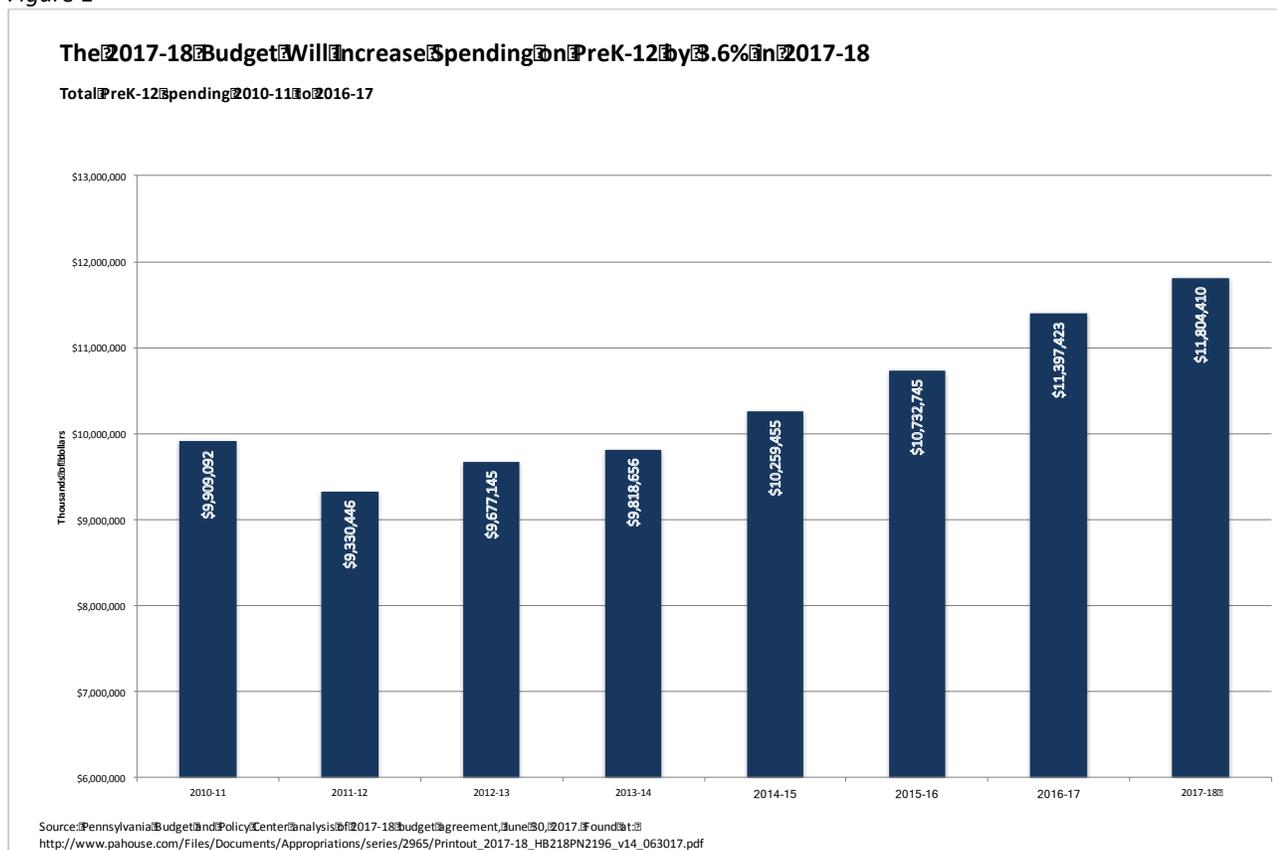
