Middleburgh Central School District has lost more than $6.7 million in state and federal funding since 2008-09, with nearly $4 million of that loss coming as a result of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), which results in money slated for schools being redirected to close the state budget deficit.

How can I help?

Contact your elected officials.
- Demand equitable and sufficient funding for MCS students.
- Demand they eliminate the GEA.
- Demand MCS students get the sound, basic education they are entitled.

What do I say?

1. Introduce yourself as a constituent, tax payer, business owner, and/or parent.
2. Identify the problem you want your representative to know about.
   Example: “The GEA has cost our district nearly $4 million in aid, resulting in cuts to programming and staff.”
3. Tell your story. Explain how lack of funding/reductions/cuts are directly impacting your child and your school.
4. Propose a solution to the problem you just presented.
   Example: “Eliminating the GEA would restore much-needed funding to our district.”
5. Issue a call to action. Calls to action should be concrete, specific and include a “yes” or “no” question, such as “Will you support an effort to eliminate the GEA?”
6. Thank the legislator for his/her time and share all your contact information.

Tips

- Keep your letter short; a single page is best.
- Be concise and specific, but add a personal touch.
- Be sure to include all of your contact information (e.g., home address, phone number, e-mail address), so your legislator can reply to you.
- View the back of this page for a sample letter.

Find out more

Visit the district website www.middleburghcsd.org for more advocacy tips, facts and figures. On behalf of our students, we thank you for taking action NOW!
Sample Advocacy Letter

Below is a sample letter to help you get started with your advocacy effort. Remember, it is important to tell YOUR story, so be sure to add a two or three sentences where indicated in the sample to illustrate how your child and your school are directly affected by the loss of aid and the cuts to programming and staff that MCS faces.

Date

The Honorable [insert member’s name]
New York State Senate/New York House of Representatives
Albany, NY

Dear Senator/Representative [member’s last name]:

As I am sure you are aware, the pain of our nation’s economic crisis is being felt everywhere, including in the homes and schools of your constituents in the Middleburgh Central School District. That is why we urgently need your help now.

As a constituent and a parent/student/tax payer/community member/business owner, I am asking you to support the elimination of the state’s Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) which is creating an unsustainable financial burden for local public schools.

Since 2008-09, Middleburgh Central School District has lost more than $6.7 million in state and federal funding, with the GEA accounting for $4 million of that loss. The district has applied more than $5 million in fund balance and reserves to offset the loss of funding. Reserves are finite resources and cannot be counted on year after year to make up for the loss in state aid.

If the GEA continues, it will be the students who suffer through loss of programming and opportunities.

[Insert personal story here. Example: At a time when our children are expected to achieve at higher levels than ever before, we cannot afford to dismantle our quality program. My son deserves more than just a bare-bones education; he deserves rich and varied educational opportunities that will help him succeed and compete in a global economy. Without relief from state leaders, he may not get that chance. If the GEA continues, even more opportunities for David will be lost.]

I urge you to seek the elimination of the GEA. The Middleburgh community, its students and its schools need your help now to make sure that schools get the funding they need to provide the best education possible for our students.

Can I count on you to please speak with your fellow legislators and take the steps necessary to ensure the GEA is no longer allowed to undercut quality education in New York?

Thank you for considering my concerns. I look forward to talking with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

(Insert your name, home address, phone number, cell phone number, email address)