



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Latimer

## Senator Latimer & Assemblyman Otis Announce State Aid Increases to Sound Shore School Districts

GEORGE LATIMER April 3, 2014

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**(Albany, NY)** With passage of the state budget, State Senator George Latimer (D-Rye) and Assemblyman Steve Otis (D-Rye) announced increases in state aid to Sound Shore School districts.

Assemblyman Otis stated, "In this time of tight school budgets and pressure on the property tax levy, we are pleased to report successful efforts to increase state aid to Westchester school districts. This year's school aid package is the largest since before the recession and will help to maintain the educational programming our school districts work so hard to provide."

Senator Latimer, the Senate Education Committee's Ranking Member said, "This is the second straight year that funding for these districts has increased. I am pleased that the state budget includes increases over last year and over the amount proposed in the Executive budget in January."

The adopted state budget includes a statewide increase of \$1.1 billion in aid to school districts that was accomplished by prioritizing education spending. Westchester's 40 school districts

will receive an increase of \$56 million (\$19.4 million more than proposed in the original Executive budget).

In addition, the Smart Schools Bond Act, if passed by referendum in November, will provide additional funding for important technology upgrades for school districts. Westchester school districts would receive over \$61.7 million in funding for computer upgrades and other infrastructure needs. This will allow technology improvements to occur without raising property taxes or adding these costs to the tax levy.

The Sound Shore school districts of Port Chester, Blind Brook, Rye, Rye Neck and Mamaroneck all received increases above \$100,000 what had been in last year's state budget. Typically, aid was increased through additions in foundation aid, high tax aid and GAP restoration aid. The additions were negotiated with the support of Governor Cuomo as part of the budget process. The Assemblyman and Senator worked closely together in presenting their district needs to budget negotiators.

Senator Latimer and Assemblyman Otis jointly stated, "Protecting taxpayers and preserving quality education in Westchester can only be accomplished if state aid better reflects the needs of our communities. This state budget is a step in the right direction."