



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

## Senator Webb & Assemblywoman Lupardo Announce Support for Roosevelt Elementary Included in State Budget

LEA WEBB April 24, 2024

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### Will Help School Make Crucial Renovations and Repairs

(BINGHAMTON, NY) – Senator Lea Webb and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo announced today that a provision was included in the recently passed state budget that will help pay for major renovations to Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School. A provision has been included in the recently passed New York State Budget to allow the Binghamton City School District to access twice their multi-year cost allowance for building aid, helping to fund Roosevelt's

much-needed renovation and reconstruction. This comes after a nearly year-long push by the Legislators, School District Officials and community members for state aid.

In the past, access to additional building aid was limited to larger school districts. A Webb-Lupardo bill that would have accomplished this was vetoed by the Governor in December 2023. In her veto message, the Governor explained that the issue should be addressed in the context of the state budget, which is what just occurred.

The school's facilities have been in dire need of an upgrade for years, with outdated infrastructure and safety concerns posing serious challenges. During the District's five-year Facilities Review, Roosevelt Elementary was designated as a high needs school, primarily due to the extensive use of asbestos for fireproofing and insulation, affecting 85% of the building. Additionally, the current classroom sizes fall below minimum square footage standards, making it difficult to provide adequate instructional support services and essential community health services through the School-based Health Clinic.

Roosevelt Elementary School serves students on the northside of Binghamton, the most economically distressed part of the city. This community has been designated both a child care and food desert and has limited access to public transportation and services. This spending flexibility will help provide much-needed resources as well as a safe, nurturing learning environment for the children who attend school there. Updates will be forthcoming on the project's timeline.

"Today marks a monumental step forward for the children and families of Roosevelt Elementary and the broader Binghamton community," **said Senator Lea Webb**. "I am proud to have led this initiative with Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo to secure this substantial investment for Roosevelt Elementary in our state budget. This funding will enable long-overdue upgrades and modernization efforts that will transform the school into a state-of-

the-art facility. By enhancing the physical infrastructure, we are affirming our commitment to providing a safe, nurturing learning environment for our children and enhancing a vital resource center for the entire community. I am deeply appreciative for the unwavering support of the leadership at Binghamton City School District, and the dedicated advocates and community members. Together, we have secured a win that will resonate for generations to come."

**Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo said,** "After learning of the dire need for renovations at Roosevelt Elementary, Senator Webb and I did everything possible to help speed up the financing of this project. After several tries we are relieved that support was included in the recently passed state budget to make it happen. The school district will now be able to provide a quality learning environment for children on Binghamton's Northside sooner, with fewer disruptions. I'd like to thank Senator Webb for her partnership, and to the school district and members of the community for their persistent advocacy for this school."

"This is a huge win for students and staff at Theodore Roosevelt, the residents of Binghamton's North Side, and the entire BCSD community," said **Superintendent Dr. Tonia Thompson.** "This funding will allow us to complete much-needed renovations to the school as quickly as possible, saving taxpayers money in the process. Theodore Roosevelt is a tremendous asset to this part of our community and bringing it into the 21st Century will ensure it continues to serve future generations of Binghamton families. Thank you Assemblywoman Lupardo & Senator Webb for their hard work to secure this critical funding."

**Steve Seepersaud, School Board President,** said "The Board of Education is very thankful for Assemblywoman Lupardo & Senator Webb's work in this endeavor and grateful that the Governor sees the value in our project. An improved Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School will be a tremendous benefit for our kids, and it is a significant and much-needed investment

in the North Side. Being able to access these funds will enable us to preserve the quality of our neighborhood schools across the district.”

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[Watch the Full Press Conference Here \(LINK\)](#)