



April 1, 2016

Good afternoon:

What we hear from Albany is that legislators continue to sign bills to finalize the 2016-17 State Budget. Here is what we know so far as it pertains to education funding:

School Aid will increase by about \$1.47B

- \$434M to end the GEA*
- \$627M increase in Foundation Aid**
- \$340M increase in Expense-Driven Aids

Here are the [School Aid runs](#) for your districts. All the details are not available to us at this point as we don't have descriptions of the aid categories yet.

Going over the numbers with Bob Lowry from The Council of School Superintendents, he clarified some concerns about GEA and Community Schools Aid:

**At the bottom of the aid run are two lines, "FINAL GEA PAYMENT" and "REMAINING GEA." The REMAINING GEA is zero for all districts. The FINAL GEA PAYMENT should be added to the 2016-17 total above to give the actual total 2016-17 aid for your district. Showing the FINAL GEA PAYMENT separately appears to have been done to make the aid shares look right without spending more money.*

*** The understanding is that the budget provides \$175M for Community Schools, part funded through Foundation Aid, and part separately.*

Our major goals have always focused on the **adequacy, equity, predictability and sustainability of State Education Aid**. We are appreciative of the substantial increase in Foundation Aid, which brings us a bit closer to adequacy. Equity, predictability and sustainability, however, are still elusive.

We had hoped that the increase in Foundation Aid would have been closer to \$900M, which would have directed assistance to more of the poorer and higher- and average-need school districts across the state. With that being said, the \$627M targeted to Foundation Aid is noteworthy. It goes a part of the way to addressing our adequacy concerns and took place thanks to the efforts of our state legislators, who clearly heard our voices and acted upon our needs.

In addition, the long-overdue end of the Gap Elimination Adjustment not only helps many of our districts, but also, importantly, removes a significant impediment that will now allow us to focus our efforts squarely on the even more overdue resolution of the inequitable distribution of Foundation Aid in New York State.

I'll be in touch as more information becomes available...

Dr. Rick Timbs

Connect with us

