



c/o Eastern Suffolk BOCES, 201 Sunrise Highway, Patchogue, New York 11772

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Congressman Lee Zeldin
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Senator Chuck Schumer

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

DATE: April 22, 2020

RE: Pubic School District Aid

Public schools across New York State and Long Island are accomplishing the nearly impossible challenge of turning traditional educational instruction to remote learning, instantaneously, and without sufficient training or resources. Additionally, we are providing meals to our students and childcare to the children of our essential workers. These are uncertain times for all, and schools have stepped up to provide. By coming together (even as we are physically distanced), schools are doing what we always do: taking care of our communities and leading by example. Teachers and leaders have been creative, innovative, and dedicated.

Beyond attending to the health and safety of our students, staff and families during this time, we are also thinking about the future. We are extremely concerned about the impact on public education resulting from the expected fiscal catastrophe the COVID-19 crisis has created.

We thank you for your work enacting the CARES Act, which has enabled New York State to develop and pass a budget which freezes support of public schools. We are grateful that, thus far, budgets have not been cut. However, not only do we anticipate increased costs to help students recover lost ground in learning, but we know additional supports will be needed due to the emotional trauma many have suffered during this time.

The New York State budget deficit has been estimated at between \$10 billion and \$15 billion. In managing the budget, the Governor has indicated that education will be impacted by this deficit, with the potential for mid-fiscal year cuts to school aid without some support from the federal government.

We write to ask you to support the bipartisan request of the National Governor's Association for \$500 billion in stabilization funding to state governments to offset the revenue losses from this public health crisis.

New York, as you know, is the epicenter of this pandemic, and our state costs of response at this time are well above any other state. We understand there are negotiations underway for a fourth COVID-19 relief package. We applaud these efforts as well, and urge a significant influx of aid to the New York State government and school districts. An earmark of one \$1 billion dollars directly to schools, to be appropriated via an act of the Legislature and Governor, will compensate for the loss from state aid.

We greatly appreciate your support of our state and school during this trying time.

JDL/de
c: SCSSA Members