



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

# **Senator Kennedy Urges Cheektowaga School Boards to Approve Plans to Examine Cost-Savings, Consolidation Opportunities**

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January 29, 2013

ISSUE:

- [Education](#)

***About 150 residents attended information meeting Monday on regional funding fairness and consolidations.***

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Cheektowaga, is urging the school boards of the four Cheektowaga districts – Cheektowaga Central, Cheektowaga-Sloan, Cleveland Hill and Maryvale – to approve plans to begin the process of studying potential cost savings through mergers, consolidations or sharing of services. Each individual board will consider a resolution to jointly pursue state grant funding for a consolidation study at their upcoming meetings.

About 150 local residents attended a presentation Monday night to discuss regional funding equity and the potential effects of consolidations or mergers. Since taking office in the Senate, Kennedy has been a fierce advocate for regional funding fairness. He intends to keep fighting for equitable allocations of state resources and working to improve educational opportunities for local students.

“Residents of the Town of Cheektowaga are united behind efforts to ensure regional equity and fairness. I am proud to stand with you in this fight to protect and improve the educational opportunities available to our children,” Kennedy said. “We believe every student in New York State deserves access to a high-quality education, whether that student lives in Cheektowaga or Westchester, Buffalo or New York City or any place else. The zip code of your home should not determine the educational opportunities that are available to your child.

“School districts throughout Western New York have long been working to reduce costs and improve high-quality programming for our children. It’s going to take continued innovative thinking and hard work to further streamline operations, protect educational opportunities for kids and keep costs down for taxpayers.

“In Cheektowaga, an important decision now awaits the approval of our school boards. I urge each of the school boards and every individual board member to vote to approve the plans to begin the process of exploring cost-savings opportunities through potential consolidations of services, programs and schools. However you feel about the issue of school consolidation, we can all agree that the leaders of our schools must keep an open mind and take steps to improve efficiencies and ensure our schools remain solvent.

“I applaud Dr. Rick Timbs of the Statewide School Finance Consortium for his ongoing advocacy on behalf of communities like ours, and I want to commend the hundreds of Cheektowaga residents who are engaged in this mission to improve our schools. As our school boards embark on these next steps, I can assure you that I will continue working hard for our schools and fighting for regional fairness in the State Capitol.”

The school boards of the Cheektowaga Central, Cheektowaga-Sloan, Cleveland Hill and Maryvale districts will soon be taking up resolutions to approve their districts’ involvement in the process of applying for state funds to finance a thorough examination of cost-savings through potential consolidations or mergers. If the

boards approve the resolutions, the districts will seek funds through the Local Government Efficiency Grant program – which is administered by the NYS Department of State.

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*Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate's 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and most of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.*