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2016-17 CNYSBA NYS Budget Agenda: Helpful Information and the Two Key Issues Albany MUST Address

Overview of Key 2016-17 NYS Budget Concerns

- Every statewide education organization, and the Board of Regents, made rational cases to add over \$2 billion of new state education aid in this year's budget to maintain critical programs and services. The Governor's budget proposal adds only \$863 million to the state aid amounts targeted for all school districts in 2016-17.
- Gap Elimination Adjustment: With a state budget surplus, the Governor should have abolished the GEA once and for all, rather than devote only \$189 million of the remaining \$434 million in GEA in his budget proposal. Without a complete end to GEA this year many of our districts will not obtain the badly needed funds they are entitled to receive.
- Foundation Aid: The Executive Budget only calls for a meager 1.7 percent increase in Foundation Aid (\$266 million). When Foundation Aid was created it was purposefully designed to begin and sustain a more equitable and adequate revenue stream to all school districts to meet the state's constitutional obligations. This obligation remains incomplete. Adequate and equitable Foundation Aid is especially vital to our least wealthy districts that are dependent on it to make ends meet.
- Property Tax Levy Cap: NYS Comptroller DiNapoli estimated that schools will have \$308 million less available with this year's lower cap. Now wealthy districts will join less wealthy and poor communities in competition for funds to make up local revenue. All efforts at an equitable and adequate distribution of state aid based on need must be preserved.

CNYSBA State Budget "Asks" of State Legislators, Governor & Board of Regents

1. Get Rid of the ENTIRE GEA in THIS YEAR'S State BUDGET — PERIOD!
 - Almost \$10 billion in entitled education aid has been deducted over the past six years. NYS continues to have a sizable budget surplus so there is no legitimate reason for this absurd fiscal gimmick to continue.
2. Provide at Least \$880 Million in Improved Foundation Aid and Distribute it Equitably
 - Foundation Aid is important to all schools, but especially to our least wealthy districts. Foundation aid components — especially those that factor in a community's income and property wealth — need further improvement and then should be used to create a more equitable distribution of basic state aid in amounts that will maintain programs, staff and the fiscal health of school districts.