

GENERAL BROWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

General Brown Junior-Senior High School

17643 Cemetery Road
Dexter, NY 13634
Tel 315-779-2300 / Fax 639-3444

Brownville/Glen Park Elementary School

771 Main Street
Glen Park, NY 13601
Tel 315-779-2300 / Fax 788-6976

Dexter Elementary School

415 East Grove Street
Dexter, NY 13634
Tel 315-779-2300 / Fax 639-6845



Brian A. Moore
Superintendent of Schools

PO Box 500
Dexter, NY 13634

Telephone: 315-779-2300 / Fax 315-639-6916

Board of Education

Kelly Milkowich, President
Tiffany Orcesi, Vice President
Natalie Hurley
Jamie Lee
Albert Romano, Jr.
Jason Reynolds
Kimberly Shuler

www.gblions.org

The Rockefeller Institute of Government
411 State Street
Albany, NY 12203

Subject: Advocating for Equity in Education through Adequate Foundation Aid

We, as the General Brown Board of Education are writing to express our deep concern regarding the persistent disparities in educational funding and to urge your group to take into consideration each area of the state and their needs based on a variety of factors. After reviewing the locations of the public comment sessions, it was disheartening to see the North Country was excluded from the selection of a site to hold a public comments meeting. Our hope is as you continue to collect data and conduct research, that your committee will take the time to visit this area to see some additional factors that should be included in producing a more equitable formula for students, to ensure each student receives the same quality of education across New York State.

Despite previous efforts to ensure fair and adequate funding for all school districts, significant gaps remain, particularly affecting students in high-need and low-wealth communities. Foundation aid, intended to provide a baseline level of funding for all students, has fallen short of meeting the needs of many districts. This shortfall has perpetuated inequities, limiting the opportunities and resources available to our most vulnerable students. Yes, the population of the North Country is lower than many city areas of the state, but our region produces 20.8 billion dollars in gross regional product, showing that this area is a significant contributor economically which helps to support the needs of the rest of the state. Based on this contribution, our students should be afforded an education that can provide the skills necessary to be contributing members to the North Country region, but also to other locations in New York State, they may want to relocate to. As a board of education, we want our students to have the same opportunities in academic rigor, curriculum offerings/electives, STEAM initiatives, and materials, to ensure they are as competitive in higher education, post-secondary training, and immediate entry into the workforce, as their counterparts in other areas of New York State.

Research consistently demonstrates that equitable funding is critical to closing achievement gaps and providing all students with a high-quality education. Yet, in many districts, outdated and

A TRADITION IN FINE EDUCATION

Equal Opportunity - Affirmative Action Employer

For more information about our District, please visit our website: www.gblions.org

and subscribe to receive E--Alert Updates.

insufficient funding formulas have led to a lack of essential resources, such as experienced teachers, updated technology, and comprehensive support services. This not only hinders student performance but also undermines the promise of equal opportunity for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background. The costs to educate and provide services to students have increased exponentially and will only continue to increase, which in turn reduces the quality of education most districts can provide to their students. General Brown has been ranked for years as the district with the lowest per-pupil spending, currently spending about \$23,000 per pupil. We are a very fiscally responsible district, but when comparing this spending to New York City at \$35,000 per pupil and some school districts spending upwards of \$100,000, there are significant discrepancies in the level of education provided to students across the state.

To address these issues, we respectfully urge the New York State Legislature to consider the following actions:

- Update the foundation aid formula to reflect current educational costs and the unique needs of each district. This should include adjustments for inflation, regional cost differences, and the specific challenges faced by high-need districts.
- Prioritize increased investment in districts that serve a higher proportion of students from low-income families, English language learners, and students with disabilities. These districts often require additional resources to provide equitable educational opportunities.
- Establish mechanisms to ensure that foundation aid is distributed in a timely and predictable manner, allowing school districts to plan effectively and avoid disruptions to educational services.
- Implement measures to enhance transparency in the allocation and use of foundation aid, ensuring that funds are directed toward programs and initiatives that directly benefit students and improve educational outcomes.
- Encourage collaboration between school districts, community organizations, and other stakeholders to develop innovative solutions that address educational inequities and promote best practices across the state.

Investing in equitable education is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for the future prosperity of New York State. By ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education, regardless of their background or where they live, we can build a more just and thriving society.

We appreciate your attention to this critical issue and urge you to take bold steps to create a more equitable education system in New York State. Thank you for your commitment to our students and our future.

Sincerely,

The General Brown Board of Education

A TRADITION IN FINE EDUCATION

Equal Opportunity - Affirmative Action Employer

***For more information about our District, please visit our website: www.gblions.org
and subscribe to receive E--Alert Updates.***