



# Freeport Public Schools

235 North Ocean Avenue • Freeport, New York 11520 • 516-867-5200

December 3, 2013

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
New York State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

**Kishore Kuncham, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

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I am writing to request your support for repealing the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) for the 2014-2015 school year. Freeport has lost approximately \$30,000,000 in state aid over the past four years because of the GEA - more than any other school district in Nassau County!

We have needed to make detrimental cuts to educational programs to maintain a tax levy increase that local taxpayers can support. Our program losses include:

- Cuts of 128 positions including 67 teachers, 28 teaching assistants, 9 administrators, and 24 other staff.
- Increases in class size
- Loss of Enrichment Program at elementary level
- Elimination of Co-ed Varsity Golf, Boys Varsity Volleyball, and Intramurals
- Consolidation of 7th & 8th grade teams (Baseball, Softball, Volleyball, Boys Basketball and Girls Basketball)
- Elimination/consolidation of coaching positions
- Elimination/consolidation of clubs
- Reductions in secondary summer school
- Loss of elementary summer school
- Loss of our alternative school
- Reduction in supplies and equipment allocations

Mandated expenditures over which school districts have no control continue to grow while foundation aid is frozen and state aid continues to be below 2009 levels. As a high need, low wealth district that is so state aid dependent, Freeport is especially hard hit by the GEA and frozen foundation aid. We have passed the point where we are doing more with less. We are now doing less with less. The GEA, state aid reductions, combined with insufficient mandate relief and the enactment of the property tax cap, has created irreversible financial consequences.

The continuation of the GEA is a death knell for our schools. We can no longer bear the burden imposed on taxpayers by the GEA. Our schools are at a crossroads. I am asking you as our elected representative, who has always cared about Freeport, to help us to maintain and promote the kind of quality education that our children deserve by abolishing the GEA and unfreezing foundation aid.

Sincerely,

Kishore Kuncham, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools