

Submitted Testimony

The New York State
Coalition of 853 Schools



TESTIMONY

BY

NEW YORK STATE COALITION OF **853** SCHOOLS

PRESENTED TO

FISCAL COMMITTEES OF THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE
HEARING ON
THE FY 2015-2016 EXECUTIVE BUDGET

ON

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015
ALBANY, NEW YORK

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the New York State Coalition of 853 Schools. 853 schools provide therapeutic and educational programs to school age students unable to be served by public school districts because of significant emotional, behavioral, or developmental challenges that require specialized related services and academic support.

The New York State Coalition of 853 Schools deeply appreciates the support of the Legislature for school age special education students and our schools. Three years ago, the support of school age special education programs was not a budget item. Discussions between the New York State Education Department and the Division of the Budget on how best to support our schools were done without oversight, without review and without the input of the Legislature. Today, that discussion is a public discussion and the voice of the Legislature has resulted in the re-establishment of growth to our sector and the implementation of modest reforms to the tuition rate methodology.

Thank you.

Annual Tuition Growth

Last year, the Assembly and Senate provided funds within your one-house budgets in support of school age special education schools on rate methodology and while the final budget did not maintain the investment, the Legislative intent to provide additional support matching the investments made to public schools was honored administratively in the tuition rate setting process and we were afforded an increase of 3.8% on costs for the 2014-15 school year. We are particularly pleased at this increase given that it is the first increase our schools have seen in several years.

In the 2015-16 budget we ask for that ongoing support be expressed once again. As the Legislature considers the state's investment in public schools, we ask that you also provide a matching percentage increase for the tuition rate methodology. We recommend that the increase be included in each of the one-house budgets to ensure that your support for additional funds is recognized by the New York State Education Department and Division of the Budget.

In addition, we support the Board of Regents' recommendation to establish an annual tuition growth index that would provide annual investments to school age special education schools on rate methodology similar to that provided to public school districts. The inclusion of language in the Article VII bill would ensure that as you invest in education that support is felt by all students regardless of if they remain in the public school district or are served by one of our schools.

Investment in School Facilities with Settlement Funds

The Coalition of 853 Schools recommends using a portion of the settlements funds to invest in the facilities of not-for-profit school-age special education providers. We recommend investing \$25 million (approximately \$250,000 per school) for the following projects:

- Deferred maintenance, repairs, renovation, and upgrades
- New purchases of energy efficient equipment, generators, HVAC
- Instructional technology
- Class room furniture/Lab equipment

- Security, Cameras, Safety
- Debt Reductions (*reimburses for recent facility repairs*)

The needs of each of our schools vary greatly and much is dependent on the needs of the students we serve. The tuition rate methodology does not support investments in infrastructure well. Schools are required to make the upfront investment an anticipation of reimbursement 2 years subsequent. Unfortunately, reimbursement is not guaranteed. Factors such as cost screens or limited to no growth prevents the investment from being reimbursed leaving the school holding the liability or having to reduce programmatic expenses to absorb the investment. In lieu of reforms to the tuition rate methodology, an investment of settlement funds of \$25 million would allow schools to make enhancements to facilities without consequence to the tuition rate that support academic programs.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to present the priorities of the New York State Coalition of 853 Schools. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the students who face enormous challenges in their young lives are afforded the same opportunity to succeed as those who are served in our community public schools.

NYS Coalition of 853 Schools

The Coalition of 853 Schools was formed in 1991 by a group of Chapter 853 residential and day schools principally located on the grounds of agencies that provide various child welfare, juvenile justice, and family/community support services. These educational programs are dedicated to improving the opportunities and outcomes for students enrolled in our schools. Schools largely serve school aged children involved in the foster care, juvenile justice and special education systems. The Coalition speaks on behalf of a broad spectrum of special education students enrolled in our member agency schools – from those with emotional/behavioral issues to those with developmental challenges – by advocating, assisting and representing the schools which support and educate them.

Membership

Anderson Center for Autism

Neil J. Pollack, Executive Director
4885 Route 9
PO Box 367
Staatsburg-On-Hudson, NY 12580
(845) 889-4034

Andrus - Orchard School

Brian Murphy, Acting CEO
1156 North Broadway
Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 965-3700

Astor Services for Children & Families

Astor Learning Center
James McGuirk, Ph. D., Executive Director
Susan Keegan, Principal
PO Box 5005, 6339 Mill Street
Rhinebeck, NY 12572-5005
(845) 871-1000

Baker Victory Services

Terese Scofidio,, CEO
Nancy Pankow, Vice President
Business Address: 780 Ridge Road
Lackawana, NY 14218
(716) 828-9500

Cardinal Hayes School for Special Children

Fred Apers, Executive Director
 PO Box CH, 60 St. Joseph Drive
 Millbrook, NY 12545
 (845) 877-6363

Cardinal McCloskey Services

Beth Finnerty, Executive Director
 115 Stevens Avenue, Suite LL5
 Valhalla, NY 10595
 (914) 997-8000

Center for Developmental Disabilities

The Children's Day Program
 Nick Boba, Executive Director
 72 South Woods Road
 Woodbury, NY 11797
 (516) 921-7650

Center for Spectrum Services

Susan Buckler, Administrative Director
 70 Kukuk Lane
 Kingston, NY 12401
 (845) 336-2616

