



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Budget Includes Biggest Boost to Local Schools in Five Years

PATTY RITCHIE March 31, 2014

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### **Students, Taxpayers Gain from Plan That Also Reforms ‘Common Core’**

State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced that the new State Budget adds \$20 million in new funding for schools in the 48<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Jefferson, Oswego and part of St. Lawrence Counties—the largest hike in five years and nearly three times the increase proposed in January by the Governor for North Country and Central New York schools.

Jefferson County’s public schools will receive \$8.7 million in additional aid, Oswego County schools will receive \$5.4 million, and 12 districts in St. Lawrence County that are included in Senator Ritchie’s Senate district will receive \$6.1 million additional.

“Students, teachers and taxpayers depend on the state for aid to maintain the high quality of public education and to help hold the line on our school property taxes,” Senator Ritchie said.

“This added investment means better schools for our students and relief for taxpayers,” Senator Ritchie said.

The overall education aid increase of \$1.1 billion is the largest in at least five years.

Changes to the original budget proposal were designed to drive more aid to rural and high-needs schools, including Senator Ritchie’s priority of restoring funds from the aid-cutting “Gap Elimination Adjustment.”

Schools in our region will receive nearly \$6.8 million in additional GEA relief under the final budget plan.

“The GEA was a budget gimmick enacted before I took office, that unfairly decreases state aid to rural and high-needs schools,” Senator Ritchie said. “It’s been my priority to eliminate the GEA, and I will continue to work toward that goal.”

In addition to increased state aid, the budget also includes reforms to schools' "Common Core" testing program, including a two-year delay that aims to decrease the impact of testing on classroom learning time.

A complete chart of showing the new budget's estimated state aid and percentage increase for schools in Senate District 48 is available by [clicking here](#).