



May 7, 2018

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

It was just a few weeks ago that hundreds of children from the Ossining School District sent you letters and drawings asking you to increase the Foundation Aid funding in the 2018-2019 state budget, such that all school systems in New York would receive the funds necessary to provide all students with an outstanding education. The drawings and letters were heartfelt stories about what it is like to be a student here in Ossining and were created to show you just how much public education, and the Ossining School District, means to so many children and the community that supports them.

Unfortunately, we are now dealing with the reality that Foundation Aid was not fully funded in the 2018-2019 budget, and due to the inequities in the distribution of funds, Ossining will receive only 44% of it's allocation of Aid while 276 school districts in the state receive 100% or more of their allocation, with some up to 2000%. This disparity in distribution of funds is increasingly difficult to manage given the substantial growth that the Ossining schools have experienced over the last 10 years:

- 24% increase in enrollment (+963 students)
- 53% increase in free and reduced price lunch applicants
- 59% increase in students with extraordinary needs
- 70% increase in students living in poverty
- 31% decrease in NYS Combined Wealth Ratio (1.629 to 1.123)

As you can see, Ossining has become a “demographic poster child” of everything that is great about broad diversity in a community, and why we believe our schools are not only vital to so many children, but also provide a shared set of values in the community.



It is undoubtable that educating children is expensive, and like you, we can think of no better place to put New York tax dollars. We look forward to working with you and others in state government to find a more equitable way to distribute the state funding such that Ossining, and other communities that are challenged with broad diversity, can meet the needs of all students.

Sincerely,  
David Whitlinger & Jess Vecchiarelli  
Co-Directors, Ossining For Fair Funding

C: Secretary of Education Daniel Fuller  
Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie  
Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan  
Deputy Democratic Conference Leader Jeff Klein  
Senate Finance Chair Catharine Young  
Assembly Ways and Means Chair Helene Weinstein  
Senate Education Chair Carl L. Marcellino  
Assembly Education Chair Catherine Nolan  
Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Senator David Carlucci  
Senator Terrance Murphy  
Assemblywoman Sandy Galef  
Assemblyman David Buchwald