



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George D. Maziarz

Senator Maziarz and Assemblyman Ceretto support Dr. Walter Polka of Lewiston for NYS Board of Regents

GEORGE D. MAZIARZ February 7, 2014

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**

Senator George Maziarz (R-C, Newfane) and Assemblyman John Ceretto (R-Lewiston) today announced that they are giving their full support to their constituent, Lewiston resident Dr. Walter S. Polka, in his effort to be chosen to serve on the New York State Board of Regents as an at-large member.

Senator Maziarz said, “Dr. Polka is a highly respected educator who would bring a much-needed voice of reason to the Board of Regents. He wants to create solutions, and with all the controversy going on today about education policy and student testing, solutions are what we need. Dr. Polka would help steer the State Education Department in the right direction, giving a voice to teachers, parents, and administrators from around the state who are demanding change. Right now, Dr. Polka’s leadership is sorely needed.”

Assemblyman Ceretto said, “I have had the honor of knowing Dr. Polka for forty years, going back to when he was my professor in the Education Department at Niagara University. As a fellow Lewiston resident, I have seen him be an active community member and I have enjoyed working with him through Kiwanis. Professionally and personally, I can say there is no better choice for a member of the Board of Regents than Dr. Polka. He has a great focus on improving individual learning outcomes and he has his finger on the pulse of what is happening in classrooms today.”

Dr. Polka has had a distinguished 36-year career in public education. He began as a social studies teacher in the Lewiston-Porter Central School District in 1968 and eventually entered the field of administration, serving as Curriculum Coordinator K-12 in the Williamsville Central School District from 1973 to 1986, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction at Lewiston-Porter from 1986 to 1990, and Superintendent of Lewiston-Porter from 1990 to 2003.

Since 1970, Dr. Polka has also taught at the college level at several area institutions of higher learning, including Niagara University, Buffalo State College, the University at Buffalo, Niagara County Community College, and more. He has authored several scholarly books and articles relating to improving the quality of education through improving teacher and classroom effectiveness.

In the coming weeks the Senate and Assembly are expected to convene jointly to elect four individuals to serve on the New York State Board of Regents. Dr. Polka will meet with state legislators in Albany next week to advance his candidacy.

Last week Dr. Polka was endorsed by the Partnership for Smarter Schools, a coalition of Western New York teachers, parents, and administrators who are working on a smart reform agenda involving smarter testing, teacher evaluation, professional development, and data collection.

Senator Maziarz and Assemblyman Ceretto pledged to do all they can to support Dr. Walter Polka's candidacy through the interview and voting process.

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