



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

Teacher Evaluation Comment Period Now Open

RICH FUNKE April 21, 2015

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**

Dear Neighbor,

Recently, I helped to pass my first Budget as State Senator for the 55th District, one that includes important provisions to create jobs, control taxes, clean-up Albany, and invest in our community. Yet most of the public discussion has been dominated by one issue: Education.

It's important to understand that the root of any good budget is compromise, and any good compromise means that not everyone will get everything they want. That's certainly the case with education in this Budget, which strikes a bipartisan consensus between two extremes. On one side, the Governor attempted to force unfair, one size-fits-all evaluations on teachers with a heavy hand. On the other side, some activists entrenched to resist any change at all. That's no way to get things done for our schools or our students.

Fortunately, the 2015-16 Budget embraces compromise by rejecting the Governor's unfair teacher evaluation proposals and puts the issue in the hands of the State Education Department (SED), with an eye toward reducing testing. As part of that process, the Budget calls for SED to accept input from teachers and parents and make recommendations on a teacher evaluation package for consideration by the Board of Regents, which is consistent

with existing State law.

It's important to know that the SED public comment period is now open and that you can submit your comments, questions, or concerns for the official record by email to Eval2015@nysed.gov. We also anticipate that the draft evaluation report will be announced at the next Board of Regents meeting on May 18 and 19th, whereafter the public comment period will remain open for additional feedback on the new draft proposal.

After taking dozens of meetings with parents, teachers, administrators, and teachers union representatives in the run-up to the Budget, I know that many feel strongly about the evaluation issue – and now's the time to make your voice heard.

I will be sure to update you on any new developments as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Rich Funke