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PETITION TO GOVERNOR ANDREW CUOMO

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We, the undersigned, are concerned that your proposed FY 2015-16 New York State Budget severely perpetuates educational inequality on a host of levels. We are concerned that your short-sided, poison pill approach will exacerbate the current challenges in our educational system. Therefore, we strongly urge you to stand up for all children and families, all teachers, principals and support staff by:

(1) ***Establishing Educational Equality***: Provide a \$2.2 billion increase in school aid that is targeted to a cohort of initiatives that will ensure the success of all students, such as—

- ◆ Investment in our poorest school districts, those that are still waiting for the resources promised as part of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) case, and
- ◆ Expansion of Pre-K statewide.

(2) ***Don't Hold Our Schools Hostage***: Divest your conditional-only promise of increased educational funding contingent upon total acceptance of your sweeping and unproven educational reform package that infringes on local control of educational policy. Reforms should be considered after careful deliberation and in consultation and partnership with parents and teachers; not by means of a shotgun marriage.

(3) ***Ending "Separate and Unequal" Public Education***: It is time to finally hold "public" charter schools accountable—not blindly expand their reach into our communities. The charter school cap must not be lifted and geographical restrictions should remain in place. Fidelity to the original law must be enforced; charter schools were meant to serve as laboratories of best practices and share them, not take over public school buildings, rent free. Robust anti-creaming provisions must be included in the budget; it is not enough just to let charter schools self-report data periodically while they cherry-pick the best and brightest while slamming the door on students who need special attention.

To sign this petition electronically, please visit our website at: <http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/bill-perkins>

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