



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Hosts Gov's Top School Advisor in Talks on Rural Funding

PATTY RITCHIE March 8, 2012

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Deputy Education Secretary Also Tours Local School

State Senator Patty Ritchie Thursday led a top education adviser to Gov. Andrew Cuomo on a tour of a local school, and hosted a meeting with schools leaders from across Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties to discuss challenges facing rural schools.

Governor Cuomo's Deputy Secretary for Education, David Wakelyn, toured Watertown's Harold T. Wiley School, where he met the district's superintendent and teachers, and sat in on several classes, answering questions from students and faculty. He later attended a meeting organized by Senator Ritchie of school district officials from across Central and Northern New York for a frank talk on school funding and state policies affecting public schools.

"I was very pleased to have one of Governor Cuomo's top education advisers personally spend time with area school officials to hear firsthand about the challenges facing rural schools in Northern and Central

New York,” Senator Ritchie said. “In addition to seeing our teachers and students at work in Watertown, Mr. Wakelyn had an opportunity to hear from students, teachers and administrators about a range of concerns in districts like Fulton and Sackets Harbor, Canton and Ogdensburg.”

“The meeting gave our local school leaders a chance to speak frankly about the problems they face, and to learn about the Governor’s priorities for public schools,” Senator Ritchie said.

Mr. Wakelyn was in Watertown to attend Thursday’s public hearing by the statewide Mandate Relief Council, which is seeking ideas for mandate relief to provide savings to taxpayers. Senator Ritchie asked him to use his time here to also learn more about local school issues.