

## Higher Education

New York State's colleges and universities have a significant impact on the lives of students pursuing a college degree and are increasingly seen as a major part of New York's economy. The Pataki administration has stripped resources from our public colleges and universities, depriving New Yorkers of the opportunity to learn and the opportunity to grow with the State's economy.

It is unfortunate that in all too many ways Governor Pataki's Executive Budget proposal in his final year continues the disregard for higher education displayed throughout his term. Specifically, the Governor again proposes significant cuts to the TAP program totaling over \$189 million for SFY 2006-07. Also, he proposes to increase tuition at SUNY State-operated campuses by \$500 from \$4,350 to \$4,850; and would increase tuition for CUNY Senior Colleges by \$300 from \$4,000 to \$4,300.

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Throughout his tenure the Governor has also continuously proposed cuts and even the elimination of higher education opportunity programs that assist disadvantaged low income students (Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), Higher Educational Opportunity Program (HEOP), Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK), College Discovery).

Concurrently, the Governor's policies also served to drive up tuition costs at our public colleges; during the Pataki administration tuition has increased at a rate of over 64 percent for SUNY schools. All too often the Governor increases tuition costs to offset significant cuts in State support for SUNY and CUNY (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

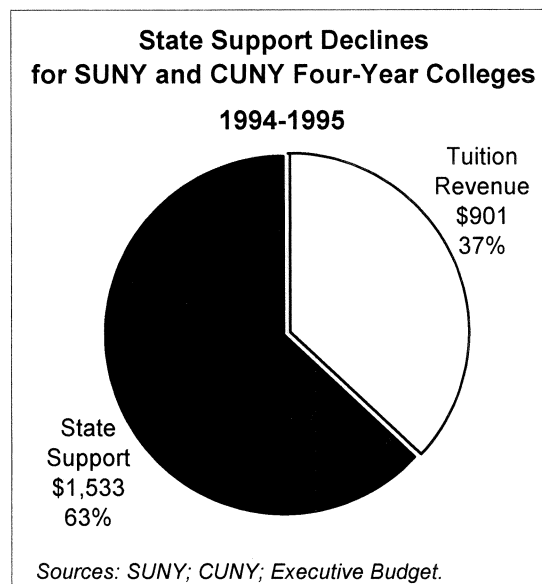
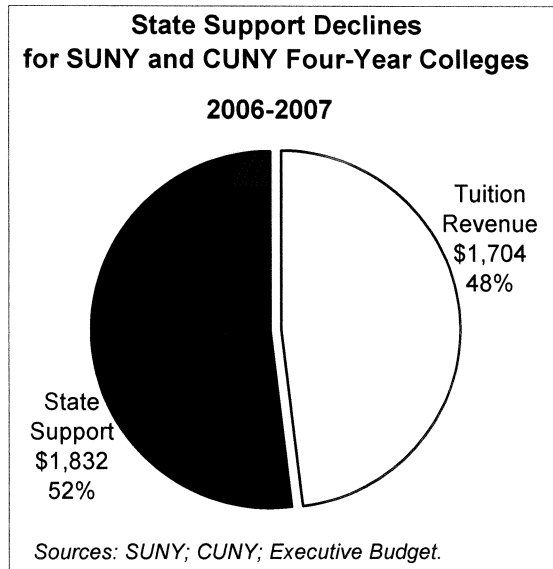


Figure 7



**Figure 8**

In the end, the Governor's policies have resulted in students being forced to pay more for a college degree. But instead of getting more for their tuition dollar students are seeing the quality of that education undermined by the Governor's cuts to SUNY and CUNY. Thus the Governor's legacy in higher education has made it harder for working families to afford college and deprived our institutions of their full potential.

*Governor Pataki—Inheriting a Strong System of Higher Education While Offering Failed Leadership*

The Governor has boasted about the strong standing of higher education in New York State and has taken credit for this. The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), is the largest State supported financial assistance program in the country. Each year TAP helps nearly 354,000 students achieve a post secondary degree. New York also has two of the largest public education systems in the nation in the State

University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY). The Governor often points to rising enrollment rates as proof that these systems are doing well and compares tuition rates to other public universities in the region. This assessment conveniently ignores the disastrous effect of the Governor's higher education policies.

