



CNYSBA NEWS

Train, Empower, Advocate, and Mobilize for Students

Local District Providing Free School Supplies

*By Jesse Harper,
Superintendent of Newfield
Central School District*

As we look ahead to the 2026–27 school year, the Newfield Central School District will take an important step to support students and families: the district will purchase all required school supplies for every student.

Continued on Page 7



School District Budget/ Legislative Season: So much to think about....

By Dr. Rick Timbs (Photo: Finger Lakes Times)

Executive (Governor’s) run not same as February run

There are some differences. Look for differences related to demographics and student weighting in Foundation Aid and expenses driven aids in particular. You may also see small changes in the textbook, library, software, and the like aid categories.

Continued on Page 2



Most of the changes are related to updated student counts and weights since the ordinal October submissions by school districts.

Save- Harmless school districts:

The numbers of Save-Harmless school districts have risen substantially over the last few years, despite the most recent changes in the formula for 2025-26 Foundation Aid. Absent significant changes to the underfunded Foundation Amount (Adjusted Foundation Amount (AFA)) as well as other changes such as major increases in weighting of students with special needs (SWD weighting) and increased weighting for students such as the economically disadvantaged and ELL areas for instance, joined with additional financial considerations for homeless and foster care students, Save-Harmless school districts designations for 2026-27 could continue to rise compared to 2025-26.

About two-thirds of all school districts are now Save-Harmless. The Foundation Aid formula needs a lot of work to make it adequate and equitable. Using more of the Rockefeller Foundation Study suggestions would help.

The Bus mandate is still in effect... the state not listening m(they are not acting either!.

Please see the January newsletter for a summary of this issue.

My recent studies with school district points to significant limitations of revenue increases, vs. significant cost increases on the horizon. This spells trouble for school districts long-range. This also makes their ability to buy Zero-Emission buses more remote and financially antagonistic.

Ask legislators to return to their willingness to address state aid with their one house budgets back in March of 2025:

This year, as in all election years, we again look for a robust Executive budget proposal in January 2026, and support from the New York State Senate and Assembly in their one house bills to follow. It is hoped that no further economic downturns will befall the state financial picture and that revenues will continue to have a healthy increased trend to offset current projected deficits for next year and the years thereafter.

FOUNDATION AID AND OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES AT BUDGET TIME March 2026

The Senate wants to increase Foundation Aid to a **due minimum of 3%.**
Increase the amount per pupil for Universal Pre-K

Raise the ceiling for capital outlays in Building Aid from \$100,000 to \$250,000.

resume funding for payment of prior year aid adjustments owed to school districts with appropriations of \$18,600,000.

repeal the Community Schools set-aside within Foundation Aid and establish a new Community Schools grant program funded at \$105 million. provide \$6 million for districts with tax certiorari and tax levy issues.

provide a \$70.2 million increase for the Learning and Enrichment After-School Program Supports.

support compliance with federal courts that school districts provide free and appropriate public education to students with disabilities until they reach age 22.

The Assembly wants to increase Foundation Aid to **a due minimum of 2.9%**.

Proposes increased weighting for English Language Learners from .5 to .65

Provides for a change in the Income Wealth Index metric by elimination of the .65 floor over a three-year period.

Increase the amount per pupil for Universal Pre-K

resume funding for payment of prior year aid adjustments owed to school districts with appropriations of \$18,660,000.

provide a \$100 million increase for after-school programs in school districts which primarily provide for economically disadvantaged students.

- \$2 million to support school regionalization efforts.

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Serious Issues Remain

Foundation Aid:

Still Generally Outdated

Still the Wrong Metrics

Still Arbitrary

Increase in number of Districts Save-Harmless?

Homeless Enrollment

Equity Adequacy

Perception of School Finances

School Budgets:

Escalations of Student and Family Mission

Escalation of Costs- Health insurance, Pensions, Labor, Equipment, Capital Work

Depletion of Reserves

Legal and Political Issues/ State and Local:

Leadership Turnover

Boards of Education

Administration and Senior leaders and educators

Practical Regional Issues

School Labor Force Issues

Bus Drivers, Bus Monitors, Bus Mechanics

Business Officials, Superintendents

Upper-Level Math and Science teachers

- Cleaners, Custodians, Maintenance Mechanics

Continued on Page 5

NEW DATE NEW DATE NEW DATE

2026 CNYSBA

TST BOCES LEGISLATIVE FORUMS



NEW DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH, 2026
TIME: 6:00PM – 8:00PM
LOCATION: IN-PERSON @ TST BOCES

New Pre K mandate information:**From Association of School Business Officials of New York:**

Important Information About the Executive Budget Universal Prekindergarten Proposal

*“First, the proposal is indeed for all four-year-olds to be eligible for prekindergarten through a requirement that by **2028-29 districts provide a full-day slot to any 4-year-old child whose parents have requested it.** This requirement can be met through either district- or CBO-operated programs.*

Second, for 4-year-olds, there is no cap on the amount of aid received or the number of slots you may provide. Aid is the greater of \$10,000 or your current selected Foundation Aid per pupil for all 4-year-old students in full-day UPK programs (these per pupil amounts are halved for students served in half-day programs). Districts that previously received Statewide Universal Full-Day Prekindergarten (SUFPK) awards would no longer receive these awards beginning in the 2026-27 school year, as the Executive Budget effectively consolidates SUFPK into the UPK program.

Third, the Executive Budget does not change the current UPK program for 3-year-olds. Districts’ funding for 3-year-olds would be maintained at its current per pupil levels. Districts that receive UPK funding for 3-year-olds must continue to serve their maximum eligible 3-year-old pupils in order to receive their maximum 3-year-old UPK grant amount.

