



NORTH MERRICK
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
—Nurturing Young Minds—

North Merrick UFSD State Foundation Aid Funding Plan

Introduction

The 2021-2022 enacted state budget includes language stating that for the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, each school district receiving a foundation aid increase of more than 10% or \$10,000,000 a school year must post a plan of how the funds will be used to address student performance and need, including but not limited to:

- Increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap;
- Reducing class size;
- Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or who are at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas;
- Addressing student social-emotional health;
- Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
- goals and ratios for pupil support;
- detailed summaries of investments in current year initiatives and balance funds spent in priority areas

For the 2021-22 school year, the North Merrick Union Free School District received a foundation aid increase of 12% or \$669,130.

Increasing graduation rates and eliminating the achievement gap.

Plan Summary:

During a time of unprecedented uncertainty amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, students need a higher level of support and guidance. As educators, we must identify how to effectively support students in this current state. Students need interaction with faculty and peers to stay connected and to build community.

Funds will be used to support the budget to fund various summer, AIS and other academic programs. The increase in Foundation Aid will ensure that these improvements do not disappear when the pandemic ends.

Reducing class size.

Plan Summary:

The District will use the foundation aid increase to maintain staff and to limit large fluctuations in class size. Funds will allow the district to hire additional elementary teachers to reduce class sizes at our two elementary schools.

Providing supports for students who are not meeting, or who are at risk of not meeting, state learning standards in core academic subject areas.

Plan Summary:

Developmental research finds that the presence of a caring trusted adult in a child's life contributes to engagement in school and resilience in the face of adverse circumstances. Strengthening bonds with students—and forging connections with those signaling they are at-risk—is particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic. School staff will use creative, informal modes of outreach—students who struggle in school may have difficulty dealing with traditional schooling models. Schools must consider students' home situation—layoffs and social distancing may introduce economic and personal stressors that manifest poor school engagement. Schools must create innovative approaches to motivate student participation—online instruction of complex academic topics can be daunting and dull. We need to develop plans to encourage students to participate

Funds will be used for increase in staffing for academic support and summer programs district wide.

Addressing student social-emotional health.

Plan Summary:

The mental health of our students is at the forefront of all our decision-making. Our teachers, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses are prepared to support our students' emotional needs. We recognize that this pandemic has been a traumatic and overwhelming experience. Whether students have been affected directly or indirectly by the virus itself, all of our students have experienced a loss of time with friends, missed celebrations, and are returning to school with varying levels of uncertainty and fear.

While the majority of the funds delegated for this priority area will be met via the ESSER and GEER Funding, the 2022- 23 budget does include the funds to maintain all of these services that had been supported in prior budgets.

Providing adequate resources to English language learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.

Plan Summary:

North Merrick is committed to continuing to identify and serve English Language Learners. Whether in person or an alternative format, instructional and support staff will continue implementing ESOL strategies to address ELL students' academic and language needs. Funds will be used to pay for staff, private and public placement of students with disabilities, transportation, and resources needed to maintain educational requirements. Funds will be used to hire part time staff to assist with learning loss and students with special needs.

Other areas of student performance and need.

Plan Summary:

Supporting our students during the pandemic and beyond will draw on many of the skills students use day-to-day to provide emotional and academic support and guidance. We must build on prior knowledge and experience, offering further guidance on things to keep in mind when planning for additional transitions and talking to students, followed by more practical tools and strategies to rebuild relationships and support all students.

Goals and ratios for pupil support;

Plan Summary:

The increase in foundation aid of \$669,130 is equally allocated through all of the aforementioned areas.

Detailed summaries of investments in current year initiatives and balance funds spent in priority areas

Plan Summary:

- State Foundation Aid was utilized and invested for the following activities:
- Summer school program districtwide
- Afterschool instruction districtwide
- At Risk Services
- Special Education programs and services, including BOCES, Non Public Schools and specialized nursing services
- Funding for instructional personnel for areas such as math, English, social studies, elementary education, teacher assistants, and social workers

The District invested in additional instructional teaching staff to reduce class sizes at the elementary school buildings. Additional investments were designated for Special Education to provide needed resources and funding for instruction, tuition, and related services. Due to the increase in student mental health and behavioral issues we have seen an increase in student needs. We have invested funding in services and assessments for our students with the highest needs. We continue to utilize the increased funding to offset the increased costs of services to our highest needs student population

Questions or comments regarding this plan may be sent to NMBOE@nmerrick.org.

DRAFT