

Superintendent Dashboard Report

January 5, 2018

- We continue to advertise for three math teachers at the high school, two media specialists and an ESL teacher.
- We are awaiting a lease agreement from Marshall Farms for the District Office space. We anticipate receiving this in the next week.

Our plans for the \$30.5 million project will be reviewed by SED next week and we they provide feedback on any changes/modifications that need to be made. We will pass this information to you at our January 23rd meeting.

Principals continue to work with staff on planning for the move for grades 5-8. We are also preparing a community newsletter with a work-up of the modular and a “Q and A” to try and answer some commonly asked questions. We hope to distribute this in early February.

- Governor Cuomo presented the “State of the State” address yesterday and he insinuated school aid would be used to close the \$4 Billion budget gap. I have attached two summaries of his address to the email for your review. I will be making appointments with our legislators to discuss our students’ and community needs in the near future.

We have been meeting with administrators developing our 2018-19 budget priorities. Bob will be compiling and presenting budget information during the next several months as per his budget calendar.

- Melanie Stevenson will be presenting an update on our school report card and accountability status at Tuesday’s meeting. We have also invited the newly designated NHS members to the meeting as Senator Helming has sent certificates for presentation.
- I received a grievance from the NRWTA regarding an extracurricular appointment. A staff member applied for the position and I rejected the request. A non-staff member was then appointed to fill the vacancy. I will provide more information on this at our meeting on Tuesday.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Cinda or me. Also, if you email Cinda or me a questions or request for information, please copy the entire Board as other members may have the same question.

Enjoy your weekend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1-9-18	BOE Meeting, 6:00 PM
1-15-18	MLK Day, No School
1-23-18	BOE Meeting, 6:00 PM, HS Auditorium

Proposal: Expand Pre-Kindergarten for Three- and Four-Year-Olds in High-Need Schools Across the State

Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, the State has more than doubled its annual commitment to pre-kindergarten from \$385 million to more than \$800 million. In addition, since Governor Cuomo introduced three-year-old pre-kindergarten in 2015, more than \$30 million is now dedicated to high-need three-year-olds alone. Governor Cuomo will continue to invest in pre-kindergarten by providing an additional \$15 million to continue to expand pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds in high-need schools around the state. This will provide high quality educational programming and incidentally help to alleviate the childcare burden. In addition, to ensure that children of all physical and learning needs are able to participate in three and four-year-old pre-kindergarten, the new expansion will focus on including students in integrated or community-based settings.

Proposal: Launch a Five-Point Plan to Ensure No Student Goes Hungry

Governor Cuomo has invested more than \$150 million to support the transformation of community schools to ensure schools are meeting their students' academic and well-being needs. New York State also provides an additional per meal reimbursement to schools to assist with providing high quality meals for children. In 2015, Governor Cuomo established funding to support Farm to School implementation, and to connect schools with local farmers. Despite best efforts some students still go hungry. In 1994, New York passed a law requiring schools that are considered "severe need" regarding student eligibility to serve school breakfast in addition to lunch. However, New York was identified as in the bottom ten states for students participating—which means students begin their day hungry. In addition, news stories have reported the disgraceful practice of lunch shaming, which is denying a child food or embarrassing him or her due to inability to pay. The issue of food insecurity is not only limited to K-12 students. A recent national survey of college students found that 48 percent experienced food insecurity in the past 30 days. The data suggests that hunger is more common among college students than the U.S. population as a whole, in which 14 percent of households experience food insecurity each year. Governor Cuomo will launch a five-point plan to eliminate barriers to school food and ensure no student goes hungry:

