



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

# **Grisanti, Peoples-Stokes, DPCC, Buffalo Reform-Ed Community Leaders Call on State Assembly to Vote on Legislation to Reform Buffalo Public Schools**

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**Bill S. 868** calls for moving the election of members of the City of Buffalo School Board from May to November, a measure that will improve voter turnout and save taxpayers over \$100,000 by consolidating elections. The legislation also calls for extending the terms of current members of the Buffalo School Board to the last day of December rather than June, allowing for future terms of office to run from January through December.

**Bill S. 1044** requires the City of Buffalo's board of education to submit their annual school district budget to voters for approval prior to final adoption of the spending plan. Grisanti believes encouraging more people to vote will allow special interest groups to have less influence over the day-to-day business of the city's school system.

In the City of Buffalo, nearly one-half of the property tax levy is allocated to the school district, but local residents have no direct input on the annual budget, unlike suburban districts. Buffalo is one of five school districts in the state that does not hold an annual vote on their proposed budget.

The recent passage of Senate bills S.868 and S.1044, both sponsored by Grisanti are in hopes of improving the quality of education currently offered to students who attend public school in the City of Buffalo and increase parental involvement.

**State Senator Mark Grisanti (R, I 60):** "I am proud to stand here with concerned parents of students who attend Buffalo Public Schools because we all recognize the need to improve the quality of education that our children are receiving. Their futures are at stake so we need to do whatever is possible to get more people involved so we can work together with district officials and other stakeholders towards a common goal of improving the educational opportunities provided to our children."

**Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes (D, 141):** "Parent Engagement is the key for future student success. The more parents that are allowed opportunities to have a role in their children's academic life, the richer their student experience will be."

**Janique S. Curry, Former Buffalo School Board Member and Chair of the Legislative Committee for the DPCC:** "As a former Buffalo School Board member and current chair of the legislative committee for the District Parent Coordinating Council, these pieces of legislation are crucial to the future of our children's education, I am encouraged by the efforts of Senator Grisanti and the New York State Senate for passing both bills. It is now time for the Assembly to bring both of these bills up for a vote."

**Hannya Boulos Executive Director of Buffalo ReformEd:** "Senator Grisanti recognizes the importance of increasing our community's input into the way our schools are governed and funded. This legislation will increase voter turnout in school board elections, decrease the impact of special interests in board elections, and give parents and community members a real seat at the table."

The 2013 legislative session is scheduled to end on Thursday, June 20. If these bills are not passed by then, the legislation would need to be re-introduced in 2014.

“I urge my constituents to call, e-mail and write letters so that their representatives in the Assembly understand how important this is to our children’s future,” said Grisanti. “We need this legislation passed before the State Legislature’s session calendar ends for 2013. Let them know you want action. We need the Assembly to bring the two bills to the floor and put it up for a vote.”