

It's time Stop the GEA today!

- Governor Cuomo has linked this year's state budget support for schools to a list of demands he refers to as his "reform agenda."
- The governor is withholding school aid runs until a state budget agreement is reached because he's hoping to use the promise of increased aid to leverage legislators to pass his reform agenda. His message is clear: "no reform agenda – no increase in operating aid."
- Many of the governor's reform ideas have nothing to do with school financing and budgets. For instance, he wants to overhaul the teacher evaluation system, make it more difficult for teachers to secure tenure, promote state takeovers of failing schools, open more charter schools and offer a generous tax credit to donors who support private schools.
- There is NOTHING in the governor's budget addressing the devastating consequences of the "Gap Elimination Adjustment." Enacted in 2010, the GEA was proposed as a temporary fix to address a state budget shortfall resulting from the Great Recession of 2008. It remains in effect today despite the fact that the state now enjoys a projected \$6 billion budget surplus. In five years, the GEA has siphoned \$9.6 billion from school aid allocations.
- Since its enactment, the GEA has cost schools in the Broome-Tioga BOCES region a combined \$155 million in aid. That's approximately \$4,600 per student. The annual take back in aid has caused huge gaps in school district budgets and has led to a wide range of program cuts and hundreds of layoffs.
- Under the GEA, another \$1 billion is scheduled to be taken back in the coming year – to close a state budget gap that no longer exists.
- If the governor's reform agenda and budget were adopted, schools would receive an aid increase of approximately \$1 billion, which would effectively only offset the GEA take back, for a net result of zero. It is unclear how funding in the governor's proposal would be divided among schools across the state. And because the governor has withheld school aid runs, we won't know the impact on OUR DISTRICT until AFTER the state budget is adopted.
- *Eliminating the GEA would provide more direct funding for schools across the state (including those in our region) than they would receive if the legislature adopted the governor's entire reform package ...and there would be many fewer "strings" attached.*

GEA: School Aid TAKE BACK

