Governor Delivers State of the State and Executive Budget

On January 21, Governor Cuomo presented his State of the State address and his recommended executive budget, or as he refers to it, the “2015 opportunity agenda.” In regard to education, the governor indicated that all the recommendations submitted to him by Regents Chancellor Tisch and Acting Education Commissioner Berlin should be implemented. That letter may be found on the SAANYS website. However, the governor went on to make a number of proposals, some of which are not entirely consistent with the letter from SED. A summary is below, as well as in the executive director column on page 2.

SAANYS Reactions

In response to budget proposals, SAANYS delivered testimony before a joint meeting of the legislature on February 3. The testimony provides a comprehensive look at SAANYS’ responses to the governor’s budget proposals and official positions on a number of issues. That document can be found on the homepage at saanys.org.

Summary

Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPRs)

Fifty percent of the APPR evaluation will be based on the state score and the remaining 50 percent shall be based on observations. Teachers must receive an effective score in both subcomponents in order to receive an overall rating of effective or highly effective.

A teacher could be removed after two ineffective ratings,

continued on page 2

Financial Planning for Life Workshop

SAANYS kicks off the “Financial Planning for Life Workshop” series, presented by NYSTRS and AXA, with a very successful workshop in Woodbury, Long Island. See the events section on page 4 for upcoming locations and more details.

ECB Groups Call on Governor to Release School Aid Runs

The New York State Educational Conference Board (ECB) – comprised of the seven leading educational organizations representing parents, teachers, school-related professionals, school business officials, building administrators, superintendents, and school boards – called upon the state to immediately release a 2015-16 state aid proposal and corresponding school aid runs allocating the approximate $1.1 billion increase as presented by the governor. The following statement was issued:

It is unprecedented for the state to withhold the release of executive budget aid runs. These aid runs are not simply a state budget “tradition,” they are necessary and indeed critical to the local budget development process for hundreds of school districts across the state.

Just like at the state level, the budget process begins well before any voting deadlines. All stakeholders in the school district community – including taxpayers, parents, teachers, students, school boards, and other school leaders – play an important role. Without projected aid runs, school districts cannot responsibly develop their budgets or adequately involve our communities in the process.

In fact, the property tax cap, first proposed and enacted by the state in 2011, requires school districts to utilize the executive budget aid runs that are currently being withheld to formulate a tax cap calculation. Under the tax cap law, school districts are required to submit a “2016 Proposed Levy” to the state by March 1 in order to be considered for funds.

continued on page 2

Legal Briefs

A New Year Has Prospects

The new year ushers in a series of meetings for some of the twelve SAANYS regional organizations. Members of SAANYS counsel’s office will be attending meetings in part to update the regions on changes that could affect upcoming local bargaining unit negotiations with their various employers. However, much of the information discussed will invariably be relevant to those units and their members who are not expected to be involved in collective negotiations this year.

Much of the discussions will involve such im- peratives as effective preparation for collective negotiations, the importance of planning ahead in anticipation of potential occurrences at the negotiating table, and setting firm rules of conduct and protocol so as to facilitate smooth negotiations as possible. A by-product of these general topics is often some detail about changes in the law that effect particular items in negotiations.

For example, acknowledgment of the current economic and political climate at these meetings will lead to discussion about how to meet the goals of unit negotiators in terms of financial gains for their current active members. The conversa- tion will turn to creative methods being employed on certain topics such as taxable and non-taxable fringe benefits. Of interest to most units are those related to paying for health care above and beyond basic insurance coverage, including flex spending accounts, health reim- bursement arrangements, health savings accounts, and medical savings accounts, all of which share much of the same goals but have nuanced differ- ences to meet differing conditions.
like to consider myself a counterreformable person not given to hyperbole. I respect those who strike me as considered thinkers who employ reason to challenges without resort to emotional responses. Despite my best efforts to find logic in the governor’s budget proposals relating to education, the only thing I can find is unadulterated hostility directed at public education.

I don’t know whether the governor is more interested in punishing NYSUT due to their famously contentious relationship, or finding funding for the hedge fund billionaires that donate vast sums to the governor.

