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LOSING TRACTION? NEW STATE BUDGET PROVIDES SMALLEST AID INCREASE IN SIX YEARS, IMPOSES NEW ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS

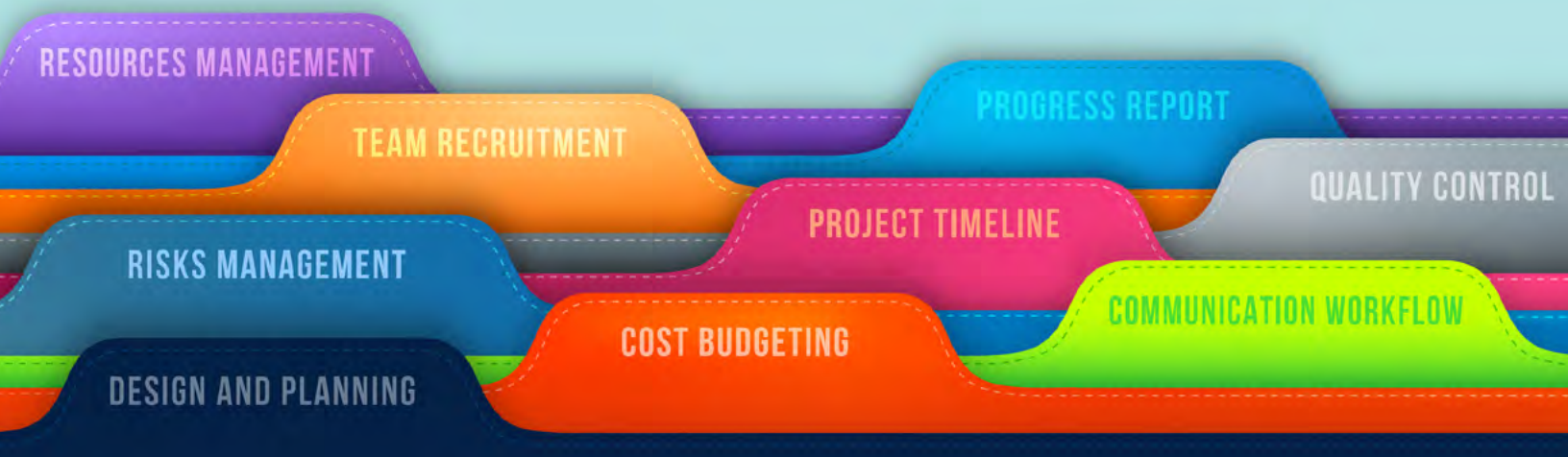
By Robert Lowry, Jr., Deputy Director, The Council

With some last-minute drama over state regulation of yeshivas (private Jewish schools providing both secular and religious instruction), the Assembly, Senate and Governor Andrew Cuomo resolved the 2018-19 state budget before the start of the fiscal year, with both legislative chambers completing passage of all necessary legislation in the early hours of March 31st.

It was the first literally on-time budget in three years but the eighth more or less timely budget of Governor Cuomo's tenure. Still, on balance, the product was disappointing for schools. Measured in dollars, the \$911 million increase in School Aid was the lowest in six years; in percentage terms, it was the lowest since the last statewide reduction in aid, in 2011-12. Some positive initiatives included in one or both legislative budget plans were omitted from the final product. The enacted budget modifies and expands a Governor's proposal for greater state oversight of local school budgets to cover all districts.

Funding Overview

The School Aid increase is comprised of an \$859 million (3.4 percent) increase in aids appearing on runs and a net \$52 million increase in other aids. The increase in other aids is driven almost entirely by new competitive grant funding totaling \$50 million proposed by the Governor and modified by the Legislature. The total includes increases of \$15 million for prekindergarten, \$10 million for after-school programs, \$9 million for early college high schools, and smaller sums for computer science, access to advanced classes, and other initiatives. CONT / 2



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