

# New York State Educational Conference Board



January 13, 2015

The Honorable Anthony S. Bottar, Vice Chancellor  
New York State Board of Regents  
120 Madison Street, Suite 1600, AXA Tower II  
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Vice Chancellor Bottar,

In my role as the Chair of the Educational Conference Board (ECB), I write to you on behalf of the seven leading statewide education groups that represent school boards, parents, superintendents, teachers, principals, business officials and other educators.

As the Regents begin the process of finding a new Commissioner, the New York State Education Department and all local school districts face significant challenges, including effectively implementing higher standards, establishing alternative pathways to graduation, addressing the needs of English language learners and accommodating increasing numbers of unaccompanied minors. At the same time, we face greater competition for the additional state funds needed to continue current programs and make real progress with these challenges.

With these priorities and challenges in mind, we need a Commissioner who understands our New York system of public education, and who has the leadership and communication skills needed to effectively build understanding and strong support for our students and schools across a wide range of interested and critical stakeholders.

The purpose of this letter is to seek ECB involvement, on behalf of our members, in the process of finding a new Commissioner. While we clearly understand that the final selection of a Commissioner will be made by the Board of Regents, we strongly believe that meaningful stakeholder involvement in the process would be helpful to you and the Regents. It would also lead to greater acceptance of, and more support for, the new Commissioner.

It is common practice for school boards across our state to actively involve key stakeholders in the process of finding a new Superintendent of Schools. While the form of the involvement may vary from district to district, the practice is widely accepted and valued.

We would like to arrange a meeting of ECB representatives with you in the near future. I will call the Regents Office to attempt to arrange a time.

We are eager to help and look forward to working with you. Please feel free to call me at 518-810-8382, at any time.

Respectfully,

John Yagielski  
Chair