

2014 State Budget

Gov. Steve Beshear said his proposed budget for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 will improve the overall competitiveness of the Commonwealth, and the biggest winner in that budget is primary and secondary education. KSBA strongly supports the investments the governor made in education; what follows is an analysis of the proposed education spending.

The biggest investment in the governor's proposed budget is in K-12 education. The big-ticket item is SEEK, the basic funding formula for our classrooms. From 2000 to 2008, SEEK grew an average of 3.4 percent each year. But from 2008 to 2014, funding flat lined – even as enrollment expanded, costs increased and local support in some areas declined. Per-pupil spending effectively dropped; even though the annual SEEK allocation remained the same. Gov. Beshear has recommended investing \$189 million in SEEK over the next biennium. His budget also requires pay increases for all teachers and classified school personnel (2 percent the first year, 1 percent the second year).

The governor's proposed education investment also:

- Increases SEEK per-pupil amount to \$3,911 in FY 2014 and \$3,981 in FY 2015.
- Provides \$95.4 million over the biennium for textbooks, professional development, school safety and Extended School Services (restoring funds to near-2008 levels).
- Includes \$36 million over the biennium to expand preschool services to serve 5,125 additional 4-year-olds by increasing eligibility from 150 percent of the poverty level to 160 percent. This is a 22 percent increase in enrollment.
- Provides \$50 million for technology and school equipment upgrades, funded through General Fund-supported bonds.
- Adds \$100 million for school facilities construction to replace aging K-12 school buildings, through General Fund-supported bonds.

KSBA concerns:

- We all want teachers to receive an increase in salary, but it must be fully paid by the state. We need your assistance in describing the effect of the mandated salary increase to legislators.
- KSBA is asking for the House to retain the \$50 million in technology funding, but to first fund increased bandwidth before providing funds for devices.
- The state still needs to increase revenues to meet education funding needs. KSBA supports increasing revenue through comprehensive tax reform, and also supports placing gaming on the ballot.