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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Long Island Delegation to the NYS Assembly
Long Island Delegation to the NYS Senate

FROM: Julie Davis Lutz, Ph.D., Chairperson
Suffolk County School Superintendents Association
Legislative Committee

DATE: February 20, 2020

RE: 10-Point Executive Budget Proposal Analysis

As you continue to work on your one house budgets, we write to share with you what we have identified as the impact on Long Island schools of the Executive budget proposal. As per the attached SCSSA analysis, you will find that our analysis indicates that in this proposal, state operating aid to Long Island schools will increase by \$76.8 million (2.3%). However, as has been the case for many years, Long Island schools continue to educate a higher percentage of students (17%) than the percent of aid they are slated to receive (12%).

When we analyze the Executive's proposal to consolidate 10 categorical (*Academic Enhancement, BOCES, Charter School Transitional, Hardware and Technology, High Tax, Library materials, Special Services, Software, Supplemental Excess Cost and Textbooks*) expense-based aids into the operating fund, we see that the remaining Foundation aid to Long Island will increase by \$58.5 million, or 2.8% over last year. The Governor has also proposed an increase of \$50 million (for a total of \$300 million) to the required set aside for community schools initiatives in targeted school districts, tying strings to the money that is allocated. He also placed additional requirements/caps on the two crucial aid categories of Transportation and Building aid.

In his Foundation Aid proposal, 21 school districts on Long Island will fall in the "save harmless" category, receiving an increase of .25%, and 11 Long Island public school districts will be receiving less in state aid than they received in 2008-09.

We thank you for your ongoing support of public education on Long Island, and look forward to continued work with you. Please feel free to contact any member of our Board of Directors or Legislative Committee to discuss this analysis or our advocacy program.

JDL/km

Attachment

c: Suffolk County School Superintendents Association Members



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10-Point Executive Budget Analysis 2020-21

1. The total state operating fund for education in New York State will increase by \$826 million (3.0%), from \$27.7 billion to \$28.5 billion. State aid to Long Island public school districts will increase by \$76.8 million (2.3%).
2. Foundation Aid, which is proposed to include 10 other categorical expense-based aids (*Academic Enhancement, BOCES, Charter School Transitional, Computer Hardware, Computer Software, High Tax, Library Materials, Special Services, Supplemental Public Excess Cost, and Textbooks*) will increase statewide by \$504 million (2.5%). Foundation Aid to Long Island public school districts will increase by \$67.8 million (2.7%). An additional \$200 million in Targeted High-Need District Foundation Aid will be distributed throughout the state.
3. The Executive Budget proposes consolidating these 10 expense-based aids into Foundation Aid, which would then increase annually based on inflation and public school district enrollment. Although this is purported to assist with directing more expense-based aid to high-need districts, public school districts would no longer be reimbursed for actual expenses which vary from year-to-year based on need. When Foundation Aid is disaggregated from other categorical aids, the statewide increase is \$494 million (2.7% over last year), the Long Island increase is \$58.5 million (2.8% over last year). The other categories comprise \$10.1 million statewide and \$9.3 million on Long Island.
4. Significant changes have been proposed in the Executive Budget to two aid categories that were not rolled into Foundation Aid: Building and Transportation Aid. Both are critical to a school district's ability to function and maintain its facilities. New tiers and restrictions were proposed for Building aid, as well as a 5% reduction in the minimum aid ratio. Transportation aid is proposed to be tied to enrollment and inflation; neither is related to the fixed costs of Transportation.
5. Fifty million dollars (\$50 million) of the \$504 million statewide increase in Foundation Aid is set aside to target districts with schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement due to their academic performance, as well as school districts with a large and/or growing population of English language learners. In total, this aid category increased to \$300 million, of which 33 Long Island public school districts will receive \$33 million.
6. Even with this state aid increase, 11 (9.1%) of Long Island public school districts will receive less in state aid (without building aid) than was received in 2008-09.
7. Long Island public school districts educate 17% of the state's students, yet will receive only 12% of the aid. This is a difference of over \$1 billion for Long Island public school districts. Our state aid per pupil amount is 27.2% less than the rest of the state (\$6,554 vs. \$9,007).
8. Long Island has 44 low-wealth public school districts (CWR <1.0) which enroll 52% (224,721) of the students in the region. These 44 public school districts will together receive an increase of \$57.4 million (3.2%) in Foundation Aid. Disaggregated from other categorical expense-based aids, the increase is \$51.6 million (3.3%).
9. Long Island's 31 high-wealth public school districts (CWR >2.0) will receive only 3.3% of all state aid to the region, while enrolling 11.7% (50,663) of the students. Thirteen of these public school districts will receive less than 5% of their revenues from the state, while 17 others will receive between 5% and 10%. Only one of the 31 high-wealth public school districts will receive more than 10% from the state.
10. The Governor has proposed a minimum Foundation Aid "save harmless" increase of .25% for school districts. The Executive proposal would place 21 school districts on Long Island on "save harmless."