



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

## Senator John W. Mannion & Senator John Liu Join Teachers, Families, and Stakeholders Calling on Governor Hochul to Sign Legislation that Will Save and Expand Programs that Serve Children with Disabilities

JOHN W. MANNION November 15, 2021

| ISSUE: **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, DISABILITIES, FUNDING, EQUITY**

NEW YORK, NY – Senator John W. Mannion (SD-50) and Senator John Liu (SD-11) today joined teachers, families, and stakeholders at the Hawthorne Country Day School in Manhattan to call on Governor Kathy Hochul to immediately sign legislation that will save and expand programs across New York 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

Senator John W. Mannion (SD-50), Chair of the Senate's Committee on Disabilities said, "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. 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."

Senator John Liu (SD-11), Chairperson of the Senate's Committee on NYC Education said, "We rely on these schools and programs to educate our special-needs school kids, but then burden them with unnecessarily complex reimbursement procedures that result in unpredictable funding streams which don't allow them to serve current students. It's time to fix this long-standing problem so that schools can focus on teaching and less on toiling through bureaucratic red-tape, and we ask the governor to sign this bill into law."

Programs serving children with disabilities have been chronically underfunded - causing closures and limiting services to students in communities throughout New York State. At least 60 schools and programs have closed since 2013. 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.

Senator Shelley B. Mayer, Chair of the Senate's Committee on Education (SD-37): "All students in New York State have the right to a quality education. This bill, which I co-sponsored in the Senate, advances our goal of funding equity and ensures schools that serve students with special needs aren't left behind, providing comfort to parents who are concerned their children's services could be diminished. Thank you to Commissioner Rosa and Chancellor Young for their leadership and advocacy on this legislation. I am pleased to join Senator Mannion and my colleagues in calling on Governor Hochul to sign it into law immediately."

Senator Samra Brouk (SD-55): We must deliver fair and equitable funding to programs that serve children with disabilities. Every child deserves an educational experience that meets their needs, and educators and staff deserve the same access to state resources as their public school counterparts. These educators and staff are skilled, passionate and dedicated, and their work with our young people must not be overlooked. We have made record investments in Foundation Aid, and we must ensure that a similar investment is made towards young people who may have a disability. I've listened to the concerns of families of children with disabilities who live in my district and I will continue to fight for state resources to make sure programs for students for disabilities are equitably funded.

Senator Harckham (SD-40): "Establishing tuition rates for special education programs on par with our public schools is necessary to ensure a proper level of support for students with unique needs. I fully back the legislation introduced by my colleague Senator Mannion that

will increase tuition and reimbursement rates for special needs programs, which will help create an equitable share of resources for students and education professionals who deserve nothing less.”

Senator Roxanne J. Persaud (SD-19): “Every young New Yorker deserves access to the highest quality education, regardless of individual ability or special need”, said Senator Roxanne J. Persaud. “Strong investments in publicly-funded special educational programs ensure that developing young minds have the tools to surpass barriers and achieve scholastically”

Linda Tempel, Executive Director for I/DD Services, Heartshare: If services to New York City’s most vulnerable children in the education system are to continue, then tuition equity for the 4410 and 853 special education schools is imperative – there are no other options after years of neglect and discrimination against our students.

Gail Nachimson, Executive Director, HFI: It is time for NYS to ensure that all students with disabilities are treated equally. Students attending 4410 preschools and 853 school age programs are public school students. They have the right to a certified special education teacher and other instructional staff, as required by IDEA. Without the funding provided for in Senate Bill S.6516-A/A. 8013, our schools cannot continue to meet the needs of the children we serve, or provide for the many children who are awaiting placement in our schools. We are counting on Governor Hochul to do what is right and equitable for all children with disabilities in New York.

Christopher Treiber, Associate Executive Director for Children's Services, IAC: Children in our 4410 and 853 schools need to have a certified special education teacher without equitable funding with the public schools this is impossible to guarantee. We urge Governor Hochul to be a leader for children with disabilities and sign the tuition equity bill S.6516-A/A. 8013.

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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
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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?