

FACT SHEET – We Demand Full and Fair Funding for PA Schools

Sept. 2021 www.powerinterfaith.org www.pafairfunding.org

OUR GOAL:

Every child in Pennsylvania should have a GREAT education that is fully and fairly funded, with up-to-date books, opportunities for advanced placement and high tech learning, reasonably sized classes and a safe learning environment. A GREAT EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA should NOT depend on a family's home zip code, their income nor the color of their skin.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WAY PENNSYLVANIA PAYS FOR ITS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?

- Pennsylvania school districts are way too dependent on raising local revenue through property taxes.
- The share of state funding vs. local funding for schools in PA has been decreasing for decades. The legislature has NOT kept up with its constitutional obligation. In 1973 PA School districts received 50% of their overall revenue from PA State Taxes. Today the state's share is only 37% on average. This is among the lowest in the nation.
- In Pennsylvania, the poorer school districts are forced to have the highest property tax rates. And still many cannot raise enough revenue to pay for what they need.
- Pennsylvania is the LARGEST gap by far largest gaps of any state in the country in per-child spending between the commonwealth's poorest and wealthiest school districts.
- Pennsylvania ranks 46th of all states in the U.S.A. in the portion of school funding that comes from state revenues. This forces

PA's school districts to be overly dependent on raising local revenue from property taxes.

FACT SHEET – Continued. . .

- Each year, Pennsylvania allocates state revenue in Basic Education Funding to its 500 school districts using an arcane, unfair and racially inequitable method. PA has a formula for fairly distributing state revenue to the school districts BUT the PA legislature refuses to use the formula for all State Basic Education Funding.
- Over 80% of Pa's Black and Brown K-12 students attend schools that are underfunded according to PA's own Fair Funding Formula!

THE SCHOOL FUNDING TRIAL

This lawsuit began in 2014 and is alleging that the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the PA Senate, the Speaker of the PA House and the PA Dept. of Education are NOT doing their PA Constitutional duty to provide an "efficient and thorough system of education" for PA children. The plaintiffs are Wm Penn School District, the NAACP PA, Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, several other school districts, parents and students. A good source of information on the trial is at <https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/>

OUR CALL TO ACTION

Sign up for newsletters from either www.POWERInterfaith.org or www.PAFairfunding.org to learn more about the trial. Get involved in one of these groups. Form a committee in your church or other organization to advocate to your local representatives. We will be holding our legislators accountable to respond to the outcome of this trial. Elimination of Racial Disparities in School Funding, Full School Funding, Fair School Funding.

WE DEMAND THAT our elected state representatives NOT WAIT TO LOSE IN COURT! We ask them to enact a school funding system that is EQUITABLE and ADEQUATE so that our children's public school education opportunities NO LONGER depend on their race, zip code, or family means.