

What is the Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign?

The Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign advocates for fair funding and educational opportunity in Pennsylvania. Its goal is the enactment and maintenance of a statewide education funding system that supports the principles of equity, adequacy, efficiency, accountability and predictability. The campaign is coordinated by the Education Law Center-PA, Good Schools Pennsylvania, and the Education Policy and Leadership Center. These three education-focused nonprofit organizations and partner organizations are working together to persuade the Governor and the General Assembly that state policymakers must act to change the current unfair and ineffective funding system for public education in order to make Pennsylvania a competitive state for economic development, jobs and quality of life.

Effective public schools are vital to the state's future, and education funding policies should enable all schools to prepare all students to be successful as workers, lifelong learners, and citizens. However, current state policies support one of the nation's most ineffective and unfair statewide school funding systems, thus resulting in one of the country's most unequal systems of educational opportunity.

Through the Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign, statewide, regional and local organizations are working together to build public and lawmaker support for significant changes to state policies that provide for education funding in Pennsylvania. The Campaign is intended to show what is wrong with the current funding system and why change is important, and then to work with state policymakers to design and enact new state policies that will support an effective and fair funding system.

The Campaign's initial work asked Governor Rendell and the General Assembly to invest in the statewide Costing-Out Study. Advocates for the Costing-Out Study argued that it was necessary for the public and state lawmakers to have better and objective information about the educational resources necessary to enable every public school student to achieve the important academic proficiencies required by the state's academic standards.

The Campaign also has emphasized the need for the Governor and General Assembly to use every annual state budget as an opportunity to make significant additional state investments in public education to improve educational opportunities for students while reducing the system's dependency on local property taxes to support public education.

The work of the Campaign continues to focus on:

- Getting better information into the hands of state policymakers demonstrating the importance of effective schools, showing the link between adequate funding and student achievement, and identifying the elements of a fair and effective funding system linked to student achievement.
- Identifying and supporting champions among state policymakers who will be the leaders in the General Assembly to enact new state policies.
- Engaging a growing number of education and other community organizations in a collaborative effort to build public awareness and support for changes in state policy.
- Informing and supporting action by all Pennsylvanians to call upon Governor Rendell and the members of the General Assembly to enact changes in state policy, and to hold policymakers accountable for their actions on this issue.

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