



THE 4201 SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

TESTIMONY

Presented to

Fiscal Committees of the New York State Legislature

Hearing On
The FY 2015-2016 Executive Budget

February 3, 2015

Albany, New York

www.4201schools.org • @4201Schools

Cleary School for the Deaf (Nesconset)	Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf (Mill Neck)	Rochester School for the Deaf (Rochester)
Henry Viscardi School (Albertson)	New York Institute for Special Education (Bronx)	St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf (Brooklyn)
Lavelle School for the Blind (Bronx)	New York School for the Deaf (White Plains)	St. Joseph's School for the Deaf (Bronx)
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Chairman Farrell, Chairman DeFrancisco, Senator Flanagan, Assemblymember Nolan and distinguished members of the Legislature, thank you for the opportunity to be with you today.

I am Dr. Bernadette Kappen, Executive Director of the New York Institute for Special Education in the Bronx. I am also the Chair of the 4201 Schools Association, schools serving Deaf, Blind and Severely Physically Disabled children throughout New York State.

With me today is Timothy Kelly, Vice Chair of the Association and Superintendent of St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo. In addition to our two schools, the nine other 4201 Schools are located on Long Island, Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, Westchester and Rochester.

We come before you today first to thank the Legislature and the Governor for your longstanding support of our students. Specifically we appreciate the language included in last year's budget to allow for additional support for technology for 4201 schools with the passage of the Smart School's Bond Act. We look forward to working with the New York State Education Department on meeting the requirement for the investment in technology you have provided.

As you know, starting in 2011-12, the process for funding our schools was radically changed. This change initially caused a number of both fiscal and administrative challenges. With your help we have been able to work through several of our concerns.

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PARITY WITH PUBLIC SCHOOL INVESTMENTS - The 4201 Schools need your help this year; we appreciate your consideration of the following budget recommendations:

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In addition, we recommend that the total increase be distributed among the 11 state-supported schools for the deaf, blind and physically disabled based on the number of students served at each school and applied to each school's Certificate of Approval (COA).¹

Finally, we recommend that the investment be appropriated directly to the 4201 schools - similar to the state's support of deaf infant, residential, summer school and in a manner similar to previous budgets. In addition, a direct appropriation will prevent an increase to the per pupil charge (PPC) thereby eliminating any fiscal impact to local school districts.

In addition to operational support for the educational programs at the 4201 schools, we would like your consideration of investing a portion of the settlement funds to improve the health and safety of our facilities and grounds. We recommend a total investment of \$11 million to support delayed capital needs.

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You have helped us reinforce the message that for children with low-incidence disabilities (deafness, blindness or severe physical disability) -- special education services, and their core communication components are a fundamental educational right - not an indulgence.

DEDICATED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR STUDENTS - The 4201 Schools Association remains committed to the responsible use of taxpayer funding while providing the best educational services to our students. The schools for the deaf, blind and severely disabled have been

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partners with the State for almost 200 years. This partnership is stronger than ever because of the support you have provided our students.

We invite you all to visit our schools and to learn more about our efforts to enable children with low-incidence disabilities to be successful students and citizens. And we stand ready to “be part of the solution.”

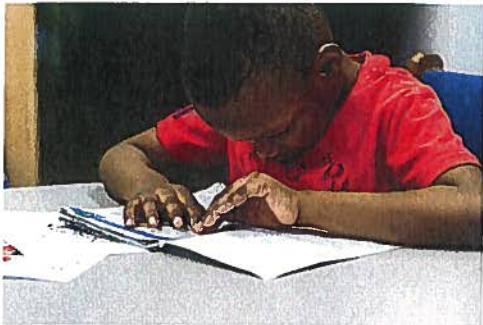
Respectfully submitted

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of an appropriate education program. There are no charges or fees to parents for educational costs, transportation, room or board.

Our students benefit from the academic programs, vocational programs, life skills programs and other specially designed programs at the 4201 Schools. They also take part in the interscholastic sports and other extra-curricular and co-curricular activities at their school. Our

schools also work with children with multiple disabilities, for whom the schools are educational/therapeutic environments that foster growth and development in all areas -



academic, sensory, and physically. Some of our students with multiple disabilities may always need certain supports to achieve an interdependent adult life, but for whom academic and personal success is attainable and an important part of our schools' mission.

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The 4201 Schools provide quality education services to children with low incidence disabilities. Our schools are working constantly to support the academic progress and success of the students we serve.



STUDENT SUCCESSES & OUTCOMES - Each of our schools is dedicated to fulfilling the full potential of each of our students, regardless of their level of ability. Examples of typical work, outcomes and success of several of our recent students follow:

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Another common success story shared about many students from their family members is the experience of seeing their Deaf child as a **CAPABLE, INDEPENDENT** (according to their own individual abilities) and successful child for the first time. Where families may have coddled the child, once they saw that they could be pushed to be independent, they became part of that effort. In one case, this was seen when staff insisted a child, who had difficulty walking due to his CP, was required to walk independently down a hallway on their own. He used the wall for support, and amazed his mother at his ability to ambulate without her help. Things proved to be a huge lesson for both of them. And now, eleven years later, as he prepares for his 8th Grade graduation, he independently moves throughout the building with much success and a great sense self-confidence in his ability to do so.



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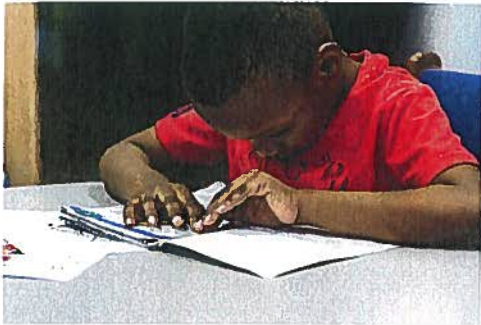
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