

Putting Children First

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Through Historically High Resources For Our Schools Combined With Revolutionary, Bipartisan Reforms, Governor Christie Is Working To Ensure Every Child Has Access To A Quality Education

ONE BILLION DOLLARS IN EDUCATION FUNDING INCREASES OVER TWO YEARS

Governor Christie's Fiscal Year 2013 Budget represents a commitment to provide both the resources and reforms to deliver opportunity to every New Jersey child with nearly \$200 million in increased education aid and a bold reform agenda for education in New Jersey.

In Fiscal Year 2012, Governor Christie increased education spending by \$855 million;

Governor Christie increases his commitment to New Jersey schools and students by providing nearly \$200 million in additional aid;

Under Governor Christie, State aid to education will have been increased by more than \$1 billion since Fiscal Year 2011, with State education aid totaling \$8.9 billion in the Fiscal Year 2013 Budget.

This is the largest appropriation of State education aid in New Jersey history.

HISTORIC BIPARTISAN CHANGES TO THE NATION'S OLDEST TENURE LAW

Marking the first extensive reform of New Jersey's tenure law in over 100 years, Governor Christie signed into law the Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey (TEACHNJ) Act, a sweeping, bipartisan overhaul of the oldest tenure law in the nation. The legislation:

Transforms the existing tenure system to now provide powerful tools to identify effective and ineffective teachers;

Strengthen the supports available to help all teachers improve their craft; and

For the first time, ties the acquisition, maintenance, and loss of tenure to a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

Dramatically reduces the time and cost it takes to remove educators who are repeatedly ineffective in improving student outcomes.

The law was the result of nearly two years of consistent and vocal advocacy for real education reform by Governor Christie and good faith, bipartisan cooperation with members of the legislature, education reform advocates, and stakeholder groups.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TRAPPED IN FAILING SCHOOLS

The Urban Hope Act is designed to expand the education options available for children and parents who are trapped in some of New Jersey's school districts with the largest achievement gaps.

The bill authorizes the conversion of failing schools into charter schools, and the designation of five failing school districts as Transformation School districts:

The board of education of a failing district may apply to DOE to be designated a transformation school district.

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If a district is designated as "failing", then one or more school management organizations can apply to DOE to create up to a total of two transformation school projects in the district.

A transformation school project approved under this bill would be authorized for 5 years.

DOE will annually assess whether transformation school projects are meeting certain goals and improving student achievement.

The nonprofits must have experience operating schools in low-achieving districts and commit to both building a new school and offering a rigorous academic program designed to prepare every student for college, career, and beyond.

ATTRACTING THE BEST CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATORS

Governor Christie has improved the authorizing and application process, encouraged more charter school applicants, created greater flexibility with administration and finances, and allowed districts to convert failing public schools into charters.

The Christie Administration approved 27 charter schools in 2011, the largest number approved in any one year since the charter law was passed in New Jersey.

The Christie Administration approved the expansion of several of the state's highest performing charter schools.

TEAM Academy, a network of KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) schools in Newark, will add a new elementary school campus, ultimately serving 500 additional students.

North Star Academy, also in Newark, will continue to grow current schools and plans to add a new elementary and middle school campus, ultimately serving 590 new students.

With the addition of nine newly approved schools set to open in September 2012, *New Jersey is home to 86 charter schools.*

IMPROVING OVERSIGHT

The Christie Administration is also working to improve accountability for charter schools by instituting a new oversight program that will set clear expectations for charter school performance and will serve as the basis for school evaluation, monitoring, and intervention.

The Performance Framework sets the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all New Jersey public charter schools are evaluated, informing officials about school performance and sustainability.

NJDOE officials will expand the rigorous standards and metrics by which each and every public charter school is evaluated. This will enable NJDOE officials to take multiple factors into account when evaluating public charter schools across the state.

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