



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo participates in joint budget conference subcommittee on education: praises some proposals, urges improvements in others

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. March 22, 2018

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At a recent first meeting of the Joint Budget Conference Subcommittee on Education, NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. expressed both praise and concern regarding newly released Senate and Assembly one-house spending proposals affecting education throughout New York State. Issues of particular importance to Addabbo included support for public schools, libraries, schools serving the disabled, and a variety of other academic programs and services.

“As the ranking member of the Senate Education Committee, I am honored to serve on this budget conference sub-committee to reach a compromise on education funding proposals recently adopted by the Senate and Assembly in response to Governor Cuomo’s 2018-19 Executive Budget,” said Addabbo. “This sub-committee will continue to meet until the two houses are able to agree on a final spending plan, which must be adopted by April 1.”

An issue of particular concern to Addabbo is Foundation Aid for schools, a funding stream that was initially created in response to the Campaign for Fiscal Equity court decision requiring that all children be provided with the “sound, basic education” guaranteed them under the State Constitution.

“Both the Senate and Assembly are proposing increases in overall education funding and Foundation Aid above the amounts advocated by Governor Cuomo in the Executive Budget,” said Addabbo. “I am pleased with both efforts, but I think we should move forward more quickly, as the Assembly proposes, to phase in Foundation Aid that has been lagging behind since the recession. We also need to make sure that this support is targeted to the neediest schools.” The Senate one-house budget proposes a \$957 million school aid increase over last year’s levels, including a \$717.2 million increase in Foundation Aid. The Assembly provides a \$1.5 billion overall increase, with significantly more Foundation Aid and a plan to phase in missing funds over four years.

Addabbo said he is pleased that both legislative budget proposals commit to restoring proposed cuts to library aid, providing support for community schools, reimbursing non-public school expenses, increasing funding for schools for the blind and deaf, and adequately funding summer school instruction.

“I am also encouraged that there is an effort to turn back the Governor’s proposal to tie state school aid increases to a requirement that large districts report their funding plans, for state

approval, on a school by school basis,” said Addabbo. “While I agree with more transparency in school district funding decisions, I don’t think it is good public policy to tie school aid increases to this reporting requirement.”

As negotiations continue on a final State Budget, Addabbo said he will work with his colleagues to encourage funding restorations for Teacher Resource Centers; school nutrition programs; and services to aid at-risk youth, like my Brother’s Keeper.

“We are facing challenging fiscal times, and need to close a multi-billion dollar state budget deficit, but I strongly believe that adequately funding our schools and varied education programs is one of the best investments we can make in the future of New York State,” said Addabbo. “I look forward to upcoming budget conference committees on education and developing a final State Budget that reflects my commitment to our children’s success.”