

EDUCATION

I am pleased to report that education funding for Bridgeport not only remains at a high level, but has been increased by \$3,366,576 in fiscal years 2016 and 2017. This means that Bridgeport will be receiving \$182,266,724 for education in both fiscal years. \$182 million in education aid equates with roughly 26 mills of tax revenue that city taxpayers are not forced to shoulder in order to fund our schools.

There is also good news for schools in our district who benefit directly from school construction funding that has been secured and that I and members of Bridgeport’s legislative delegation will continue to fight for.

For example:

- Central High School...This session we worked with State officials to cut through red tape and get construction moving on renovations, upgrades, and additions to the school building. Improvements at Central High School will provide a new auxiliary gymnasium, media center, technology, and security systems. The Central High School project represents a \$67.6 million investment.
- Longfellow Elementary School...Construction of a new facility that includes a full size gymnasium, 29 classrooms, a cafeteria, media center, outdoor play areas and much more for an estimated 550 students is well underway and expected to open in time for the 2016-2017 school year. The budget for this new facility is \$50.8 million.
- Black Rock Elementary School...Construction of the \$13,100,000 addition is now complete. This session we secured an additional \$110,000 to purchase roller shades, a stage curtain, and to create green space on School Street.

It’s critical that we continue to work to secure Bridgeport’s appropriate share of education and school construction funding in the future to ensure that all of our children receive the education they deserve and that we provide the facilities they need to achieve their goals.



Hosting a Young Lawyers event



Bridgeport Day at the Capitol

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

STEVEN STAFSTROM

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
STEVEN STAFSTROM

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Dear Neighbor,

I want to thank you for your support and for the honor to represent you in the General Assembly. Since my election in February, I have worked hard to make progress on the issues that matter most to the people of Bridgeport: **Property tax reform, job creation, access to education and our quality of life.**

I am pleased to report that we passed a state budget that makes transformative changes to our regressive property tax structure. As a result of a statewide mill rate cap on automobiles, Bridgeport taxpayers will see a 30% reduction in their car tax by 2017. This same law also pledges .5% of the annual state sales tax to our cities and towns, resulting in Bridgeport not losing any revenue due to the car tax reduction and, in fact, receiving roughly \$14 million dollars in increased state funding to offset the burden of residential property taxes.

In addition to providing property tax relief for Bridgeport’s hard working families, this budget funds those vital services our community relies on everyday, including social services, education, libraries, before- and after-school programs, mental health services, developmental services and job training. All the while, state income taxes remain steady for those families making less than \$500,000 per year.

Importantly, the budget is balanced, constrains spending and invests in Connecticut’s transportation infrastructure, which is critical to our job and economic growth. By investing in transportation projects, such as widening highways, improving our rails, dredging our harbors and making our secondary roads more bike and pedestrian friendly, we are encouraging smart growth, addressing traffic congestion, and bringing sustainable jobs home to Connecticut.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely



Steven Stafstrom
State Representative



BRIDGEPORT FISCAL YEAR 2017 STATE AID	
Education Cost Sharing	\$182,266,724
Priority School Districts	\$6,963,751
PILOT: State Owned Property	\$3,012,598
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$7,962,794
Pequot/Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$6,196,581
School Transportation	\$1,452,541
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$2,413,992
Town Aid Roads	\$1,383,106
Adult Education	\$2,179,158
Grants for Municipal Projects and Municipal Revenue Sharing Account (MRSA)	\$14,026,063
Total State Funds to Bridgeport	\$227,857,308

ASH CREEK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

In late May, we were awarded \$3,837,600 to fund construction of a pedestrian foot and bike bridge over Ash Creek at the end of Fox Street. This bridge will provide a more convenient link between the Black Rock business district and the Fairfield Metro train station, helping commuters into and out of the neighborhood, bringing a welcome boost for property values and business traffic. The project will also include improvements to Fox Street and additional pedestrian access along Ash Creek.



Being sworn in after the special election in February

ECONOMIC SUCCESS THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY

Bridgeport will soon become a leader in sustainable energy with the approval of funding for a new thermal energy loop. This project will provide cheaper, cleaner, more reliable sources of energy in our downtown area which will reduce the cost of doing business and incentivize development in our city. This will not only help our business community and city government save on energy costs, it will also reduce our carbon footprint in the process. I am proud the Bridgeport delegation worked hard together to secure funding for this project.

PROTECTING SENIORS

This session I led the House passage of a bill enacting a uniform Power of Attorney Act, which represents an important bipartisan effort to help prevent abuse and financial fraud against our senior citizens. The bill, which was supported by the Connecticut AARP, clarifies Power of Attorney duties, sets standards for third parties and adds liabilities for those who violate the law.

A SECOND CHANCE SOCIETY

Connecticut’s drug policies have swelled our prisons, and our budgets, with nonviolent drug offenders who struggle to reintegrate into society upon release. The Second Chance Society will ensure public safety, save money, and help end the culture of mass incarceration by lowering sentencing for nonviolent offenses. The Second Chance Society will give ex-offenders more opportunity to get back into the workforce – and will also save millions in taxpayer dollars while allowing our police force to focus on more pressing crime.



Speaking in the House Chamber

**RESTORING TRUST BETWEEN
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND OUR COMMUNITIES**

This year we took a look at the critical issue of restoring trust between law enforcement and minority communities. Among some of the most key provisions of the new “Excessive Use of Force” law are: Police units will now face new requirements for promoting diversity and will receive training in the proper use of physical force. They will also be required to document incidents when an officer’s discharge of a weapon or use of force likely caused a serious physical injury or death. State police will now be required to use body cameras, as will local police if they receive state grants to fund the equipment and data storage. An independent prosecutor will now be assigned to investigate allegations that an officer’s physical force resulted in the death of a person.