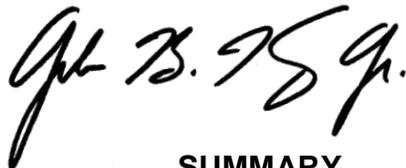




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Cosimo Tangorra, Jr.   
**SUBJECT:** Overview of the New York State School for the Blind and New York State School for the Deaf  
**DATE:** September 8, 2014

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Discussion**

With new leadership at the Department's School for the Blind and School for the Deaf, staff will discuss with the Board the unique nature of each of the schools, as well as the efforts underway to ensure a learning environment where children can achieve their full potential.

**Proposed Handling**

This item will come before the Board of Regents in the form of a slide presentation by the Superintendents at the September 2014 meeting.

**Background Information**

The New York State School for the Blind and School for the Deaf were established under the jurisdiction and control of the Education Department pursuant to Article 87 and 88 of Education Law, respectively. The P-12: Office of Special Education (OSE) has historically been given oversight and responsibility of these schools by the Commissioner of Education. OSE relies on the support of many offices within the Education Department to maintain the operation of these two facilities.

The New York State School for the Blind (NYSSB) at Batavia provides 12-month educational and residential services to students who are blind and have additional

disabilities. NYSSB offers a day program along with a five-day residential option, as well as an extended school year program during July and August. Consideration for admission to the school is given to school-age students (5 - 21 years of age) who are blind, residents of New York State and who have an additional disability. A Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), acting in coordination with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) from the district of residence, reviews the individual evaluation conducted at the school and if appropriate, recommends appointment of the student to the school and develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP). NYSSB provides instruction using the New York State standards while emphasizing self-reliance and independence both in its academic and residential program.

The New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD) at Rome provides 10 and 12-month educational and residential services to students who are deaf. NYSSD offers a deaf infant program (birth to age 3) that provides home-based services, a day program and a five-day residential option, as well as an extended school program during July and August. Consideration for admission to the school is given to students, ages 3 through 21, who are deaf and residents of New York State. A MDT, acting in coordination with the CSE from the district of residence, reviews the individual evaluation conducted at the school and if appropriate, recommends appointment of the student to the school and develops an IEP. The school offers an elementary unit that provides appropriate educational programs to students ages 3 through 13; a high school unit that provides educational services to students ages 14 through 21; an alternative education program that includes job and life skills training to transitioning students 14 through 21 years of age; a program for children with cochlear implants, along with early intervention services for deaf infants under 3 years of age; and a program for students with multiple disabilities that are eligible for the NYS Alternate Assessment. Because of the significant language deficits experienced by many students who are profoundly deaf, the program emphasizes language and literacy development throughout the academic and residential experiences. All instruction is provided in American Sign Language and/or Signed English and English to enhance the learning of English and to close the language and literacy gaps.

### **Recommendation**

The Board of Regents will continue to support the New York State School for the Blind and the New York State School for the Deaf.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

With Regents support, the described activities will continue to move forward with the resources of the Education Department to enable the schools to continue to meet the needs of the children placed directly in our care.