

Statement of Principles

Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign

I/We endorse the Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign and the following statement and principles:

Effective public schools are vital in preparing young people to become successful citizens, life-long learners and productive, taxpaying workers.

Effective public schools are also vital to the social and economic well-being of our communities, regions and the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

All children should have access to quality public education no matter where they live or the wealth of their community.

Educators and policymakers understand what schools need in order to be successful, including: qualified teachers and administrators; a curriculum designed to meet challenging academic standards; up-to-date books, computers and libraries; useful assessments of student learning; safe facilities; appropriate class sizes; and early childhood education and other resources available for students that may be at educational risk due to poverty or other disadvantages.

All public schools must have adequate financial resources to support these ingredients of an effective education for all students.

The current state funding system has failed to meet the needs of Pennsylvania's students and schools:

- The share of total education costs funded by state government is among the lowest in the country.
- The state appropriation per student is hundreds of dollars below the national average and thousands of dollars below several contiguous states.
- There is little connection between the state's allocation of funds and the actual costs associated with educating students to meet the state academic standards.
- There is no consistent system of state funding that appropriately considers basic factors such as student enrollment, the relative wealth of the district, and the needs of disadvantaged students.

As a result of this failed state funding system, Pennsylvania has one of the nation's most unequal systems of educational opportunity for students. The education of students in more wealthy communities is supported annually with as much as \$17,000 per student, while students in other districts are supported with as little as \$7,000.

Also as a result of this failed state funding system, public education is excessively dependent upon local taxes, especially property taxes, compared to most other states.

The Governor and the General Assembly have the constitutional responsibility and authority to fix the problems of the state's ineffective and unfair school funding system.

In 2006, the General Assembly took the first step toward addressing these issues when it authorized a statewide "costing-out" study to identify the programs and resources needed to make sure that all schools are effective and can prepare all students for academic success.

The Governor and the General Assembly must now use the costing-out study to develop and enact a new statewide system of funding for public education that:

- Promotes the principle of adequacy by ensuring that necessary and sufficient educational and financial resources are available in every school district to support every student in meeting statewide academic standards, as identified by the costing-out study;
- Promotes the principle of equity by significantly reducing the current disparity of educational and financial resources among the 501 school districts in the Commonwealth;
- Promotes the principle of efficiency by ensuring the cost-effective use of public resources toward accomplishing proficient academic achievement for all students;
- Promotes the principle of accountability by requiring public funds to be used only in ways that meet state and federal educational standards; and
- Promotes the principle of predictability by providing state funding in a manner that allows school districts to plan their budget from year to year.

Yes! I/We support state funding reforms and the fundamental right of all children to have access to a high quality public education. Please list our organization as a supporter on Campaign letterhead and information materials.

Please provide the following information below:

Name	Date
Name of Organization (if representing an organization)	
Phone	Email
Mailing Address	

Please return to: Good Schools Pennsylvania, 6757 Greene Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119, or info@goodschoolspa.org.

Want to do more? Here are other ways your organization can support the campaign:

- Include an article in a newsletter or email or on your website to your members about the campaign.
- Highlight the Campaign at an upcoming meeting, forum, or other public event.
- Assist with communicating to decision makers and elected officials.
- Send letters to the editor and/or participate in media related events.
- Mobilize your constituents to become engaged in this campaign by communicating to and meeting with legislators and participating in other campaign activities.