



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Senate Announces Agreement on NYC School Governance

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY July 27, 2009

New York, NY (July 24, 2009): The New York State Senate Majority Conference has reached an agreement with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg on New York City school governance. The Senate is expected to vote on and pass S.5887 with a chapter amendment designed to increase parental input, promote enhanced arts education, address concerns relating to school safety procedures and strengthen the oversight role of the community superintendents.

Senators Shirley L. Huntley and Martin Malave Dilan were instrumental in negotiating the terms of the chapter amendment, and provided critical leadership to resolve concerns of Members in the Majority Conference.

The draft chapter amendment to S.5887 includes four basic provisions:

1. Creation of a Parent Training Center Increases the capacity of parents to participate and engage in the educational system through training and support programs.
2. Establishment of an Arts Advisory Committee Advises, makes recommendations and issues an annual report on educational policy involving arts education.

3. Clarifies Review Process of Principals by Superintendent Includes quality of curriculum and instruction as part of superintendent review of principals.

4. Requiring Schools to Hold Open Public Meetings Concerning School Safety Directs each school to conduct meetings at least annually, open to parents, to discuss safety concerns including matters related to school safety officers.

“Delivering a quality education for all our children is a moral imperative,” said Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm A. Smith. “Establishing greater avenues for parental input in our schools will better prepare students to contribute as our next generation of thinkers, workers and leaders. The more engaged parents are, the better an education our children receive. We now have a system designed to serve their needs and provide the education our children deserve.”

The Senate is expected to return to Albany to vote on the legislation before schools open. Also helpful in reaching a final agreement were Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Deputy Chancellor Chris Serf, Randi Weingarten, President American Federation of Teachers and President United Federation of Teachers; Michael Mulgrew, Vice President, United Federation of Teachers; Jon Kest, Head Organizer NY ACORN (part of the Campaign for Better Schools); and Billy Easton, Executive Director, Alliance for Quality Education and Organizer with the Campaign for Better Schools.