

January 2016

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

The West Islip School District has kept its budget under the tax levy cap despite reductions in state aid and increases in mandated expenses, including converting to the Common Core Learning Standards; increasing staff due to Part 154 regulations; administering, scoring, and reporting data for tests; the costs of negotiating new APPR rules (again) for teachers and administrators (and the associated professional development to implement these systems); and increased contributions to retirement funds and healthcare costs.

In fact, over the past six years, West Islip has lost over \$24.9 million in state aid – more than \$2.0 million in the last year alone as a result of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA). With one of the lowest per pupil spending rates on Long Island, West Islip has long done more with less, but we have reached the point where we are now doing less with less. Over these five years, West Islip has been forced to lay off teachers, administrators, and non-instructional staff; consolidate and close two elementary schools; reduce instructional programs; and delay the updating and renovation of facilities.

As our Governor, it is your responsibility to safeguard a sound education for every child, but recent budgets have not come close to achieving that. We understood that sacrifices were necessary during the recent fiscal crisis, but with an expected CPI of less than 1%, is the time for NY State to fundamentally return to appropriate education funding. We ask that you:

- **Restore all GEA funds** in the 2016-2017 budget. The West Islip outstanding GEA is \$2,035,303, almost 9% of the district's Foundation Aid.
- **Increase 2015-2016 Foundation Aid** to the mandated levels of the 2008 CFE settlement, beyond the GEA restoration.
- **Restore local control** and stop tying education reforms to basic school aid distribution.
- **Establish true mandate relief** by empowering schools to close budget gaps without sacrificing education programs for our students.

West Islip schools are worthy of pride and worthy of support - please support our children and their future by addressing the above concerns.

Sincerely,

January 2016

The Honorable John J. Flanagan
260 Middle Country Road, Suite 102
Smithtown, New York 11787

Dear Senator Flanagan:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

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As President and Majority Leader of the Senate, it is your responsibility to safeguard a sound education for every child, but recent budgets have not come close to achieving that. We understood that sacrifices were necessary during the recent fiscal crisis, but with an expected CPI of less than 1%, is the time for NY State to fundamentally return to appropriate education funding. We ask that you:

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January 2016

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
1446 East Gun Hill Road
Bronx, NY 10469

Dear Assemblyman Heastie:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

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As Speaker of the Assembly, it is your responsibility to safeguard a sound education for every child, but recent budgets have not come close to achieving that. We understood that sacrifices were necessary during the recent fiscal crisis, but with an expected CPI of less than 1%, is the time for NY State to fundamentally return to appropriate education funding. We ask that you:

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January 2016

The Honorable Philip M. Boyle
69 W. Main Street, Suite B
Bay Shore, NY 11706

Dear Senator Boyle:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

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As our Senator, it is your responsibility to safeguard a sound education for every child, but recent budgets have not come close to achieving that. We understood that sacrifices were necessary during the recent fiscal crisis, but with an expected CPI of less than 1%, is the time for NY State to fundamentally return to appropriate education funding. We ask that you:

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The Honorable Andrew P. Raia
75 Woodbine Avenue
Northport, NY 11768

Dear Assemblyman Raia:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

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As our assemblyman, it is your responsibility to safeguard a sound education for every child, but recent budgets have not come close to achieving that. We understood that sacrifices were necessary during the recent fiscal crisis, but with an expected CPI of less than 1%, is the time for NY State to fundamentally return to appropriate education funding. We ask that you:

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The Honorable Joseph S. Saladino
512 Park Boulevard
Massapequa Park, NY 11762

Dear Assemblyman Saladino:

As a concerned taxpayer and voting resident of West Islip, I am writing as you work to develop the 2016 Executive Budget. This is the year to fix the funding problem for the West Islip School District and districts throughout New York State. The state has the money and it is short several billion dollars on its legal obligation to fund public education. It is time to fix and fund the formula.

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