



New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Education

Shannon Tahoe, Interim Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York

February 11, 2020

Regents State Aid Proposal: State Aid to Schools

Regents 2020-21 Proposal on State Aid to Schools

In order to increase equity for all students, the Regents recommend a **\$2 billion total increase** in State Aid for the 2020-21 school year to support our schools.

- Adds \$1.9 billion in formula aid to school districts, providing a significant increase in Foundation Aid. This proposal calls for a full phase-in of the Foundation Aid Formula by the 2022-23 school year.
- The Regents State Aid Proposal also includes \$82 million in increases for reimbursement-based aids, such as Building, BOCES, and Transportation Aid, and, most importantly, would maintain the current reimbursement formulas.

Regents State Aid Proposal: Expand Access to Early Learning

Implementing the recommendations of the **Regents Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee** would support a clear, coherent and comprehensive strategy to ensure that all of New York State's children have the fairness of an even start and access to services that are developmentally appropriate and responsive to culture, race, ethnicity, language, citizenship status, and socioeconomic status.

The Regents recommend **\$26 million** to expand Prekindergarten:

- **\$20 million** to allow for 2,000 additional **4-year-old children** to be served; and
- **\$6 million** to create a single reimbursement structure **for prekindergarten inclusion programs** by blending existing prekindergarten and preschool special education funding mechanisms.



Regents State Aid Proposal:

Support State Review of the Foundation Aid Formula

The Regents recommend **\$1.2 million** to create a team within the Department's Fiscal Analysis and Research Unit to work with a consulting firm to conduct a rigorous examination of the history, factors, and impact of the Foundation Aid Formula from 2007 to the present.

- Research could be targeted to issues that are fundamental to the question of how education funding is generated and distributed. Among issues that could be considered are:
 - The Successful Schools methodology currently used in the Foundation Aid Formula, and whether revisions are warranted in light of the ongoing discussions about diploma requirements.
 - The Regional Cost Index, which has been frozen at the same levels since 2006.
 - Measurements of student need, district fiscal capacity, and the relationship between those elements and student achievement.

Regents State Aid Proposal: Provide Financial Technical Assistance

The Regents recommend **\$550,000** in state operations funds to expand the Department's ability to assist school districts in the effective management of their financial operations before challenges negatively impact the instructional program or require a legislative solution, such as financial bailouts or other state level intervention.

- School districts across the state experience a diverse array of financial challenges. Improving the Department's ability to provide technical assistance for effective fiscal management will help districts maximize their use of resources and minimize the disruption to students and staff when fiscal challenges arise.

Regents 2020-21 Budget Priorities

Priority	Request
Promote Positive School Climate & Bullying Prevention	\$3.4 million
ESSA: Support Newly Identified (CSI & TSI) Schools	\$3.5 million
Establish Regional Early Learning TACs	\$1.6 million
Redesign Tuition Rate-Setting and Funding Parity	\$12.65 million
Address Teacher Shortages in Approved Private Schools Serving Students with Disabilities & Special Act Schools	\$4 million
Increase Districts' Capacity to Serve ELLs	\$15 million
Ensure Equal Opportunities for ELLs/MLLs- Enhance RBERNS	\$1.6 million
Ensure the Appropriate Provision of ELL Services- ELP Assessment	\$1 million
Support Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures	\$200,000
Modernize the Education Finance Data System	\$11.6 million
Expand Teacher Opportunity Corps II	\$3 million
Transform Teacher and Leader Preparation Programs	\$2.5 million
Expand Teacher Certification Exam Fee Waiver Vouchers	\$1.2 million

Regents 2020-21 Budget Priorities

Priority	Request
Enhance Teacher Effectiveness- Albert Shanker Grants	\$132,000
Establish Bridge to College & Careers Pilot Program	\$3 million
Access to the NYS Summer School of the Arts	\$1.5 million
Expand Access to Education Programs through Cultural Institutions- The Museum Education Act	\$5 million
Increase State Aid for Library Construction	\$11 million
Build Oversight & Capacity at SED	5% set-aside within all newly created programs
Webcast Regular Board of Regents Public Meetings	\$200,000
Enhance Communication with Multilingual Parents, Students, and Professionals	\$1.5 million

Promote Positive School Climate and Bullying Prevention

2020-21 \$3.4M Budget Request

Every Child Deserves to Attend a Safe, High-Quality School and be Treated with Respect

