



**TESTIMONY OF CHRISTOPHER GOEKEN  
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 ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING STATIONS OF NEW YORK  
 BEFORE THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON EDUCATION  
 FEBRUARY 11, 2020**

Chair Krueger, Chair Weinstein, Chair Mayer, Chair Benedetto, and members of this joint committee, thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of New York’s public television stations. The Association for Public Broadcasting Stations of New York represents the nine public television stations across New York State. APBS requests an appropriation of \$14.75M in this year’s budget, an increase of \$250,000 over the FY2020 final enacted budget.

New York’s public television stations are a unique private-public partnership that continues to keep its promise—to provide high-quality, trusted content that educates, inspires, and informs in ways that enrich the lives of New Yorkers. New York’s nine locally-controlled nonprofit public television stations reach almost every New Yorker and uniquely serve their communities throughout the state—rural, urban, and everywhere in between. This is because public television stations were founded on a mission for universal service and community-based accountability.

While many of you would be familiar with national PBS shows like *American Experience* or *PBS NewsHour*, you might not know about all the local programming produced across New York State. Our stations create programming that matters to their local region and the state, whether it is our news magazine *Mountain Lakes Journal* in Plattsburgh and the Adirondacks; *Long Island Business Report* from WLIW; public affairs shows like *Metrofocus* in New York City, Watertown’s *WPBS Now*, Syracuse’s *Connect NY* or *New York Now* in Albany; medical series *Second Opinion* from Rochester; Binghamton’s series on poverty in the Southern Tier *Chasing the Dream*, and Buffalo’s *Making Buffalo Home* about refugees in Western New York. Recently, public television stations partnered with the New York State Office of Alcohol Addiction and Substance Abuse for “New York’s Opioid Crisis”, a week of special programming on television and radio to shed light on this issue and connect New Yorkers with needed

resources. We also bring New York veterans together to discuss their adjustment back to civilian life in our continuing series *Veterans Coming Home*.

PBS is New York's largest classroom. Two out of three kids below the age of eight watch PBS, and 62% of parents say that PBS is the most educational media for children. The American Academy of Pediatrics has said that PBS content is a great source for quality educational programming.<sup>1</sup> In fact, PBS content can increase student performance. A 2015 study found that students using PBS Kids *Odd Squad Learning Math* increased their test scores by 14%.<sup>2</sup> Children who watched *Super Why* scored 46% higher on standardized tests than those who did not.<sup>3</sup> Children who watched and engaged with *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood* demonstrated greater empathy, recognized emotions better, and felt more confident in social interactions than their peers who did not.<sup>4</sup>

PBS Kids attracts a higher proportion of viewers from African-American, Hispanic, and low-income homes compared to the overall population. Families in low-income communities and rural areas rely on our free, over-the-air broadcasts for quality educational programming. Online, PBS Kids attracts a higher proportion of users from Asian-American and African-American homes compared with the overall population. Our local stations know that educational content is paramount to our mission. With our recently-launched free 24/7 PBS Kids channel, virtually all New Yorkers have access to this educational resource with a digital television antenna.

But New York's largest classroom isn't just on the air, we are literally in classrooms across the state. *PBS LearningMedia* is a free tool for New York's teachers to use educational digital content in the classroom. With over 29,000 videos, 2,700 interactive digital tools, and 8,800 lesson plans, PBS LearningMedia makes the classroom come alive. Teachers today know that their students are tech-savvy so PBS LearningMedia makes it easy for them to use videos, interactive resources, and more in the classroom. All of this free content lets teachers use their tablets, laptops, and digital projectors with compelling, standards-aligned content.

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<sup>1</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics Media Guidelines 10/16/2016

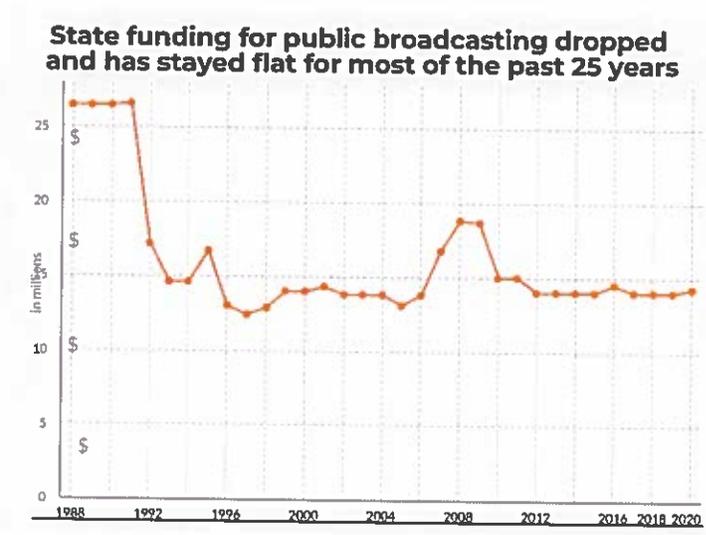
<sup>2</sup> Odd Squad Learning Math with PBS KIDS Transmedia Content at School and Home, WestEd, 2015

<sup>3</sup> Linebarger, Wainwright, and McMenamin, "Summative Evaluation of Super Why!", Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Rassmussen, Shafer, et.al., "Relation between active mediation, exposure to Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, and US preschoolers' social and emotional development," *Journal of Children & Media*, Vol. 10, Iss. 4, 2016

PBS LearningMedia is plug and play for a teacher—they can search for a lesson plan on the website, use our digital content and tools, and even allow students to access this content for free at home. PBS LearningMedia is a walled garden where children can safely view digital content away from YouTube or other sites with inappropriate or poor-quality content. All for free.

PBS LearningMedia provides content from known and trusted PBS shows like *PBS Newshour*, *Nature*, *Curious George*, *Nova*, and *Ken Burns*. We screen this content, select short video clips, create lesson plans, hand-outs, and make it easy for teachers to use them. Forty-two percent of New York’s public school teachers use PBS LearningMedia—and more sign-up every day.



However, in our conversations with teachers, we have heard that they need even more 21st Century learning resources for the classroom. We continue to create new content on New York State civics and history, social studies, media literacy, and more.

More and more schools are now ready for these 21st Century learning resources from PBS LearningMedia with the state’s

recent efforts under the \$2B Smart Schools Bond Act to provide broadband and laptops. Our next step is to make sure New York’s teachers are the best trained in the country on using this technology in the classroom. That’s why we are proposing to train 10,000 teachers a year in using PBS LearningMedia in all STEM courses, history, social studies, and more.

With the increase in funds we are requesting this year, we can reach these goals. Thank you again for this opportunity to share our views on state support for public broadcasting in this year’s Executive Budget Proposal.

*The Association of Public Broadcasting Stations of New York represents nine public television stations across the state, WNET (NYC), WLIW (Long Island), WCNY (Syracuse), WXXI (Rochester), WMHT (Albany), WNED (Buffalo), WPBS (Watertown), WSKG (Binghamton), and Mountain Lake PBS (Plattsburgh).*