



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

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JOSEPH A. GRIFFO August 30, 2011

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Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-C-IP, Rome) today gave the State Education a grade of 'F' for scheduling the 2012 ELA (English Language arts) state exams during a time when many school districts have already scheduled their spring vacations.

“The state has made a decision long after the local schools have made theirs, and now is saying that the decision is what it is, regardless of the inconvenience that it causes anyone

and everyone,” Griffo said. “This is an absurd situation of state bureaucracy working without any regard for the people it supposedly serves. Just a little bit of on-the-ground research by the highly paid state bureaucrats in the Department would have learned that most districts set their calendars in the spring. It would have been a simple matter to avoid a conflict. Instead, the state has gone ahead and scheduled the tests and told local districts that this is the way it is going to be.”

Griffo said the issue goes beyond potential inconvenience regarding vacation plans. “These are very important exams. Giving an exam in the middle of what is supposed to be time off is going to have a negative impact on the scores of the students who do take the tests. The right thing to do in this case is sit down to negotiate an alternative that will work, and not simply act as the heavy-handed state coming in after local decisions are made.”

Griffo said the state should try to work with schools and not ram another bad decision down local throats. “The goal of our education system should be to do the right thing for students. Right now, we have some sort of bureaucratic showdown instead of decision-making that works in the best interests of our students. I call upon the State Education Commissioner, and even Gov. Cuomo if need be, to get involved and resolve this situation now before school starts so that New York’s students are not penalized for bad decisions made in the state bureaucracy.”