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Gov. Wolf Welcomes New Teachers, Celebrates Historic Investment in Education

Norristown, PA – Governor Tom Wolf today joined administrators, educators and elected officials in the Norristown Area School District to welcome the district's new teachers and celebrate the administration's historic \$3.7 billion investment in public education over the past eight years.

"I'm proud of the steps we've taken to bring new resources into our schools," Governor Wolf said. "And I am deeply proud of the teachers all across the commonwealth who have worked so hard to give each student the education they deserve, even when the resources you needed to succeed were scarce."

This year's budget alone includes a record \$1.8 billion in education investments.

Norristown Superintendent Christopher Dormer said more than half of the new teachers and educational support staff in his district will be in positions made possible by the added dollars from the state.

"The importance of the historic increase to Norristown Area School District will truly be transformative for our district. With millions of additional dollars that we can count on as sustainable revenue each year, we are able to onboard resources that will directly impact our educational program and will improve the lives of our students," Dormer said. "Most importantly, we are now able to make significant investments in additional staff – positions that we have not been previously able to afford as a historically and dramatically underfunded school district – to better and more personally serve our families and to better meet the individual needs of all students."

Speaking at East Norriton Middle School today where the district was holding its new teacher induction, Governor Wolf recalled that proper funding for education was his top priority when he took office in 2015. That priority held true in this year's budget talks, resulting in:

- **\$525 million increase through the Fair Funding Formula.** On average Pennsylvania schools will see their funding increase by 8 percent.

- **\$225 million increase for Level Up** to provide targeted support to the 100 most in-need school districts, ensuring that every child in Pennsylvania has the opportunity to thrive and succeed through equal access to a high-quality education no matter their zip code.
- **\$100 million increase for Special Education.**
- **\$79 million increase for Early Education** through Pre-K Counts and Head Start.
- **\$220 million for public higher education.**

The investment in education includes \$850 million in recurring funding to allow school districts to invest in student learning while simultaneously cutting local property taxes.

“Funding matters when it comes to education – both how much and where it comes from – and for a long time, Pennsylvania has been getting it wrong. Wealthier communities have adequately funded schools, but less affluent communities, like Norristown, could not, no matter how high they raised property taxes,” said state Rep. Matt Bradford. “This budget’s significant and sustainable increase in state education funding takes a huge step toward fairly funding all schools in this commonwealth. With \$5.5 billion in new, recurring state funding, Norristown Area School District can make significant investments to lower class sizes, increase opportunities, meet students’ needs, and improve outcomes.”

Even before the 2022-23 budget was finalized, the Wolf administration had:

- Invested more than \$1.9 billion in education from pre-k through college, including the largest single-year education funding increase in state history in 2021.
- Created the Level Up initiative to provide \$100 million to the 100 most underfunded school districts.
- Established the Public School Fair Funding Formula to help address chronic inequitable and inadequate funding for school districts in the commonwealth.
- Invested \$116 million in science, computer science and technical education, including \$80 million in the innovative PAsmart program, and \$36 million in apprenticeships and workforce training.
- Modernized standards for science education.
- Invested more than \$130 million in School Safety Grants to make schools and school communities safer.
- Reduced the age when students must start school to 6 and raising the high school dropout age to 18 to set students up for a lifetime of success.
- Launched first-of-its-kind “It’s On Us PA” Campus Sexual Assault Prevention initiative to combat sexual assault and make colleges and universities safer.

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