



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Statement of Senator Shelley Mayer and Assemblyman Steve Otis On the Closure of the Ridge Street Elementary School in the Blind Brook-Rye School District and Plans for Return to In-Person Learning

SHELLEY B. MAYER September 21, 2021



**NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE**

"Yesterday, we had another extensive call with New York State Education Commissioner Betty Rosa and her team with respect to the closure of the Ridge Street Elementary School in the Blind Brook-Rye School District. Commissioner Rosa reiterated the Department's commitment to work closely with the Superintendent and the Board of Education to address the specific items that were deemed to be non-compliant with the NYS Building Code as

referenced in her letter on September 17. The Commissioner has already made available the expertise and guidance of State Education Department staff to assist the district in returning to safe, in-person learning at the earliest opportunity. She reiterated that commitment on the call and wants to assist the district in resolving construction issues and in expediting a full opening of the school.

Under the law, a school district has the responsibility to undertake school construction in full compliance with all state building codes and to obtain approval from the State Education Department prior to occupancy.

To that end, we urge the district to work with their construction contractors to provide a detailed and specific plan describing the steps and timetable for remaining projects that need to be completed, the schedule for full compliance with the code and applicable state law and the timetable for the opening of the school for in person learning for each grade. The plan should be presented to parents, teachers and the school community as soon as possible with updates to be shared on a regular basis.

We remain committed to helping everyone address these issues and safely open the Ridge Street School."