

June 22, 2026

To the Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly:

As leaders of Pennsylvania's urban, suburban, and rural school districts, we write together to add our voices to the call that Philadelphia Mayor Chelle Parker and other leaders are bringing to Harrisburg today. We represent very different communities, but we share common ground: the Commonwealth must keep its commitment to adequacy funding in this year's budget, and it must help all districts meet the urgent needs of their school buildings and facilities.

The challenges facing the School District of Philadelphia are not Philadelphia's alone. We share the Mayor's concerns about school facilities, because districts of every size and in every region of the state are managing the same realities: buildings decades past their prime, environmental and safety hazards, and infrastructure never designed for 21st-century learning. Administrators in underfunded rural and small districts face challenges similar to those of our colleagues in underfunded urban districts. How can we rectify situations where our students sit in the same aging classrooms? Safe, modern school buildings should not depend on a community's zip code, and we stand with Mayor Parker in calling for Harrisburg to make that needed commitment to students in every corner of the Commonwealth.

The case for adequacy funding is just as clear. In *William Penn School District v. Pennsylvania Department of Education*, the Commonwealth Court found that Pennsylvania's school funding system was unconstitutional and that students in our most underfunded districts – urban, suburban, and rural alike – were paying the price. In response, lawmakers from both parties created the adequacy supplement, delivered through the Ready to Learn Block Grant. Over two budgets, that bipartisan investment has begun to work. Districts are hiring counselors and special education staff, reducing class sizes, protecting full-day kindergarten, strengthening early literacy, and expanding career and technical education. Superintendents across the Commonwealth describe these dollars not as an add-on, but as a lifeline.

But the work is unfinished. Even after two years of investment, most of the original adequacy gap remains, and roughly eight of every ten Pennsylvania students attend a district that depends on these funds. We respectfully urge you to adopt a final budget that includes robust, sustained adequacy supplement funding, along with full support for the basic education and special education funding formulas.

That we write together, the Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools and the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, is itself the point. The case for fully funding our schools is not an urban issue or a rural issue. We respectfully ask you to maintain the Commonwealth's commitment to closing the adequacy gap in this year's final budget agreement with another investment of \$565 million. And we ask that you also make a sustained, meaningful investment in school facilities funding so districts can address urgent building needs and provide safe, modern learning environments for every student.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Pennsylvania's 1.7 million public school students.

Respectfully,

Brian White

Superintendent, Butler Area School District
President, Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools (PLUS)

Edward Albert

President, Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools (PARSS)