

**Andrew Pallotta**

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**Paul Pecorale**

*Second Vice President*

March 27, 2018

MaryEllen Elia  
Commissioner of Education  
New York State Education Department  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Commissioner Elia:

As we discussed at the stakeholders meeting yesterday, New York State's grade 3-8 tests are not providing parents and educators with a true picture of their student's progress toward a High School Diploma. It would be reasonable to assume that if students were not proficient on their grades 3-8 state exams that they would not be prepared to successfully pass Regents exams. However, this is not the case; for example, in 2016 24% of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students that took the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math assessment were identified as proficient, but one year later when most of these students took the Algebra I Regents exam 74% passed. Similarly in 2013, only 31% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders were proficient on the state ELA exam and four years later in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, when most of those 7<sup>th</sup> graders took the ELA common Core Regents exam, the Regents passage rate was 84%.

NYSUT believes this discrepancy can be traced to the standard setting process used when the common core grades 3-8 tests were introduced. As our report "NYSUT White Paper on College, Career & Civic Readiness" points out the process used in standard setting led to results on the grades 3-8 exams that did not match future results on the Regents exams required for High School Graduation. Whether you agree with the results of our report or not, the data indicates a problem exists. This problem can be solved with this year's test administration.

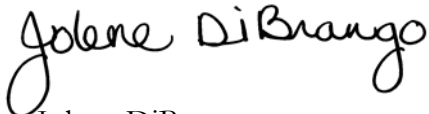
Because SED is planning to go through the standard setting process with this year's administration of the grades 3-8 tests, there is an opportunity to correct the mismatch between the results on the grades 3-8 tests and results on the High School Regents Exams. It is critical to rebuilding parent and educator trust in the grades 3-8 tests to get this process right this year.

On Monday, NYSUT is planning to circulate an open letter to parents and educators explaining the mismatch between the results on the grades 3-8 tests and High School Regents Exams. This letter will call on parents and educators to demand this problem be solved. Before we send the

letter, we wanted to give you an opportunity to explain the standard setting process you plan to use this year and why you think this process will solve the mismatch in proficiency issue. If you could get back to us by Monday morning, we will make the appropriate adjustments to our open letter.

We look forward to hearing from you on this critical issue and stand ready to work with you to solve this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jolene DiBrango". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jolene DiBrango  
Executive Vice President