

# News & Notes

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www.saanys.org

## Educational Conference Board 2016-2017 State Aid Proposal



During the morning of November 9, representatives of The New York State Educational Conference Board (ECB) held a press conference in the state Capitol. The presentation was led by ECB chairman, John Yagielski, who presented the main constructs of the proposal that calls for a \$2.2 billion increase for schools. Of the proposed budget, \$1.7 billion is needed to continue current school services. In addition, \$500 million would be set for targeted funding of critical school improvement initiatives such as expanding prekindergarten access, providing sufficient support for struggling schools and English language learners, training teachers, and opening new pathways to graduation.

ECB's projection for the state increase that is necessary to continue current school services is based on information



Front: ECB Chairman John Yagielski is joined by ECB colleagues, including Jim Viola, SAANYS director of government relations, pictured in the background, in calling for at \$2.2 billion increase in state aid.

from the state Division of Budget and other outside estimates for costs such as salaries, health insurance, and pension contributions. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and average monthly CPI have remained unchanged through the first nine months of the year and therefore might limit the local tax levy under the property tax cap to approximately zero percent. For this reason, the proposed state aid increase includes \$700 million to address this short-fall for 2016-17.

Representing the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS), James Viola encouraged public support of the plan, pointing out that "...it fully addresses and ends the Gap Elimination Adjustment that was intended as a short-term fiscal adjustment and has now been in place for six years" and "...significantly advances funding of the Foundation Aid formula enacted in 2007." He also stressed that the state aid proposal is "not exces-

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### SAANYS Welcomes New Unit:

– REGION 9 –

**Binghamton Administrators and Supervisory Association**

## Government Relations Committee Meets with Elia and NYSTRS



The SAANYS Government Relations Committee convened for their fall meeting on November 5 and 6. The meeting had three segments:

1. Serving as an advisory committee to the State Education Department in regard to Academic Intervention Services.
2. Meeting with the New York State Teachers Retirement System.
3. Meeting with Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia.

### Academic Intervention Services Committee

At the September meeting of the state Board of Regents it was decided "... that a committee be established during the 2015-16 school year to examine the effectiveness of AIS and to make recommendations about revisions to AIS regulation for 2016-17." For this portion of the meeting, SED Assistant Commissioner Renee Rider met with SAANYS GRC members joined by colleagues from New York City, Buffalo, and Yonkers as well as by school administrators from other nominated school districts. A fast-paced discussion ensued regarding considerations that support the effective provision of AIS, such as the use of multiple measures; challenges to the effective provision of AIS, such as insufficient funding, lack of needed qualified teachers, and late availability of state performance data; and recommended practices, such as development through coaching and co-teaching

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## LIFT NY Virtual Learning Series



*"Brockton High demonstrates that you don't have to change the student population to get results, you have to change the conditions under which they learn."*  
Pedro Noguera

The journey of struggling Brockton High, now a "National Model School" featured in the NY Times and Newsweek, was outlined by its former principal, Sue Szachowicz, in the latest keynote webinar in this virtual learning series by LIFT NY (The Magellan Foundation, SAANYS, and NYSFSA) and the International Center for Leadership in Education.

Don't miss the next keynote webinar, "Schools that Work for Kids," presented by Eric Sheninger on December 10. As principal of New Milford High School, Sheninger oversaw the successful implementation of several sustainable change initiatives that radically transformed the learning culture at his school. Sheninger was named to the NSBA "20 to Watch" list for technology leadership in 2010.

All webinars and follow up "Deep Dive" sessions are achieved at <https://saanys.org/professional-learning/lift-ny-virtual-learning-series/> along with handouts. ■

### LEGAL BRIEFS

## SAANYS Legal Department Update on Important Litigation

There are currently several active lawsuits that may potentially impact SAANYS members. The SAANYS Legal Department is either actively involved in or monitoring these important legal matters. The following is a brief summary of several litigations that are of interest to SAANYS members.

