



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

Supporting school leaders, every day.

Summary of March 2025 Stakeholders Meeting

The **Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA)** held their monthly Stakeholder Meeting on Monday, March 24, 2025, via videoconference. Participants representing NYSED included Commissioner, Betty Rosa; Senior Deputy Commissioner for Education Policy, Jeffrey Matteson; Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Instructional Supports, Angelique Dingle-Johnson; Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Educational Policy, David Frank; Deputy Commissioner, P-12 Operational Supports, Jason Harmon; and Chief of Staff in the Office of Educational Policy, Laura Glass.

ESSAA was represented at the meeting by ESSAA Executive Board Members: President, Carol Conklin-Spillane; Director of Professional Learning, Eva Jones; Vice President, Lisa O'Neill; Vice President, Russell Buckley; Vice President, Jesimae Ossorio; Vice President for Professional Development, Shelley Baldwin-Nye; Director of Information Resources, Celia Strino; Regents/NYSED Liaison, Paul Scampini; and ESSAA Delegate, Vince DiGrandi.

As a follow-up to our February discussion, this month's meeting focused on how best to support school administrators with implementing the upcoming recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on Graduation Measures.

At last month's meeting, Commissioner Rosa shared that NYSED is working on initial guidance to provide educators with a deeper understanding of the scope of the BRC recommendations, and a comprehensive statewide professional development plan for teachers and school leaders. During the meeting, the Commissioner also expressed that NYSED is very interested in collaborating with ESSAA to make the professional development plan for administrators as personalized as possible to ensure effective implementation of the recommendations.

Mrs. Conklin-Spillane opened this month's meeting by again expressing concerns about the need for preparing school leaders to implement the significant changes being proposed by the BRC. She 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 principals to implement such sweeping changes. Citing the example of the current regression of the role of assistant principals to primarily managing discipline, she stated that the implementation of the new Graduation Measures presents an opportunity to reprioritize the role of principals as instructional leaders. Commissioner Rosa acknowledged that she is aware that the role of assistant principals has become increasingly focused on managing discipline and added that she realizes it will be both difficult to attract and retain quality candidates in the future if the current situation continues.

Mrs. Conklin-Spillane asked about the next steps in the Graduation Measures approval process and the proposed implementation timeline. Deputy Commissioner Johnson-Dingle responded that a tentative timeline of implementation steps was included in the initial recommendations that were announced in November 2024. The Deputy Commissioner also noted that as more specific BRC proposals are presented to the Board of Regents, NYSED will allow significant time for public comment before any recommendations are formally adopted.

Commissioner Rosa reported that they are seeing evidence in schools of positive shifts toward creative teaching and learning strategies in response to the initial BRC recommendations. She specifically noted progress in STEM courses, and in the Performance Learning and Assessment Network (PLAN) Pilot schools. Deputy Commissioner Johnson-Dingle noted that the PLAN Pilot schools are being supported by Advisory Workgroups, Technical Assistance Centers, and researchers from the University at Albany. She feels these added levels of support will assist NYSED staff with evaluating lessons learned, aligning best practices with the components of the Portrait of a Graduate, and with developing the Graduation Measures professional development priorities.

Mrs. Conklin-Spillane stressed the importance of dovetailing the teaching and learning successes we are seeing in the field with the leadership characteristics that are best supporting these positive shifts. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that these practices are shared with higher education leadership programs and are emphasized in the foundational components of the Graduation Measures professional development program for school leaders.

At the conclusion of the meeting Commissioner Rosa was asked if there are plans to offer professional development on Graduation Measures implementation for school leaders this summer. The Commissioner responded that it is currently being discussed and that she would provide an update at our next meeting.

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. New topics will be submitted to our Stakeholder Committee for consideration.