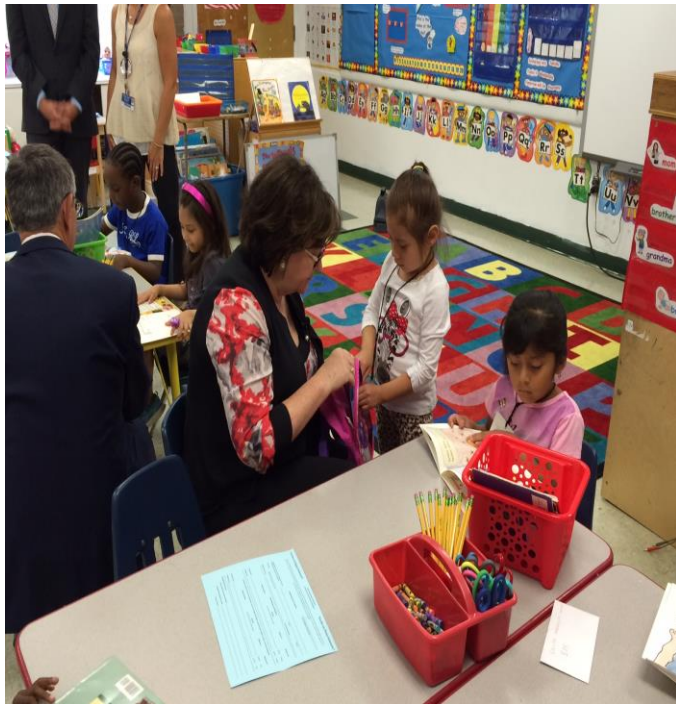
It is critical that the state provide additional resources for schools to assess their current environment and provide them with the assistance necessary to develop and implement a plan, derived from evidence-based strategies and best practices, for improving school culture, climate, and safety. The Regents recommend expanding the Supportive Schools Grant Program to:

- provide resources to an additional 16 schools for a total of 32 schools;
- expand the capacity of the Department to support (through both technical assistance and compliance monitoring) school safety emergency response planning, and the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability requirements regarding chronic absenteeism and school suspension; and
- increase the capacity of the Center for School Safety Technical Assistance Center and Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center to provide expert on-site technical assistance to schools and districts on school climate, implementing behavioral threat assessment teams, reducing incidents of violence, bullying and harassment, and DASA implementation.

ESSA: Support Newly Identified TSI & CSI Schools

2020-21- \$3.5M Budget Request

Help Schools & Districts Identify School-Specific Solutions Based on their Current Needs



ESSA identified a number of new federal requirements for how states work with struggling schools. Identified schools must undergo a Needs Assessment and use the results to inform their improvement plans and include an evidence-based intervention as part of it. SED provides oversight and support for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools, which are schools in the bottom 5 percent in NYS. The local school district oversees the improvement process of Targeted Support & Improvement (TSI) schools.

Funding would allow us to:

- contract with school improvement experts to lead on-site Needs Assessments at the 125 CSI schools;
- facilitate training to school districts with TSI schools so that districts can conduct Needs Assessments in all TSI schools; and
- facilitate training on Evidence-Based Interventions so that CSI and TSI schools can learn strategies to ensure that their school improvement plans are evidence-based and implemented strategically.

Establish Regional Early Learning Technical Assistance Centers

2020-21 \$1.6M Budget Request

Provide Support to Early Care and Educational Settings Across the State

The Regents Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee recommends the establishment of three Early Learning Regional Technical Assistance Centers to:

- provide on-site technical assistance, quality assurance and support for state-funded prekindergarten programs as well as professional learning for both school districts and community-based providers; and
- support school leaders and the early childhood education workforce by providing and developing train-the-trainer courses on topics such as developmentally appropriate practice, play-based learning, culturally responsive and sustaining practices, anti-bias training, and trauma-informed practices, among others.

Redesign Tuition Rate-Setting and Funding Parity

2020-21 \$12.65M Budget Request

Address Financial Stability for Approved School-Age and Preschool Programs Serving Students with Disabilities

The Department establishes annual tuition rates for over 1,000 approved special education programs at approved private schools, public schools, Special Act School Districts, and BOCES. In recent years, the volume of tuition rate appeals and waivers has increased at an unsustainable rate, resulting in funding delays to the providers and hindering providers' ability to budget for their operations and make sound fiscal decisions.

To address the financial stability of approved school-age and preschool programs serving students with disabilities and better enable them to provide mandated services to the students they serve, the Regents recommend:

- dedicating targeted resources to design a new tuition rate-setting methodology (\$1.25M); and
- creating a statutory index to provide parity in annual funding increases for both school-age and preschool providers (\$11.4M).

