

SSFC 2013 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

This agenda addresses our goals and mission from the outset: Reform the process for distributing state aid to schools to make it equitable, sufficient and predictable

1. Abolish the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) IMMEDIATELY

- Any aid formula must include a distribution that takes into account both poverty and fiscal capacity
 - Remove any and all money for non-essential programs
 - Avoid performance grants – they are unproven and untested
 - Curtail funding to redundant or unproven programs
- Guarantee that all funds be used for education – not for political purposes
- Increase Foundation Aid to prevent re-creating another “Shares Agreement”
- Cease the highly political practice of awarding Bullet Aid and re-direct those funds to the reduction of the GEA

2. Repurpose the Governor’s Education Reform Commission, or Establish a New Commission, that Includes Experts with Hands-On Experience in Public Education Finance to Propose/Develop Legislation That Will:

- Create a new and equitable Foundation Aid formula for 2014-15
- Add supplementary funds – rather than the current model of re-directing current levels of education aid – to promote and support school district mergers and regional high schools
- Correspondingly, add supplemental funds for Kindergarten and Pre-K programs
- Eliminate or significantly reduce costly, unfunded mandates that impede the mission of school districts, such as...
 - Reform – not abolish – the Triborough Amendment to alleviate the fiscal pressures on school districts due to major automatic cost increases
 - Allow school districts to have access to or direct membership in a statewide health insurance plan
 - Establish statewide minimum health insurance contributions for all personnel
 - Order the automatic removal and loss of license of personnel convicted of crimes

3. The Board of Regents Must Also Stand Up and Be Counted by Taking Definitive Action to Support these Efforts by Advocating for:

- State aid distributions as proposed above
- Mandate relief as noted above