



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy: Put Kids First

TERRENCE P. MURPHY June 16, 2015

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ALBANY, NY - The State Senate today approved new education reform measures Senator Terrence Murphy says are designed to empower parents and teachers, restore local control, and address the overemphasis on standardized testing.

"The reform measures passed today require a comprehensive review, with stakeholders, of the effectiveness and appropriateness of Common Core learning standards," Murphy said.

"After voting to deliver a \$1.4 billion aid increase in school and on top of voting to eliminate

the Gap Elimination Adjustment scheme, these common-sense changes approved today puts our kids first."

Following a \$1.4 billion school aid increase that was the centerpiece of the 2015-6 state budget, Murphy voted in favor of the plan to put in place what he calls a simpler, fairer Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) system that will improve outcomes for parents, teachers and kids, while easing the anxiety that now exists in classrooms across this state.

The legislation, Senate Bill 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, Murphy claimed.

The bill also enacts measures to ensure that state exams in grades 3-8 are grade-appropriate and time-appropriate while providing funding that will end the need for stand alone field tests of state ELA and math assessments.

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.

"17 out of the 19 standardized tests that New York students, like my three public school children, have to take are mandated by the Federal government," Murphy said. "In addition, the disastrous roll-out and implementation of the Common Core standards is a clear sign that a top-down federal interference does not work. After successfully blocking the

Governor's recent efforts to further increase our reliance on testing, I have acted today in an effort to return decision making to the local level."