



# Concerns about the Governor's State Budget Proposal

**Annual formula changes will undermine the planning process the Foundation Formula was supposed to make possible.** Although the \$1.46 billion in new Foundation Aid is a 7.45% increase, it is less than school districts were told to anticipate to guide their planning for the coming year.

**Proposed cuts and unfunded mandates will force increases in district operating costs at the same time as the Commission on Property Tax Relief is looking reduce property taxes.**

**BOCES aid would be cut \$31 million.** Justifying this as a realignment of the aid with the new needs based aid formula ignores the fact these dollars are a reimbursement aid and changing the formula after the fact reduces districts' anticipated revenue stream.

**The Healthy Schools Program will require changes** to improve school nutrition but does not provide sufficient aid to cover the new expenses. School lunch programs are supposed to be self-sufficient.

**The transfer to the schools of new responsibilities for preschool special education** will save the state \$46 million but add that same cost to district budgets.

**Cuts to SED will hinder the ability to protect children against sexual abuse.** The Office of School Personnel and Accountability processes fingerprint and background checks for school employees and investigates allegations of sexual misconduct. Already overburdened, the Commissioner had sought to add \$1.45 million to this department's \$1.6 million budget but instead a \$500,000 cut was proposed.

**Planned property tax relief will be delayed** if the STAR increase is rolled back.

**The proposed changes to Wicks will be inadequate** to provide meaningful savings.

**The Commission on Property Tax Relief does not include any people who have had experience preparing a school budget** for public vote but does contain people who have been responsible for creating unfunded and under funded mandates. Comments by the Governor and some members make it appear school property tax caps are a forgone conclusion. Will this group of people understand and address the real causes of rising costs or will schools be blamed for problems they did not create and forced to cope with a damaging and incorrectly targeted solution?

**School districts are being squeezed on all sides** by a growing trend to force costs onto lower levels of government and the additional demand that property taxes be reduced.

Monroe County's F.A.I.R. Plan takes education sales taxes to pay for Medicaid.

The Governor's budget proposes new preschool special education mandates and cuts to BOCES; Washington has chronically under funded IDEA and NCLB (over \$81 billion shortfall since 2003) and has scheduled the elimination of Medicaid reimbursements to school districts for required services (\$3.65 billion per year).



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## Monroe County School Boards Association

is the recognized representative of some 500,000 taxpayers in the greater Rochester area, as well as the advocate of public education for about 118,000 school-aged children and youth attending its 18 suburban school districts, the City School District of Rochester, and two Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). MCSBA focuses on the major issues facing public education in Monroe County, and on the need for all levels of government to collaborate to find solutions to the problems facing our common constituencies.

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1250 Scottsville Road, Suite 5A  
Rochester, NY 14624  
(585) 328-1972 [www.mcsba.org](http://www.mcsba.org)