Fourth, because this is an expansion of existing programs and the entire universe of 4-year-olds who will join these programs is not known, your state aid run amount in 2026-27 is an estimated proxy of what the State anticipates you may be able to provide in 2026-27; it is not a limit on the amount of aid you will receive or the number of slots you can or must provide.”

Nice concept but....

- **How does a district plan and budget for the unknown, strategically and logistically?**
- **Does every school district have the “room” for these additional sections?**
- **What about transportation aid for this?**
- **Interesting, but I don’t believe Kindergarten is mandated...**
- **Has this mandate been studied?**
- **For many school districts this will be a “heavy lift”. Think of the related costs.....**

Other state aid and financial initiatives

- Permit Transportation Aid for Pre-K programs
- Excess Cost Aids are aid categories that have not been updated in years and continue to be unrealistically frozen or simply without merit in terms of equity. These aids categories should be addressed for equity and adequacy.
- All aid due to school districts in the “Prior Year Aid Queue” must be paid on an accelerated basis. \$308 million is owed due to claims corrections.
- Increase RPTL §1318 to at least 10% ... 4% is SIMPLY TOO LOW!!! How about 10%?
- The state must reevaluate its state aid initiatives every 2 years for equity, adequacy, and sustainability. (The Rockefeller Report Agreed to this type of reevaluation)

What is next?

Produce a lobby plan and talking points. I encourage you to seek allies from parents, key community leaders, and others to help you lobby. Often school district residents can provide valuable support as voters toward mutual goals!

See you soon,

Be well,

Rick



CNYSBA

D.A.S.A

Dignity for All Students Act

VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE EVENT

with Special Guest Presenter
Roseann Bayne
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, CiTi BOCES

LOGISTICS:

REGISTER NOW!



MARCH 4th, 2026
(Wednesday)



6:30PM – 7:30PM
45 min – Presentation / 15 Min – Q&A



VIRTUAL / ZOOM
ZOOM link sent after completed registration



EVENT INFO:

This Roundtable Event is designed to strengthen legal compliance, governance, and public trust. We hope to encourage all with knowledge on how to uphold student dignity while maintaining appropriate oversight.

- Discuss the distinctions among bullying, harassment, discrimination, and material incidents, and examine DASA's impact-based standard.

- Reinforce the District's role in responding to complaints, reviewing appeals, using the "arbitrary and capricious" standard, without re-investigating cases.

PRESENTER:

Roseann Bayne has over 30 years of experience in education. She oversees many programs as the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for CiTi BOCES. Roseann is a NYS Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) trainer, certified instructor in Emotional Intelligence, and executive board member of the NYS Staff/Curriculum Development Network (SCDN).

RESPECT

RESPECT



<https://cnysba.org/cnysba-events/>

2026 CNYSBA OCM BOCES LEGISLATIVE FORUMS



EVENT DETAILS:

Saturday, February 28th, 2026
9:00am-11:30am
Location: @ OCM BOCES
110 Elwood Davis Road Liverpool,
NY 13088



This event will include a brief overview from Dr. Richard Timbs (Executive Director, SSFC) regarding the impacts of the Governor's Executive Budget Proposal on the component school districts.

CNYSBA has received and confirmed the following responses for the 2026 CNYSBA Legislative Forums for OCM BOCES: Catherine Tomczyk - Senator Ryans Office Legislative and Community Coordinator, Assemblymember Al Stirpe, Assemblymember Pamela Hunter & Matt Jones (communications director), Craig Sweicki - Legislative Aide to Assemblymember Magnarelli.

DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO MEET WITH LEGISLATORS IN-PERSON AND ADVOCATE FOR YOUR DISTRICTS!



REGISTER TODAY:

VISIT OUR WEBSITE @



<https://cnysba.org/cnysba-events/>

CNY STEM SCHOLARSHIP



The CNY STEM Scholarship Program supports Central New York high school seniors pursuing college degrees in STEM fields. Administered by Partners for Education & Business, Inc. (PEB), the program aims to build an inclusive STEM workforce, highlight local career opportunities, and retain local talent. Scholarships are awarded based on a number of criteria. Participating companies are encouraged to offer a paid internship opportunity following the student's sophomore year of college.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications open in November and close in mid-March. Top candidates are selected by sponsoring companies using a standard rubric and scheduled for virtual interviews coordinated by PEB. Company representatives conduct the interviews and choose scholarship recipients based on both applications and interviews. Final decisions are announced via email in early May.

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

- Current High School Senior
- Planned College Major:
 - Architecture
 - Computer Science
 - Engineering
 - Math
 - Physics
- Required Cumulative Average: 85+



INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

Scan the QR code or visit cnystem.com for more info!



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Investing in Leadership, Education, and Community Success

At the Central New York School Boards Association (CNYSBA), our Business Partners are more than sponsors—they are trusted allies in our mission to strengthen public education. Their generous support fuels professional development, leadership training, and resources that help school board members rise to the growing responsibilities of serving their communities.

A Shared Commitment to Public Education

Our Business Partners represent a diverse network of companies that share a deep commitment to the future of public education. Each partner brings unique expertise and services that directly benefit our school districts—whether through legal guidance, construction excellence, insurance solutions, or innovative design. We are proud to recognize and work alongside these organizations whose values align with our mission

Support Those Who Support You

We encourage our members to explore and connect with the businesses that make our work possible. By choosing to work with CNYSBA Business Partners, you are reinvesting in the strength and success of Central New York's schools.

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