



# MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

## *BOCES as Regional Leaders*

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### ***The New York State Council of School Superintendents SUPPORTS efforts to promote BOCES as regional leaders, and urges attention***

BOCES is a vehicle for local efficiency. Since 1948, BOCES across the state have partnered with schools to create economies of scale. Most recently, Governor Cuomo's Education Reform Commission have recommended BOCES as a means to improve cooperation, quality and cost effectiveness. The 37 BOCES across New York state are uniquely positioned to create efficiencies throughout the state and beyond, by lowering state costs in a variety of ways.

Enable BOCES as regional leaders in promoting efficiency, thereby saving taxpayers, the state and school districts scarce resources to support greater student programming.

### **Change BOCES lease term to up to 20 years S.1190 (Flanagan)/A.7197 (Paulin)**

BOCES are currently limited to lease terms for facilities of no more than 10 years, making it difficult for BOCES to secure updated facilities at competitive prices. In basic terms, it is less expensive to enter into a lease that maintains costs for 20 years as opposed to two 10-year leases. The current limit on lease terms reduces BOCES' competitive advantage, and actually increases costs to the state.

To help save taxpayer money, we ask that state leaders authorize BOCES to enter into leases for up to 20 years, with the option to purchase the property at the end of the lease.

### **Allow BOCES to operate regional high schools S.3778 (Young)/A.6165 (Nolan) S.4795 (Young)**

These bills would authorize school districts to enter into a contract to establish and operate regional high schools.

We support the establishment of regional high schools and will continue to work to ensure that all districts, especially rural and poor districts, have the necessary tools and resources to provide a meaningful and demanding high school program for all students.

However, it is imperative that BOCES are allowed to operate regional high schools. S.3778/A.6165 should be amended to allow BOCES to operate regional high schools. S.4795 already allows BOCES to operate regional high schools, while S.3778/A.6165 does not.

Especially now with the advent of the tax cap and cap on State Aid, efforts such as regional high schools and real meaningful mandate relief are imperative for the survival of our educational system. Most importantly, regional high schools will allow greater educational opportunities and a more fulfilling high school experience.

**Exclude BOCES capital expenses from the tax levy cap  
S.2800 (Ball)/A.3137 (Galef)**

While capital expenses for school districts are not included under the tax levy cap, BOCES capital expenses are included. Essentially, this renders BOCES unable to pursue a capital project, which has the potential to significantly restrict the ability of BOCES to provide critical programs and services in the future.

We ask that state leaders exclude BOCES capital expenses from the tax levy cap to help ensure that students in BOCES programs continue to be educated in facilities that have the same quality and resources typically associated with a school environment.

**Authorizes BOCES to establish repair reserve funds  
S.5137 (Flanagan)/A.6435 (Jaffee)**

BOCES, just like school districts and other municipal entities, must maintain property and buildings for the safety and security of their students and staff.

This legislation would allow BOCES to establish a repair reserve fund, which is already allowed for municipalities and school districts, and would correct this oversight.