



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: State Aid Subcommittee
FROM: Elizabeth R. Berlin *Elizabeth R Berlin*
SUBJECT: Discussion of Priorities for the 2019-2020 Board of Regents
State Aid Proposal
DATE: October 12, 2018
AUTHORIZATION(S): *Mary Ellen Eina*

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

State Aid Subcommittee will discuss areas of priority to be reflected in the Board of Regents 2019-2020 State Aid proposal.

Background

Each year the Board of Regents, through its State Aid Subcommittee, develops a proposal on State Aid to support public education. In its deliberations, the Subcommittee considers information gathered from advocates and practitioners in the field, the needs of school districts and an examination of various State Aid models. In September, the Subcommittee discussed critical elements to include in the 2019-2020 Regents State Aid proposal as well as agreed that, this year, priorities are:

1. Equity
2. Every Student Succeeds Act implementation
3. Early Learning
4. English Language Learners
5. Efficiency (Initiatives and investments that will enhance and/or streamline Department and school district functions).

The Subcommittee will reflect upon stakeholder feedback received to date including identifying the themes that emerged so that the information may be considered in deliberations. (Attachment A)

The Subcommittee will then discuss how the existing State Aid model aligns with, supports, or conflicts with the priorities and themes identified by the Subcommittee. (Attachments B, C, D and E)

From the discussion, the Subcommittee will provide staff input by which they can begin to frame a State Aid recommendation for the November committee meeting.

Timetable for Implementation

The discussion in October is meant to inform the framework of the 2019-2020 Regents State Aid proposal which will be presented at the November meeting. A final State Aid proposal will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval at its December meeting.



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October 4, 2018**

STATE AID SUB-COMMITTEE

From: Co-Chairs Ouderkirk and Mead
To: Vice Chancellor Brown and Regents Tilles, Norwood, Cashin, Johnson & Reyes
Copy: Chancellor Rosa, Commissioner Elia and Beth Berlin
Subject: Summary of 2019-2020 State Aid Sub-Committee Work and Collation of Responses from Interviews with Statewide Stakeholders

****Updated October 4, 2018** (original document dated September 16, 2018) Input added from the Big Five, NYSSBA, and the NYS Association for Bilingual Education. Items added are underlined.

To date Regent Mead and I have reflected on last year's process for developing the Regents' State Aid Proposal and Legislative Priorities and we have considered modifications and additions to the process going forward for 2019-20 with a focus on unmet needs and new challenges. This past week we completed interviews with our growing, and somewhat fluid, list of stakeholders which included NYS PTA (New York State Parent Teacher Association), SAANYS, (School Administrators Association of NYS), NYSUT (New York State United Teachers), SSFC (Statewide School Finance Consortium), RSA (Rural Schools Association of New York State), AQE (Alliance for Quality Education), NYAPT (New York Association for Pupil Transportation), ASBO (Association of School Business Officials), CSA, NYSCOSS (New York State Council of School Superintendents), and BOCES District Superintendent reps.

In our letter of invitation this year we provided five questions to which we requested each organization respond. Our request was well-received and proved helpful in keeping each session focused. Below we have listed the questions and the responses we received. If a response is followed by an asterisk, that indicates the need was noted by multiple responders.

What items that made it to the enacted 2018-19 budget did you feel were both worthy and impressive and should continue to be included again in the future?

- 2018-19 Budget not overly impressive in light of increasing inequities and challenges districts are now facing
- Need for effort to shape **innovative** formulas *
- Funding for Teacher Centers

