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NYS Council of School Superintendents Report: *Resurrecting the Promise of Foundation Aid*

Albany, NY – The New York State Council of School Superintendents today released [a report on the state of Foundation Aid](#), the primary general purpose operating aid formula supporting public schools in New York State.

The 2021-22 enacted state budget increases Foundation Aid by \$1.4 billion (7.6%) and commits to fully funding the formula within three years—by 2023-24.

Council Deputy Director Robert Lowry said, “Almost from the beginning back in 2007, we have described Foundation Aid as an underappreciated achievement in public policy—it generally delivered the greatest aid per pupil to the neediest districts and promised more transparency in state funding. We are grateful to Senators and Assemblymembers for the commitment they have demonstrated to funding Foundation Aid.”

The report analyzes trends in progress toward full funding for different groupings of districts. For example, 42% of districts are on “save-harmless”—fully funded now. Eighty-three percent of this save-harmless aid supports average and high need school districts, many serving low-wealth rural communities. On the other hand, 17% of districts are further from full-funding now than when the formula began. Typically, these districts have received relatively strong Foundation Aid increases, but enrollment growth and other demographic changes have caused their full funding targets to increase even more.

The report also notes that the state budget formula used to allocate some federal COVID-relief aid may indicate possible future directions for revising Foundation Aid. The formula for federal aid distribution updates and restructures an index used to account for regional cost differences and introduces new measures of student poverty.

Lowry, the report’s principal author said, “The state’s major revenue sources can be hard to predict and that creates uncertainty for school funding. But the determination the legislature has shown in funding the formula is impressive and that gives us hope that the promise of Foundation Aid will finally be fulfilled.”

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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 875 members with numerous professional development opportunities, publications and personal services while advocating for public education and the superintendency.