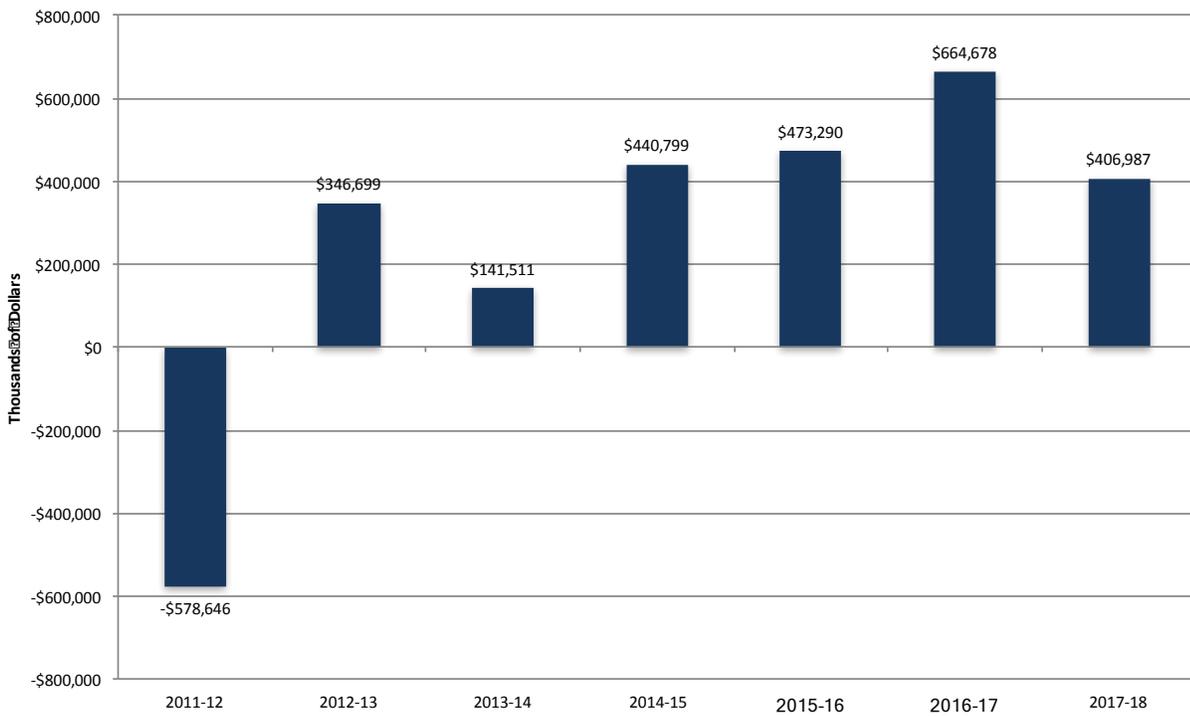


