



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Announces More Than \$33 Million Owed To Western Queens Schools Allocated In State Budget

MICHAEL GIANARIS April 16, 2021

| ISSUE: **FOUNDATION AID, ALLIANCE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION, STATE BUDGET, SCHOOLS, QUEENS**



ASTORIA – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced the newly-enacted state budget would include additional funding of \$33 million dollars for schools in western Queens. The money comes in the form of additional Foundation Aid owed to school districts across the state as the result of a long-standing Court of Appeals decision. New York City as a whole will receive an additional \$11.9 billion owed to schools since 2006.

“This year’s budget is a moral document that reflects our values and our desire to rebuild in a way that leaves no one behind – especially our children,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “We have been fighting for years to adequately support our schoolchildren and I am thrilled our budget includes this long-denied funding. I am especially proud that \$33 million additional dollars will be making their way to western Queens communities.”

Schools in western Queens are owed more than \$33 million. [Here](#) is a list of what specific area schools are owed based on existing formulas. Aid is distributed to schools on a monthly basis beginning in September.

The [Campaign for Fiscal Equity \(CFE\)](#) was created when parents filed a lawsuit against the State of New York claiming that children were not being provided a sound, basic education as required by the State Constitution. In 2006, the New York State Court of Appeals ruled in CFE’s favor, and found that New York State was violating students’ Constitutional rights by shortchanging them of the funding necessary to meet these educational requirements. As a result, schools statewide should have received a \$5.5 billion increase in basic operating aid (also known as Foundation Aid) over the course of a four-year phase-in from 2007 to 2011.

The Foundation Aid formula was created in response to the ruling to distribute aid based on student need so as to create an equitable education system for all students.

Jasmine Gripper, Executive Director of the Alliance for Quality Education said, “Thanks to the leadership of the NYS Senate Democrats, students in Queens and all over New York City will receive a historic investment in their education. This monumental infusion of resources to our schools will ensure that students have access to the opportunities they need to succeed. This funding will enable schools to reduce class sizes, hire more counselors and increase academic support for students.”

Dr. Philip Composto, District 30 Superintendent said, “Working with students from District 30, I know this funding is sorely needed in our schools and at this unprecedented time now more than ever we need resources. Senator Gianaris has always supported our schools and advocated for our fair share of Foundation Aid and I am pleased that New York's students will be receiving the funds they are owed.”

Phil Wong, President, District 24 Community Education Council said, “Investing in our students is investing in the future of our community. I thank Senator Gianaris for his leadership on this issue and am eager to see the Foundation Aid go to where it belongs. Education advocates have been fighting for this funding since 2006.”

Deborah Alexander, Co-President, District 30 Community Education Council said, “New York City parents owe a debt of gratitude to Senator Gianaris and the legislature for *finally* holding the State accountable to our students and fully funding the long-overdue Foundation Aid. A sound, basic, and *equitable* education is more possible now, particularly for our most vulnerable children.”

Kelly Craig, President of the P.S./I.S. 78 PTA said, “Foundation aid is money that has long been owed to New York’s students for years and years and finally these dollars will go to the right place. I thank Senator Gianaris for his leadership on this issue, for fighting for our children, and being a constant partner to the P.S./I.S. 78Q community.”