



Legislative Budget Outreach

During the Board of Education's meetings with our legislators this winter, we discussed a number of initiatives that we deemed of great interest and importance to public school districts in general, and to the Rhinebeck Central School District in particular, as we strive to prepare students to attain college and career readiness by the end of their K-12 educational experience.

The budget-based initiatives that we have discussed with Senator Serino, Assembly Member, Cahill and Assembly Member Barrett include:

- the full restoration of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) for all New York State school districts as part of the upcoming state budget;
- the immediate full funding of the State's Foundation Aid formula;
- the exemption of Special Education costs, or increases thereto, from the Tax Levy Cap calculation;
- the temporary allowance for school districts' flexible use of Reserve Funds, such as the Employee Benefits, Capital, and Repair reserves; and
- modifications to the current Tax Levy Cap legislation to allow for a true 2% tax levy cap at the least, and optimally for a tax levy cap set at the cost of living or 2%, whichever is greater, assuming in the first place the appropriateness of a tax levy cap that takes responsibility for local control of public education out of the hands of the local school district voters.

In addition, we encourage our State lawmakers:

- to decouple the required negotiation of yet another version of the State's mandated Annual Professional Performance Review Plan (APPR) regarding the evaluation of teachers and administrators from its current linkage to a school district's State Aid increase for the coming year. We believe that a school district's receipt of a State Aid increase should be independent of the local collective bargaining process.

State budget discussions are starting to heat up in Albany as New York's budget development process nears the April 1, 2016 deadline. It would be helpful for residents of our school district to contact our local area legislators, as well as Governor Cuomo, whom they elected, and legislative majority leaders Senator Flanagan and Assembly Member Heastie, as soon as possible to make their opinions known to the State's elected decision-makers on the topics outlined above.

Contact information for our elected officials is on the following page:

Senator Sue Serino
District Office - telephone: (845) 229-0106
4254 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, NY 12538
Serino@nysenate.gov

Assembly Member Kevin Cahill (representing the Towns of Rhinebeck and Red Hook)
District Office – telephone: (845) 338-9610
Governor Clinton Building - Suite G-4, Albany Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401
cahillk@assembly.state.ny.us

Assembly Member Didi Barrett (representing the Towns of Clinton, Milan, Stanford, Hyde Park)
District Office – telephone: (845) 454-1703
12 Raymond Avenue Suite 105, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
BarrettD@assembly.state.ny.us

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo, Governor of New York State
telephone: (518) 474-8390; fax: (518) 474-1513
New York State Capital Bldg., Albany, NY 12224

Senator John J. Flanagan, Senate President
Albany Office – telephone: (518) 455-2071; fax (518) 426-6904
Room 330, State Capitol Building, Albany, NY 12247
flanagan@nysenate.gov

Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie, Assembly Speaker
Albany Office – telephone: (518) 455-3791; fax: (518) 455-4812
LOB 932, Albany, NY 12248
Speaker@assembly.state.ny.us

For all other questions relating to the 2016-17 school budget development process,
please send an email to our dedicated link at BudgetInfo@rhinebeckcsd.org