



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Statement on 2015-16 Education Aid

JAMES L. SEWARD March 31, 2015

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ALBANY, 03/31/15 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today commented on the education aid portion of the 2015-16 state budget:

“This year, more than any other in recent memory, the education aid discussion drifted toward other issues. My focus remained steadfast – to deliver state dollars to our local schools to make sure every student will have access to a quality education.”

As a member of the joint budget conference committee on education Senator Seward worked to boost school funding by more than \$1.4 billion. Seward also made eliminating the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) a leading priority. While the assembly did not place the same emphasis on the GEA elimination, the final state budget plan reflects Seward’s work and dramatically reduces the GEA with the expectation that any remaining traces will be fully erased next year.

“In regard to the governor’s education reforms, my senate colleagues and I have soundly rejected the governor’s unfair evaluation proposals and put the issue into the hands of professionals at the state Education Department (NYSED). Along with focusing on a reduction in testing NYSED will accept input from teachers and parents, who best understand student needs, and forward their recommendations to the Board of Regents for final approval which is consistent with current law.

“I fought to ensure local schools will receive their fair share of state aid this year, and are better able to plan for future years as well. At the same time, I have communicated on a regular basis with school administrators, teachers, and parents and worked to make sure their concerns regarding

testing and related issues were addressed. The vast majority of our students and teachers are at a high standard, and I want to see that continue. While a compromise, I believe the overall education package delivers for students, schools and property taxpayers, and is a major step forward to ensuring a bright future for children who attend our local schools,” Seward concluded.

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2015-16 education aid runs for schools in Senator Seward's district (and neighboring schools within the represented counties) are attached.