

Ohio House Moves Away from Kasich's School Funding Plan

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When Governor John Kasich announced his new school-funding proposal, most superintendents around the state were **relieved** to hear no one would get a funding cut. Then there was a lot of cheering when Kasich said his new formula would mean rich schools got less and poor schools got more.

As it turned out, the Governor's description of his plan didn't fit with the **numbers**. Projections showed many poor districts would not get an increase, while many districts that are well off would see more in state aid – sometimes a lot more.

Now, the Republican controlled House has come up with its own **formula**.

“We think we have something pretty close to a workable, sustainable, defensible long term solution here,” House Finance Committee chair Ron Amstutz told reporters yesterday.

Under the Governor's plan less than a third of districts would have seen an increase in state funding. Under the House model, about half would get more; many of those are poor, rural districts. And some of those rich districts that would have seen increases under the Governor's plan would get a much smaller increase under the House plan.

[\[You can see the House's projections for each district here.\]](#)

While the Governor's plan allocated base funding based on home property values and how much a district can raise in local tax levies, the House allots a minimal dollar amount per student. Both plans would then give districts more for various categories, including special education students, gifted students, and students learning English.

The House also lowered the cap on how much of an increase in state aid districts can get each year, which accounts for some of those well-off districts getting smaller increases.

So are superintendents happy again?

“It's a case of short run, long run,” says Howard Fleeter, an economist with the Education Tax Policy Institute.

“In the short run there are certainly going to be some districts that are not as happy with the house’s version as the Governor’s version,” Fleeter says. “But I think that this type of approach works out better in the long run for all types of school districts.”

Steve Dyer, a former lawmaker now with the liberal think-tank Innovation Ohio likes this Republican revision.

“School funding should be relatively simple, it should figure out what kids need and then fund it.”

Dyer says the House plan does just that.

But this isn’t a done deal, and the Governor can still fight for his proposal. The budget still has to make its way through the House and Senate, and eventually back to the Governor’s desk.

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