*Governor Pataki - Failed Leadership in Higher Education*

At SUNY and CUNY, the Governor has historically relied on tuition increases as a substitute for State operating support. Since the Governor's first year in 1995, tuition at SUNY has increased 64 percent from \$2,650 to \$4,350 in 2005-06 and at CUNY tuition increased 63 percent from \$2,450 in 1995-96 to \$4,000 in 2005-06. These amounts represent an increase that's more than double the rate of inflation for the period 1995-2005. Even worse, if the Executive achieved all the tuition increases that the Legislature rejected, tuition would have been increased to \$6,250 at SUNY, a 136 percent increase. These misplaced policy directives have allowed tuition to eclipse state support of our public institutions.

Not surprisingly, State support has also diminished at State community colleges during the Pataki Administration. Community college funding is legally mandated to be split between student tuition, a local contribution and a State share. Under statute, the State share must be a minimum of 33 percent of expenditures. However, the Pataki Administration has consistently brushed aside this mandate leaving State support

for community colleges at its lowest point in over 30 years (Figure 9).

*The Consequences of Governor Pataki's Failures in Higher Education*

Over the course of the Pataki Administration, New York has maintained a nationwide ranking of 39th for State tax appropriations per \$1,000 of personal income (Grapevine Tables). The impact of the Governor's negligence in higher education has been to threaten the quality of the instruction provided at SUNY and CUNY. In 1995, the ratio of full-time faculty to part-time faculty at SUNY was 55:45, and was 50:50 at CUNY. In 2005-06, this percentage plummeted to 49:51 at SUNY and 42:58 at CUNY.

statewide – the TAP program has become a pivotal tool for low income and middle income students seeking a post-secondary degree. But again, through his proposed reductions to the TAP program, Governor Pataki's Administration consistently sought to undermine the possibility that all New Yorkers would have the ability to access postsecondary education. The Governor's proposed cuts to TAP would have slashed hundreds of millions of dollars out of the TAP program. In 2006-07, Governor Pataki has proposed a \$189.9 million cut to TAP.

The Governor was also a constant opponent of higher education opportunity programs (EOP, HEOP, SEEK and College Discovery). These programs are specifically designed to assist disadvantaged youth in their achievement of a college diploma. Throughout his term, Governor Pataki proposed cutting or eliminating a total of \$137.4 million from the higher education opportunity programs.

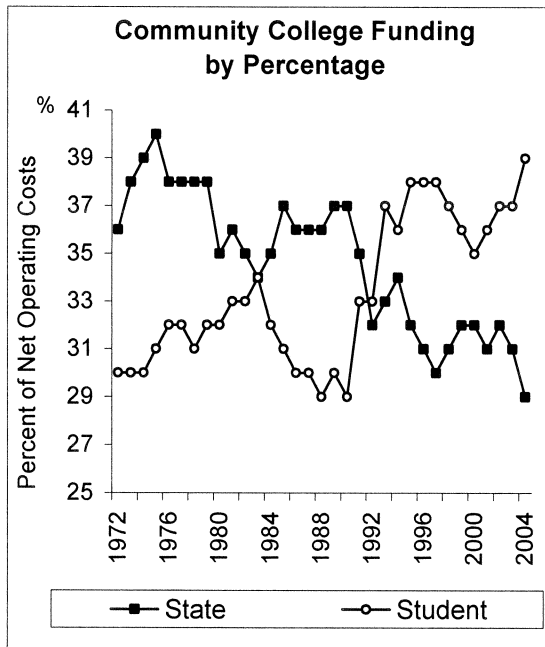


Figure 9

With the cost of attending college rising – under Governor Pataki, tuition and mandatory fees have increase by 100 percent at SUNY, 69 percent at CUNY, and 67 percent at private colleges