



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

NYS Lawmakers Deliver \$46.1 Million Increase in State Funding Over Last Year For Yonkers Public Schools

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 12, 2021

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(Yonkers, NY) - On Monday, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins along with State lawmakers who represent Yonkers, Senator and Education Committee Chair Shelley B. Mayer and Assemblymembers Nader J. Sayegh and Gary Pretlow joined Yonkers school and city officials to announce the New York State budget's historic investment in education, and the ending of the decades long battle to fully fund foundation aid.

From the auditorium of the William Boyce Thompson School in Yonkers, Yonkers Schools Superintendent Edwin Quezada and Yonkers City Mayor Mike Spono celebrated the Yonkers State Delegation for their commitment to putting students first by ensuring New York meets its constitutional obligation to fund public schools based on need.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, “Our students, parents, educators, and unions shouldn’t have had to become lobbyists for foundation aid to deliver the fiscal equity that our schools need and deserve. The Senate Majority fought to pass a budget with a commitment to fully fund foundation aid so funding goes where it is needed most. We also delivered transformational increases in education funding so federal dollars were not in place of State education funding. I thank everyone who advocated for these victories.”

Senator and Education Committee Chair, Shelley B. Mayer said, "Today is an historic day for the Yonkers Public Schools and schools throughout New York State. With the leadership of Majority Leader Senator Stewart-Cousins and our Assembly colleagues, we have finally succeeded in ensuring New York State meets its constitutional obligation to fund its public schools based on need, not politics. I know that for the children of Yonkers, this day has been a long time coming. I thank all the forces that contributed to this victory - my elected colleagues, the parents of the YCPTAs, Dr. Quezada, Rev. Lopez and the Yonkers School Board, our teachers, administrators and staff. I am proud of the work that led to this historic moment - our children deserve this."

Assemblyman Gary Pretlow said, “Due to the pandemic, our students have had a rough transition from in-person to remote learning. Yonkers Public Schools have been hit significantly by this transition, but the future looks bright for our students. I am proud that the Yonkers school system receives essential funding in the 2021-2022 state budget. The process of reintegrating students into in-person learning will be much smoother.”

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins negotiated a budget, which invests \$29.5 billion in New York's schools and increases foundation aid by \$1.4 billion, the largest ever seen. Foundation aid is meant to help bring equity to New York's schools and support schools with the greatest needs, like supporting students experiencing poverty, students who are English Language Learners, and students who receive free and reduced lunch. For years though, like other high needs school districts, Yonkers did not receive their fair share of foundation aid through the foundation aid formula.

However, through the Yonkers State Delegation's efforts and years of advocacy by parents, students, educators, and unions, Yonkers will now receive a significant investment of \$21.9 million, bringing total foundation aid from \$213.7 million last year to \$235.6 million this year, a 10.3 percent increase. Lawmakers also advocated for about \$14 million in state aid to go towards infrastructure improvements. Now, total school aid in Yonkers is expected to increase about \$35.7 million, bringing it from \$309.9 million last year to \$345.6 million this year. The federal government stepped in to help schools avoid disastrous cuts last year, allowing the State to allocate about \$10.4 million in federal aid to Yonkers bringing total State school funding to \$46.1 million, an increase of 15.4 percent over last year. Yonkers Public Schools are also expected to receive about \$106 million in federal funding, which means for the year, the district is expected to receive \$141.7 million.