



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Elizabeth R. Berlin *Elizabeth R. Berlin*
SUBJECT: Regents 2016-2017 State Budget Priorities
DATE: October 21, 2015
AUTHORIZATION(S): *Mary Ellen Elin*

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

The Regents advance state budget priorities every year. At the October meeting, the relevant committees of the Board will review the proposals to be advanced in 2016-2017, other than State Aid to school districts, which is handled separately through the Regents Subcommittee on State Aid. The proposals will come before the full Board in November for approval.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Regents discussion of the 2016-2017 state budget priorities.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Regents approve the budget priorities as follows:

Higher Education Opportunity Programs	\$12.75 million
Enhancing the Achievement of English Language Learners	\$10.0 million
Improving Assessments for Students with Severe Disabilities	\$ 2.9 million
Building SED Capacity to Provide Support to the Field	5% set-aside
Public Library Construction	\$4.2 million
State Aid Modeling	\$2.0 million
Erasure Analysis of Test Results	\$ 500,000
Bridge to College & Careers Pilot Program	\$10.0 million
Facilities Planning System	\$ 4.0 million
Improving Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color	TBD



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Supporting NYS Access & Opportunity Programs

THE ISSUE:

Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP): HEOP serves over 4,600 students through 53 programs by providing financial aid, pre-freshman summer programs, remedial/developmental courses, tutoring, and counseling to students attending independent colleges. HEOP students, who do not meet the traditional academic criteria when they are admitted to college, typically earn their degrees at rates that equal or exceed general admission students.

Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP): STEP provides academic enrichment in science and mathematics with the purpose of increasing the number of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students prepared to enter college, and improving their participation rate in mathematics, science, technology, health-related fields and the licensed professions. STEP serves over 7,900 students through 54 programs.

Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP): CSTEP provides academic enrichment and research experience in STEM content areas in order to increase the number of historically under-represented and economically disadvantaged undergraduate and graduate students who complete programs of study that lead to professional licensure and to careers in mathematics, science, technology, and health-related fields. CSTEP programs serve over 6,300 students through 44 programs.

Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP): LPP offers comprehensive pre-collegiate/dropout prevention programs and services to over 10,800 youth through 41 programs across New York State.

Teacher Opportunity Corps (TOC): TOC enhances the preparation of teachers in addressing the needs of students at risk of truancy, academic failure, or dropping out of school as well as increases the participation rate of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged individuals in teaching careers. TOC programs only currently serve 80 students through 6 programs (or 5% of colleges with teacher education programs).

2016-17 Budget Request- \$12.75 million in additional state funds

The Department supports the following funding increases, above 2015-16 funding levels:

HEOP: An additional **\$2.5 million** to provide additional support to current programs.

STEP: An additional **\$2.5 million** to increase partial awards to full and fund another 5 programs for approximately 2,500 additional students.

CSTEP: An additional **\$4 million** increase partial awards to full and fund another 17 programs for approximately 1,900 additional students.

LPP: An additional **\$750,000** to provide a 2.5% increase to support enhanced outreach to partner schools.

TOC: An additional **\$3 million** to provide supplemental financial assistance to participants and fund new programs.

For more information contact the
Office of Governmental Relations, New York State Education Department, (518) 486-5644



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Enhancing the Achievement of English Language Learners

THE ISSUE:

Over the past decade, New York's English Language Learner (ELL) student enrollment has increased by 20 percent. According to the US Education Department, ELL student enrollment has increased by 18 percent nationally. Currently in New York, over 200,000 ELLs make up approximately 8 percent of the total student population. Last year, their linguistic diversity made up over 140 languages spoken in New York; for 61.5 percent of ELLs, Spanish is their home language. In addition, 41.2 percent were born in another country. In addition, New York school districts experienced a 44 percent increase in Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) between the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years.

While "ever ELLs" (students who were identified as ELLs at one time, but achieved English proficiency and exited ELL status) generally achieve graduation rates almost equal to that of all non-ELLs, the graduation rate of current ELLs lags well below that of non-ELLs. In June 2014, only 31.2 percent of ELLs graduated, compared to 76.4 percent of all students.

For years, the Department has advocated for a waiver from the United States Education Department (USED) to provide additional flexibility from federal testing requirements for newly arrived ELLs. Despite the Department's advocacy for a waiver, USED has denied the request. In order to better ensure that the assessment of ELLs is productive and contributes to improved teaching and learning opportunities, the Department requests state funds to develop Native Language Arts assessments which would provide ELLs the opportunity to test in their native language (initially Spanish) while they transition to English proficiency.

2016-17 Budget Request – \$10 million in additional state funds to support:

- Native Language Arts test development and implementation supports to provide districts with the option of offering this assessment when it would best measure progress of Spanish-speaking ELLs.



