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## **EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION**

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Supporting school leaders, every day.

### **Summary of January 2024 Stakeholders Meeting**

The **Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA)** held its monthly Stakeholder Meeting on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, via videoconference. Participants representing NYSED included Commissioner of Education, Betty Rosa; Deputy Commissioner, P12 Instructional Support, Angelique Johnson-Dingle; Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Educational Policy, David Frank; Senior Deputy Commissioner for Educational Policy, Jeffrey Matteson; and Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Operational Supports, Jason Harmon.

ESSAA was represented at the meeting by ESSAA President, Carol Conklin-Spillane; Executive Director, Mike Starvaggi; Executive Vice President, Skip Voorneveld; Director of Information Resources, Celia Strino; Vice President, Dr. Shireen Fasciglione; Vice President, John Rickert; Vice President, Shelley Baldwin Nye; Vice President, John Zampaglione; Director of Professional Learning, Eva Jones; ESSAA member, Jennifer Martino; ESSAA member, Mike Moran; ESSAA member, Lisa O'Neill; and Regents/NYSED Liaison, Paul Scampini.

**Important Note:** Recently, in an effort to make Stakeholder Meetings more productive, NYSED is has begun providing ESSAA representatives with a written summary of topics they will be addressing, prior to the meeting. The summary includes updated background information, data, and links to additional guidance and resources on each of the areas being discussed. The summary is presented in a bulleted format, is easy to read, and includes useful talking points relating to the many initiatives that are being worked on at NYSED which can be shared with colleagues and staff members.

The informational summary for this meeting is available as an attachment at the end of this meeting report.

## **Specific Topics discussed during the meeting included:**

### **Status of APPR Legislative Bill**

Commissioner Rosa began the meeting with an update on the status of the pending APPR legislation. She stated that NYSED continues to negotiate with legislators toward agreement on key components. The Commissioner stressed that NYSED continues to advocate for a formative approach to the APPR evaluation process that ensures appropriate professional development opportunities for both teachers and administrators.

Mrs. Conklin-Spillane emphasized the need for an emphasis on implementing the **Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)** as part of the legislation. Commissioner Rosa responded that, at this point, NYSED is working to make it through the APPR approval process. The Commissioner added she does not want to create any more barriers that could hold up the passage of the APPR Bill and the PSELs implementation would come at a later date.

### **Governor's Proposal Relating to Mental Health Clinics for All Schools**

ESSAA representatives asked for clarification on Governor Hochul's proposal to establish school-based mental health clinics in any New York State school that wants one. Commissioner Rosa responded that the aspirational and ambitious components of this proposal need to be balanced with the realities of cost and implementation. The Commissioner feels that if the proposal is supported by the legislature, it will require a transitional phase-in period that would require a significant period of time.

ESSAA representatives Skip Voorneveld and John Zampaglione both commented that they have had very positive experiences with school-based mental health clinic partnerships with community agencies, and strongly support the Governor's proposal.

### **Legislative Budget Update**

With regards to ongoing NYS Budget negotiations, Commissioner Rosa expressed that the current "elephant in the room" is Foundation Aid. The Commissioner stated that NYSED is participating in ongoing conversations with representatives from the NYS Division of Budget. NYSED is supporting a three to five year Foundation Aid agreement which would eliminate the problems that are occurring on an annual basis with allocations to districts.

### **Flexibilities to Certification Process for Aspiring Teachers and Administrators**

ESSAA members continue to express concern with the lack of qualified candidates that are available to fill teaching and administrative vacancies. ESSAA representative, Dr. Shireen Fasciglione, emphasized the need for more flexible pathways for qualified candidates to pursue certification.

Dr. Fasciglione, an elementary principal in the Capital Region, cited an example in her building where they had an outstanding Teaching Assistant (TA) who had recently moved to the area and had worked as a classroom teacher in a private school in another state. When a vacancy opened up in her building, the TA

would have been an excellent candidate, but was unable to follow an expedited track toward NYS certification. Dr. Fasciglione expressed frustration that it took approximately six months for her to hire a qualified candidate.

Commissioner Rosas expressed surprise and said that case studies like this help to dissect some of the current certification barriers that can be resolved. The Commissioner asked Senior Deputy Commissioner Matteson to look into this type of scenario and share his findings with us.

ESSAA representative Eva Jones also expressed that, in addition to teachers, the need also exists for removing some of the barriers that make it difficult for potential school leaders to earn administrator certification.

Commissioner Rosa responded that she is willing to work with us on creative models to resolve these situations. She went on to say that NYSED is looking at hybrid student teaching models that allow teacher candidates to substitute in classrooms while they are student teaching so they can earn some income to offset tuition expenses. Mrs. Conklin-Spillane also suggested a model where, through extended day options, student teachers and/or leadership candidates can do paid internships and still earn credit toward certification.

As an aside to the stakeholder discussion, the teacher certification scenario presented by Dr. Fasciglione is an excellent reminder of the many of real world challenges educational leaders are facing. Examples such as this can be a powerful tool during our stakeholder discussions as ESSAA advocates for policy changes. We encourage all ESSAA members to submit any concerns they would like to have addressed during an upcoming meeting at [info@essaa.org](mailto:info@essaa.org).

## **Status of Solutions Not Suspensions Bill in Legislature**

Mr. Rickert asked about the status of the **Solutions Not Suspensions Bill** which was introduced in the legislature last year but was not passed. Deputy Commissioner Johnson-Dingle responded that she has not heard any mention of the proposed bill advancing at this point. She is fairly confident however, that there is a strong advocacy group which will push to move the bill forward in the coming weeks and that NYSED will be monitoring the bill's status.

## **NYSED Agenda Summary Notes**

To request a copy of ESSAA's Stakeholder Summary that includes the information summary provided by NYSED on some of the topics discussed at the meeting and updated information on several topics that were not discussed at the meeting including, please email [bberry@essaa.org](mailto:bberry@essaa.org).

1. Overview of 2024 NAEP Testing
2. Updated 2024-2025 Testing Dates
3. Outsourcing of scoring for 2024 Grade 5 and Grade 8 Science Scoring
4. Update of PLAN (Performance-Based Learning and Assessment Network) Pilot
5. Reporting Procedures After School Closures Relating to Swatting Incidents

**ESSAA Members:**

***If you have any feedback on the foregoing issues or would like to suggest a topic to be addressed with the Commissioner at an upcoming meeting, please e-mail us at [info@essaa.org](mailto:info@essaa.org). New topics will be submitted to our Stakeholder Committee for consideration.***