



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 and 2019-2020 Budget and Legislative
Priorities

DATE: September 6, 2018

AUTHORIZATION(S): *MaryEllen Eina*

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Should the State Aid Subcommittee establish two processes related to the Board of Regents' review and recommendation of State Aid?

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.

The Board has identified the importance of understanding more completely the present-day effectiveness and equity of the state aid formula since it was established in 2007. Implementation of NYS ESSA plan including, but not limited to, transparency and establishing equity across the state, presents a unique opportunity to frame the discussion of the State funding formulas in a broader context and with data points that are currently not available. However, such an analysis is not feasible within the Board's annual four-month budget process. A separate and distinct process could be established to accomplish a more in-depth review. Topics that could be discussed include, but are not limited to:

- **Formula Structure:** Are there any structural changes to the Foundation Aid formula that should be considered?

- **Weightings:** Should any of the current weightings in the Foundation Aid formula, such as for students with disabilities, English language learners or poverty status, be adjusted, or additional weightings be added?
- **Categorical Funds:** Are categorical aid funds aligned to a specific purpose and being used in a consistent manner?

Further, a timeframe could be structured to enable stakeholder and public input into the process.

If there is agreement that an in-depth state aid review should occur, staff will advance a separate timeline and list of activities.

Discussion of Priorities for the 2019-2020 Regents State Aid Proposal

The Subcommittee will discuss critical elements to include in its 2019-2020 Regents State Aid Proposal. This discussion provides an opportunity to review and consider important topics, including investments the Board has recommended in the past, stakeholder input, and current policy priorities that should be advanced in the proposal this year.

Among the questions to be discussed are:

What will the Board priorities be for the coming year? Last year, the Board focused on the four E's:

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

This year it is recommended to expand the priorities to include English language learners, the five E's

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 areas where investment recommendations were not enacted – should they continue to be advanced in the 2019-2020 budget?

Are there new areas for prioritization?

Are there modifications within the existing State Aid formula that are consistent with the existing priorities, feasible within September-December timeline that should be reviewed (i.e. should the Board advance a proposal that reflects an update of the Need Resource Data utilized from 2003 to 2018)?

2019-20 Regents Non-State Aid Budget and Legislative Priorities

At the July retreat budget and legislative priority summaries were advanced for Board review and consideration prior to the beginning of the September discussion. Staff will seek feedback on the priorities previously established.

As was done last year, each committee through the leadership of the chairs is asked to review the initiatives that were advanced for the 2018-19 non-state aid budget and legislative priorities and confirm or modify recommendations. Among the questions to be discussed:

- Does the initiative still fall within one of the E's as there may have been statutory changes or funding investments that would motivate recommendation for removal or modification.
- What have we learned over the past few years in this specific area; how does that alter or support the request (i.e. does recent data underscore the need or show a decreasing utilization)?

Timetable for Implementation

The discussion in September is meant to inform the conceptual framework of the 2019-2020 Regents State Aid Proposal and Non-State Aid budget and legislative proposals that will be presented to this Subcommittee at the November meeting. A final State aid proposal will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval at its December meeting.