



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy Gives A+ For Teacher Appreciation Week

TERRENCE MURPHY May 10, 2018

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Albany, NY - Teaching is a difficult profession with its own unique set of challenges. Being an educator in charge of cultivating young minds requires tremendous ability and preparation. It also requires continuous learning and support. Unfortunately, the current statutory system for evaluating teachers is tied to state standardized tests that do not accurately measure student learning and have forced educators to spend too much time doing test prep rather than teaching.

The father of three school-aged children, Senator Terrence Murphy wants to ensure that teachers can be evaluated fairly and constructively, allowing them to grow on the job, so they in turn, can provide all students with the tools they need to succeed in life. To improve the process of state assessments and teacher evaluations, Senator Murphy co-sponsored new legislation, S8301, which would amend the annual teacher and principal evaluation system to eliminate the mandatory use of state assessments to determine a teacher or principal's appraisal. This change to the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) system will allow districts to create and adopt local assessments in order to measure teacher performance.

"I proudly stand with our teachers in an effort to restore local control when it comes to educating our kids," said Senator Murphy. "One size does not fit all. We all want higher standards for our kids but Albany must let our teachers teach and maximize their expertise to ensure every child receives the quality education they deserve. Experimental exams and bureaucrats aren't the answer. My kids have never taken these tests and I have proudly sponsored the Parental Refusal Act in an effort to end this testing madness."

"We're very excited about this measure, which restores local control," commented Maureen Warren, Coordinator, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). "This takes the evaluation process away from Albany and those who don't work in the classroom. It returns the focus to teaching and learning, rather than assessing on a snapshot measurement."

Lisa Jackson, President, Carmel Teachers' Association and a school counselor at Carmel Schools stated, "I have reviewed the bill and while this is not where we want to end up on Teacher Evaluation, this is an important step in the right direction. This legislation prevents the State from using statistically unsound Value Added Measures in Teacher Evaluation."

"The intent of this measure is to remove many of the barriers keeping educators from doing what they do best - teaching students," added Sean Kennedy, President, Yorktown Congress of Teachers. "This legislation is a step in the right direction toward fixing the broken evaluation system and reducing high stakes testing,"

Many teachers have expressed the hope that assessment and evaluation systems can be co-created or designed with teachers at the local level through collective bargaining or, where there is no collective bargaining, agreed to by the organization representing teachers.