



News for Immediate Release

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Governor Corbett Calls for Four-Year, \$1 Billion Investment in Schools

2013-14 Education Budget Increases Funding \$338 Million; Invests in Rigorous, Student-Focused Initiatives

Harrisburg – Governor Tom Corbett today unveiled his 2013-14 state budget that invests an additional \$338.1 million into education and ensures that schools provide student-focused educational programs.

In total, \$11.7 billion, or 41 percent, of the state’s General Fund budget is slated for early, basic and higher education and public libraries.

“Governor Corbett has proposed to invest a historic level of funding into public education to ensure that students are offered high-quality academic programs,” Secretary of Education Ron Tomalis said.

“Since education is the foundation of the state’s economy, Pennsylvania’s students deserve to have access to quality programs that will ensure their success in the future. The appropriate skills and academic credentials will afford our students the opportunity to remain competitive in a global economy.”

Corbett’s 2013-14 state budget would increase the Basic Education Funding line item by \$90 million, or 1.7 percent, to \$5.5 billion – the highest investment in state history. This increase will be allocated through a student-focused supplement, which will be based on a school district’s average daily membership and state aid ratio.

The governor also renewed his call to privatize the state’s wine and spirit stores and investing the proceeds, estimated at \$1 billion, into K-12 education.

These funds would be directed into a four-year Passport for Learning Block Grant.

Pennsylvania’s school districts would share the grant funds to invest in four, student-focused, initiatives including: school safety, “Ready by 3,” individualized learning programs, and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs.

- School safety is a key component to student success in school. In January, Corbett met with school superintendents, teachers and security personnel to listen to their thoughts about and suggestions for improving school safety. With a variety of needs across the state, Corbett believes that each district

should determine where investments should be made. Funds could be used for school safety and security efforts, including training for employees, enhanced security measures and partnerships with local law enforcement.

- “Ready by 3” is an initiative the governor believes is critical to a solid academic foundation early in a student’s education. The focus is to ensure that students are performing at grade level by third grade, based on the Pennsylvania Common Core Academic Standards. Schools could invest in quality kindergarten programs and enrichment programs that promote academic achievement in elementary reading and math.
- Recognizing that students learn differently and at their own pace, Corbett’s proposal includes an initiative for a self-paced, customized learning plan that would be based on a student’s proficiency in academic standards. Schools could use grant funds to finance start-up costs to implement Competency-Based Education programs that move away from seat-time requirements to a model that is based on a student’s mastery of specific course content.
- Enhancing access to STEM course work and programs is critical to preparing today’s students for the jobs of tomorrow. Public schools could invest in programs that support STEM in grades 6-12, including career exploration activities, opportunities for technical skill attainment and partnerships with postsecondary education and training programs.

The budget also calls for a mandate waiver program to provide the ability for school districts to apply to the Department of Education for a waiver from certain provisions of the Public School Code.

School districts looking to implement innovative programs and methods of educational delivery are often prevented from moving forward due to outdated sections of the Public School Code. As a result, mandate relief would provide greater flexibility for districts to manage personnel and resources to design educational programs to meet the needs of students.

Corbett’s pension reform plan would save school districts and local education agencies an estimated \$138 million in the 2013-14 school year. This will free up the funds to be invested in students, rather than pensions.

Last year, the governor signed into law a new educator evaluation system to provide educators with targeted resources, support and feedback for them to improve their instruction and leadership.

The new system, comprised of a teacher and principal evaluation tool, includes multiple measures of student achievement and classroom observation in an educator’s evaluation.

This budget provides \$6.6 million in state and federal funds for continued support of this initiative. During the current school year, more than 1,000 schools are piloting

the teacher evaluation tool, including elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, charter schools and intermediate units. Classroom teachers will be evaluated under this new system beginning with the 2013-14 school year.

Additionally, the budget provides \$2.7 million for continued development of the new specialist and principal evaluation system, which is currently being piloted in 845 schools. Implementation of the principal evaluation tool will occur in the 2014-15 school year.

Since the safety of students is important, this budget invests an additional \$775,000, separate from the amount included in the Passport for Learning Block Grant, to protect students from potentially dangerous individuals.

These funds would be used to establish a dedicated division within the Department of Education to prosecute misconduct by professional educators. This will enhance the efficiency in which complaints of educator misconduct can be reviewed and resolved. Funding would be provided by increasing the fee paid by educators to obtain a teaching certificate by \$25.

In addition, this budget would extend the moratorium by one year on the department's acceptance of school reimbursement requests for construction and renovation projects through the Planning and Construction Workbook (PlanCon) program. The budget allocates \$296.2 million for this line item.

This budget proposes a total of \$9.83 billion in state support of public schools, including:

- \$5.5 billion for Basic Education Funding to the state's 500 school districts
- \$1.03 billion for Special Education
- \$100 million for Accountability Block Grants
- \$62 million for Career and Technical Education
- \$1.08 billion for the school employees' retirement system
- \$634.5 million for student transportation
- \$544.5 million for school employees' Social Security

Since taking office, Corbett has increased the state's support of public schools by more than \$1.25 billion.

The governor is committed to funding quality early childhood education programs for younger students to ensure their success when they enter the K-12 education system.

Early childhood education programs would receive a total of \$348.4 million, which is an increase of \$11.4 million, or 3.4 percent, over the 2012-13 budget.

Early Intervention would receive \$221.9 million, which is an increase of \$5 million, or 2.3 percent, over 2012-13. Pre-K Counts would receive \$87.2 million, which is an increase of \$4.5 million, or 5.4 percent, over 2012-13. Head Start Supplemental

Assistance is slated to receive \$39.1 million, which is an increase of \$1.9 million, or 5.1 percent, over 2012-13.

Combined, these additional investments would provide early education opportunities to more than 3,200 students through expanded programs and kindergarten readiness camps.

Corbett proposes to provide more than \$1.58 billion to higher education:

- \$344.8 million for student grants administered by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
- \$412.7 million for the 14 universities of the State System of Higher Education
- \$212.1 million for the 14 community colleges
- \$214.1 million for Penn State University
- \$136 million for the University of Pittsburgh
- \$139.9 million for Temple University
- \$11.1 million for Lincoln University
- \$10.3 million for Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology
- \$13.5 million for Pennsylvania College of Technology

The governor's budget would also invest more than \$60.8 million into the state's public libraries.

- \$1.9 million for the State Library
- \$53.5 million for the Public Library Subsidy
- \$2.8 million for Library Access
- \$2.6 million for Library Services for Visually Impaired and Disabled

"Governor Corbett's education budget not only ensures that students remain the central focus of our education system, it provides the resources that are necessary to transform our schools into 21st century learning centers and puts students in the seat of their education," Tomalis said.

"The governor believes that Pennsylvania's students have the potential to outperform their peers; we just have to give them the opportunities to do so."

Additional information about the governor's proposed education budget can be accessed by visiting www.education.state.pa.us and clicking on the "Proposed 2013-14 Education Budget" icon.

A breakdown of how much funding each school district would receive under the governor's plan is available at the Investing in Pennsylvania's Students website at www.investinginpastudents.com.

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