

A YEAR FOR TRANSFORMATION: A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD IN CHESTER COUNTY

Pennsylvania's current school funding system is unconstitutional, and this is the year to fix it. Last February, after a trial that spanned eight years, the Commonwealth Court ruled that the way Pennsylvania funds public schools has failed to educate all students and has disproportionately harmed students in low-wealth school districts. Now, it's up to the General Assembly, the Governor, and education officials to fix the system. It's their job; it's our future.

Chester County is a perfect example of the unconstitutional funding disparities; local wealth varies within the county, and state underfunding has created a patchwork of missed opportunity. For example, spending per student ranges from under \$10,000 per student in Avon Grove to over \$14,000 per student Tredyffrin-Easttown.¹ It's time to right-size this outdated, insufficient funding system so that every community in Chester County has thriving public schools.

THIS IS THE YEAR TO TRANSFORM SCHOOL FUNDING IN CHESTER COUNTY

CHESTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS WOULD RECEIVE NEARLY

\$25M

ADDITIONAL FUNDING WITH THE PROPOSED BUDGET INCREASES

IN ADDITION TO

\$6.5M

IN SAVINGS FROM CURBING CYBER CHARTER OVERSPENDING

WHICH ALLOWS

\$31M

THIS YEAR WOULD BE ENOUGH TO HIRE

299 or **272**
NEW TEACHERS NEW SUPPORT STAFF

Pennsylvania's lawmakers are meeting the moment with an ambitious budget proposal that would fix the way schools are funded over the course of seven years. If lawmakers pass the current FY25 education proposal, Chester County school districts would receive almost **\$25 million** more starting in the fall, with additional increases over the next six years to ensure constitutional levels of funding. (See page 2 of this report for a detailed breakdown by school district.)

The proposal would also reform the way cyber charter schools are funded, curbing waste and redirecting taxpayer dollars to school districts. By standardizing the statewide cyber tuition rate at \$8,000 per student and adjusting the special education payments to cyber schools, Chester County schools would save a combined **\$6.5 million** in the 2024-25 school year alone.

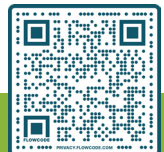
The combined countywide budget increases and savings of over **\$31 million** this year would be enough to hire 299 new teachers, or 272 new support staff like counselors, psychologists, and classroom aides. With a \$14 billion surplus in Harrisburg, there are plenty of state funds to bring home to Chester County. Let's make this year the first of a seven-year plan to build a world class education system in Pennsylvania.

¹ For data sources and methodology on all data included in this report, see our data appendix at: www.childrenfirstpa.org/befc2024factsheets

ADVOCATES



STUDENTS



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO GET INVOLVED:

CHESTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS **BENEFIT UNDER THE PROPOSED EDUCATION BUDGET IN SY 24-25** ...Year One of a Seven Year Plan!

School District	Total Increases (Adequacy, Tax Equity, BEF, SEF)	Additional Savings from setting a standard cyber charter tuition rate	Combined Increases and Savings per Student	Receives constitutional adequacy supplement?	Receives tax equity supplement?	Benefits from resetting the base?
Avon Grove	\$3,701,953	\$300,640	\$680	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Coatesville Area	\$12,082,984	\$1,258,239	\$1,534	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Downingtown Area	\$1,186,244	\$746,377	\$145	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Great Valley	\$201,560	\$736,775	\$195			
Kennett Consolidated	\$1,318,819	\$288,594	\$388	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Octorara Area	\$1,058,699	\$328,096	\$606		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owen J Roberts	\$608,268	\$623,342	\$223		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Oxford Area	\$3,501,878	\$389,597	\$987	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Phoenixville Area	\$281,961	\$396,024	\$154		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Tredyffrin-Easttown	\$255,408	\$237,262	\$72			
Unionville-Chadds Ford	\$165,057	\$293,250	\$116			
West Chester Area	\$610,252	\$948,236	\$123			

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

ADEQUACY SUPPLEMENT – Funding so that each student has enough to succeed in school. It’s based on what the PA’s 63 most successful school districts (excluding very high-spending districts) spent per weighted student in the 2021-22 school year, which was \$13,704.

TAX EQUITY SUPPLEMENT – Funding directed to the school districts that have been contributing a lot of local funding relative to their local tax capacity.

RESETTING THE BASE – The “base” is the stable funding that each school district relies on each year. By maintaining the base as part of the school funding system and updating it to reflect 2023-24 enrollment, school districts with declining enrollment are protected from losing funding. This gives districts that are losing enrollment a head start on reaching adequacy.

BEF - Basic Education Funding. This money is distributed to all 500 school districts each year based on a weighted funding formula.

SEF - Special Education Funding. This money is distributed to all 500 school districts each year based on a weighted funding formula.