



Governor signs K-12 education budget

There still is no agreement on the overall state budget, but Governor Bruce Rauner announced Wednesday afternoon that he has signed the K-12 education budget, averting a situation where some school districts might have had problems if there was no budget when school opens in August.

"We are relieved that school districts can now plan for the new school year knowing that the state budget for education is in place. While we believe General State Aid should be fully funded for schools, going from 89 percent funding to 92 percent in this budget represents some progress," said IASA Executive Director Dr. Brent Clark. "The downturn in the economy and the cuts to state funding the past few years have left many school districts across the state struggling, so we are encouraged that this budget includes \$85 million that is supposed to go to the neediest districts as well as increases for Special Education and Early Childhood Education. Educating our children is the single best long-term investment the state can make and we are pleased that the governor and the General Assembly have made it a priority in the middle of these tough budget negotiations."

The K-12 FY16 budget bill (House Bill 3763) calls for an increase of some \$240 million over FY15. It still is \$60 million less than the increase the governor proposed, but it would increase General State Aid from 89 percent to 92 percent of the statutory foundation level. It also would provide \$85 million for the poorest school districts in the state, \$40 million more for Special Education, \$21 million more for Early Childhood Education and restore \$6.3 million for the Regional Safe Schools program. Transportation and most other mandated categorical items would receive flat funding.

IASA



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