



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## Senator Golden Hosts Special Education Forum

MARTIN J. GOLDEN March 15, 2010

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Brooklyn- State Senator Marty Golden, along with members of his Committee on Special Education, hosted their 4th Annual Special Education Forum, and more than 225 teachers, school administrators, and parents of School District 20, 21 and 22 attended on Friday, March 12, 2010 at the Dyker Beach Golf Course.

Kim Sweet, the Executive Director of the Advocates for Children of New York, and Laura Rodriguez, the Chief Achievement Officer of the New York City Department of Education, were the featured speakers. The event also featured a series of breakout sessions on a variety of important topics including “Life After High School” and “Children with Learning Disabilities and Struggling Readers,” “Autism Issues” and a session on “Internet Safety” presented by District Attorney Charles Hynes’s office.

Senator Golden, in his remarks at the event stated, "We are here because we want the best education possible for our children. It is imperative that we have events like this so to get important information directly into the hands of parents, teachers and administrators, because our current system is not working to its full potential as it seeks to serve our special needs children."

Senator Golden also spoke of his opposition to the Governor's budget proposal that will reduce funding for Early Intervention Programs. Senator Golden discussed his support for Senate Bill 492, which would create a New York State Autism Council, and Senate Bill 1199 that would require that additional after school programs for students with Autism be created in New York. Senator Golden also indicated support for S.951A that would require fingerprinting of prospective employees of special education schools for the purposes of a criminal background check.

The Community Mayors, Marathon Bank of New York, The The Third Avenue Merchants, Marine Park Hardware, and the Dyker Heights Civic Association, along with the Community Education Councils of District 20, 21 and 22, were sponsors of the event.

Representatives from parent advocacy groups, city and state agencies, and national associations including Parent to Parent of New York State, the New York City Department of Education, Heart Share Human Services of New York, the Guild for Exceptional Children, and the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, were on hand and provided information.

Also attending where the United Cerebral Palsy Association, Sensory Freeway, My Time Inc., the Bronx Chapter of the Autism Society, the Fire Department of New York Fire Safety Division, New York State VESID Office (Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities), the Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled, and Bridge to Youth.