

March 2015

Senator James Seward
172 State Street Room 420, Capital
Albany, NY 12247

Re: Release School Aid Runs

Dear Senator Seward:

I am a concerned citizen in the Sherburne-Earlville CSD. I am very concerned for my district because the release of the 2015-16 Executive Budget Proposal on January 21, 2015 did not contain a spending plan for school districts. Within the proposed legislation, the release of additional monies for school districts was tied to the passage of education policy reforms.

The proposed state budget would technically appropriate an increase of \$1.1 billion for School Aid. But the budget does not include formulas to allocate that increase and no estimates of aid for individual districts have been provided.

For my district, withholding proposed School Aid distribution from the executive budget makes it virtually impossible to proceed with budget development and to comply with state laws. **A projected School Aid distribution and corresponding distribution runs for individual school districts must be released immediately.**

The education of the children in my community is at stake. We have already experienced deep cuts to programs and staff.

As drafted in the executive budget proposal, if the reforms are not enacted, no district would be allowed *any* increase in aid over current year levels, which leaves Sherburne-Earlville CSD with a shortfall that would result in program and staffing cuts. With that figure as our only state aid assurance, our options are 1.) steep cuts within a projected budget to ensure expenditures will meet our only known level of revenue, or 2.) increasing the local tax levy to a safe level above the cap to compensate for possible lost state aid.

Neither of these options is acceptable or fair to my community, as we have already made millions of dollars in reductions since 2010. Spending on materials, supplies, and equipment have been kept to their bare bones. The district has increased its use of reserves by over 300% to mitigate cuts and save student programs. Those cuts have changed the face of education in my community and it must not continue.

I implore you to **submit a proposal to allocate the planned \$1.1 billion increase in School Aid** and release the corresponding projected 2015-16 state aid distribution for our school district immediately. This is an imperative that threatens to disrupt government function in our state and our school district as well as cause unnecessary distress in our community, and it cannot be continued.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____