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| **MEMORANDUM** |

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| **TO:**          NYSUT Board of Directors                NYSUT Local Presidents **FROM:**      Melinda Person, NYSUT President**DATE:**November 13, 2023**SUBJECT:**  NYSUT Alert - SED Blue Ribbon Commission Report |

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| Earlier today, the Board of Regents released a report by its Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures. The commission was formed earlier this year to review New York’s graduation requirements to best meet the needs of every student in the state.The SED report makes twelve primary recommendations which fall under four general categories: multiple pathways leading to one diploma; assessment flexibility; credentials that are more reflective of needed real-life skills; and curriculums, instruction and assessment that reflects the diversity of the student body. NYSUT’s statement in response to the SED report can be found online at: <https://www.nysut.org/news/2023/november/media-release-sed>. It reads:“The recommendations from SED's Blue Ribbon Commission promise a bright future for our students and a positive outlook for New York as an innovator and global economic leader. The recommendations recognize what educators know so well: That each of our students is a unique learner with talents, skills and aspirations that should be fully explored and nurtured on their way to graduation. These proposals would help create young adults who are not just ready for the careers and challenges of today's dynamic economy but who are lifelong learners and knowledgeable, engaged citizens.”SED’s complete report is available online at: <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/grad-measures/nys-blue-ribbon-commission-graduation-measures-report.pd>fThe SED report comes on the heels of NYSUT’s More Teaching Less Testing Task Force Report, released last week. NYSUT’s recommendations build upon our firm and longstanding position that overreliance on standardized testing forces a “teach to the test” model that strips the joy of learning and teaching from our classrooms. The NYSUT Task Force report recommends providing for additional pathways to graduation that do not rely solely on Regents exams, fixing the flawed grades 3-8 assessment system by revising the content and structure of the exams and delinking the test results from teacher evaluations, and revising the federal testing requirements through the proposed More Teaching Less Testing Act with flexibility for states to make the exams more reasonable, useful and less stressful on students. The full NYSUT report and recommendations can be found at <https://nysut.cc/moreteaching>.Today’s news shows that there’s a light at the end of the very long testing tunnel. When it’s time to graduate, students should have multiple options to show they are ready. Expanding our graduation requirements to allow for career and technical education programs, capstone portfolios, or project-based pathways is how we prepare our children for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.We will continue to keep you updated with the latest information from SED. Please reach out to us if you have any questions about the Blue Ribbon Commission or NYSUT’s own More Teaching Less Testing Task Force report.In solidarity,Melinda |

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