### NYSHIP Buyout

SAANYS has reported in the past about the Department of Civil Service's rule that employers who offer health insurance through the New York State Health Insurance Plan (NYSHIP) are no longer allowed to offer a financial incentive to employees in exchange for not taking employer offered health insurance if the alternate coverage also comes from a NYSHIP plan. Such a financial incentive is commonly referred to as a buyout and is a commonly negotiated benefit in collective bargaining agreements. Both SAANYS and NYSUT were involved in active litigation on the matter on behalf of bargaining units. The SAANYS case was dismissed on a procedural violation, namely the concept that the statute of limitations commences once the rule was issued and not when the employer admittedly first notified the administrators' association of the rule. SAANYS appealed this unfair determination that associations have constructive notice of changes to regulations without having actual knowledge of the changes. The Appellate Division, Third Department, disagreed with SAANYS' interpretation that the commencement of a statute of limitations should be when the association has actual knowledge of the change in regulation. SAANYS then attempted to bring the issue to the state's highest court, the

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## Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

### It's Time to Dance Again

It's that time of year again. It's the beginning of the annual state aid to education dance. The time when any number of organizations recommend an amount of state aid that particular organization believes to be appropriate. Moreover, the timing of the recommendation is almost as important as the recommendation itself.

Most organizations are under no illusions that its recommendations will be adopted carte blanche, particularly in light of the significant number of varying recommendations that are made. Most organizations also

realize that not all aid proposals are created equal, so the goal is to have a credible recommendation early enough in the dance to hopefully influence the recommendations of those whose recommendations carry more weight than most. For example, the Board of Regents' (BOR) state aid proposal is given some deference by legislators due to the presumed expertise of the BOR, so many organizations hope to influence the aid proposal of the BOR. More important than the BOR are the "one house" bills wherein both the assembly and the senate each set out aid

proposals that are really opening salvos in the budget negotiations to come. Every interested organization hopes to influence the one house bills.

The Holy Grail, the one target of influence important beyond all others, and most difficult to influence, is the governor's proposed budget. I believe the governor's staff reviews the recommendations of many organizations, but does not acknowledge the influence of any of them.

On November 9, the Educational Conference Board (ECB), of which SAANYS is a member, released its 2016-17 school finance report which includes its request for an increase of \$2.2 billion in state aid to education over last year [see story on page 1]. A copy of the report is also available at [www.saanys.org](http://www.saanys.org). Some of the public

reaction was predictable. Why more? Don't we give schools enough already? Like many things, the devil is in the details.

The 2008 recession prompted a freeze to foundation aid. Despite recent foundation aid increases, the state is over \$4 billion behind the original foundation aid schedule, and the aid formula itself does not reflect the costs of imposed accountability systems, standards and curricula updates, and the changing needs of our students. Further, according to the New York State School Boards Association, from 2010-2011 through 2013-2014 the Gap Elimination Adjustment has reduced state aid to schools by nearly \$8.5 billion, an average of \$3.1 million per district over each of those four years. After partial aid restorations, it is estimated that

\$434 million of re-purposed school aid is still owed to schools.

New York's tax cap law makes it difficult to turn to local taxpayers to fund the gap even when a majority would want to. A 60 percent super majority is required to pierce the cap, and the tax cap formula, which is based on changes to the CPI, today results in a zero percent tax cap for 2016-2017 because the CPI is essentially unchanged from a year ago. The limited ability of districts to raise increased revenue makes the level of state aid more important than ever.

There are months to go before the 2016-2017 level of state aid to schools is established, but the dance has begun, and it promises to be an intense one. ■

## Closing the Circle on Tech in Schools – There's an App for That!

Sponsor Opinion piece by Scott B. Crowder, CEO Educational Vistas, Inc.

Yes, new cell phone apps are being used in schools to effectively bridge the gap between district websites/parent portals and "smart phones." Since the 1980s, computer technology and cellular telephones have been getting smaller and much more powerful. For computers this trend continues but, with the introduction of the Apple

iPhone, things started to change in terms of cell phone size and purpose.

They have gotten bigger in order to meet the demands of younger and tech-savvy millennials. Today, over 60 percent of that demographic gets their news from Facebook and other online (social) media providers. A full 75 percent of them use their smart phones to look

something up. GenX'ers come in at 51 percent and even 40 percent of baby boomers use the internet for news and information.

For many, the cell phone is now a part of who they are and how they communicate and interact with the world. This brings us to phone apps and their effective use in schools. District websites run the gamut from well-designed and organized to very difficult to navigate. These new phone apps link to your district and school web content and "re-imagine" them in ways that even adaptive web design (AWD) and responsive web design (RWD) cannot.

The cell phone apps now

available are customized for each district's/school's website(s) and reorganize all content in powerful ways that truly make the phone an extension and effective platform for accessing all available information. The text is readable and single-click buttons take the user to any area selected. It all happens quickly, efficiently, and for the first time... naturally. Every stakeholder in the district from administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the general public may download your personalized app from an "app store" and they then

become plugged-in to your schools on the device that they prefer to use.

Beyond the benefits of accessing website information on smart phones, you may create custom groups of users and communicate directly to them individually or as a whole. These apps also link directly to Facebook and other social media sites to become seamlessly connected to all aspects of your educational entity. Information is power and this technology empowers schools and communities. ■

*The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinion or philosophy of the School Administrators Association of New York State.*

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## Check Out the New SAANYS Facebook Page!



Stay up to date on all SAANYS news and events, as well as education news from around the state. Scan the QR code to the left, to like us on Facebook. ■

# CAPITAL UPDATE

## At the November Meeting of the State Board of Regents

The Board of Regents convened in Albany on November 16 and 17. Highlights of the meeting are below.

### State Aid

Regent James Tallon and Director Brian Cechnicki presented conceptual highlights of SED's state aid budget proposal for 2016-17. SED plans to recommend an overall budget increase of \$2.4 billion, including the following:

- \$2.1 billion for formula aids prioritized to increase Foundation Aid (with full phase-in targeted for 2018-19) and restore the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA).
- \$300 million in additional investments including:
  - Expanding universal prekindergarten
  - Support for struggling schools
  - Education of English language learners
  - Family and community engagement

### Part 83 Good Moral Character Proceedings

The SED Office of Higher Education presented an item that would "streamline" Part 83 procedures by discontinuing the option for practicing teachers and school administrators (or applicant) to select a hearing panel, and would thereby require that all **Part 83 hearings be conducted before a single hearing officer**. The item, jointly presented by Deputy Commissioner John D'Agati and Director Deborah Marriott, would also expand the State Education Department's authority to remand Part 83 decisions for reconsideration when SED disagrees with rendered decisions. Upon learning of the item the day before the Regents meeting, SAANYS sent letters of opposition to all members of the Board of Regents and to Commissioner MaryEllen Elia – and apparently the letter was successful. Regent Charles Bendit asked whether appropriate stakeholders were provided an opportunity to opine on doing away with the panels. Regents Anthony Bottar, Judith Johnson, Betty Rosa, and Lester Young each asked why this change is being proposed. Regent Bottar said, "panels have served well" and Regent Young said, "I haven't heard anything to suggest this needs to be changed." When Ms. Marriott explained that 25 percent of cases request a panel rather than a single hearing officer, Regent Rosa said, "A choice is a choice." Regents Bottar and Bendit led other board members in roundly rejecting SED's proposal to post the item for public comment. They instead directed that SED meet with SAANYS and other stakeholders. The item will be revised and scheduled for discussion again in December.

