

DATE: February 3, 2012
TO: Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Representative Eugene DePasquale
SUBJECT: **Priority Assistance Grant for Education (PAGE) program**

In the near future I plan on introducing the Priority Assistance Grant for Education (PAGE) program. The program targets funding to support research-based strategies and interventions proven to increase student achievement in our most academically or financially distressed school districts. Currently the bill is drafted to capture 18 school districts that would qualify for a grant under the program.

The PAGE investments for the school district would be guided by a school leadership team comprised of key stakeholders in the district. This team will determine which research proven strategy, or combination of strategies, will work best in their school district. In the case of a district that is in critical fiscal distress and may need to use the grant funds simply to continue operation of the district, the state would appoint a "monitor" to review the district's revenues and expenditures and to oversee the expenditure of the PAGE funds. Finally, the bill creates an Academic Excellence Commission comprised of school board members, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and college-level education faculty members to assist in the review of the program, the appointment of state monitors, the establishment of the clearinghouse of information and programs priority school districts can use to implement the PAGE program, and the development of the annual report from the Department of Education to the General Assembly to ensure that there is oversight that the grant is being used wisely.

The 18 targeted school districts include: Harrisburg City, Steelton-Highspire, York City, Lancaster, Lebanon, Clairton City, McKeesport Area, Sto-Rox, Woodland Hills, Aliquippa, Reading, Greater Johnstown, Chester-Upland, Erie City, Albert Gallatin Area, Allentown City, Farrell Area and Norristown Area school districts.

If you would like to join me in co-sponsoring this significant legislation, please contact Cynthia Clory at 717-787-7514 or cclory@pahouse.net.