



**BCSD Advocacy White Paper**  
***Statement in Brief***  
February 2017

**Introduction**

Due to unfunded mandates and an increasing high need population, costs are rising significantly faster than revenues, despite the fact that programs have been cut, class sizes are increasing, and total employment is down. The BCSD needs financial aid from the State to maintain quality education.

BCSD has a substantial and rising population of high need and at risk students comprised of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students in poverty who receive Free and Reduced Price Meals. Out of 46 districts in Westchester and Putnam counties, the BCSD is:

- #4 in English Language Learner student growth
- #7 in English Language Learner students as a percent of total enrollment
- #11 in Free and Reduced Lunch Program (FRLP) participation

**Yet, BCSD is #40 in the amount of the state aid we receive.**

Districts across Westchester and Putnam counties are experiencing declining student populations. Many have a minimal number of high need students, yet they receive more aid than the BCSD.

State aid is intended to help districts that genuinely need it most. The aid should be provided for students at risk and requiring mandated services. BCSD represents a diverse community that is more heterogeneous than most districts in Westchester and Putnam counties, and the lack of State support for communities with growing English Language Learner populations is hurting those districts the most.

These changes would provide the funding needed for the Bedford Central School District to provide adequate, equitable, fair and affordable education for all children.

The key areas, which will likely have the greatest impact, are:

- Modifying the State aid formula to increase the weight for ELLs
- Using current data to recognize the poverty in our community. (The BCSD has had more than 50% growth in ELLs and students in poverty since 2007. Data from the 2000 census (that is being used) is not representative of our current population.)
- Lowering the extraordinary cost threshold to provide relief to school districts to educate students with extraordinary needs.

A full Whitepaper, Executive Summary, and PowerPoint presentation can be found at <http://www.bcsdny.org/news.cfm?story=1212>.