



## Rye City School District

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Superintendent of Schools

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February 10, 2016

Dear RCSD Parents and Guardians, Faculty and Staff:

I am writing today to ask you to advocate on behalf of our school district to State representatives in Albany. It won't take more than a few minutes of your time, and it could make a huge impact on the Rye City School District.

As you may know, in 2010, Albany passed a measure called the Gap Elimination Act or GEA. Essentially, the GEA fills state budget gaps by taking back funding from public schools. In the 2015-16 school year, the RCSD lost \$166,900 as a result of GEA. In the Governor's proposed budget for 2016-17, the District is slated to lose an additional \$116,833. The RCSD has lost over \$2.3 million in State Education Aid since 2010. In addition, State Foundation Aid has been frozen for years. Rye will lose \$127,557 in Foundation Aid this year.

All this is happening while New York State is running a \$2 billion surplus.

Please see below for a sample email letter to New York State Senate leaders asking them to end the chronic underfunding of our school district by restoring our GEA funds and State Aid. The sample email letter is in Word format for ease of copying.

**Now is the time to act.** The New York State legislature is evaluating the Governor's budget proposals this week and next. The RCSD Administration, Board of Education and our local representatives, Assemblyman Steve Otis and State Senator George Latimer, are all working to end this inequity. Please add your voice to ours to demand appropriate levels of funding for our schools.

Sincerely,

Frank Alvarez

TO:

speaker@assembly.state.ny.us  
Flanagan@nysenate.gov  
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scousins@nysenate.gov

CC:

commissioner@NYSED.gov  
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otiss@assembly.state.ny.us

TO:

Speaker Carl Heastie [speaker@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:speaker@assembly.state.ny.us)  
Senate President John Flanagan [Flanagan@nysenate.gov](mailto:Flanagan@nysenate.gov)  
Senate IDC Leader Jeff Klein [jdklein@senate.state.ny.us](mailto:jdklein@senate.state.ny.us)  
Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins [scousins@nysenate.gov](mailto:scousins@nysenate.gov)

CC:

Commissioner of the State Education Department MaryEllen Elia [commissioner@NYSED.gov](mailto:commissioner@NYSED.gov)  
The State Board of Regents [regentsoffice@NYSED.gov](mailto:regentsoffice@NYSED.gov)  
Senator George Latimer [Latimer@nysenate.gov](mailto:Latimer@nysenate.gov)  
Assembly Member Steve Otis [otiss@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:otiss@assembly.state.ny.us)

In the proposed Governor's budget for 2016-17 our local school district, the Rye City School District in Westchester County, has once again been shortchanged.

Now that the state has surplus revenues, end the Gap Elimination Act and restore the funding that has been withheld from the District since 2010. Unfreeze Foundation Aid by reinstating the Foundation Aid formula. These painful cuts came about as a result of the recession of 2008. The recession is over. During Governor Cuomo's re-election bid, he announced the state has a \$2 billion surplus. There is no longer any reason to continue withholding school funding.

Rye, along with every other school district in NY State, is laboring under an allowable growth factor of .12%. All the while employee pension and health care costs and state-mandated program costs far outpace the allowable growth under the tax cap. If we cannot have meaningful mandate or tax cap relief, we must have robust help from the state in the form funding for education.

Rye's Assembly Member, Steve Otis, and our State Senator, George Latimer, have been tireless advocates on behalf of education and the Rye City School District, but they need your support.

I urge you to help New York State live up to its commitment to education by appropriately funding its public schools.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[ADDRESS]