



Community District Education Council 26

New York City Department of Education

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Resolution to Update the Regional Cost Index to Reflect Current Living and Labor Costs in the New York City-Long Island Region.

WHEREAS, the New York State Foundation Aid formula was established to ensure that every school district receives sufficient funding to provide a "sound basic education" as mandated by the State Constitutionⁱ; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Court of Appeals in Campaign for Fiscal Equity v. State of New York affirmed the State's obligation to provide adequate education funding aligned with the actual cost of delivering educational servicesⁱⁱ; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation Aid formula utilizes a Regional Cost Index (RCI) to adjust aid based on the varying costs of labor and living across different geographic regions of New York Stateⁱⁱⁱ; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Cost Index (RCI) for the New York City-Long Island labor force region has remained frozen at 1.425 since its implementation in the 2007–2008 school year pursuant to New York State Education Law § 3602^{iv}; and

WHEREAS, this prolonged freeze has failed to account for nearly two decades of cumulative inflation and escalating labor costs in the downstate metropolitan region, significantly eroding the purchasing power of Foundation Aid, resulting in larger class sizes, reduced staffing capacity, and diminished student support services; and

WHEREAS, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Consumer Price Index for the New York–Newark–Jersey City metropolitan area has increased by more than 55 percent since 2007, substantially outpacing cost growth in other regions of New York State, where inflation has been comparatively lower^v; and

WHEREAS, New York State Senate Bill S8125 and corresponding Assembly Bill A9049^{vi} propose updating the RCI for the New York City-Long Island labor force region from 1.425 to 1.496 to better reflect current economic conditions; and

WHEREAS, an analysis by the New York City Independent Budget Office (IBO) indicates that updating the Regional Cost Index to 1.496 would result in an estimated \$539.7 million annual increase in Foundation Aid for New York City, providing critical revenue to offset rising operational costs, prevent program reductions, maintain adequate classroom staffing levels, and support state-mandated initiatives^{vii}; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Education Council 26 (CEC 26) formally calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, Senate Bill S8125 and Assembly Bill A9049 to update the Regional Cost Index from 1.425 to 1.496; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such an update should be implemented as a supplemental increase in Foundation Aid to ensure that New York City Public Schools can meet the statutory requirements of the class size reduction law and the increasing costs of special education services, while requiring no structural modification to the Foundation Aid formula and minimal administrative implementation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the New York City Department of Education and the Panel for Educational Policy shall include the RCI update as a primary legislative priority in their 2026-2027 state budget advocacy platform; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Kathy Hochul, State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and the members of the New York City delegation to the State Legislature.

During the CEC 26 meeting held on March 26, 2026, the resolution was reviewed and unanimously approved by all members in attendance.

ⁱ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/CNS/A11S1>

ⁱⁱ https://www.nycourts.gov/reporter//3dseries/2006/2006_02284.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/3602>

^{iv} <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/3602>

^v https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/news-release/consumerpriceindex_newyork.htm

^{vi} <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/S8125>

^{vii} <https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/impact-of-state-legislature-proposals-for-foundation-aids-regional-cost-index-march-2025.pdf>