- **Ban lunch shaming:** Lunch shaming is a disgraceful practice in some schools where children are publicly humiliated in front of their peers by adults for not having money for lunch. In many cases, these students are forced to wear a sticker or bracelet, or have their name called over the loud speaker. In other cases, these students are given alternative, lesser quality lunches, such as a cold cheese sandwich when other students get hot lunches. Other national news reports have reported children simply being denied food if they cannot pay. The Governor will propose a law that when passed, would immediately end the practice of lunch shaming of any kind. First, it will prohibit any public act to humiliate a student who cannot afford lunch. Second, it will ban alternative lunches and require students to receive the same lunch as others starting in the 2018-19 school year.
- **Expand breakfast "after the bell:"** High-need schools in New York are required to offer breakfast, but current law allows flexibility when it is offered. Therefore, many offer meals in only a limited time frame, which may be before buses arrive, making it inaccessible for many students. In order to allow students to have breakfast and to

prevent them from going hungry during morning classes, Governor Cuomo will propose requiring schools with more than 70 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch to provide breakfast after the school day has begun for the next school year. In successful breakfast after the bell programs, schools can either serve breakfast in the classroom, or offer nutritious vending machine options to ensure that students have access to breakfast as they start their day. In the city of Newburgh, where Breakfast After the Bell was implemented during the 2015-16 school year, schools have seen their breakfast participation rates increase by more than 100 percent. To ease the transition, the state will provide technical assistance and capital funds for equipment such as coolers and vending machines to support breakfast after the bell. An estimated \$7 million in capital funds will support expanded breakfast for 1,400 schools.

- **Expand the Farm to School Program:** The Farm to School program was created to connect schools with local farmers and offers technical assistance and capacity in the school to source products locally to help schools provide students with nutritious meals from food produced by local farms. Previous rounds of funding for this program have increased access to healthy, farm-fresh food for 324,000 students. This funding can be used for capital costs to support transporting and storing locally produced food, and to hire farm-to-school coordinators and trainings for crops and food preparation. Governor Cuomo proposes doubling the state's investment to add \$750,000 for a total of \$1.5 million in Farm to School projects. If passed, the program would serve an estimated total of 18 projects and 328,000 additional students, bringing the estimated total number of students served to 652,000.
- **Increase the Use of Farm-Fresh, Locally Grown Foods at School:** To incentivize school districts to use more local farm-fresh products, Governor Cuomo will propose an increase in the reimbursement schools receive for lunches from the current 5.9 cents per meal to 25 cents per meal for any district that purchases at least 30 percent ingredients from New York farms. This is a win-win for students as well as New York's local farms.
- **Require food pantries on all SUNY and CUNY campuses:** To ensure consistent healthy food options are available to young adults on college campuses, the Governor will require all SUNY and CUNY schools to either provide physical food pantries on campus, or enable students to receive food through a separate arrangement that is stigma-free. The Governor proposes a \$1 million state investment for schools to implement the program. In 2009, fewer than 10 campus food pantries existed at private and state colleges nationwide, and as of 2017, more than 570 currently exist. Only about half of all SUNY and CUNY campuses have food pantries currently in place. If a campus offers students access to quality, affordable food options through an arrangement with an outside food bank, delivery and distribution must be included. New York State would be the first state to require every public campus to have a food pantry.

Proposal: Improve School Mental Health Capacity and Services in Community Schools

Trauma at early ages has been found to lead to difficulty learning and ongoing behavior problems. Given the overwhelming amount of research connecting childhood mental health with school performance and long-term success, teachers and school administrators need new

tools to support student's mental health and wellness. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York has significantly changed the way the State approaches mental health in schools. In 2016, as part of the Safe Schools emergency plans, school districts are now required to train staff on mental health and the emergency plans. In 2017, mental health was included as an allowable use of the \$150 million in community school funds. Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, school districts are now required to include mental health as part of the health curriculum. In addition, there are now 745 school-based mental health clinics licensed by New York State Office of Mental Health to help students better access services. Despite this progress, student mental health remains a challenge. In order to better support schools, Governor Cuomo is proposing \$250,000 to create enhanced mental health support grants. Community schools programs would be eligible to include mental health activities in wrap-around services. Funds can also be used to improve school climate, combat violence and bullying, and support social-emotional learning.

Proposal: Expand the Reach of Master Teachers

In 2013, Governor Cuomo launched the New York State Master Teacher Program to strengthen our nation's STEM education. The Master Teachers award gives selected educators an annual \$15,000 stipend for four years, professional development opportunities and a platform to foster a supportive environment for the next generation of STEM teachers. Today, the New York State Master Teacher Program is a vibrant network of more than 900 outstanding public school teachers throughout the state who share a passion for their own STEM learning and for collaborating with colleagues to inspire the next generation of STEM leaders. In 2017, Governor Cuomo announced \$2 million to expand the Master Teacher Program and create a new cohort of 115 Master Teachers in grades K-12, specifically in computer science. This year the Governor is proposing an additional \$1 million to create a new cohort of Master Teachers serving exclusively in high-need school districts. High-need school districts have higher than average rates of teacher turnover so this funding will help recruit and retain highly performing teachers in high poverty districts, and well as create professional networks. In addition, in order to support and retain new teachers, the Master Teacher professional learning networks will be encouraged to connect with teachers from the Teacher Opportunity Corps—a program that recruits historically underrepresented individuals to become New York teachers—that are in the regional area.

Proposal: Extend the Empire State Excellence in Teaching Program

In 2016, Governor Cuomo announced the winners of the first-ever Empire State Excellence in Teaching Awards. The Teaching Awards recognize outstanding educators who embody these traits of teachers across the state. Winners were selected from every region of the state; they devote their careers to working with students in grades Pre-K to 12 and teach diverse subjects such as music, math, reading, science, technical education and art. To highlight the high caliber of teaching in classrooms across the state each and every day, the Governor proposes supporting a third round of the Excellence in Teaching awards.

Proposal: Launch Another Round of the Empire State After-School Program

Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, the State has worked to ensure a safe, supportive place to go after school. Last year, the State invested \$35 million to create 22,000 new after-school slots in school districts with the highest rates of child poverty, and the State now invests \$100 million to directly support safe and enriching childcare for school-aged children. Research shows that high quality after-school programs have a \$3 return on investment for every dollar

spent.³⁶ Moreover, after-school programming provides an invaluable alternative for homeless students. On a single night in January 2016 there were 29,914 children under the age of 18 experiencing homelessness—for these students the after-school hours can be a particularly dangerous and vulnerable time. In order to ensure that as many students as possible have a safe and supportive place to go after school, the State will launch an additional \$10 million round of Empire State After School Grants, with a focus on high-need areas. In addition, research has shown that after-school programming can help keep students safe from violent activities. A study of after-school programs in 12 high-risk California communities found that, among participating youth, vandalism and stealing dropped by two-thirds, violent acts and carrying a concealed weapon fell by more than half, and arrests were cut in half.³⁸ In order to combat gang and violent activity, \$2 million of this expansion will be directed to schools and community partners identified in at-risk areas. A new investment in afterschool programs targeted to school districts with high rates of childhood homelessness or few safe afterschool options will help ensure that children have a secure and productive place to be in the hours after school ends.

Proposal: Expand the Successful Early College High School Program by Growing the Network of Schools Throughout the State

Under Governor Cuomo, New York State has been a leader in offering opportunities for students to earn college credit while still in high school. In 2013, New York State began funding the State's first Pathways in Technology (P-TECH) programs, which allow students to graduate with a high school diploma and an associate's degree in an in-demand field in technology. As the first Governor to provide state support for P-TECH Schools, this network has grown from one school in 2013 to 32 schools today. New York now invests more than \$10 million annually supporting the successful P-TECH program. In addition, in the 2015 to 2016 school year, there were 24 other Early College High School programs where roughly 8,000 students had earned over 84,000 transferable college credits.³⁹ In New York State, in 2016, nearly 86 percent of the 2012 cohort of Smart Scholars graduated or met high school graduation requirements. For too many young people, the current high school model is still not working. There are high schools in the state where less than two-thirds of the students graduate. Moreover, even among graduates, not all students are prepared for college work—recent data suggests that less than forty percent of students in New York City met the standard for college readiness at CUNY.⁴¹ Research has suggested that access to college level courses in high school has a significant effect on students' college readiness. A 2013 study found that students who took one or more AP Exams, regardless of their exam score, were more likely to graduate from college in four years compared to non-AP students, even when controlling for demographic factors and prior academic achievement. Currently, too many students have their opportunities limited because they cannot participate in an Early College High School program, like P-TECH, due to the school they attend. For those high schools that do offer college courses or a P-TECH, those programs have a very limited number of seats. To ensure that every student in these schools has greater opportunity, the Governor proposes a \$9 million expansion of the highly successful Early College High Schools program by aligning new schools to in-demand industries such as technology, sports management and finance to provide opportunities for every student in the school to earn some college credit or associate's degrees, with skills and enhanced experience to step into a job in the related-field upon graduation. Funds will be allocated to create 15 new early college high schools in communities with low graduation or college access rates. In order to receive funds, schools must partner with an institution of higher education and a business to

develop a plan that will ensure students graduate with a minimum of some college credit and have a degree or a path to completion in two years or fewer.

Proposal: Expand Computer Science Education to All Elementary, Middle and High Schools

Governor Cuomo has long recognized the importance of reimagining education for the 21st century. The \$2 billion Smart Schools Bond Act, proposed in 2014, is a groundbreaking investment in education technology across New York and represents a pillar of the Governor's commitment to expanding computer and STEM learning in our schools. Computer science education is more important than ever before. Technology is among the fastest growing and highest paying sectors today, and the number one in-demand occupation in New York State.⁴³ But even though 93 percent of parents report that they want their child to study Computer Science,⁴⁴ the majority of New York public schools do not offer computer science in the classroom. In addition, there is a wide gender gap in the students studying computer science. In 2015, New York had only 3,801 computer science graduates; only 18 percent were female.⁴⁵ Only 3,761 high school students in New York took the AP Computer Science exam in 2016; only 25 percent were female.

- **Create the Smart Start Computer Science Program:** This year, Governor Cuomo will launch New York's largest state investment to expand high-quality computer science education by offering teacher support and resources in computer science and technology, especially for the youngest learners, starting as early as kindergarten and creating a continuum through 8th grade. It is important to reach students at an early age, as research has suggested that girls are less likely to pursue STEM careers as adults, even when equally mathematically talented; ⁴⁷ many boys of color fall behind early in their academic careers and, in many situations, never catch up. The Governor proposes a commitment of \$6 million a year for the *Smart Start* program that will provide grants to schools for teacher development in computer science and engineering. All schools will be eligible but grants will go to the highest need schools first. By providing elementary school teachers support to become in-house experts in computer science, more students will be exposed to computer science and engineering and will self-select into it. Schools that receive an award will work with their Regional Economic Development Councils to tailor the program to regional businesses or future employers' needs.
- **Create model computer science standards:** In addition, the Governor will convene a working group of educators and industry partners create model computer science standards to be made available to any school. By equipping our young people with computer science skills at an early age today, we will prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow.

