



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Excellence in teaching is real; APPR scores aren't the proof**

ALBANY, N.Y. December 16, 2014 – New York's dedicated teachers are among the most highly skilled, best-educated in the nation and the proof of that professionalism is found in lessons taught in classrooms today and every day — not in the evaluation data released by the State Education Department today, New York State United Teachers said.

“New York teachers consistently exceed high standards for knowledge, professionalism and dedication to student learning. We know that, parents know that and students know that,” said NYSUT President Karen E. Magee. “Although, on the surface, it is heartening to see aggregate evaluation data that is consistent with the positive experience of parents and students, the reality is that the current system does not accurately reflect all the great work that teachers do in classrooms every day.”

Magee pointed out the state has already approved a moratorium on the use of invalid and unreliable test scores for decisions involving students, and the Legislature in June enacted a two-year delay in the use of state tests in teacher evaluations. NYSUT expects the governor to sign the bill.

“The rushed implementation of the Common Core and use of invalid test scores in evaluations calls into question the validity of any and all of these scores. On the whole, they may be spot on. But for individual teachers, they can be spectacularly wrong — and that undermines confidence in the whole system,” Magee said.

NYSUT Vice President Catalina Fortino said the union welcomes evaluations that are fair, objective and are designed to help teachers build on their already strong skills.

“For evaluations to be meaningful, they must be designed to help teachers hone their craft and reflect on what they are doing in the classroom to reach all students. And, embedded in the evaluation system should be constructive feedback and meaningful professional development. That was the original goal and we need to get back to that,” Fortino said. “The current system, unfortunately, leans too heavily on the flawed use of test scores, which has led to unnecessary testing and anguish and frustration among parents and students. We look forward to working collaboratively in the coming months to fix this broken system.”

*New York State United Teachers is a statewide union with more than 600,000 members in education, human services and health care. NYSUT is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the AFL-CIO.*