About PASA

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) is an organization that is instrumental in developing successful school leadership through advocacy, support, sustenance of high quality school administrators and a statewide collegial network.

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Property Tax Proposals

The Legislative School Property Tax Work Group issued its report on December 5, 2019. This group, consisting of the four legislative floor leaders, other legislators, and a representative of the governor’s office, has provided five options for consideration to provide property tax relief to the citizens of Pennsylvania. PASA understands this is a very difficult issue with many variables to consider in making adjustments to how public school districts collect local revenue to provide educational services to the children in their communities.

We realize that homeowners need relief from property tax bills that can create a burden on their personal budgets. PASA believes that property tax relief can be provided without destabilizing revenue needed to reliably operate our public school system.

All of the plans proposed by the work group would require an increase in the state personal income tax (PIT) and/or an increase in the sales and use tax (SUT). PASA is supportive of replacing some portion of home owner and farm owner property taxes with PIT and SUT revenues. PASA does not support reductions in commercial property taxes as business and industry should partner with the state and homeowners in the education of our children.

However, PASA remains cautious in regard to how PIT and SUT will be collected and what would happen to school districts should there be a downturn in the economy in any given year. Property taxes have been a very reliable source of income for school districts. The collection rate is relatively stable during good and challenging economic times. PIT and SUT revenue will fluctuate with the economy and could put districts at risk of receiving less revenue than the previous year during an economic downturn, creating budget deficits and forcing cuts in personnel and programs.

PASA recommends that any replacement of property tax revenue with increased PIT and/or SUT revenue be carefully designed to prevent significant fluctuations in expected revenue that is critical to maintaining school programs and personnel. School districts must be assured that their revenue sources will be stable to the greatest extent possible in order to deliver consistent and mandated programming to the children of the commonwealth.
**PASA Principles**

All partners in education must stand accountable for their contributions to public schools and the impact their role has on student learning. This includes:

The Commonwealth’s commitment to public education and recognition of shared responsibility with local communities for providing resources adequate to comply with laws and regulations regarding public education and essential to support student learning in Pennsylvania’s public schools

The teaching profession’s obligation to utilize evidence-based and research-based instructional strategies

Administrators’ obligation to ensure that high quality leadership is in place to lead efforts to improve student learning

Student and family commitment to pursue, promote and support the value of education and life-long learning

Higher education’s commitment to preparing future teachers, offering dual-enrollment courses for students and partnering with school districts to ensure student readiness

Commitment from the profession, the public, the media and the wider community in acknowledging the high importance of public education and the teaching profession to ensure a strong democracy

The greater business community’s commitment to workforce development and career and college readiness

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**Public Schools Need Adequate Resources to Educate All Children**

PASA supports providing sufficient funds through the funding formula based on the needs of individual districts and their students. A true funding formula allows for local control and flexibility in the use of funds while eliminating competitive grants and special funding initiatives that are inconsistent and unreliable.

PASA supports use of the school funding formula to distribute increases in state funding, provided the use of that formula does not further compromise struggling districts and is paired annually with increased and adequate funding that meets the needs of schools and their students.

PASA supports a sustainable state funding system that is focused on equity, adequacy, predictability, accountability and efficiency in support of Pennsylvania’s public schools.

PASA supports implementation of adequate federal funding through revisions to the state funding formula for special education programs and services. This includes full funding of state and federal mandates, eliminating state requirements that go beyond federal requirements, and establishing reasonable limits on available programs.

PASA supports revising the Act 1 timeline for passing school district budgets to allow districts to have relevant and accurate data on which to base funding/budget decisions.

PASA supports restoring previous Act 1 exceptions to referendum requirements that account for the actual costs incurred by the school district to provide mandatory programs and services for students with special needs and the school district’s share of mandated employee pension costs.

PASA supports including expenditures for school safety and security as an exception under Act 1.

PASA supports recalculation under Act 1 that fully meet a school district’s ability to ensure that school programs and services are adequately supported with local revenues.

PASA supports regular, statewide and uniform property assessment.

PASA supports sustainable state and local funding structures that ensure that districts have guaranteed revenues that reflect annual cost increases and do not restrict school districts from raising local revenue to support the locally determined fiscal needs of the district and the educational needs of its students.

PASA supports increasing funding for career and technical education and programs.

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“Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked. Leadership is defined by results not attributes” Peter Drucker