Address Teacher Shortages in Approved Private Schools Serving Students with Disabilities & Special Act Schools

2020-21 \$4M Budget Request

Special Education & Bilingual Special Education Teacher Shortages

The Special Education and Bilingual Education Teacher shortage is affecting the recruitment and retention of qualified staff to serve students with disabilities who are placed in approved special education programs, including approved private schools serving students with disabilities (853 Schools), Special Act School Districts, approved private preschool (4410) Special Class, and Special Class in an Integrated Setting programs. **Teachers working in these schools earn on average 40% less in salary than their peers in public school districts. To address these issues, the Regents recommend:**

- \$2 million in new Teacher Pipeline funding to be administered through a competitive process to pilot a “grow your own educator” program. This pilot program would require the recruitment of a diverse pool of prospective teacher candidates from the local community to work in an approved program, receive training and professional development, and obtain fiscal assistance for tuition and related teacher preparation expenses; and
- \$2 million to support a loan forgiveness program for staff providing instruction and related services to students at 853 Schools, Special Act School Districts, and private preschool Special Class and Special Class in an Integrated Setting programs.

Increase Districts' Capacity to Serve English Language Learners

2020-21 \$15M Budget Request

Provide Educational Opportunities for New York's Diverse Student Population

Expanded funding is needed to supplement and increase districts' ability to provide quality instruction, supports and services to their English Language Learners (ELLs).



- Currently, approximately 270,000 ELLs make up roughly 10.3% of the total NYS student population. There has also been an expansion of ELLs' linguistic diversity, with over 200 languages spoken.
- ELLs who successfully develop English language proficiency and exit out of ELL status experience higher success than all students on average. These students (known as "Ever ELLs") achieve a graduation rate higher than all students at 89.8% compared to 83.4% of all students.

Ensure Equal Opportunities for English Language Learners

2020-21 \$1.6M Budget Request

Expand Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) Support Centers

New funding would assist schools and district leaders in transforming and improving their systems to support ELL success through investments in the RBERN network.

New York State currently funds eight RBERN support centers, with seven RBERNs assigned to geographic zones and one Statewide Language RBERN, to provide and conduct professional learning, technical assistance and compliance support. These funds are critical to ensure the state's ability to meet ESSA mandates because ELLs' acquisition of English language proficiency and ELL subgroup performance are key factors in accountability determinations.

- This expansion will allow these centers to increase the services provided to school districts by ensuring that the RBERNs are able to support the development and reinforcement of teachers', school administrators', and district administrators' understanding of the needs of ELLs as well as investigate parent complaints, and engage in compliance and enforcement duties.

Ensure the Appropriate Provision of English Language Learner Services

2020-21 \$1M Budget Request

Develop a New English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment Program for ELLs with the Most Severe Cognitive Disabilities

Although the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) allows accommodations for ELL students with disabilities, it is not well suited for those students with the most severe cognitive disabilities. In addition to better serving students, a new assessment is required to fulfill federal requirements. **Guidance from the US Department of Education released last year, requires an alternate English Language Proficiency assessment for ELLs who cannot participate on the current assessment even with appropriate accommodations.**

- Funds would support the development of a new English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment program for ELLs with severe cognitive disabilities over a three-year period:
 - Year 1: \$1 million would support test design and development;
 - Year 2: \$1 million would support pilot/field testing; and
 - Year 3: \$2 million would allow for the operational administration and additional developmental needs.

Support the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures

2020-21 \$200,000 Budget Request

Ensure Educational Excellence and Equity for All New York State Students



The Regents will establish a Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures to review the research, practice and policies surrounding graduation measures in New York State. The Commission will:

- look at whether adding other equally rigorous measures of achievement could also serve New York's diverse student population;
- work with a stakeholder group comprised of current or recent parents, students, educators, school board members, researchers, advocates, higher education and business leaders;
- gather input from across the state to help inform recommendations to reconsider current diploma requirements;
- ensure all students have access to multiple graduation measures; and
- ensure a transition plan timeline allows time to prepare for and implement any changes.

\$200,000 annually for two years would support project management costs and event costs associated with the statewide Commission meetings.

Modernize the Education Finance Data System

2020-21 \$11.6M Budget Request

Update and Consolidate Existing State Aid Data Systems

The Department manages the data collection, calculation, and payment of over \$27 billion in state aid annually using nearly 50 legacy systems with over 100 interfaces, including outdated mainframe technology, Excel spreadsheets, and Access databases. Improvements in data collection and reporting will include:

- building project/transportation contract/BOCES Co-SER data where state aid calculations and additional detail will be tagged and tracked at the project/contract level;
- data verification improvements including real time claim edits that will help districts catch and correct or explain aberrations more quickly, improving the overall quality of data and reducing the risk of overpayments to districts that result in aid deductions;
- better reporting; and
- refocusing program staff tasks.

