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Lawmakers Earn Incomplete Grades for Work on Budget for Schools *Parents and School Officials Urge Lawmakers to Approve \$410 Million in New State Funding for Education*

POTTSTOWN, PA (July 23rd, 2015) – Montgomery County parents and school officials gave Pennsylvania lawmakers “incomplete” grades for their work on a new state budget. Public school superintendents, school board members and parents called on legislators to finish their assignments by voting for \$410 million in new investments in education and reforming the payment system for cyber and charter schools.

“Our students are on vacation after finishing their work for the 2014-2015 school year. Our elected officials are starting their vacations too, but they’ve yet to complete their last job of the year- pass a budget that puts our students first,” said Dr. Jeff Sparagana, Superintendent of the Pottstown School District. “We need our state legislators to finish the job by passing a budget that makes significant investments in our schools so our children can receive the great education they deserve.”

The Governor’s proposed budget calls for \$410 million in new state funding for education, including \$11 million for school districts in Montgomery County. The budget approved by the legislature and vetoed by the Governor called for \$100 million in new funding for education.

“We need a budget that makes a real investment in our children’s education, not more of the status quo,” said Kimberly Stilwell, a mother with four children in the Pottstown School District and a School Board Member. “Every year counts in a child’s education, that’s why our lawmakers need to make this budget count so our kids have all the tools they need to succeed in the classroom.”

The report card also points out that the state can save schools millions of dollars by implementing common-sense reforms in funding for cyber and charter schools. School districts currently pay the same tuition of cyber charter schools as they do for children attending brick-and-mortar charter schools even though cyber charters do not incur the same overhead costs as brick-and-mortar charters.

“Reforming charter school payments could save suburban school districts \$73 million,” said Roxy Barnebey, Associate Director of Education Policy for PCCY. “It’s a win for public schools and ensures charters receive a fair amount of funding to educate its students. It’s a no-brainer.”