

## **News for Immediate Release**

**June 22, 2010**

### **Governor Rendell Hears Concerns from Teachers at Capitol, Urges Strong Education Funding in Next State Budget**

**Harrisburg** – Governor Edward G. Rendell today met with teachers from across the state as they visited the Capitol to urge legislators to adopt an education budget that protects and advances the strides the commonwealth has made in student achievement.

"The commonwealth's school districts are facing unprecedented financial challenges because of the economic downturn," Governor Rendell said. "Districts are making agonizing decisions to cut programs and staff. Many will be forced to make even deeper cuts if the commonwealth doesn't deliver on its promise. It's more important than ever that the commonwealth step up and fulfill our promise to our kids. There's a clear link between adequate funding and student performance."

Governor Rendell's proposed \$354.8 million increase in basic education funding furthers the commonwealth's commitment to the school funding formula – a benchmark for what each school district should spend for every student to reach proficiency.

School districts are struggling with decreased local revenues, sluggish home sales and loss of investment income that has put the finances of many districts in a dire situation, Governor Rendell said, citing a study the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials and the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators released last week.

As a result, districts are being forced to make deep cuts. Almost one-quarter of districts across the state, and more than half of the districts in southeastern PA, have approved or proposed program cuts to close serious gaps in local revenue, according to the Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign, a coalition of parents, educators, school board members, administrators and others.

“We’ve made tremendous gains in student achievement in just six years,” Governor Rendell said. “In that time, Pennsylvania moved from 24th place in the percentage of kids on grade level in eighth grade math – up to tenth place. In reading, we moved from 16th to sixth in the nation for the percentage of fourth graders reading at grade level. We have made great progress; we can’t give it up now.”

For more information, visit [www.education.state.pa.us](http://www.education.state.pa.us).

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