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## **PA School Funding Coalition Calls on Legislature to Go Further on 2019-20 Education Funding**

*Advocates Commend Governor Wolf, Ignite Efforts to Persuade Legislature to Invest Further*

HARRISBURG, PA (Nov. 8, 2018) --- PA Schools Work, a non-partisan coalition of organizations representing urban, suburban and rural communities, called Governor Wolf's 2019-20 budget proposal a good launching point, but said more funding is needed. PA Schools Work leaders called on its statewide legion of supporters to encourage their local legislators to prioritize public education funding, citing underfunded schools across the state.

PA Schools Work 22 partner organizations issued the following statement regarding the 2019-20 PA Budget Proposal:

"The mission of PA Schools Work is to ensure that every child, regardless of their background or where they live, is attending a public school that has the funds necessary to help them succeed – this budget proposal doesn't get us there. So while we appreciate Governor Wolf's commitment to our public schools since he took office, in the spirit of advocacy we must move our supporters to push on.

"There are several bright spots in Governor Wolf's 2019-20 budget proposal, including the \$10 million increase in career and technical education so more students have access to programs that ready them for careers after graduation.

"Given what it takes to simply keep up with the mandated obligations public schools face, like charter school payments, pensions and special education, an even bolder investment in basic education and special education is necessary to deliver what Pennsylvania students need.

"Pennsylvania's share in funding schools remains one of the lowest in the country. The gap between wealthy and poor schools is among the widest of all the states. Years of underinvestment by the state has left schools \$3 billion short in basic education and \$1.38 billion short in special education.



“PA Schools Work has called for increases of \$400 million in basic education funding – driven through the state’s fair funding formula – and \$100 million in special education funding. The governor’s proposal of \$168 million in new funds for our schools that will be driven through the school funding formula and \$50 million in new special education funds is an important step in the right direction but does not get our students what they need.

“We urge the legislature to come to the table to enact the governor’s proposed career and technical education increase, and to work with the governor to increase basic and special education to a level that is closer to what is truly needed in our classrooms. Our schools are not funded equitably or adequately. In the state with the largest gap between the poorest and wealthiest districts, only larger increases of state funding targeted to the districts that need it most will enable poorer communities to offer every child the education they need and deserve. And doing so makes our schools work and secures our communities.

“The longer we delay in increasing the state’s share of education costs, the more Pennsylvania students will lose the opportunity for the 21<sup>st</sup> century education they deserve.”

PA Schools Work is a non-partisan coalition of organizations representing urban, suburban and rural communities that support:

- Significant funding increases for K-12 public education including: basic, special, and career and technical education.
- Increases in funding that are not reliant upon cuts to other school districts’ current funds.
- The use of the state’s fair funding formula as the mechanism to close funding gaps.
- School districts keeping local control of education funding decisions.

Those interested in learning about becoming a PA Schools Work Advocacy Leader should visit [paschoolswork.org](http://paschoolswork.org) or email [info@paschoolswork.org](mailto:info@paschoolswork.org).

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