



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

State Officials Meet with Brighton Families to Advocate for Increased School Funding

JEREMY COONEY March 22, 2021

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(Brighton, NY) - Today, state and town officials hosted a virtual roundtable event to discuss the need for an increase in education funding for local schools. Parent groups and over 25 attendees participated in the online event and Q&A.

Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-56) and Assemblymember Sarah Clark (D-138) have introduced complementary bills in both the Senate and Assembly to increase Foundation Aid to school

districts and create a more equitable floor amount each school district will receive. In Monroe County, 16 of the 18 schools are underfunded, this includes the Brighton Central School District which only receives 49% of its allocated state funding each year. It's the lowest in Monroe County and one of the lowest in upstate.

Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Clark

"Our public schools have been historically underfunded for too long. Raising the school aid floor through this legislation is the first step to ensuring funding equity across New York State," **said Senator Cooney**. "This funding helps ensure that schools across Monroe County have access to resources needed to compete in today's competitive academic environment."

"Budgets are a reflection of our values. Education funding is critically important and we know districts across Monroe County, like Brighton, are not receiving their fair share of aid," **said Assemblymember Sarah Clark**. "This year the Assembly One House budget has increased Foundation Aid by \$1.4 billion and fully phases in Foundation Aid over three years. This is a great first step, but I will continue to push for FULL Foundation Aid funding as quickly as possible. We owe it to our children to invest in their future."

Brighton Supervisor Bill Moehle

"Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Clark are the champions we need for the students in Monroe County and Brighton," said Brighton Supervisor Bill Moehle. "Our community deserves its fair share of funding so that we can fix the underlying issues that years of limited access to resources have caused. We look forward to continuing to work with Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Clark on behalf of our families."

"It was such a pleasure to be a part of a dynamic and engaging discussion regarding state aid, fair funding for all schools and the unique challenges that Brighton has faced due to significant underfunding over several years," **said Kevin McGowan, Superintendent of Schools**

Brighton CSD. "We are so grateful for the Fight for Brighton from our community members, Supervisor Moehle and our representatives in the legislature. The legislation being vigorously advanced by Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Clark will be a game changer as we continue to focus on restoring programs and building opportunities for all children and families."

Fight for Brighton and Greater Rochester Parent-Leader Training Institute (PLTI)

The parent group Fight for Brighton and Greater Rochester Parent-Leader Training Institute (PLTI) took part in the event and shared historical data on the years of underfunding.

"Fight for Brighton and Greater Rochester PLTI are encouraged to see our state legislators working together to establish protections for the state's lowest funded districts, including Brighton," said Dr. Claire McLauchin, Co-Chair for Fight for Brighton. "We thank Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Clark for being responsive to the concerns of parents in underfunded school districts."

"It is time for meaningful change in education funding by the state," **said Maranne McDade Clay, Co-Chair for Fight for Brighton.** "We applaud the efforts of our state officials who are working to ensure that we have the resources needed for our families and students."

The Senate and the Assembly are in the final stages of the annual budget process with a April 1 deadline.

"As schools reopen and we work to recover from COVID19, this school funding will be crucial in creating an academic and social-emotional setting where students can thrive," **Senator Cooney concluded.**