



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 26, 2019

CONTACT: Robert Lowry • 518-449-1063 or 518-435-5996 (cell)
E-mail: boblowry@nyscoss.org

The New York State Council of School Superintendents Releases Report about Governor’s Budget for Public School Funding

ALBANY – The New York State Council of School Superintendents today released its [summary and analysis](#) of Governor Cuomo’s 2019-20 Executive Budget recommendations relating to funding public schools.

Council Deputy Director Robert Lowry said, “The report is our effort to provide a comprehensive review of how the proposed state budget will affect the choices that school districts will need to present their voters in the spring.”

Some key observations and recommendations from The Council’s report:

- The Budget recommends a \$338 million increase in Foundation Aid; at that rate more than 10 years would be required to fully phase-in the permanent law Foundation Aid formula. Enactment of the current proposal would leave the state \$3.78 billion behind in phasing-in that formula.
- The distribution of the proposed Foundation Aid increase is generally progressive, giving larger percentage aid increases to lower wealth, higher poverty districts. But a fifth of the state’s school districts would remain more than 25 percent below their full phase-in amounts; these districts are predominantly average wealth or below and their increases would average less than 1 percent.
- Based on past trends, the proposal to consolidate 11 aid categories, including Transportation and BOCES Aids, into a new “Services Aid” formula will almost certainly result in most districts receiving less help from the state when the formula would go into effect (in 2020-21). The proposed growth factor in the formula is unlikely to keep pace with exceptional costs districts cannot control, such as the need to pay higher fuel costs or to transport more children to charter schools or out-of-district special education programs. The impact on BOCES shared services could be especially damaging for poor districts which rely upon them to provide students with opportunities they could not offer alone.
- The Budget proposes to enable the state to require districts to reallocate funds to schools deemed “under-funded” and “high-need” relative to other schools within the district. But not every funding disparity is an inequity – insignificant differences in teacher experience could produce large spending differences among schools, for example. The proposal would

supersede judgments by local educators and elected school boards with a clumsy state formula likely to require pointless reallocations, aggravate some parents, and leave no one satisfied.

- The school property tax cap should not be made permanent without change, including allowing districts to exclude the local share of BOCES capital costs from the cap, as they can exclude the local share of district capital costs, and to realize revenue outside the cap from tax base growth generating payments in lieu of taxes, as they can now do with growth generating property tax revenue. These are commonsense adjustments, not major changes. They would provide similar treatment for similar considerations – two forms of capital expenditures and two forms of tax base growth.

The report was distributed to state legislators earlier this week. **A copy of the report is available upon request or our on our [website](#).**

#

The New York State Council of School Superintendents is a professional and advocacy organization with over a century of service to school superintendents and assistant superintendents in New York State. The Council provides more than 800 members with professional development opportunities, publications and personal support while advocating for public education and the superintendency.