



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## BACK TO SCHOOL BRINGS MORE THAN A CHANGE OF SEASON

PATTY RITCHIE August 31, 2011

With the chill in the air at night, you can tell that the end of summer is upon us. It's a reminder for parents it's time families begin getting their children ready to go back to school.

I'd like to take this opportunity to salute our hard working teaching professionals and school staffs who returned to school this week to begin preparations for the new school year.

Too often we forget the endless preparation that goes into gearing up for a new school year. Thanks to their efforts, our schools are able to help our children learn the important skills they'll need to compete in our increasingly technological society.

We as parents sometimes wonder about the changes driving our society. Our teachers have the difficult job of helping our children master technological skills that in many cases never even existed when we were growing up.

But today's teachers manage that tough job while still providing our young people with the kind of well rounded education and citizenship skills that will make them the kind of people who can make a difference in our state and society.

As your state senator, despite the tough times facing families, our state and our nation, I've been working to help families in Central and Northern New York prepare for the new school

year. I can remember how the start of a new school year also meant that I had to buy new clothes and footwear for my children as well as school supplies and gear for extracurricular sports and activities. That's why last winter I supported a measure to eliminate the four-percent state sales tax for clothing and footwear items under \$55.

I know what it's like to scramble to get children ready to go back to school and to search the stores for supplies. I supported this tax break to reduce taxes for hard working families trying to make ends meet.

I understand how critical it is to provide children with what they need to succeed in school and in life. Every parent understands the sacrifices that are necessary and that most of us make without even blinking to provide the next generation with what they'll need to have a better life.