



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Sen. Farley Notes Following Historic \$1.4 Billion Aid Increase, Senate Republicans Act to Further Protect Students and Schools

HUGH T. FARLEY June 16, 2015

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**



school aid increase that was the centerpiece of the 2015-16 state budget approved in March, Senate Republicans recently passed common-sense education reforms that will empower parents and teachers, restore local control, and aggressively address the problems caused by an overemphasis on standardized testing.

The legislation (S5954) directs the State Education Department (SED) to release test questions and the corresponding correct answers to teachers by June 1st of the same school year. Doing so will encourage greater transparency and accountability, and ensure that the standardized tests are a learning tool, not just a data collection device.

The bill helps students by enacting measures to ensure that state exams in grades 3-8 are grade-appropriate and time-appropriate.

Meanwhile, the bill requires an additional 45-day public comment period following the release of the new draft regulations now being put together by the State Education Department - - allowing students, teachers, parents, grandparents and others to make their voices heard on this important statewide education issue.

This legislation also requires the State Education Department (SED) to consider student characteristics, such as English language learners, students with disabilities, students in poverty and a student's prior academic history, as factors in the calculation of a teacher's student growth scores.

In addition, the reform measures passed today require a comprehensive SED review – with education stakeholders – of the effectiveness and appropriateness of Common Core standards.

As part of this year's state budget, Senate Republicans worked tirelessly to eliminate nearly 60 percent of what was left of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) scheme imposed by Democrats when they controlled our entire state government.

A top priority of the members of the Senate GOP conference, the state has now done away with nearly 85 percent of the original GEA.

As a result of the billions of dollars in state education aid secured by Senate Republicans both this year and in the past, students and teachers will continue to have the resources they need to succeed and thrive.