



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

Supporting school leaders, every day.

### **Summary of February 2025 Stakeholders Meeting**

The **Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA)** held their monthly Stakeholder Meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, via videoconference. Participants representing NYSED included Commissioner, Betty Rosa; Senior Deputy Commissioner for Education Policy, Jeffrey Matteson; Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Educational Policy, David Frank; and Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Operational Supports, Jason Harmon.

ESSAA was represented at the meeting by ESSAA Executive Board Members: President, Carol Conklin-Spillane; Executive Director, Mike Starvaggi; Executive Vice President, Skip Voorneveld; Director of Professional Learning, Eva Jones; Vice President, Lisa O'Neill; Vice President for Professional Development, Shelley Baldwin-Nye; Regents/NYSED Liaison, Paul Scampini; and ESSAA Delegate, Vince DiGrandi.

**Topics discussed during the meeting include:**

- 1. Recent NYSED Guidance in response to Federal Executive Orders.**
- 2. Preparing School Leaders to Implement the Final Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures.**
- 3. Update on the New Requirement for Districts to Annually Verify That Instructional Practices Align with the Best Practices Associated with the Science of Reading.**
- 4. Status of NYS Dyslexia and Dysgraphia Task Force Recommendations.**
- 5. Mandated Reporter Workshop Training Requirements Update.**
- 6. Using Schools as Voting Sites on Election Day.**
- 7. Proposed NYSED Principal Leadership Training and Support Center.**

**Recent NYSED Guidance Statements in Response to Federal Executive Orders**

Mrs. Conklin-Spillane opened the meeting by commending Commissioner Rosa and her staff on the Guidance Documents NYSED has been releasing to clarify New York State's position on the federal Executive Orders, particularly those that relate to safeguarding the rights of immigrant and transgender students.

### **Preparing School Leaders to Implement the Final Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures.**

Mr. Starvaggi expressed concern with the need to prepare school leaders to effectively implement the final recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commissioner on Graduation Measures. Mrs. Conklin-Spillane stressed that there is a wide range of expertise and experience among current school administrators and emphasized the need for very specific, individualized training approaches as we ask them to implement such sweeping changes.

Commissioner Rosa responded that NYSED is working on both initial guidance to provide a deeper understanding of the scope of the recommendations and a comprehensive statewide professional development plan for school leaders. The Commissioner went on to say that NYSED is very interested in working with ESSAA to make the professional development more personalized and effective. She asked Deputy Commissioner Matteson to set up a planning meeting for a group of ESSAA members and NYSED staff to collaboratively discuss potential recommendations.

### **Update on the New Mandate that Requires Districts to Annually Verify that K-3 Literacy Instruction Aligns With Science of Reading Best Practices.**

Mr. Starvaggi asked for an update on the newly mandated annual validation of K-3 literacy instruction to ensure that schools are utilizing Science of Reading best practices.

Deputy Commissioner Matteson responded that the draft guidelines for conducting the process have been completed and the finalized version should be released to districts in the near future. All districts are required to make the initial attestation by **September 1, 2025**.

### **Update on Recommendations of Dyslexia and Dysgraphia Task Force**

Mr. Starvaggi asked for an update of the recommendations of the NYS Dyslexia and Dysgraphia Task Force that were released in December 2024.

Commissioner Rosa responded that NYSED continues to review the findings of the 49 member task force. The Commissioner expressed that NYSED is working to codify the recommendations and look at how best to implement changes in areas such as initial screenings and diagnosis. She added that guidance documents are being worked on that will be released to the field in the near future.

### **Mandated Reporter Workshop Requirements**

Mr. Starvaggi asked for an update on the new Mandated Reporter Training requirements. Deputy Commissioner Matteson responded that the new law requires mandated reporters, even those who have previously been previously trained, to complete the updated version by **April 1, 2025**.

The link below provides more specific information on the requirements and includes access to a list of approved training providers.

<https://www.op.nysed.gov/professions/licensed-master-social-worker/mandated-training-related-child-abuse>

## **Use of Schools as Polling Sites on Election Day**

At previous stakeholder meetings, ESSAA members have raised safety concerns regarding the use of schools as polling sites on Election Day while school is in session. Mrs. Conklin-Spillane expressed that since we are still approximately eight months away from the next Election Day, this would be a good time for districts to start taking steps to look at alternative locations within individual communities.

Commissioner Rosa expressed appreciation for the suggestion and said she would look into ways NYSED could provide support.

## **Proposed NYSED Principal Leadership Training and Support Center**

In recent years, Mrs. Conklin-Spillane, along with ESSAA representatives, have consistently emphasized to Commissioner Rosa and her staff, the need for increased efforts dedicated to recruiting, training, mentoring, and retaining new educational leaders.

In response to these requests, Commissioner Rosa informed us that she has reached out to several highly respected educational leadership programs for resources to assist NYSED with developing their own **Principal Leadership Center**. The Commissioner stated that she will be identifying some NYSED staff member(s) to coordinate the initial planning efforts this summer, with a goal of an official launch of the Leadership Center in the summer of 2026.

Commissioner Rosa added that she would like to have ESSAA members assist with the initial planning and that NYSED will be in contact with us in the near future to start setting up meetings.

***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.***