

# State Education Department

The Executive Budget recommends (analysis as of **January 24, 2025**):

- **A FY 2025-26 workforce of 2,909**, unchanged from the previous enacted budget.

SED anticipates a loss of 290 positions through attrition and expects 290 new fills.

The following chart identifies estimated FTEs level by program:

Program	FY 25 Est. FTEs 3/31/25	FY 26 Est. FTEs 3/31/26	FTE Change
Administration	54	54	0
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services	740	740	0
Cultural Education	280	280	0
Office of Higher Education and the Professions	497	497	0
Office of Management Services Program	388	388	0
Office of Pre-K through Grade 12 Education	755	755	0
School for the Blind	114	114	0
School for the Deaf	81	81	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2909</b>	<b>2909</b>	<b>0</b>

- An All Funds appropriation of **\$700.3** million, an **increase of \$3.1 million (0.4%)** from the enacted appropriation for the previous SFY.
- The total appropriation for personal services is **\$306.8** million, an **increase of \$3.9 million (1.3%)**.
- The agency employed an estimated **374.5 contract employees** under consultant contracts in the previous FY at a cost of **\$57.7 million**. It is estimated that the number of consultant FTE contract employees will **decrease to 366.94** in FY 26 at a **decreased estimated cost of \$57.3 million (-0.6%)**.
- Budget Highlights
  - Provides \$37.4 billion in total School Aid. This represents a \$1.7 billion (4.7%) yea-to-year increase compared to SY 2025, including a \$1.5 billion Foundation Aid increase and a \$230 million increase in all other School Aid programs including expense-based aids, categorical aids, and competitive grants.
  - Begins the process of reforming the Foundation Aid formula by updating the formula's two measures of the percentage of low-income students in a school district, consistent with the recommendation of the Rockefeller Institute of Government and the Board of Regents. The outdated 2000 Census poverty rate is replaced with the most recent Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates data, while the unreliable free-and-reduced-price lunch data is replaced with economically disadvantaged data to better reflect the current population of low-income students. The Executive Budget also modified the formula to provide

# State Education Department

additional aid to low-wealth school districts and to ensure that each district receives at least a two percent annual increase in aid, providing a total increase of \$1.46 billion (5.9%) in Foundation Aid.

- Fully funds the current statutory formulas that reimburse a portion of certain school district expenses, such as school construction, pupil transportation, BOCES services, and the educational costs of certain students with disabilities. In total, these aid categories are projected to increase by \$230 million (2.2%).
- Provides \$64.6 million for the College in High School Opportunity Fund, including \$52.4 million for Smart Scholars, Smart Transfer, and Pathways in Technology Early College High School programs, and \$12.2 million to provide new ongoing, per-credit funding for College in High School programs.
- Proposes to limit the use of smartphones and other internet-enabled devices on school grounds during school hours in order to ensure a distraction-free learning environment. Aims to improve student outcomes by addressing the negative impacts of smartphone use on children's mental health and academic performance. Provides \$13.5 million to aid in the implementation of distraction-free school policies.
- Provides \$340 million for school meals, a \$160 million (89%) year-to-year increase, and requires all school districts, charter schools, and nonpublic schools that participate in the national school lunch and breakfast program to provide free breakfast and lunch meals to all students regardless of their families' income. Under the universal Free School Meals program, the State will pay the student's share of costs for all meals served to students not already receiving free meals.
- Provides \$228.4 million in aid to reimburse nonpublic schools' costs for State-mandated activities, a \$10.3 million (4.7%) year-to-year increase, to fund aid payable in SY 2026. Provides \$85.5 million for science, technology, engineering, and math instruction, a \$10 million (13.2%) year-to-year increase. Continues \$70 million for health and safety capital projects, including critical repair and maintenance of nonpublic schools' facilities, and \$5 million for art and music instruction.
- Includes charter school students in the pupil counts used to calculate each district's School Aid. Continues additional State support through the supplemental tuition and facilities aid reimbursement, providing a total of \$190 million for charter school supplemental tuition and \$145 million for charter school facilities aid.
- Funds the State's share of the costs for year-round special education services for preschool-age children with disabilities and summer services for school-age students with disabilities, providing \$1.1 billion to reimburse counties for the cost of preschool special education services, a \$57 million (5.5%) year-to-year

## State Education Department

increase, and \$413 million to reimburse school districts for the cost of summer school services, a \$9 million (2.2%) year-to-year increase.

- Provides \$104.6 million of Library Aid, equal to the SY 2026 statutory funding amount. This is a \$748,000 increase over FY 2025 Enacted Budget levels. Provides \$34 million for Library Construction to fund various capital projects. Continues a \$3 million appropriation to ensure continues access to the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library.
- Provides \$27.6 million for capital improvements to the 5 State-owned schools. This includes \$20.1 million for the 3 State-owned schools on Native American reservations (the Onondaga School, the St. Regis Mohawk School, and the Tuscarora School), \$4.5 million for the State School for the Blind at Batavia, and \$3 million for the State School for the Deaf at Rome. This capital funding will modernize HVAC systems and support school facility upgrades and necessary maintenance costs.