



MEC – MARYLAND EDUCATION COALITION

www.marylandeducationcoalition.org

FULLY FUND PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR FY2016 & BEYOND

The **Maryland Education Coalition (MEC)** is a group of organizations and individuals dedicated to raising the academic achievement of students in Maryland public schools by promoting adequate funding and systemic accountability for improving results. Created in 1993, our nearly 200,000 informed members are active in over 950 Maryland Public School communities from Allegheny to Worcester Counties.

MEC urges the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly to fully fund public education in Maryland for FY 2016 and beyond and reminds each that the Maryland Constitution requires the state to provide “a thorough and efficient System of Free Public Schools; and to provide by taxation, or otherwise, for their maintenance.”

MEC views the Governor’s proposed cuts to be unacceptable. It would disproportionately put the weight of balancing budgets on those local school systems responsible for educating all children including Maryland’s poorer, special needs and/or limited English proficient students from over 100 countries. Over 59% are also identified as minorities, often requiring additional education services! (See attached)

It would also place an overwhelming burden on those local governments, less wealthy or able to generate additional funds by mandating them to maintain quality educational, children and family services with significantly less funds or the ability to make up a significant gap in state aid to locals.

MEC Supports:

- **Restoring the estimated \$76.1 million in proposed cuts to the Public School Funding Formulas** – Failure to do so will have a negative impact on all public school students within all school systems and disproportionately and inequitably have a negative impact on very large numbers of poor, minority, special needs and limited English students statewide.
- **Full funding of the Geographical Cost of Education Index (GCEI) currently proposed to be cut \$68.1 million** – Failure to do so will have a significant negative impact on jurisdictions with higher costs and local governments will find it unlikely or impossible to make up the differences.
- **Fully fund the Inflation Factor currently at 1.4%, proposed to be cut in FY 2016 and capped at 1% in 2017** - Public Education Funding has already absorbed an estimated \$800 million plus in cuts to the inflation factor in recent years due previous Governor’s failure to fully fund or fund at all the inflation factor.

Talking Points

- The Governor’s \$6.1 billion education budget is inadequate, and **actually a \$144 million cut** (See next page)
- Cutting the **Education Foundation Program \$52.8 million** is a cut in funding for all **867,000** Maryland Students
- Cutting the **Compensatory Education funding \$18 million** is a cut for about **400,000** of Maryland’s poorest students
- Cutting funding **\$3,754,335 for students with Disabilities** will limit educational services for about **122,000** special needs students
- Cutting funding **\$2,902,468** for the **Limited English Proficient** education program, will directly impact over **61,000** students
- Cutting the **Geographic Cost of Education Index 50% (\$68.1 million)** cuts funds to Maryland’s poorest jurisdictions, which have the largest number of minorities (59%) - It would mean that education funding would be inadequate and inequitable for 13 of Maryland’s 24 local school systems
- Cutting **State Aid to Local governments by 53.7 million**, cuts funds for local libraries and health care for families
- **Failure to fund the inflationary factor at 1.4%**, fails to fund increased cost of education services & programs as well as pay for public education educators, administrators and support staff. An estimated **2,500-4,300 jobs are at risk**

If Maryland, its elected officials, taxpayers and voters are committed to maintaining a top 3 ranking among all State Public Education School Systems, **we must Fully Fund Education in FY 2016 and beyond. STOP THE CUTS!**

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