

Funding Formula Capacity Factor Answers Equitable

According to the Governor's proposed biennial budget, the capacity factor emphasizes wealth of a community opposed to property values. Examining Milford under this new formula, we are placed in the 3rd quintile with a capacity measure of 1.01 and state share index of 49%. The funding formula finally recognizes that Milford as a whole does not have the capacity to raise local funds as inflated property values over prior years would indicate. Milford will receive a 10% increase in state funding each year under the budget and we are pleased to be moving away from the CAP and toward the funding formula.

Funding of Public Schools Still Inadequate

While we agree the budget appears to be a genuine attempt at making school funding equitable, we are still unconvinced the state funding earmarked for public education is adequate. The budget estimates \$5,800 per student for FY 16 with a \$100 increase each year. This figure was rolled forward from previous formulas with no basis. A \$100 increase per student is 1.7% in FY 16 but percentage diminishes each successive year so local districts will once again be assuming a greater portion of student costs with each year. Instead of a set dollar amount why not use a percentage?

There are 1.9 million school age children in the state of Ohio per the US Census Bureau. The \$100 increase per child is \$190 million per year. If the state would increase spending on public education by 2.2% annually, once the funding formula is fully in effect, the cost would be \$125 per child or \$237.5 million each year. In the February 27 issue of *On the Money*, the state was \$261 million above their estimated budget for fiscal year 2015 which is attributed to spending less than anticipated along with additional collections in auto sales tax, income tax and cigarette tax. The summary of this report indicates economic growth, employment, personal income and consumption, manufacturing and construction are all on the rise. The state of Ohio is showing a significant surplus. Please consider using the surplus to adequately fund public schools.

Pupil Transportation

The funding formula for transportation services should incentivize efficiencies and account for specific circumstances among districts. For instance, the formula should, 1) provide funding for EVERY child who rides a school bus — not just for those students required by state law to be transported; 2) reward schools for efficiency (districts that maximize the number of students utilizing each school bus throughout the school day); 3) incentivize (rather than mandate) that students within one to two miles of their school be transported (the state only requires schools to transport K-5 students who live more than two miles from school); 4) contain provisions to compensate districts for the transportation of students to schools which are not part of the district (i.e., private schools and community schools); 5) include an adjustment to better support rural districts with low density and low wealth and low density and 6) Operate separately from the education funding formula — thus, not being affected by funding guarantees or caps, or limited by a line-item appropriation amount — to ensure districts actually receive the state transportation funding levels to which they are entitled.

College Credit Plus (CCP)

CCP is promoted as free college. The presentations and information on various state websites intensely promote paying nothing, yet there is only superficial mention of learning or education. This is disturbing. First, nothing is really free. Taxpayers are footing the bill. Secondly, where is the evidence that Ohio students taking college classes while still in high school actually results in more Ohio students earning a college degree?

CCP removes local board of education control. Local boards are permitted to add to the state's high school graduation requirements, and often do so because the state requirements are considered minimum requirements, and the local community has higher standards. The same is true of academic content standards. Many local boards consider these standards as baseline expectations; therefore, the district curricula may go far beyond the state standards. CCP usurps local control. College courses, especially those offered at regional campuses, often do not meet the state content standards or the rigor and richness of high school courses. With CCP, it is now possible for a student to earn a high school diploma without taking any English course that focuses on composition or academic writing. Just one example: with CCP, a student would be allowed to substitute 1 semester of Introduction to Poetry Writing and have that fulfill Milford's requirement for a full-year Honors American Literature class in which seminal American texts are read, and students hone their academic and research writing skills.

Another example: while the state requires one semester of American History, the Milford district requires a full year. Our community believes that the study of American History is important. With CCP, a student may take one semester of American History and have it fulfill the one-year requirement. Comparing the high school syllabus with a typical college syllabus for the same course, the high school course is higher level and more rigorous.

Add to the concerns of the curriculum department, the financial ramifications. Post-secondary education for FY 14 cost Milford \$105,154 for 643.5 semester hours. Textbooks for those students amounted to \$23,463 which were not paid by Milford. With College Credit Plus (CCP) Milford would be expected to pay for up to 30 credits per student per year at the ceiling cost (since universities are not interested in negotiating as they are for-profit) of \$160 per credit ($30 \times 160 = \$4,800$). Milford will still be on the CAP in FY 16. Using the current ADM of 6,535 and the \$3,186 state funding for Milford per the proposed budget for FY 16, Milford would have to distribute \$1,614 of local funds exceeding dollars received from the state to pay for tuition. Effectively if a student chooses to take 20 credits or more the Milford community must assume the cost of educating the child for high school and college courses and cover the unlimited cost of textbooks necessary for those college courses.

Please consider rewriting CCP to **permit** parents to cover the cost of college tuition instead of **refusing to allow** them to pay for tuition. This would be very similar to the post-secondary program currently in place with the district picking up the cost all tuition for economically challenged students; but in this scenario the district would still assume the cost of the college textbooks.

We want a Milford High School diploma to mean that the graduate is well-read, has written extensively in all academic content areas, has taken science courses requiring lab experiences, and has a strong background in American history and government. CCP removes much of this local control.