



NASSAU-SUFFOLK SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

OFFICE: 219 Bedford Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710-0385  
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 385, Bellmore, NY 11710-0385  
**JIM KADEN**, PRESIDENT

Tel (516) 781-2053 Fax (516) 679-0401  
e-mail: info@nssba.org  
**LORRAINE DELLER**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 2, 2008

The Honorable Dean Skelos  
55 Front Street  
Rockville Centre, New York 11570

Dear Senator Skelos:

Your resolve to avoid mid-year cuts to schools in the face of harsh criticism and political maneuvering is greatly appreciated by our 113 member boards of education. Because you held your position, you have given school districts a much-needed respite to plan for the fiscal challenges ahead.

A mid-year default on the scheduled payments of the state's share of education costs to public schools would have unequivocally resulted in the shifting of those costs on to the backs of the local property taxpayers and wreaked havoc among school officials left scrambling to cut programs mid-year. Not unlike Governor Cuomo's approach to a state deficit, Long Island schools were targeted with a disproportional share of the cuts and a decline in the state's support of education costs.

In the face of critical, long-term state deficits, it is irresponsible of Governor Paterson to call upon schools to completely deplete their reserve funds, compromising their fiscal stability and leaving them with an even greater hole to fill in the coming years. While we would appreciate legislation that would enable districts to tap this resource, we agree with your position that the governor should also be tapping into the state's "rainy day fund."

The current fiscal crisis will not be resolved with the broad stroke of a simplistic, populist maneuver, such as mid-year cuts or school property tax caps, but rather with a serious, strategic plan. The solution must address not only the immediate financial tension, but encompass the critical role Long Island's public school systems will need to play in this region's economic recovery. We appreciate your efforts to promote a solution with a long-term vision.

To assist you in your efforts, I am enclosing a copy of the New York State School Boards Association's (NYSSBA) *Report of the Task Force on Maximizing School District Resources*, released in October 2008. This year-long effort by school board members throughout the state contains 55 recommendations. In the interest of taxpayers and school districts throughout New York State, we hope you will support legislation that is required to make some of these recommendations a reality.

In the interest of taxpayers and school districts throughout New York State, we hope you will support legislation that is required to make some of these recommendations a reality. We look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with you and your colleagues in seeking measures to reduce school costs and minimize the impact of our collective financial challenges.

Sincerely,

Jim Kaden  
President