

# *Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign*

## *Successful Schools...Successful Children...Successful Communities*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **PSFC APPLAUDS PROPOSED INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION**

Harrisburg (March 4, 2009) — The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign (PSFC) applauds the Governor's decision this week to invest \$418 million in federal economic stimulus funds in 2009-10 to stay on schedule to phasing in the formula adopted last July over six years. That decision will allow school districts to continue making improvements begun in the current year to assure that students are receiving the quality education they will need to achieve a middle class life and a chance to get ahead.

Like most states, Pennsylvania now finds itself in the most serious fiscal crisis in decades. Our Governor and legislators are called upon to fund a variety of important, and in many cases, vital services for children, families, and communities, despite the reality of massive state budget deficits and declining revenues. The federal economic stimulus funds allow the Commonwealth to address many of these needs during the next two years.

The Campaign supported the Governor's February 2008 proposal to enact the first real formula in almost two decades based upon current data and student needs and his plan to fully-fund that formula within six years. We were delighted by the General Assembly's decision last July to enact the formula and its statement in Act 61 of 2008 that "it is the goal of this Commonwealth to review and meet state funding targets by fiscal year 2013-2014."

As the Governor and General Assembly complete work on the 2009-10 budget and future year budgets, we hope they will consider the following points:

1. The Commonwealth's economic future will depend to an even greater degree than ever before on the quality of our workforce, and that will depend to an even greater degree than ever before on the quality of education we provide to all our young people.
2. The Commonwealth is only one year into a multi-year effort to fix what had been a badly broken school funding system. We cannot afford to abandon our collective commitment to "meet state funding targets by fiscal year 2013-2014."
3. We support the expenditure of \$418 million in federal stimulus funds to increase the basic education formula for 2009-10. The availability of these funds enables the Commonwealth to fully fund the second year phase-in of the formula, which is an improvement over the Governor's proposal prior to passage of the federal legislation to increase the subsidy by \$300 million.

The primary long-term goals of PSFC are to maintain a commitment to the funding formula, to increase funding every year so all children are able to meet state academic standards within six years and to relieve pressure on local property taxes. The Campaign was established in the fall of 2007 to encourage state policymakers to transform the General Assembly's 2007 Costing-Out Study into a fair school funding formula that will assure every child has an opportunity to achieve the state's academic standards, regardless of the local wealth of his or her local community.

The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations representing hundreds of thousands of parents, students, educators, school board members, administrators and other concerned citizens advocating for adequate and equitable funding of Pennsylvania's public schools.

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