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Begin to restore the promise of CFE by re-allocating the Governor's proposed competitive grants

The state has never fully complied with their promise to fairly fund NYC according to the court's decision in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case in 2006. Instead, our schools have suffered nearly \$1 billion in state budget cuts over the last two years.

The Governor's proposed budget for 2012-13 includes restorations of \$805 million statewide, but \$250 million of that is supposed to be allocated to districts through competitive grants, based at least on test score gains. The amount remaining -- \$555 million -- will not even cover inflation. Of that amount, NYC is slated to receive only about \$180 million in additional funds.

Proposal: We are asking that **a minimum of \$272 million** in additional foundation aid be allocated to NYC schools, by eliminating the proposed competitive grant program and adding \$92 million from that program to the \$180 million for NYC already in the Governor's budget.

Rationale: Competitive grants based largely on test score gains put even more emphasis on high-stakes testing and create winners and losers. A sound basic education is not a race but a right. NYC schools enroll over 70% of the state's free and reduced lunch students and more than 65% of the state's African American and Hispanic students. NYC schools need and deserve to receive more of our fair share. Our schools have lost thousands of teaching positions in recent years, and our children have experienced rising class sizes and the loss of many critical programs. With only \$180 million in cuts restored, they will continue to lose ground.

If CFE had been fully funded, NYC would be receiving approximately \$770 million in increased aid this year, to make up for two years of cuts; or \$2.3 billion annually in additional state aid over what our schools received in 2006.

In a recent letter to the Governor, CFE wrote that "the Executive Budget proposal appears to conflict with the New York Court of Appeals rulings in the landmark Campaign for Fiscal Equity litigation."

Endorsed by Class Size Matters and the Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council, 3/8/12.