



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Senator Ritchie Votes to Replace Regents

PATTY RITCHIE March 11, 2014

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**



### **Votes NO on Nominees; Backs Reforms in Wake of Flawed ‘Common Core’ Rollout**

State Senator Patty Ritchie today voted to oust members of the Board of Regents, citing the flawed rollout of the state’s new Common Core educational standards, and announced support for legislation to increase accountability of the education policy-setting board to students, parents and taxpayers.

Senator Ritchie voted to reject the reappointments of three current Regents, James Cottrell of Brooklyn, Wade Norwood of Rochester, and Christine Cea of Staten Island. A fourth Regent, James Jackson of

Albany, who served on the board since 2011, abruptly withdrew his name from consideration.

“The flawed roll-out of Common Core has created anxiety for students, parents and teachers from every corner of New York, and a resulting outpouring of protest from all across Central and Northern New York,” Senator Ritchie said. “Every single parent, student and educator who has contacted me about Common Core has demanded change from the Board of Regents, and with my vote today I am joining my voice with theirs in calling for increased accountability and reform.”

“Today, it’s the Board of Regents that got the failing grade.”

In order to continue to bring accountability to the Board of Regents, Senator Ritchie also announced she was immediately backing two Regents reform bills, and would work with colleagues in the Senate and Assembly to identify additional ways to reform the state’s education system.

The first, S.6377, would allow the public to choose members of the Board of Regents. Senator Ritchie has signed on as cosponsor of the bill. Right now, Regents are selected by the Legislature through a secretive and outdated process that is controlled entirely by Assembly Democrats, leaving no role for lawmakers who represent nearly half the state’s population, including vast swaths of rural and Upstate New York.

“The Regents hold daunting power to set education policy affecting millions of students, dictating the careers of hundreds of thousands of educators, and directly impacting on local taxpayers,” Senator Ritchie said.

“But the public has absolutely no say in who serves as a Regent, the policies they impose, and the standards they set. Direct public election of Regents would make the panel accountable and responsive to parents, educators and students.”

Senator Ritchie is drafting a second bill to require the Board of Regents to hold at least one meeting a year in each region of the state. The Regents currently meet 11 times a year.

“The public needs to see and understand what the Regents do. The public needs an opportunity to address the policy makers, to demand changes, and see results. My proposal would bring the Regents in direct contact with parents and educators,” said Senator Ritchie.