

August 2004

# School Aid

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From the NYS Assembly • Sheldon Silver, Speaker  
Steve Sanders • Chair, Education Committee

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## Legislature's budget invests in education

### Aid ensures a quality education for New York's children

The Assembly has been fighting for an education funding formula in this year's budget that would provide relief to New York schools. *The governor's proposed budget this year would have cut school aid by \$369 million* – ignoring inflation, rising enrollments and the need to help students meet higher standards – as well as hurt essential initiatives such as:

- School construction projects
- BOCES
- Disabled students services
- Transportation aid
- Teacher training programs

His budget would have meant lower educational standards for our children – and even fewer classrooms. The Assembly successfully fought these cuts, and instead worked to increase aid.

*The Assembly and Senate have approved a budget to fund New York schools by an additional \$740.4 million this year – the fourth highest increase in state history.* The new budget will increase operating aid nearly \$120 million, a 1.75 percent minimum increase for every school district in the state.

Overall, New York City schools will receive nearly \$300 million more – which is \$328 million more than the governor proposed for our schools. In fact, Mayor Bloomberg has guaranteed that under this plan, no classroom will see cuts.

### Legislature fights governor's shortsighted cuts

The governor's budget proposal made damaging and shortsighted cuts to education aid. The Assembly has fought these cuts and increased education funding to important programs, including:

- Extraordinary Needs Aid: \$265.3 million increase over last year to help serve high-

needs pupils

- Building Aid: \$38.8 million over governor's proposal and \$170 million over last year
- BOCES Aid: \$45.4 million over governor's proposal and \$22.7 million over last year
- Transportation Aid: \$79 million more over last year, and \$63.1 million increase over governor's proposal

The budget maintains funding for programs that improve the learning environment in our schools, including:

- Universal Pre-K: \$201.9 million
- Class Size Reduction: \$138.3 million
- Minor Maintenance and Repair Aid: \$50 million
- Full-Day Kindergarten: \$3.7 million
- Extended Day/School Violence Prevention: \$30.2 million

The Legislature's budget also restores the governor's cuts to: BOCES; Transportation Aid; Extended Day/School Violence Prevention; Primary Mental Health Project (PMHP); Schools Under Registration Review (SURR); Transferring Success; Education of Children of Migrant Workers; School Health Demonstration; Comprehensive School Health Demonstration; Workplace Literacy; Apprenticeship Training; and teacher programs such as Teacher Support Aid, Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers, and the Teacher Mentor-Intern Program.

### **Assembly continues commitment to education**

These are necessary investments in education that will help provide a better education for our students and protect already scarce resources. Our plan can bring relief to New York's schools, but not without the governor's support. The Assembly and Senate are urging the governor to sign this agreement into law immediately so schools can prepare for the school year ahead.

The governor and Senate also need to get serious about Campaign for Fiscal Equity reform by getting behind the Assembly's plan, which is the only plan that meets all the requirements of the court's ruling by:

- Establishing the cost of a sound, basic education
- Reforming the funding formula
- Ensuring that every school has sufficient resources
- Enhancing accountability

The Assembly will continue to fight for this plan so that all children will have access to a good education.

For more information about the Legislature's budget and school aid funding for your district, visit: <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/comm/WAM/20040809/>.

For a comparison of the governor's school aid plan to the Legislature's budget for individual school districts, see: <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/comm/WAM/20040809a/>.

## Assembly CFE plan invests in New York's children — and future

The Assembly is the only one who has passed a comprehensive school financing reform plan that complies with the requirements of the court's decision in the CFE case. Unlike the governor and Senate, the Assembly's CFE plan provides real details and real numbers.

See the plan for yourself on the Assembly Web site at:  
<http://assembly.state.ny.us/comm/WAM/20040616/>. For funding levels by school district, visit:  
<http://assembly.state.ny.us/Press/20040602a/schoolaid.html>.

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