



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Submit Your Comments to the State Education Department

JOSEPH E. ROBACH April 22, 2015

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Earlier this year, Governor Andrew Cuomo attempted to enact far-reaching educational reforms as part of the 2015-2016 New York State budget.

My Senate colleagues and I, very early on in this year's budget adoption process, rejected the broad scope of the original Cuomo education reform plan and, in particular, the plan's over-reliance on testing.

The final 2015-2016 state budget attempts to move everyone toward a more reasonable common ground and, again, it **does not** enact the original Cuomo education reform plan.

The new state budget charges the state education commissioner and the Board of Regents with ultimately determining changes -- but not without undertaking a full public comment period that will allow every stakeholder (teachers, students, administrators, parents, and every other concerned citizen) who wants to provide as much input as he or she desires.

It gives teachers, superintendents, parents -- every stakeholder -- the ongoing opportunity to have input, to ensure the fairness that needs to be met, to continue to make the case against the over-reliance on testing and, most importantly, to offer better answers.

Toward that end, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is currently accepting public comment on developing new teacher evaluation standards. It represents the first opportunity to provide your input directly and specifically to NYSED, which you can send by e-mail to: Eval2015@nysed.gov.

It's anticipated that draft regulations will be announced at the next Board of Regents meeting on May 18-19, after which the public comment period will remain open for specific comment on the new draft proposal.

I'll do my best to provide additional updates as they become available throughout the critical months ahead. And I hope that you will **keep me updated** on your ongoing concerns, criticisms and, most important of all, concrete suggestions for improvements.