



Summary of SCSSA Legislative Priorities

Success and Sustainability: Reimagining Education Post-Pandemic

The 2021-22 school year can be considered a year of recovery and reinvention for school districts. As our schools continued to navigate lingering challenges, economically and psychologically from the pandemic, we entered the 2022-23 school year with a great deal of optimism for normalcy. The following summary represents the legislative priorities for the superintendents in Suffolk County for the upcoming year.

- Support for School Safety and Mental Health Initiatives
- Foundation Aid / Funding Flexibility
- Prudent and Reasonable Modifications to the 2% Tax Levy Cap
- Civil Service Reform
- Ed Law 3012-d APPR Adjustments
- Universal Pre-Kindergarten
- Childhood Nutrition - Universal School Meals Program
- Zero-Emission Buses



Support for School Safety and Mental Health Initiatives

- Provide for an exemption to the tax levy limit calculation to exclude expenses related to additional mental health supports and school safety/cyber security.
- Establish an expense-driven categorical aid with the designation of “School Safety Aid” to partially reimburse districts for expenditures related to school security and mental health supports.
- Permanently remove the earnings limit for retired law enforcement officers working as school security staff.
- Amend Election Law Section 4-104(3) to add public school buildings to the list of public places that can file a written request to be removed from the list of polling places.

Foundation Aid / Funding Flexibility

- Provide for flexibility in allowing ESSER and ARP funds to be spent over a longer window of opportunity (five years instead of three).
- Allow for flexibility in the 4% maximum carryover in school districts’ unrestricted fund balance.
- Provide for the allowance for districts to borrow from reserves to eliminate the use of Tax Anticipation Notes (TANs).
- Convene a committee to revise the Foundation Aid Formula.

Prudent and Reasonable Modifications to the 2% Tax Levy Cap

- Establish a fixed 2% tax levy cap, rather than the lesser of 2% or CPI.
- Include properties covered by PILOTS in the tax base.
- Modify the tax levy limit calculation to exclude expenses related to:
 - Addition of new mental health initiatives
 - School safety and cyber security initiatives
 - New unfunded government mandates
 - Exempt increases in health insurance costs above 2%

Civil Service Reform

- Offer tests on a continuous basis to allow for real-time recruitment.
- Modernize content on exams to ensure they are relevant and consistent with job requirements.
- Establish a procedure to transition successful provisional employees to permanent status.
- Allow part-time employees for some titles to be hired non-competitively.
- Eliminate the requirement to utilize traditional mail for canvas letters and allow for electronic canvassing.
- Amend the rule of 3 to a rule of 5. This will allow for a larger candidate pool.

Ed Law 3012-d APPR Adjustments

- Convene a panel of experts to create an Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) system that encourages innovation and is based on a growth model for enhancing professional practice for the state.

Universal Pre-Kindergarten

- Increase in the minimum per pupil allotment for school districts
- Allow for local control over and greater flexibility in the use of these UPK funds

Childhood Nutrition - Universal School Meals Program

- Implement a universal school meals program to ensure all public school students in NYS are offered daily nutritious meals, free of charge to level the playing field, allowing all students the opportunity to succeed

Zero-Emission Buses

- Due to the undue burden this requirement will place on districts, we ask that you reconsider the implementation timeline and aid structure for this mandate.