

I am writing this e-mail to propose that you consider the following when you finalize your State Budget Proposal for the 2008-09 school year. I am asking you to consider the students and residents of Commack, New York on Long Island as you finalize your budget design for State Aid to schools. Many residents of this community, where I am privileged to serve as an Elementary School Principal, have found an increasing number of households struggle to "make ends meet" due to the fluctuations in the economy that we all do not seem to have control over. Increasing number of students in my school (Burr Intermediate School) find that both of their parents are working multiple jobs to afford their children the best opportunities for the future. Parent and residents support the schools that provide a top flight education for their children.

Commack's Board of Education, Superintendent and the PTA's throughout the district work together each year, over many months, to present a School Budget that support their goals for the students of the Commack School District. They take into account the circumstances facing the residents of the community. Like all New York State School Districts Commack residents rely on The Governor and the Legislature to support their efforts by providing State Aid that supports the School Budget.

I am asking that your State Budget proposal include increased State Aid to the Commack School District. Consider for adoption a Foundation Aid formula that would include the greater regional costs that affect all Long Islanders. I propose that the Foundation Aid be set at 4% for a minimum increase under the Foundation Aid formula.

I am asking that your State Budget proposal include increased Aid for Transportation. Transportation costs have increased steadily over the years as Aid for Transportation has decreased.

The Commack Schools community is proud that 97% of our graduating seniors have achieved Regents Diplomas and that over 90% of our students surpass the State Standard for "highly successful school districts" (passing seven state exams). These achievements are the result of a total community effort. New York State Aid increases to Commack will help continue this high quality performance by our students.

I look forward to your support of our students and the Commack, New York community in your State Budget for the 2008-09 school year.

Charles N. Heppeler Jr.
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