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PHILADELPHIA
FEDERATION of TEACHERS

Policy and Legislative Priorities for 2025

#PublicFundsPublicSchools #FundOurFacilities

A constitutional system of education funding

- ▶ Increase adequacy funding to at least \$1 billion annually in order to close the \$5 billion gap between wealthy and low-income school districts
- ▶ Codify a funding timeline to meet the constitutional requirement set by the 2023 Commonwealth Court ruling
- ▶ Run all new public education funding through the student-weighted funding formula

Accountability for cyber schools and charter schools

- ▶ Restore the charter school reimbursement line item for public school districts
- ▶ Reform per-pupil spending to bring funding into alignment with actual education costs
- ▶ Tighten financial reporting and transparency requirements to eliminate “slush funds” and prevent fraud and corruption
- ▶ Hold the state Department of Education accountable for charter school regulation and oversight

End the special education staffing crisis

- ▶ Philadelphia and other school districts are violating the civil rights of special needs students because of a lack of resources for trained and certified personnel
- ▶ Failure to provide appropriate services to special needs students creates classroom disruptions and overwhelms teachers and staff

Fund repair and rebuilding of school facilities

- ▶ Revive PlanCon to reimburse districts for capital improvements and projects
- ▶ New dedicated funding stream for improvements
- ▶ Expand Blue-Green alliance to modernize buildings, lower energy bills, and create good-paying union jobs

End public subsidies for private and religious schools

- ▶ From Arizona to Ohio, private school voucher programs are proven to benefit mostly wealthy families that were already enrolled in private or religious schools
- ▶ Private school voucher and tax credit programs have proven so costly that non-education budget priorities such as transportation and water/sewer maintenance have had funding threatened, on top of painful cuts to public schools
- ▶ Unlike public schools, private and religious schools in Pennsylvania are permitted to discriminate against students for reasons including gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation. Taxpayers should not fund such institutions.
- ▶ There is no evidence that private/religious school vouchers contribute to improved educational achievement in Pennsylvania. Research has shown vouchers actually hurt student achievement in other programs across the country.

Recommit to Community Schools

- ▶ Develop private sector and nonprofit partnerships to provide poverty-fighting resources to low-income students and their families, such as health clinics, employment services, and nutrition support

Extend OSHA protections to public sector workers

- ▶ Understaffing and a growing special needs student population has subjected teachers and assistants to actual physical danger and injury
- ▶ Failure to modernize and remediate aging facilities has contributed to respiratory and other illnesses among school staff, as well as cancer



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