

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLOG #4
January 27, 2012

Earlier this month the Gallatin County School District along with every school district in Kentucky was notified that our basic school funding (SEEK) would be cut this school year 2011-2012. We anticipated this mid-year funding cut and had planned and budgeted accordingly. Our district alone was cut well over \$173,520.00 which included funding for building construction.

As a point of emphasis and understanding, the compensating tax rate we set this year will generate approximately an additional \$226,260 over the amount we collected last year. The mandated rank and step increases on our salary tables calculated to approximately \$107,000. The increase in CERS (county retirement for classified staff) was \$43,149 and the increase in the KTRS (Kentucky Teacher Retirement System) match for Fund 1 was \$15,131 for a total of \$165,280. Our compensating tax rate gives us a little over \$60,000 to use for increases in other expenses such as diesel fuel, utilities, etc. Please also keep in mind that our EduJobs project in Fund 2 is taking about \$352,000 out of our General Fund budget this year and those expenditures will be back in our general fund budget once the EduJobs funding is over this year. So, keeping that in mind we will be about \$292,000 short next year for our General Fund Budget. We are working on the draft budget for 2012-2013 now. All of our employees have been without raises beyond the minimal mandated increase for years of experience and/or a rank change for the past three years. With the elimination of state funding for textbooks and reductions in professional development, extended school services, and other state programs, etc., by the state, I see Kentucky sliding back to pre-KERA funding days as expectations continue to rise. It is irresponsible to say that education has been spared in all of the funding cuts we have experienced in Kentucky – in fact, it's a lie. Education has been cut drastically. At a time when we are trying to get every student college and career ready our resources are dwindling. The needs of our students are great. Our schools are a reflection of the community we serve.

Below are graphs that demonstrate the cuts we have experienced statewide in education since 2008.

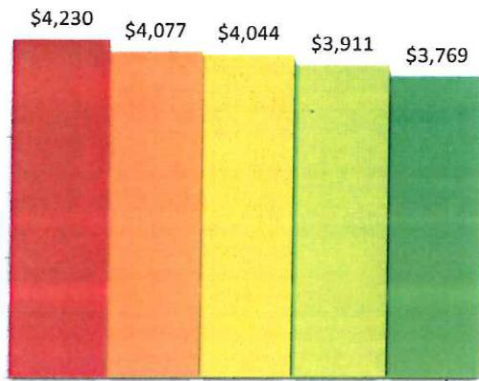
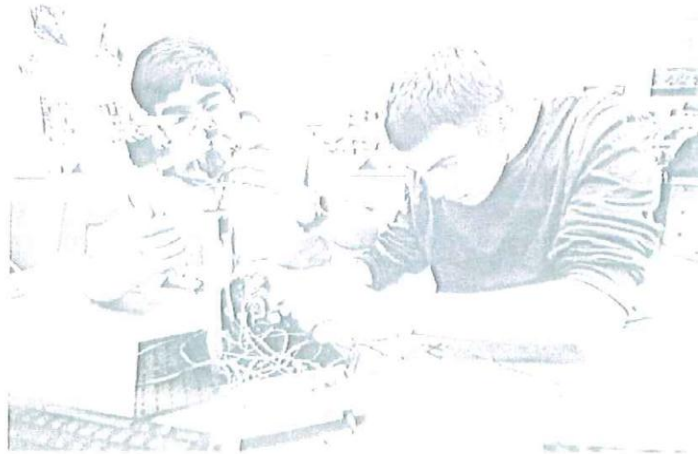
EXPECTATIONS UP, RESOURCES DOWN

Kentucky's goal is for all students to graduate from high school and be ready for college and career.

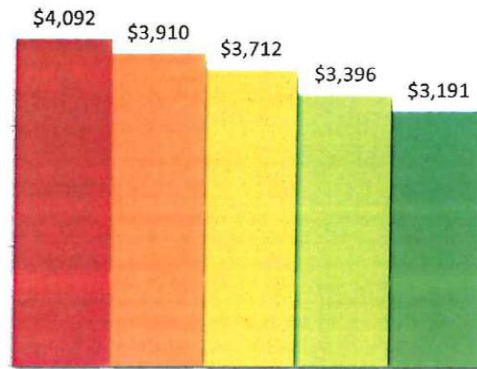
As a state, we've committed to much higher expectations, but state funding per student has declined in program after program.

It's time to invest in our children, providing the vital financial support required to meet our bold new goals.

