

New York State

PTA

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NYS PTA Legislation Education Conference
The Governor's Reform Agenda:
Proposing New Policy in Exchange for Funding

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The Exchange Proposal:

\$1.1 billion State Aid increase in Exchange for Legislative Approval of an “Executive Reform Package”

- **NYS PTA’s Position**
 - Separate the issues: Money first, policy second
 - Honor past fiscal obligations
 - Fund new challenges
 - Reject proposals that divert funding
 - Review “Reform” policy components separately
 - Emphasize benefit to students

Reform Components:

Teacher Preparation: When is a teacher ready to enter the classroom?

- Governor
 - Graduate Scholarships
 - GPA entry and completion standards
 - Teacher residency program
 - Extended time to tenure
- NYS PTA positions and questions
 - Full certification before entering classroom?
 - Closely supervised clinical internship
 - Instruction in meaningful family engagement
 - Is five years to tenure too long?

Reform Components: Teacher Assessment Purpose

- Governor
 - Recognize excellence
 - Target professional development to teachers in need of improvement
 - Remove teachers who under perform
- NYS PTA
 - Inform and support ongoing professional development for all educators to improve the teaching and learning experience for students

Reform Components: Teacher Assessment Model

- Ratings: Teachers rated as Highly Effective, Effective, Developing or Ineffective
- Current
 - Rating= 20% state tests, 20% local tests, 60% “qualitative measures”
- Governor
 - 50% state tests or other assessment, 15% local observation, 35% outside observation
 - State would set “scoring bands”
- SED
 - 40% state tests or other assessment, 60% qualitative measures

Reform Components: Certification and Tenure

- Current
 - Tenure after three years or two years if previously tenured
 - Full certification after five years to include Masters degree
- Governor
 - Tenure after five consecutive years with Effective or better rating
 - Certification renewable each five years based on state prescribed professional development
- SED
 - 40% state tests or other assessment, 60% qualitative measures

Reform Components: Discipline and Removal

- Current
 - Three person panel selected by participants
- Governor
 - Presumption of ineffective performance favoring administration
 - Eliminate requirement to “rehabilitate”
- SED
 - Replace panel system with appointment of a single hearing officer

Reform Components: Recognition and Reward

- Current
 - Master Teacher system pays \$15,000 bonuses to top STEM teachers who must receive highly effective rating to qualify
- Governor
 - Expand Master Teacher system to include ELL and dual certified special ed
 - Use Master Teachers to train and mentor other teachers
- SED
 - Expand career ladder system
- NYS PTA questions: Financial bonuses can't be the only answer
 - What motivates teachers?
 - Is our goal to recognize past performance or inspires future performance?
 - Do financial bonuses incentivize educators to collaborate or to compete?

Reform Components: Charter Schools

- **Current**
 - Number capped at 460. Total of 248 now operating
 - Limits placed on chartering authority and region (NYC)
 - NYC is 24 charters from its cap
- **Governor**
 - Increase cap by 100
 - Eliminate caps on specific chartering authorities
 - Make cap an overall statewide cap
- **NYS PTA positions**
 - Cost to support charter schools must not divert funding from traditional public schools
 - Charter schools must be accountable to Boards of Education of traditional public schools in which their students reside

Reform Components: Education Investment Tax Credit

- Current

- Contributions to eligible institutions are tax deductible in that they reduce taxpayer income resulting in an average taxpayer benefit equal to about 5% of the contribution

Governor

- Offer a credit that reduces tax obligation by 75% of the donation at a cost of \$100 million per year.
- Passage linked to “Dream Act” and continued TAP payments
- Senate adopted version would reduce tax obligation by 90% at an eventual cost of \$300million per year

- NYS PTA positions and questions

- Cost to fund tax credit must not divert funding from traditional public schools
- Tax credits would put policy decisions over use of public dollars into private hands
- Tax credit issues should be separated from Dream Act and TAP payment
- Would new tax credits provide incentive to reduce tax deductible donations in order to realize the added benefit of a tax credit?

