



Christie Administration Announces \$13.3 billion in Education Funding for Fiscal 2017

For Immediate Release

Contact: Michael Yaple
David Saenz

Date: February 19, 2016

609-292-1126

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration has released state school-aid figures for fiscal year 2017 that, for the sixth consecutive year, provides the greatest levels of state aid supporting Pre-K to Grade 12 education in New Jersey's history.

Governor Christie's proposed budget would allocate \$13.3 billion toward public education. That amount – an increase of \$548 million from fiscal year 2016 – includes direct aid to schools; debt service for school construction; as well as pension, Social Security and post-retirement health benefits for teachers. Of the total funding, \$9.1 billion is for direct aid to be distributed across New Jersey school districts, an increase of more than \$94.3 million from fiscal 2016 levels.

Every school district would see some kind of aid increase in the coming year. More than a third of the state budget goes to support New Jersey schools.

"As more revenue becomes available, the Administration is continuing to provide the highest levels of school funding," said Education Commissioner David C. Hespe. "This speaks volumes about the priorities of this Administration."

The Department of Education is running the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) formula this year, which brings with it the following benefits:

- Running the formula starts the process of bringing districts closer to their SFRA funding levels.
- It provides \$36.5 million in additional funding to the SFRA K-12 formula aid categories. Of note, an additional \$4 million of that will go toward Security Aid, bringing the total of that category to nearly \$200 million. In addition, a \$6 million increase will go toward Transportation Aid, bringing the total of that aid category to \$184 million.

Budget highlights include:

Professional Learning Community Aid– A new category of aid, called Professional Learning Community Aid (PLCA), will provide \$10 per student for every district, assuring that all districts will receive more state aid than last year. The nearly \$13.5 million for this new aid category is designed to support the development of "learning communities" within and across districts, in order to help teachers and administrators analyze and use the assessment data they collect to improve classroom instruction.

Host District Support Aid – Host District Support Aid is a new aid category that provides an additional \$25.9 million to support school districts that send students to charter schools. To ensure funding stability to charter schools, the proposed budget calls for all charter schools to receive the same base level of funding as they did in the previous year. The largest portion of Host District Support Aid will provide the resources to help a number of larger urban school districts offset the cost of maintaining this level of charter school base funding.

Choice Aid – Total Choice Aid amounts to \$53.7 million, an increase of \$1.2 million from the previous year's levels.

Special Education Funding– Total funding for special education will increase by over \$11 million in the fiscal 2017 budget proposal. That includes an increase of \$5 million in Extraordinary Special Education Aid, to a total of \$170 million. In addition, Special Education Categorical Aid (part of the SFRA formula, described above) will increase by \$6.3 million over fiscal 2016 levels.

Preschool Funding– Support for preschool funding will continue at \$655.5 million for fiscal 2017.

In addition, all aid categories that were created over the past three years – Under Adequacy Aid, Supplemental Enrollment Growth Aid, Per-Pupil Growth Aid, and PARCC Readiness Aid – will continue to be funded at their fiscal 2016 aid levels.

District-by-district state aid allocations are online at www.nj.gov/education/stateaid/1617/.