

**Resolution Urging Increased State Funding
for School Construction and Renovation Projects
By the Board of Directors of the Bethlehem Area School District**

WHEREAS, the Public School Code assigns local school board directors the duty to provide students with suitable school buildings that are constructed, furnished, equipped, and maintained in a proper manner;

WHEREAS, the construction, renovation, and repair of school facilities to ensure that they meet the educational and safety needs students and staff can be costly for school districts;

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of providing appropriate school facilities, to help school districts pay for a portion of the costs of school construction and renovation, the Department of Education developed the Planning and Construction Workbook, known as PlanCon, a system through which the Commonwealth reimburses school districts, based on need, for a share of their construction costs and oversees and approves a school district's school construction project at each step of the construction process;

WHEREAS, the line item for the annual PlanCon reimbursements to school districts has been flat-funded at \$296 million since 2011-12 and has decreased by over \$30 million since 2009-10, resulting in a significant backlog of projects in the PlanCon pipeline and a significant delay in reimbursement;

WHEREAS, this significant delay in state PlanCon reimbursement has created financial hardship for many school districts and the imposition of the state moratorium has created uncertainty for school districts that are in dire need of critical renovations or repairs to fix leaking roofs, failing mechanical and electrical systems, crumbling infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and ADA compliance concerns;

WHEREAS, the Bethlehem Area School District authorized a project in February 2013 to build a new middle school to address the deteriorating facility conditions;

WHEREAS, the Bethlehem Area School District hired a project manager, awarded contracts for pre-design site investigations, and is currently developing Part A of the PlanCon process;

WHEREAS, a significant delay in receiving the state reimbursement at Part H of the PlanCon process will force the Bethlehem Area School District to borrow additional money;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Bethlehem Area School District School Board urges the General Assembly to uphold its responsibility to provide reimbursement to school districts engaging in needed school construction and renovation projects and to appropriately fund the program to ensure that school districts are reimbursed in a manner that is timely and predictable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bethlehem Area School District School Board encourages the General Assembly to examine and revise the current PlanCon process to save resources for both school districts and the Department of Education while still maintaining a state reimbursement program that ensures the structural and educational integrity of school facilities.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be posted on the district's website and submitted to the Governor of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education, as well as to the elected state senators and representatives of the Bethlehem Area School District in the General Assembly.

Adopted this 20th day of May 2013 at the Regular Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors for the Bethlehem Area School District.

Signed,



Michael E. Faccinnetto
School Board President


Stacy M. Gober
Board Secretary

(seal)