



Pennsylvania School Boards Association

legislative report

December 8, 2016

TAKE ACTION

Contact your federal legislators today on critical funding measure

Current funding for federal agencies is set to expire tomorrow, December 9, Congress must act quickly to pass legislation to ensure continuity in funding and operations of the federal government. PSBA and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) are asking school district officials to contact their members of the U.S. Congress (both Senate and House) now to urge support for Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations.

[Please take a moment right now to contact your members of the U.S. House and Senate by sending the prepared letter from NSBA's Action Center that is available by clicking here or the red Take Action button.](#)

Urge them to support legislation that:

- Maximizes funding for key education programs such as Title I and IDEA and avoids further rescissions.
- Ensures continuity in key education programs through sustained federal investments, including Impact Aid.

Critical decisions regarding federal funding for public education are being made. It's time to speak up to make sure lawmakers maximize investments in key Prek-12 public education programs such as Title I grants for disadvantaged students and special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Sustained investments and fiscal stability are critical as your school district continues to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), address the needs of children with special needs and advance innovation through career and technical education programs. Without swift passage of a final funding bill, more than 1,000 school districts educating federally connected students could lose support when funding expires this Friday. For more information, read [NSBA's letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committees](#) on prioritizing FY2017 investments in education.

Thank you for your advocacy efforts!

PDE News

- [PDE announces replacement model for SPP measures](#)

PSERS News

- [PSERS sets employer contribution rate for 2017-18](#)

PDE News

PDE announces replacement model for SPP measures

This week state Education Secretary Pedro Rivera outlined the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) recommendations for replacing the School Performance Profile (SPP) with a new measure of school success that will be called the Future Ready PA Index.

The existing SPP, which was first used in 2013, is heavily reliant on standardized test scores, which only mark student performance at a single point in time during the school year. The department wants to replace the existing SPP and create a more useful and holistic measure of how schools and students are performing.

The recommendations for replacing the SPP retain several of the indicators from the current SPP, however the weighting of those indicators would be modified. The proposed new measure will be called the Future Ready PA Index and will include the following recommendations:

- Increasing the weighting of value-added measures, which incentivizes a focus on all learners and is less sensitive to demographic variables.
- Measuring English language acquisition among ESL students, not simply performance on a test of grade level ELA standards.
- Incentivizing career awareness instruction beginning at the elementary level.
- Addressing the issue of unequal weighting of content areas in the current SPP.
- Increasing the weighting of rigorous course offerings such as AP, IB, and dual enrollment.
- Allowing LEAs to include locally-selected reading assessments (grade 3) and math assessments (grade 7) as additional snapshots of student

progress.

- Awarding extra credit to schools graduating students with at least one high-value, industry-recognized credential.

PDE will continue to engage with education stakeholders over the coming months to discuss the recommendations, and to build support for the Future Ready PA Index.

[Top](#)

PSERS News

PSERS sets employer contribution rate for 2017-18

This week the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS) Board of Trustees certified an annual employer contribution rate of 32.57% for fiscal year 2017-18, which begins on July 1, 2017. The newly-certified rate is composed of 0.83% for health insurance premium assistance and a pension rate of 31.74%.

Nearly 75% of the employer contribution rate is for the payment of unfunded liability, which is primarily for past service already earned by members. Total employer contributions for FY 2017/2018 are estimated at \$4.4 billion. Employees will contribute an average of 7.54% or approximately \$1 billion in 2017-18.

The new rate is a jump up from the current 2016-17 rate of 30.03% and also higher than the 32.23% that had been projected earlier this year for 2017-18. PSERS' projected employer contribution rates moving forward continue to climb as follows: 34.18% for 2018-19, 35.53% for 2019-20, 35.95% for 2020-21, and 36.40% for 2021-22.

[Click here for PSERS' Employer Contribution Rate Fact Sheet](#)

[Click here for PSERS' Current Employer Contribution Rate and Rate Projections](#)

[Top](#)

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