



NJDOE News

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DOE Releases Final 2003-2004 Abbott Supplemental Aid Figures *Commissioner Librera Stresses Continued Commitment to Effective/Efficient Practices*

▶ [Supplemental Aid Chart](#)

Stressing the Department of Education's commitment to funding efficient and effective practices, as well as a need to expedite the *Abbott v. Burke* budget process, Commissioner of Education William L. Librera today announced final supplemental aid figures for Abbott districts for the 2003-2004 school year.

"The Department of Education (DOE) remains committed to funding programs that work — and work efficiently," Dr. Librera said. "Effective practices are those that improve student achievement; efficient practices are those that produce results without duplication, uncoordinated effort and unnecessary costs. We believe that the state aid figures we release today speak to both. We are confident that our Abbott districts will continue to focus on challenging students academically and we support such endeavors wholeheartedly."

In releasing the final supplemental aid numbers today, Commissioner Librera said the DOE is mindful of delays in the Abbott budget process, but emphasized that today's final aid determinations were sent to districts in order to expedite the budget process.

"We have followed precisely the schedule established by the Supreme Court on July 23," Commissioner Librera said. "School districts have exercised their rights to appeal, and while that is fair, it also extends the Abbott budget process. We release these final figures today because the Abbott budget process has been delayed enough and we want to help move this process along."

The total amount of Abbott supplemental aid for the 2003-2004 school year is approximately \$297 million. Included in this total is an additional \$88 million to fully fund the amount of supplemental aid needed for Abbott districts, given the fact that \$209 million was previously provided in the budget adopted by the State Legislature on June 30, 2003 for fiscal year 2004.

A breakdown of aid figures is attached.

The DOE sent final supplemental aid letters to 25 of the 30 Abbott districts today. Five — Bridgeton, Hoboken, Perth Amboy, Union City and West New York — did not ask for supplemental aid. The total amount of supplemental aid for the 25 districts totals approximately \$297 million. Of the 25 districts, four — Harrison, Irvington, Millville and Orange — did not receive supplemental aid.

In addition to releasing the final budget determinations for the 2003-2004 school year, the DOE also released preliminary budget figures to the 20 Abbott districts who previously appealed the Department's August preliminary supplemental aid calculation, as required by a Jan. 26 Appellate Court directive.

In releasing the numbers today, Commissioner Librera also reiterated comments made Wednesday regarding the DOE's appeal to the Supreme Court in lieu of the most recent Appellate Court decision on the Abbott case.

"We believe that the criteria and procedures for supplemental aid should be decided by the Supreme Court," Commissioner Librera said. "We maintain that programs that are deemed both 'effective' and 'efficient' are the benchmark for how much supplemental aid an Abbott district should receive. This is both sound educational and sound business practice."

The DOE is developing a working definition for effective and efficient practices, as directed by the Supreme Court to be completed by July 1 of this year. For more information, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.