



# Education Update

From the Senate Education Committee

FEBRUARY 21, 2005

## Governor's Budget Would Increase Funding for Select Education Programs

The FY 2005-2006 budget proposal Governor Edward Rendell submitted to the General Assembly on February 8 includes significant funding increases for several recent initiatives and stable funding for most core education programs.

Overall, funding for programs under the Department of Education would increase by \$226 million, or 2.5%.

The Governor proposed to double funding for both the education assistance tutoring program (EAP) and the Head Start Supplemental Assistance program. He also recommended that funding for the community college operating formula be increased by 10%. The EAP and Head Start programs were funded for the first time in FY 2004-2005.

Funding increases for the basic and

special education subsidies were proposed for 2.5% and funding for the accountability block grant program would remain at the FY 2004-2005 level of \$200 million.

Secretary of Education Francis Barnes will appear before the Senate Appropriations Committee to discuss the budget proposal on March 8.

### FY 2005-2006 Budget Proposal Selected Line-Items

	\$ Request	\$ Inc.	% Inc.
Basic Education Subsidy	4,470,050,000	109,026,000	2.5%
Special Education Subsidy	952,404,000	23,229,000	2.5%
Block Grants	200,000,000	0	n/a
Charter School Reimbursement	82,602,000	2,015,000	2.5%
Head Start Grants	30,000,000	15,000,000	100%
EAP	76,000,000	38,000,000	100%
Education Support Services	9,000,000	0	n/a
School Improvement Grants	21,717,000	0	n/a
Libraries	59,362,000	1,448,000	2.5%
Community Colleges	249,081,000	22,800,000	10%

## New Funding Proposed for High School Reform Efforts

Reflecting national interest in initiatives to reform high school instruction, Governor Rendell's FY 2005-2006 budget proposal includes several new programs focused on secondary education.

The proposed budget includes \$4.7 million for high school reform, \$5 million to support dual enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn both high school and college credit and \$8 million for equipment purchases in

vocational-technical schools.

Several of these new initiatives fall under the Governor's Job Ready Pennsylvania initiative.

Senate Education Committee

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**Senator James J. Rhoades**  
*Chairman*

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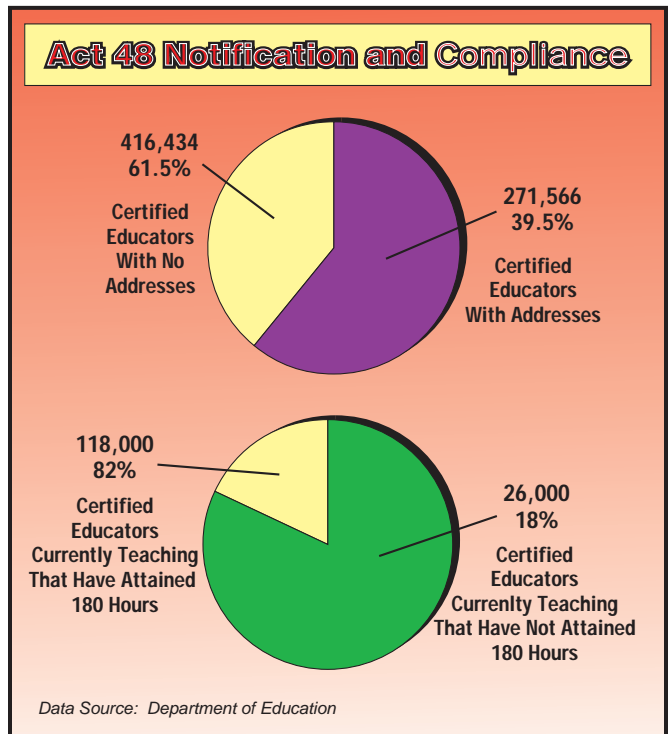
## Department Fails to Send Act 48 Notices

During a Senate Education Committee hearing on the State Continuing Professional Education act, the Department of Education revealed that it had failed to send official notices to professional educators in June, 2004, as the law requires.

Act 48 of 1999 requires certified teachers and administrators to complete six credits or 180 hours of continuing professional education every five years in order to keep their certificates active. The five-year compliance period for educators certified as of 2000 will close on June 30, 2005.

The Department maintains a database tracking each educator's continuing education hours and credits, which is accessible on-line. However, Act 48 also requires the Department to send a written notice to educators twelve months prior to the end of a five-year compliance period.

According to the Department's testimony, the notice was not sent due to lack of proper addresses for 416,434, or 61.5%, of professional educators. Now, some are suggesting that the June 30 deadline for compliance should be postponed.



## Rhoades' Technical Assistance Package Clears Committee

On February 14 and 15, the Senate unanimously approved Senator Rhoades' three-bill technical assistance package to provide assistance to school districts working to meet the academic achievement goals of the federal No Child Left

Behind Act.

Senate Bill 146 would authorize intermediate units to coordinate academic improvement teams for school districts that have schools on the NCLB warning list. Senate Bill 147 would direct the Department of

Education to provide technical assistance to school districts on various NCLB warning lists. Senate Bill 148 would establish a clearinghouse of professional development programs.

The bills now go to the House of Representatives.

## ED Challenges Philadelphia Tutoring Program

The U.S. Department of Education has told the Philadelphia School District that it may not operate a tutoring program through the Philadelphia Intermediate Unit, because the school district also functions as an intermediate unit.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, students enrolled in schools on the school improvement list must receive access to tutoring services. However, school entities on the list may not offer those tutoring

services themselves. A number of Philadelphia schools are on such lists.

The Philadelphia arrangement was challenged by private tutoring organizations interested in offering programs themselves.

For more information or detailed analyses of these topics, contact the Senate Education Committee staff at 787-2637.