



Murphy Administration's Proposed Budget Sets Course for Fully Funding State School-Aid Formula

Spending plan bolsters funding for Preschool

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – Governor Phil Murphy's first proposed budget increases state "formula" aid that goes directly to school districts by \$283.6 million, the initial step toward fulfilling the state's school-funding obligation. The budget also increases aid for expanded preschool, STEM programs and other education priorities.

Under the funding plan, more than 94 percent of school districts will receive additional state aid and no school district will see a decrease in K-12 formula aid. The 546 school districts that will receive additional state support represent suburban, rural and urban communities.

"Even with these investments, we know our current school funding formula, enacted in 2008, needs to be modernized, and I ask you to work with me to make these changes so we can reach this goal of full, fair funding by the 2021-2022 school year," Governor Murphy told legislators during his budget address on Tuesday. "Together, we can fulfill the promises made a decade ago while ensuring that our dollars are spent according to the needs of students and districts today."

The state's school funding formula, the School Funding Reform Act of 2008, has been fully funded only once since it was enacted.

"As an educator, I'm excited about this budget because it's the first time in years that we've seen this level of emphasis on investing in education," said Acting Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet. "We're going to focus our resources to advance the Governor's education agenda, which means fully funding our schools and enhancing learning opportunities."

Governor Murphy's commitment to funding the school-aid formula is further bolstered by his proposal to eliminate off-formula add-on aid categories that were created over the past several years. In addition to the new formula aid being added, his proposed budget reallocates the money from these categories back to the same districts using the school funding formula.

The Governor's budget includes a total of \$14.9 billion in proposed state support for schools for fiscal year 2019 (including pension contributions from the lottery), highlighted by:

Preschool: The Governor's budget proposes the largest increase in preschool funding in more than a decade. Districts that currently operate a state-supported preschool program will see an increase to their per-pupil funding, and the preschool expansions that were established this year, which serve 2,000 children in 26 districts, will be made permanent. In all, the increase to existing preschool programs will total nearly \$33 million. In addition, \$25 million more in preschool expansion aid will allow for the development of new preschool programs to serve more than 3,500 children.

Expanding Access to Computer Science: The proposed budget includes a \$2 million grant program to help high schools implement college-level computer science courses, and to support teacher training for those courses.

School Safety: The Governor's proposed budget includes a \$66 million increase in school security aid, allowing districts the flexibility to support school safety initiatives that fit the needs of their districts. Nonpublic schools also will receive \$75 per student in school security funding.

Payments Made on Behalf of School Districts: In addition to aid provided directly to school districts, the state annually covers the cost of important education-related costs such as teacher pensions, retired teacher medical benefits, and Social Security contributions for teachers. Governor Murphy's proposed budget will include an additional \$478 million to support these areas in the upcoming school year.

New Jersey law requires state aid to school districts to be announced within two days of the Governor's budget address. For more information on district allocations of state aid, see the Department's [School Finance webpage](#).

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