

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Highlights Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Plan to Increase Pre-K through 12 School Aid by \$1 Billion, Grow the State's Educator Workforce, and Promote the Success of New Jersey's Students

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SKILLMAN – Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Education Commissioner Angelica Allen-McMillan visited Montgomery Upper Middle School in Skillman today to highlight the \$20.5 billion in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposal to support New Jersey schools. This funding will help grow New Jersey's education workforce, support academic recovery, increase the availability of college-level courses in high schools, and advance the Governor's goal of reaching universal pre-K.

The proposed budget will provide historic levels of School Aid, with an increase in \$1 billion over the prior year for a total of \$20.5 billion in school funding. This amount includes pre-K funding, pension and benefits funding for school staff, and an increase in \$832 million in total K-12 formula aid. District allocations of state aid are available on the DOE's School Finance webpage (<https://www.nj.gov/education/stateaid/2324/>).

"My Administration remains committed to providing students throughout our state with the world-class education they deserve," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "Ensuring equitable access to high-quality education not only prepares our children for successful futures – it benefits us in the here and now. Investments in education represent investments in working families, school communities, and so much more. This year's budget proposal demonstrates our ongoing commitment to working towards fully funding our schools, expanding pre-K throughout the state, growing our educator workforce, and promoting the success of our students."

"Governor Murphy's State budgets have substantially increased investment in New Jersey schools. The proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget continues that historic investment," **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. "Governor Murphy's spending plan demonstrates the importance of strong educational systems and a commitment to the vitality of our State investment. Moreover, the Fiscal Year 2024 budget focuses on crucial initiatives that our schools, staff, and students so desperately need, ranging from high-impact tutoring to the improvement in the culture and climate of the teaching profession."

"This historic investment will serve students, ease local tax burdens, and keep our schools the finest in the nation," **said Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**.

"The Governor's budget proposal continues to reinforce our commitment to investing in our families by doubling the child tax credit, investing in student mental health and bringing us closer to fully funding our schools," **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**. "I am grateful to have the Governor as a partner in our continued efforts to address the teacher shortage, expand access to early childhood education and bolster the childcare infrastructure. I look forward to the budget discussions and continuing the critical work of repairing and building new schools and ensuring the state has a robust plan in place to address the learning loss that has compounded over the last three years. These efforts underscore our commitment as a state to invest in the next generation and work towards a day when all of our students and families have access to the highest quality education in the country regardless of where they live in this state."

"The Governor's proposed budget promises historic investments into our public schools, dedicated funding to address the teacher shortage, support for child academic recovery, and the expansion of free pre-K," **said Assembly Majority Leader Louis D. Greenwald**. "I look forward to working with him and my colleagues in the Legislature over the next few months to invest in our students and provide real property tax relief that ensures New Jersey remains affordable for working and middle-class families."

In the FY2024 budget, the Montgomery School District will receive over \$1 million more in K-12 formula aid, which is a 15 percent increase over the prior year.

Stabilizing School Funding

The FY 2024 budget proposal marks the sixth year of the seven-year phase-in to fully funding New Jersey's school funding formula, established under P.L. 2018, c. 67 (S2). New Jersey's school funding formula is designed to address inequities and meet the needs of growing districts. By adding \$832 million in K-12 formula aid, the Governor is proposing to maintain the phase-in as planned for FY2024.

In addition, the Governor proposes \$20 million in Stabilization Aid to help districts that are experiencing a reduction in State aid or are otherwise facing a budgetary imbalance.

Expanding Pre-K

The Governor remains committed to expanding high-quality pre-K throughout the state. The FY2024 budget includes an increase of nearly \$110 million in pre-K funding compared to the prior year, for a total of \$1.1 billion. The increased funding includes \$40 million to expand high-quality full-day programs into new districts and support other preschool expansion needs, such as workforce development.

Since Governor Murphy took office, high-quality preschool programs have been introduced to over 160 school districts, opening seats for more than 12,000 additional children. Recent federal funding announced by the Administration also included \$120 million in preschool facilities funding to help expand preschool infrastructure throughout the state.

Promoting the Academic Success of New Jersey Students

In concert with the launch of the New Jersey Partnership for Student Success last year – which will continue to recruit coaches and mentors to accelerate student learning in FY2024 – the Governor is announcing additional funding for the recently-announced high-impact tutoring and RAPID learning acceleration professional development initiatives.

The Administration has already committed over \$20 million in State and federal funding for these programs. The Governor is now proposing an additional \$10 million in ARP State Fiscal Recovery Funds for the tutoring program and a continued commitment of \$2 million for professional development in the FY2024 budget.

In addition, the Governor's budget proposal includes \$1 million for the expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in New Jersey, as well as \$500,000 for wraparound supports and additional class offerings for students in Dual Enrollment (DE) courses in New Jersey, which will allow our students to take more college-level courses in high school to better prepare them for higher education.

The expansion of these courses will be targeted to help students from low-income communities by increasing their opportunities to gain college credit in high school – making a higher education more accessible to students who may not have previously felt college was within their reach. These targeted expansions are based on recommendations from the Wealth Disparity Task Force.

