



May 28, 2015

CONTACT: KEVIN CZERWINSKI (914-310-7621)

Good Morning. My name is Nancy Fisher and I am chief of staff for Assemblywoman Amy Paulin. I am here today to represent the following Assembly Members. On behalf of these members, I appreciate the opportunity to read the following agreed upon statement.

To reinforce our enduring commitment to improving public education, The New York State Assembly has recently passed a bill, A.7303-A, that embraces the policies that are being advocated for here today.

At this time, we join this body of esteemed educators to call for a delay of the newly proposed SED regulations. We also believe that their request for a one year study by a group of experts and seasoned practitioners to develop a research-based and thoughtfully implemented teacher evaluation system, that appropriately uses multiple measures of student assessment data to determine teacher effectiveness and student growth that accurately reflects the practice of teaching is absolutely necessary. Allowing for a delay, gives the legislature the time to create a meaningful teacher/principal evaluation system without going through multiple, unnecessary stages.

While we appreciate the efforts of the Board of Regents and NYSED, we feel their newly proposed regulations, except for a very few, do not adequately address serious flaws in the APPR and do not take advantage of the flexibility that the recently passed law, Chapter 56 of 2015, part DD, sub-part E, allows.

On the positive side, regarding student performance, we support SED's provision to allow districts to use "multiple measures" instead of using just one test and

one cohort of students to determine teacher and principal effectiveness. It is widely recognized that using one test and one cohort of students cannot possibly give an accurate measure of a teacher's performance. When dealing with children, especially young children, there are just too many variables to ensure a reliable outcome.

Regarding independent observations, we also support the recommendation to define a "School Building" by the BEDS code which will allow small districts to use outside evaluators from within their district even if they have only one school building. This is an important cost-saving measure.

However, there are just too many, very significant recommendations that must be rejected as they are antithetical to good practices and/or not required by law including:

- Using an outside evaluator for 20% of every teacher evaluation. We believe that teacher evaluation should be an ongoing, fully integrated process that uses several measures of performance, not just standardized tests and that observations should recognize the unique characteristics of each grade level and content area, especially special education. We strongly support, as the law allows, giving districts the option of how and when to use an outside evaluator.
- Regarding the use of a local option, we reject SED's proposed regulation to make it a rigid 20% of a teacher's evaluation. We believe that a district, in the plan that they submit to SED for approval, should have the flexibility to determine the weight and composition of a local option.
- Regarding the Hardship Waiver, we reject the two month renewal period. SED cannot possibly approve a waiver request in that time frame. Thus, districts, due to no fault of their own, will be in limbo not knowing what to do and risk the loss of state aid. The law allows this flexibility.

Thank you.

Members of Assembly

Thomas Abinanti	92 A.D.
David Buchwald	93 A.D.
Steve Englebright	4 A.D.
Aileen Gunther	98 A.D.
Ellen Jaffee	100 A.D.
Todd Kaminsky	20 A.D.
Charles Lavine	13 A.D.
Steven Otis	91 A.D.
Amy Paulin	88 A.D.
Michelle Schimel	16 A.D.
Frank Skartodos	104 A.D.
James Skoufis	99 A.D.
Fred Thiele	1 A.D.
Kenneth Zebrowski	96 A.D.