

April 2003



# Education

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

## Governor attempts to mask history of lackluster support for schools

Every year the governor plays the same game: proposing a budget that shortchanges our schools, and then taking credit for the Assembly's hard-fought restorations.

This year is no different. In fact, he had the gall to claim "no governor ... is more committed or has a better record in providing resources for education than I do." As usual, the governor's rhetoric doesn't match the reality of his policies.

Since the governor took office in 1995, the Assembly has fought for an additional \$2.8 billion that the governor tried to deny our schools. Not surprisingly, this year's proposal represents his lowest level of school support since he first took office. In fact, if the governor's budget were enacted, the state's share of education funding would plummet from 42 percent to 37.7 percent. Consequently, the average statewide school property tax would have to increase by nearly 20 percent for schools to maintain their current levels of service.

## Telling the truth about the governor's education record

The governor's record on education speaks much louder than his rhetoric.



## Experts say...

"The problem with this Executive Budget is that it gets us off the path of success. We need to get back on the path that works, and the prize is a genuine opportunity for the good life for all children."

– *Richard P. Mills,*  
*State Education*  
*Commissioner*

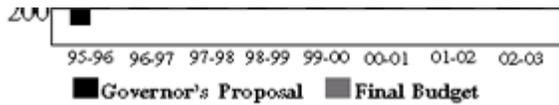
"A retreat from this state's historic commitment to support public education will produce devastating consequences for local taxpayers and children."

– *Timothy G.*  
*Kremer, Executive*  
*Director of New*  
*York State School*  
*Boards Association*

"As a parent of a young child in the Buffalo Public Schools, I am devastated by Governor George Pataki's proposal to cut more than \$1 billion in state aid. Our schools are already at an acute financial deficit. Depriving them of fundamental resources robs our children of the opportunity for success."

– *Amy Cappelli,*  
*Buffalo parent*

"Kids come first, and I'm not



Source: NYS Assembly Ways and Means Committee

## Less funding means larger class sizes and lost opportunities for kids

After eight years of trying to shortchange our schools, this year the governor is mounting an all out assault. In fact, his budget slashes education funding by an astronomical \$1.4 billion. Since 1998, the Assembly's early education program has helped schools reduce class sizes, improve teacher training, establish universal pre-kindergarten, provide full-day kindergarten and after school programs, and modernize computer technology.

According to a recent report from New York State United Teachers – some 20,000 educators are expected to lose their jobs as districts struggle to weather the governor's budget storm. This means there will be even fewer teachers to instruct our already over-crowded classrooms. Teachers are the catalyst helping to shape our children's successes not just in academics – but far, far beyond. Now that so many schools are reaching higher standards, the last thing our children need is to have their growth stunted by the governor's budget games.

## Learning from past mistakes

It's clear the governor hasn't learned from his past – and now he's determined to repeat it. As we've done the last eight years, the Assembly will fight the governor's assault on our schools and ensure they have the resources they need to prepare our students for an increasingly competitive global economy. The Assembly is committed to crafting a budget that's right for New York – one that provides our children with the education they need to reach their full potential.

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sure that's where the governor has his mind right now."

- Harry Kilfoile,  
 Superintendent,  
 Canastota School  
 District

"The state aid cuts jeopardize the very foundation and quality of our schools. The future of our students and our community are threatened."

- Dr. Evelyn Blose  
 Holman,  
 Superintendent, Bay  
 Shore School  
 District