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Improving the Assessment of Students with Severe Disabilities

THE ISSUE:

Over the past few years, the Department has been engaged in numerous conversations with educators from across the state about potential revisions to the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) program. NYSAA measures attainment of the state learning standards for students with severe disabilities in the areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and social studies for Grades 3-8 and high school. As a result of these conversations, it was determined that revisions to the NYSAA are needed in order to better assess the range of students with severe disabilities as well as addressing time and resource concerns of the educators who administer the assessment.

The Department has developed a plan to create an enhanced alternate assessment that would allow students with severe disabilities to: more fully demonstrate their knowledge by adapting to their level of proficiency; be more efficient to measure by scoring this assessment either by or with the assistance of computer software; and provide useful and timely information by reporting scores electronically and much more quickly to inform instruction for the student.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released in Spring 2015 soliciting assessment programs that address, to the extent possible, the concerns and recommendations received from educators on the NYSAA. Proposal review committees included New York State certified educators from across the regions of the state, and these educators would continue to advise the Department on the implementation of the NYSAA.

2016-17 Budget Request – \$2.9 million in additional state funds



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Building SED Capacity to Provide Support to the Field

THE ISSUE:

Following the end of the Race to the Top program, the Department lost significant capacity to provide districts with implementation support and technical assistance. While the vast majority of the state's nearly \$700 million award was passed through to school districts in the form of grants and direct assistance, the Department did receive administrative funding that provided critical staff capacity, which has now been lost as of the end of the grant term.

Since 2011, state budgets have included new education programs for which the Department has received no additional state support. These programs include several new prekindergarten programs (including a \$340 million statewide full-day program), several rounds of P-TECH schools, receivership, community schools, extended learning time, performance improvement grants, management efficiency grants, and the Smart Schools Bond Act. As districts are faced with implementation of these various programs, they rely more and more on the technical support and expertise at the Department. In addition, the taxpayers of the state deserve to know that these funds are being wisely spent and that adequate oversight is conducted.

In the 2015-16 budget, the state general fund contribution to the operations of the Department accounted for only 9.7 percent of the agency's budget, compared to 26 percent for the Department of Health and 56 percent for the Office of Children and Family Services.

It is common in federal programs for the administering agency to be allowed a 5 percent set-aside from grant awards to allow for proper oversight, support and technical assistance. It is time that the state implement a similar mechanism to ensure that districts can receive adequate and timely support from the Department, and that New Yorkers can trust that their tax dollars are being wisely invested and properly overseen.

2016-17 Budget Request – Enact a 5% set-aside within all new programs for administrative oversight and technical assistance



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State Aid for Library Construction

THE ISSUE:

The state budget has provided \$14 million annually in capital funds to support State Aid for Library Construction grants since 2006-07. The program is highly visible and has been very successful. During its first nine years in operation, the program supported a total of 1,619 construction grant projects for 694 unique public library and library system facilities.

The Regents have endorsed the concept that all public libraries should be able to accommodate new technologies and provide the knowledge resources New Yorkers need to be successful in an information-driven global environment. Despite the many successes of the current State Aid for Library Construction program, there is still a pressing need for state support. The estimated need for new construction, expansion and renovation of existing library facilities to ensure that New York's libraries are accessible to all library users and can accommodate advances in technology is over \$2.2 billion. More than half of all public library buildings in New York are now over 60 years old, and more than a third are more than 30 years old.

2016-17 Budget Request –\$4.2 million in additional state funds



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State Aid Modeling

THE ISSUE:

The Department oversees the statistical data modeling of over \$23 billion in state aid to public school districts annually. A critical role for the Department is to provide estimates of school aid throughout the budget process to the executive and to the legislature, a process that involves calculating 15 or more formulas for nearly 700 school districts using more than 2.1 million data points. The current system is highly accurate and effective but was developed over 30 years ago, and has relied heavily on one highly skilled operator. The program, written in COBOL, currently runs on a dated Unisys mainframe reaching the limits of its useful life.

2016-17 Budget Request- \$2.0 million additional state funds to support:

- \$2 million for the development of a new state aid model that meets the following business requirements:
 - Speed – The current model can process calculations in under 5 minutes and it is expected the new model would maintain the same capability.
 - Flexibility – Formulas are changed or added every year and the model must be able to accommodate new data elements quickly.
 - Accuracy – School aid represents approximately 30 percent of state operating funds, so accurate calculations are of paramount importance for the State's finances.
 - Reporting – The system must be able to quickly export data to EXCEL and other reporting packages to support the variety of reports for purposes of public reporting.
 - User Interface – The new model must feature a graphical user interface that supports drop down menus and selections.



