



Dr. Robert Glass
Superintendent of Schools
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To: Honorable Members of the New York State Legislature
From: Robert Glass, Ph.D., Superintendent, Bedford Central School District
Date: February 1, 2024
Re: Testimony for Joint Legislative Hearing: Elementary & Secondary Education

It is regard for student welfare that compels me to address today a deep concern relative to the proposed Foundation Aid Formula for fiscal year 2024-25.

The elimination of the Save Harmless provision, combined with changes to wealth and pupil factors, have resulted in a *Transition Adjustment* that has, without notice, reduced Foundation Aid to the Bedford Central School District by approximately \$1.6 million.

Our district was already facing strong budgetary headwinds resulting from a recent period of high inflation and rapidly increasing healthcare costs that are outpacing tax cap limitations and making it difficult to reach agreement at the bargaining table. The proposed foundation Aid formula is only adding to our burden.

The net impacts to Bedford's 2024-25 budget are expected to be:

- Rising class sizes and trimming of electives
- Position reductions and likely layoffs across all units resulting in loss of program oversight and integrity
- Deferred facilities maintenance
- Projected use of \$2.5 million in Fund Balance reserves (net after the above reductions) to maintain operations in 2024-25; a non-sustainable practice

As you know, every locality has a story to tell; one that goes beyond the numbers. Bedford CSD is geographically large, and while we have high wealth we also have high high need populations requiring mandated services:

- 37% Free-Reduced lunch
- 18% English Language Learners
- 16% Students With Disabilities

The mission of schools is ever expanding; the proposed Foundation Aid reduction leaves us much less able to provide the student supports we feel are necessary to serve the needs of our generous taxpayers.

Thank you for your service and for graciously receiving this testimony. If I can be of assistance or provide more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at rglass5100@bcisdny.org or 914-758-2171.