



## 2013 School Aid Budget Fact Sheet

**If Enacted by the Legislature, Executive Budget Proposal = More Classroom Cuts.** The Executive Budget proposes a 4.4% school aid increase. Last year's enacted budget included a 4% increase and the result was more cuts of teachers, programs and opportunities for students.

**The Legislature Needs to Add at Least \$350 Million in Additional Funding.** An additional \$350 million will be needed to prevent yet another round of classroom cuts. These funds should be distributed through GEA restorations or the foundation formula. Over the past few years 35,000 educators have been cut. Thirty-one percent of school districts made cuts to art, 33% to music, 24% have cut back on honors classes, 44% have reduced summer school, 23% have reduced career and technical education, 11% have reduced or eliminated pre-kindergarten, 57% have cut back on interscholastic sports and two-thirds have increased class sizes. These cuts have hurt our students and undermine their readiness to compete for college and the job market.

**The Legislature Must Ensure that the \$203 Million in Fiscal Stabilization Funds are Distributed Fairly and Go into Base School Aid.** The Governor proposed \$203 million in Fiscal Stabilization Funds. These funds have not been distributed and are proposed as one-year funding. The Legislature needs to ensure these funds are fairly distributed through either GEA restorations or foundation aid.

**\$83 Million can be Saved by Reprogramming the Performance Improvement and Management Efficiency Competitive Grants.** Last year the state was only able to award \$17 million of these competitive grant funds, but the Executive budget proposes to expand these competitive grants to \$100 million. The legislature should limit the appropriation to \$17 million to renew existing grants and use the rest towards restoring school aid.

**The Foundation Aid Formula should be Updated.** While the Foundation Aid Formula prioritizes high and average need districts, it can and should be improved.

- Last year the legislature limited the hold-harmless provision, the same should occur this year in the context of limited funds.
- The Income Wealth Index is a factor in the foundation formula that measures the relative income wealth of school districts. When calculating state aid districts that have an IWI below 65% of the state average have their wealth rounded up to 65%--this deprives many of the poorest districts in the state of their fair share of school funding.
- The demographic factors in the foundation formula have been frozen in place for several years. There is no accounting for changes in enrollment or increased poverty that resulted from the recession. Many districts are being shortchanged as a result. The data should be updated in order to make the foundation aid formula work properly
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**Support the \$25M Full-day Pre-K initiative included in the Executive Budget.** This new funding is a significant next step to all children having access to high-quality, full-day prekindergarten, starting with highest need students first. Research shows that children that attend prekindergarten are more likely to stay in school, graduate, go to college, not get involved in delinquent activities, and get higher paying jobs as adults.

**Students should not be Deprived of Classroom Resources based upon Teacher Evaluation Negotiations.** Any school districts that lost resources should have those restored.