The total request to build the system is \$41 million across four years, and for \$5.7 million annually for ongoing maintenance and support of the completed system starting in year five. \$11.6 million is requested for the first year of phase two, which involves consolidating more than 50 different legacy systems and moving all technology off the mainframe.

Expand Teacher Opportunity Corps II

2020-21 \$3M Budget Request

Increase Access to a Highly Qualified, Diverse Teaching Workforce

The Regents recommend establishing a separately appropriated Teacher Opportunity Corps II (TOC II) program to help increase the number of certified educators of color. Under this expansion, the number of projects would approximately increase from 16 to 26, with the goal of extending coverage to all regions of NYS.

- An expanded TOC II program would increase the pipeline of diverse students to increase the participation rate of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged individuals in teaching careers and bolster the retention of highly qualified individuals who value equity and reflect the diversity inside and outside of our classrooms.
- Competitive grants would be awarded to higher education institutions that partner with community-based organizations and school districts to identify, recruit, and select students who are identified as underrepresented and underserved in the teaching profession.
- Program elements would include an enhanced 10-month student internship, preparation of teachers to become culturally responsive educators, and possible tuition stipends.

Transform Teacher & Leader Preparation Programs

2020-21 \$2.5M Budget Request

Transform Teacher and Leader Preparation Programs & Increase Diversity

Funding would be used to establish research-based, innovative, high-quality birth to grade 3 teacher preparation programs (\$1.2M each year for four years) and birth to grade 12 leader preparation programs (\$1.2M each year for two years), and for staff costs to implement these initiatives (\$100,000 each year).

- Approximately 240 of New York's historically underrepresented and underserved teachers and leaders would be provided opportunities to equitably access high-quality, clinically-rich, competency-based preparation programs leading to long-term careers serving New York State's diverse students, families, and communities.
- Benefits of the teacher and leader preparation programs would include:
 - decreased tuition costs;
 - increased qualifications and experience;
 - enhanced coursework and field experiences;
 - advanced credit;
 - employment search assistance; and
 - mentoring.

Expand Certification Exam Fee Waiver Vouchers

2020-21 \$1.2M Budget Request

Expand the Provision of Certification Examination Fee Waiver Vouchers

To promote teacher diversity and encourage more candidates to join the teaching profession in response to public school teacher shortages, the Regents recommend providing more fee waiver vouchers to assist economically disadvantaged educator candidates in paying for certification exams.

- \$1.2 million would support tripling the number of vouchers currently distributed annually from 3,000 to 9,000 to cover the certification exam fees.



Enhance Teacher Effectiveness

2020-21 \$132,000 Budget Request

Expand the Albert Shanker Grant to Provide Assistance to Public School Teachers in NYS

The Albert Shanker National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification Grant Program (Shanker Grant) was established in 1999 to encourage teachers to pursue National Board certification by supporting eligible NYS public school teachers with the fee for National Board certification and supportive services for districts.

The certification process allows teachers to hone their practice, showcase their talent in the classroom, and demonstrate dedication to their students and profession. The cost of this (\$1,900 for each teacher) deters many educators from participating in the National Board process, though interest has been on the rise and is anticipated to grow again in the upcoming year.



- This funding would expand the Albert Shanker grant to provide assistance to public school teachers in New York in seeking National Board certification.

Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program

2020-21 \$3M Budget Request

Enable Out-of-School Youth and Adults to Prepare for Postsecondary Study and Careers



Funding would create a Bridge to College and Career Pilot Program consisting of partnerships between adult education programs and college or training providers in each of the seven Regional Adult Education Network regions of the state.

These programs would include:

- career exploration and career assessment;
- relationships with employers and colleges; and
- apprenticeships and internships.

Access to the New York State Summer School of the Arts

2020-21 \$1.5M Budget Request

Ensure Program Access to Students to Exceptionally Talented Students

Re-establishing a state appropriation for The New York State Summer School of the Arts (NYSSSA) would ensure that sufficient funds are available to continue to provide need-blind NYSSSA programming each summer to approximately 400 students who have demonstrated exceptional artistic skills and talents.

