

March 23, 2011

Senate K-12 Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Proposes Smaller Cut in Per Pupil Allocation in Exchange for Deeper Cuts in Other Education Programs

On March 23, 2011, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on K-12 School Aid met to take public testimony on the budget for the upcoming fiscal year (fiscal year 2012). Senator Howard Walker, the Chair of the Subcommittee, presented his draft recommendations for fiscal year 2012. Included in his recommendations were the following:

Per Pupil Allocation:

- **A smaller cut in the per-pupil allocation, offset by deeper cuts in categorical programs.** The Chair's proposal continues the current year cut in the per pupil allocation of \$170 and cuts an additional \$120, for a total per pupil reduction in fiscal year 2012 of \$290. The Governor had recommended continuation of the current year \$170 per pupil cut plus an additional \$300 per pupil, for a total cut of \$470 per pupil.
- **A change in the definition of kindergarten membership to require full-day attendance if school districts are to receive a full foundation allowance.** Under current law, school districts receive a full foundation allowance for children enrolled in kindergarten, including those in either half-or full-day programs. The Senate proposal would result in an estimated \$245 million in savings, and budget language is added that would require a cut in per-pupil funding if those savings aren't achieved, with the proration structured to result in a smaller reduction for districts with lower foundation allowances. The Governor had incorporated current law in his proposed budget.

Supplemental Payments to Districts:

- **Increased funding for rural and isolated school districts.** The Chair recommends approximately \$4 million for isolated and rural school districts, up from \$2 million in the current fiscal year. The Governor proposed to eliminate this supplemental funding in fiscal year 2012.
- **Elimination of funding for schools with declining enrollments.** The Governor and the Chair both recommended the elimination of funding (\$20 million) for school districts with two consecutive years of declining enrollments.

Intermediate School District Operations:

- **Reductions in Intermediate School District (ISD) operational funding.** The Chair agrees with the Governor to reduce funding for ISD operations by 5 percent, from current year funding of \$65.4 million to \$62.1 million in fiscal year 2012.

Payments For Court-Placed Children:

- **Reduction in funding for court-placed children.** The Chair reduced funding for court-placed children by \$500,000, from \$8 million in the current fiscal year to \$7.5 million in fiscal year 2012. The Governor recommended continuation funding. Funding for children in Department of Human Services' juvenile justice facilities was reduced by both the Governor and the Chair from \$1.4 million this year to \$1.2 million in fiscal year 2012.

At-Risk School Aid Services:

- **A reduction in School Aid At-Risk funding.** The Chair recommends a total cut in At-Risk funding to districts of \$5 million, from \$309 million to \$304 million. The Governor recommended continuation funding for the At-Risk program.
- **Continuation funding for child and adolescent health centers.** The Governor and the Chair recommend continuation funding (\$3.6 million) for child and adolescent health centers.
- **Continuation funding for hearing and vision screenings.** The Governor and the Chair recommend continuation funding (\$5.2 million) for hearing and vision screenings.

Early Childhood Services:

- **The elimination of funding for local Great Start Collaboratives.** The Chair recommends the elimination of School Aid funding for local Great Start Collaboratives (\$6 million). Funding is used to support local Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions around the state, and leverages both local and private dollars for services for young children. The Governor recommended continuation funding for local Great Start Collaboratives.
- **Increased funding for the Great Start Readiness program (GSRP).** The Chair shifted funding currently provided to Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions to the School Aid GSRP, increasing the program by \$6 million, from \$89.4 million to \$95.4 million. The GSRP competitive program is provided continuation funding of \$8.8 million. The Governor provided continuation funding for both the School Aid and competitive GSRP.
- **Continuation of current funding levels for the Great Parents/Great Start program.** The Chair agrees with the Governor in providing continuation funding of \$5 million for the Great Parents/Great Start program.
- **Removal of local flexibility to use GSRP funding for family involvement and education initiatives.** The Chair agrees with the Governor to remove current-year budget language allowing school districts to use GSRP funds for preschool and parenting programs that were allowed under the former Parent Involvement and Education program.
- **Addition of budget language relating to GSRP staff training and credentials.** The Chair agrees with the Governor to add budget language: (1) adding an additional endorsement as an option for certification; (2) requiring teachers to complete compliance plans within two years, rather than the current four years, from the date of employment; and (3) removing the option allowing teachers in subcontracted programs with 90 credit hours and at least 4 years of teaching experience in a qualified preschool program to meet the requirements to participate.
- **Addition of language defining a "full-day program".** The Chair agrees with the Governor to add budget language defining a full-day program as one that provides supplementary child care that totals at least 10 hours of programming per day.

Bilingual Education:

- **Elimination of funding for bilingual education.** The Governor and the Chair eliminate funding (\$2.8 million) to districts for bilingual education programs.

Vocational and Adult Education:

- **Elimination of funding for adult education.** The Chair recommends eliminating all funding (\$22 million) for adult education programs. The Governor had recommended continuation funding.
- **Continuation funding for vocational education.** Both the Governor and the Chair recommend continuation funding (\$29.6 million) for vocational education.

Middle College Programs:

- **Elimination of funding for middle college programs.** Both the Governor and the Chair eliminated funding (\$2 million) for grants to ISDs and the Detroit Public Schools for middle college programs in consortium with community colleges or universities.

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