The graphs below show the key declines in per pupil funding, adjusted for inflation.

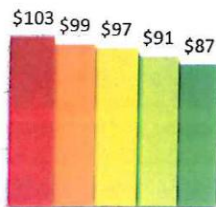


State SEEK Base Funding

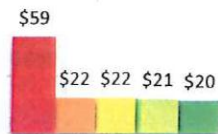


State Preschool

2007-08 2008-09 2009-10 2010-11 2011-12



State Family Resource & Youth Service Centers



State ESS Tutoring



State Safe Schools



State Professional Development



State Textbooks



For immediate release

Kentucky Association
of School
Administrators

Historic coalition of K-12 groups calls on General Assembly, Gov. Beshear to restore state funding for student achievement

Kentucky Association
of School Councils

Frankfort, Ky. (Jan. 4, 2012) – For the first time, seven organizations representing the full spectrum of elementary and secondary education in Kentucky have banded together to urge Gov. Steve Beshear and the General Assembly to reverse four years of state funding reductions to key services that support teaching and learning in the state’s public schools.

Kentucky Association
of School
Superintendents

During a Frankfort news conference today, representatives of the Kentucky Education Action Team (KEAT) called on state leaders to restore funding to the SEEK (Support Education Excellence in Kentucky) program, the primary source of state funding for public schools; and to key elements such as textbooks, preschool, teacher training and family resource and youth services centers, along with afterschool and school safety programs.

Kentucky Parent-
Teacher Association

Kentucky Education
Association

“At a time when schools are being expected to significantly boost student achievement, budgeting equals tools that can help teachers and schools succeed for students,” said Tim Hitzfield, president of the Kentucky Association of School Councils and principal of Conner High School in Boone County. “Training, materials, technology and extra time for students are all key investments for kids to succeed instead of just getting by.”

Kentucky School
Boards Association

Prichard Committee
for Academic
Excellence

KEAT’s efforts represent the first statewide joint advocacy campaign by the seven founding members: Kentucky Association of School Administrators, Kentucky Association of School Councils, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, Kentucky Education Association, Kentucky Parent Teacher Association, Kentucky School Boards Association and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

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Prichard Committee Executive Director Stu Silberman said, “Having all of these organizations come together like this is a historic time for Kentucky. We believe that education is the bridge to a better life for all Kentuckians. The progress that has been made over the last 20 years is in danger of regression due to the reductions in funding.”

Jessamine County Schools Superintendent Lu Young, a member of the board of directors of the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, said her members are “excited about the collaboration. This is perhaps the first partnership that focuses entirely on funding issues that impact our children.”

(more)

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During the Jan. 4 news conference, KEAT released data demonstrating the reductions in state funding to key K-12 programs since 2008, including:

	<u>FY 2007-08</u>	<u>FY 2011-12</u>
SEEK	\$4,230 per student	\$3,769
Preschool	\$4,092	\$3,191
FRYSCs	\$103	\$87
Afterschool	\$59	\$20
Training	\$25	\$4
Safe schools	\$17	\$6
Textbooks	\$40	\$0 (for the past two years)

“The public hears a lot of talk about education having been ‘protected’ from cuts in recent years, but that’s only true on a relative level to the cuts in funding to other public services,” said Bill Scott, executive director of the Kentucky School Boards Association. “School funding has not gone untouched, and the public needs to understand that.”

Representatives of classroom teachers and district administrators called on state leaders to end the slow eroding of resources that they see affecting student learning.

Sharron K. Oxendine, president of the Kentucky Education Association, a group with 42,000 active, student and retired teachers, said, "KEA members see the impact of reduced funding on their students' lives and on their own economic welfare every day in our classrooms. KEA believes the united effort to inform lawmakers about the impact of funding cuts is important."

“Our call to action is necessary and urgent,” said Mayfield Independent Schools Superintendent Lonnie Burgett, president of the Kentucky Association of School Administrators. “Kentucky’s educators are poised to lead our schools in this global society, and our children are engaged and ready to learn. Funding must be restored to meet the higher standards for learning as set forth by the General Assembly in Senate Bill 1 in 2009.”

Kentucky Parent Teacher Association President Teri Gale of Fairdale pledged her organization’s No. 1 focus to “advocate that Kentucky must fully fund all programs it mandates to local school districts.

“Our members believe all parents should be involved both in the home and in the classroom in the education of their children,” she said, “so we support the position that the Kentucky General Assembly acts to restore funding levels for education to 2008 levels.”

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Attachments