



New York State Politics 101

AaQqEe

Alliance for Quality Education

The Governor

- As head of the Executive branch, Hochul is the Commander in chief of the National Guard
- 2022: 1st time negotiating the NYS budget which is one of the largest budgets in the entire country
- Can veto bills that the legislature passes
- Reaffirmed commitment to fully fund public schools and promised to invest in childcare
- Spouse is the top lawyer and lobbyist for Buffalo's most powerful billionaires and a board member at Buffalo's corporate lobbying organization



NEW YORK STATE GOVERNMENT: Legislature



NYS Assembly Speaker:
Carl Heastie (D)

State Assembly 150 seats

Assembly controlled by Democrats since the mid-1970s. Holds an overwhelming majority.

NEW YORK STATE GOVERNMENT: Legislature



NYS Senate: Majority
Leader: Andrea
Stewart-Cousins (D)

State Senate 63 seats

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins:

- ▶ From Westchester County
- ▶ Represents both urban and suburban school districts
- ▶ The democratic conference is just one seat shy of a supermajority in the state Senate (41 Dems)

NYS BUDGET PROCESS: Power Players

Governor: Kathy Hochul (D)



NYS Senate: Majority Leader: Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D)



NYS Assembly: Speaker: Carl Heastie (D)



JANUARY

- Legislative session begins
- Governor delivers State of the State and budget address
- Legislature schedules budget hearings



FEBRUARY

- Legislature holds budget hearings



MARCH

- State Assembly and Senate introduce “one-house budgets”
- Budget negotiations begin
- Tentative budget framework released
- Budget is finalized



APRIL 1

- New fiscal year begins



JUNE

- Legislative session ends

What is lobbying?

Process by which we seek to influence a person in a position of power to get us what we want.

Why do we do it?

- To inform
- To persuade
- To get legislators to do something concrete to move us toward our goals (introducing legislation, sponsoring, writing an op ed to show support, coming to our campus to speak, etc.)

**From birth to graduation, here is
how we will be fighting for
education justice for New York's
children in 2025...**

Maintain 100% of Foundation Aid to all school districts - Executive budget upholds this ask

Update the Foundation Aid Formula - AQE's suggestions [HERE](#)

The Governor's proposed changes to Foundation Aid are generally positive but have a mixed impact, particularly on NYC.

She proposed updating the poverty measures in the existing Formula:

- Replacing 2000 census poverty data with SAIPE data
- Replacing free and reduced price lunch data with economically disadvantaged data

The impact:

- New York City schools will see their expected Foundation Aid increase cut almost in half (expected \$940 million increase to \$540 million under her proposed changes)
- Many other high need school districts in other parts of the state would receive a higher-than-expected increase under the Governor's proposed formula update
- Every district would get at least a 2% increase in Foundation Aid.

End Jim Crow Education in East Ramapo:

The state budget should incorporate the reforms contained in A10407 to empower public school families, fix crumbling infrastructure, hire bilingual educators, have access to quality classroom instruction and materials, and end the systemic racism that defines school governance and finance.

Solutions Not Suspensions (SNS)

Requires schools to use proven alternatives to suspension that correct misbehavior and keep kids in the classroom. The state budget should invest at least \$5 million in training for educators and school personnel and ensure that there is full Foundation Aid funding to address all the needs of all students.

Universal Pre-K

NYS has made significant strides in expanding full day pre-K to all four year olds and to some three year olds. Yet, some issues persist. Many of the school districts that implemented UPK early on have not seen their funding increase at all since then, whereas school districts just implementing the program now receive at least \$10,000 per child.

Cost: \$25 million

Move Closer to Universal Child Care (\$1.6 billion)

Early care and education is a right, not a privilege. It's essential for family stability and our economy, yet early childhood educators earn poverty wages, and access remains limited for low-income families. As a result, parents can't afford to pay more for child care, and programs can't afford to charge less. We demand fair compensation for child care workers and expanded access to affordable child care for all families, specifically:

\$1.2 billion investment to increase compensation for child care workers through a permanent workforce fund.

Guarantee assistance for families earning less than 250% of the federal poverty line

Enhanced reimbursement rates for children with special needs

**But how will we
pay for all of this?**



By taxing New York's ultra wealthy!!

All of us work hard so our families and communities can thrive. But corporate politicians and their ultra-wealthy donors have spent decades protecting the very rich at the expense of government services and community resources. When lawmakers stand with the many over the one percent, we can ensure our communities and public schools have the resources they need, and help all of us build a foundation on which we all can thrive.

Pass legislation so millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share, and highly profitable corporations pay what they owe. The [Invest in Our New York \(IONY\) campaign](#) offers a menu of options that raise enough revenue to address the needs of New Yorkers.

Lobby Visit Roles:

- a) **Facilitator/Leader**: This person will be the one that keeps the meeting flowing and on track. They can begin the meeting stating our day's objectives as well as finish the meeting with the asks.
- a) **Storytellers**: Personal stories are the key to meeting with legislators. Make sure the parents and community members are there to tell their stories and how they are being affected by early childhood education.
- a) **Notetaker**: It is very important to record accurately what is being said in the meeting. Especially the answers to the asks. These notes must be emailed or handed to AQE's email immediately following the meeting. (email address is aqe@aqeny.org)
- a) **Supporters**: If people would like to be part of the meeting but not have a speaking role, that is okay. As long as the legislator is okay with having that many people in the room, those particular people will be acknowledged as supporters though they do not want to share.

Beware: Techniques elected officials will use to avoid your demands:

- **Red Herring — Brings up issues to sidetrack you**
- **Passing the Buck — To another level of government**
- **The Chatterbox — Doesn't allow you to get in a word**
- **The White Rabbit — "I'm running late..."**
- **The Friendly Put Off — Don't get fooled by the friendly tone**
- **Trust Me Never "Trust Me" — Get specific commitments, not assurances of friendship**

Role Play & Debrief