


## EDUCATION VOTERS OF PENNSYLVANIA

*Working to ensure that every child in Pennsylvania  
receives the education they need to succeed...*

### Who are we?


*Education Voters of PA is a non-profit, non-partisan, education advocacy organization focused on building public demand for strong education policy and increasing public involvement in the policy making process.*

Organizational Structure includes the following:  
501(c)(3)  
501(c)(4)  
PAC





### What we do is A, B, C, D...

- **Advocate** for best policy,
- **Build** voter demand,
- **Civic Engagement**,
- **Distinguish** candidates.





### Why is Education Important?

*Education equips individuals with the tools needed to be successful in life, both academically and non-academically.*





### Education and Crime

**Poor education can lead to a steep increase in criminal behavior; receiving adequate education is a matter of public safety.**





- A 10% increase in male graduation rate would reduce murder and assault arrest rates by 20%
- Increasing high-school completion rates by just 1% for all men would save the US up to \$1.4 billion per year in reduced costs from crime.
- State prison inmates without a diploma/GED are more likely to be repeat offenders than those with a diploma.



### Education and the Economy


**A good education produces national economic gains; conversely the effects of poor education drain the nation's economy.**

- 60% of all new jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will require skills that only 20% of the current workforce possess.
- By 2018, demand for students with an associate's degree or higher will exceed supply by 3 million workers.
- 22% of high school students do not graduate on time
- Nationally, 60% of 3-4 yr olds do not have math and literacy school-readiness skills

### Where were we?

Increased education funding in recent years has led to increased student achievement.

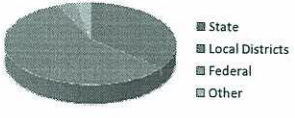


- In 2010, CNBC ranked PA 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in education in its Top States for Business.
- In 2003, 11 states beat Pennsylvania in 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading. In 2010, the state had the best scores in the nation.
- In 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading in 2003, 14 states were demonstrating better results than Pennsylvania's. Today we are in the top six.

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### History of Education Funding by the State

**PA Ranks 4th in the Nation in our Dependence on Local Taxes**



- For about 2 decades, state policymakers used political decisions to determine how much money a SD received
- Costing-out study determined: PA was under-funding K-12 education by more than \$4 billion
- In 2008, a funding formula based on need and disparities in wealth was adopted

National Averages are:  
 • 48% from state funding  
 • 44% from local districts

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### State Budget FY 2011-2012

- Biggest cut in state funding for basic education
- Cuts fall hardest on SDs w/ the greatest student poverty
- Budget will result to higher property taxes, elimination of proven practices and layoffs of teachers

LINE ITEM	FY 2010-2011 BUDGET (2010-11)	FY 2011-2012 BUDGET (2011-12)	FY 2011-2012 FINAL BUDGET (2011-12)	PERCENTAGE CHANGE (2011-12)
K-12 Public Education	\$1,276,880,000	\$1,276,880,000	\$1,254,459,000	(1.7%)
Charter School Reimbursement	\$146,045,000	\$0	\$0	(100%)
Accountability Block Grant	\$75,436,000	\$0	\$100,000,000	(100%)
Pre-K Counts	\$8,347,000	\$8,630,000	\$8,378,000	(1.2%)
Head Start	\$30,384,000	\$31,511,000	\$31,780,000	(0.5%)
State-Related Universities	\$12,150,000	\$14,398,000	\$14,850,000	(1.7%)
PASHE Universities	\$45,792,000	\$51,999,000	\$47,570,000	(5.4%)
Commonwealth Colleges	\$74,313,000	\$71,462,000	\$70,163,000	(1.8%)

**State surplus at time of budget signing: \$785 million**

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### State Budget FY 2012-2013

- Budget continues to shift cost to local gov't & taxpayers
- Cements drastic budget cuts from last year.
- Money diverted to private schools is doubled

LINE ITEM	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-13	% CHANGE
Basic Education	5,354,629	5,403,629*	1%
Accountability Block Grant	100,000	100,000	0%
Pre-K Counts	82,784	82,784	0%
Head Start Supplemental Assistance	37,278	37,278	0%
Special Education	1,026,815	1,026,815	0%

\*Includes \$39 million for fiscally distressed schools and \$10 million for the Financial Recovery Transitional Loan fund

**State surplus at time of budget signing: 649 million**

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### Recent Education Policy Issues

- Teacher Evaluations** – Sets a new system to evaluate teachers: 50% on a more-detailed version of the supervisor observation; 50% on a combination student improvement (graduation rates, PSSA, etc.) and elective data (student projects, district-designed measurements, etc.)
- Fiscally Distressed Schools**– creates an early warning system for school districts in financial distress and gives the state broad new powers to assign a recovery officer to districts and implement a financial recovery plan. Also created the Financial Recovery Transitional Loan fund.
- Special Education Funding**– SB 1115 would establish a funding formula hat would distribute funding for special education in an equitable manner based on the number of students with special education needs and the level of that need – future action expected in the fall of 2012

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### EITC 1.0 & 2.0 (Voucher lite)

- Education Investment Tax Credit (EITC) – increased by \$25 million
- Education Investment Scholarship Credit (EISC) – funded for \$50 million
- Re-direct dollars away from revenue collections, therefore reducing the amount of revenue the Commonwealth has to use for programs and services.
- Provides little accountability, law prevents the state from collecting more than minimum information on scholarships.


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### Charter Schools


- Charter schools are independent public schools that operate under a contract with the local school district..
- Recent legislation includes a statewide authorizer that would be able to bypass local input by school districts and taxpayers and allow charter schools to be created.
- Good Reform – should include fixes to the current funding structure, promote fairness, transparency and accountability.



### What is Advocacy?





The process of informing decision makers and providing recommendations and promoting passage of a specific policy.




### Why Do It?

Advocacy makes issues relevant to politicians and brings the issues back home to their district.

### Types of Advocacy



- **Building a base** – organizing fellow constituents, educating them on the issues affecting public education and encouraging them to engage in the process.
- **Write letters** to the editor of your local newspapers and your local legislators on current education issues
- **Educating Legislators** on education issues voters are concerned about by providing them with relevant information on these issues
- **Legislative Visit** – meet with your local legislators to discuss educational issues you are concerned about and solutions you support
- **Voting** – encourage citizens to vote. We need legislators in Harrisburg that support public education.



### Your Participation is Critical

Politicians work for **YOU** and they need to **HEAR** from you.

Legislators won't know what your views on issues are unless **you tell them.**

### Your Participation is Critical

Imagine if every voter in your district contacted your legislator twice a year...

The cumulative effect of this contact would have a significant impact on the decisions your legislator makes.