Figure 2

² Our figures for total PreK-12 spending are slightly different (and higher) than those presented in the Governor’s summary of his budget proposal.

³ Classroom funding is the primary vehicle (through the education funding formula) for closing the gaps that have emerged in a system of education finance that because of a heavy reliance on local property taxes has generated wide gaps in spending per student between school districts. It also excludes spending that does not directly affect what goes on in the classroom as well as spending on pensions which do not affect the quality of education in solely one year. For our methodology and data sources see Waslala Miranda, *Undermining Educational Opportunity: Pennsylvania’s Unequal Restoration of School Funding*, Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center, October 21, 2015, especially Box 1 and "Methodology and Data Sources" (at the end of the brief); online at <https://pennbpc.org/sites/pennbpc.org/files/finaledcutsbrief.pdf>.

Yearly Change in Pre-K-12 Funding in Pennsylvania, 2011-12 to 2017-18



Source: Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center analysis of 2017-18 Budget Agreement, June 30, 2017. Found at: http://www.pahouse.com/Files/Documents/Appropriations/series/2965/Printout_2017-18_HB218PN2196_v14_063017.pdf

New basic education funding for 2017-2018, like the basic education funding added in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, is distributed using the new fair funding formula, which was enacted in June of 2016. This formula ensures that the distribution of new basic funding for education takes into account each district’s unique needs, including factors such as number of children living in poverty, number of English language learners, and the wealth of the district.

However, the fair funding formula is not applied to the existing basic education funding appropriated as of 2014-2015, only to the “new” money added since then. Thus, the total amount of basic education funding distributed through the fair funding formula will increase to \$452 million, which is only 7.5% of the entire \$6.25 billion basic education funding appropriation.

Classroom funding

Figures 3 and 4 examine what we call “classroom funding.” Classroom funding is essentially the state subsidy provided to local school districts to fund education, not including things like transportation or pensions. The gap between overall education funding and classroom funding exists primarily because Act 120, the pension reform act of 2010, required the state to fully fund pensions for teachers after years of not doing so. This added substantially to overall PreK-12 spending. As a result, funding for pensions at the state and school district level have increased. In the next two years, this trend will begin to level off.

