

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

NEWS RELEASE

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New York State Council of School Superintendents Reacts to Release of Draft State Learning Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics

ALBANY – New York State Council of School Superintendents Executive Director Charles Dedrick today commended State Education Commissioner MaryEllenElia and the Board of Regents for their leadership in working to revise state learning standards in English language arts and mathematics.

The Council's comments came in reaction to draft changes to state learning standards released for public comment today by the State Education Department.

Dedrick explained that the Council is encouraged by the process the Departments is following to improve the standards. He said that individual superintendents and the Council's Curriculum and Instruction Committee will be offering specific reactions to the draft standards in the weeks ahead.

Dedrick observed, "Our state constitution promises 'a system of free common schools, wherein all the children of this state may be educated.' State learning standards attempt to define the meaning of our constitution's promise for today by detailing what students should know, understand, and be able to do as they progress through school. Because standards are a cornerstone in our education system, revising them has to be done thoughtfully and implemented carefully."

Dedrick went on, "This is only a first step, however. What happens next will be pivotal. First, the Department's leadership needs to weigh seriously the comments that will come in now that educators and the public can react to possible new standards. Then we will need to work as a state to avoid mis-steps that hurt implementation of the Common Core standards."

Dedrick explained, "Superintendents found value in the current standards but want changes. They were most troubled by rushed and flawed implementation of the standards and other major initiatives all at once, including new state tests and teacher evaluations." He said, "The thoughtful and inclusive approach the Education Department is following to revise the standards this time can help avoid past mistakes."

The Department surveyed educators and parents and engaged over 130 teachers, administrators, parents and others in review committees to develop the changes proposed day. Public engagement will continue before new standards are given final approval by our Board of Regents.

The Council also commended the Department leadership for recognizing the need to engage and support parents in helping their children learn with the new standards.

Dedrick concluded, "Schools and teachers will need time and support if the new standards are to benefit students as intended. We will work with Commissioner Elia, the Regents and colleagues in education to assure those resources are delivered."

The New York State Council of School Superintendents is a professional and advocacy organization with over a century of service to school superintendents and assistant superintendents in New York State. The Council provides more than 800 members with professional development opportunities, publications and personal support while advocating for public education and the superintendency.