

Talking Points: State Aid and the Proposed Executive Budget

- We are very concerned that school districts would see a reduction of state aid averaging 5% under the Governor's proposed budget.
- The loss of funding will likely be greatest in low wealth/high need districts that are more dependent on state aid and serve our most vulnerable populations.
- Proposed reductions are too great to be absorbed in a single year without causing long term damage to educational program and staffing.
- We question the proposal to save \$13 million by modifying Early Intervention programs by requiring evidence based criteria to determine service eligibility, permitting paraprofessionals to provide certain services and increasing reimbursement from commercial insurers. Even more disconcerting is the introduction of a sliding scale based on income that would, for the first time, charge parents between \$42 and \$540 for each child enrolled in the program.
- We are very concerned about the delay in foundation aid and stretching its phase-in from the original four years to seven and now to a proposed ten years, as our schools fall further and further behind.
- Over the past several years, school districts, of all entities, have demonstrated remarkable ingenuity and efforts to reduce spending.
- We acknowledge that Governor Paterson and our state Legislators approach the 2010-11 budget year faced with unprecedented and continuing economic challenge.
- New York State's economic future depends on protecting the investment our state has made in providing the learning opportunities that today's youth will need to succeed in tomorrow's world.
- Education is an enterprise that can only flourish where each achievement builds on those that precede it and where continuity is the key to achievement of long term objectives.
- Each child passes through the education process once. Where opportunity is diminished or denied at any level, the impact will be felt forever.