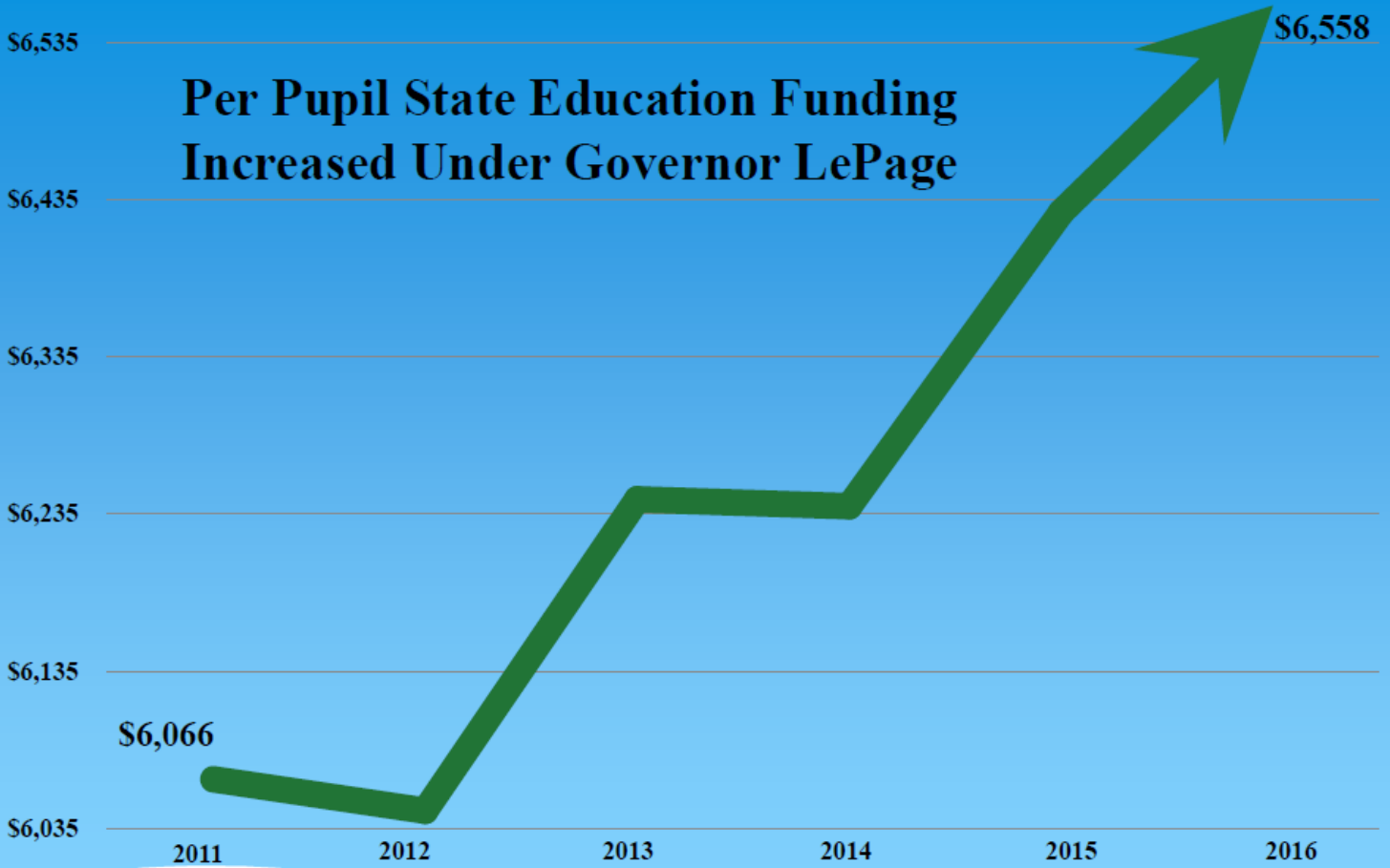


Per Pupil State Education Funding Increased Under Governor LePage



Source: Maine Department of Education



Adjusted for inflation, state education spending per pupil has increased 8.1% since 2011, from \$6,066 in 2011 to \$6,558 in 2016. Under the Governor's 2017-18 budget proposal, even if enrollment stays level, the per pupil cost would further increase to \$6,585.

BACKGROUND

Under Governor Paul LePage, state funding for education has increased, even as the state has 10,000 fewer students than it did when the Governor took office. As a result, in inflation-adjusted dollars, state spending per pupil has risen from \$6,066 in 2011 to \$6,558 in 2016—an increase of 8.1 percent. Under the Governor's 2017-18 budget proposal, even if student enrollment remained level, state per pupil spending would rise further, to \$6,585. At the same time, Maine is only putting 59 cents of every dollar it spends on education in the classroom. This is below the national average of 61 cents per dollar.

Reforms, however, are already underway. As the Governor noted in this week's address, "The state is now paying upfront costs of regionalization through its new program called EMBRACE. Maine Department of Education (DOE) Commissioner Bob Hasson is introducing a plan that will let communities create 9 to 12 regional centers. Services such as payroll, transportation, nutrition and professional development can be provided regionally at a lower cost." DOE has also offered \$3 million in grants for schools to create efficiencies. In just six weeks, DOE received 21 applications to deliver nearly \$40 million in savings over the next five years. So far, DOE has awarded over \$2.6 million, which is going to save about \$17 million over the next five years.

By reducing administrative costs and making Maine's education system more efficient, these reforms proposed and now being implemented by the Administration can go a long way toward achieving the Governor's goal of putting 70 cents of every education dollar the state spends in the classroom.