Charlton School

Don Marshall, Executive Director
 Dr. Michael Tucker, Principal
 PO Box 47
 Burnt Hills, NY 12027
 (518) 399-8182

Child and Family Services

Francisco Vasquez, Executive Director
 Business Address: 330 Delaware Avenue
 Buffalo, NY 14202
 (716) 842-2750

Children's Home of Kingston

Grove Street Academy
 Gwen McCann, Executive Director
 26 Grove Street
 Kingston, NY 12402
 (845) 331-1448

Children's Home of Wyoming Conference

Robert "Chip" Houser, President/ CEO
 Maria Cali, VP of Education
 1182 Chenango Street
 Binghamton, NY 13901
 (607) 772-6904 ext. 121

Devereux Foundation

John O'Keefe, Executive Director
 40 Devereux Way
 Red Hook, NY 12571
 (845) 758-1899

Gateway-Longview

Lynde School
 Carolyne DeFranco, President/CEO
 Timothy P. Girard, MS, VP Educational Services
 6350 Main Street
 Williamsville, NY 14221
 Phone: (716) 633-7266

Green Chimneys Children's Services

Joseph Whalen, Executive Director
 400 Doansburg Road Box 719
 Brewster, NY 10509
 (845) 279-2995

Gustavus Adolphus

Karl Wiggins, Vice President
 Pamela C. Ruschak, Director of Education
 200 Gustavus Avenue
 Jamestown, NY 14701
 (716) 665-2116

Harmony Heights

Ellen Benson, Executive Director
 Ellen Laino, Principal
 57 Sandy Hill Road
 PO Box 569
 Oyster Bay, NY 11771
 (516) 922-4060

Hillside Children's Center

Dennis Richardson, Executive Director
 Cecilia Griffin Golden, Ph.D. Executive Director
 of Education
 1183 Monroe Avenue
 Rochester, NY 14620
 (585) 256-7512

House of the Good Shepherd

Tilton School
 Bob Roberts, Executive Director
 1550 Champlin Avenue
 Utica, NY 13502
 (315) 235-7600

LaSalle School

William Wolff, Executive Director
 James Meyer, Director of ED Services
 391 Western Avenue
 Albany, NY 12203
 (518) 242-4731 ext. 218

Leake and Watts Services, Inc.

Alan Mucatel, Executive Director
 463 Hawthorne Avenue
 Yonkers, NY 10705
 (914) 375-8700

Lowell School

Dede Proujansky, Executive Director
 203-05 32nd Street
 Bayside, NY 11361
 (718) 352-2100

Martin de Porres School

Dr. Edward Dana, Executive Director
 621 Elmont Road
 Elmont, NY 11003
 (516) 502-2840

Mary Cariola Children's Center, Inc.

Karen Zandi, Executive Director
 Irene Magee, Director of Financial Services
 1000 Elmwood Avenue
 Rochester, NY 14620
 (585) 271-0761

New Directions Youth & Family Services

Harietta G. Lewis Campus School
 James W. Coder, CEO
 Patricia McMahon, School Principal
 6395 Old Niagara Road
 Lockport, NY 14094
 (716) 433-4487

Norman Howard School

Joseph Martino, Executive Director
 275 Pinnacle Road
 Rochester, NY 14623
 (585) 334-8010

Northeast Parent and Child Society**Parsons Child & Family Center**

John Henley, President & CEO
 One Genium Plaza
 Schenectady, NY 12304
 (518) 346-1284 ext. 303

Oak Hill School, Inc.

David Mitchell, Executive Director
 39 Charlton Road
 Scotia, NY 12302
 (518) 339-5048

Parsons Family and Child Center

John Henley, President & CEO
 60 Academy Road
 Albany, NY 12208
 (518) 426-2600

School of the Holy Childhood

Donna Dedee, President/CEO
 100 Groton Parkway
 Rochester, NY 14623
 (585) 359-3710

SCO Family of Services

The Center for Living and Learning
 Tyree Learning Center
 Doug O'Dell, Interim Executive Director
 1 Alexander Place
 Glen Cove, NY 11542
 (516) 671-1253

St. Anne Institute

Anthony Cortese, Executive Director
 160 North Main Avenue
 Albany, NY 12206
 (518) 437-6501

St. Catherine's Center for Children

The R & E May School
 William Gettman, Executive Director
 40 North Main Ave
 Albany, NY 12203
 (518) 453-6700

St. Dominic's Home

Judith Kydon, Executive Director
 500 Western Highway
 Blauvelt, NY 10903
 (845) 359-3400

Villa of Hope (formerly St. Joseph's Villa of Rochester)

Christina Gullo, Executive Director
 3300 Dewey Avenue
 Rochester, NY 14616
 (585) 865-1550

Springbrook

Patricia Kennedy, CEO
2705 State Highway 28
Oneonta, NY 13820
(607) 286-7171

Summit Children's Residence Center

Dr. Bruce Goldsmith, Executive Director
Richard Sitman, Education Director
339 North Broadway
Upper Nyack, NY 10960

Summit Educational Resources

Stephen Anderson, PhD
Stahl Road
Getzville, New York 14068
(716) 629-3400

Upstate Cerebral Palsy

Louis B. Tehan, Executive Director
Jim Weaver, Vice President, School-Age-Services
1020 Mary Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6907

Vanderheyden

Karen Carpenter-Palumbo, Executive Director
Box 219 Cooper Hill Road
Wynantskill, NY 12198
(518) 283-6500