



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Calls For New Regents Selection Process

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 4, 2014

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, ELECTIONS**



ALBANY – Sen. Joseph A. Griffo today called on his colleagues in the state Legislature to re-design its process for appointing Board of Regents members, in light of systemic failures in the implementation of the Common Core curriculum.

“Regents board members control the state’s educational system, determine all its policies and appoint the commissioner of education,” said Griffo. “Frankly, the process of selecting an appropriate Regents member is too important to be decided by a single vote of the entire Legislature.”

Griffo said he believes Board of Regents appointments should be determined by the real stakeholders in the education system: voters.

“Each May, districts across New York state ask eligible voters to approve their school budgets,” said Griffo. “I’d like voters to pick Regents members at the same time.”

As for the current method, Griffo said he believes appointments should be made by a majority from each chamber – not by a single vote, which effectively hands all power to downstate members.

Griffo added: “While we work on empowering voters through direct election, we must bring upstate’s voice back into this crucial decision.”

Griffo has been at the forefront of identifying problems related to the rollout of the new curriculum. Last fall, he hosted two education forums to receive feedback from parents, teachers and school officials about the new requirements. In response to those concerns, Griffo sponsored several pieces of legislation that would address problems created by Common Core.

The senator has also called on the Board of Regents to refrain from using Common Core results for teacher, principal and student evaluations for at least two years.

“This has been a botched job from the beginning,” said Griffo. “Many of the parents and school officials I’ve talked to have completely lost faith in the ability of this body to fix the problems it created. I believe it’s time to start with fresh faces, and I’ll be urging my colleagues to do the same.”

Four of the 17 Board of Regents seats are up for election to a five-year term. Those whose terms are ending are Christine Cea, representing Staten Island; James Jackson, representing Albany; and two “at-large” members: James Cottrell, Brooklyn and Wade Norwood, Rochester.

The combined vote of the Assembly and Senate is expected to occur March 11.