Growing New Jersey's Education Workforce

As part of the Administration's ongoing efforts to address the shortage of educators in New Jersey – an issue currently seen around the nation – the Governor also proposes over \$20 million in new investments and other supports to help ensure our state has the trained and dedicated workforce necessary to provide top-quality education to public school students.

This includes \$10 million in stipends to support student-teachers while they work and study, and \$5 million to waive certification fees in an effort to help bring more qualified and diverse individuals into the education profession.

An additional \$2 million will go towards a Culture and Climate Innovation Grant opportunity to help districts support educator quality of life, while \$1 million will go towards a public awareness campaign to help encourage interest in teaching and raise the profile of the education profession. \$1 million in funding will aim to develop local partnerships to help train paraprofessionals and offer tuition assistance to those seeking to become teachers.

Similarly, the budget proposal includes \$800,000 for a teacher apprenticeship program and maintains funding for the Men of Color Hope Achievers program and the Minority Teacher Development program to help support a diverse educator workforce.

Additional Highlights

Municipal aid and school aid funding combined represent more than 42% of the entire FY2024 budget proposal. This funding will not only help schools keep up with rising costs, but will ultimately help keep property taxes from significantly increasing.

Additional highlights include:

- \$80 million for capital maintenance and emergent needs in traditional school districts and charter schools;
- \$250 million for Schools Development Authority projects, drawing from the \$1.9 billion appropriated to Schools Development Authority (SDA) from the Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund last year;
- \$3 million to implement a community schools pilot program; and
- A continuation of \$420 million in funding to support Extraordinary Special Education aid that helps defray the cost of educating students in special education classes.

"The robust funding for education is beneficial for students, their schools and their home communities," said **Senator Paul Sarlo, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee**. "It supports a quality education with state financing that helps to hold down local taxes. This is an investment in educational opportunity that's good for the taxpayers."

"After three years, our schools, teachers and students are just now beginning to come out of the pandemic era that caused so many disruptions in learning. The Governor's education budget - which includes stabilization aid, pre-school funding, increased funding for those districts which increased enrollment and extraordinary special education funding is giving vital support for kids, teachers and school districts," said **Senator Vin Gopal, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee**. "Now is the time to recover what was lost and continue to invest heavily in public education, a commitment that carries with it the future of our state. I am especially excited to see funding provided to fast-track top-quality tutoring programs, which have proven to be a game-changer around the country. They help students achieve, and also teach them how to learn. Research has shown time and again that robust, high-dosage tutoring is one of the best tools we have to begin to address learning loss and to raise student achievement."

"I appreciate the governor's focus on increasing investment in public education on a number of fronts, including expanded Pre-K funding and vital programs aimed at recruiting and retaining new teachers," said **Senator Andrew Zwicker**. "These are bold, visionary actions that will prepare our students to thrive in a 21st century world, and do so in a way that helps lighten the load on property taxpayers across the state."

"Any investment into the education of our children is an investment worth making," said **Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin, Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee**. "These are comprehensive steps to ensuring students post pandemic needs are met and also preparing them for the future. I look forward to reviewing the Governor's proposed budget in the weeks and months ahead."

"I am pleased to see the Governor continue to give close attention to the needs of our students, teachers, and schools in his proposed budget," said **Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee**. "It is critically important that we continue to work together to ensure that our state attracts the best teachers and gives our students the environment and tools they need to learn, grow, and thrive. I look forward to working with the Governor, my colleagues, and our friends in the education community, through the budget process and beyond, to make sure New Jersey remains an education leader in America."

"Creating a strong educational foundation for our children is critically important," said **Assemblyman Roy Freiman and Assemblywoman Sadaf Jaffer**. "The state budget's investments in school aid and additional programs will help districts meet the needs of their students and enable current and future generations to receive the excellent education for which New Jersey is known."

"Gov. Murphy has once again demonstrated his commitment to New Jersey's students, families and public schools with a budget that prioritizes their needs by investing in our state's future," said **NJEA President Sean M. Spiller**. "We know that every dollar invested in education is repaid many times over in increased future productivity and decreased future costs. New Jersey students are better off today and New Jersey will be stronger for years to come because of the investments Gov. Murphy and the Legislature have made in the last five budgets and the increased investment contained in this budget."

"I applaud the additional financial commitment to supplement our educational programs for our students," said **State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg**. "I am especially pleased with the proposed increase in funding for our youngest learners. This dedication to education will continue to accelerate and advance our state with future leaders for our nation."

"I want to thank Governor Murphy for his consistent and ongoing support for Somerset County, and in particular his support for our schools," said **Somerset County Commissioner Deputy Director Doug Singletery**. "The Murphy administration's annual increases in state education funding combined with strategic awards of grants have helped our schools remain in the top tier while minimizing the impact on our property taxpayers."

"Governor Murphy's proposed budget includes increases in aid to many areas of education that will greatly assist districts with furthering their academic and social-emotional goals for their students," said **Mary E. McLoughlin, Superintendent, Montgomery Township School District**. "Addressing the needs of our students is the priority for all of us in education. We are grateful for the governor's continued focus on making education a top priority and allocating the appropriate funding to support these important initiatives."

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