



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

## Senator John W. Mannion Joins Teachers, Families, and Stakeholders Calling on Governor Cuomo to Immediately Sign into Law Legislation That Will Save and Expand Programs that Serve Children with Disabilities

JOHN W. MANNION July 22, 2021

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

SYRACUSE, NY – Senator John W. Mannion (D-Geddes) today joined teachers, families, and stakeholders to call on Governor Andrew Cuomo to immediately sign into law his bill that will save and expand programs in Central New York and across the state that serve children with disabilities.

The legislation S6516A – sponsored by Senator Mannion and passed unanimously in both houses - provides programs serving preschool and school age children with disabilities fair and equitable funding linked to the aid given to public schools

“Children with special needs are as valuable and as deserving of dignity and respect as all New Yorkers and state policy and state funding needs to reflect that,” said Senator Mannion.

“Every child in New York State is guaranteed a sound basic education under the law and it's up to all of us to deliver it. A sound basic education can only be achieved for these students if they have the proper supports and their schools are funded at the same rate as other public schools.”

“Schools like the Main Street School provide a critical service for individuals and families across the state. As a parent who had kids attend Main Street, I know the importance of SCIS and other 4410 schools,” said Assemblyman Al Stirpe. “But, unlike other educational facilities, the state funding for these schools uses an outdated formula, which includes a cumbersome appeals process that can take years to resolve. Meaning, many of these 4410 schools are years behind others in funding and lack the resources to offer state mandated services to their students. This legislation will put these community assets on par with their peer institutions and make sure all have the funding needed to play an essential role in the public education system.”

Programs serving children with disabilities have been chronically underfunded - causing closures and limiting services to students in communities throughout New York State. When enacted, this legislation will keep current programming in place, and provide opportunities to reinstate programming in underserved communities throughout New York.

Decades of research shows that early investment in children yields tremendous results. For preschool students with disabilities the return on investment and future cost savings are even greater. Recent data indicates preschool students with disabilities who receive

appropriate special education and therapy services need fewer if any additional services from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Toni'Lyn Brauchle is a parent, former school board member, currently serving youth as the director of the CanTeen Youth Center in Cicero New, NY. "Services, supports and opportunities provided for our young people in a timely and equitable fashion are the key foundation for their growth as healthy, contributing members of our society. As a parent whose child received these services, I can speak to the life long (he is now 32) positive impact those early interventions provided. As the director of the CanTeen Teen Center, I have seen time and time again the wonderful outcomes that can blossom out of early foundational supports. I truly believe in casting a wide net to gather all of our young people under our wings and providing them and other families the resources needed to do the task well. Thank you to Senator Mannion for his dedication to New York's kids and for investing in our future!"

Phil Cleary is a career preschool special education teacher. He currently serves as the Political Action Coordinator for New York State United Teachers in Central New York."Providing New York's youngest citizens with the educational and therapy services they need is the best investment we can make. When our kids reach their fullest potential everyone benefits. We are truly thankful for the partnership and power that has come from building relationships with parents, teachers and having a champion like Senator John Mannion in the NYS Legislature. I urge Governor Cuomo to sign this important legislation as soon as possible."

Daniel Bowles is a parent and school administrator. He is currently Superintendent of the North Syracuse Central School District. "Having the ability to identify and prevent educational gaps before they occur, right here at the preschool level, is a tremendous tool in building successful academic careers for ALL students. Current funding formulas are inadequate. The bill proposed to increase funding for 4410 programs will help make up for some devastating inefficiencies. This funding will directly benefit children and families who need additional support services."

Danielle Luckenbaugh is a second grade teacher at the Smith Road Elementary School in North Syracuse. "At 18 months old, I became a student at the North Syracuse Early Education Program. With the help of my teachers and therapists, I was able to adapt to life with one arm without ever realizing I was different from my peers. I received Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy and gained necessary life skills through play therapy as well. I believe that the early interventions I received molded me into the determined and independent person that I am today. The relationships that I made with my teachers inspired me to become an educator. After graduating from college, I began my career in education. Today I am a second grade teacher at Smith Road Elementary in North Syracuse and have the privilege to see many NSEEP graduates succeeding on a daily basis."

Dawn Hussein is a principal of the North Syracuse Early Education Program in the North Syracuse Central School District. "Research shows that there are proven benefits to early childhood intervention services. The North Syracuse Early Education Program has been

serving special education preschoolers alongside general education peers for over 40 years. Lack of sufficient funding to 4410 programs has caused many to close their doors which leads to less comprehensive support for children across Onondaga County and New York State. Senator Mannion’s legislation delivers a new funding methodology that will guarantee sustainable programming for preschoolers with disabilities.”

Dr. Kathleen Esposito Ed. D., a parent, grandparent, and former administrator of the North Syracuse Early Education Program in North Syracuse said, “During the pandemic our nation learned how important it is to be together in school where children can learn and grow. For children with disabilities this is especially important. This bill will stabilize the funding formula so that children in need of education and therapy services will have access regardless of their zip code.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2021-S6516A**

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- Introduced

- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Vetoed By Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Creates the calculation by which to determine yearly tuition and regional rate reimbursement for approved school-age and preschool special education programs

May 04, 2021

Vetoed

Sponsored by **John W. Mannion**

Do you support this bill?