

March 3, 2017

Governor Andrew Cuomo

State Capitol

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

My name is Jon Peterson and I am the Superintendent of Schools of the Mayfield Central School District. As you are well aware, former Governor David Patterson created the Gap Elimination Adjustment or GEA in 2010 as a plan of action to address New York's nearly \$13 billion dollar deficit. Mayfield Central School (MCS), like all public schools in the great State of New York, did our part for those six years of the GEA by making the difficult, fiscally responsible decisions while New York was in the red. During that time, Mayfield lost \$7,577,945 in state aid to the GEA. We appropriated reserves and fund balance, adopted tax levies under the cap, increased average class size and eliminated or reduced educational programs for our students. Since 2010, the elimination or reduction of programs at Mayfield Central School has meant the elimination of 18 full time positions and the reduction of 7 others to part time (please refer to the attachment for the details). In order to make those numbers relevant, you should know that our total workforce includes 138 full time and 10 part time employees. I would like to thank you for agreeing to the restoration of the GEA last year. It literally stopped the process of purging at MCS and began the process of restoring programs and staff to benefit the needs of our students.

Much to my disappointment, the Governor's Executive Budget Proposal for the 2017/2018 school year proposes a mere 1.23% state aid increase. I find your proposed level of state aid objectionable, especially since it ignores the 2007 Foundation Aid formula. The lack of sufficient state aid combined with the statutory regulations of the tax levy cap potentially returns MCS to the reduction and elimination mode characteristic of the GEA era. I and the district I represent commend the emotions of Assembly Education committee chair Cathy Nolan who said, "Any repeal of Foundation Aid in this budget is just completely unacceptable." I beseech you to do what is right by the students of Mayfield Central School by passing a New York State 2017/2018 budget that provides foundation formula levels of state aid that would allow MCS to sustain current programs and staff.

Sincerely,

Jon W. Peterson

Superintendent, Mayfield Central School