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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **2007 SCHOOL REFORMS MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO PROJECT HOW MUCH NEW MONEY WILL BE IN THE GOVERNOR'S 2008 BUDGET FOR EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE STATE**

#### **THE ALLIANCE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR FISCAL EQUITY RELEASE PROJECTED 2008 SCHOOL AID RUNS**

(Albany, NY) The Alliance for Quality Education (AQE) and the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) submitted statewide district-by-district projected 2008 school aid runs for foundation aid while presenting testimony prioritizing education needs at a budget hearing held today by the State Division of Budget. The figures, calculated by the Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI), are based on 2007 New York State school aid reform legislation, they project that the 2008 Governor's budget will increase foundation aid by \$1.24 billion—there will be additional aid increases for transportation, BOCES, pre-kindergarten, and building construction that are not included in these projections. Calculations for each of New York's 597 school districts were included in the submission. Due to the enactment of a new school aid formula with predictable phase-ins of foundation aid, this is the first time in the history of New York State education that school aid increases can be predicted in advance of the Governor's budget.

The \$1.24 billion increase is on top of a \$1.1 billion increase in foundation aid in 2007 and is the second phase of a four year foundation aid phase-in totaling \$5.5 billion by the year 2010. School districts will now be able to accurately begin planning for next year in anticipation of state funding increases before the budget is passed, due to the four year education plan championed by Governor Spitzer and enacted into law earlier this year.

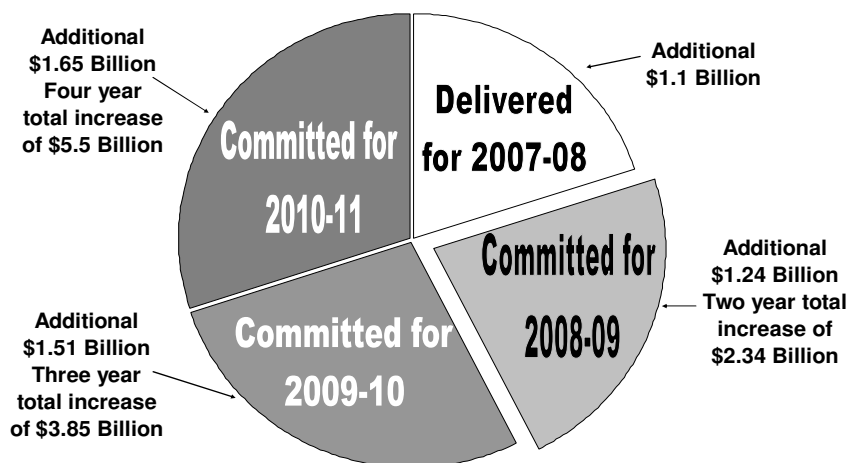
"In 2007, with Governor Spitzer's leadership, New York State finally stopped the cycle of delays that denied educational opportunity to so many school children for so long," testified Billy Easton, Executive Director, Alliance for Quality Education. "The new formula that was the centerpiece of Governor Spitzer's successful school funding reform in 2007, tells us that we can expect a \$1.24 billion increase in classroom operating aid in the Governor's budget in 2008."

**Graph on Page 2, School Aid Runs Attached**

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By law the four-year statewide committed financial increases are as follows:

**NYS School Foundation Aid:  
20% Delivered and 80% more committed by 2011**



*	<b>2007 - 2008</b>	<b>\$1.1 billion</b>	<b>20.0% increase</b>
*	<b>2008 - 2009</b>	<b>\$1.24 billion</b>	<b>22.5% increase</b>
*	<b>2009 - 2010</b>	<b>\$1.51 billion</b>	<b>27.5% increase</b>
*	<b>2010 - 2011</b>	<b>\$1.65 billion</b>	<b>30.0% increase</b>

“Governor Spitzer put an end to 13 years of gridlock and delay with the enactment of a transparent and reliable school aid formula based on need that provides \$5.5 billion over 4 years to ensure the right to a sound basic education to every public school child. Guaranteeing both the amount and the timeframe are essential to make sure New York’s schools can deliver on this constitutional promise,” said Geri Palast, Executive Director, Campaign for Fiscal Equity.

Foundation aid generated by this formula is the basic classroom operating aid that is used to put teachers in classrooms, provide reading and math programs, underwrite after school programs, educate English Language Learners and perform all other basic educational functions in schools.

As a measure to tie the historic 2007 school aid increase to effective education programs and policies and ensure district accountability Governor Spitzer proposed the Contracts for Excellence which were enacted into law along with the foundation formula. The Contracts target the new foundation aid to five priority areas: smaller class sizes, teacher and principal quality, full-day pre-kindergarten, time on task and high school/middle school restructuring. Districts receiving at least \$15 million or a 10% foundation aid increase are required to submit a Contract.

This year 55 school districts across the state submitted a Contract for Excellence detailing new programs and policies designed for educational success. All 55 of the Contracts were approved by the New York State Commissioner of Education last month.

The 2008 projected school aid runs for foundation aid will be available at [www.aqeny.org](http://www.aqeny.org)