



MOUNT SINAI UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Superintendent of Schools

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January 19, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to express our deep concerns regarding the recent changes in the state budget, particularly the reduction in Foundation Aid for the 2024-25 school year.


As you are aware, Foundation Aid is a vital source of revenue for school districts across New York State, and its impact on the quality of education we can provide to our students cannot be overstated. For the Mount Sinai School District, Foundation Aid constitutes 18.91% of our revenue. The proposed budget for the 2024-25 school year allocates \$12,637,094 in Foundation Aid to our district, which represents a substantial reduction of \$1,332,085 from the previous year.

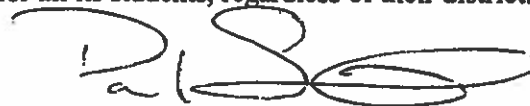
This reduction is particularly concerning given that our district's enrollment has remained steady, and the costs associated with meeting our students' diverse needs have increased significantly. The marginal increase of 3.15% in Foundation Aid last year barely met our requirements, and the current proposed reduction threatens our ability to provide essential services and educational opportunities.

We understand the challenges of budgeting at the state level, but it is crucial to recognize the real-world impact that such financial decisions have on our students and educators. Reductions in Foundation Aid directly affect our ability to maintain quality education, support services, and enrichment programs that are crucial for the holistic development of our students.

In light of this, we respectfully request the State to re-examine the proposed budget and consider the adverse effects of the reduction in Foundation Aid on districts like ours. We believe that investing in education is investing in the future of our state, and it is essential that this is reflected in our budget priorities.

The decisions made in Albany have direct and significant consequences on the lives and futures of our children. Our students and community deserve equitable treatment and should not be penalized by a redistribution of funds that undermines their education. We await your prompt action to rectify this situation and uphold the state's responsibility to provide adequate funding for all its students, regardless of their district.

Sincerely,

Christine Criscione, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools


Paul Staudt
Board of Education President

c: Assemblywoman Jodi Giglio
Assemblyman Ed Flood
Senator Anthony H. Palumbo
Congressman Nick LaLota
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