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## Statement on Governor Wolf's Budget Proposal

*Deborah Gordon Klehr, executive director of the Education Law Center, issued this statement following Governor Tom Wolf's budget address today:*

"Gov. Wolf has put forward a budget proposal that would provide an additional \$435 million for classroom spending in schools and early education programs across the Commonwealth, in addition to \$1 billion to clean up toxic schools.

"There's no question that Pennsylvania's students need every dollar that the governor has proposed. Pennsylvania has the capacity to provide its students with the dollars the governor has proposed and more. But in years past, our state elected officials have not shown the will to make the game-changing investments that are needed in basic education, special education, and early childhood education.

"Students across the state in underfunded schools and under-resourced communities cannot afford to wait any longer for the boost in state support they sorely need. The levels of education inequity and underfunding in the state are profound, entrenched, and cannot be resolved by the kinds of incremental increases adopted in recent state budgets. It will take even bigger, multiyear investments, focused on the most disadvantaged school districts, to close our state's longstanding resource gaps and fix its broken education funding system.

"Commonsense charter school funding reforms are another vital piece of Gov. Wolf's package. But whether or not those reforms are approved, the legislature must find a way to provide the overall increase in support this year that the governor has recommended. We urge the legislature to deliver that full amount of \$435 million in increased classroom funding as well as his additional school facilities increases.

"The governor's package is a positive step, but to address the needs and rights of our students, we will also continue to pursue our court case, *William Penn School District et al. v. Pennsylvania Department of Education et al.*, challenging the failure of our state government officials to comply with their constitutional obligations to adequately and equitably fund our schools."

*For more information, contact Paul Socolar, 215-372-1650 or [psocolar@elc-pa.org](mailto:psocolar@elc-pa.org)*

The Education Law Center-PA (ELC) is a nonprofit, legal advocacy organization with offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, dedicated to ensuring that all children in Pennsylvania have access to a quality public education. Through legal representation, impact litigation, trainings, and policy advocacy, ELC advances the rights of vulnerable children, including children living in poverty, children of color, children in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, children with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ students, and children experiencing homelessness. For more information, visit [elc-pa.org](http://elc-pa.org) or follow on Twitter @edlawcenterpa.

**Ensuring that all of Pennsylvania's children have equal access to a quality public education.**