

# **DRAFT public comments for asking your school board to pass a resolution in support of the school funding lawsuit**

*Use as is, pick and choose what you like, or write your own!*

**Public comment for <date>, <School District> school board meeting,**

<Name>

<Address>

I am a district parent/community member and I am here to talk about school funding.

**Specifically, I am here to ask the <District> school board to consider passing a resolution in support of Pennsylvania's school funding lawsuit, which went to trial on November 12<sup>th</sup>.**

The Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth.

But Pennsylvania's school funding system is anything but thorough or efficient. And the current system is hurting our children throughout Pennsylvania and right here in <District>.

**PA ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation for state share of funding for K-12 education. States typically fund about half of what it costs to educate students in K-12 schools. In Pennsylvania, our state government funds just 38%.**

**When the state is cheap, there is a heavy reliance on property taxes to fund our schools.**

Some communities have robust property tax bases and can raise sufficient funding at the local level, often with low tax effort from their property owners. In these districts there is so much property wealth that a small rate increase generates a lot of revenue.

But other communities, including rural areas, shrinking small towns, big cities, and a lot of communities just like ours, raise local taxes year in and year out, placing a heavy burden on taxpayers, and we still cannot pay for what our students need and deserve.

The current school funding system in Pennsylvania results in grossly different amounts of money spent on children in different districts in violation of the equal protection provisions of the state Constitution; with much less money spent on children in low-wealth districts, even though their students have additional education needs.

**In Pennsylvania the students who need the most, get the least.**

An expert study prepared for the court found that public schools need at least \$4.6 billion in additional funding for students to be able to meet state standards according to adequacy benchmarks that are in the Pennsylvania School Code—our state law.

<Name> School District is underfunded by approximately <\$\$\$ check [www.fundourschoolspa.org](http://www.fundourschoolspa.org) information> per student or more than <\$\$\$> million annually.

Parents in <District Name> know that our schools need more resources. <List here resources you need—more teachers, counselors, aides, etc.)>

And we all know that just about every year we come together as a community and pay higher taxes and do our best at the local level to give our students the opportunities that they need.

But we need more funding from Harrisburg.

**Pennsylvania’s school funding lawsuit is a once in a generation opportunity to break the logjam in Harrisburg and change the trajectory of the lives of Pennsylvania students for years to come.**

The plaintiffs are asking the court to declare the school funding system unconstitutional and to order the state legislature to create and maintain a school funding system that provides students with the resources they need to meet state academic standards and prepares them for life after graduation.

I hope that the board will consider passing the attached resolution in support of the school funding lawsuit and that we can come together as a community to support the state funding system that our children need and deserve.

Thank you.