

Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign

Successful Schools... Successful Children... Successful Communities

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Citizens Call on Policymakers to Protect Educational Opportunities for Kids, Even if it Requires a Tax Increase

Harrisburg (July 7, 2009) – Concerned citizens joined the Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign at the state Capitol today to tell legislators that maintaining a commitment to the state's new education funding formula is non-negotiable with their constituents – even if it requires legislators to increase revenues – and urge legislators to support a balanced approach to the state budget that includes a \$418 million increase for basic education.

“Without the proper increase in basic education funding, teaching positions will be trimmed, class sizes will increase and the quality of instruction will be sacrificed. Our children are going to graduate into the most competitive, high-skill economy that any of us have ever known. We need elected officials in Harrisburg to make smart decisions that invest in education – even if it means a state tax increase – so that they can give our children the educational opportunities they deserve and that will prepare them for college and life,” said Anita Weikel of the Pennsylvania PTA.

During today's Budget Watch, citizens called on lawmakers not to cut state funding for Pennsylvania's public schools, and said the 2009-2010 state budget must include fair and equitable state funding of public education.

“No one likes making tough economic decisions, especially in times like these. But we cannot tell our students that their education is only important when the economy is good,” said Marcela Myers, School Director in the Lower Dauphin School District. “The money we spend on our students is an investment in the future of our state. We need to protect that investment and make sure it does not lose its value.”

“We are here today, tomorrow, and as long as necessary to remind members of the General Assembly of their bi-partisan obligation to honor the recently initiated six-year education funding plan, fund the second year of the plan with the necessary \$418 million increase proposed by Governor Rendell, and keep funding reform on track and on schedule in Pennsylvania,” said Ron Cowell, president of The Education Policy and Leadership Center. “Education is vital to the well-being of our citizens, our community, our economy, our future – we can't tell kids to put their schooling on hold until it gets easier for the Legislature to make the necessary funding decisions.”

The PSFC 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. For more information about the Campaign, see www.paschoolfunding.org.