



## 2022-2023 Legislative Priorities

## Ten Legislative Actions For School Success

- **Modify the Annual Professional Performance Review Law (APPR):**
  - o School leaders want the current evaluation procedures revamped and a new system that is less dictated by the state and more locally determined, with integrity and that ensures a highly qualified educator.
- **Fix Civil Service:**
  - o Provide that if an employee has been provisionally appointed for at least nine months and no list is being offered for that position, the employee becomes a permanent appointment.
  - o Provide that schools can canvass from the top five highest scores on the exam, rather than just the top three.
  - o Prohibit counties from mandating that schools canvass from the county list before expanding their options.
- **Enhance Student Safety:**
  - o Promote collaboration between school districts and local law enforcement agencies in implementing “handle with care” programs, informing the school that a family or student has experienced a traumatic event outside of school hours.
  - o The state should provide an allocation of dollars exclusively for school safety purposes, but with broad allowable uses.
  - o Prohibit county boards of election from requiring school buildings to be used as election sites.
- **Expand Reserve Fund Flexibility:**
  - o In recognition of the state’s understanding of the benefits of reserves and their commitment to increase its “rainy day” fund to 15% of the state’s total budget, school districts ask and deserve the same opportunity to manage their finances and provide a modest increase in the unrestricted fund balance.
- **Support Career and Technical Education:**
  - o Increase the amount of CTE Instructional salary that is aidable in the current formula from \$40,000 to \$60,000 over the next three years and adopt a commensurate increase in Special Services Aid.
  - o Consider phasing in a new tier of BOCES and Special Services Aid that reflects the current and future costs of these programs.
- **Increase Capital Outlay Authority:**
  - o Increase the limit to a minimum of \$250,000 adjusted by the Building Aid Regional Cost Factor and up to a maximum of \$500,000.
- o Authorize use of capital outlays for multiple buildings in a year. (Schools are presently limited to using the outlay funds on one building.)
- o Authorize multiyear project approval. (Schools should be able to request project approval for multiple capital outlay projects for up to five years), resulting in reduced waste and an increase in the impact of these dollars.
- **Extend Retiree Earning Limit Exemptions:**
  - o The state suspended the limitation on earnings of more than \$35,000 for retirees receiving a state pension that are employed by schools. Schools are faced with labor shortages, and this statute is set to expire at the end of this year. The law should be extended through the 2024-2025 school year to provide ongoing employment assistance for schools.
- **Support “Grow Your Own” Staffing Initiative:**
  - o Funding “grow your own” teacher initiative would be a long-term strategy that could also advance another critical goal – achieving greater diversity in the school work force.
- **Modify the Tax Cap:**
  - o Eliminate negative tax levy caps.
  - o Include Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) in the tax base growth factor.
  - o Increase pension exclusion flexibility (by a simple 2% and not by 2 percentage points).
  - o Exemption of Security Costs.
- **Streamline School District Planning and Reporting Requirements:**
  - o An accretion of reporting and planning requirements has increased demands on school and district administrators. Some districts may have added administrative positions to meet the demands, while in smaller and poorer districts, leaders have been diverted from responsibilities more essential to students and taxpayers. The State Education Department intends to launch a multi-agency review of these requirements. The Department should be empowered to terminate requirements imposed under the Education Law, with advance notice to the Governor and Legislature. Also, duplicative school level financial reporting should be allowed to expire, as scheduled, on June 30, 2023.

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