



ALBERT A. STIRPE, JR.  
Assemblyman 127<sup>th</sup> District

THE ASSEMBLY  
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ALBANY

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Subcommittee on Export Trade

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Alcoholism & Drug Abuse  
Economic Development, Job Creation,  
Commerce and Industry  
Higher Education  
Tourism, Parks, Arts &  
Sports Development

September 25, 2014

Nancy S. Ruscio & Sonia Apker  
Homer Central School District  
P.O. Box 500  
Homer, NY 13077



Dear Superintendent Ruscio & President Apker:

Thank you for your letter of July 23, 2014. I was disappointed, but not surprised, to read of your frustrations with implementing universal prekindergarten in Homer. We share the goal of making New York's expansion of pre-K both easily accessible for students, families and communities and financially feasible for school districts statewide.

The 2014-15 Enacted Budget fell short of this goal. As you wrote, requiring districts to foot the bill for pre-K and await reimbursement is "problematic." For upstate districts in particular, this upfront financing system presents substantial barriers to launching any expansion of pre-K, let alone the comprehensive expansion the Governor promised at the program's inception. Closing the gap between the rhetoric and reality for upstate districts remains at the top of my agenda for the coming legislative session.

In addition to proposals from the last session, I will fully examine all viable legislative options to replace the current Request for Proposals (RFP) upfront financing system with a more traditional grant-based system. I understand that any hope of achieving the promised vision of universal pre-K rests squarely upon the state's willingness to provide school districts with the necessary startup capital.

Sincerely yours,

Al Stirpe  
NYS Assembly – 127<sup>th</sup> District