



## **News for Immediate Release**

**June 14, 2013**

### **Governor Corbett Signs Bill to Improve Special Education Funding**

**Warminster** – Governor Tom Corbett today ceremonially signed legislation that will improve the way special education funds are distributed in Pennsylvania schools.

“This legislation marks another step in our journey toward providing a full and equitable education for our students with intellectual and physical disabilities,” Corbett said.

Joining the governor in a special ceremony today at the William Tennant High School were sponsors of the legislation, Sen. Pat Browne (R-Lehigh) and Rep. Bernie O’Neill (R-Bucks), as well as Acting Secretary of Education Dr. William Harner and representatives of several special education organizations, including the Education Law Center and The Arc of Pennsylvania.

“I am pleased that the Governor signed this bill into law, which will make long overdue reforms and changes to how Pennsylvania funds special education,” Senate Majority Whip Pat Browne said. “The current funding formula system is ineffective in ensuring that state money is adequately and equitably distributed. Act 3 creates a commission, of which I am pleased to be co-chair of, whose charge is to develop a special education funding formula and identify factors that may be used to determine the distribution of changes in funding among school districts. ”

“This is an issue that has been a huge part of my adult and professional life and I am extremely passionate about it,” Rep. O’Neill said. “I truly look forward to the Commission’s work toward ensuring fair and equitable funding for all of our school districts and their special needs students.”

Presently, each of Pennsylvania’s 500 school districts is provided with the amount of special education funding they received in the prior school year.

The bill, which was passed unanimously in the House of Representatives and the Senate, was signed into law in April.

It creates a 15-member commission, made up of legislators and members of the administration, including the Secretary of Budget and Secretary of Education that will study ways to improve the special education funding formula.

"The Arc of Pennsylvania applauds Governor Corbett's commitment to special education funding reform, demonstrated in the passage and signing of Act 3 of 2013," Maureen Cronin, executive director of The Arc of Pennsylvania, said. "We look forward to collaborating with the Special Education Funding Commission in its momentous responsibility of improving special education funding for students with disabilities in Pennsylvania."

The commission held its first hearing June 13 in Harrisburg and will continue to hold hearings across the state in the upcoming months.

Today's ceremonial bill signing was also attended by: Sen. Tommy Tomlinson (R-Bucks), Rep. Paul Clymer (R-Bucks), Rep. Frank Farry (R-Bucks), Rep. Sam Saylor (R-York), Rep. Dan Truitt (R-Chester), and Rep. Mike Sturla (D-Lancaster).

For more information, visit [www.pa.gov](http://www.pa.gov).

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