



# 2014 Update from the New York State Assembly EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sheldon Silver, Speaker • Catherine Nolan, Chairwoman

Dear Friends:

The Assembly Education Committee has worked to increase funding for education and improve the well-being of our students. The 2014-15 state budget increases education funding by \$1.12 billion, including allocations for school aid, universal pre-kindergarten, after-school programming, and the Smart School Bond Act. The committee also reported bills on important topics including student privacy, slowing down the implementation the Common Core, and teacher evaluations.

This has been a productive legislative session and I am grateful for the support of Speaker Silver and my hard-working colleagues who serve on this committee. I look forward to working to further education so New York State reaches its full potential for all students.

Sincerely,

Catherine Nolan  
Chairwoman



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan speaking at the Joint Budget Hearing on Education. The hearing is called to examine portions of the Governor's Executive Budget.

## 2014-15 Education Budget:

The 2014-15 state budget increased funding to education by \$1.12 billion, the largest education increase since 2008-09. This included \$602 million in Gap Elimination Aid restoration, and a \$251 million increase in Foundation Aid. After the budget was passed, the governor approved a 3.8 percent increase for 853 schools and Special Act School Districts that the Assembly had pushed for in its one-house budget.

The budget also includes:

- \$1.5 billion over 5 years for statewide universal pre-kindergarten, including \$600 million over 2 years for New York City for Mayor de Blasio's universal pre-kindergarten plan
- \$2 billion Smart School Bond Act
- \$5 million for technology in special education schools
- \$20 million for a Teacher Excellence Fund
- \$16 million for Non-Public Mandated Services
- \$14 million for Teacher Resources Centers
- \$5 million for Library Aid



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan with Deputy Speaker Earlene Hooper and First Deputy Comptroller Pete Grannis.

## First Deputy Comptroller Pete Grannis Addresses the Committee

Deputy Commissioner Pete Grannis met with the Education Committee about oversight and quality of preschool special education (4410) programs in the state. Last year, A.7302-A (Nolan)/Chapter 545 of the Laws of 2013 was enacted, which requires that notice be given to the Commissioner of certain 4410 student placements. The law also requires the Commissioner to establish criteria for executive directors of 4410 programs and requires all 4410 programs to be audited by the State Comptroller by March 31, 2018 in order to ensure that funding for these programs is being spent appropriately.

## Education highlights

### Protection for students and teachers against high-stakes consequences

This year, the Assembly Education Committee took measures to protect students and teachers against the high-stakes consequences associated with Common Core-aligned tests and the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). Bill A.8929 (Nolan), which passed the Assembly, provided that students' test scores on state-administered English Language Arts and Math tests for grades 3-8 would not be put on their permanent records. This ensures that students will not be penalized for complications in aligning the Common Core State Standards with state assessments.

A.8929 also provided that no state-administered tests could be given in pre-kindergarten or grades K-2. This provision also later became part of the state budget bill, which passed both houses and was signed into law. Additionally, bill A.10168 (Nolan), a governor's program bill which passed both houses of the Legislature, prevents teachers from being hit with high-stakes consequences due to Common Core-aligned test scores. With these new pieces of legislation, the Assembly is working toward an ongoing evaluation for Common Core Standards and APPR that does not unfairly hurt our students or teachers.

### Protection of student privacy

Student privacy has been an incredibly important issue for the Education Committee. Last year, we passed A.7872-A (Nolan) allowing parents to opt their students out of the disclosure of personally identifiable information to a third party. This year, the Assembly followed up this issue with language in A.8929 (Nolan) allowing such an opt-out and prohibiting the State Education Department from releasing personally identifiable information to third-party vendors until July of 2015. This provision also later became part of the state budget bill, which passed both houses and was signed into law.

The Assembly Education Committee made a thorough effort to ensure that parents and students were informed about every interaction with inBloom Inc., a data management organization that the State Education Department had signed a contract with. The committee held multiple public hearings in order to inquire about student privacy. Following the hearings and legislation, the State Education Department retracted its contract with inBloom Inc. This was a great success for parents and students that kept children's private information safe from third parties.

### Pre-K Classroom Tour

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan recently joined Mayor Bill de Blasio, Speaker Sheldon Silver and Chancellor Carmen Farina to visit a pre-k classroom at the Spruce Street School in Lower Manhattan.

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan speaking at the Press Conference along with Mayor Bill de Blasio, Speaker Sheldon Silver, NYC Chancellor Carmen Farina and several other officials from the Spruce Street school.



## Permission for Students to Carry Epinephrine in Schools

Allergies, asthma, and diabetes can be life-threatening to students if they are not able to use their prescribed medications at school. This is why the Assembly Education Committee reported bill A.9334-B, which passed both houses of the Legislature. This legislation makes it clear that students who are diagnosed with allergies, asthma or diabetes can carry and use at school medications which, in an emergency, can save their lives. The bill standardizes policies and practices about self-administered medications in all school districts throughout the state. It also establishes consistency about self-administered medications whether they are used for allergic reactions, asthma attacks or dangerous blood sugar levels. This legislation is an enormous success for students and parents of students with asthma, allergies, or diabetes.

## Legislation Regarding CPR in Schools

About 5,290 children 18 years old and under suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrest each year from various causes, including trauma, cardiovascular causes, and sudden infant death syndrome. The American Heart Association recommends that hands-on



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan visits with fellow education committee member Barbara Lifton and education officials. They spoke on about several topics including standardized testing and common core.

training be a requirement for graduation. Several studies have demonstrated that trainees, including schoolchildren, can achieve acceptable levels of proficiency in adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation in 30 minutes or less. Bill A.9298 (Weisenberg) requires the Commissioner of Education to make recommendations to the Board of Regents in regard to requiring high schools to train students in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated defibrillators (AEDs). This legislation passed both houses of the legislature, and is a big step toward making our schools safer environments for students.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan attended an educational forum on the Dignity for all Students Act with Assemblyman Danny O'Donnell. I look forward to continue working with Assemblyman O'Donnell on this issue.

## Subcommittee on Students with Special Needs

Last year, the Subcommittee on Students with Special Needs held a roundtable to examine programs and services that are offered by Special Act school districts, 853 schools, and 4201 schools serving students with disabilities as well as examine challenges these schools and their students may be facing. This year, Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, along with Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer, Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Students with Special Needs, took action to secure additional support for Special Act school districts and 853 schools. They circulated two letters, each signed by many Assemblymembers, requesting that the governor approve an increase in support for these schools. In June, the governor announced a 3.8 percent increase in direct and indirect costs for Special Act school districts and 853 schools. This money will be a great help to special education providers and some of New York State's most vulnerable students.

## Adult Learning Education

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan spoke recently at the Adult Learning Graduation at the Long Island City Queens Public Library. As Chair of the Assembly Education Committee, she has consistently fought to increase funding for Adult Education.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, George L. Stamatiades, Trustee, Queens Public Library, Bridget Quinn-Carey, Chief Operating Officer, Queens Public Library, David Agliadoro, Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan's Office, a representative from the State Education Department and several Graduates.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan visited with Assemblyman Edward Hennessey and Superintendents from his district. They spoke on several issues related to education.

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