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On 4201 Schools Advocacy Day – Students, Educators and Leaders Request Critical Funding to Support the Success of Children with Low Incidence Disabilities

More than 50 students, teachers and education leaders from specialized schools serving students with various disabilities arrived at the State Capitol today to meet with members of the Legislature and make their case for critical funding in the 2019-20 state budget.

The 4201 Schools Association is made up of 10 private, state-supported schools that serve students who are deaf, blind and severely physically disabled. They rely on state funding in order to provide students with the tools needed to achieve academic, physical, and social success- leading to a lifetime of independence.

The Association has advanced four goals for the Legislature to consider this budget session.

- The first, is to ensure \$30 million for capital improvements included in the Governor's Executive Budget is supported by the legislature, and that the borrowing cap is increased to \$100 million for long-term capital improvements. These investments will allow 4201 schools to continue to provide safe and healthy learning environments to all students.
- Second, is for the Legislature to continue the state's direct appropriation of funding, consistent with last year's budget that totaled \$9.2 million. This funding is critical to the day-to-day services that are provided to students of all ages.
- Third, is to provide parity to the 4201 schools that is commensurate with any aid increases that might be approved in public school aid. 4201 school students are just as deserving as their non-disabled peers attending public schools.
- The fourth goal, is to support the schools' efforts to fairly compensate and retain trained educators that are frequently offered salary and benefits 4201 schools are unable to match.

The 4201 Schools Association was formed as a result of a distinct designation in the State Education Law. The association's 10 member schools, which are located across New York State, are represented by Chair Bernadette Kappen, Ph.D., executive director of the New York Institute for Special Education (located in the Bronx); and Vice Chair Timothy Kelly, superintendent of St. Mary's School for the Deaf (located in Buffalo).

"Our schools are grateful for the ongoing support from the state in recent years, and the \$30 million investment included in the Governor's 2019-20 Budget," **said Dr. Bernadette**

Kappen, chair of the 4201 Schools Association. “This support, in addition to access to other funds, is needed to address electric, plumbing and fire equipment that are outdated and in need of replacement or repair. In order to meet the health and safety needs of 4201 students and teachers, we are urging the Legislature to raise the borrowing cap, provide parity in funding, and work together to invest in the next generation of New Yorkers.”

The 4201 Schools Association represents 10 schools located in Erie, Monroe, Westchester, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties. The schools support nearly 1,500 students from across New York and are nationally recognized for their expertise and achievement. Learn more at www.4201schools.org.

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