Proposal: Expand Access to Advanced Placement Courses

According to the College Board, high school students can save college tuition savings by taking college classes in high school, up to an entire year of college.⁴⁸ Research has demonstrated that students who take the AP exam are more likely to graduate college on time than students of similar academic performance who do not take AP courses.⁴⁹ Governor Cuomo included \$2 million in the FY 2018 budget to help subsidize the AP exam fee for nearly 70,000 tests taken by low-income students. This funding was able to help decrease the cost of the exam to under \$30 for every low-income student taking the exam in the State. However, not all students are

currently able to access such advanced coursework. For example, nationally only 49 percent of high schools in rural areas offer at least one AP course, while 86 percent of high schools in suburban districts offer at least one AP course—some offering more than 20 courses.⁵⁰ In addition, in schools with more limited offerings, students are not able to access courses such as AP Computer Science, STEM courses, or world languages. In order to ensure that students across the State, including the more remote, rural areas of New York State as well as high poverty areas have access to advanced coursework, and can afford the cost of the exam the Governor will provide \$2 million in new funds to expand the low-income test fee fund for both AP and International Baccalaureate test fees as well as provide \$500,000 in grants for technical assistance for school districts wishing to start advanced courses that do not currently offer any courses, or very limited advanced course offerings.

Proposal: Increase Fines and Enforcement for Passing Stopped School Buses

Governor Cuomo recognizes that the safety of our children is our highest priority. To that end, the Governor modernized the school safety laws in 2016 to increase student safety. The updated laws required school districts to designate a point of contact in case of emergency, increase training requirements for faculty and staff, and update safety drills to include a lock down event. The Governor will continue this leadership in student safety to ensure that students are safe on their way to and from school. In New York, approximately 2.3 million students ride school buses to and from school every year, and out of concern for their safety it is illegal to pass a stopped school bus. Yet on Operation Safe Stop in April 2017, the one day in which law enforcement targeted citations for passing a stopped school bus, over 1,000 people were ticketed.⁵¹ Extrapolated for 180 days of school, someone passes a stopped school bus 180,000 times a year, endangering the safety of school children. This year, Governor Cuomo will increase the fine for passing a stopped school bus as a way to increase student safety.

Proposal: Continue to Reduce the Local Property Tax Burden by Making the State's County Shared Services Panels Permanent

Governor Cuomo has made a historic commitment to reducing local property taxes for millions of New Yorkers. Taxpayers across the state have saved more than \$17 billion through 2016 through the implementation of the 2 percent Property Tax Cap and the Property Tax Freeze programs alone. The State has eliminated growth in the local share of Medicaid, saving counties \$3.2 billion in FY 2018. All growth in the Medicaid program for counties is being absorbed by the State. The State is also assuming Medicaid administrative responsibilities for counties. In addition, Governor Cuomo spearheaded pension reform legislation to impose a new Tier VI for future employees and save taxpayers \$80 billion over the next 30 years. The 2017 County-Wide Shared Services Initiative bolstered those efforts by stimulating local governments to find new efficiencies. In the first year alone, 34 counties submitted nearly 400 projects with more than \$200 million in savings.

But more work remains. Property taxes are the largest tax burden for New York taxpayers, with the typical taxpayer paying 2.5 times more in property taxes than in income taxes. Statutory impediments prevent local governments from building on the savings achieved to date, and local governments have expressed a need for support and resources to drive additional progress. New York State will take the next step forward to provide local governments with new tools to put money back in the pockets of middle-class families.

First, the state will provide \$225 million in the FY 2019 budget to meet the match commitment of the County Wide Shared Services Initiative.

Second, Governor Cuomo will make the state's successful county-wide shared services panels permanent in order to institutionalize savings initiatives. The Governor proposes that state funding for local government performance aid be conditional on the continuation of shared services panels.

Third, Governor Cuomo will ease rules on the creation of local healthcare consortia to reduce local health insurance costs. One way to lower health insurance costs is to pool local governments health plans into healthcare consortia, but during the recent county-wide shared services planning process local governments raised concerns that there are regulatory burdens, especially for smaller governments, that make pooling health insurance among local government legally or financially prohibitive. Therefore, Governor Cuomo is directing the New York State Department of Financial Services to publish guidance and provide technical assistance to local governments in order to ease the process of creating health consortia, specifically for smaller municipalities. The Governor has also directed the Department of State and other agencies to continue to work with local municipalities to examine other legal and policy impediments to shared services by municipalities, such as zoning and other functions, to be considered this session.

