

NEWYORK
STATE
SENATE



SENATOR ROBERT G. ORTT
62ND SENATE DISTRICT

January 30, 2015

New York State Board of Regents
89 Washington Avenue Board of Regents
Room 110 EB
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Board Member:

With recent inclement weather experienced in New York City and Long Island, State Education Department (SED) granted leeway to school districts impacted by the storms. Districts were allowed to reschedule state examinations if they submitted plans for keeping them secured. I applaud this decision as it balances important goals such as public safety, exam integrity, and student advancement.

I must however, raise objection with the fact that Western New York schools have not been offered the same courtesy. Last January, when schools across the region were closed due to the extreme cold associated with the Polar Vortex, students who missed exams were forced to wait until Spring to take them again. This was especially inconvenient for students scheduled to graduate in January. Many of these students were already delayed in their academic progress, further hindered by these additional setbacks beyond their control.

Rather than categorize test make-ups resulting from the January 27, 2015 storm as a "one-time exception," it seems prudent for SED to adopt an approach that protects the best interests of students and schools in a consistent manner. I look forward to working with you as we demonstrate that we value the safety and academic progress of all of our students equally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert G. Ortt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "O".

Robert G. Ortt
Senator 62nd District