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[policymattersohio.org/district-survey-apr2013](http://policymattersohio.org/district-survey-apr2013)

## State funding cuts are shrinking Ohio schools

Seven of 10 responding districts cut budgets for this school year, survey finds

Ohio school districts report that they have reduced salaries and benefits, laid off staff, and cut back on classroom materials to deal with the loss of state funding since 2011, according to the results of a survey released today by Policy Matters Ohio.

Fully 70 percent of responding districts reported making cuts for the 2012-13 school year, with 90 percent expecting further cuts for the coming school year if the state doesn't increase funding, the survey found.

"Long-term investment in education is the best way to build opportunity for Ohioans," said Piet van Lier, education researcher at Policy Matters Ohio. "Instead, Ohio's cuts to school funding have forced schools to get rid of staff, reduce pay, cut materials and increase class sizes."

Of the 70 percent of responding districts that reported cuts for 2012-13:

- **Eighty-four percent** said they reduced or froze compensation;
- **Eighty-two percent** said they reduced staff;
- **Fifty-seven percent** cut materials, supplies, textbooks or equipment;
- **Forty-three percent** reported larger class sizes;
- **Twenty-three percent** had reduced course offerings;
- **Twenty-two percent** introduced pay-to-play for extracurricular activities, or reduced extracurricular offerings.

Policy Matters also analyzed the change in formula funding over 10 years, including an estimate of the impact on the proposed budget for fiscal years 2014-15, adjusted for inflation. Ohio's schools will end up in fiscal year 2015 about \$1.2 billion behind where they would have been if the state had merely kept up with inflation, in spite of increases proposed so far for the coming biennium.

"Neither Gov. Kasich nor the Ohio House have adequately addressed the needs of Ohio's schools in their budget proposals," said van Lier. "The Senate must now lead the way in crafting a stronger, more predictable funding system for the next two years and beyond."

### About the survey

In October 2012, Policy Matters asked the Ohio Association of School Business Officials to distribute a 15-question survey to its members about district finances. Forty-three percent – 261 of the state's K-12 districts – responded, representing districts from 82 Ohio counties. These districts enroll 646,358 students, about 40 percent of the students attending the state's K-12 district schools.

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*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute  
with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.*