

**Resolution Supporting
Increased State Funding for K-12 Public Education
By the Board of Directors
of the Highlands School District**

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's more than 1.8 million public school students deserve the highest quality education; and maintaining and supporting a 'thorough and efficient system' of public education is a constitutional obligation of the commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors of the Highlands School District to provide for the education of its students in a manner that enables them to be college and career-ready upon graduation; and

WHEREAS, increases in recent years in state investment in K-12 education has resulted in sustained improvement in academic performance for students, as evidenced by these facts that show that Pennsylvania's public schools are succeeding:

- Pennsylvania currently ranks 7th among the 50 states for K-12 student achievement and 13th overall in a national report released in January 2012; and
- Pennsylvania's 2011 PSSA scores show that 94% of public school districts reached targets for Adequate Yearly Progress as required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act;
- The number of Pennsylvania public high school students taking and testing in an Advanced Placement course continues to increase each year, and the numbers of Pennsylvania students scoring a 3+ on AP exams continues to grow each year. In November 2011, Pennsylvania was awarded by The College Board as the state with the most public school districts named to its "AP Honor Roll" for expanding participation in Advanced Placement courses from 2009 to 2011, while increasing or maintaining the test results; and

WHEREAS, evidence of academic achievement in the Highlands School District has been demonstrated by:

- Dual Enrollment offerings for students interested in attending college
- Based on student's success ratings on the PSAT, Highlands School District is able to provide 8 AP courses and 9 Honors classes.
- All Elementary Schools are making AYP according to most recent PSSA results.

WHEREAS, it is critical for Pennsylvania to continue to make smart investments that improve the ability of our students to compete in the high-skills global economy without shifting the burden to the local property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the 2012-13 state budget maintains basic education funding at 2008-09 levels, maintains level funding for special education for the fourth consecutive year although the costs for providing such mandated services continues to rise, and eliminates the Accountability Block Grant program; and

WHEREAS, the 2012-13 proposed state budget for K-12 education does not restore funds eliminated in the 2011-12 budget for charter school reimbursement, school improvement grants; education assistance programs, elementary science programs, and dual enrollment programs; and

WHEREAS, expectations and requirements for students do not diminish in times of economic difficulty, as exemplified by the need for school districts to meet rising targets in 2012 for proficiency on PSSA assessments, implement curriculum aligned with new Common Core standards, increase graduation requirements and administer Keystone Exams; and

WHEREAS, no increases in K-12 education funding actually is a net loss for public education considering increases in costs out of the control of school boards, including pensions, prevailing wage requirements, unreimbursed charter school costs, rising healthcare and energy costs, and more; and

WHEREAS, the continued reduction of state funding for basic education further shifts the burden to the local property taxpayers and provide no mandate relief to school districts as a way of controlling costs; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Highlands School District strongly urges the General Assembly to take legislative action in the 2012-13 state budget to increase funding for K-12 education. Such increases include, at a minimum, additional funding for the basic education and special education subsidies, and restoration of funding for charter school reimbursement and Accountability Block Grants.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this district also urges the General Assembly to take action on meaningful mandate reform by the time the new 2012-13 state budget is enacted and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be posted on the district's website and submitted to the elected state senators and representatives of the Highlands School District in the General Assembly, and to the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2012.

Signed,

School Board President

Board Secretary (seal)