

For Immediate Release

Manderino to Head New School Funding Campaign

HARRISBURG (Aug. 18) – A former state lawmaker with a reputation for consensus-building will manage a newly formed, non-partisan campaign to address one of Pennsylvania’s most important and challenging issues: the funding of its public schools.

Kathy Manderino has been named campaign manager for a new school funding campaign that includes more than 40 organizations representing educators, business, labor, faith-based organizations and civic and child advocacy groups who want to see the commonwealth find a long-term solution to adequately and equitably fund public schools.

“School funding is, without question, one of the toughest issues facing Pennsylvania, but it’s also arguably the most important,” Manderino said. “So many facets of our commonwealth – jobs, culture, community, quality of life – are dependent upon and shaped by the education we provide for our children. How we fund that education really does dictate the future of Pennsylvania, and I’m excited to help advance such a critical discussion.”

While the campaign plans to formally launch this fall, the coalition behind the effort already has begun examining the issues that impact school funding and formed a governing body chaired by Joan Benso, president and CEO of Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, a statewide children’s advocacy organization.

“While there has been plenty of discussion over the years about how Pennsylvania funds its public schools, there hasn’t been enough consensus among the many groups that have a vested interest in our kids and schools,” Benso said. “This campaign will be unprecedented in the various voices it listens to and represents and it’s vital that we have a dynamic, strategic thinker managing the effort. That’s why we brought Kathy on board.”

David W. Patti, president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Business Council and a member of the coalition’s executive committee, said Manderino’s background makes her well-suited to help find common ground on a complex issue.

“We needed someone who understands the commonwealth’s diversity, Pennsylvania politics and the legislative culture,” Patti said. “Kathy Manderino couldn’t be more ideal: 18 really stellar years in the General Assembly garnering respect that lasts to this day from both sides of the aisle; and a life spent in Monessen and Philadelphia – vastly different, but incredibly important economies and cultures.”

A Westmoreland County native, Manderino earned a bachelor’s degree in public service from Penn State University and a law degree from Temple University. Following her tenure as a state lawmaker, she served as senior vice president for Intercommunity Action, Inc., a community-based organization providing services and housing to people with intellectual disabilities and behavioral health needs, and to older adults.

In the weeks ahead, the campaign will announce its formal name and launch a website and related media tools to engage and inform Pennsylvanians on this important issue.

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EDITORS NOTE: A full list of organizations that have signed on to the campaign is attached.

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