

Date: July 25, 2024

Testimony Submitted by Shawn Van Scoy, Superintendent of Schools

On Behalf of: Gananda Central School District Board of Education

To: Foundation Aid Public Hearing

I am here today to advocate for essential changes to the Foundation Aid formula, which directly impact the Gananda Central School District.

Over the last 14 years the Governor's office and legislators have added tiers and tweaks to the formula to move funding towards changing political interests, such as focusing on student extraordinary needs. In doing so they have ignored the quantitative measures of wealth and fiscal ability built into the system that factor into a district's ability to fund services to meet those needs.

We are asking that you prioritize

1. Per Pupil Property Wealth
2. Local Tax Effort
3. Per Pupil Income Wealth
4. CWR

First, I would like to address Per Pupil Property Wealth (AV/TWPU). Gananda is a planned community comprised primarily of residential housing, we have no town or village center with businesses to contribute to the tax base. Consequently, our per pupil property wealth is significantly lower than our BOCES and New York State averages. This reality limits our capacity to generate local revenue through property taxes as compared to other districts.

Second, for the last 20 years Gananda has had one of the 20 highest tax rates on true. Our residents are annually assuming a tax burden higher than 97% of the districts in NY. We are asking for the formula to consider local effort.

Third, the Per Pupil Income Wealth (AGI/TWPU) in Gananda is lower than our BOCES and New York State averages. This indicates that our community's aggregate adjusted gross income is insufficient to support our schools financially locally.

Our Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) of 0.54 further underscores our financial challenges. This ratio is again lower than the average for our BOCES and New York State. Its another clear indicator that Gananda is less wealthy compared to other districts and should, **in theory**, qualify for more state aid to balance these disparities.

Again, We are asking that you prioritize

1. Per Pupil Property Wealth \$469,540 (state average \$1,065,600)
2. Local Tax Effort 0.299
3. Per Pupil Income Wealth \$185,411 (state average \$310,500)
4. CWR 0.545