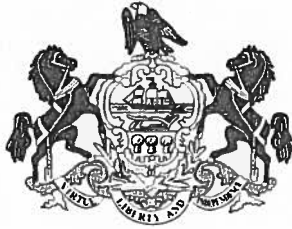


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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** All House Members  
**From:** Representative Bernie O'Neill *BT*  
**Date:** May 11, 2011  
**Subject:** Special Education Funding Formula

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I will be introducing legislation, along with Senator Patrick Brown, to address the current problems with the state systems for funding and accountability of special education students with disabilities in the Commonwealth. This legislation will put into place an equitable funding formula to distribute special education dollars.

As you know, state funding for special education is currently distributed based on an estimate that the average daily enrollment of each district includes 16% of students with special education needs. These funds can be partially augmented by the contingency fund for students with extraordinary expenses; however, there is nothing in place to assist schools that continually struggle with higher special education costs.

Specifically, the legislation provides an effective formula to distribute state funding for special education, without creating compulsory annual targets or limiting the discretion of the General Assembly; increases the accuracy of the special education formula by using three weights; establish a transparent processes to set the final formula weights through a legislative commission and subsequent regulation; streamline and strengthens school district accountability without imposing excess bureaucracy; and maintains the Contingency Fund and make it more accountable and transparent.

Over 30 organizations and counting are supportive of this essential funding change. We hope that you will join us in taking this practical and necessary step that the education of special education students is fairly funded.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Connie McClure in my Harrisburg office at 705-7170 or by e-mailing [cmccclure@pahousegop.com](mailto:cmccclure@pahousegop.com).

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.