



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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Summary of October 2023 Board of Regents Meeting

The Board of Regents conducted their monthly meeting on Monday, October 15th and Tuesday, October 16th. Regent Roger Tillis opened the meeting by condemning the barbarity and inhumanity occurring in Israel. Regent Tillis asked that New York use this moment to create action through the formation of a **NYS Commission on Holocaust Education** to more clearly define the Holocaust curriculum that is taught in schools to expand student awareness.

Regent Aramina Ferrer recognized the period from September 15 to October 15 as **Hispanic Heritage Month**. She stressed the need to celebrate Hispanic Culture, recognize the contributions of Latinos in America, and continue striving to enable Hispanic students to reach their potential through high quality education.

Regent Christine Cea acknowledged October as **Down's Syndrome Awareness Month** and recognized the progress that has been made in New York to afford students with Down's Syndrome a quality education in our public schools.

- The opening session focused on a review of the work done by the **Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures**. Commissioner Rosa began the discussion with a general overview of the process that has been followed in rethinking the concept of the high school diploma since the Commission began meeting in October 2022.

Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Instructional Support, Angelique Johnson-Dingle, reviewed the various steps that were followed with selecting committee members and the timeline that was followed in generating the recommendations over the past several years. The Deputy Commissioner stressed that this was **not** an effort to eliminate Regents Exams, but an attempt to provide multiple pathways for students to meet both educational standards and graduation requirements.

From the stakeholder feedback that was received, the Blue Ribbon Commission designated four primary areas of emphasis that guided the final Graduation Measures recommendations. They include:

1. Consideration of Multiple Pathways
2. Review of Assessment Flexibility Options
3. Understanding of Meaningful Life-Ready Credentials
4. Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction

Final recommendations will be presented to the Board at the November 13, 2023 Board of Regents meeting. No formal action will be taken at that time to adopt any of the recommendations and no information was presented about a potential implementation timeline.

The link below includes more detailed information on what was presented during the discussion.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/FB%20Monday%20-%20NYS%20Graduation%20Measures%20Initiative%20-%20Understanding%20the%20Process.pdf>

- Members of the State Aid Subcommittee continued discussions relating to the development of the **Regents Budget and Legislative Priorities for the 2024-2025** school year. It was emphasized that current NYS financial projections anticipate a large budget deficit this year. Combined with the end of COVID Relief funding, and a projected increase in school aid related expenditures, it was emphasized that the proposed budget will need to be extremely strategic in ensuring operational effectiveness.

Board members stressed the importance of funding emerging needs. Examples cited included costs associated with the increased influx of asylum seekers, and the recent FAPE22 ruling which expands a school district's obligation to provide students with disabilities with a "free and appropriate education" (FAPE) until a student's 22nd birthday.

While Foundation Aid was fully funded last year, several Board members expressed frustration that the current formula is outdated and needs updating to become more equitable. NYSED staff members Christina Coughlin and Jen Trowbridge stated that in anticipation of a large budget deficit that could exceed \$9 million, budget requests will need to be very carefully prioritized.

The link below provides an overview of the framework that guided the discussion.

<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/sites/regents/files/SA%20-%20Regents%20Budget%20and%20Legislative%20Priorities%20Framework%20Discussion.pdf>