

The **Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA)** participated in a Stakeholder Meeting on Wednesday, June 17, 2026 via videoconference. Participants representing NYSED included Commissioner of Education, Betty Rosa; Deputy Commissioner for Educational Policy, Jeffrey Matteson; and Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Educational Policy, David Frank.

ESSAA was represented at the meeting by President, Carol Conklin-Spillane; Director for Professional Learning, Eva Jones; Vice President, Jessimae Ossorio; Vice President, John Zampaglione; Regents/NYSED Liaison, Paul Scampini; and ESSAA Delegates, Kathy Barboulis and Luke Sotherden.

NY Inspires/Portrait of a Graduate

The stakeholder meeting took place one day after the completion of the June Board of Regents session where new information was made available regarding the **NY Inspires** initiative. Commissioner Rosa opened our discussion by reviewing some of the areas that were covered during the Board of Regents meeting. The Commissioner expressed that she was especially impressed with the presentation of Dr. Jason Green, a highly recognized leader in Systems Change. Dr. Green spoke about the role of AI in teaching and emphasized the need to reframe the focus of learning in schools around authentic, connected, and creative instruction. Mrs. Conklin-Spillane made special note to remind Commissioner Rosa of Dr. Green's statement that **"at this very critical time when we are working to implement significant changes in schools, the most important individuals are building leaders. Educational leaders currently are not being trained in how to effectively manage strategic change and that there needs to be a huge investment in adult learning for initiatives such as this to be successful."**

Commissioner Rosa then provided an overview of NYSED's next steps as they move forward with implementing NY Inspires and is asking for feedback from education leaders on three essential questions.

1. As school leaders, what kinds of support do you need from NYSED to move forward with the initial implementation steps?
2. What kinds support structure adjustments are needed to assist school leaders with successful implementation?
3. What immediate needs do you have that would assist you with taking initial steps this summer?

In response, Mrs. Conklin-Spillane expressed that, at this point, school leaders need a "check for understanding" from NYSED to evaluate everyone's current level of awareness. She went on to state that it is important for principals to receive guidance on the scope of their role as change agents with facilitating implementation. They also need to know how the

responsibilities they are currently accountable for will compare to what they are accountable for in the future under the new system.”

ESSAA representative, Eva Jones, cited a situation where concerns are being raised from parents of 8th graders taking advanced Regents Algebra. She said that teachers, administrators and parents are concerned about the future of the Algebra Regents and Regents exams in general. They want to know what future alternative competency-based assessments might look like, and whether alternative competency assessment options will carry a credible and appropriate level of rigor. Commissioner Rosa responded that NYSED is ready to start having these conversations about competency-based assessments and what they will look like. The Commissioner did also confirm that Regents exams **are not** being eliminated and will still have a place in the scope of assessment options for students.

Deputy Commissioner Matteson added that NYSED is now beginning to look at specific competencies for the different subject areas, developing draft rubrics for evaluation, and exploring possibilities for what a new transcript might look like as we move to a one diploma system. He stated that NYSED recognizes the need to pare down the volume of the current learning standards as they are currently written, and connect them with the required competencies as they are developed. Commissioner Rosa also stated that NYSED is reviewing the whole idea of Carnegie Credit requirements as they relate to seat time requirements and that changes could be coming soon.

At the close of our meeting, Mrs. Conklin-Spillane emphasized that school leaders need access to tangible examples of what the NY Inspires framework is, in order to effectively facilitate change. Mr. Scampini asked if it would be possible for NYSED to share sample course descriptions/outlines which are aligned with competency-based requirements, that principals could use as examples to begin meaningful discussions with their staff members. Commissioner Rosa stated that she would try to obtain some models or examples and forward them to us in the near future.

Special note: At the conclusion of Monday’s Board of Regents session, Assistant Commissioner Frank sent out a **“One Pager”** document to the field that summarizes the current scope and goals of the NY Inspires initiative. It could be a useful reference as you continue to build awareness with staff and parents. A link to the document can found below.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=c360d3967a&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1868174218785673670&th=19ed168dd14351c6&view=att&zw&disp=inline>

ESSAA Members: If you have any feedback on the foregoing issues or would like to suggest a topic to be addressed with the Commissioner at an upcoming meeting, please e-mail us at info@essaa.org. New topics will be submitted to our Stakeholder Committee for consideration.