

# How Long Island Compares to the Rest of the State and the Nation



**IMAGINE IF LONG ISLAND WAS  
ITS OWN STATE**

# Something to Think About...



- If Long Island were a state...we would be ranked #1 in the nation in High School Completion Rate:
  1. Long Island
  2. Wisconsin
  3. Vermont
  4. N. Dakota/Minnesota
  5. Iowa
- If Long Island were a state...we would be ranked #1 in the nation in **Intel Semifinalists**
- 54 Long Island high schools ranked in the top 7% of high schools in the nation by *The Washington Post*

# Something to Think About...



- 21 Long Island high schools rank among the Top 300 Best Schools in America
- 50% of Long Island graduates earn a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, compared to 27 % for the rest of New York State
- US News and World Reports ranked both Division Avenue and MacArthur HS in the top 1000 nationally

# Something to Think About...



- Test scores have never been higher and graduation rates are the highest they have ever been
- 25% of our children are in poverty - highest in all of the developed countries
- This is not an education problem but instead a socio-economic problem
- If you really care about poor kids then you leave testing out of it.
- Testing does not close achievement gaps, it measures them.

# Part I



## **THE EFFECT OF THE 2% TAX CAP**

# TAX LEVY CAP FACTS



- **Took effect in 2012. Remains in effect until June 15, 2016. (Fate tied to law regulating rent control.)**
- **Maximum tax *levy* increase of previous year's tax levy with a few exceptions. Allowable exemptions in the law can also increase the maximum tax levy cap**
- **Example: If the cost of living goes up 1.4%, then the tax levy can only increase by 1.4%.**
- **The 5 big cities are exempt from the law.  
NYC/Buffalo/Rochester/Syracuse/Yonkers**

# **TAX LEVY CAP FACTS - continued**



- ☞ Voter approval is still needed on school budgets. If the budget is defeated twice, the district may not increase the tax levy from the previous year.**
- ☞ Max Cap Levy due to exemptions, this year for Levittown is 3.54% which would just need a simple majority to pass.**
- ☞ With a 60% voter approval, the 2% cap can be increased.**
- ☞ State aid may not exceed 4% even in good economic times when the state is flush.**

# TAX CAP COMPARISON

## NY vs. MA

Element/Condition	Massachusetts	New York
	<b>CAP FUNCTIONS</b>	
Failed Vote/No Vote	2.5% Increase	0.0% Increase
Majority Override (50.1%)	Unlimited Increase	2.0% Increase
Supermajority override (60.1%)	None Needed	Unlimited Increase
	<b>ECONOMIC CONDITIONS</b>	
10 Year Enrollment Trend	-21%	-3.6%
State Aid History	CPI +8.6%/Year	CPI-Only
State Economic Growth	Massachusetts Miracle	Uncertain
	<b>STUDENT CONDITIONS</b>	
Students in Poverty	28%	44%

# HOW STUDENTS WILL BE HURT



- ⌘ **While called a 2% tax cap, without voter approval it is a 0% tax cap.**
  - **How many more millions will have to be cut?**
  - **More incentive for people to vote “No”**
  
- ⌘ **Most costs beyond local control such as pension contributions (with a minor exception) and health care costs fall under the 2% tax cap.**
  
- ⌘ **Increased school enrollments must fall under the cap.**
  - **e.g. If 2 or 3 more 4<sup>th</sup> graders move into district and class size is maxed, will district be able to add a new class?**

# **HOW STUDENTS WILL BE HURT - continued**



- **Can any new programs be implemented?**
- **Who pays when state mandates new programs ?**

**(e.g. bullying prevention, APPR)**

# **HOW STUDENTS WILL BE HURT - continued**

- **Will be in-fighting within districts when programs are eliminated.**
  - ✦ **Dad's club argues to cut art. Music parents demand cuts in sports.**
- **Class sizes increase, electives will be cut, extra curricula activities will be harmed, specialized programs will be in jeopardy, and school closings occur.**
  - ✦ **Will there be class sizes up to 40 in a class?**
  - ✦ **What happens to Intel programs, A.P and remedial classes?**

