

Proposed education funding a boost to districts

By [NICHOLE DOBO](#)
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York County school districts would get basic education funding increases up to nearly 13 percent if a budget deal between legislative leaders and the governor is approved.

And when stimulus money is factored in, districts in the county would get funding increases between 10.8 percent at South Eastern School District and 25.3 percent at the York Suburban School District, based on estimates released Tuesday by the state Senate appropriations committee.

The increases come during a difficult budget year for the state. The state budget is more than three months overdue. Pennsylvania is the only state that has not passed a budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Statewide, school districts could get a \$300 million increase in basic education subsidies, something Gov. Ed Rendell has identified as a priority.

The York City School District would have faced a multi-million-dollar hole in its budget if the state had not stuck closely to a funding plan proposed by the governor in the spring.

The city district should do fine if the latest budget compromise is passed, said Jon Boyer, the district business manager. However, he is still awaiting information on what grants will be funded and if there will be federal stimulus money made available for building projects, he said.

The state Department of Education, which releases these figures to schools each year, has not confirmed the funding estimates released by the appropriations committee.

Erik Arneson, a spokesman for senate majority leader Dominic Pileggi, R-Chester, said the estimates were figures that the governor and general assembly leaders had agreed upon. It should be voted on in the next five to seven days, he said.

On Monday Rendell said he hoped to sign a budget by Sunday.