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The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Thank you for convening the education Task Force — and specifically, for its recommendation to re-examine the impact of Education Law 3012-d on student learning. The Task Force's recommendations have set a new direction that will ultimately ensure that we have the time needed to get educator evaluation right in New York State.

Already, the Task Force's recommendations have paid dividends in the form of the Regents' emergency amendments to the regulations implementing Education Law 3012-d. However, although the Regents have exhausted their flexibility under the law, some issues still remain unresolved, and as a result, the transition period will have inherent problems that cause it to fall short of the expectations of the Task Force. You have already indicated that the Task Force's recommendations will serve as the foundation for your education remarks in your annual address to the Legislature. We would respectfully ask that you take this opportunity to call for the legislative changes that will be necessary to fully realize your Task Force's vision.

- Counterintuitively, substituting alternative assessments for state assessments in the development of student learning objectives (SLOs) may actually require an increase in budgets spent on assessments and/or reallocate limited fiscal resources to fund the development of new teacher-developed SLO assessments.
- Given the Task Force's recommendation of the review and the revision of the Common Core Learning Standards, we believe that developing any new assessments linked to standards still under review will continue to erode our communities' confidence in our system.

To build upon the positive momentum that the Task Force has begun, we recommend a chapter amendment to Education Law 3012-d that includes the following:

- Declare a full moratorium on Common Core-derived New York State Education Department assessment data for the purpose of student/teacher evaluation, including related local assessments. Such a moratorium shall remain in effect until such time as the newly designed assessments are proven valid, reliable and aligned to the new standards. No assessments should be utilized for accountability purposes until the completed review of the standards and any revisions/changes have been adopted.



- Implement a teacher and principal evaluation that will be based on the subcomponents currently defined and assessed through state-approved rubrics during the moratorium. These components will shift in weight from 50 to 100 points with the opportunity for a supervisor to include discussion of student performance.
- Convene a panel of nationally recognized experts in the areas of teaching and learning, curriculum development and psychometrics. The panel should also include seasoned practitioners, including teachers, principals and superintendents. The charge to the panel should be to create a meaningful teacher and principal evaluation system that links practice to measurable student outcomes.
- Permit NYSED to extend the hardship waiver through June 30, 2016, without a reapplication. This would allow districts to focus limited resources to meet the deadline for a 3012-d APPR plan.

The superintendents of Nassau County, Suffolk County and the counties of the Lower Hudson reiterate our support for the initial recommendations of the Governor’s task force and the regulations proposed by the Regents. It is our belief that these recommendations will continue to strengthen the work of the Task Force and move forward achieving the goal of rebuilding confidence in our educational system as well as restoring essential trust within our communities.

We continue to welcome all opportunities to work together for the common goal of ensuring that all students attending New York State public schools have the resources and support to achieve success.

Respectfully,

Lorna R. Lewis

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cc: New York State Legislators
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