Fourth, to help communities across the state take advantage of Smart Street Lighting technology and its taxpayer savings and energy efficiency benefits, Governor Cuomo will launch a statewide Smart Street Lighting program to convert 500,000 street lights to LED technology by 2025. The New York Power Authority will lead this interdisciplinary and interagency initiative with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the Department of Public Service, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Department of State and other State agencies to offer a one-stop-shop solution for municipalities to replace inefficient streetlights with LEDs and provide technical expertise on design, procurement and construction, along with financing and guidance on Internet of Things (IOT) devices that allow streetlights to function as part of a Smart City. NYPA will also explore modifications to existing street lighting utility tariffs in order to allow for greater cost savings from lighting conversions. This program has the potential to reduce energy consumption annually across the state by 482 gigawatt hours, the equivalent of 44,770 households, save taxpayers \$87 million annually, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the quality of light and safety of communities across the state.

Finally, Governor Cuomo will continue the state's local property tax relief program that will provide an average reduction of \$380 in local property taxes to 2.6 million homeowners this year alone.

Proposal: Expand the New York Youth Works Program

Governor Cuomo launched a program in 2012 to incentivize the hiring of at-risk youth, age 16 to 24, through business tax credits. Today, the New York Youth Jobs Program connects youth with stable, good-paying jobs and provides certified New York employers who hire them with tax credits up to \$5,000 for full-time and up to \$2,500 for part-time employment. The Program provides \$30 million for 13 targeted areas with high youth unemployment—including Albany, Brookhaven, Buffalo, Hempstead, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, New York, Rochester,

Schenectady, Syracuse, Utica, White Plains and Yonkers—and an additional \$20 million for young people who live in other areas of the state. Since its inception, over 78,000 youth have been hired in the New York Youth Jobs program, by more than 2,200 participating employers, and in 2017, more than 26,000 young people were hired through this program. Between 2010 and 2016, minority unemployment decreased 8 percent, from 25 percent to 17 percent.

To build on the success of the Youth Jobs Program, Governor Cuomo proposes to increase the maximum credit available to certified New York employers by 50 percent—raising the maximum tax credit from \$5,000 to \$7,500 for certified youth employed full-time and from \$2,500 to \$3,750 for those employed part-time. In addition, to help participants better-develop the skills needed to advance from an entry-level position toward a chosen career, the Governor will direct the Department of Labor to align and connect employers and youth participating in the Youth Jobs Program with regional workforce development efforts of SUNY, CUNY and New York's **BOCES**. This alignment will leverage State workforce investments and augment skills development that employers are able to provide on-site with additional workforce support in the classroom and online.

Proposal: Strengthen the Rural Emergency Medical Services System

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are essential for disaster preparedness and public safety, and under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York State has strengthened EMS through locally directed efforts tailored to the diverse communities throughout the state. Over 59,000 certified EMS providers serve as critical first-responders throughout New York's urban, suburban, and rural communities. In the last year alone these providers responded to over three million calls from New Yorkers. For rural EMS, ensuring ambulances are appropriately staffed and able to respond in a timely fashion has become increasingly challenging. The increased demand for EMS response, the increasing cost of providing the service, and the shortage of EMS professionals are leading to a gap between the capacities of the current system and the standard of care New Yorkers deserve. This situation is compounded in rural communities, where low-call volumes generate insufficient revenue to support a paid agency. To address the underlying issues facing rural EMS agencies, Governor Cuomo proposes a three-pronged Strengthening of the Rural Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System plan to recruit, retain and strengthen the EMS system across rural regions of New York State. To ensure that New Yorkers, especially young New Yorkers, are aware of the career possibilities in EMS and the contribution that working in the EMS field makes to their communities, the Department of Health will launch a coordinated digital media and educational campaign to heighten awareness of EMS employment opportunities through partnerships with regional and local health care organizations, area health educational centers (AHECs), and EMS training systems. In addition, to enhance career opportunities for EMS professionals and to improve quality of care and lower costs to the health care system, DOH will propose legislation to authorize Community Paramedicine collaboratives and programs, which will expand the scope of services carried out by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to include community settings beyond initial emergency care and transportation.

