

Summary of Stakeholders Meeting February 26, 2019

The Empire State Supervisors and Administrators (ESSAA) held its monthly Stakeholder Meeting on Tuesday, February 26th, 2019 with Commissioner of Education, MaryEllen Elia, and Senior Deputy Commissioner, Beth Berlin. Commissioner Elia recently implemented a new procedure for conducting the monthly meetings. In the past, she has met with individual stakeholder groups in one hour blocks. The new process incorporates a general session with representatives from all the stakeholder groups, at which the Commissioner presents information that is of interest to everyone. Shorter time blocks are then set aside for each group, including ESSAA, to meet with the Commissioner individually to present specific concerns.

For the general meeting, stakeholders have the option of participating either in person or through videoconference. This month, Regents/NYSED Liaison Paul Scampini attended the meeting while ESSAA Executive Director, Mike Starvaggi, ESSAA Executive Vice President, Skip Voorneveld, ESSAA Vice President, Andrea Hamilton, ESSAA member Jesiemae Ossorio and ESSAA member, Kristin Randhare, participated via videoconference.

Participating in the individual ESSAA stakeholder meeting were Commissioner Elia, Deputy Commissioner Berlin, Mike Starvaggi, Skip Voorneveld, Andrea Hamilton and Paul Scampini, along with ESSAA Vice President, John Rickert, ESSAA Vice President, Dr. Shireen Fasciglione, and ESSAA Vice President, Greg Avellino.

Topics discussed at the general meeting:

1. Educational Conference Board (ECB) – Release of Position Paper on Restorative Justice

The Educational Conference Board (ECB) is a collaboration of educational stakeholder groups in New York State that includes representatives from organizations such as NYSUT, Council of Superintendents, NYS School Boards Assn. and PTA. The group recently published a position paper advocating for increased support for further implementation of Restorative Justice Practices in schools. The Board of Regents allocated three million dollars in their proposed 2019-20 budget to support the initiative.

The ECB and the Commissioner are very much in favor of allowing schools flexibility and discretion to integrate Restorative Justice Practices based on the specific needs of their buildings/districts. The legislature, however, is currently considering a bill that would mandate the use of Restorative Justice Practices in schools and could make the implementation requirements very prescriptive.

The bill had been introduced previously but has not received much attention. Commissioner Elia shared concerns that this year the proposal could receive more support with the Senate moving to a Democratic majority. Below you will find a link to the position paper.

<https://www.nysecb.org/the-issues/restorative-practices>

2. ESSA School Comprehensive Education Plans (SCEP)

Commissioner Elia updated the group on the timeline for the development of improvement plans for schools/districts who were identified as not meeting the new accountability requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Site visits for all identified schools/districts are currently being carried out by NYSED staff and are scheduled to continue through June. The deadline for schools to have School Comprehensive Improvement Plans (SCEP) submitted is July 1, 2019. The Commissioner did mention that there would be flexibility with the submission date for schools whose site visits do not occur until May or June.

Topics discussed at the individual ESSAA stakeholder meeting:

1. Status of APPR Workgroups

Mr. Starvaggi asked Commissioner Elia for an update on the status of the APPR workgroups that had been working on proposed amendments to the current teacher and principal evaluation frameworks.

The Commissioner responded that there has not been much movement in the legislature regarding the changes or new requirements associated with the new APPR bill. She went on to say that she is reluctant to have the groups do any more work until the legislation is finalized. She is optimistic that this could happen in the next month and will have the groups reconvene when the evaluation regulations are clarified.

2. Marijuana and E-Cigarettes

Mr. Voorneveld expressed concern to Commissioner Elia about the potential negative ramifications that the legalization of marijuana would have on schools. The Commissioner responded that she shares our concern and is worried that both the legalization of marijuana and the problems associated with E-cigarettes will present enormous problems for schools. Mr. Voorneveld shared that our organization is preparing position papers on this topic for distribution to policy makers and that ESSAA would forward a copy to the Commissioner.

[ESSAA's position – Proposal to Legalize Marijuana in NYS](#)

[ESSAA Supports Proposed Legislation to Curb Tobacco and E-Cigarette Products](#)