



2019 Election: What's at stake for Kentucky Students?

Public School Funding in Kentucky inadequate to meet Students needs

Kentucky spends 13% less per student in 2019 than in 2008, after adjusting for inflation, which ranks our state at the fourth worst in the nation for state-level spending cuts over the last decade.

While the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky or the SEEK funding formula saw a modest \$19.00 per student increase in the last state budget, Kentucky also dramatically reduced funding for other educational funding areas including no money for textbooks or professional development.

Kentucky continues to dramatically underfund pupil transportation and most local school districts pick up the cost for full day Kindergarten which is critical to providing kids with a strong start and closing achievement gaps.

Local Communities being Taxed by inadequate state funding

In the past decade Kentucky has shifted nearly 10% of the total obligation for our public schools from the state budget to local school districts. This amounts to nearly \$700 million dollars in local revenue that must be generated each year in local communities to provide for our public schools.

Because of strained school budgets, Kentucky's parents, grandparents, guardians, and educators are being asked to provide more classroom support materials such as tissues, paper, paper towels, and other supplies to be sure our students basic needs are met.

Our communities depend on an educated workforce to attract and retain good-paying local jobs. School employees spend their salaries in their community. When they lose pay, local merchants lose business.

Salaries (funded through SEEK): Most employees' salaries have been flat over the last five years, while inflation has gone up 8.6%. Add to this the additional burden of a reduced paid school year, increased pension contributions and health care costs, and that means many school employees' pay is thousands less today than it was five years ago. At the same time, they are spending a crushing amount of time serving their students and communities.

Pensions (TRS and CERS): Pension systems for both certified and classified employees are woefully under-funded because of previous General Assembly action. It's time to start making up that deficit. The longer we wait, the deeper the hole will be.

Health care: School employees with family coverage or cross-referenced coverage are either paying much more for that coverage or absorbing costs that insurance used to cover, or both. This results in another reduction in take-home salary.