

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Visits Bound Brook to Highlight School Funding Increases in His FY2021 Budget Proposal

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Spending Plan Would Increase K-12 Aid by \$336.5 Million, Stabilize School Funding, Expand Preschool

BOUND BROOK, NJ – Governor Phil Murphy today visited Bound Brook High School to announce state school aid funding for his Fiscal Year 2021 budget proposal that provides \$16.3 billion to support New Jersey schools – the greatest funding commitment to education in the history of the state. The additional \$336.5 million in K-12 aid and \$83 million for preschool in the Governor’s budget plan marks an increase of over a billion dollars in state aid for schools since the beginning of the Administration. In his budget remarks on Tuesday, Governor Murphy noted that the record investments in school funding continue to tackle the root-cause of New Jersey’s high property taxes.

“The budget proposal unveiled on Tuesday furthers my Administration’s commitment to level the playing field across New Jersey’s public education system, ensuring that all students have access to a high quality, world-class education,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Every dollar spent to maintain our position as the national leader in education makes New Jersey more affordable for communities, like Bound Brook, who deserve much-needed property tax relief.”

“Our commitment to stronger and fairer New Jersey schools ranges from preschool through high-school graduation,” **said Dr. Lamont O. Repollet, Commissioner of Education**. “We are focused on bringing high-quality preschool to more and more districts and ensuring that students have access to great technical education and STEM programs that allow them to graduate with a wealth of opportunities for success.”

Expanding Preschool – The Governor is proposing an increase of nearly \$83 million for preschool, for a total of \$889.2 million in the FY2021 budget proposal. The increase consists of \$58 million for existing programs and \$25 million for the expansion of new preschool programs. The new preschool funding is in addition to and separate from the nearly \$337 million in additional K-12 school aid, or “formula aid.”

Not only will school districts that currently receive preschool education aid receive an increase in their per-pupil funding, but the preschool programs that expanded this school year will be made permanent – providing high-quality, full-day preschool to approximately 1,800 children in 28 communities.

Preparing Students for Jobs of the Future – The Governor’s proposed budget would continue to advance the STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and math; fund initiatives in career and technical education (CTE); and create a new job training program.

This includes new and continued support for initiatives such as:


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- \$100,000 to support the Jobs for New Jersey's Graduates program that provides academic, social-emotional, and career readiness supports to underserved students in reaching postsecondary and career goals.
- Another allocation of \$2 million for the Computer Science for All initiative. (The budget refers to the program as the "Secondary School Computer Science Education Initiative.")
- \$650,000 to support innovative early college programs, which in past years has led to the launch of P-TECH schools across New Jersey. Under the P-TECH program, high schools work collaboratively with community colleges and business to create a program where students graduate in six years with a high school diploma *and* an associate degree. (The program is referred to as "STEM Dual Enrollment and Early College High Schools" in the budget.)
- \$750,000 for Minority Teacher Development Grants designed to continue diversifying the teacher pipeline. (The grants are referred to as the "High Poverty School District Minority Teacher Recruitment Program" in the budget.)

Boosting School Funding – The FY2021 budget proposal continues the seven-year phase-in to full funding of the school funding formula. That law, S2, was designed to address inequities that resulted from the multiple years of overfunding some districts while failing to adequately meet the needs of other growing districts. The Governor's budget also includes \$50 million in Stabilization Aid, which will provide one-time assistance for districts facing fiscal challenges. When the transition to full funding is complete, all school districts will be funded as envisioned in the state's school-funding formula: based on student enrollment and community factors.

Governor Murphy announced the state education aid during a school visit in Bound Brook, a district that had been consistently underfunded since FY2009, despite an enrollment increase of more than 30 percent. In the Governor's proposed FY2021 budget plan, the district would receive an increase of \$2.8 million, or 18 percent, from the prior year. The district is on track to receive an 88 percent increase in aid since FY2018.

In addition, Bound Brook schools would receive a 33 percent increase in preschool education aid from the prior year, for a total of \$1.4 million in FY2021. That amount represents a 99 percent increase in preschool aid from just two years ago.

Additional Highlights – Other highlights of the Governor's FY2021 budget proposal include:

Nonpublic and Charter Schools: All funding streams for nonpublic students will be maintained in the Governor's budget plan. Nonpublic security aid would increase from \$150 to \$200 per pupil. Charter schools will continue to receive at least the same aid amount as this year, both in total revenue and on a per-pupil basis.

Pensions and Benefits for Retired Educators: In addition to providing direct aid to school districts, the State of New Jersey 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 \$183 million to support these areas in the upcoming school year, up from a \$108.9 million increase in the Governor's previous budget.

Additional information on district allocations of state aid is available on the Department of Education's [School Finance webpage \(https://www.state.nj.us/education/stateaid/\)](https://www.state.nj.us/education/stateaid/).

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