



AQE In Action

May 2011

This past February, Governor Cuomo proposed \$1.5 billion funding cut to public schools, the largest cut in the history of New York State. The finalized 2012 state budget restored \$230 million to schools but failed to include an extension of the Millionaire's Tax. This tax, if extended, would generate \$4.6 billion in state revenue that could be used to fund education. Instead, our schools will suffer a \$1.3 billion cut in order to finance a tax break for millionaires and billionaires.

Despite the bad budget news, we are proud of our work. Under the banner of our 'College & Careers, Not More Cuts Campaign, AQE helped to mobilize tens of thousands of New Yorkers to stand up for protecting kids, not millionaires over the past three months. We filled the halls of the Capitol and the streets of our local neighborhoods to fight to ensure that all children will have an opportunity to learn. More than 1,200 people attended education lobby day in March and 1,000 protestors attended Capitol Camp In. [Click here for pictures.](#)

[The Dear Governor Cuomo Video Contest](#) entries, thousands of handwritten letters, thousands of protesters, 450 parents, as well as students, and community advocates sleeping in the halls of the State Capitol sent a clear message to the Governor and Legislature that New Yorkers demand better.

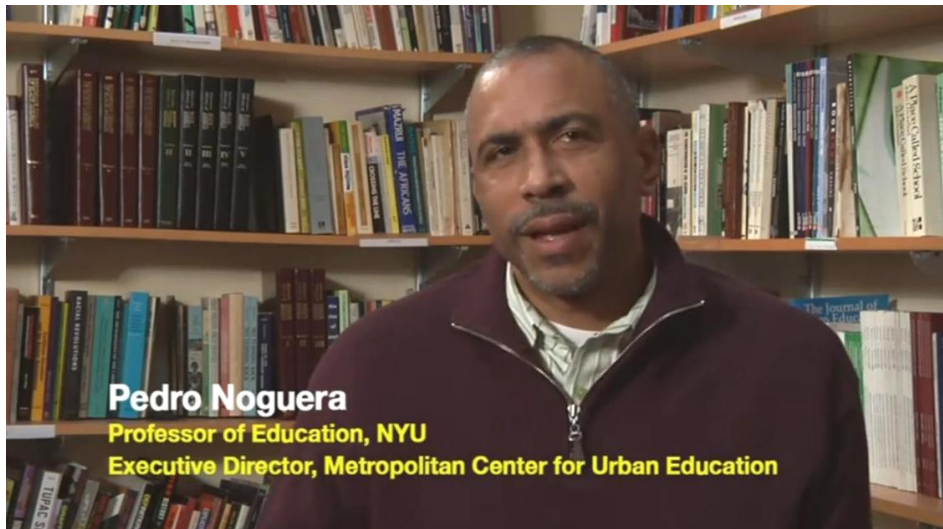
A final budget doesn't mean that our work stops. The next phase of our campaign will be to document the impact in our local communities of a budget that prioritizes the pockets of millionaires and billionaires over school children. Let us know what's being cut in your schools as a result of Governor Cuomo's budget. Teachers? Programs? Classroom Resources? How are they affecting students? Send us your stories at 2011cuts@aqeny.org or post them on the [AQE Facebook page.](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Billy Easton'.

Executive Director
Alliance for Quality Education

AQE launches its statewide campaign: *College and Careers NOT Cuts*



We kicked off our “College and Careers. NOT more cuts” campaign in response to Governor Cuomo’s budget with a video, “A Call for Equity.” Events in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, New York City and Long Island held local strategy meetings. The video was screened for each event to set the stage for our campaign. Click on the picture to watch the video!

Statewide Platform for Research-Based Reforms *AQE College and Careers: Agenda for School Improvement*

Working in collaboration with the Annenberg Institute of School Reform for state of the art research regarding greatest impact on improving schools and student achievement, we published a series of policy briefs *College and Careers: Agenda for School Reform*. Click on each title to read each brief.



- [Quality teaching for every student](#)
- [Extended learning time to expand learning opportunities for students](#)
- [Our students need the supports provided by community schools](#)
- [Prepare all our students for college and/or careers with new standards and an enriched curriculum](#)
- [We need a plan to put parents and students at the table](#)
- [Early childhood education.](#)

The research-based policy briefs offer a menu of suggested strategies for the lowest performing schools in order to close the achievement gap. In addition, each of the briefs has extensive research background which provides a thorough justification of the call to implement the strategies in the lowest performing schools of our state.

Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus.

February 19th



More than 300 people from across the state demonstrated in front of the Governor's Mansion to demand that Governor Cuomo protects kids, not millionaires in the budget and keeps the promise of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity Lawsuit.

We were led by original CFE Plaintiff and NYC Council Education Chair, Robert Jackson who spoke out against Governor Cuomo's cuts and called for New York State to fulfill its legal obligations as decided by the CFE Lawsuit to ensure fair funding in public schools.



At the rally and march we delivered handwritten letters from students, parents, and community advocates from all over the state to demonstrate to Governor Cuomo and Lawmakers that there was widespread opposition to the awful cuts in the budget.



Hudson Valley Action February 24th



February 15th , Education Budget hearing

March 9th, 2011, Education Lobby Day



More than 1200 parents, students, and community members from all over New York lobbied for quality public education. The group also participated in a demonstration outside of Governor Cuomo's office.

Protect kids. Not millionaires!



Rallies around the state:

In a span of 7 days in early March, a series of events were organized that included 5,000 protesters against education cuts in their communities across NY State. We helped ensure that there were daily actions.

Syracuse March 15th



Albany March 15th



Yonkers March 16th



Watertown March 16th



The Capitol Camp In!



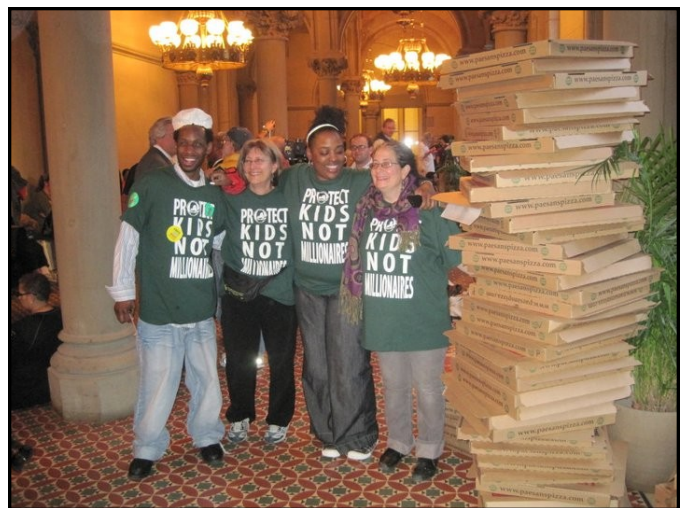
On Wednesday March 30th, more than 1,000 people protested cuts and 450 people stayed overnight at the Capitol Camp In in a last ditch effort to pass the millionaire's tax and fight against the devastating cuts that Governor Cuomo had proposed in his budget.

Despite the fact that the Governor's budget was passed with devastating cuts and without the millionaire's tax, the scope, breadth and beauty of the protest at the Capitol was absolutely unprecedented.

For more than 12 hours, a coalition of students, parents, teachers, advocates, community groups & labor organizations led a tireless march between the Senate and Assembly Chambers with stops at the Governor's Office and Million-Dollar Staircase. Chanting "You say cut-back, we say FIGHT-back" and "Hey you, millionaires, pay your fair share" marchers kept up the energy for the entire duration of the protest.

There were a number of press conferences held throughout the day where advocates voiced their concerns with the budget and detailed how it would affect their lives and families. Students, seniors, educators, housing activists and parents told their stories and moved the crowd. Press coverage was constant throughout the day. In-house videographers also helped to document the day. [Here](#) & [Here](#). Please check out AQE's live twitter feed from the event [HERE](#).

Senator Eric Adams speaking to the media about why it was important for him to camp-in with protestors.



Pizza, anyone?



Make a donation today

All children in New York State deserve a quality education. Help make this right a reality by clicking the envelope to donate.

Your gift will support our successful work to win funding to reduce class size, expand pre-kindergarten, and provide essential education services for millions of New York children. Our organizing and advocacy has shown proven results: millions of dollars in funding, while holding education officials accountable for how the money is spent. Your gift will enable us to educate the public, involve parents and community members, and inform our elected officials.

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Buffalo **716-855-1522**
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Rochester **585-325-2560**
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