

## Advocacy Newsbriefs...

### Legislation Q & A: State Aid Formulas

**You asked:** What are the state aid formulas used to determine aid to low wealth districts and why is there uneven distribution of aid to those districts?

State aid is distributed by a number of formulas, but the largest aid distribution formula is called a "foundation" formula. Adopted in 2007 in response to the Court of Appeals decision in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case, it was slated for a four-year phase-in, but the time line has been stretched to 2016 and many people question if it will ever truly be phased in. The "foundation" formula is supposed to ensure that every community that offers a minimum "sound basic education" can do so with the same tax effort, with state aid making up the difference between what a community raises in taxes on its own and the full cost of providing that sound basic education. Until the formula is fully phased in, however, inequities will continue to be dramatic, even more so with a tax cap. Now the legislature has added an aid reduction formula called a "Gap Elimination Adjustment," or GEA. Until the GEA goes away and the foundation formula is fully in effect, low wealth districts will continue to be treated differently than more affluent districts.

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### Environment Spotlight

#### Resources for Energy, Cost, Health and Environmentally Sustainable Learning Spaces and Education

On August 1st the U.S. Department of Education announced the Green Ribbon Schools award program, and guidelines for schools are now available. Through Green Ribbon Schools, the Department of Education will recognize schools that take exemplary steps toward achieving energy efficiencies and other sustainability measures; environmental health and student wellness; and environmental literacy. Interested parties and applicants can find more detailed information, including proposed nomination procedures and award criteria, at: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/department-education-starts-award-green-schools>

### Health and Wellness Information

#### Resources:

*Health, Fitness and Safety Government Sites with information for kids.*

[http://www.kids.gov/educators/ed\\_health.shtml](http://www.kids.gov/educators/ed_health.shtml)

*Sports-related brain injuries for US kids on the rise, CDC reports.*

<http://news.consumerreports.org/safety/2011/10/sports-related-concussions-for-us-kids-on-the-rise-cdc-reports.html>

*Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Guide: A Parent's Guide to the Legal Drugs Kids are Using and Abusing*

<http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/drug-guide-2.pdf>

**AlcoholEdu for Parents** is a course that helps parents have a more effective conversation with their teen regarding underage drinking by helping them to understand Social Host Liability; dispels common misperceptions about underage drinking; assists with strategies and techniques for monitoring and setting rules; gives guidance on what to do if your teen is experimenting; and gives expert advice for dealing with common situations.

To learn more about AlcoholEdu programs visit: <http://www.outsidetheclassroom.com/solutions/high-school/alcoholedu-for-high-school-parents.aspx>

### Obama Delivers Education Speech

President Barack Obama delivered his third annual back-to-school speech to high school students, but college students may also want to take notes from his message. "Just getting into college isn't enough," Obama said in his speech at Banneker High School. "You need to graduate."

To read more from the President's address, go to:

<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2011/09/28/obama-urges-college-students-to-graduate-in-back-to-school-speech/>



*"Advocacy is at the heart of PTA's mission and vision. Taking action provides both parents and PTA leaders with the resources to become more involved with their community at home and their community"*

