



MARY BETH WALSH
Assemblywoman 112th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Education

COMMITTEES
Ethics & Guidance
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April 5, 2019

Hon. Michael Benedetto
Standing Committee on Education, Chairman
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building Room 813
Albany, NY 12248

Chairman Benedetto:

I'm sure you are by now aware of the software issues that occurred with Questar Assessment, Inc., the State's testing vendor during this week's State ELA exams. This comes in addition to issues during last spring's exams and a prior data breach incident in 2017. As a result, our students were subjected to additional stress and missed instructional time. While it is within the purview of the State Education Department to develop and administer these federally mandated exams, it is certainly our responsibility to ensure accountability for New York's taxpayers. Moreover, it is our responsibility to ensure that the environment within our schools is best suited for learning and development. Given that Questar Assessment, Inc. was awarded a \$44 million contract for the development of these exams which runs through 2020 it is paramount that both our taxpayers and students get answers as to what has caused these issues and what is being done to prevent them in the future.

We respectfully request that our Committee convene a hearing in order to allow questioning of representatives from Questar Assessment, Inc., State Education Department officials and other stakeholders who have firsthand knowledge of the disruption caused by this software's failure.

Respectfully,

Mary Beth Walsh
Ranking Minority Member Committee
112th Assembly District

Assemblyman Edward Ra
Education Committee Member
19th Assembly District

David McDonough
Education Committee Member
14th Assembly District

John Mikulin
Education Committee Member
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Peter Lawrence
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Nicole Malliotakis
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Melissa "Missy" Miller
Education Committee Member
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David DiPietro
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