Reform Components: Struggling Schools

- Current

- Under NCLB, NY State uses student test scores and graduation rates to identify 178 of the state's lowest performing schools. State officials follow up using the *Diagnostic Tool for School District Effectiveness (DTSDE)*. School flexibility in developing improvement plans vary based on length of time that performance has failed to improve.

Governor

- Adopt a “receivership” takeover model modeled after strategy adopted by Massachusetts in 2012 to appoint receivers in failing schools and in some school districts.

- NYS PTA questions

- What has been the Massachusetts experience with school takeover?
- What has been the New York experience with school takeover?
- What issues may be raised when several schools are in receivership but the district as a whole is not?

Reform Discussion: Annual Professional Performance Review: Student Testing

- Issues and questions
 - Number of tests and class time devoted to test preparation
 - Test validity in measuring student performance
 - Test validity for measuring individual student growth
 - Test validity for the purpose of assessing school-wide performance
 - Test validity for the purpose of assessing individual teacher performance
 - Length and frequency of tests
 - Feedback of test data to teachers and parents
 - Parent and teacher feedback
 - State and federal laws
 - Consistency with past and present State and National PTA positions

Reform Discussion: Annual Professional Performance Review: Student Testing

- NYS PTA positions and what we have said
 - Assessment is a valid and valuable aspect of instruction
 - The original intent of ESEA/ NCLB assessment was to identify gaps in education across schools, across districts and among sub-groups
 - We test too much and use tests for too many purposes unrelated to improvement of classroom instruction
 - The role for standardized tests should be to assess the effectiveness of the school community as a whole
 - The appropriate role for testing in judging individual educators is to focus on how each teacher uses diagnostic data to improve instruction
 - The links between teacher performance and student test results should be suspended until all planned instructional reforms have been implemented

Reform Discussion: Annual Professional Performance Review: Non Testing Components

- Issues and Questions

- The Governor proposes that 15% of APPR be based on one principal observation with 35% of APPR based on one independent observation
 - How many outside evaluators will be needed?
 - How much will they cost?
 - Who trains them?
 - To whom are they accountable?
 - What is the impact on the authority of the direct supervisor?
- How should performance not readily evident through classroom observation be judged?
- Who should be held primarily accountable for individual teacher performance review?
- What is the primary purpose of collecting non test data regarding teacher performance?
- How can non student data be made more objective?

Reform Discussion: Annual Professional Performance Review: Non Testing Components

- NYS PTA positions and what we have said
 - By proposing that 35% of APPR be judged by an outside evaluator, the Governor makes a mockery of local control, implies questionable confidence in local school leaders and leaves many questions unanswered
 - To support professional development as the primary purpose of evaluation, we must be able to distinguish relative educator strengths and weaknesses but if the purpose of the system is viewed as primarily punitive, the developmental potential is lost..
 - The *NYS Teaching Standards and Performance Indicators* adopted by the NYS Board of Regents in 2011 provide an effective model for evaluating teacher performance
 - Who should be held primarily accountable for individual teacher performance review?
 - Performance assessment models should be continuously evaluated and updated

Reform Discussion: Annual Professional Performance Review: Questions Moving Forward

- As parents, should we be concerned with the manner in which educators are evaluated and how the process affects the quality of our children's educational experience?
- When is it appropriate to use student test results as a component of an individual teacher's evaluation?
- Should our advocacy focus be more on student tests or on the manner in which student test results are used?
- Should our advocacy efforts focus more on the use of tests or on the non test components of educator evaluation?
- What should the percentage balance be between test performance and non test factors?
- How should we compare performance of teachers across schools, districts and evaluators?
- When is it appropriate to compare performance of educators who teach in different environments or with different demographic sub-groups?
- What are the educator performance factors that will be most effective in improving the productivity of the classroom experience?