



March 15, 2024

The Honorable Jason Nemes
702 Capital Ave
Annex Room 372
Frankfort, KY 40601

Majority Whip Nemes:

I am writing to commend the General Assembly on the progress you have made in the last two budget sessions on essential education funding outlined in the Prichard Committee's Big Bold Ask. The 2024-2026 Biennial Budget is the last in the 6-year ask we submitted to you in the fall of 2019. We urge you to complete the Big Bold Ask as the House and Senate go into conference committee in the days ahead.

In 2019, we came to you with a big idea: invest in early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary education in a way that proves measurable impact for the commonwealth and adds \$1 billion dollars over 6 years. Since the 2020 state budget cycle, your leadership secured an additional \$465 million in education funding across both K-12 and postsecondary education. You've delivered in each budget cycle— and now it's time to cross the finish line.

The following items remain unfulfilled from the Big Bold Ask. We seek your support in finishing strong by funding the following items in the 2024 state budget:

- Provide access to quality, affordable child care so that parents enter, remain in, and fully contribute to the workforce and their children receive a strong start in their education.
 - Particularly, investments in items A-D on page 97 of the Senate budget proposal provide a solid footing for child care. Item D, the Innovations in Early Childhood Education Delivery Fund, moves the sector toward an improved business model.
- Secure full funding for school transportation, thereby freeing local dollars for additional investments in education.
- Increase teacher quality by investing in teacher professional development opportunities such as needed teacher training aligned to the Read to Succeed Act, Numeracy Counts Act, and other instructional quality initiatives.
- Grow access to higher education by investing in institutional and performance-based funding for public 4-year and 2-year institutions.



The Prichard Committee

Building a Groundswell for a Big Bold Future

This chart demonstrates the funding gap outlined in the Big Bold Ask compared to the House and Senate budget proposals:

FY 2026 HOUSE AND SENATE BUDGET PLANS AND THE BIG BOLD ASK (ADDED INVESTMENT IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS COMPARED TO FY 2020 FUNDING)			
	Big Bold Ask	House Version of HB 6	Senate Version of HB 6
Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	\$251	\$52	\$47
Preschool	\$80	\$0	\$0
All-Day Kindergarten	\$140	\$140	\$140
School Transportation	\$162	\$184	\$144
Fund for Teaching Excellence	\$58	\$12	\$12
Public Universities and KCTCS (Including Performance Funding)	\$311	\$315	\$421
College Assistance Program Grants	\$30	\$90	\$106
Total	\$1,031	\$793	\$869

In this prichardcommittee.org table, the numbers for FY 2026 increases reflect funding in the HB 6 House and Senate Committee Substitutes, available at legislature.ky.gov

We commend the initial steps taken and now look to the General Assembly to see these commitments through. It's time to cross the finish line, making a big, bold future a reality for all Kentuckians, with education at the core.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Blom
President & CEO
The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence