



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Senator Grisanti Urges 'Big Four' Districts to Repeal 'Last In First Out' Law

MARK GRISANTI February 28, 2011

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Republican state legislator teams with Democratic colleague in asking for a new system for teacher evaluation

New York State Senator Mark Grisanti (60th District) is pushing to repeal the “last in, first out” (LIFO) policy by joining with administrators and board of education members from the “Big Four” school districts of New York (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers) in their request for new systems for teacher evaluation to be put into place.

The “last in, first out” policy protects the most senior teachers by requiring that all layoffs be based on seniority and most years of service, rather than merit. In order to build a school system that will be sustainable because of the promotion of top-quality teachers, the culture that tells us that a teacher’s hard work and effectiveness is meaningless must be changed.

“I am in favor of repealing the ‘last in, first out’ policy because I believe that we should not be evaluating the performance of teachers strictly by the number of years they have on the job,” Sen. Grisanti said. “We need to introduce measures that will implement an evaluation program for teachers that will improve our educational system through the strengthening of the work force who work directly with our students.”

Sen. Grisanti is joining with Assemblyman Sam Hoyt and various administrators and school board members as part of a unified front to make sure City of Buffalo schools are not left behind or completely forgotten as policy decisions are made by a New York City-focused Legislature.

Sen. Grisanti is working with Hoyt and local education reform non-profit Buffalo ReformED. The three are working together to make sure that Buffalo city schools are once again not left behind as policy decisions are made by a New York City-focused Legislature.

"Teachers are the single-most important factor in raising student achievement, and we must raise the bar so that only the very best teachers are in front of the classroom," Katie Campos, Director of Buffalo ReformED. "Last in, first out is an out-dated obstacle to ensuring that every student has access to the highest quality education. No one wants to see our teachers get laid off, especially when they are our best teachers."

"I will fight to ensure that the best interests of our school children in the City of Buffalo are represented in Albany," Sen. Grisanti said. "The bottom line is that this process is unfortunately driven by people from New York City. It is my hope along with Assemblyman Hoyt that by our reaching out to the other Big Four school districts, we will form a partnership that will strongly advocate for Western New York and the education of our children."

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Attached is the letter sent to Dr. James Williams, superientendt of the Buffalo Public Schools.