



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Skelos, and Speaker Silver Announce Agreement on Historic Teacher Evaluation Law

DEAN G. SKELOS March 14, 2012

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Skelos, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver today announced an agreement on legislation to put the Governor's new groundbreaking teacher and principal evaluation system into law, firmly establishing New York as a national leader in school accountability.

The new evaluation system will provide clear standards and significant guidance to local school districts for implementation of teacher evaluations based on multiple measures of performance including student achievement and rigorous classroom observations. The legislation follows through on New York's commitment to establish a real and effective teacher evaluations as a condition of the \$700 million granted through the federal Race to the Top program.

"We are writing into law a new national model for teacher evaluations that will put our students first and put New York State at the front of the class when it comes to school accountability," Governor Cuomo said. "The new statewide evaluation law sets clear

standards for measuring educators' based on how our students are performing in the classroom, so we can make sure our children have best possible opportunity for the future. I commend the legislative leaders for taking this extraordinary step to create permanent and real evaluations in our schools."

Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said, "This agreement on teacher evaluations will enhance accountability in school districts across New York and give our students the first-class education they deserve. I commend the Governor for working with the Legislature and labor on this important issue and look forward to doing much more to help our kids compete and succeed, so they can prepare themselves to be tomorrow's leaders in business, in education, and in each of our communities."

State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said, "The teacher evaluation law we passed two years ago helped bring \$700 million in federal Race-to-the-Top funding to New York's schools. This will provide comprehensive standards for using multiple measures to evaluate teacher effectiveness and help struggling teachers grow and improve. I commend the Governor for his commitment to giving our students the best education system possible."

Details of the plan under the legislation are as follows:

Teacher Performance – 60 points

Under the legislation, 60 percent of a teacher's evaluation will be based on rigorous and nationally recognized measures of teacher performance. The legislation requires that a majority of the teacher performance points will be based on classroom observations by an administrator or principal, and at least one observation will be unannounced. The remaining points will be based upon defined standards including observations by independent trained evaluators, peer classroom observations, student and parent feedback from evaluators, and evidence of performance through student portfolios.

Student Achievement in State and Local Assessments– 40 points

Under the legislation, 40 percent of a teacher's evaluation will be based on student academic achievement, with 20 percent from state testing and 20 percent from a list of three testing options including state tests, third party assessments/tests approved by the SED and locally developed tests that will be subject to SED review and approval. Under the plan, school districts will also have the option of using state tests to measure up to 40 percent of a teacher's rating.

Rating System

The legislation significantly tightens the scoring system to ensure student achievement and teacher performance are both properly taken into account for teacher ratings. Teachers or principals that are rated ineffective in the 40 points could not receive a developing score overall.

Ineffective: 0 – 64

Developing: 65 – 74

Effective: 75 – 90

Highly Effective: 91 – 100

Point Allocation System for the Ratings

The legislation sets forth, for the first time, a standard for school districts and teacher unions to set the allocation of points for the teacher ratings. The points must be allocated in a manner that a teacher can receive one of the four ratings, and the SED Commissioner will be able to reject points that are unfairly allocated.

SED Commissioner Final Review

The legislation also, for the first time, gives the SED Commissioner the authority to approve or disapprove local evaluation plans that are deemed insufficient. This will add rigor to the process and ensure evaluation plans comply with the law.

New York City Expedited Appeals Process

The legislation also includes an expedited and streamlined appeals process for the New York City School District that becomes effective on January 17, 2013 if New York City and the UFT agree to an overall evaluation system.