

TESTIMONY ON GROWING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Presented by:
Central York School District

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Thank you for the opportunity to discuss issues facing growing school districts.

- **In 1991-92, the Commonwealth moved from utilizing a formula sensitive to changes in enrollment, among other changes, to a “hold harmless” method of distributing State aid.**

Fundamentally, the funding formula prior to the 1991-92 “hold harmless” decision was driven by three items: the prior year’s enrollment, local wealth, per-student cost, and a cost factor determined by the legislation annually. Since 1991-92, distribution of State aid has not been sensitive to significant increases in enrollment.

In 1991-92, Central York School District had a total enrollment of 3,090 students. That was the first year the district was “held harmless”. From 1991-92 until the present year, our district has increased by more than 150 students annually. Our enrollment for the start of the 2007-2008 school year is 5,525 students, a 79% increase in enrollment, or 2,437 students. The growth supplement, given the uncertainty and the inconsistency of this funding approach, do not provide adequate financial support to rapidly growing districts. Conversely, due to the definition of “hold harmless”, districts that have experienced a significant decline in enrollment continue to receive funding at the 1991-92 levels, which translates into an inequitable approach to State aid.

- **The Commonwealth has distributed various growth supplements that vary each year and the amount available to supplements is mixed with the many other demands on the State Budget.**

During the past three years, 2005-2008, we have experienced an average increase of 219 students per year. And as you just heard, projections continue to show an increasing trend for enrollment.

Central York’s Basic Ed Funding subsidy, that has been received, averages \$884 dollars per student since the 2000-01 school year. However, the growth supplement subsidy, relevant to the increase in enrollment each year, has only been an average of \$477 dollars per student.

Year	Enrollment	Increase	BEF subsidy	Growth subsidy	BEF per student	Growth Subsidy / increase enrollment
2000-01	4,284	137	3,571,682.08	60,824.40	\$ 833.73	\$ 353.63
2001-02	4,400	116	3,764,969.55	54,580.00	\$ 855.67	\$ 398.39
2002-03	4,540	140	3,914,611.53	30,579.25	\$ 862.25	\$ 263.61
2003-04	4,732	192	4,058,124.40	65,565.02	\$ 857.59	\$ 468.32
2004-05	4,868	136	4,306,097.31	183,959.50	\$ 884.57	\$ 958.12
2005-06	5,151	283	4,454,767.48	38,090.55	\$ 864.84	\$ 280.08
2006-07	5,321	170	4,992,711.00	154,361.00	\$ 938.30	\$ 545.45
2007-08	5,525	204	5,377,447.88	93,584.00	\$ 973.29	\$ 550.49
	657	- Total Increase over last 3 years.			\$ 7,070.25	\$ 3,818.10
	219	- Average per year since 2005-06.			\$ 883.78	\$ 477.26

Growth subsidy supplement has been up and down every year since 2000, despite the continued steady growth in enrollment for Central. In the 2004-05 growth supplement we received more money for a 192 student increase than we did in the 2006-07 supplement for a 283 student increase.

All data was taken from PDE's website and shows other area school districts have received more per student growth subsidy even though they have had less enrollment increase than Central. Also, the data shows that over a 4 year time period from 2002-2006 there are school districts that received growth supplement revenue even though their total enrollment decreased over the 4 years.

	2002-03 Enrollment	2003-04 Enrollment	2004-05 Growth Supp	2004-05 Enrollment	2004-05 Growth Supp	2005-06 Enrollment	2005-06 Growth Supp	Enrollment Change	Total Growth Supplement
Central Dauphin SD	11,018	11,104	\$5,046.40	11,108	\$57,915.84	11,219	\$37,882.79	201	\$100,845.03
Cumberland Valley SD	7,667	7,708	\$40,213.18	7,694	\$19,350.75	7,728	\$0.00	61	\$59,563.93
Dallastown Area SD	5,177	5,287	\$40,777.86	5,455	\$132,235.48	5,551	\$70,511.57	374	\$243,524.91
Dover Area SD	3,718	3,537	\$0.00	3,531	\$44,376.42	3,582	\$0.00	(136)	\$44,376.42
West Shore SD	8,298	8,355	\$55,222.38	8,226	\$51,596.60	8,237	\$0.00	(61)	\$106,818.98
West York Area SD	3,043	3,065	\$31,795.28	3,146	\$42,640.92	3,177	\$26,850.36	134	\$101,286.56
Central York SD	4,540	4,732	\$65,565.02	4,868	\$183,959.50	5,151	\$38,090.55	611	\$287,615.07

I am sure you have heard from many others, that the current funding formula is "broken." As for growing districts, it appears that there is no standard allocation or consideration for the true impact of increasing enrollment over a continued period of time.

- **The use of supplements to address increases in enrollment does not meet the needs of districts with multi-year growth increases.**

In 2006, the Central York School District contracted with the Pennsylvania Economy League to provide a demographic analysis covering 2006-2015. The extended total enrollment projections estimate a 35% increase in student population over that ten-year period. The projected increase averages 202 students annually compared with an annual average increase of 150 students over the past five years. The growth in our district outpaces the rate of growth for the remainder of York County. Given the projected large increases in enrollment, Central York School District will face serious funding issues if the current system remains in place.

Ultimately, the taxpayer must bear the additional financial burden through local real estate tax increases to support growing districts. To avoid this additional tax increase, we ask for your assistance in addressing the concern.