- Increase state aid in an amount to meet more complex set of imperatives (safety, mental health, need for more Guidance Counselors, school psychologists, social workers, integrated programs, ESSA requirements) *
- Address the inquiry: what is the essence of ESSA
- Why do needs assessments surveys have to be separate? What requirements can be combined?
- Full restoration of original Foundation Aid *
- Must be adequate to maintain current programs and equitable to deliver greater opportunities to learn for all students in districts with limited resources, growing enrollment and students with greater needs *
- Continuation of full-funding of expense-based aids.
- Use of a district's percentage of Foundation Aid funding (as compared against the statutory formula) when determining their increase.
- The Big 5 are extremely supportive of the State's Multiple Pathways to High School Graduation; however, State Aid reimbursement under Special Services Aid for CTE in the Big 5 non-component districts has not increased in decades and only reimburses for students in grades 10-12. Special Services Aid, which is determined on a per pupil formula, must be increased and expanded to cover students in 9th grade in a CTE sequence.
- The phase-in must be accelerated for districts with high concentrations of students living in poverty and educating a large number of ELLs, while flexibility must be maintained to determine locally how best to deliver the programs.
- Increased state support for CTE Programs and P-Tech Pathways *
- Increased support for ELLs Programs, appropriate testing schedule and materials printed in additional native languages
- Maintenance of 80% summer school special education reimbursement rate
- Continued investments in after-school program funding, P-tech and early college high schools
- Increase funding for Community Schools separate from Foundation Aid Formula *
- Support for Family Engagement Activities *
- Update formulas including CWR, Regional Cost Index, IWI (Income Wealth Index) *
- Equity vs. Adequacy
- Kindergarten not mandated (nor is grade 12), needs to be addressed
- Concern for diminishing merger efforts and question why other alternatives are not being pursued
- Slight support of districts facing building aid penalty under old building aid process.
- Supportive of staggering building conditions surveys *
- Special education identification spiking up again, need for clear definitions of student needs and rationale for weighting based on single, dual and multiple special needs including language *
- MBK funding needs to be continued
- Need to continue to take bold stand
- Regents need to remain committed to their values/ need to push the limits/need to resist the resisters

What prior proposed investments that did not get traction this past year warrant a repeat request with perhaps a new approach?

- Planned Foundation Aid phase-in *
- Tax Cap continues to be problematic and needs to be re-visited *
- High tax aid frozen since 2013, needs to be addressed
- Continue to advocate for increasing state support for CTE Programs *

- Additional funding for ELLs (beyond regular Foundation Aid.) ELL set asides should become ELL Categorical) *
- Our advocacy needs to be consistent and strong for ELLS, mental health, school safety, funding for full day kindergarten, expansion of pre-k for all 4 year olds, expanded CTE, expanded development of end of course assessments for LOTE & CTE Pathways *
- Adjustments to Foundation Aid Formula: *
New costing out study
Review impact of enrollment-based district wealth factors
Account for property tax cap in the expected local contribution calculation
- Building aid and transportation aid amnesty
- 4201 school funding should be built upon by adding an automatic annual percentage increase
- Minimum wage reimbursement funding and Special Act Schools increased support should be improved without negatively impacting program levels or other staff

What new “asks” should be part of this year’s proposal? What rationale would generate legislative buy-in?

- Many students in our school districts (the Big 5), walk through hazardous or dangerous conditions to get to school. In some cases, parents chose schools outside their neighborhoods for safety reasons so their children can be transported to school by bus. The mileage limits for Transportation Aid no longer reflect the circumstances of our communities nor the needs of our students and families. We are seeking a designated Child Safety Zone Program to provide State funding below the mileage limits for transportation to and from school where there are hazardous and/or dangerous conditions in our urban districts.
- Recovery High Schools need funding *
- Caution re: impact of use of “set asides” i.e. for Community Schools. Recommend separate funding streams *
- Dedicated funding for professional develop for administrators including bilingual education *
- Substantial funding for Early Childhood *
- Commission a Task Force to provide recommendations to NYSED (and Legislature) for revised and updated Foundation Formula *
- Lend support to “Farm to School Programs” in area of grant writers for smaller districts to be equally competitive
- Increase in state reimbursement rate for certain school lunch programs using NYS farm products
- Define equity and fiscal equity. What do they look like across the state? What would need to be included in a Foundation Aid Formula whose purpose is to establish statewide fiscal equity?
- Last year we included an abundance of new initiatives. This year focus needs to be a year of implementation
- Culturally Responsive Education needs money attached
- Support for SEPTA (Special Education PTAs groups)
- Allow reserves for teacher retirement costs *
- Change regulation allowing flexibility for over-burdened districts; i.e. staggered Building Conditions Survey reporting and streamlining internal audit requirements as well as altering scheduling of same to alleviate drain on small staff(s). *
- Support for Translation Services initiated by PTA’s in partnership with schools and community

- Financial support for attracting, preparing, and continuous training of bilingual teachers and school leaders
- Support is needed to meet the mandates of multilingual students with disabilities

How would you prioritize your list of needs for students, staff, and/or district?

