

To the Rockefeller Institute of Government,

I am writing to request that you research the Foundation Aid formula.

To start off with, every student – public and also private – should be given the tools necessary in order to succeed. The aid given by the Foundation Aid is in order to help insure that.

There are a few major problems with the formula. First of all, it only takes into account the amount of public school students, and none of the private school students. Where I live, in the East Ramapo Central School District, most of the students attend private schools. The district must give these students certain basic needs, such as bussing, with only having a fraction of the money needed for all this. This causes certain services that the public school students need not to have full funding. There is no way for the district to meet the needs with just raising taxes, as then taxes would have to be raised by over 12%! This lack of money causes fighting inside or community, something that could be easily avoided if the state would allocate more money.

Secondly, the formula uses data from the 2000 Census. While this may be based on the assumption that the population grows at a certain rate, in this school district the growth rate is much higher than most of NYS. Perhaps the formula could be based on more recent census data.

Thirdly, there are a very large number of English language learners have joined or community since 2000. These children are in the public schools of this district and need more help in order to succeed, further strapping the already strapped school district funds.

Please research the formula in order that all children, regardless of which school district they are in, and regardless of what school they attend are able to succeed.

Sincerely,

Samuel Cahn