

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy and Acting Department of Education Commissioner Allen-McMillan Visit Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Fair Lawn to Discuss Historic Pre-K Through 12 Investments in Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Proposal

02/25/2021

***FY2022 budget would invest \$18.1 billion in New Jersey's public schools***

***Budget would increase K-12 education aid by \$578 million and increase pre-K funding by \$50 million***

**FAIR LAWN** – Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Education Commissioner Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan today visited Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Fair Lawn to highlight the \$18.1 billion in pre-K through 12 school aid funding in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2022 (FY2022) budget proposal.

The proposed FY2022 budget furthers the Governor's historic commitment to education, with \$578 million in additional K-12 school aid and nearly \$50 million in additional preschool funding. When paired with additional investments in Extraordinary Special Aid and stabilization aid, the FY2022 budget increases school funding by \$700 million. Governor Murphy's four budgets will have increased direct pre-K through 12 spending statewide by nearly \$1.5 billion. School districts will be able to use State funds in conjunction with federal resources to address COVID-19-related learning loss, stand up mental health programs, train educators, and remediate buildings, among other uses.

"The budget proposal unveiled this week furthers our commitment to ensuring that school districts have the resources they need to the unique needs of their students and educators, an especially critical priority as districts manage challenges caused by COVID-19," **said Governor Murphy**. "I have long believed that investments in our students are investments in the future of our state, and now more than ever I am proud that our students continue to be a priority."

"The Governor's budget will help provide necessary resources to help schools navigate the countless challenges they have faced throughout the global pandemic," **said Acting Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Allen-McMillan**. "Ultimately, the beneficiaries of our commitment to education will be the students, from the youngest preschoolers to high school graduates."

## ***Increased School Funding***

The FY2022 budget proposal continues the seven-year phase-in to fully fund New Jersey's school funding formula. By adding \$578 million in K-12 formula aid, the Governor is proposing to make the full scheduled phase-in for FY2022 and make up for the pause in the phase-in from FY2021.

The budget also includes \$50 million in Stabilization Aid to help districts adjust to the phase-in of the school funding formula and an additional \$25 million for Extraordinary Special Education aid.

Governor Murphy announced the state education aid during a school visit in Fair Lawn. In the Governor's proposed FY2022 budget plan, Fair Lawn is slated to receive \$11.7 million in State school funding aid, which is an increase of more than 52% from FY2021.

## ***Expanding Pre-K***

The Governor also continues to champion preschool education with a total of more than \$924 million in funding in the FY2022 budget, an increase of nearly \$50 million. The increase consists of \$24 million for existing programs and \$26 million to expand access to high-quality preschool programs in more school districts.

The budget also continues the Supplemental Wraparound Program, which provides \$4.5 million to assist families with before- and after-school care for children of lower income families.

## ***Preparing Students for Success***

The Governor's proposed budget would prepare students for jobs of the future by advancing STEM programs and funding initiatives in career and technical education (CTE). This includes new and continued support for initiatives such as:

- Increasing the allocation for the Computer Science for All initiative by \$1.2 million, for a total appropriation of \$2 million. The budget refers to the program as the "K-12 Computer Science Education Initiative."
- \$100,000 for the Math for America STEM Fellowship Program, which would bring outstanding teachers together outside of school hours to learn about innovative STEM teaching practices.

## ***Promoting Healthy, Safe, and Efficient Schools***

Additionally, the proposed budget provides funding to promote school infrastructure improvements, perform important safety testing, and assist school regionalization efforts. Initiatives include:

- \$75 million to support capital maintenance projects and emergent needs in our schools that will be overseen by the Schools Development Authority;
- \$5 million to reimburse school districts for the cost of performing lead testing in water of school facilities; and
- \$10 million in new funding to assist school districts with regionalization or consolidation to improve the efficiency of their operations.

## ***Additional Highlights***

Other highlights of the Governor's FY2022 budget proposal include:

***Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline:*** The budget includes \$750,000 for Minority Teacher Development Grants and \$550,000 to encourage retention and diversification within the teaching profession.

***Nonpublic Schools:*** The appropriation for nursing services in nonpublic schools will increase by \$1.5 million, while State funding for the nonpublic technology initiative will be restored at \$5.4 million. Funding for auxiliary services provided to nonpublic school students, such as compensatory education and English as a second language services, will increase by \$1 million.

***Pensions and Benefits for Retired Educators:*** In addition to providing direct aid to school districts, the State annually covers important school-related costs such as teacher pensions, medical benefits for retired educators, and Social Security contributions for teachers. Many states do not cover such costs on behalf of their school districts. Governor Murphy's proposed budget will include an additional \$974.4 million to support these areas in the upcoming school year.

Additional information on district allocations of state aid is available on the Department of Education's School

Finance webpage

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