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Erasure Analysis of Test Results

THE ISSUE:

Erasure analysis involves statistical analysis of student answer sheets to identify irregular patterns of changed responses. These analyses typically focus on whether there is a statistically unlikely frequency of incorrect-to-correct answer changes within a sample of students, with an irregularly high number of changed responses providing evidence of possible test security violations, such as student, class, or school level cheating. Erasure analyses are among the most commonly used and respected tools for identifying possible testing irregularities, in part because these analyses are considered cost-effective compared to other forensic and audit techniques.

The Department will continue to work with regional information centers to collect the necessary data and seeks to retain additional expertise to perform analysis of the data.

2016-17 Budget Request – \$500,000 additional state funds



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Bridge to College & Careers Pilot Program

THE ISSUE:

According to US Census data, workers with a high school diploma or the equivalent earn 1.5 more per year than workers without these credentials earn, and workers with an associate's degree earn 2 times more. Bridge programs enable out of school youth and adults to obtain: critical basic skills, a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma, industry-recognized credentials and preparation for postsecondary study and careers.

Program applicants would be a partnership between an adult education program and college or training provider of demonstrated effectiveness. Awards would range from \$150,000 to adapt and modify existing literacy programs to \$600,000 for the most comprehensive models, with the average award around \$330,000. Program costs would vary given the sector being targeted (i.e. health care or food services) and other funding that the proposals might leverage, including existing state (i.e. Employment Preparation Education or EPE) and federal funding (i.e. Title I workforce development). This proposal could pilot up to 30 Bridge programs which would be funded in each of the seven Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN) regions of the state.

Proposals for these innovative approaches would include components such as:

- Career exploration and career assessment;
- Curricula and teaching models that provide instruction with co-teaching or dual enrollment in basic skills and occupational/career and technical education training with contextualized curriculum specific to a high demand sector matched to employer needs;
- Supplemental support from case managers or educational mentors/tutors to offer supplemental supports;
- Bridge coordination to proactively build strong relationships with employers, college and more advanced educational opportunities to connect participants with the next step in their career ladder;
- Apprenticeships/internships; and
- Job Placement, retention and advancement including sector-specific job coaches.

2016-17 Budget Request – \$10 million in new state funding



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Facilities Planning Project Management System

THE ISSUE:

The Department oversees facilities planning and distributes building aid to school districts. The software used to review, approve, and issue building permits and assist in the calculation of building aid for public school district capital construction projects is currently tracking more than 100,000 projects, with a value exceeding \$75 billion. The system first went on line in 1987 and runs on an obsolete DOS-based platform. The software is no longer supported by the company and there is a substantial risk that the Department will be unable to run it in the near future or the maximum number of records supported by the software will be exceeded. Failure to run the software would cripple the Department's ability to issue building permits, track and report on the status of capital projects, and pay building aid.

2016-17 Budget Request- \$4 million additional state funds to support:

- The development of a new facilities planning system that would:
 - Allow the Office of Facilities Planning to replace outdated business practices with state of the art management practices.
 - Decrease the timeline for processing applications significantly through electronic submission of materials.
 - Enable districts to check the status of their projects on-line, receive updates via email, and see if any additional information is required to be submitted.
 - Provide districts with instantaneous notification of project approval and receipt of building permits.
 - Merge the Office of Facilities Planning and State Aid Systems for seamless and accurate transfer of data, and to allow either office to answer school district and legislative inquiries more quickly and efficiently.



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Improving Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color

THE ISSUE:

In February 2014, as part of his plan to make 2014 a year of action focused on expanding opportunity for all Americans, President Obama unveiled the “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. Nationally and locally, too many males of color do not realize their full potential in our nation’s schools and school systems. A number of reports and studies have indicated that too often our schools have not served these students well. There is now broad consensus that the nation’s public schools need to vastly improve the quality of education these students need in order to succeed in college and careers.

In order to address the goals of My Brother’s Keeper in New York the Board of Regents established the Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color (Workgroup). The Workgroup has been examining the educational challenges boys and young men of color face on a daily basis and is developing strategies to address those challenges and expand opportunities to increase their educational successes. Following the completion of full day work sessions on September 29, 2015 at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn and November 9, 2015 at Nazareth College in Rochester, the Workgroup will be proposing a series of policy and budget recommendations that seek to correct the inequities that have hampered the educational opportunities, and ultimately life opportunities for boys and young men of color.

The Regents and the Department are dedicated to supporting successful programs that currently exist in the State, are excited about new and innovative opportunities to improve the educational destiny of boys and young men of color, and eagerly await the final recommendations of the Workgroup to Improve Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color.

2016-17 Budget Request – TBD

For more information contact the
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