### Special Education

Assistant Commissioner James DeLorenzo and Coordinator Patricia Geary presented information regarding the requirement to place each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment (LRE). They stressed that special education is a service, not a place; and that the LRE requirement applies to school age and preschool

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## Government Relations Committee Meets with Elia and NYSTRS

*continued from page 1*

approaches. It was interesting to note that approximately 80 percent of schools represented at the meeting implemented a Response to Intervention (RTI) model, rather than an AIS model. Many members pointed out that there is not one AIS model, and that it is implemented differently school-to-school. GRC member Joseph Rainis, from Lynbrook High School, summed it up well by saying: "AIS is like going to the emergency room, but RTI is like going for treatment." Assistant Commissioner Rider was impressed with the quality and quantity of information shared at the meeting, and plans to meet again with a number of participants to continue the discussion and develop recommendations.

### New York State Teachers Retirement System

SAANYS met with leadership of NYSTRS in their Albany office building. In August, the Retirement Board adopted a 2015-16 Employer Contribution Rate (ECR) of 13.26 percent of payroll, which is a significant decrease from the 17.53 percent rate set for the prior year. Based on preliminary results from the June 30, 2015 actuarial valuation, an ECR between 11.5 percent and 12 percent is projected for 2016-17. An administrative bulletin will be issued in February 2016 with a more precise ECR estimate.

During the NYSTRS meeting, detailed information was provided in regard to the calculation of pension amounts and the roles and functions of the NYSTRS Board of Trustees. Information was also provided in regard to **two legislative bills that SAANYS plans to support:**

- Bill 16-1: This bill would extend the minimum retirement allowance provided to long-standing retired members of NYSTRS who retired prior to July 1, 1980 and increase the minimum retirement allowance of such retirees to \$550 per year of New York State service up to a 35-year maximum of \$19,250.
- Bill 16-2: This bill would permit employers participating in the New York State Teachers' Retirement System to establish a retirement contribution reserve fund.

### Commissioner MaryEllen Elia

The New York State Education Department is completing reviews of virtually all planks of the education reforms that emanated from the Race to the Top program. SAANYS has nominated representatives to serve on committees in regard to common core-aligned Regents

*continued on page 7*

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For more information regarding the SAANYS legislative agenda, the New York State Board of Regents, the Educational Conference Board, or other government relations concerns, contact James Viola, SAANYS director of government relations, at [JViola@saanys.org](mailto:JViola@saanys.org).

## 2015 CALENDAR



National Native American Heritage Month

Dec 6-14 Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)

Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day

Dec 10 Emily Dickinson's Birthday

Dec 15 Bill of Rights Day

Dec 16 Boston Tea Party Anniversary

Dec 17 Anniversary of Wright Brothers' Flight

Dec 21 First Day of Winter

Dec 25 Christmas

Dec 26-Jan 1 Kwanzaa

Dec 29 Wounded Knee Massacre Anniversary



Jan 1 New Year's Day

Jan 1 Emancipation Proclamation Anniversary

Jan 17 World Religion Day

Jan 18 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Observance

Jan 19 Robert E. Lee's Birthday

Jan 28 Christa McAuliffe Day

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SAANYS New York State



# SAANYS Professional Development Update



## Classroom Observations

For information on any SAANYS professional development event, contact Karen Bronson at [KBronson@saanys.org](mailto:KBronson@saanys.org).

I was recently in a district doing practice with the administrative team designed to hone classroom observation skills. One thing that is crystal clear is how much we have all learned about teacher observation over the last three or four years. Becoming increasingly familiar with the rubrics and gaining a true understanding

of the meaning of evidence-based observation is truly a learning process that takes time. There is little question that despite all of the drama over the last few years, most would agree that the observation process itself, apart from the unfortunate focus on points and scores, is light years ahead of where we were.

Unlike a few years ago, when the rubrics were used for the first time in many districts, many of our colleagues are now seasoned evaluators who are well suited to advise new administrators who are just beginning as classroom observers. With this in mind, I asked the “seasoned” attendees at the workshop what they would share with new administrators as far as the “do’s and don’ts” of classroom observation now that they have been down the road a few years and gained valuable experience. Here are some of their responses:

### DO:

- Stick to the facts.
- Focus on student centered learning.
- Encourage risks.
- Know the rubric and keep learning more about it.
- Look for change and improvement.
- Observe STUDENTS as well as teachers.
- Make sure as many of your comments start with “student(s)” as they do with “teacher.”
- Move around the room so you know what’s going on in groups.
- Expect progress.
- Keep opinions to yourself.
- Keep the conversation focused on the observation period.
- Formulate your QUESTIONS ahead of the post observation conference.
- Begin by sharing specific evidence-based positives from the lesson.
- Listen first and try to draw reflection from the teacher.
- Demonstrate support and coaching strategies.
- Have resources to go along with recommendations.

### DON'T:

- Dominate the conversation: listen!
- Back down from the plan: don’t avoid accountability.
- Over-write the observation.
- Hold the post conference meeting in your office.
- Make it personal.
- Act like you know it all.
- Lose sleep over it!

It’s clear to see how much we have all learned. Improving inter-rater reliability within administrative teams is at the top of many lists as the greatest need to continue to practice, along with building skills around effective feedback about instruction. Please let me know if **SAANYS can provide some opportunities within your district for your administrative team to practice observation skills** and engage in authentic practice around inter-rater reliability.

On another note, here are a few links that I have come across that I think you will enjoy learning more about. The second two, Kahoot and Plickers, were recommended by principals in a recent workshop as ones to share with your teachers asap:

- George Couros: Blog: The Principal of Change: Stories of Learning and Leading. <http://georgecouros.ca/blog/>
- Kahoot: Make learning awesome - create, play, and share learning games for every subject and age level for free. <https://getkahoot.com>
- Plickers: A powerfully simple tool that lets teachers collect real-time formative assessment data without the need for student devices. <https://www.plickers.com> ■

# PLANNING FOR THE EARLY-MID CAREER ADMINISTRATOR

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## Google CAMP

- December 14, 2015**  
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355 Harlem Road  
West Seneca, NY 14224
- January 29, 2016**  
Central Valley CSD  
111 Frederick Street  
Ilion, NY 13357
- March 16, 2016**  
Minisink Valley CSD  
2230 US-6  
Slate Hill, NY 10973

### Schedule for the Day

- 8:00 am - 8:30 am Registration
- 8:30 am - 8:45 am Opening
- 8:45 am - 9:00 am Session Presentation
- 9:05 am - 9:50 am Session 1
- 10:00 am - 10:45 am Session 2
- 10:45 am - 11:00 am Coffee break
- 11:10 am - 11:45 am Session 3
- 12:00 Noon - 12:45 pm Lunch
- 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Session 4
- 1:50 pm - 2:35 pm Session 5
- 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm App Smackdown | Closing Remarks

### Topics include but are not limited to:

1. Chromebooks in the Classroom
2. Google Apps Management
3. Google + Hangouts
4. Understanding Google Classroom
5. Going Google
6. Customizing Chrome to make your life awesome!
7. Google Scripts
8. Google Apps for Mobile Devices
9. Deep Dive with Drive
10. Google App Smackdown

### What is an Edcamp Format?

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# Is Your District Subject to a “A-133 Single Audit”?



In the coming weeks and months, some school districts in

New York State will receive phone calls and letters from the NYS Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services (DHSES) regarding a federal requirement known as an “A-133 Single Audit.” Jurisdictions expending significant Federal funds (\$750,000; \$500,000 prior to December 2014) are subject to the requirement. A-133 applies to expenditure of ALL federal funds including FEMA disaster recovery programs. The wide-spread damage caused by storms Irene, Lee, and Sandy in particular, mean that many school districts are using these programs for the first time.

“All funding sources” means that the expenditure threshold is not based on just the Disaster Public Assistance funds awarded. The sub-recipient must add up all of their expenditures from federal funding sources whether they are received directly from a federal agency or passed-through a state agency (i.e. – DHSES, Labor, DOT, State Education Dept., etc.) and if the sum of these expenditures is \$500,000 or more (for fiscal years beginning on or after 12/26/2014, the sum is \$750,000 or more), a single audit must be conducted.

As the administrator of FEMA funding, DHSES must ensure compliance with this rule. DHSES has advised SAANYS that it has not received information from a number of districts.

For further information, please contact the DHSES at (518) 242-5072 or e-mail [FMU@dhses.ny.gov](mailto:FMU@dhses.ny.gov). ■

# Report: Student Test Anxiety Greater on State than Local Exams



Joint School Board-School Psychologist Research Report Examines Test Anxiety

Report finds student test anxiety greater on state than local exams; study also finds adults have a significant impact on student test anxiety.

About three-quarters (76 percent) of school psychologists in New York say their students experience greater anxiety over state tests than for local assessments, according to a new research report issued jointly today by the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) and the New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP).

Test anxiety appears to physically affect a minority of students overall. When asked what percentage of students in their caseload exhibited adverse physical symptoms during the most recent state tests, school psychologists most often said that fewer than half experienced adverse physical symptoms. This is consistent with previous research studies, which found that about 25 percent of students experience test anxiety, with a range of 10 to 40 percent of students.

One explanation for the increased anxiety is the implementation of exams linked to the state’s new learning standards. Six in 10 school psychologists say the level of anxiety has increased since the state aligned its grades 3-8 assessments with the Common Core Learning Standards.

The report found that test anxiety is more common at the elementary levels, and that students displayed “internalized” symptoms of test anxiety – such as excessive worry and withdrawal – about twice as often as “externalized” symptoms, such as heightened levels of irritability, frustration, and acting out.

The report, entitled “Anxious for Success: High Anxiety in New York’s Schools,” is based on a survey of school psychologists conducted in September 2015. A total of 1,672 school psychologists were asked to respond to the survey, and 222 submitted completed responses, for a response rate of 13.2 percent. ■

# Amityville Boys Varsity Soccer Team Named State Champions



Congratulations to the Amityville Union Free School District boys varsity soccer team for claiming the title of Class “A” State Champions (in addition to the Suffolk Class “A” championship and the Long Island Class “A” championship)! Kudos to SAANYS member and Amityville Director of Athletics, Physical Education, and Health Ted Tsirigotis for his leadership and support of this outstanding effort. ■

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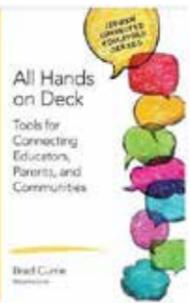
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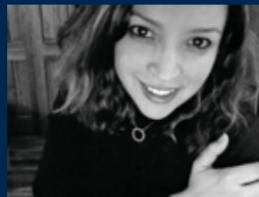
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# LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message From  
Jennifer Carlson,  
SAANYS Deputy General Counsel  
JCarlson@saanys.org



## SAANYS Legal Department Update on Important Litigation

*continued from page 1*

Court of Appeals, which declined to hear the issue.

But hope is not lost on the buyout issue. NYSUT's cases were heard by a different judge, who ruled that the prohibition on the buyback was impermissible as a matter of law. The state appealed this decision and oral arguments were heard in October 2015. A decision is anticipated in the next few months and SAANYS will keep its members advised on this issue that impacts many members.

### Anti-Tenure Litigation

As SAANYS has reported in the past, there is a group of parents from New York City, Albany, and Rochester who have

brought a lawsuit on behalf of their children in Supreme Court, Richmond County, alleging that the statutes concerning tenure, layoff and recall rights, APPR, and 3020-a due process rights are denying their children to the constitutional right to a "sound basic education." The theory behind this lawsuit is that these challenged statutes are making it too easy for ineffective educators to receive tenure and making it too difficult for school districts to get rid of ineffective older educators, sometimes to the detriment of effective newer educators.

SAANYS, on behalf of two principals, was the only administrative group to intervene as a defendant in

this litigation and become a party in order to protect the rights of administrators. Last January, oral arguments were heard on the defendants' motions to dismiss the case for failure to state a cause of action. In March 2015, the court determined that the plaintiffs sufficiently stated a cause of action and that the case should continue.

Subsequent to that decision, the laws were radically changed by the legislature, including issuing the new APPR system. In response, the defendants, including SAANYS, filed a new motion, seeking to have the case dismissed on the basis that the new versions of the challenged statutes made the case moot. The court recently issued a decision that the changes in the laws were minimal and the matter should proceed. It did recognize that the defendants are going to appeal both decisions in this case and have put a hold on the case until the Appellate Division issues a decision.

SAANYS and the other defendants are currently preparing their appeals for submission to the Ap-

pellate Division by the end of December. SAANYS will continue to keep members apprised of any developments in this important matter.

*SAANYS, on behalf of two principals, was the only administrative group to intervene as a defendant in this litigation and become a party in order to protect the rights of administrators.*

constitutionally guaranteed right to a sound basic education and that such non-compliance must be fully corrected by the 2016-2017 school year, either through implementation of the statutory funding formulas or through the development of a new educational finance system. Oral arguments on this motion took place on November 4, 2015. SAANYS is eagerly awaiting the

decision on this matter and will inform everyone promptly of the developments.

If you have questions on these, or any other, cases, please contact the SAANYS legal department and we will be happy to discuss these matters. ■

### Educational Funding Litigation

SAANYS is also closely monitoring the pending case of *New Yorkers for Students' Educational Rights (NYSER) v. State of New York*. In that matter, NYSER, a group of parents from throughout New York State, are alleging that New York State has failed to implement the educational funding reforms it adopted in 2008. Plaintiffs in this case have filed a motion for summary judgment, seeking a judicial declaration that the state's continuing failure to apply its own funding reforms is denying the students of this state to their



Jennifer Carlson,  
SAANYS Deputy General  
Counsel

**2 Awards Program**

SAANYS is proud to honor many exceptional New York State administrators with an annual awards program. This program was established to recognize educators who demonstrate outstanding leadership skills and have made exceptional contributions to the educational process.

For a complete list of the awards and criteria, as well as nomination forms, go to: [www.saanys.org/about-us/awards](http://www.saanys.org/about-us/awards).

For additional information, contact Susan Jaronski at [SJaronski@saanys.org](mailto:SJaronski@saanys.org)

**Application Deadline:  
January 31, 2016**

### Contract Settlements

NOTICE: Please send copies of your unit's settlements in the event that SAANYS did not negotiate the contract. This information is important and is helpful to fellow SAANYS members.

### Administrators Association of Plainedge, Region 2

After one and one-half years of bargaining, including a declaration of impasse, mediation, and fact finding, the negotiating team of Vito Mannino, Tony DeRiso, and Emily O'Brien agreed to a four-year contract with annual salary increases of 1.75 percent for each of four years. The unit enjoys a unique salary schedule in which every individual in the same title gets paid the same amount regardless of years of service in the district. Such a schedule benefits new employees who start at a much higher salary than would be typically found. What was significant during bargaining was that while the union was willing to consider changing the structure, the district's proposals were economically unsatisfactory. Eventually, the team rejected the proposal and accepted the deal that was ultimately negotiated. ■

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During normal business hours, call 518-782-0600 to speak with a SAANYS attorney.

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# Government Relations Committee Meets with Elia and NYSTRS

*continued from page 3*

examinations, assessments for students in grades three to eight, and the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Reviews are also being completed for the annual professional performance review (APPR) system by members of the Board of Regents; and, as described above, Assistant Commissioner Rider is leading a review of academic intervention services.

During her meeting with the GRC, Commissioner Elia focused most intently upon the common core standards survey that was available to communities at [www.NYSED.gov](http://www.NYSED.gov), which closed at the end of November. She asked for the assistance of school administrators to “get people to the common core survey, even for one grade level or for one content area.” She said that feedback is needed for the “2000 standards” and that as of that time 17,000 individuals looked at the survey and 3,500 individuals provided feedback. GRC members described actions taken by their respective school districts to encourage participation in the survey, but said that the survey is overwhelming for most parents and for some educators as well. For this reason, the SAANYS members suggested that focus groups may be formed to discuss the common core standards in detail according to grade levels and/or content areas.

In terms of annual professional performance reviews, **the commissioner posited that “SLOs are a problem,”** she recognized field concerns regarding “the matrix” and the approximately equal weighting of student performance and educator observation; and she also indicated that the department is reviewing the methodology used to generate state-developed growth scores. She stated her conviction that student performance will remain an APPR criterion; furthermore raising the idea of a possible three-year rolling average for student performance calculations, but rejecting the suggestion to use student portfolios.

Christopher Richardt, a principal from the Hampton Bays High School was invited by SAANYS to present information regarding programmatic and fiscal considerations associated with **increasing numbers of English language learners that must receive services** pursuant to the new Part 154 requirements; and the programmatic and accountability considerations associated with students arriving in the United States near the end of their eligibility for a free public education. On the behalf of 35 Long Island school districts he presented data regarding increasing student counts along with their staffing, budget, and program implications. Deputy Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green did not feel that a CDOS ESEA Waiver request would succeed, but pointed out that her office is currently working with the US Department of Education to develop different accountability procedures for students with interrupted education. She also pointed out that for ELL students it is permissible to re-assign their cohort and thereby gain an additional year. Assistant Commissioner Ira Schwartz pointed out that federal regulations require that students be assessed in “language arts” (not necessarily English language arts) in grades three to eight. SED is planning to ask the legislature for funds to develop a Spanish language arts assessment and is partnering with three other states in this regard. Finally, Assistant Commissioner Lissette Colon-Collins indicated to Mr. Richardt her intention to meet with him and his colleagues, on Long Island, to discuss these issues further. ■

# Board of Regents

*continued from page 3*

students with disabilities. The PowerPoint document used for the presentation includes statewide and regional data summaries that may be helpful for local level benchmarking.

## National External Diploma

Deputy Commissioner Kevin Smith presented information regarding the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) – a program that leads to a local high school diploma through the demonstration of 70 competencies. Eight states currently participate in this program. Although the program is normed for individuals 18 years of age or older, New York State currently restricts participation to adults who are at least 21 years of age and receive a minimum score of 9.0 (i.e., grade 9) on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). The deputy commissioner explained that the program is suited to individuals who do not perform well on standardized tests, and that approximately half of the participants in this program formerly had individualized education programs (IEPs). Commissioner Elia expressed that this program may potentially be used as another high school graduation pathway for students with disabilities.

The letter sent by SAANYS in regard to contemplated revisions of Part 83 requirements is posted on the SAANYS website. Also posted on the SAANYS website is the PowerPoint presentation containing statistical breakouts pertaining to Least Restrictive Environment. ■

## Educational Conference Board

*continued from page 1*

sive and not extravagant” but is necessary for New York State schools and New York State as a whole to meet the constitutional obligation to provide quality educational services to all students.

“The state’s financial condition is in markedly better shape today than in previous years,” Chairman Yagielski said. “We believe this can be a period of great progress, and the recommendations in the report provide a road-map for how the state can lead the way.”

The New York State Education Conference Board is comprised of the Conference of Big 5 School Districts, New York State Association of School Business Officials, New York State Council of School Superintendents, New York State PTA, New York State School Boards Association, New York State United Teachers, and SAANYS.

The ECB report budget proposal is posted on the SAANYS website. ■



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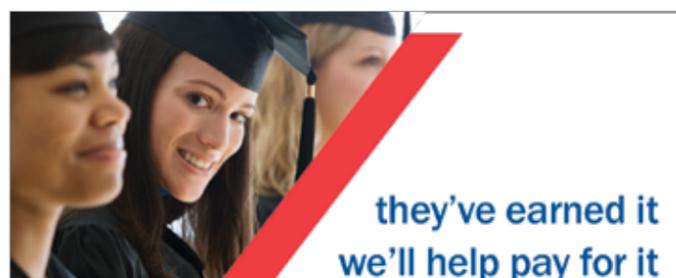
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