# **QUESTIONS WE MUST START ASKING**



- ✦ **What happens when inflation goes up 3, 4, or 5%?**
- ✦ **Will there be a nurse in each school?**
- ✦ **If employee compensation packages are decimated, what effect will that have on morale?**
- ✦ **With many cutbacks, how will test scores improve?**
- ✦ **What impact and what help is there for students if test scores go down?**
- ✦ **If dozens of employees are cut, are others trained to provide specialized programs?**

# **QUESTIONS WE MUST START ASKING**

## **Continued**



- ✦ **If tragedies occur, will there be support staff (psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors) to help students?**
- ✦ **If after school activities are curtailed, what will the kids be doing?**
- ✦ **What effect will these devastating cuts have on college admission?**
- ✦ **How many scholarship opportunities will be lost?**

## **The Most Objectionable Piece of the 2% Tax Cap Law is that it:**



- 1. Takes away local control.**
- 2. Prevents your elected officials, your neighbors, whom you trusted with your vote, from proposing a budget they believe meets the needs of your community.**
- 3. Assumes Albany knows better what your community needs and wishes are. Albany ties your hands and those of your elected officials!**
- 4. Albany now says that 41% is better than 59%**

# How It Has Affected Levittown...



## What has Levittown Lost So Far?

Gifted and Talented Program

Computer Literacy in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

World Language in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Librarians in Elementary Schools

Many Elective Classes in HS (eg. Economics, Business,)

Athletic Teams and Assistant Coaches

Supervision for Athletic Events

Athletic Teams Cut

LEAD Teachers in Elementary Schools

Chair people

108 Teachers

# How Taxes Increase Beyond The Anticipated Tax Increase



## SUNSHINE, NEW YORK HAS 1000 HOMES

TOTAL AMOUNT NEEDED IN PROPERTY TAXES TO OPERATE SCHOOLS =  
\$10,000,000

### HOMES REASSESSED

100 HOMES TAXES CUT 2K  
LOSS OF 200K

20 BUSINESSES HAVE TAXES CUT 40K  
LOSS OF 800K

**TOTAL LOSS = \$1,000,000**

### HOMES NOT REASSESSED

900 HOMES NOT REASSESSED

TO RAISE \$10,000,000 These  
houses must be assessed an  
additional \$1,000,000

**\$1,000,000/ 900 HOUSES = \$1,111  
TAX INCREASE PER HOME**

# STATE AID



## LEVITTOWN

● 2008-2009:	52,351,030
● 2009-2010:	48,938,245
● 2010-2011:	48,376,122
● 2011-2012:	48,969,435
● 2012-2013:	48,041,062
● CUMULATIVE LOSS:	-15,079,256

# Part II



# **TESTING**

# History of Student Tests



Since the beginning of public schooling, educators have used some type of test or assessment to measure student skills and knowledge.

- Assessments are “yardsticks” to compare students and/or document student progress.
- Educators and schools use assessments and test scores in a variety of ways.

# The Current Testing System in NYS



New York state measures students' learning from year to year in all public schools:

- Federal No Child Left Behind/Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements
- NYS Regents requirements
- Local requirements are added on to the mandated testing system

*NYSUT estimates the average student takes a minimum of 74 hours or 4,440 minutes of standardized tests through grades 3-12.*

# Changes on the Horizon



- The state is phasing in common core student learning standards, and assessments aligned to the standards.
- SED intends to pilot computer-based testing in 2014 and statewide administration in 2015.

# NYS Requires Standardized Testing – Pros and Cons



Assessment	Pros	Cons
Standardized Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help align curriculum and classroom instruction to state standards</li><li>• Provide comparative data between schools and districts and can reveal achievement gaps between and among students in different groups</li><li>• Help to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not tell us all we need to know about student learning</li><li>• Do not adequately measure critical thinking skills or creative ability</li><li>• Administered at grade level, testing a level of proficiency that the student may not have yet acquired</li></ul>

# Over-emphasizing standardized tests impacts schools and children



- Over reliance – using a single test designed for a specific purpose in multiple ways.
- Misuse of data – schools and students can be improperly labeled as failing.
- Time – test prep and administration take time away from instruction.
- Test fatigue – young children and those with special needs exhibit signs of test burn-out.
- Financial cost – already limited resources are diverted to testing.

