



PRESS RELEASE

From: Vincent Pezzimenti, Public Information Specialist
Re: Press Release
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Salamanca School District Leaders Call on Congress to Support Federally Impacted Schools

WASHINGTON – Representatives of the Salamanca City Central School District visited Washington D.C. this week to call Congress' attention to the needs of area schools at the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) Spring Conference.

District board of education members Dr. Meghan McCune, Ms. Sue Fries and Superintendent Robert Breidenstein joined district leaders from across the United States to discuss and advocate for Impact Aid, an essential program that provides funding to federally impacted school districts like Salamanca, Lake Shore, Silver Creek, Gowanda, Akron and Niagara Wheatfield in western New York.

Impact Aid reimburses these school districts for the loss of revenue caused by the presence of federal non-taxable lands. It helps ensure that students who attend schools on or near such property have adequate funding to have access to a quality education.

As part of the 3-day conference, Dr. McCune, Ms. Fries and Mr. Breidenstein met with staff from Representative Tom Reed's 23rd congressional district office, as well as those from Senator Charles Schumer's office, to request that Congress increase funding for Impact Aid for the Fiscal Year 2020 and dedicate significant funds to address the infrastructure needs of federally impacted school districts.

Salamanca representatives explained the crucial role of Impact Aid in funding district salaries, three school resource officers, athletics, equipment, professional development, intervention supports, and to reduce the burden of school taxes and unfunded mandates.

"We shared the remarkable academic improvements the Salamanca School District has seen becoming a member of the Impact Aid family," Mr. Breidenstein said.

Such growth has included an increase in Native American student 4-year graduation rates from 41% to 87%, mastery learning levels on high school exit exams from 3% to 19%, dropout rates falling from nearly 19% to under 4%, and a rise of enrollment of more than 140 students in the past 18 months.

Programs available for students now include five Advanced Placement (AP) courses, more than 15 college



credit bearing classes, and co-curricular programs such as archery and robotics. Salamanca has also been recognized as a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) District of Excellence.

“Without Impact Aid, we wouldn’t be able to effectively serve the needs of our students,” Mr. Breidenstein said. “Impact Aid funds are used to provide tremendous opportunities for our students, train our staff, and revitalize our achievement results. Traveling to Washington D.C. to tell our story to New York congressional leaders, our senators, and other elected officials across our country is taking advocacy to the offices of our elected officials. The future of Federally Impacted Schools like Salamanca is at stake and why we must continue to advocate directly to our representatives in D.C.”

During the conference, school district representatives received updates on Impact Aid from the U.S. Department of Education. Participants also heard from national experts on teacher retention, school safety, career and technical education, and how to communicate more effectively with our school communities.

To learn more about the Salamanca City Central School District visit www.SalamancaNY.org. You can also find us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/SalamancaWarriors.

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Salamanca City Central School Board of Education members, Ms. Sue Fries, and Dr. Meghan McCune (far left), along with superintendent Robert Breidenstein (center), meet with staff from Senator Charles Schumer’s office in Washington, D.C.