



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## Hinchey Applauds Free School Meals and Pre-K Expansion for North East CSD

MICHELLE HINCHEY August 9, 2023



North East Uses State Funds Championed by Hinchey to Deliver Free School Meals to All Students

UPK Funding Increase Secured by Hinchey Will Support Second Pre-K Class at North East CSD

**NORTH EAST, NY** – Senator Michelle Hinchey today announced that North East (Webutuck) Central School District will be providing free breakfast and lunch to all of its students as well as expanding its pre-kindergarten program thanks to new state funding Hinchey fought for

and secured in the FY'24 State Budget. As the sponsor of Senate Bill [S1678A](#), which seeks to make school meals free for all New York students, Hinchey championed and won a \$135 million statewide investment that made it possible for North East to provide meals at no cost across all local schools starting in September. Hinchey was also successful in securing a total of \$185,002 in local pre-K funding – an increase of \$108,000 over previous years, which will fund a second pre-K program and support a total of 36 students across two classes.

**Senator Michelle Hinchey said,** “I was proud to lead the effort in the Senate to secure a pivotal expansion of free school meals and full-day four-year-old pre-K, and it’s incredible to see the local impact on school districts like North East that are taking advantage of this new funding. Both investments will pay dividends in keeping our kids healthy and setting them up for success while helping working families save money in the process. I applaud North East for electing to utilize this transformative state funding that will benefit the whole community.”

**North East CSD Superintendent Raymond Castellani said,** “This program is so important for ALL students and families of the Webutuck Central School District! Ensuring that ALL students are afforded a healthy meal is vital in the learning process! Regardless of socioeconomic status, students will now have access to Free breakfast and lunch! In addition, the additional funding for our Universal PreK program will allow the District to provide additional early intervention resources to students helping them to be better prepared when entering kindergarten. We cannot thank Senator Hinchey and the rest of our representatives enough for this most important legislation!”

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