



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Capital Region Lawmakers Announce Historic Funding for Guilderland Schools, Mental Health Outreach in NYS Budget for FY 2022

MICHELLE HINCHEY May 14, 2021

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL FUNDING, EDUCATION, GUILDERLAND SCHOOLS, 2021-22 STATE BUDGET**



GUILDERLAND, N.Y. – Today, at Farnsworth Middle School in Guilderland, New York State Senator Michelle Hinchey (SD-46) and Assemblymember Patricia Fahy (AD-109) were joined by Guilderland Superintendent of Schools Marie Wiles and district faculty to announce record-setting state funding for K–12 education included in the 2021-2022 State Budget. The Guilderland Central School District will see its State Aid increase from \$25.1 million to \$27.2 million as a result of this new funding, a more than \$2.1 million jump that will enhance

classroom instruction and support educators and students.

The core State Aid secured by the lawmakers will allow Guilderland schools to avoid layoffs, maintain academic programming and services for students, and restore all extracurricular activities to pre-pandemic levels, including in the areas of athletics, music, and the arts.

The additional aid will also enable Guilderland schools to make three new hires in the coming year to support the needs of educators and students, including a school psychologist at Guilderland High School who will work to improve the social-emotional and academic well-being of students with mental health concerns and learning disabilities. The district will also seek to hire a Literacy Coach and a Coordinator for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity, to build on the district's commitment to foster safe, supportive, and anti-racist policies and practices across all schools.

"Our schools set the foundational building blocks for students, and they require equitable streams of funding to provide our kids with a good public education and the supportive services they need to be successful both in and outside of the classroom," said **Senator Michelle Hinchey**. "I'm proud to have worked with my partner in government, Assemblymember Pat Fahy, and all of my colleagues in the Legislature to secure the highest level of State Aid ever for our local school districts. That means more money directly into Albany County classrooms, and, in the case of our Guilderland schools, the ability to expand social-emotional services to ensure that staff is available to help students with the mental health challenges that have grown over the past year. Funding our schools is one of the most important things we can do and I'm thrilled that these historic investments will be put to good use in Guilderland."

"This year's state budget reflects the needs of New York's public schools after a grueling and

unpredictable year and a global pandemic," said **Assemblymember Patricia Fahy**. "Record-setting and historic levels of funding for the state's education budget means that schools across the Capital Region and state will see increases in state aid to help maintain key programming and the ability to provide a holistic, comprehensive education in and outside of the classroom. I thank Senator Michelle Hinchey for a strong working relationship that helped secure these critical funds for our schools amidst a challenging fiscal climate. I commend Farnsworth Middle School and Guilderland Schools for utilizing part of these funds to improve student mental health and socio-emotional wellbeing, truly a game changer considering the impacts levied on students, parents, and teachers alike due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Guilderland Superintendent of Schools Marie Wiles said, "This additional aid is critical in addressing all of the work we need to do to recover from a year of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have so many students in need of support, beyond what we would think of when it comes to academics. The prolonged trauma and disruption to daily life have had a profound impact on our students' mental health and wellbeing."

###