- NYSSSA is a program that provides talented high school students with the opportunity to study with some of the world's foremost artists in the visual and performing arts in seven schools, including ballet, dance, choral studies, orchestral studies, theatre, visual arts, and media arts.
- Tuition revenue alone is insufficient to fully cover NYSSSA program costs. The Regents believe that NYSSSA programming should be made available to students based on their talents and skills – not on their ability to pay. Admittance into the program is on a need-blind basis to ensure NYSSSA is representative of New York's wide spectrum of economic, cultural, ethnic, and social diversity of students.

Pass and Fund the Museum Education Act

2020-21 \$5M Budget Request

Expand Access to Education Programs Through Cultural Institutions



More than 1,500 museums, historical societies, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, and cultural arts institutions across NYS provide instruction to over six million children. These cultural institutions receive no direct state support to initiate, expand, and enhance educational services through access to museum collections, scholarship and virtual learning.

Students living in low-income communities in urban, suburban, or rural settings benefit from having access to the type of learning provided by cultural institutions. Fair and equal access to these types of institutions will provide enhanced learning opportunities for students.

- Funding would establish a competitive grants program to support cultural institutions that seek to establish or improve museum educational programs designed to support student learning opportunities, including the development of local curricular aids.

Increase Support for Public Library Construction

2020-21 \$11M Budget Request

Ensure That All New Yorkers Continue to Have Access to State-of-the-Art Libraries



- All public libraries should be able to accommodate new technologies and provide the resources New Yorkers need to be successful in an information-driven global environment.
- To expand the successes of the library construction program, the Regents are seeking an additional \$11 million in state funding to support new construction, renovation, and expansion of existing public libraries throughout the state.

Summer Reading at New York Libraries is an annual program that brings children and families into local public libraries for reading and activities. 2.5 million children participated in the summer reading program in 2019, an increase of 134,000 participants over last year's program.

Build Technical Assistance and Support Capacity at SED

5% Set-Aside

Resources to Provide Proper Oversight & Support of New Programs

The state should enact a 5% set-aside within all new programs for administrative oversight and technical assistance at the Department.

- Following the end of federal grants to the Department, and years of agency funding constraints, the Department has lost significant capacity to provide districts with implementation support and technical assistance.
- Since 2011, state budgets have included new education programs for which SED has received no additional state support. As districts are faced with implementing these various programs, they rely more and more on the technical support and expertise of the Department.
- It is common in federal programs and in other states for the administering agency to be allowed a set-aside from grant awards to allow for proper oversight of the program.

Webcast Regular Board of Regents Public Meetings

2020-21 \$200,000 Budget Request

Enhance Transparency at the Department

With current limited resources, the Department is only able to provide a live webcast of meetings of the Full Board of Regents. To increase transparency and provide public access to important education-related discussions and determinations made at such meetings, it is important that the Department is able to webcast other regular public meetings of the Board of Regents, including each month's Committee and Subcommittee meetings, as well as provide for the verbatim transcript for such meetings which is currently done for all Full Board meetings.

Enhance Communication with Multilingual Parents, Students and Professionals

2020-21 \$1.5M Budget Request

Support the Translation of Documents into Languages Other Than English

Due to resource constraints, the Department is not currently able to translate certain documents into languages other than English, which can limit the awareness of parents and students who do not speak English as their primary language to available educational programs and services.

- Funding to translate informational and guidance documents into multiple languages would support the Department's culturally responsive-sustaining framework and improve services to ELLs and their families by providing information to families in the language they best understand.

Regents 2020 State Legislative Priorities

Mandate Relief and Flexibility – Legislation would enact a series of mandate relief measures to promote cost savings and provide relief from reporting requirements including to:

- expand the funds available to pay claims in the first-come-first served queue;
- forgive penalties associated with the late filing of Final Cost Reports (FCRs) for all school district construction projects approved by the Commissioner before July 1, 2011;
- allow districts to lease space outside of the district in certain emergency situations;
- allow transportation contracts to be submitted electronically in a form approved by the Commissioner when available; and
- authorize school districts to lease, on a temporary basis, necessary space, when the facilities of the district are under construction.

Regional Secondary Schools Advisory Council– Legislation would create an advisory council to make recommendations to expand regional high schools in the state.

Increase Access to College & Reduce the Cost to Students through ECHS & PTECH– Legislation would codify and provide a mechanism to continue successful Early College High Schools (ECHS) and PTECH programs outside of a competitive procurement process.

Improving Educational Outcomes for Justice System Involved Youth – Legislation to require the school districts of location of a juvenile justice system facility to issue a diploma for students who have fulfilled the graduation requirements while placed in a facility and to create a statutory FERPA exception so that education records can be released without written parent consent.



Thank You.

Follow NYSED on Twitter:

@NYSEDNews