# Unintended Consequences



- Narrowing of the curriculum – art, music, languages, electives are squeezed out.
- Creates pressure to teach to the test – drill and kill.
- High-stakes nature (promotion, graduation, school labeled as failing) leads to anxiety for students and teachers.

*We spend 90% of the school year preparing students for 6 days of testing!*

# Educators Believe...

- Educators support good assessments that fairly measure what students know. Standardized tests are not inherently bad when used for what they are designed for.
- Educators support the use of multiple measures of student performance beyond a single test score.
- Educators believe SED must lessen the focus on the use of the current standardized tests and place greater emphasis on other measures of student learning, such as authentic assessments.

# Cost of Testing for Levittown



- **Cost of Testing for 2012-2013 School Year**

**377,921.00**

- **Total School Days Used for Administration of Tests**

ELA, Math, Science (3-8) ---8 days

- **NWEA**

Each student loses 2-4 hours of instruction 3 times a yr.

- **SLO's**

2 days

- **Days Lost in Computer Lab Due to Testing NWEA**

45 days for the year to test all students grades 4-6

# Part III



# **DATA MINING**

# Data Mining



- NYS and NYC sharing **confidential student and teacher records** with inBloom Inc., funded by Gates (\$100 million) & Carnegie Foundations.
- Other states participating in Phase I only involve “pilot” districts: North Carolina (Guilford Co.), Colorado (Jefferson Co.), Illinois (Unit 5 Normal and District 87 Bloomington) and Massachusetts (Everett).
- NYS only Phase I state sharing student data statewide.
- Phase II states include Delaware, Georgia, and Kentucky, starting date unknown.
- Louisiana was going to share data statewide but pulled out of inBloom entirely because of protests of parents and school board members.

# What is inBloom Doing?



- inBloom is collecting student names, grades, test scores, detailed disciplinary & health records, race/ethnicity, economic and disability status.
- The information will be stored on a data cloud operated by Amazon.com.
- Gates paid at least \$44 million to Wireless Generation to build operating system. Wireless part of Rupert Murdoch's NewsCorp.
- inBloom plans to share data with district consent with for-profit companies to help them develop and market their "learning products."

# What About Security?



- In recent survey, 86% of technology experts say they do not trust clouds to hold their organization's "more sensitive" data.\*
- inBloom's security policy states they "***cannot guarantee the security of the information stored in inBloom or that the information will not be intercepted when it is being transmitted.***"
- All this is happening without parental notification or consent.

\*Lieberman Software's 2012 Cloud Security Survey

# What Can You Do?



**As residents of the Levittown Community, your community urgently needs your help.**

## **Please Contact:**

### **Governor Andrew Cuomo**

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224  
518-474-8390

### **State Senator Kemp Hannon**

District Office 595 Stewart Ave. Suite, 540  
Garden City, NY 11530 United States  
Phone: 516-739-1700

### **Assemblyman Thomas McKeivitt.**

District Office  
1975 Hempstead Trnpke  
Suite 202  
East Meadow, NY 11554  
516-228-4960  
Fax: 516-228-4963

# What Can You Do?



- Call your NYS Assembly member & State Senator; ask them to co-sponsor bills to protect student privacy, **A6059** and **S04284**
- Visit the following site:  
<https://truthabouttesting.org/>

# Talking Points



## **UNFUNDED MANDATES:**

- New York State continues to implement unfunded mandates and has mandated the Common Core Curriculum, which requires extensive teacher training (not funded). Further, is chronic testing of our children necessary? Who pays for this?

## **INEQUITY OF FUNDS TO LONG ISLAND:**

- This does not seem equal when for every \$1.00 we send to New York State we only receive back \$.23 with \$.77 being sent to other districts off of Long Island. Our children in Levittown are year after year losing out.

## **TAX CAP:**

- With the implementation of the tax cap, ask your Governor, at what cost to public education? How many programs and services will be lost?

# EVENT



**SAVE THE DATE & SPREAD THE WORD**

**BE  
THERE  
6.8.13  
ALBANY**



# RALLY

**FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION!**

*Your Voice Needs To Be Heard*  
*NYSUT Members, Parents, Students, Community Members*



Rally will start at midday:  
go to [nysut.org](http://nysut.org) for details

**BE THERE: ALBANY, JUNE 8!**