Looking at classroom spending alone tells a different story about state support for education. Despite substantial increases in funding since 2011-2012, especially in the three years of the Wolf Administration, the drastic reduction between 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 has still not been fully restored.

Figure 3

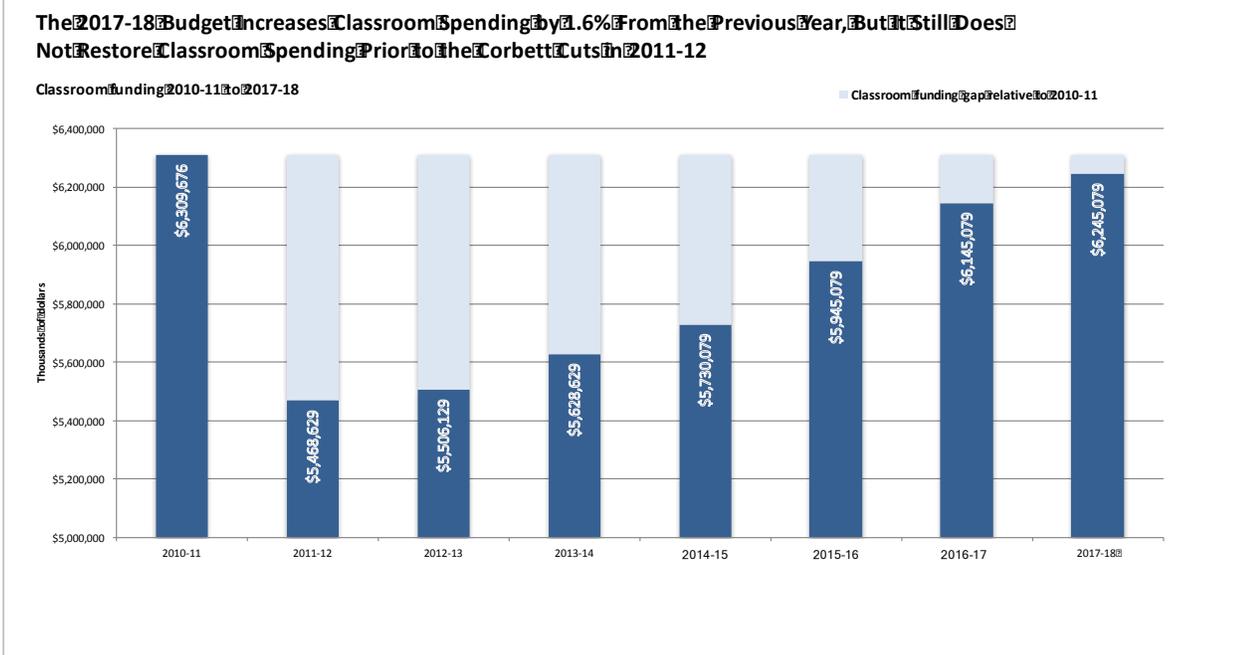
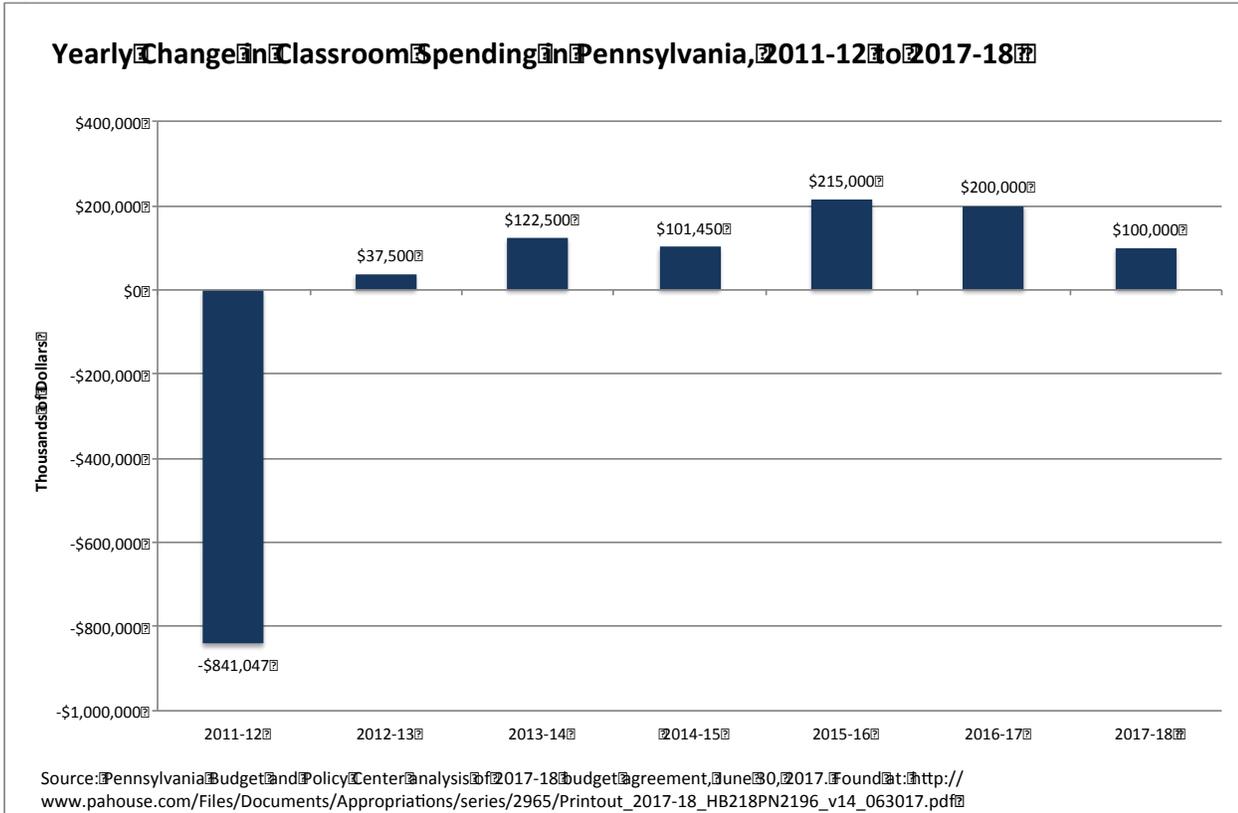


