



New York State Federation
of School Administrators

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

TESTIMONY

Joint Legislative Hearing of the

NEW YORK STATE

ASSEMBLY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

&

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

On

Executive Budget Proposals for Education

SFY 2021 – 2022

Thursday, January 28, 2021

Albany, New York

www.nysfsa.org

On behalf of the New York State Federation of School Administrators, please accept the following testimony regarding the Executive Budget for State Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

NYSFSA represents 14,000 active and retired Principals, Assistant Principals, Education Administrators and other school supervisors in Buffalo, Yonkers and New York City. Each of our local units are members of the American Federation of School Administrators/AFL-CIO. Our mission is to educate and advocate for the significant role of educational supervisors and administrators in the 21st century. Every successful school has great school leaders.

The FY 2022 Executive Budget is presented during a time of extraordinary challenges for our state and nation, and our members have worked throughout the COVID-19 emergency to maintain students' safe access to education. Our school leaders have implemented stringent cleaning, testing and contact-tracing protocols, facilitated the delivery of meals, instructional devices and hot spots, and configured remote and in-person instructional schedules. This work continues every day.

State Aid – The FY 2022 Executive Budget proposal is extraordinarily complex, and we fear relies too much on one-time federal assistance that could result in a major shortfall in school aid in the following years.

The federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) allocated \$3.8 billion to go to school districts in New York. While it is entirely appropriate that these funds be available to school districts, the Executive Budget proposal would use \$2 billion to supplant state education funding. We are

fearful that doing so creates the real possibility of an extraordinary shortfall in state aid within a year.

Instead, NYSFSA urges lawmakers to recommit to fully funding Foundation Aid to support all school districts across New York State, and most importantly low-wealth school districts. We also support the state aid proposal advanced by the New York State Board of Regents and the State Education Department.

Services Aid – The Executive Budget also proposes to consolidate eleven separate expense-based and categorical aids:

Transportation Aid	BOCES Aid
Special Services Aid	Charter School Transitional Aid
High Tax Aid	Supplemental Public Excess Cost Aid
Academic Enhancement Aid	Library Aid
Textbook Aid	Software Aid
Hardware Aid	

NYSFSA opposes this proposal, as we believe it would ultimately lead to reductions in instructional spending to cover costs ordinarily borne under these aid categories.

Transportation Aid – We support the Executive’s proposal to permit transportation aid for expenses of delivering student meals, instructional materials and providing internet access during the period when school buildings were ordered closed in 2020. NYSFSA also supports expanding aid eligibility for the entirety of the pandemic, including the current 2020-202 school year.

Bilingual Education/English Language Learners - The FY 2022 Executive Budget proposal appropriates \$12.950 million (level funding) for bilingual education grants. Our schools continue to see increases in the number of immigrant children needing substantial support from bilingual education programs. NYSFSA recommends increasing funding for these services.

We are pleased to collaborate in our advocacy with our fellow school administrators across the State in the *New York State School Administrators Consortium (NYSSAC)*. NYSFSA works with the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) to represent active and retired public school Principals, Assistant Principals, Supervisors and Administrators across New York.

In closing, I am grateful for the opportunity to bring the voices and concerns of our school leaders to your attention, and we thank you for your continued support of our work.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter McNally
Executive Director