

Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign

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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 2009

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PSFC Statement on Budget Agreement

(HARRISBURG, October 9, 2009) ó The Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign (PSFC) today praised the Governor and the General Assembly for agreeing to a budget that honors and improves the school funding formula adopted last year and provides a \$300 million increase in the basic education subsidy for school districts. The Campaign particularly commended the commitment of the Governor and legislative leaders who negotiated the 2009-10 budget and found a way to include this increase in a time of economic crisis.

Federal economic stimulus funds will pay for the \$300 million increase. öIt is gratifying that state leaders continue to see education as an investment in our future and not just a budget line item and that they used available federal funds to sustain the formula,ö said Ron Cowell, president of The Education Policy and Leadership Center and Campaign spokesperson. öWe are grateful for this important step toward meeting the state's six-year commitment to fully-fund the formula. Continued adherence to the formula is vital to correcting three decades of an inadequate and unfair state school funding system.ö

öThis is a very generous increase in a difficult budget year. We know that the legislature had to make tough decisions and cut many important and worthwhile programs, which makes us even more thankful for the continuing support of public schools,ö said Tim Allwein, assistant executive director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association.

Joseph Bard, executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, added öwe are delighted that the 2009-10 budget will improve on the formula adopted last year, making it even more fair to children and school districts across the state. We are on the right track and need to stay the course over the next four years. This is not just about money but about providing an equal

opportunity for all Pennsylvania children to achieve academic success.ö

The budget agreement uses a total of \$654.7 million in federal stimulus funds to support the school subsidy in 2009-10. In addition to the \$300 million increase over last year, \$354.7 million of federal funds is used to replace a reduction in state funds for the subsidy. öWe look forward to working with the Governor and General Assembly to develop a long-term strategy to keep the formula's phase-in on schedule next year and when federal stimulus funding ends in 2011,ö Cowell said.

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.