



Floral Park-Bellerose School District

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Rockefeller Institute of Government
Attn: Foundation Aid Study Researchers
411 State Street
Albany, NY 12203

Subject: Request for Consideration in Foundation Aid Study

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the Floral Park-Bellerose School District Board of Education, write to you regarding the ongoing Foundation Aid study being conducted by the Rockefeller Institute. As an educational body committed to providing all students with the opportunity for a sound basic education, we believe it is crucial to address several key issues that have emerged since the establishment of the Foundation Aid formula in 2007.

The 1995 Court of Appeals decision was a landmark moment in New York State's educational history. The Court's ruling affirmed that the Education Article of the State Constitution mandates the State to offer all children the "opportunity" for a sound basic education. This pivotal decision underscored the State's obligation to ensure that every child, regardless of their socioeconomic background, has access to quality education. In response, the Foundation Aid formula was introduced in 2007, aiming to provide a more equitable distribution of resources across school districts.

However, as we approach nearly two decades since the formula's inception, it is evident that it no longer adequately meets the needs of our students. The demographics of New York State have shifted significantly, and with these changes have come new challenges. Among the most pressing concerns is the rising number of students classified for special education services. The current formula does not adequately account for the increased costs associated with providing these essential services, nor does it reflect the evolving demographic landscape of our communities.

The Floral Park-Bellerose School District has experienced firsthand the financial strain of trying to meet the diverse and complex needs of our student population under an outdated funding formula. As the costs associated with special education continue to rise, our ability to provide equitable opportunities for all students is increasingly compromised. We believe that a comprehensive review and revision of the Foundation Aid formula is necessary to ensure that it aligns with the current realities faced by districts across the state.

We respectfully urge the Rockefeller Institute to consider these factors in your study. We believe that by addressing these critical issues, New York State can take meaningful steps toward fulfilling its constitutional obligation to offer every child the opportunity for a sound basic education.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing efforts to enhance educational equity in New York State. We look forward to the findings of your study and hope that it will lead to much-needed reforms in the Foundation Aid formula.

Sincerely,
Floral Park Bellerose School District
Board of Education Trustees