



Joint Senate Hearing: To examine the distribution of the Foundation Aid formula as it relates to pupil and district needs

Hosted by: Senate Committee on Education and Committee on Budget & Revenues

Submitted by: The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators

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The following testimony is submitted by Mark Cannizzaro, President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA). CSA is the labor union representing approximately 6,100 in service and 10,000 retired Principals, Assistant Principals, Education Administrators and Supervisors working in New York City public schools and five charter schools. CSA is also the collective bargaining unit for 200 Early Childhood Directors and Assistant Directors who work in city-subsidized Early Childhood Education Centers.

CSA appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony and is grateful for the work of the Senate Committee on Education and Committee on Budget and Revenues over the past several weeks. We hope that the discussions which took place with stakeholders from across the state will help to improve New York's support for public education in FY2020-21.

Foundation Aid

CSA believes that the current level of funding fails to provide adequate supports to public schools. We believe the state must commit to fully funding the Foundation Aid formula and ensure that low-wealth school districts are supported adequately.

New York is significantly behind the full phase-in of Foundation Aid. CSA believes that the Foundation Aid should be fully funded within three (3) years. We also respectfully request that any increase in Foundation Aid for New York City schools be tied to a directive that these funds are for the sole purpose of increasing *Fair Student Funding* percentages for schools that are currently operating below 100% of New York City's *Fair Student Funding* formula.

While we appreciate the discussion regarding changes to the formula that may better identify students in poverty, reallocating existing dollars is insufficient. What is needed most is an increase in State Funding so that the city is able to fully fund its current *needs-based* formula giving schools the ability to adequately implement programs for the students they serve.

Community Schools

CSA supports the Community Schools model. There are now 215 Community Schools in New York City, the largest Community School system in the nation. Students must come to school ready to learn and our Community schools support them in doing so. Community schools identify societal, health, and educational issues our students face and offer the services needed to address them. As a result, we are confident that these schools will continue to show and sustain concrete results and benefit our students significantly.

Funds for these critical and potentially life changing programs should be provided in addition to, not instead of, increases to foundation aid. We know that Community Schools have transformed school buildings into community hubs that deliver academic, health, mental health, nutrition and counseling services to students and their families. These are smart investments proven to improve student success and achievement.

Conclusion

Our students deserve the best; we must provide them with the programs, services and supports necessary to prepare them for not only college and careers, but also for life.

New York State will be successful in educating our students only when we take the time to discuss, plan, implement and provide the necessary resources to our students. During the upcoming budget negotiations, we thank our legislators for their deep commitment to our students and respectfully urge them to continue their steadfast support for our school communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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