



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

LongIsland.com: As New York Students Return to the Classroom, Governor Hochul Signs Legislation to Support Students and Parents

CHRIS BOYLE September 5, 2024

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Governor Kathy Hochul.

Governor Kathy Hochul today in Syracuse signed legislation that will support students and parents. Legislation S.9701/A.10209 makes it easier for parents to save for their child's college tuition by allowing for expanded uses of 529 accounts, in alignment with federal tax law. Legislation S.9018A/A.9855A amends current law to require all school districts containing a high school to establish a process to include at least one ex-officio, non-voting student member on the board of education. The bill also removes the current law requirement that such a student member seat be authorized by referendum of the voters of the district. Legislation S.9016/A.9934 reestablishes the name of the Syracuse Comprehensive Education and Workforce Training Center as the Syracuse Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) High School.

"Our education system plays a crucial role in the continued success and growth of the great State of New York," **Governor Hochul said.** "With these new bills, I am confident that New York will continue to stand out as a national leader in providing quality and equitable education."

Legislation S.9701/A.10209 amends education law to classify payment of principal or interest on qualified education loans as well as rollovers of funds into Roth Individual Retirement Accounts as qualified withdrawals from New York State College Choice tuition savings accounts, known as "529 accounts." This will make it easier for people to save for their children's college by expanding the eligible uses for remaining funds. This change also aligns New York's law with federal tax laws governing qualified educational expenses from 529 accounts. Research has shown that students with college savings accounts are significantly more likely to attend college than those without. This bill removes a barrier to college savings by ensuring additional allowable uses beyond strictly paying for college expenses.

State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky said, “New York's 529 College Savings Program does not currently align with Federal law which has been amended twice in the last five years. My legislation confirms New York statutes to the federal laws. As a result, it will be easier for students and their families to save for college and ultimately pay off student loans. I thank Governor Hochul for signing this legislation, Senator Chu for co-sponsoring it and Assemblyman McDonald for being the Assembly sponsor.”

Assemblymember John T. McDonald III, RPh said, “I sponsored this new law to correct an inconsistency in federal and state law after hearing about the issue from a constituent. This measure implements a federal law permitting the use of unused 529 savings account funds to rollover account proceeds to a Roth IRA. This measure incentivizes investing in 529 college savings accounts and Roth IRAs. Thank you to Governor Kathy Hochul for signing S.9701/A.10209 into law and thank you to the office of the NYS Comptroller for working with me on this legislation.”

Legislation S.9018A/A.9855A amends current law to require all school districts outside the City of New York containing a high school and all Boards of Cooperative Educational Services to establish a process to include at least one ex-officio, non-voting student member on the board of education. It would also remove the current law requirement that a student member seat be authorized by referendum of the voters of the district. The bill would also remove the requirement that a student member be a senior at the school and instead require only that the student member have attended the high school for at least one year prior to selection to the board.

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “I am extremely pleased that my bill to require school districts and BOCES to appoint at least one student ex-officio school board member has been signed into law by Governor Hochul. School boards shape the educational experiences of students, but they do not always include the voices of the students they serve. This

legislation will give students new opportunities to engage with their school community and build habits of civic engagement that will serve them throughout their lives. Ex-officio board members will learn the power of their own voices, and the importance of listening to and engaging respectfully with those who may have a different point of view, while bringing valuable and unique perspective to board decision making. I want to thank Assemblymember Carrie Woerner for her partnership on this legislation and Governor Kathy Hochul for signing it into law today.”

Assemblymember Carrie Woerner said, “As a former high school student School Board member, I know first-hand what a wonderful experience it was to be my school’s student representative and to be able to offer students’ perspectives on all School Board-related topics. I’m thrilled high school students across our state will now have this great learning experience as well.”

Legislation S.9016/A.9934 establishes the official name of the Syracuse Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics High School. The purpose is to update enabling legislation for the Syracuse Regional STEAM school to conform with its intended name and operations.

State Senator Rachel May said, “The Central Tech High School will be a transformative opportunity for students across the region, giving them a direct path to a career upon graduation. I’m proud to have led the effort in Albany to get funding for this one-of-a-kind school in New York. With my bill to officially change the name to Syracuse Regional STEAM school, we can now look toward the future when students fill classrooms, preparing them for a successful and fulfilling career. Thank you to Governor Hochul for her commitment to ensuring quality education for students throughout Central New York.”

Assemblymember William Magnarelli said, “The STEAM High School is a timely educational initiative that will help Syracuse meet the workforce demands of Micron and other

semiconductor manufacturers moving into the Central New York Area. As the sponsor of the Assembly legislation establishing the CNY STEAM School and authorizing the state funding of the renovation of the old Central Tech, I look forward to the day CNY students can get a first-class education in science, technology, engineering, arts and math at the CNY STEAM School.”