

## HOUSE AND SENATE BUDGET OVERVIEW K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION

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- **Staffing standards** – House: reduces funding to establish pupil/teacher ratio of 25:1 in middle and high schools by eliminating state funding for secondary planning period.
- **At-risk funding** – House: reduces funding for at-risk, early intervention and preschool by block granting and distributing funds on a per pupil basis (ignores at-risk factor for which programs were designed).
- **Non personal support costs** – House and Senate: eliminate state funding for travel expenditures and lease and rental expenditures.
- **Education technology** – House and Senate reinstate technology notes to add funding eliminated in Kaine budget.
- **Support cap/rebenchmarking** – House and Senate budgets continue Kaine methodology to maintain the support cap; however, Senate budget language requires Department of Education to estimate future calculations with and without the cap thus maintaining process to show actual cost of rebenchmarking.
- **Teacher retirement** – House would decrease employer contribution rate for VRS from 10.49% to 4.24% in biennium thus “freeing up” funds to fill holes in school budgets; Senate decreases employer contribution rate for VRS to 4.84% and proposes a premium holiday for employer and employee share of group life.
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- **Special programs** – House eliminates funding for Project Discovery, Mentor Teaching programs and reduces funds for Project Graduation.
- **Staffing standards flexibility** – House allows pupil/teacher ratio increase by one student in K-7 and English grades 6-12; waives ratios for prevention, intervention and remediation

programs, ESL, gifted and CTE programs; waives ratios for new hires for instructional and support technology, librarians and guidance counselors. Senate allows increase in class size by one student or decrease FTE positions per 1000 for all minimum staffing ratios.

- **Testing** – Senate language requires Department of Education to make recommendations for eliminating tests not associated with NCLB by August 2010.
- **SUMMARY**
  - HOUSE BUDGET** includes recommendations that would result in permanent changes to the funding methodology and cuts over \$800 M to K-12.
  - SENATE BUDGET** includes language that envisions mostly temporary cuts to K-12 and cuts less from the overall public education budget than the House (over \$500M).
  - BOTH BUDGETS** draw down funds from VRS through lower rates to fund deficit creating delayed payback in the future.
  - VEA research** suggests that K-12 job losses using Senate budget figures could be as high as 14,648 and over 22,000 using the House budget.

There are many differences between the House and Senate budgets including major differences as to how and how much each funds K-12 public education. The 2010 Session is scheduled to adjourn on March 13. If the House and Senate conferees appointed from the Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees reach a budget compromise, legislators could leave Richmond on time.