The underlying premise is that our schools are in crisis, despite following a teacher and principal evaluation system, at least in part, of the governor’s creation. For a far more measured and realistic look at the state of education in New York, see the 1/23/15 article by Kate Taylor in the New York Times, which appeared on page A14 of the 1/24 NY print edition. Chancellor Tisch and Acting Commissioner Regier dutifully sent a twenty page response to the governor. In his State of the State address, the governor said he was adopting the Tisch/Berlin recommendations (whether these recommendations were supported by other Regents is currently an open question), but such adoption must have been conceptual only, as the content of the governor’s budget bill goes beyond the Tisch/Berlin recommendations. I suspect this was done so that the governor can say he has SED support for his changes. It also provides the governor with a place to point to, when if these proposals are enacted, the impact of these changes manifest themselves in narrowed curriculum, stricter standards of student work, unfairly fired staff, financially strapped districts, and the inevitable public pushback.

The governor has positioned SED to have accountability for his changes. Some of those proposed changes are as follows:

- Increase the weight of the state-developed growth measures of other comparable measures (e.g., student learning objectives) given to teachers and principals from 20 percent to 50 percent, despite the fact that many school boards, superintendents, the Value-Added Research Center at the University of Wisconsin, the American Education Research Association, and the American Statistical Association all question the use of SED’s data for high stakes purposes.

Despite these doubts, the governor agrees the very same test results that are not worthy for placement on student records may be relied upon to fire educators.

- Eliminate local means (with the exception of the local component) and have the remaining 50 percent of a teacher’s and a principal’s evaluation result from observation in a bifurcated manner. For a teacher, AT LEAST 35 percent of the remaining 50 percent would be from “in-dependent observers” outside of the building or district. This change, in addition to raising significant issues with respect to cost, scheduling, capacity, inter-rater reliability...also encroaches on the right of administrators to make decisions with the guidance of the building principal or district. This change, in addition to raising significant issues with respect to cost, scheduling, capacity, inter-rater reliability...also encroaches on the right of administrators to make decisions with the guidance of the building principal or district. This change, in addition to raising significant issues with respect to cost, scheduling, capacity, inter-rater reliability...also encroaches on the right of administrators to make decisions with the guidance of the building principal or district. This change, in addition to raising significant issues with respect to cost, scheduling, capacity, inter-rater reliability...also encroaches on the right of administrators to make decisions with the guidance of the building principal or district. This change, in addition to raising significant issues with respect to cost, scheduling, capacity, inter-rater reliability...also encroaches on the right of administrators to make decisions with the guidance of the building principal or district.

School districts are given the approximate $1.1 billion school aid increment in his State of the State address. For school districts, until that is done, the executive budget is simply incomplete.

This is not a matter of politics or even a policy debate. This is a matter of basic government function and an informed decision making process for our communities. School districts should not be held hostage in this process. The current situation centers on chaotic and dysfunctional. The governor should release a school aid proposal and school aid runs without delay.

The budget bills also do not include any language regarding how any potential state aid would be distributed. Even if a school district had the time and capability to decipher the state’s traditionally complex school aid formula, they would still not be able to estimate their aid based on the information missing from the executive proposal. We call on the governor to amend his executive budget proposal to include a state aid proposal that allocates and distributes to school districts the approximate $1.1 billion school aid increment in his State of the State address. For school districts, until that is done, the executive budget is simply incomplete.

This is not a matter of politics or even a policy debate. This is a matter of basic government function and an informed decision making process for our communities. School districts should not be held hostage in this process. The current situation centers on chaotic and dysfunctional. The governor should release a school aid proposal and school aid runs without delay.

The rubric used by the SED for determining the principal’s overall rating is not subject to CBA negotiations and will be selected by the outside observer. Prior to this budget, no county or school district could have different observers utilizing different rubrics and therefore be compared to one another.

The governor’s proposal does not address any rubric(s) to be used for school observations.

- Extend the probationary period to five consecutive years for receiving an overall rating of effective or highly effective; ratings that would be unattainable as a matter of law in any year a teacher or principal received an ineffective in either of the two subordinate domains. Such developing or ineffective overall rating resets the probationary period to five years.

Over time this will likely result in a predominately probationary workforce of which members may be dismissed on a whim.

- A student may not be instructed for more than consecutive years by two teachers in the same school district. Not a single member of whom has a current contractual effective overall rating. Consider the scheduling and hiring implications of that one for a moment.

SED may put failing schools into receive school districts against a receiver with the authority of the superintendent and the board of education, and have the authority to modify the budget, curriculum, and program offerings and CBA’s.

- Sharply increase charter schools, support mayoral control of boards, school vouchers, and incentivize regionalization.

There’s more, but you get the drift. It seems more like an emotion-based attack, and not a well-considered effort to improve education.

Not a single member of the Educational Conference Board (ECB) or the Big 5, NYASBO, NYVSU, NYSSBA, NYSOS, SAA-NYS was asked to react to these proposals before they were released. We made it to know the extent of the professional endorsement of the authors.
The Issue

SAANYS Says …

State Aid
The proposed school aid increase is insufficient. SAANYS recommends an increase of $1.9 billion in order to more adequately support school districts in implementing the many mandates associated with the state education reform agenda. An increase of $1.2 billion is essential in order to maintain current programs and services.

Gap Elimination Adjustment & Foundation Aid
SAANYS recommends that the Gap Elimination Adjustment be phased out. Consistent with SED’s recommendation, SAANYS supports the allocation of $597 million directed to GEA restoration and $526 million directed to Foundation Aid so that school districts will benefit.

Property Tax Cap
SAANYS recommends that the property tax cap be discontinued in favor of a circuit breaker tax relief system.

Investment Incentives Tax Credit
SAANYS opposes this proposal completely.

English Language Learners
SAANYS recommends a .20 weighting for the increase of each LEP enrolled student, without any trigger.

Unaccompanied Minors
SAANYS recommends an immediate current year allocation of $10 million to school districts that had substantial spikes in enrollment and the re-establishment of growth aid to address future spikes.

APPR
SAANYS adamantly opposes the governor’s proposed revisions of the state APPR system. SAANYS and all other organizations comprising the Educational Conference Board have, since 2012, recommended a formal independent evaluation of the state APPR system by a competent entity that is neither employed by, nor affiliated with, the State Education Department.

Probation and Tenure
The governor’s proposal seeks to keep principals and teachers in probationary status for as long as possible and to make clear that districts have authority to ‘dismiss probationary teachers at any time for any reason (performance or otherwise).’ The governor’s proposal provides credible evidence as to why tenure is absolutely necessary.

Failing Schools and Districts
SAANYS opposes the governor’s proposal to appoint to each failing school or failing district a “revisor.” Instead, SAANYS recommends the joint selection of a school or school district coach.

Charter Schools
There is no compelling data-based rationale for wanting to increase the number of charter schools. SAANYS opposes the expansion of charter schools.

Universal Prekindergarten
SAANYS recommends that the $25 million proposed to expand prekindergarten to three-year-old students be redirected to programs for students four years of age. Equitable access to all eligible four-year-old children to quality prekindergarten programs should be in place before expanding the program to children who are three years of age.

Transitioning From 65 to Aspirational Performance on Regents Examinations
SAANYS has actively engaged the State Education Department in regard to the transition from English and mathematics Regents examinations based on NYS 2005 standards to new Regents examinations based on common core standards. This engagement has resulted in the establishment of the local option for dual administration of both versions of the examinations, and recent actions of SED to extend the dual administration option for English language arts (to August 2015) and for Algebra I (to June 2015).

Recently, Executive Deputy Commissioner Kenneth Wagner requested SAANYS’ recommendations in regard to high school graduation requirements.

The Issue
In order to receive a Regents High School Diploma, what approach should be employed in transitioning from the current level 3 (score of 65) performance on ELA and mathematics Regents exams to level 4 (74/79) aspirational performance between now and 2022? A. Should it be done incrementally, year-by-year beginning in 2015-16? B. Should it be done using a “light switch” approach, in 2021-22?

SAANYS discussed this matter with a focus group of high school principals in western New York and with members of the Government Relations Committee and Board of Directors. Members overwhelmingly recommended Approach B.

Rationale for Approach A
The primary consideration in support of Approach A (employing two or three incremental shifts, but not every year) is that maintaining the status quo from 2014-15 to 2020-21 may reduce the sense of urgency at the local level to strengthen and enhance instruction and

continued on page 7
In an effort to assist members in achieving the 175-hour professional development requirement, SAANYS provides completion certificates for conference and seminar attendees that can be used as verification of professional development hours.

Go to www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqpdf.htm for complete information on requirements.

Google Docs to Simplify and Enhance Your Day-to-Day Work

Two Session Workshop  
February 24 and March 3

Google Certified Teacher
Carol LaRow

Instructor: Carol LaRow, Authorized Google Education Trainer/Google Certified Teacher

Session 1: Simplify Your Day-to-Day Work by Writing and Editing Online Learn the "basics" of Google DRIVE, Docs, and Folders. Write and edit online, do paperwork as you design word-processing documents. Import images, create hyperlinks, use revision history, duel with collaborators, translate within documents, use fonts, use comment features, and more.

Session 2: Learn Additional Features of Docs That Will Enhance the Documents You Create Features most users have not discovered such as visibility options, Research Tool, Contact Lists, creating PDF files, processing documents. Import images, use folders, use comment features, and more.

Cost: $75 Non-Members  
$60 SAANYS Members

REGISTER ONLINE www.saanys.org/events

February 25, 2015
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm
SAANYS Headquarters
8 Airport Park Blvd.
Latham, NY

• cookies and light refreshments
• informal get together
• cookies and light refreshments

REGISTER ONLINE www.saanys.org/events (scroll to Region 6)

Financial Planning for Life

Presented by AXA with NYSTRS
4:30 - 6:30 pm
Light refreshments
Cost: FREE

SAANYS members and spouses welcome

Join your colleagues for this comprehensive retirement planning workshop presented by a representative from NYSTRS.

AXA Presentation: AXA specializes in working with New York State employees, helping them to get the most out of their NY State Pension Plan. AXA will provide specific information about understanding the true value of your NY State pension, how to protect your pension during your working years, and what to consider in choosing a payout option, as well as examples on how to maximize your pension payments in retirement. The presentation will also discuss the importance of appropriate asset allocation within 403(b) and other retirement savings plans.

NYSTRS Presentation: Even in turbulent economic times like these, you can achieve future financial stability and security by building a strong pension at NYSTRS. This presentation will provide an overview of the important benefits NYSTRS provides, with an emphasis on issues pertaining to members approaching retirement.

Highlights include a review of the fundamental pension components such as service credit and final average salary, key retirement thresholds to heed for, the tools needed to maximize these benefits, retirement benefit options, and much more.

March 2 - Vestal
AXA Office, 4100 Old Vestal Road, Suite 105, Vestal

March 10 - Albany (Clifton Park)
AXA Office, 5 Maxwell Drive, Suite 100, Clifton Park

March 24 - Buffalo
Gannett-Binghamton, 70 Main Street, Buffalo

March 25 - Rochester
175 Corporate Woods, Suite 250, Rochester

Sponsored by AXA NYSTRS does not promote or support any products

Registration Required: www.saanys.org/events (scroll to statewide events and click on “register for this event”)
March 26, 2015
Hamilton College
198 College Hill Road, Clinton, NY

Schedule for the Day

08:00 am - 09:30 am Registration
09:30 am - 10:30 am Session 1
10:30 am - 11:00 am Session 2
11:00 am - 12:00 Noon Lunch
12:00 Noon - 1:00 pm Session 3
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Session 4
3:00 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 easier!
7. Google Scripts
8. Google Apps for Mobile Devices
9. Deep Dive with Drive
10. Google Glass Demo

What is an Edcamp Format?

An "unconference" without keynotes; everything to be discussed that day is determined by the attendees themselves on the morning of the event.
Four exciting, interactive, practical sessions will result, with a focus on all things Google.

Register early to reserve your spot!

Select registration option:
* $125 per person — includes full program, Google Chromecast, lunch, and breaks
* $99 per person — includes full program, lunch, and breaks.

All attendees are eligible for door prize drawings, to be held during the closing remarks.

Registration and Payment

Please register online at:
www.nyscate.org
or fax registration to: 518-786-3983.

\begin{itemize}
\item $99 per person — includes full program, lunch, and breaks.
\item $125 per person — includes full program, Google Chromecast, lunch, and breaks.
\end{itemize}

Name on Credit Card

For more information, contact Karen Bronson at kbronson@saanys.org.
A New Year Has Prospects... continued from page 1

financial needs. From there, the discussion will likely touch on the effect of Obamacare, also known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), on these items. In some instances for 2015, the ACA places new limits on employer contributions and changes the tax implications on these negotiated benefits.

Inasmuch questions arise about the tax implications of both non-health care and health care related fringe benefits. Separate from the health care related items mentioned above, non-health care related items may include reimbursements for personal cell phone use on work-related matters, use of one’s car, or payment of life insurance premiums. It is best in negotiations to follow the general rule that if an item was not expressly created by the legislature to have tax free benefits, it likely does not. Thereafter, you can get specific as to which items need to be precisely delineated as taxable or nontaxable benefits. Critical to remember is that what was considered of value in the previous agreement, which may have been taken away by a legislative act like the ACA, can and should be negotiated back into your contract in one form or another. Don’t settle for the fact that it is gone. Demand something in return.

Similarly, the discussion of the current political and economic climate will raise particular questions from those preparing to retire or merely looking down the road toward retirement. Their interests may involve the pensionability of particular benefits provided in their collective bargaining agreements. Members in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) currently occupy state service or those joining the system after April 1, 2012 labeled Tier 6 members. The TRS has recently issued clarification on certain particular negotiated benefits that were believed added to their pension calculations but found that they were not.

The general rule that has been applied to the tiers 3 through 6 has always been that to be included in a pension, the payments had to be reasonably incidental to the work necessary to complete the job of the title, was cumulative and continuous year after year, and was not in the mode of a bonus designed to augment a final average salary. Questions have arisen about negotiating tenure stipends, merit pay, longevity bonuses, and the like, as to how they figure in to a member’s final average salary, if at all. Each provision or proposal in your negotiation involving such an item must be scrutinized and made clear. Oftens, bargaining units have proceeded on the presumption that its interpretation is the same as that of the district, that a particular item is part of base salary and thus added to a pension calculation. That is always a dangerous presumption but in this case is also an irrelevant presumption.

Even if the parties agree on an interpretation of a contract, such agreement does not bind the TRS. So, as noted above, if you believed something had pensionable value that it turns out may not, do not despair, it merely presents an opportunity to negotiate its lost value back to your members in another form.

Looking positively, SAANYS will impart at these regional meetings the good things that can come from those changes that come with a new year.
The January Meeting of the Board of Regents... continued from page 3

- Over the past five years, the percentage of students graduating with local diplomas has decreased from nine percent to four percent, and the percentage of students graduating with Regents diplomas has increased from 33 percent to 41 percent. The percentage of students earning a Regents diploma with advanced designation has remained 31 percent.

- The four-year graduation rate for English language learners (ELL) decreased each year (40.3 percent, 38.2 percent, 34.3 percent, 31.4 percent, and 31.2 percent), but the graduation rate for students who no longer receive ELL services is comparable to the general population.

- Charter school four-year graduation rates have consistently lagged behind the rates of public school districts and decreased for the 2016 cohort as follows: 56.0 percent, 57.2 percent, 64.7 percent, 70.1 percent, and 63.8 percent.

Regent Kathleen Cashin asked whether data were available to track changes of the incidence of high school graduates needing remediation upon college entry. The executive deputy responded that such data is not available.

Statewide Strategic Plan for Science

The Board of Regents acted to unanimously approve implementation of a five-year strategic plan for transitioning to an new P-12 New York State science learning standards. SAANYS submitted a formal letter of support of the strategic plan, which was included in the Regents item and is posted on the SAANYS website.

Pathways to High School Graduation

Deputy Commissioner Cosimo Tangorra and Assistant Commissioner Charles Szubera reviewed the “4+1 pathway” that will be available to students who first enter grade nine in September 2011. Through this option, students may apply a SED-approved assessment in the humanities, STEM, bileriteracy, CTE and the arts in lieu of a Regents social studies examination for high school graduation. The presenters indicated that SED received a recommendation from Regent Roger Tilles, Chancellor Tisch and is posted on the SAANYS website.

Transitioning From 65 to Aspirational Performance on Regents Examinations... continued from page 3

student performance. Moreover, if the interim shifts are demonstrated to be unsuccessful, the transition schedule and approach may be discussed and/or revised sooner at the state level, rather than waiting until 2022.

Rationale for Approach B

- Incrementally increasing level 3 performance requirements for high school graduation will be confusing for the entire education community – students, parents, the general public, and educators. It will constitute a multi-year communications “nightmare.”

- There are questions and concerns regarding the sufficiency of notice. Revising the level 3 cut points for 2015-16 would provide markedly less than a year’s notice. For many students, especially students with disabilities, high school programs are planned on a multi-year basis. Therefore, revising high school graduation criteria should be announced several years in advance of being effective.

- Each year the level 3 cut points are raised will result in some students meeting the prior year cut point requirements but not the enhanced requirements. This will adversely impact student engagement, school-family relationships, and educators’ morale.

- School districts may establish differentiated student progress tracking systems for students currently enrolled in grade 5 (i.e., the class of 2022) and below. AIS and RII support, after-school and before-school support, and other educational interventions may be targeted and implemented as appropriate; school programs and instructional techniques may be thoughtfully revised and improved.

- Though aspirational graduation requirements would not be effective for students until 2022, school

continued on page 8

SAANYS has always been here for members who need advice or assistance from legal counsel on job-related matters. Now, SAANYS has partnered with the law firm of Feldman, Kramer and Monaco to help when you need personal legal advice and assistance.

$85 annually provides a simple will, power of attorney, health care proxy, living will, and unlimited advice via telephone. Enrollees will also receive certificates good for two free hour-long office consultations with a local referral attorney. For services beyond this package, discounted rates apply.

Contact Feldman, Kramer and Monaco, the law firm that administers the plan for SAANYS members, at 1-800-832-5182

Be prepared to present your membership ID #.

Rate applies to regular active, retired active, and retired affiliate members. Associate member fee is $150.

Do you know of a website, a book, a grant, or other resource that your colleagues should know about? Share it in this column by emailing MHebert@saanys.org.

Action for Healthy Kids Webinars

Action for Healthy Kids offers a wide variety of virtual learning opportunities. From school breakfast programs and recess before lunch to wellness policy implementation and more, most sessions are of no cost. Register online at http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/events/webinars.

Every Kid Healthy™ Week 2015

Tuesday, February 17, 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. (CT) Every Kid Healthy Week is focused on the nation’s problem of childhood obesity as well as its solutions: sound nutrition, regular physical activity, and health-promoting school programs. Learn how to get involved and find resources to plan a great event!

School Breakfast: Resources to Increase Participation Wednesday, March 25, 3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. (CT) Various resources available nationwide and at the state level or how to customize your school breakfast efforts will be presented. Discover free resources to impact stakeholder buy in, parental support, and student engagement. Receive links for resources for grab and go models and breakfast in the classroom. Learn how you can find funding and grants to support your efforts.
Governor Delivers State of the State and Executive Budget...

continued from page 1

unless the teachers proves that the rating is "fraudulent." Note, this means that removal is not determined based on the validity of the evaluation (before or after appeal) but whether the rating is based on cheating or dishonesty.

Tenure

The governor indicated that all the recommendations submitted to him by Regents Chancellor Tisch and Acting Commissioner Berlin should be implemented. In addition to proposing that the probationary period of teachers be extended to five years, the governor went on to propose that in order to be granted tenure, a teacher must receive five consecutive years of effective APPR evaluations.

Early Childhood Education

No additional monetary support beyond the $365 million allocated last year is proposed by the governor for prekindergarten programs for children four years of age. He proposes an allocation of $25 million to preschool education for children three years of age.

Charter Schools

The governor proposes to raise the current charter school cap (460) by 100 to 560 without regional caps (e.g., New York City).

Dream Act

The governor supports passage of the Dream Act. This legislation (previously proposed by the State Education Department) would allow undocumented students who meet in-state tuition requirements to access state financial aid and scholarships for higher education.

State Aid

The governor proposes an incentive/punishment provision whereby if ALL of his education proposals are implemented, state school operating aid will increase 4.8 percent or $1.06 billion. If ANY proposal of the governor’s is not implemented, state school operating aid will decrease by 1.7 percent or $377 million.

Transitional From 65 to Aspirational Performance on Regents Examinations...

continued from page 7

districts may set their own incrementally increased performance targets in a manner deemed strategic and appropriate for local level student and program evaluation. This approach would have no deleterious impact upon students, and may be expected to improve performance on Regents, SAT, and other standardized test instruments.

The SAANYS recommendation was presented to the executive deputy on January 14. During the meeting, discussion focused on related implementation issues such as: for a student who expects to graduate in 2021, and earns Regents scores of 68 in English and 61 in mathematics must the student take both exams and score 74/79? The executive deputy responded that the passing score (68) would be “grandfathered.” In regard to sub-populations, SAANYS said that the graduation rate for English language learners remains flat. Many ELL students currently take the English Regents three and four times to earn 65. Achieving a score of 74 does not appear to be a programmatically (or humanistically) fair expectation, especially for SIFE, students and students entering at an advanced age. The executive deputy said that SED is considering course and examination flexibility for student subpopulations such as ELL students. He also said that the appeal procedure will remain in place for late arriving ELL students (grade 9 or above) to appeal ELA Regents scores between 55 and 61; and that the special education safety net will remain in place as well.

There is no firm timeline for presenting to the Board of Regents any discussion or action items regarding the timeline and approach for transition to aspirational performance standards on Regents examinations in English language arts and mathematics, though March 2015 was raised as a possibility.

Low Income Students Now a Majority in the Nation’s Public Schools

For the first time in at least 50 years, a majority of public school students across the country are considered “low-income,” according to a new study by the Southern Education Foundation. While poor children are spread across the country, concentrations are highest in the South and West.

SAANYS corporate sponsor

A message from a

SMART®

Students are natural learners, yet in schools we often create environments where learning doesn’t happen naturally. Educational requirements often force teaching practices to focus more on standardized tests than on real-world skill development. Furthermore, technology in schools is often har-pressed and embraced the same way students use it in their everyday lives.

SMART® equips educators with the right technology solutions to support learning and collaboration. SMART notebooks® and SMART amp™— that unlocks the full collaborative potential of students, teachers, interactive displays, and mobile devices; interactive flat panels built specifically for education that support the evolving needs of teachers and learners, and provide tools for students to learn, problem-solve, and explore concepts together; and SMART kapp™ which creates new collaborative possibilities inside and outside the classroom, all with the simplicity of a traditional dry-erase board.

SMART®’s solutions emphasize the process and product of learning, enabling students to build skills and knowledge. They provide educational spaces that can be physical or virtual and are places where technology fades into the background, seamlessly enhancing learning and inspiring collaboration. These spaces extend beyond the walls of the classroom, so learning never has to stop.

Learn more at http://education.smarttech.com

SAANYS provides members with an elite collection of local and national discounts from thousands of hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, retailers, florists, car dealers, theme parks, national attractions, concerts, and events through Abenity. Go to saanys.org and enter the Members Only section.

Thousands of Discounts Available to SAANYS Members

Available to SAANYS Members

SAANYS provides members with an elite collection of local and national discounts from thousands of hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, retailers, florists, car dealers, theme parks, national attractions, concerts, and events through Abenity. Go to saanys.org and enter the Members Only section.

The South and West have the highest concentrations of low-income students.