- Establish a statewide phase-in schedule of Foundation Aid to fully fund and include minimum increase for all districts *
- Impact of phase-in tiers has raised equity concerns
- All districts need to receive increase in aid to ensure high quality education for all *
- Save harmless concerns combined with enrollment declines *
- Support for services and programs to address the increased mental health needs of students *
- Consistent professional development on new initiatives *
- Need instructional support for literacy teams
- Targeted funding for school safety *
- Template available for trial runs of new aid and weighting combos/impact *
- Fixed costs need to be reviewed *
- Concern shared: Charters are killing us – financially
- Need funding to address safety/security issues *
- Some efforts circumventing local Board roles
- Continue to provide sufficient Funding for School Transportation Safety – continue to resist CAP proposal
- The Big 5 non-component school districts receive no targeted State Aid for professional development activities. A dedicated funding source is critical to deliver ongoing professional learning opportunities without having to compete for funds within a district's limited budget.
- Provide funding in support of Transportation Services for UPK children. *
- Allow expenditures for School Bus Monitors to be eligible for transportation aid (also impacts safety matters)
- Expand support for Early Learning Opportunities including bilingual students as well *
- Foundation Aid's Extraordinary Needs Count for English Language Learners only factors 50% of identified ELL pupils and does not include long term ELLS for more than six years, students transitioning out of ELL designation but still entitled to mandated services, and Pre-K ELLS.
- A designated categorical program should be adopted to capture costs not covered under Foundation Aid for all ELL students
- Fund expense-based aids *
- Improve measurement of poverty through use of Direct Certification and SAIPE *
- Equalize aid fully by eliminating .65 floor on income wealth and 2.0 ceiling for students in poverty in pupil need index *
- Use most recent data possible in funding formulas and measures of resource capacity/keep Foundation Aid unrestricted *
- Allow for aid to support increased security measures related to school buses (i.e. fencing to prevent mischievous activity, lighting in storage areas, surveillance cameras)
- Allow expenditures for extracurricular activity runs, such as curriculum related field trips
- Increase \$\$ for School Bus Driver safety training

- Encourage shared services in routing, monitoring, managing transportation between districts to save dollars, provide incentives to reduce pupil transportation costs *
- Increase appropriations for PYAs (Prior Year Adjustments) pay back sooner *
- School districts saturated with charter schools should have the right to approve a new or expanded charter school since growing charter school tuition expenses redirect funds away from remaining public school pupils and contribute to equity issues within a school district.
- Charter school accountability measures need to be strengthened to ensure enrollment accurately reflects district pupil demographics, that struggling students are not counseled to leave and financial assets are transparent and properly refunded upon a charter school's closure.

Would you suggest any changes in how we package the proposal and/or the tri-fold?

