



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senator Ritchie Meets on Rural School Funding

PATTY RITCHIE November 29, 2011

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School Leaders Making the Case for More State Aid

State Senator Patty Ritchie today met with South Jefferson Central School Superintendent Jamie A. Moesel to discuss school aid funding for rural schools in next year's New York State Budget.

The meeting was the latest in a series that Senator Ritchie has held with school administrators, school boards, teachers and parents concerning possible changes to the state's school funding formula.

"Since taking office in January, I've been working to ensure that Albany treats our schools in Central and Northern New York more fairly," said Senator Ritchie. "I will continue to work with school leaders, teachers and parents to make sure our children get the education they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world."

"Superintendent Moesel, and other school leaders across Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence County are doing more with less, but we need to make sure that we are getting our fair share.

In addition to securing \$4 million in additional state funds for schools in the 48th Senate District as part of this year's budget, Senator Ritchie also has been working to help schools cut costs so more taxpayer money reaches the classroom and students it's intended to help.

Her efforts this year have included:

- Voting to restore \$230 million in education funding cuts, including \$4 million in additional funds for Senate District 48 schools. The additional funding was specifically included to benefit rural, Upstate schools who were hurt by the traditional funding formula at the Senate's insistence;
- Voting to enact an historic, two-year state school aid budget, a reform that helps school administrators better plan their own budgets for challenging fiscal times, like those they are facing today;
- Voting to eliminate \$127 million in unnecessary mandates on school districts and local governments to eliminate waste and protect local taxpayers. In addition, Senator Ritchie has named a nine-member working group of local officials from Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties to identify additional mandates that can be scaled back or eliminated. Superintendent Moesel serves on the Senator's working group;
- Arranged a meeting in Watertown earlier this year between local school leaders and the chair of the Senate Education Committee, so he could learn firsthand about the challenges facing rural schools;
- Currently is reviewing legislation to change the school aid distribution formula to benefit rural schools;