



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## GRIFFO, BRINDISI: NEW YORK STATE'S 2016-2017 BUDGET INCLUDES HISTORIC BOOST IN EDUCATION SPENDING

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO April 1, 2016

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION FUNDING, HIGHER EDUCATION, GAP ELIMINATION ADJUSTMENT (GEA)**

ALBANY -- State Senator Joseph Griffo, R-Rome, and Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, D-Utica, announced today that the 2016-2017 State Budget will provide a record increase in funding for local school districts.

The new spending plan approved by the Legislature includes:

- A significant increase of nearly \$1.5 billion in aid for schools, with about \$627 million in Foundation Aid to benefit the most financially troubled districts.
- Completely wipes out the remaining Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), a funding formula enacted nearly a decade ago that has penalized many school districts in the Mohawk Valley. This ensures that schools will finally receive the outstanding \$434 million in GEA funds that they are still owed.
- A tuition freeze and increased funding for the state's public colleges.

Brindisi and Griffo said State Aid Projections for 2016-17 show the following increases for some area school districts over last year's state aid figures:

<b>Utica City School District</b>	+\$7,921,248	+7.55 %
<b>Rome City School District</b>	+\$1,977,654	+3.32 %
<b>Whitesboro Central School District</b>	+\$1,500,461	+6.25 %
<b>New Hartford Central School District</b>	+\$1,196,484	+11.10 %

A link to the complete list of school aid projections for all New York State School Districts can be found at the bottom of this news release.

**Senator Griffo said:** “The more funding we can provide our schools, the better education they can guarantee our children, and I believe this State Budget goes a long way toward accomplishing that goal. Not only have we approved a record increase in funding that our schools desperately need, but we also have finally restored all of the remaining funds that school districts have been waiting for ever since the Gap Elimination Adjustment. Totally getting rid of the GEA is something school superintendents have been asking for to avoid any further staffing cuts, and I am pleased we were able to make it happen. This overall boost in funding will help ensure that the schools of the Mohawk Valley have the resources and staffing they need to provide the best education possible.”

**Assemblyman Brindisi said:** “This year’s budget includes a significant increase in funding for our schools, which will help them better prepare students in the Mohawk Valley for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy. The elimination of the GEA formula is a major victory for many school districts, because it lifts a significant fiscal burden, and will help prevent layoffs and program cuts that have hurt students. Many of the issues that have plagued our schools in recent years, including high class sizes, and reductions in programs that help students at risk will be eased with this sizeable increase in Foundation Aid funding, and with the elimination of the

GEA. ”

Brindisi and Griffo noted that the freeze on SUNY tuition was something many students and families strongly supported, and that it will help reduce the burden many college graduates now face paying off student loans.

**School aid runs for 2016-17 can be found at this link:**

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/2016budget/schoolaid/schoolaid.pdf>

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