



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

## Senator Rich Funke and Pittsford Central School District Leaders stand together to announce that state funding will allow the district to provide Full-Day Kindergarten

RICH FUNKE April 10, 2018

| ISSUE: **FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN**



On Tuesday, April 10, 2018, Senator Funke joined school leaders and local education advocates including Superintendent Michael Pero to announce that language the Senator inserted into the 2018-2019 State budget will allow Pittsford to move forward with Full-Day Kindergarten.

“This wasn’t easy. It was a tough fight. Pittsford was one of only five districts in the state without full-day Kindergarten. We simply could not allow our students to fall behind for another year. The enhanced transition aid package I fought for in this state budget ensures that they will not,” said **Senator Rich Funke**.

That agreement secures an enhanced three-year incentive in the New York State budget for full-day Kindergarten in Pittsford. The Governor offered only a one-year incentive, but Senator Funke did not back down. He continued to pressure Governor Cuomo along with local grassroots advocates. In the end, the Governor gave in and supported a multi-year incentive for the first time.

Pittsford will receive 100% reimbursement for transitioning to full day Kindergarten in the first year, 65% in the second year and 35% in the third year. This is the largest kindergarten Transition aid ever offered in State history.

“I’m grateful to Senator Funke and his staff for working so hard to support our advocacy efforts for Full-Day Kindergarten in Pittsford. Without Senator Funke’s leadership, we would not be here today,” said **Superintendent Michael Pero**. “I know everyone involved agrees that providing FDK is in the best interest of our students’ social, emotional and academic development.”

Advocates of full-day kindergarten have long touted the benefits of a full-day program compared to half-day kindergarten. According to research, children who attend full-day K programs are better prepared for school; demonstrate stronger learning skills, and higher academic achievement in later grades.

“Thank you to Senator Funke, Superintendent Pero and our Advocacy Team, PTSA, Pittsford Cares, and all the PCSD staff, parents and residents who championed Full-Day Kindergarten

for our students and brought it within reach for Pittsford,” said **Amy J. Thomas, Board of Education President**. “The Board of Education and I look forward to the formal budget presentation that will include this important program.”

“The state standards were designed to be implemented in a full day program. With the additional time provided by Full Day Kindergarten, our youngest learners will now have the opportunity to learn, experience and interact at an age appropriate pace,” said **Dwayne Cerbone, Pittsford District Teachers Association President**.

“We are grateful to Senator Funke for advocating alongside us to bring Full-Day Kindergarten to the Pittsford Central School District,” said **Kim Huels, Pittsford Parent Teacher Student Association President and member of Pittsford Cares**, a group of community advocates with the mission to engage, educate, and mobilize all of Pittsford to take action to support and ensure sufficient resources for all of our students.

The new budget provides more than \$1 billion dollars in funding to support public schools in addition to this enhanced full –day Kindergarten incentive for Pittsford. This means predictability for the district, a smooth transition for students and protection for taxpayers.

“It’s time to start putting our children first. They are our future. As your Senator, I have a responsibility to make Albany work better for all of you. That is exactly what I plan to keep on doing,” said **Senator Funke**.