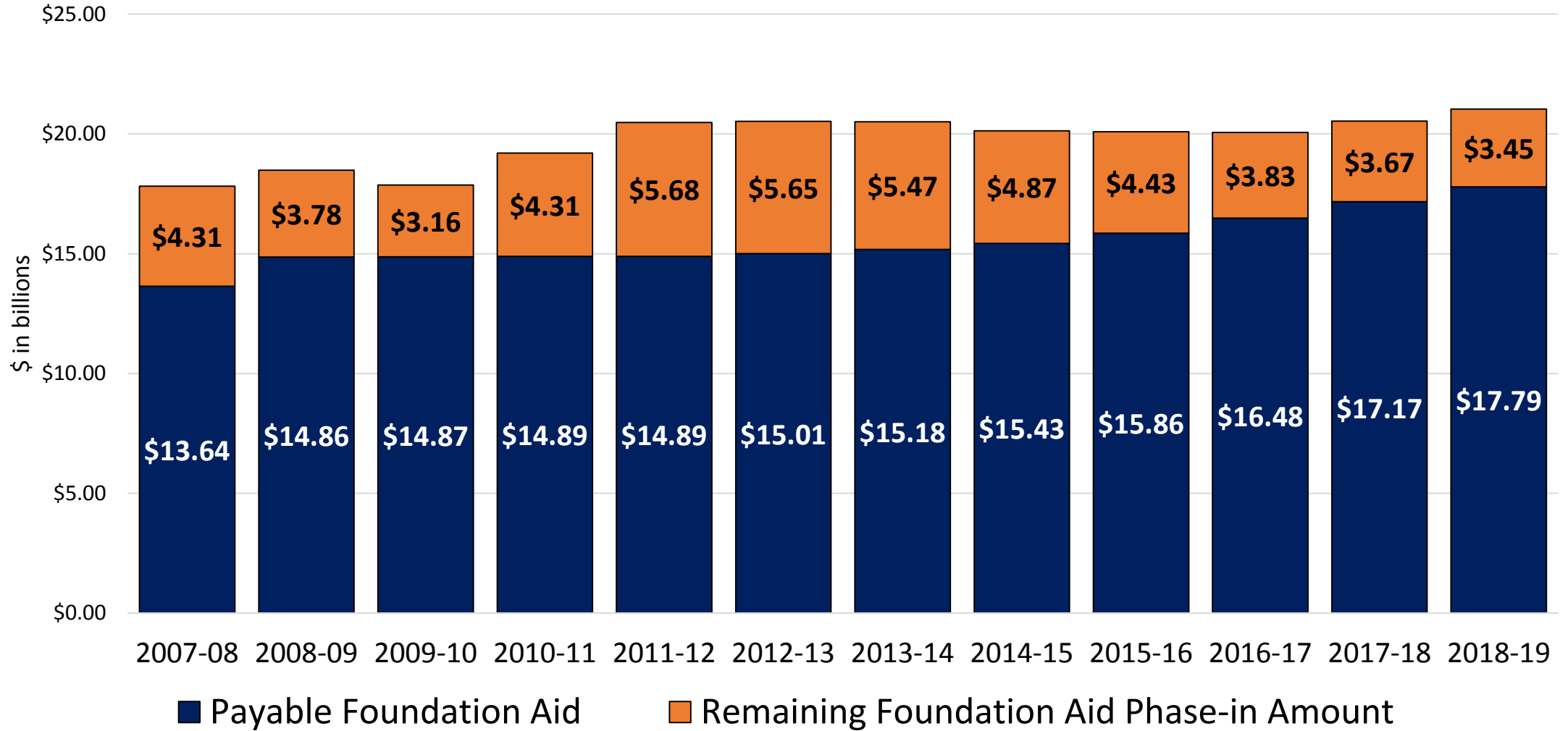
- Frame need for additional state funds in the context of maintaining current program levels in public schools rather than simply asking for “more”
- Any type of media/publications to advance a state aid proposal should be brief, direct, and designed for the audience for whom it is intended. Often our state level publications attempt to explain requests rather than communicate a message. Tone and image are critical for the message being received.
- The Regents have effectively packaged the proposal. *
- DO A LOT OF ADVOCACY!
- Use thematic approach – tie things together.
- ESSA should be added as Fifth Pillar on the tri-fold document *

Other

- Issue of sustainability *
- Issue of tax cap fluidity *
- Issue of weighting needs to be re-visited including students who have dual needs, such as bi-literacy and disabilities *
- Need for support in encouraging strong bilingual teachers to seek leadership positions as too often personnel charged with supervising bilingual education teachers and programs do not have appropriate background knowledge and experience
- Go high with “asks”. Coming in low is a disservice
- Opioid – need to ask for what we need *
- Greater need of students today: mental health *
- Education missing from election debates *
- It is our anticipation that the year will be filled with issues that arise quickly and need very quick responses. To that end, we extend our sincere offer of assistance and support of initiatives important to students and administrators across this diverse state.
- Leadership development lacking *
- Keep paperwork to a minimum
- No consistent agreement what every building must have
- Loss of foreign language programs
- Concern regarding chronic absenteeism
- Losing ground globally
- Losing jobs and people from NYS, concern for impact, especially on rural areas
- Research the use of the Seal of Biliteracy and the impact of its availability

