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## Governor's Accountability Proposals



Included in Governor Pataki's 2005-06 Executive Budget are a series of new measures designed to promote accountability in education. "New resources must be accompanied by top-to-bottom, fundamental reforms to ensure greater accountability and performance," said Governor Pataki in his budget address. The following is a brief summary of the key elements from the governor's proposed accountability recommendations.

### OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFICIENCY —

The centerpiece of his accountability proposal is the creation of a new Office of Educational Accountability and Efficiency. An Executive Director would be appointed by the Governor to run this new office. The new office would be responsible for:

- ▶ Tracking and reporting on the educational performance of all public schools.
- ▶ Reviewing and approving school improvement plans and providing assistance in the closure and/or reconfiguration of schools that fail to meet state educational standards.
- ▶ Undertaking evaluations of the financial condition of school districts to identify districts as being in fiscal distress or lacking auditing controls.

### SBE PLAN —

Every school district would be required to develop a three-year Sound Basic Education (SBE) plan that would detail how the school district will provide an opportunity for a sound basic education to all students. The plan would be developed in conjunction with groups representing parents, teachers and administrators.

### POORLY PERFORMING SCHOOLS —

The Office of Educational Accountability would establish criteria to identify poorly performing schools based upon student performance on state tests, attendance rates, and dropout rates.

School districts with a school identified as poorly performing would be required to develop a three-year improvement plan for each school identified as poorly performing. This plan would be developed in cooperation with groups representing parents, teachers, and administrators. These plans would be submitted to the Office of Educational Accountability for review and approval. If after the third year of the plan, the Office of Educational Accountability and Efficiency determines that the school is not meeting performance expectations, the school will be closed and a new restructured school will be opened with a new principal and staff in accordance with "local conditions."

If the restructured school fails to meet performance expectations, an interim administrator will be appointed to manage the school and assume the power of the local school board and superintendent for the designated school.

#### **VALUE-ADDED SYSTEM —**

The Office of Educational Accountability and Efficiency would be required to create a value-added accountability system to track individual student performance. This new value-added accountability system would be based on grade-by-grade tests required under the No Child Left Behind Act.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE TENURE —**

Tenure for principals and other administrators would be replaced with three to five year renewable contracts. This would only apply to principals and other administrators that are appointed on or after September 1, 2005. During the first three years of the administrator's initial contract, the administrator may be terminated at any time on the recommendation of the superintendent and with a majority vote of the school board.

#### **EXPEDITED TEACHER DISCIPLINE HEARINGS —**

Under the Governor's proposal, if a tenured teacher receives an evaluation from the school district which documents pedagogical incompetence, the district in consultation with the teacher and the collective bargaining unit must develop a 90-day remedial plan. If after the remedial plan is completed and the tenured teacher's performance is still unsatisfactory, the district may file charges of pedagogical incompetence against the teacher and use a new expedited procedure.

Under this new expedited procedure, the school district within 30 days must notify the tenured teacher of the charges following the completion of the 90-day remedial plan. When the district notifies the tenured teacher of the charges, the district must also request a list of hearing officers from the Commissioner of Education who are available to complete a hearing and issue a decision within 60 days. The tenured teacher and school district will select a hearing officer from the list. However, if within five days of receipt of the list a hearing officer is not agreed to, the Commissioner will select the hearing officer.

#### **MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS TO SCHOOL BOARDS —**

Under the Governor's proposal the mayors of Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse would appoint two members to the school board. The appointed school board members would serve a four-year term. However, a mayor could remove an appointed school board member at any time during the four-year term. In the city of Albany, the mayor would appoint a non-voting member to the school board.

#### **SCHOOL BUDGET VOTING —**

The Governor proposes various reforms to the school voting process to encourage voter participation, such as requiring that all school budget voting occur from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., requiring that all votes on capital projects occur on the statewide school budget voting day and requiring that all budget revotes occur on the third Tuesday in June.