

FUND OUR FUTURE



Lowell public schools and students are being short-changed **\$42 million** every year.

Lawmakers must take action now!

Public education is why Massachusetts is a great place to live and work. But our future is at risk when some communities and students have access to sufficient resources while others do not. The United Teachers of Lowell (UTL) has joined with AFT Massachusetts and the Fund our Future Coalition to press lawmakers to make long-overdue fixes to our state's education funding system. The need is urgent, and lawmakers must act this year.

THE HISTORY

Establishment of the Foundation Budget Formula in 1993

In 1993, Massachusetts passed the Education Reform Act. The law established the concept of a "foundation budget"—ensuring that all school districts could provide their students with a quality education. Unfortunately, in the 25 years since, the Legislature has done little to update the foundation budget formula, and it's now outdated, hampering districts' efforts to provide students with the quality education they deserve.

THE NEED

Foundation Budget Review Commission Identifies Shortfalls of Current System

In 2015, the bipartisan Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC) studied the funding formula. The FBRC found that health insurance and special education costs have far surpassed the assumptions built into the original formula. It also found that the formula drastically underestimates the resources necessary to meet the needs of low-income students and English language learners.¹

The FBRC recommended investing in our neediest students: low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. According to one estimate, if the FBRC recommendations are fully implemented, the Lowell Public Schools would receive an additional \$42 million annually in state education aid.² These are resources we desperately need to lower class sizes, increase social and academic supports, and enhance enrichment opportunities for our students.

THE URGENCY

Lawmakers Must Act Now

To date, the Legislature has failed to enact the recommendations of the FBRC. Yet, students, parents, educators, and community leaders know that our state and city face an urgent education funding crisis. That's why we've joined the Fund our Future Coalition to press lawmakers to pass a bill that would increase state funding for preK-12 schools by \$1 billion a year. The bill would also increase funding for public colleges and universities by \$500 million a year. We can't afford to wait any longer—lawmakers must act this year.

THE ASK

Make Your Voice Heard

Your voice matters and lawmakers need to hear from you. Here's how you can get involved in the Fund our Future campaign.

Ask lawmakers to fully implement the FBRC recommendations:

State Representatives

Rady Mom (617) 722-2030 or email him at rady.mom@mahouse.gov

David Nangle (617) 722-2520 or email him at david.nangle@mahouse.gov

Thomas Golden (617) 722-2263 or email him at thomas.golden@mahouse.gov

State Senator

Edward Kennedy (617) 722-1630 or email him at edward.kennedy@masenate.gov

¹ Full FBRC report at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/chapter70/FBRC-Report.docx>

² Estimate from the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. See Model 4 in *Building an Education System That Works for Everyone: Funding Reforms to Help All Our Children Thrive*, available at www.massbudget.org