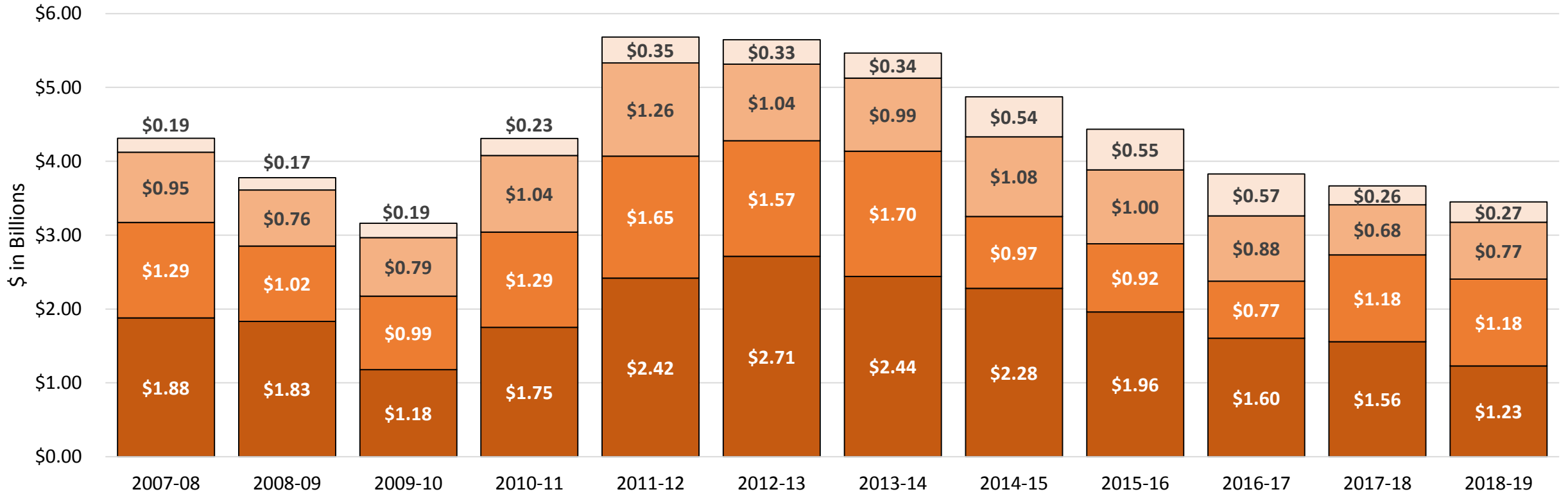
- Need to allow for additional reserves *
- Rural schools politically disadvantaged
- Need to shift funding to adjust for poverty *
- Transportation costs continue to increase due to cost of new buses, required safety modifications, needs required for special education
- Encourage more partnerships between schools, community, and business *
- Empty (relatively new) school facilities has financial impact (related to long- term declining enrollments). These districts no longer generate the amount of Foundation Aid they once did and therefore need state aid to meet these costs
- Similarities between urban and rural districts noted in terms of needs
- Regional high schools increase educational opportunities without merger, concept needs legislative approval and deeper study of potential *
- Provide flexibility for over-burdened districts through incentives and mandate relief
- Relationship between race and underfunded schools needs to be examined and addressed
- No dollars for guns for teachers!
- Noted last year's ELLs outperformed white students for the first time
- Debate about visuals (in recent article)
- Concern: roll out of Smart Schools Bond Act monies *
- Stress developing economic programs as way to get support for CTE programs
- Consider support for PTIC in case grant application through USDE does not materialize
- Hoping the discussion on hours of instruction would cause us to be more creative

Actual Foundation Aid Paid to Districts vs. Formula Generated Phase-in Amount



Remaining Foundation Aid Phase-in by Needs/Resource Category

The majority of new foundation aid would go to high need districts upon full phase-in



