

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



SUSAN SERINO
41ST District

ALBANY OFFICE
ROOM 613
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2945
DISTRICT OFFICE
4254 ALBANY POST ROAD
HYDE PARK, NEW YORK 12538
(845) 229-0106
PUTNAM OFFICE
117 TOWN PARK LANE
PUTNAM VALLEY, NEW YORK 10579
(845) 528-0417

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

AGING
SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE MEMBER

CHILDREN & FAMILIES
INSURANCE

MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

April 30, 2020

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

It is my understanding that earlier this month, the Regents Chancellor and the State Education Department Interim Commissioner requested that you sign an executive order to waive the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) for Teachers and Principals this year, in light of the ongoing crisis. I would like to add my voice to this request, on behalf of countless educators I represent who have brought their concerns on this matter to my attention.

Pursuant to Executive Order 202.4, which you signed on March 16, schools across the state closed on March 18 and have not reopened since. To date, school districts have not been provided with any concrete reopening plan. Despite this, as of the writing of this letter, teachers and principals will still have to undergo the APPR this year, despite schools already being closed for nearly a month and a half and the June Regents exams being cancelled. Not only would it be impractical to review educators in the typical manner in such an atypical year, it is a looming burden on their shoulders when they are already working overtime to effectively educate our students, and provide support for parents and guardians, through this crisis.

Time and again, New Yorkers have risen to the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown our way. Our educators have gone above and beyond to find innovative ways to engage their students, overcome serious obstacles to effective remote learning, and provide holistic support for families and communities. In addition, many of our educators are also grappling with the same struggles so many other New Yorkers are currently experiencing during this crisis—many are parents themselves, have partners who have not been able to work, are caring for aging loved ones, etc.

While I understand the difficulty in committing to long-term decisions in the midst of a crisis that is continually evolving, this is an instance where we can remove this unnecessary source of stress and uncertainty for school administrators and teachers. By issuing an executive order to waive the APPR requirements for this year, you could provide desperately needed relief for countless educators throughout our state and allow them the opportunity and the flexibility to continue to come up with new and innovative ways to serve the students of New York State during these trying times.

I thank you again for your continued leadership and your efforts to provide critical relief to New Yorkers during a time when it is needed most. I urge you to immediately expand such relief to educators facing uncertainty regarding the APPR.

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Serino".

Sue Serino
New York State Senator
41st District