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June 15, 2016

Dear Chancellor Rosa and NYS Board of Regents,

It has come to our attention that the New York State Board of Regents no longer has a committee or workgroup dedicated to Special Education concerns and services. Given the fact that there are nearly a half a million children in New York State with disabilities who receive Special Education services, this decision is disconcerting.

Whereas, the establishment of the Office of Special Education within the State Education Department's Office of P-12 Education has been a welcome and necessary addition to the department, we believe that this is not enough. According to the website, "This change reflects the Regents' commitment to ensure that students with disabilities are an integral part of all aspects of P-12 education policy development and program implementation." In order to fulfill this commitment, we strongly believe that a Board of Regents Committee or Workgroup needs to be reinstated.

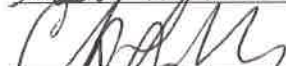
We are aware that pursuant to P.L.94-142 (Education of the Handicapped Act) and reauthorized through PL 108-446 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), there is a Commissioner's Advisory Panel (CAP) for Special Education Services that functions in an advisory capacity to the Office of Special Education and advises the Governor, Legislature and Commissioner on unmet needs in the education of children with disabilities.

Even with these groups in place, we feel that the needs of students with special education requirements are not being adequately considered or met in the state of New York. We strongly urge you to reinstate a Special Education committee or workgroup to ensure that this large population of young New Yorkers is not forgotten.

Thank you.

Signed,

 Scott McInnes, Board President

 Cheryl May, Board Vice President

 Jonathan Altus, Trustee

 Melissa Gates, Trustee

 Mitchell A. Greebel, Trustee

 Harold Kislik, Trustee

 Stephen B. Witt, Trustee