

## **John A. Nocero, Executive Vice-President, Council of Administrators and Supervisors (CAS)**

On behalf of the Council of Administrators and Supervisors (CAS) and the Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA) we would like to share our concerns and provide input for revising and improving the current regulations and procedures for Common Core and standardized testing. Our organization supports initiatives to raise standards and enhance student learning to best prepare our students for 21st century college and career readiness. While our 3500 public school administrators across the State have worked hard to implement the Common Core, the related standardized assessments, and teacher and principal evaluations we have witnessed the negative impact of the poorly conceived and rushed implementation of these initiatives. It is critical that a new implementation process be vetted by experienced practitioners to ensure there are no unintended consequences that negatively impact our public schools.

Our concerns regarding the Common Core Learning Standards and the “high stakes” assessments associated with these standards include:

- The implementation of new standards was rushed and lacked the necessary teacher/principal and parent input. The curriculum was not aligned with professional development activities and the 3-8 tests were not designed to reflect what students were actually exposed
- The time allocated for 3-8 testing remains excessive and significantly reduces contact time within the classroom. For our students with disabilities who receive additional time, these tests have become a measure of endurance. Test imbedded field test questions, beyond the abilities of students caused unnecessary stress, anxiety, and the feeling of hopelessness in many of our students
- Test questions were embargoed and hidden from professionals, further frustrating administrators and teachers who did not have access to data needed to drive group and individual instruction.
- Learning mandates have not been differentiated to take into account a district’s current performance and achievement resulting in a “one size fits all” approach.
- The college readiness benchmark is irresponsibly inflated and cut scores are in many cases unattainable. The NYSED college readiness benchmarks need to correlate with the College Board’s benchmarks.
- Teachers are now teaching to the test and enrichment and creativity have been discouraged. The arts and exploratory subjects are no longer a priority and cursive writing has been virtually eliminated in most elementary schools across the state.
- The associated costs with Common Core implementation including training, staffing,

curriculum materials, and remediation for students who do not make the mark has put additional financial stress on district budgets in an era of the 2% tax cap.

In closing, we have an opportunity to review and improve Common Core learning, assessment, and teacher/principal performance evaluation in a meaningful, timely, and appropriate manner. We implore our elected officials and Education Department to abandon the many failed facets of the School Reform Agenda we have pointed out related to curriculum and student assessment. A comprehensive summary of our concerns and recommendations has been submitted and we ask that you carefully review this information. We remain committed to working together to preserve a challenging, healthy and rewarding learning environment in which to lead, to teach and to learn.