



# NEWS *from* ASSEMBLYWOMAN SARAH CLARK



ASSEMBLYWOMAN

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CLARK

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Dear Neighbor,

2025 has been an eventful year, but in New York we have many accomplishments to be proud of. We will continue to fight to protect the most vulnerable members of our community while also maintaining and improving quality of life for all New Yorkers.

The legislative and budget session runs from January to June, and during this time I spend most weeks in Albany fighting for our shared priorities. This year we delivered on improved services for older New Yorkers, guaranteed meals for students in our schools, and supported small businesses. We made critical investments in our community through funding for non-profit organizations and capital improvements for public parks, roads, and housing.

I know many of us are feeling uncertain or worried about the road ahead. We are living in strange times, and while there may be challenges ahead, we are in this together. Please do not hesitate to contact my office for assistance or to share your hopes for a better future.

Best,  
  
Sarah Clark





# Budget and Legislative Achievements

The legislative process can take time and often is collective compromise to move forward on important issues. This year the state budget incorporated several pieces of my legislation as well as many priorities I have been fighting to change. I have shared a few highlights with you below.

As we continue into next year pushing forward on legislative issues like environmental conservation, health care, education, and more, I hope you will share your thoughts with my team.

## Education

### Universal School Meals

The 2025-2026 budget includes \$340 million to ensure every student has access to free breakfast and lunch.

We have seen that free school meals increase the number of students who are eating breakfast and lunch. Food security also has an impact on the students' readiness to learn, leading to improved school outcomes and success for the next generation.



*With Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblywoman Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas*

## Children and Families

### Supporting Child Care providers

The enacted state budget incorporates language from my legislation (A.2708) to allow Child Care Resource & Referral participants to create a registry of qualified and available staff to serve as substitutes at child care centers and home child care providers, including in conducting criminal history reviews and background clearances. These registries will help fill gaps when child care providers face staff shortages, ensuring consistent care is available to children and families throughout our state.

### Helping Families

The state budget supports New York families. This year we are expanding access to child care by investing \$2.2 billion statewide, featuring a \$400 million extra investment to save child care subsidies for families statewide, ensuring it remains affordable for working parents.

We are delivering a sweeping increase to the Child Tax Credit by giving eligible families a \$1,000 credit for kids younger than 4 years old and a \$500 credit for kids ages 4-16, the highest levels in state history. Costs have far outpaced salaries, and we must do more to help.

## Older New Yorkers

### Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)

EISEP provides help for those 60 and older who need assistance with their personal care or household chores. In this year's budget, we increased our investment in this program to help clear the list for those waiting for help. This support will deliver more case management, home care, respite for caregivers, and other services to ensure older New Yorkers stay independent at home. For more information, call NY Connects at 1-800-342-9871 or the Monroe County Office for the Aging at (585) 753-6280.

### Direct Deposit for the School Tax Relief Program (STAR)

STAR credit recipients can now have credits deposited directly into their bank account. It is the easiest and fastest way to receive your STAR credit.

By choosing direct deposit, you will:

- receive your STAR credit quicker,
- eliminate the hassle of cashing a check, and
- have peace of mind (no lost or undeliverable checks).

Rochester City School District credits were issued beginning July 10; other school districts will be issued mid-August through September.

Enroll in direct deposit or learn more at [tax.ny.gov/star](https://tax.ny.gov/star)

## Helping Small Businesses

### Unemployment Insurance

During the COVID-19 pandemic, more than a million people lost their jobs at no fault of their own. Paying unemployment insurance (UI) to these New Yorkers caused the unemployment trust fund to go into more than \$10 billion of debt to the federal government.

This debt has been, and normally would be, paid by the employers. The \$8 billion we fought to secure in the 2025-26 budget will be used to pay back the debt owed to the federal government, lowering the rates and eliminating the interest payments and burden on New York businesses. Also by eliminating the debt, New Yorkers that lose their job will be able to receive UI benefits that keep up with the cost of living, as the maximum benefit is currently set at 2019 levels.



*Opening the Red Wings Performance Center*



# Local Highlights



Announcing \$4.2 million allocated in the 2024 state budget for the Family Justice Center in Irondequoit

## Supporting our Community

Domestic violence continues to affect many in our community. Ensuring survivors feel safe and supported to leave dangerous situations is critical. My legislation (A.2109) to allow survivors of domestic violence to self attest to their DV situation while seeking financial assistance was included in the state budget.

Previously, survivors of domestic violence were subjected to a credibility assessment, delaying or sometimes preventing them from safely separating from their abuser. By allowing a self-attestation, survivors will be able to secure housing and the assistance they need to get on their feet quickly and safely.

Affordable and stable housing is still a top concern for many in the district. For the first time ever, this year's spending plan includes \$50 million to establish the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP), a rental assistance program to help individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness secure permanent housing or transition out of shelters and unsustainable housing situations. It would also enable local housing agencies to avert evictions for the most vulnerable individuals and families.




With students from Edison Career and Technology High School



Showing the Aquinas Institute Diversity Club the Assembly chambers

## Now in effect: Student Lifeline Act



Governor Hochul signs the Student Lifeline Act along with sponsors Assemblywoman Sarah Clark and Senator Samra Brouk.

On July 1 of this year, the Student Lifeline Act went into effect (A.6563 of 2024). This law requires institutes of higher education to educate students on the availability of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline and the Crisis Text Line at 741741. It also requires that contact information be included on student ID cards, or for that information to be shared at least once per year by institutions that do not issue physical ID cards.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college students in the United States, and too many consider suicide, attempt suicide, or cause intentional injury to themselves. When faced with these thoughts, it is vital that students throughout New York are aware of the resources available to them right away.

Since going into effect a few years ago, we know the 988 line has saved lives. Ensuring everyone in crisis knows who to call to get help is most important. As the mother of two college students, I know firsthand the need for more mental health support and I am immensely proud to have carried and passed the Student Lifeline Act in the Assembly.



# Keep in Touch

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# NEWS

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## Back to School Supply Drive

EnCompass, Education Success Foundation, and The Hive are hosting a “Back 2 School Blitz” donation drive so every child in Rochester can return back to school equipped to succeed. Please see the list if you would like to make a donation to support students in over 50 schools in our area. Donations can be brought to my district office located at 500 Helendale Road, Suite 90, Rochester, NY 14609 on weekdays between 9 AM to 5 PM to prepare for Education Success Foundation’s Back-2-School Blow Out on August 28.



### Supplies

- Alarm clocks
- Backpacks
- USB-C Chargers
- Headphones
- Water Bottles
- Basic School Supplies

### Toiletries

- Laundry Detergent
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Lotion
- Toothpaste and
- Toothbrushes
- Hair Brushes and Combs

### Clothes

- Socks and Underwear
- Undershirts and Bras
- Knit hats and gloves
- (Youth and Adult sizes)

- Towels and Washcloths
- Menstrual Products
- Face Wash
- Lip balm and Vaseline



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[bit.ly/b2swishes](https://bit.ly/b2swishes)