



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo: Local Schools Use Opportunity To Press For Balance in Education Aid

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 17, 2011

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Balance was the critical issue addressed by local school leaders who this week accepted Senator Joseph A. Griffo's offer to meet personally with Senate Education Committee Chair John Flanagan to discuss school aid in the coming state budget.

"The superintendents and school board representatives understand that the state cannot function the way it has, but they also bring to the discussion a real world perspective that rural districts and poorer districts need to have their needs addressed when the state develops its formula for school aid," Griffo said. "One of the reasons I wanted to have Senator Flanagan here was to hear this perspective, because to me the needs of young people in our rural areas and our lower-wealth communities are top priorities. I thank the school officials who attended for making the most of the opportunity that I offered them to have direct communication with one of the major voices in shaping the final state education budget."

Griffo said that during the meeting, school officials made their concerns known. "We're hearing a lot of them express concerns about what that will mean to their programs and some of the activities within the school system. My concern is that the cuts are not disproportionate," said Griffo.

Flanagan says other steps are also necessary, and echoed Griffo's position that overhauling mandates must be done at this time when fiscal realities mean the state has to take a new approach.

"We need to do real mandate relief," said Flanagan. "In a time when it's hard to find money -- extra money to give people, it is all the more important to say, 'Okay, we're gonna listen.'"

Griffo said that school leaders from across the 47th District were invited to meet with Flanagan. Districts represented at the meeting included Madison-Oneida BOCES, Stockbridge Valley, Vernon-Verona Sherrill, Jefferson-Lewis BOCES, Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES, Oriskany, Massena, Remsen, Hamilton, Whitesboro, Westmoreland, New Hartford, and Holland Patent. NYSUT (New York State United Teachers) was also represented at the meeting.

Watch a clip of the meeting here:

<http://www.nysenate.gov/video/2011/feb/25/2-15-11-sen-flanagan-meeting-educators>