

The Post-Journal

School Business Officers Release Aid Proposal

ALBANY — The New York State Association of School Business Officials recently released its 2017-18 state school aid proposal calling for a \$1.9 billion increase in formula and categorical aids.

The plan also seeks targeted increases for Career and Technical Education, school nutrition, prior year adjustments and strategic resource planning for an additional \$157 million in state support.

The proposal is based on a three-year phase in of outstanding Foundation Aid and other enhancements to the school aid formula recommended by NYSASBO's Foundation Aid Task Force Study, which can be found on www.nysasbo.org.

Nine years ago, New York state's Foundation Aid formula was enacted into law to provide New York's children the sound basic education mandated by our State constitution. However, due to the 2008 recession, planned funding increases are unrealized and schools have not received over \$3.8 billion in anticipated Foundation Aid payments. The New York State Association of School Business Officials proposal lays out a three-year plan for New York to phase in a fully funded Foundation Aid formula to provide educational opportunities to all New York's students.

CTE programs establish connections between education and job opportunities, offering students additional educational paths while reducing high school dropout rates. Aid limits for CTE programs have remained the same for two decades. The New York State Association of School Business Officials recommends these aid limits be adjusted to reflect

increases in program costs, ensuring greater student access to appropriate educational options.

The New York State Association of School Business Officials' proposal includes recommendations to increase school lunch reimbursement rates that have remained unchanged for 40 years at just under 6 cents. It is difficult for school districts to purchase the best food for students at this restrictive rate. NYSASBO supports a three-year phase in of the New York State School Nutrition Association's "Drive for 25" initiative to reimburse school nutrition programs an additional 20 cents per meal when 25 percent of their purchases are made from in-state vendors. This policy would better position school districts to provide nutritious, affordable lunches to students.

"With the complete phase out of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) in 2016, New York State took an important first step toward providing adequate school funding. This year, we are calling on the State to finish what they started last year by fully funding the Foundation Aid formula. Together with timely adjustments to several reimbursement rates, a fully funded Foundation Aid formula will ensure that our students receive an adequate and equitable education at a cost taxpayers can afford," stated Michael Borges, The New York State Association of School Business Officials executive director.

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