



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MAJORITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN NEW YORK STATE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES
THEY NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR STUDENTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE
REGENTS' LEARNING STANDARDS**

March 30, 2004 – Ensuring students have an opportunity to achieve a Regents-level education in New York State will require an increased investment of \$6.6 billion to \$9.1 billion, according to the final report of the *New York Adequacy Study* released today. The independent and privately-funded “costing-out” study, undertaken by leading educational economists and school finance experts at the American Institutes of Research (AIR) and Management Analysis & Planning, Inc. (MAP), is the most ambitious and the only one of its kind to be undertaken in the State of New York. Based on the study’s results, CFE projects a statewide education aid increase of \$9.5 billion, including building aid, to bring all schools to adequacy level.

“In this study, some of the state’s most experienced and successful educators identified the key ingredients students need to meet the Regents’ Learning Standards,” stated Michael A. Rebell, CFE’s Executive Director and Counsel. “Now that we know the recipe for an adequate education, it’s time to provide it to every New York public school student.”

Nearly 60 principals, superintendents, school business officials, and special education directors from communities across the state participated in the study. With an average of nearly 30 years of experience, these educators specified precise conditions such as class sizes, teacher-pupil ratios, and levels of extended day/extended year programming to ensure every student has a full chance to meet the Regents’ standards. The study also solicited and integrated the input of hundreds of other “stakeholders,” including school board members, parents, business leaders, policy makers, representatives from the state legislature, and representatives from the governor’s staff.

“This study embodies a commitment of communities across the state to ensure that all students - regardless of the color of their skin or the wealth of their community - have a fair chance to succeed in school,” stated David Ernst, Director of Communications and Research for the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA).

“If we follow the Standard & Poor’s plan, we would continue to underfund our neediest schools,” stated Rebell. “The *New York Adequacy Study*, which is grounded in the solid recommendations of highly-qualified professionals, unambiguously outlines the full resources that our kids need to succeed. Our elected officials now have everything they need to develop the right legislation to fund education in a way that aligns with student need.” This was a central requirement of the Court of Appeals in the *CFE* decision, which gave the state until July 2004 to undertake major reforms to ensure that all students are afforded their right to a sound basic education.

According to the study, 517 of the state’s school districts are currently spending less than is necessary to provide their students with an opportunity to meet the Regents’ Learning Standards. To ensure every student has a chance to meet those standards would require a 39% increase in funding for New York City’s schools and an increased investment in many other high needs districts across the state, such as Albany (22.5%), Brentwood (40.5%), Buffalo (32.5%), Elmira (15%), Port Chester (26.7%), Rochester (39.9%), Salamanca (30%), and Syracuse (34.8%). None of these figures include funding for school facilities or student transportation.

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• Additional materials can be found on CFE’s website at www.cfequity.org