Secondly, in an effort to increase the availability of EMS training programs, DOH will work closely with the **boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES)** and community colleges throughout New York to provide educational opportunities in diverse settings outside of the traditional paradigm.

The third component of the plan will add sophisticated, in-depth management educational material to enhance existing supervisory training for EMS professionals who want to advance their expertise and take on leadership roles, and to expand interactive web-based offerings and regional seminars in order to reach a broader audience. The Strengthening of the Rural EMS System plan will ensure a trained, effective EMS workforce, and improve the timeliness, quality, and delivery of EMS throughout rural areas of New York State.

Vigliotti, Stephan

From: Rural Schools Association of New York State <Nam33=cornell.edu@mail24.atl111.rsgsv.net> on behalf of Rural Schools Association of New York State <Nam33@cornell.edu>
Sent: Thursday, January 04, 2018 7:52 AM
To: Vigliotti, Stephan
Subject: Update - RSA Advocacy Alert State of the State 2018



Update

State of The State 2018 Advocacy Alert

STATE OF THE STATE ANALYSIS: UPDATE

In addition to the Advocacy Alert provided earlier, the governor's "policy book" that accompanies his State of the State Message contained proposals for public education unmentioned in the address itself. The address contained almost no mention of public education, beyond indicating that more state aid should flow to financially challenged school districts. The extensive policy paper (more than 400 pages) merely indicates an intent to "expand access to quality educational programming."

Not mentioned in the speech (but included in the policy book) were several proposals with the potential to help our rural schools. The degree to which they would help is in question however, given that they are all grant programs that by definition are limited to only certain districts (and they are generally of modest amounts.) That said, the governor has offered the following program and policy changes for public education in the coming year:

1. Using the Community School model, an additional \$250,000 in student mental health support would be provided. Any funding obtained could also be used to combat violence and curtail bullying. Given the small pool, additional work in this area is likely to be limited and would come with questions of sustainability.
2. \$1 million is being proposed to support additional Master Teachers in high need districts. The funding would be used to enhance salaries, encouraging the recruitment and retention of Master Teachers in these districts.
3. The governor suggests continuing the existing Mentoring Program.
4. An additional \$10 million in grant funding would be provided to support after school programming with a focus on high risk areas and student homelessness.
5. The Early College High School initiative would receive a \$9 million boost under the governor's plan.
6. The 2018 State of the State includes a new Smart Start program to bring computer science to grades K-8 in high need districts.
7. \$2 million is included to offset the student cost of taking the Advanced Placement (AP) examination. This program is targeted to rural schools, as is an additional \$500,000 for districts needing help initiating AP courses.
8. The governor also proposed increasing fines for those who pass a stopped school bus.

REACTION

At this stage, the governor has only offered ideas on new initiatives in our schools. The funding behind the programs is minimal and there is no indication if other areas might be cut to pay for the programs. The governor is continuing his penchant for grant programs, rather than formulaic funding. Unfortunately, this severely limits the ability of fiscally strapped districts to participate; even for programs aimed specifically at high need school districts (as these districts

don't have the staff or the data-keeping capacity to successfully compete for the funding.) As always, State of the State proposals must await the presentation of the Executive Budget for schools to determine the impact on both their academic programming and their finances. The age old question of whether the new programs would "supplement or supplant" existing programs and funding lurks in upcoming state budget negotiations. Will these new programs be offered in an environment of a healthy Operating (Foundation) Aid increase or an across the board cut to education funding? The only thing not in doubt at this point is that this is a year when advocacy will be of paramount importance.

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