



CAMPAIGN FOR FISCAL EQUITY, INC.

NEW YORKERS STATEWIDE CALL FOR NEW SCHOOL FUNDING SYSTEM

CFE/NYSSBA FORUMS REVEAL STRONG SUPPORT FOR JUSTICE DEGRASSE'S REFORM PRINCIPLES

In a series of public forums this spring sponsored by CFE and the New York State School Boards Association, New Yorkers from diverse communities around the state strongly confirmed the value of the basic principles for reform of the state education finance system that State Supreme Court Justice Leland DeGrasse set out in his ruling in *CFE v. State of New York* in January. Throughout the state, forum participants called for a new funding system that

- is based on actual education costs,
- makes sure each district has the funds it needs to provide the education its students require,
- accounts for regional cost differences,
- provides longer term and more predictable funding
- is easy to use and to understand, and
- ensures accountability.

Over 600 parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, and other concerned citizens participated in forums in Albany, Saranac Lake, Horseheads, Utica, Goshen, New York City, Dix Hills, Shortsville, White Plains, and Lancaster.

Justice DeGrasse set clear guidelines for the reforms needed to remedy the constitutional violations of the current funding system, but he left the actual reform design and implementation to the legislature. The CFE/NYSSBA forums provide important input from public-school stakeholders, and other community members, to aid the legislature in this effort. Forum participants registered numerous sound and creative implementation ideas. Areas of clear consensus also emerged; participants in every forum strongly supported Justice DeGrasse's six principles as an appropriate set of parameters for a new funding system. There was also wide agreement that this set of six principles is interdependent and all necessary (e.g., accountability requires funding actual costs, transparency, and stability; costing out allows for stability, planning, regional cost variations) to create a funding system that ensures the opportunity for a sound basic education for all the students in the state.

For a copy of the CFE/NYSSBA Forums Report, call CFE at 212-867-8455 or log on to the CFE website: www.cfequity.org.