



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

News Release

For immediate release

Contact: Leah Kramer, Communications Associate • lkramer@afcnyc.org • 212-822-9524

New York State Budget Shortchanges New York City Schools

May 7, 2025 (NEW YORK CITY) — *Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York (AFC), issued the following statement in response to the introduction of the budget bill that includes changes to the Foundation Aid per-pupil funding formula:*

We are deeply disappointed that the budget introduced today will result in New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) receiving hundreds of millions of dollars less from the State than they otherwise would have, had the Foundation Aid per-pupil funding formula been left untouched from last year. While an overhaul of the outdated formula is sorely needed, the limited changes make matters worse — shortchanging NYC students as a result.

We began the year hopeful that the State would make changes to the Foundation Aid formula that would help schools better support students, especially those with the greatest needs. Instead, the changes in the budget bill released today would cause NYC schools to miss out on hundreds of millions of dollars intended to serve low-income students in a city where more than 146,000 students experienced homelessness last year. The changes moving forward measure student poverty using the federal poverty guidelines alone, disregarding major differences between school districts across the State and failing to account for the fact that New York City is one of the most expensive cities in the country. The federal guidelines make no adjustments for the local cost of living; they are the same in the five boroughs as in a rural community upstate, a Midwestern suburb, or a small town in the Sunbelt.

While the Senate and the Assembly budget proposals would have provided an update to the Regional Cost Index (RCI), which has not been updated since 2006, to reflect the higher costs in New York City, this budget bill provides an RCI update for Westchester only. The Assembly budget proposal also included an increased weight for English Language Learners from .5 to .65, but the budget bill introduced merely updates the weight for ELLs to .53—restoring an estimated \$30M of the \$350M lost through the changes first proposed by the Governor. This increase falls far short of the funding needed to mitigate the harmful impact of the changes first proposed by the Governor—not to mention to meet the needs of the growing population of ELLs. At present, New York State is clearly falling short: in 2024, the State's ELLs dropped out of high school at four times the rate of their non-ELL peers, while only 52% of ELLs who entered ninth grade in 2020 graduated in four years.

Every day, we hear from parents struggling to live in this expensive city and get their children the educational support they need. We thank the elected officials, parents, students, educators, and advocates who called for changes that would better capture student needs and reflect the rising costs of providing a high-quality education. We will keep advocating for the students with the greatest needs to get the resources they deserve.

About Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)

Since 1971, Advocates for Children of New York has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.