

PROTECTING NEW YORK'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

THE FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL FIGHT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

These are unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic is wreaking havoc in our communities, shedding an illuminating light on the inequities of New York. Looming cuts pose an existential threat to the fabric of our public education system. **The only way to protect children, families and their access to education and childcare is with bold action at every level of government local, state and federal.**



LOCAL LEVEL

Local school districts across the state are working to finalize their 2020-2021 school budgets. **The reality is in the time of the pandemic and prolonged shutdown, students need more resources, not less.** In order to thrive with remote or in person learning students will need more individualized attention with increased academic, social and emotional support. Many districts are already facing difficult decisions to cut staff, reduce resources and eliminate programs. Healthy schools means prioritizing the physical and emotional wellbeing of students.



STATE LEVEL

New York State is the primary source of funding for vital services such as public education and health care. To balance the budget, Governor Cuomo is threatening to cut education and health budgets by 20 percent. But **New York State can close its \$10 billion budget gap without cutting essential funding for our schools and hospitals.** A growing chorus of State Legislators, including bills introduced by Senator Robert Jackson (S.7378) and Senator Shelley Mayer (S.8329), are calling for new tax brackets to raise revenues for public schools.



FEDERAL LEVEL

Congress has the power to act to provide the states with immediate relief. **A federal stimulus will provide the infusion of funds necessary to continue to provide educational programming and services.** Our Congressional representatives and senators have many more resources at their availability to provide funding to states. We need our federal leaders to act quickly to help states. As they provide much needed funding to states, they will also help our local school districts.

WHAT STUDENTS NEED:

School districts must minimize cuts to essential support services like counselors and coaches in their budgets. They must prioritize students' social and emotional health by investing resources in counselors, not cops. They must protect proven to work programs like pre-K, community schools and restorative justice specialists.

The Governor and the state legislature can raise revenue with new tax brackets for billionaires and millionaires. New York is home to some of the wealthiest people in the world, but it also has some of the worst inequality in the nation, including in public education. Our State leaders can and must preserve our schools and hospitals by asking the ultra rich to pay a little more to help all New Yorkers get through this crisis.

Tell Congress to act quickly to pass a federal stimulus package, including relief to New York earmarked for public schools. Congress must ensure that New York State cannot use the federal funds to make additional cuts at the state level, so that the federal dollars act as the relief they are intended to be.

It's going to take all levels of government taking steps to keep our students safe. It's going to take all of us, taking bold actions to hold our elected officials accountable to protect children, not billionaires throughout this crisis.

Tell your representatives at the state, local and federal level to fight for New York's public schools!

