



NASSAU-SUFFOLK SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 385, Bellmore, NY 11710-0385
OFFICE: 219 Bedford Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710-0385
MARY JO O'HAGAN, PRESIDENT

Tel (516) 781-2053 Fax (516) 679-0401
e-mail: info@nssba.org
LORRAINE DELLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 10, 2015

To: Long Island's New York State Senate and Assembly Delegation
From: Mary Jo O'Hagan, President
Mark Masin, Legislation Committee Chair

Re: New York State Education Investment Tax Credit

In mid-May, at the time the big-money-funded media barrage for "Education Investment Tax Credit" began to inundate mailboxes and the airwaves, Long Islanders went to the polls to pass proposed budgets for their communities' schools with unprecedented majorities. Their currency was their vote. To supporters of democracy that vote carried far greater value than the millions spent to sway the votes of our lawmakers.

On Long Island, investment in public schools remains a priority. This region's legacy of quality public schools is due to a very supportive and demanding public.

For decades, that public has looked unfavorably on increases in public funding to private and religious institutions via tax credits, vouchers or direct aid. There is a growing awareness of the impact on local school budgets of the escalating costs for services to private and religious schools, including transportation, textbooks, software, remedial education services, therapy and nursing costs. Presently additional monies are to be turned over to these institutions as part of the Smart Schools Bond Act.

Locally elected school boards have seen their governance authority legislated away in the name of increased accountability. What should the public make of the aim in Albany to grant massive tax breaks to contributors of private and religious institutions with no questions asked? Read and understand the legislation in front of you. WE HAVE!

As we have since learned from the opening of the state's coffers to the operators of charter schools, once that step is taken there is no pulling back. It will be irretrievable. Inevitably New Yorkers will be funding two parallel school systems, one private and one public, both competing for the state's limited resources.

Long Islanders know a bad deal when they see one. An "Education Investment Tax Credit" is a bad deal for Long Island and for all of New York.

Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association, on behalf of its member boards of education, calls upon Long Island's New York State Senators and Assembly Members to **stand up for our public schools** and **deny all attempts** to institute any form of so-called "Education Investment Tax Credit" in the State of New York.

cc: New York State Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan
New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie
New York State Senate Education Committee Chair Carl Marcellino
New York State Assembly Education Committee Chair Catherine Nolan
Roger Tilles, Member, New York State Board of Regents
New York State School Boards Association
Nassau County Council of School Superintendents
Suffolk County School Superintendents Association
Nassau Region PTA
Suffolk Region PTA
Long Island Education Coalition