Figure 4



Steps towards greater equity

While most of overall classroom spending cuts of the Corbett years will be restored this year because the General Assembly largely accepted Governor Wolf's proposals for 2017-2108, a substantial part of the inequity created by the Corbett cuts, which were far deeper for districts in low-income than high-income communities, will remain.

Figures 5 and 6 show per-pupil funding for Pennsylvania's 500 school districts arranged into four groups of 125, based on the percent of children under 18 living below the poverty line. The 1st quartile is made up of the highest poverty districts and the 4th quartile is of the lowest poverty districts.

As we pointed out above, new basic education funding is distributed through the fair funding formula. Thus, as figure 5 shows, new funding for 2017-2018 adds classroom funding for all school districts but provides more new funding to the high poverty school districts that suffered the greatest reductions from the Corbett budget cuts of 2011-2012.

But, as Figure 6 shows, disparities in per student funding will remain even with the new basic education funding. The 125 school districts in the 1st quartile will still receive \$104 less in classroom funding per student than they did in 2010-2011. So long as the fair funding formula only applies to new basic education funding, it will take at least another \$100 million in new basic education funding to fully restore the cuts in the low-income school districts.

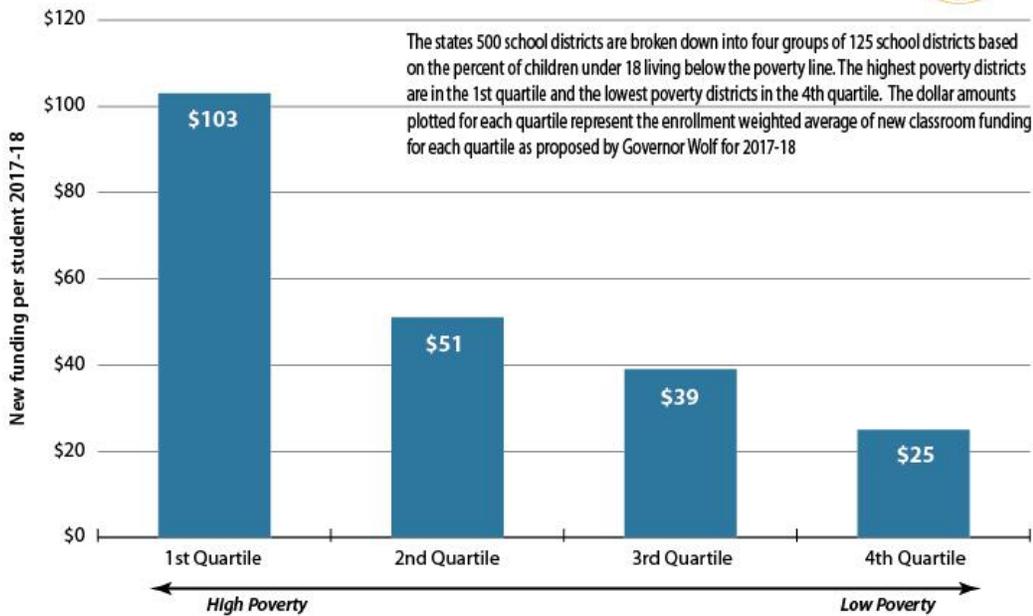
More needs to be done

While the Governor's proposed education funding increases combined with the fair funding formula take a step towards addressing the great inequities faced by our state's schools, it is not enough. The low state share of education spending shifts the burden of financing schools onto local taxpayers. This, combined with large differences in income between school districts, leads to the large funding inequities I discussed before. To address these inequities and to fully support all of Pennsylvania's youth, the Public Interest Law Center has estimated that the state needs to invest another \$3 to \$4 billion in public education over the next six to eight years.⁴

⁴ <http://fairfundingpa.org/2016/07/campaign-fair-education-funding-statement-final-passage-2016-17-state-budget/>

Figure 5

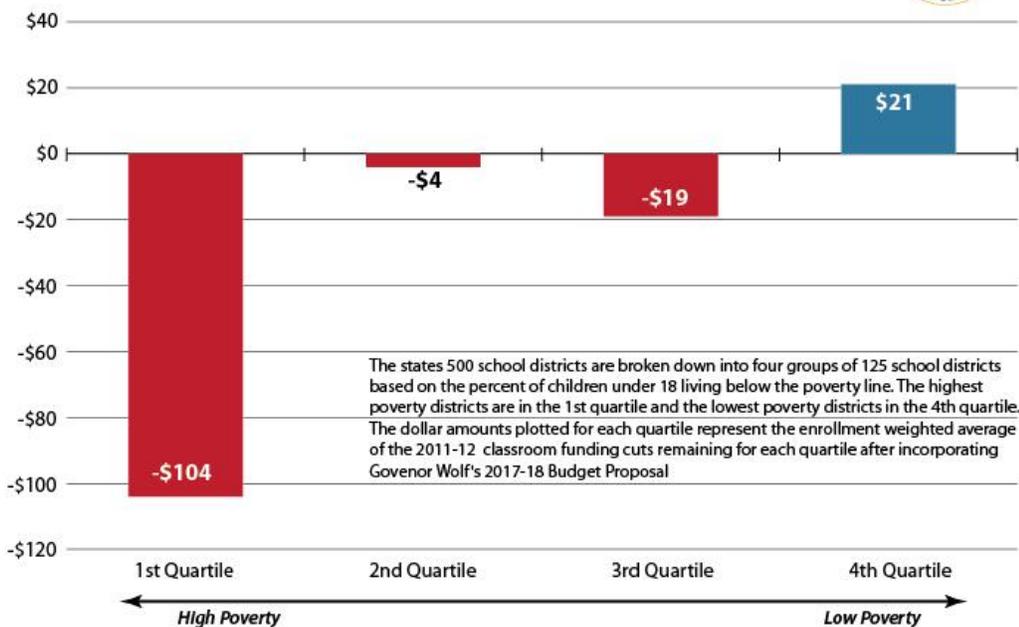
New Funding in 2017-18 in Governor Wolf's 2017-18 Budget Proposal



Source: Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center analysis of data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Figure 6

Funding Cuts per Student from 2011-12 still remaining as of 2017-18



Source: Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center analysis of data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.