



2018-19

NYS Higher Education Budget Funding

NYSUT is asking the state to make a significant investment in the State University of New York (SUNY) and City University of New York (CUNY). The enactment of the Excelsior Scholarship Program last year highlighted the importance of New York's public higher education institutions, which resulted in an increase in applicants and enrollment.

This is the year for New York to focus on the quality of the education offered at CUNY and SUNY. Increasing access to public higher education without providing funding to preserve and enhance the quality of education is a disservice to the hundreds of thousands of students our members serve. An investment in our public higher education institutions is needed to provide additional funding for the academic programs, student supports and advisement needed to help all students graduate on time.

These institutions need an infusion of new state funding to address growing enrollment as a result of the Excelsior Scholarship Program.

Mandatory Costs

The executive budget holds SUNY's and CUNY's instructional core budgets flat from last year's funding level, a level that represents a decrease in full time equivalent (FTE) student funding, when adjusted for inflation. Unfortunately for New York's students, this has been the case for many years. It needs to be addressed. As enrollment increases at our four-year campuses, so must the state's investment to protect and

enhance the quality of education accessed by all students.

An investment in CUNY and SUNY is needed to cover all mandatory costs, including collective bargaining increases, energy and other inflationary costs as well as the tuition credit waiver. Without state funding to cover these rising costs, CUNY and SUNY are forced to absorb them, which often necessitates reductions in academic programs and student supports.

Mandatory costs for both institutions are estimated to be approximately \$243 million (\$125M SUNY/\$118M CUNY). We understand the financial challenges the state is facing and ask the Legislature to make a down payment on this investment by reimbursing campuses for tuition credits (i.e., TAP gap), which is estimated at \$124 million (\$65M SUNY /\$59M CUNY). Future funding for collective bargaining increases, which are a routine part of operations for SUNY and CUNY, are once again not included. This funding will help free up funds at campuses to be reinvested in the classroom.

Faculty

Both SUNY and CUNY are experiencing an acute shortage of full-time faculty as a result of years of underfunding. Access to full-time faculty is among the most important factors in student success. Investment is urgently needed to create full-time faculty positions and remedy the low pay of adjunct faculty. NYSUT is pleased to see that a budget appropriation of \$30M (\$12M CUNY \$18 M/SUNY) previously allocated for performance-based funding has been modified to allow these funds to be used to support new classroom faculty. We believe

this language represents an acknowledgement that more faculty is needed at CUNY and SUNY.

Additional faculty will allow SUNY and CUNY to provide more course offerings, reduce class sizes and offer more student advisement and mentoring services — all of which improve the quality of education and on-time student completion.

Over the years, students have paid tuition increases to help support the hiring of additional faculty and staff. Students have paid more than their fair share and it is time for the state to pick up its share of the costs. We look forward to working with the Legislature to make funding for new classroom faculty a reality in this year's budget.

Community Colleges

Community colleges educate and prepare students for the workforce as well as provide the foundation for those students who move on to four-year campuses or universities. Community colleges also work collaboratively with regional businesses and employers to develop and provide training to address local workforce needs.

State funding to community colleges is not commensurate with the provisions of the state education law. State education law stipulates that the state shall pay 40 percent of the operating costs of these campuses; however, the state is not meeting its obligation.

The executive budget proposes flat funding per FTE student for community colleges, which will likely force campuses to raise tuition. While state base aid funding is flat, some of our community colleges will receive less state funding due to enrollment fluctuations.

In order for our campuses to maintain and enhance academic programming and supports, state funding needs to be increased. SUNY proposed a new methodology to fund community colleges. While NYSUT is open to discussing ways to improve the funding methodology, we believe that state funding should continue to be directly allocated to the campuses. To date, we have not seen the proposed methodology. However, we understand it does contain the use of block grant funding, which we oppose. Prior to enacting any change to funding for these campuses, we must take the time to ensure that there are no unintended consequences.

NYSUT urges the Legislature to increase base aid by \$253 per FTE student, a \$46M increase (\$30M/ SUNY and \$16M/CUNY). This would raise the per student spending level to \$3,000. In addition to an FTE increase, we would like to work with the Legislature to provide “hold-harmless” funding to campuses impacted by enrollment fluctuations. With inadequate funding, community colleges are unable to retain programming and services that not only support students, but also help attract future students.

SUNY Hospitals

The executive budget proposes the elimination of the state subsidy for SUNY hospitals and replaces it with a state capital appropriation. The elimination of the subsidy is deeply troubling.

While our hospitals need capital for critical maintenance and improvements, the state subsidy is a vital lifeline to keeping these teaching hospitals open. SUNY hospitals are academic medical centers that provide much needed patient care to many of the poorest citizens of New York whose physical health would be compromised by these cuts; train and prepare the next generation of health care workers; engage in research to improve lives; create technologies to revolutionize health care; and provide invaluable community services. These hospitals are New York's true safety net providers, serving low-income communities, the uninsured and the underinsured.

As New York braces for draconian changes and cuts to federal health care reimbursement, SUNY's hospitals must be supported and positioned to continue to provide care to all, regardless of a patient's ability to pay, as well as train the next generation of health care workers. We urge the Legislature to restore the \$78.6 million state subsidy and ensure that SUNY's hospitals receive their full state match of Disproportionate Share Hospital Payments. It is time for New York to start recognizing that SUNY's hospitals are the state's hospitals, providing a public service for citizens who otherwise would not have such access to critical health care.

CUNY Student Success Initiative

Thirteen of CUNY colleges are ranked among the top 20 colleges nationally for moving students from poverty to the middle class. Yet after decades of disinvestment, CUNY needs resources to assure that every student has the academic support and personal attention to succeed and graduate on time. The state's per-FTE student investment in CUNY senior colleges has declined 18 percent since 2008, when adjusted for inflation. Without adequate resources, CUNY has been unable to hire adequate numbers of full-time faculty and counselors, relying on increased numbers of poorly-paid adjunct faculty, despite evidence that strong relationships with full-time faculty are key to student success.

To diminish inequality, promote student success and invest in wage justice for adjunct faculty beginning this year, we are proposing a three-year investment of \$150 million in a CUNY Student Success Initiative (\$50M for year one in SFY 18-19).

NYSUT urges the Legislature to invest in CUNY and SUNY in the 2018-19 enacted budget by:

1. Providing state funding to fully cover the TAP gap costs borne by four-year campuses — \$124 million (\$65M SUNY /\$59M CUNY).
2. Increasing community college base aid by \$253 per FTE student (\$46 million — \$30M/SUNY and \$16M/CUNY).
3. Restoring the state subsidy to SUNY hospitals (\$78.6 M).
4. Providing \$150 million (\$50 million for year one) for a CUNY Student Success Initiative.