



New Mandates!



Robert J. Reidy, Jr.
Executive Director
rreidy@nyscoss.org

Robert N. Lowry, Jr.
Deputy Director for
Advocacy, Research and
Communications
boblownry@nyscoss.org
518.435.5996

Kyle M. Belokopitsky, Esq.
Assistant Director for
Government Relations
kyle@nyscoss.org
518.817.3017

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President
Putnam-No. Westchester
BOCES
200 Boces Drive
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

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The New York State Council of School Superintendents asks that the legislature pass NO NEW MANDATES

This year's enacted budget provided significant help to many school districts facing impossible choices. Unfortunately, many districts will still be receiving less state aid than in 2008-09 and must cope with difficult fiscal circumstances and cuts to student programming and services.

Moving forward, mandate relief must be an integral aspect of all legislative discussions and is necessary for the continued stability and health of our educational system. Local governments need immediate help with currently imposed unfunded mandates.

Equally important, as we work to achieve significant, real mandate relief, ***the state must not impose new mandates upon schools and municipalities.***

During the end of session, legislation is often considered which would impact schools in a variety of ways – both programmatically and fiscally. We ask that during these discussions, no legislation is passed which would impose new mandates, either educationally or fiscally, upon schools.

Any new unfunded mandate imposed on schools means something else must be cut, at the cost of diminishing opportunities for students.

We also support the following mandate relief proposals, along with many others:

- **Mandate relief for schools** – Pass S.5557 (Flanagan)/A.7060 (Nolan) which would enact comprehensive mandate relief for school districts and BOCES.
- **Moratorium on new unfunded mandates:** The Governor, Legislators, and Board of Regents should all pledge to neither propose nor adopt any new unfunded mandates.
- **Limit future unfunded mandates:** Pass S.1176 (Martins), which establishes limitations to restrict the adoption of new state laws imposing additional unfunded mandates on schools local governments.
- **Annual report card on mandates:** The State Comptroller should report each year on all mandates, funded and unfunded, enacted and repealed, either by law or regulation.

- **Unfunded Mandate Reform Act:** Pass S.4094 (O'Brien)/A.3106 (Morelle), the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act. This legislation authorizes the Governor to submit an unfunded mandate reform plan to the Legislature each year, to be voted upon without amendment within 30 days of its submission.
- **Comprehensive special education reform:** Enact comprehensive special education reform, including, but not limited to, aligning New York's mandates to other states and the federal requirements, convening a blue ribbon commission to study and report on special education reform, allowing more class size flexibility, shifting the burden of proof back to parents for impartial hearings, analyzing out of district and out of state private placements, and amending the two year statute of limitations on requests for impartial hearings.
- **Promote development of Regional High Schools:** Authorize two or more school districts or BOCES to form a regional high school in order to sustain the capacity provide students with an adequate and comprehensive high school education.
- **Remove obstacles for BOCES**
Authorize BOCES to enter into agreements with other local government entities for non-instructional services. Grant BOCES the authority to contract for telecommunications equipment on behalf of their component school districts. Authorize BOCES to enter into leases for up to 20 years, with an option to purchase the subject property at intervals provided in such a lease.
- **Seat time flexibility:** Abolish minimum seat time requirements and allow adjustments for student need and competency.
- **Minimum health insurance contributions:** Establish minimum health insurance contributions for employees and retirees.
- **Leave for medical screening screenings:** Eliminate the allowance of additional time off for teachers, over and above sick and vacation time, for these screenings. Teachers traditional enjoy summer months off and should be encouraged to schedule these necessary screenings during this plentiful time period.
- **Mandated mailings by electronic mail:** Allow school budget mailings and other mandated mailings to be sent by electronic mail for parents and taxpayers who opt out of traditional paper mailings.
- **Allow for regional transportation:** Allow districts to jointly, or through BOCES, further collaborate on transportation of students and amend section 305(14) of the education law to authorize the collaboration of transportation contracts, even if using a contractor.
- **Amend Triborough:** Amend the Triborough Law by freezing salary step increases when a contract expires, while keeping all other benefits and base salary in place.
- **Amend Wicks and Reform Scaffold Law:** Reduce the cost of construction on public/private projects, by amending Wicks Law and enacting scaffold reform.