

# How to Write a Letter to the Editor to Support the Lawsuit and Fair and Equitable Funding for All of Pennsylvania's Public Schools

## Tips

- Click [HERE for a tool that will help you find newspapers in your area](#). You may cut and paste your letter here and send the same letter to multiple newspapers in your area.
- Be brief and to the point. Your letter should be no more than 200-250 words.
- Feel free to include the talking points that are listed below or write a letter from scratch.
- If you have questions or would like support writing your letter, please contact Susan Spicka at [sspicka@educationvoterspa.org](mailto:sspicka@educationvoterspa.org).

## Talking Points you may include in your letter:

- Pennsylvania's state funding system is unfair, with bigger differences in spending between wealthy and poor districts than in any other state.
- Pennsylvania's irrational school funding system means many students don't have basic necessities including up-to-date books, libraries, art and music, counselors, and reasonable size classes.
- The passage of the fair funding formula and modest funding increases are a step in the right direction. However, this isn't enough to keep schools from cutting instructional expenses.
- State funding for Pennsylvania's public schools remains wholly inadequate. Only three other states provide so small a share of the cost of public schools. The courts must intervene.
- To learn more about the lawsuit, please visit <http://edfundinglawsuit.wordpress.com/>

## Sample Letter

Dear Editor,

Although the PA legislature has set academic standards that all children in the Commonwealth are expected to meet, some schools have barely a third of what other schools spend on helping their students meet those standards. Pennsylvania's irrational funding system and heavy reliance on local taxes to fund schools means that children in low wealth districts (mostly rural and urban) don't have up-to-date books, science labs and necessary personnel for their students to meet those standards

Unless state legislators increase state funding for schools, hundreds of thousands of students in districts all across the state will continue to fail to meet the standards the state says they need to succeed.

Our Constitution says, "The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth." Because the state legislature has for so long failed to provide what is necessary, six school districts have asked the state courts to declare that the current funding system violates the constitution.

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court will hear oral argument on that school funding lawsuit and will then determine whether or not the lawsuit will go to a full trial. The PA Supreme Court not only has the ability to examine this case, it has the duty to determine whether the constitution is being upheld.

The state government is breaking its own law, our kids are suffering, and it is time for the courts to act.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe