



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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August 31, 2017

New York State Board of Regents
89 Washington Avenue
Board of Regents, Room 110 EB
Albany, New York 12234

Re: *Middle Level CTE Requirements*

Dear Members of the New York State Board of Regents,

As a professional organization of public school administrators, the Empire State School Supervisors and Administrators (“ESSAA”) has a significant interest in the future of the Middle Level CTE modifications that were implemented as an Emergency Action by the Board. On behalf of our organization, I am writing to express our support for the measures and our sincere hope that they will be adopted as permanent changes to the Regulations.

As you know, the previous CTE middle level course standards require only two (Tech and FACS) of the six CTE content areas to be included in the high school standards. This significantly limits a middle school’s ability to create effective sequential curricular pathways with high school CTE course strands. In addition, the current shortage of both FACS and technical education teachers makes the situation even more difficult.

The Emergency Action allows for a more broad-based and flexible approach to middle level CTE coursework. Under the plan, students have the opportunity to meet the requirements through a variety of approved courses in any of the six CTE content areas. In addition, the Education Department has proposed development of guidance to schools districts that we believe would facilitate a very successful implementation of the changes, including the ability to use available certified teachers to create more curricular pathways in CTE, STEM and CDOS. This would allow schools great flexibility in what courses they offer and greatly expand the teacher pool which addresses the current shortage.

We understand that there has been concern about “phasing out” of FACS teachers in favor of teachers certified in other curricular areas. However, we believe that allowing flexibility in this area makes sense. Districts that do not have a problem finding qualified FACS teachers would be free to retain them, but where there are significant difficulties in the availability of certified FACS teachers, the flexibility would allow a creative approach to satisfying CTE requirements. Concerns have also been raised about the possible misuse of the change by some districts to eliminate programs. We agree that this is a legitimate concern and feel that the changes should be implemented, but should safeguard against such abuse.

Our organization therefore urges you to adopt the Regulations on a permanent basis for the fundamental reason that it will be good for our middle level students. We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions or provide more information as you weigh this important decision and we thank you for your dedicated service to education in our State.

Sincerely,

Carol Conklin-Spillane, ESSAA President