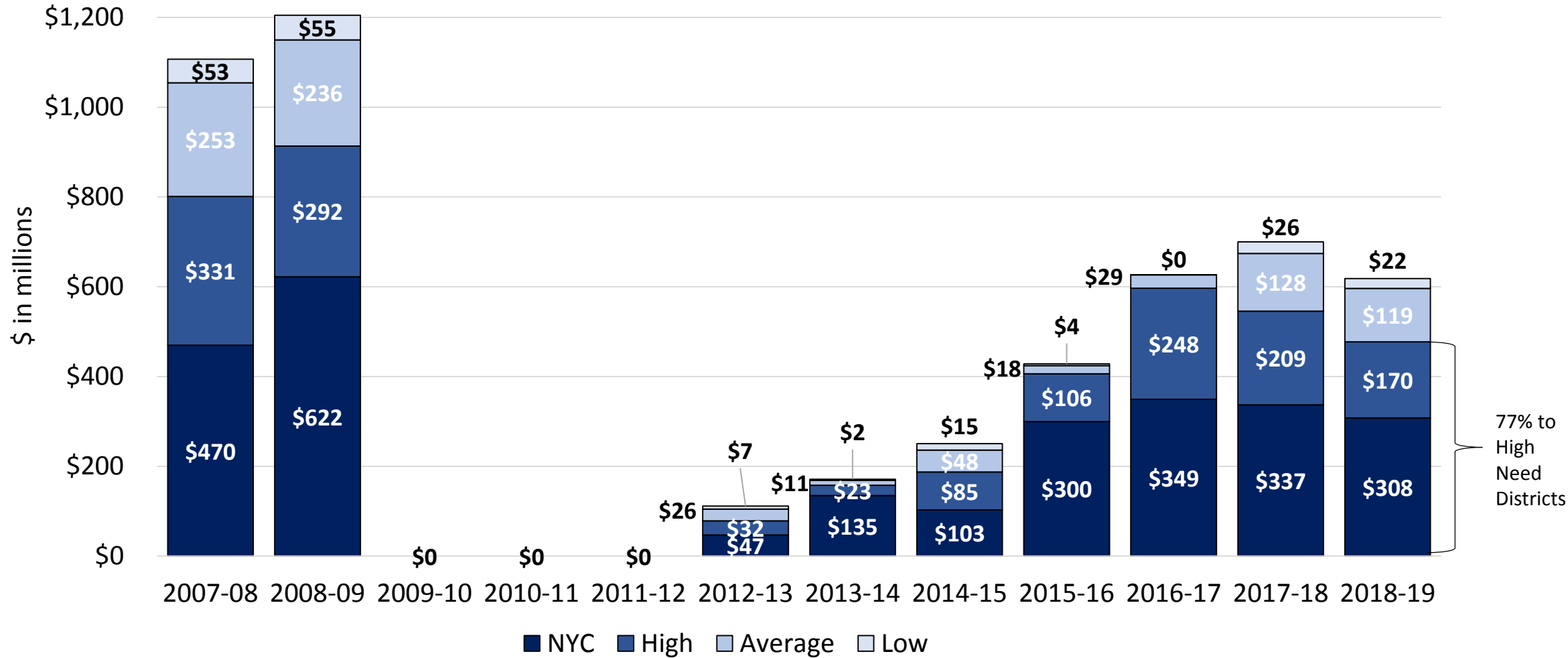
Remaining Foundation Aid Phase-in Amount as of 2018-19

	Amount Remaining	Percent Remaining	Percent of Remaining
New York City	\$1.23 billion	13.7%	35.7%
Other High Need	\$1.18 billion	20.7%	34.2%
All High Need	\$2.41 billion	16.4%	69.9%
Average Need	\$0.77 billion	16.3%	22.3%
Low Need	\$0.27 billion	25.3%	7.8%

- Low Need
- Average Need
- High Need
- NYC

Where Did Foundation Aid Go?

The majority of new foundation aid funds have gone to high need school districts



Note: Increases between 2012-13 and 2016-17 do not include amounts from Gap Elimination Adjustment Restorations

Actual Foundation Aid Paid to District vs. Formula Generated Phase-in Amount; by Needs/Resource Category

