



ONEIDA COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
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October 16, 2018

Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson
State University Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

Chancellor Johnson,

Every year New York counties spend this time finalizing our annual budgets. Locally we continue to face the crushing weight of unfunded state mandates and increasing costs as all county governments do. Meanwhile, we still create budgets that allow for proper investment in the initiatives that help move our communities forward. This includes commitment to our community colleges.

Community college education funding in the state of New York, as you are aware, is a complicated web of state, county and tuition revenue splits. What used to be a 33% split has since seen the state's share decrease while tuition and county contributions have gone up. Counties are then forced into a complicated chargeback system for their own host colleges and also for students going to any other community colleges around the state.

While I believe we should look for more equitable ways to fund community colleges I acknowledge those changes would be slow in coming from Albany, if they were to come at all. However, I do believe there is one correction that could take place immediately that would save county taxpayer dollars. The Fashion Institute of Technology is a fantastic center of higher learning that blends business, art, marketing and fashion to create a unique experience unduplicated in all of New York. Conversely, it is not a community college. It offers a slew of four year degrees and graduate programs just like many other SUNY schools throughout the state. It is long past time this chargeback to local communities came to an end.

Quite frankly, not only does this chargeback not make any logical sense it also comes with an exuberant price tag that is fiscally irresponsible. From 2017 through 2019 the county of Oneida has and will send \$557,230 to FIT in New York City to send on average 13 students there. It is long past time that FIT be treated like any other SUNY School that offers bachelor and graduate degrees.

I'm asking for a thorough review of this practice and calling for an end to this unnecessary local cost.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Picente Jr.
Oneida County Executive

Cc: Gov. Cuomo, Mohawk Valley Nine Regional Caucus