

NYS School Funding Inequity

New York State's Foundation Aid formula for funding our schools is broken, and needs to be fixed. School aid distribution does not support every student in a way that shows that ***every student matters***. And every student does matter.

A Tale of Two Schools

One of the downstate schools we looked at, the Sag Harbor School District in Suffolk County, offers its 993 students opportunities we could only dream of. With average funds per student of \$34,423, here is a sampling of some of its offerings:

- 12 AP courses, including AP studio art, print making, sculpture and music theory
- An International Baccalaureate Diploma Program
- K-5 conversational Spanish
- SAT prep
- Artist in residence in photography and sculpture
- Elementary Eco Walk and greenhouse
- Parenting Center with workshops and affordable family outings
- Elementary Morning Programs every day with parents, community members and visitors invited
- A research in science program

By contrast, our Canajoharie school district, which is comparable in size and spends \$18,846 on average per student, can offer only a portion of what Sag Harbor has the capacity to do. Because *our students matter*, we need to advocate that our district has the same capacity - not take anything away from Sag Harbor - to have the same offerings.

Comparison information – by the economic numbers

	# students	\$/student	*Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR)	2012/13 Budget (millions)	2012/13 Local tax levy (millions)	**Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)	GEA as percent of local budget	GEA as percent of local tax levy	Cut/student above/below average (-794)
Port Jefferson	1219	31236	3	38.1	32.6	-682000	1.8	2.1	-235
Sag Harbor	993	34423	5.6	34.2	31.5	-341000	1	1.1	-450
Elmsford	959	31582	1.9	30.3	26.7	-365000	1.2	1.4	-413
East Moriches	734	33474	1.1	24.6	17.8	-603000	2.5	3.4	+28
Tuckahoe	1103	27111	1.8	29.9	25.2	-385000	1.3	1.5	-445
AVERAGES	1002	31565	2.68	31.4	26.8	-475200	1.6	1.9	-303
Canajoharie	1023	18846	0.48	19.3	6.6	-917000	4.8	13.8	+102
Fort Plain	815	22822	0.36	18.6	5.6	-803000	4.3	14.4	+192
Fonda/Fultonville	1434	16868	0.57	24.2	9.8	-2400000	9.9	24.5	+880
St. Johnsville	454	19219	0.46	8.7	2.3	-477000	5.5	20	+256
AVERAGES	932	19439	0.46	17.7	6.1	-1149000	6.1	18.1	+357
Amsterdam	3610	16157	0.48	58.3	21.4	-2550000	4.4	11.9	-88

*Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) is a measure of the average level of property and adjusted growth income wealth behind each student. The higher the combined wealth ratio, the greater the potential is to generate funds locally and the greater ability to pay school taxes. Average CWR is 1.0.

**Gap Elimination Adjustment is the amount of projected state aid that is withheld to help close the overall state budget deficit.