

*Focus on***Education**

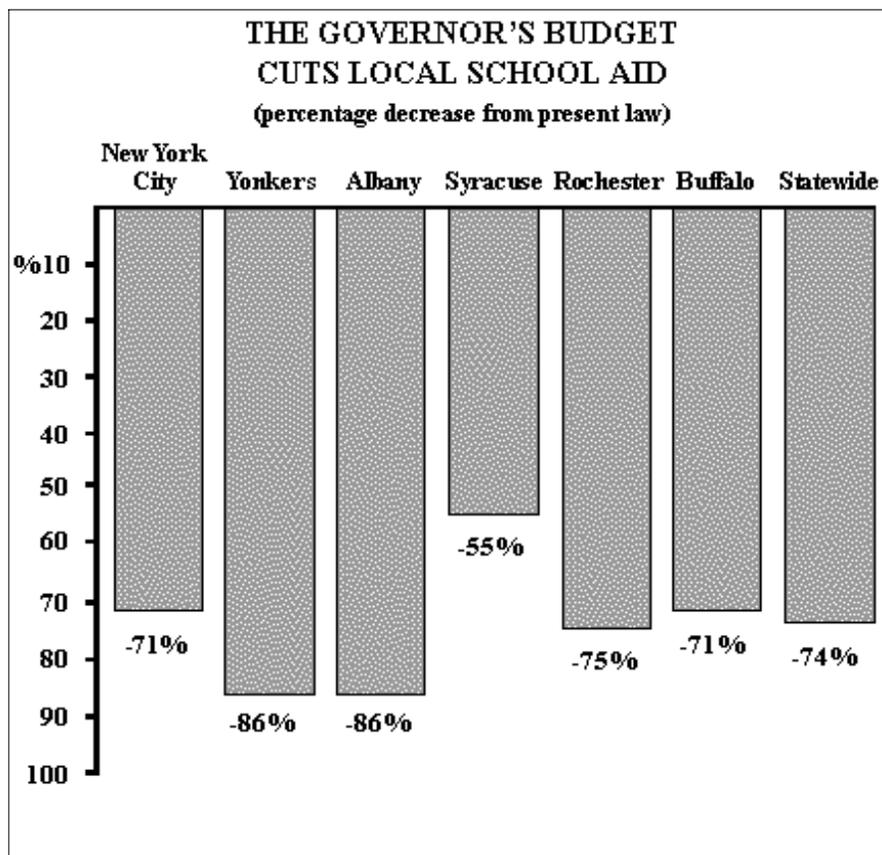
January 29, 2001

From the NYS Assembly □ Sheldon Silver, Speaker □ Steven Sanders, Chair, Education Committee

**The Governor's budget cuts education aid by \$1.1 billion from what our schools would receive**

In what has sadly become an annual event, the Governor's 2001 budget proposal jeopardizes the quality of education our children will receive and places additional burdens on local taxpayers.

The Governor's so-called school funding "reform" actually cuts state education aid by \$1.1 billion from current law and fails to address inequities in the school aid formula. This, at a time when local districts are struggling to raise educational standards and prepare our kids for the challenges of the 21st Century.



*Note: For a complete listing of the Governor's proposed school aid cuts, click below.*

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**Educators Agree:**  
Governor's budget fails to meet the needs of our schoolchildren

*"The proposed aid increase is insufficient to help all students meet the new standards."*  
□ Timothy G. Kremer  
NYS School Boards Assn.

*"For me, flexibility should not be a trade-off for reduced funding."*  
□ Georgia Ascianto,  
Conference of Big 5 School Districts

*"The proposed education budget is disappointing, but eminently fixable."*  
□ New York State United Teachers

*"The Governor dropped the ball. This (3% increase) is nothing. It's insulting."*  
□ Ronald Ross,  
Mount Vernon Superintendent

*"I'm very disappointed...in*

*terms of just increases in aids, he has not begun to address the needs of Utica."*  
□ Daniel Lowengard,  
Utica Superintendent

## The Governor's budget:

- cuts \$660 million from the innovative and effective LADDER program — reneging on a critical Assembly initiative that helps schools raise academic standards by reducing class sizes, improving teacher training, establishing universal pre-kindergarten, providing full-day kindergarten programs and modernizing computer technology;
- cuts \$314 million in building aid — undercutting the state's commitment to provide a safe and adequate learning environment for every child;
- cuts \$147 million from education programs for disabled children, funding to help schools improve standards, minor maintenance, and other important programs the Governor combines into a single — but dramatically reduced — "Flex Aid" plan;
- cuts \$52.5 million in Teacher Support Aid — and eliminates Teacher Centers and the Teacher Mentor program; and
- cuts \$27 million for BOCES — jeopardizing local school budgets and burdening property taxpayers by cutting funds that reimburse schools for expenses already paid.

## The Assembly will continue fighting for quality, safe schools, higher educational standards and relief for local taxpayers

Recently, the State Supreme Court ruled that New York's school aid formula is unconstitutional. At the heart of the court ruling is the need to ensure that all children receive an education that will help them succeed in the 21st Century.

Regardless of how anyone feels about the court ruling, the fact remains that the Governor's budget doesn't come close to providing any school district in this state — from Montauk to Niagara Falls — with the tools they need to help our children meet the challenges ahead.

The Assembly Majority has always made education a top priority. Last year, we defeated the Governor's \$885 million school aid cut, and dramatically increased education aid nearly \$1.1 billion. It was the fourth straight year the Assembly made an historic investment in our schoolchildren and our future prosperity.

That's what the Assembly has been fighting for all along. And that's what we'll continue fighting for this year.

*Additional information is available in the publication, **Statistical and Narrative Summary of the Executive Budget (the Yellow Book)**.*

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