

Dear Esteemed Legislators:

In the proposed Governor's Budget for 2016-17 our local school district, **Blind Brook-Rye Union Free School District**, has been short-changed - again. We are working together - school board, superintendent, administrators, teachers and parents - to meet the needs of our children for the next year. We are working under the specter of a **near zero % property tax levy cap** which means we will have no additional revenue from last year's budget.

Our operating costs have increased and our capital needs are more urgent than ever before. Foundation aid was frozen for years, denying us proper state support. The Gap Elimination Adjustment, a reduction in aid that occurred six years ago when the State was in crisis, has not been fully restored, as was promised. And yet our district is asked to do more each year.

We appreciate the efforts of our local legislators. They have both worked with us the last three years to improve our situation. But we need your help. Our children need your help.

If we cannot gain meaningful mandate relief from the State; if we are to labor under a near zero % property tax levy cap with no adjustments for increase in enrollments, special ed student or ESL student needs, **then we must have robust help from the State. Please consider fully restoring the GEA and make a significant increase in Foundation Aid.**

We appreciate your assistance and attention to this important matter as you deliberate and arrive at a sensible 2016 budget that addresses the needs of this state and especially its public school children.

Sincerely,