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What They're Saying: "Monumental"

Wednesday, August 08, 2012

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"This is a historic day for New Jersey and this new tenure law is an important step towards ensuring we have a great teacher in every classroom. After more than 100 years in existence, this Administration, Legislature and key reformers have done together what many considered to be impossible."

– Governor Chris Christie, Remarks On Signing Historic, Bipartisan Tenure Reform, August 6, 2012

Education Leaders Across New Jersey Praise Governor Christie's Signing Of Tenure Reform As "An Essential Fiber In The Fabric Of Promoting Our Schools" And "A Blueprint For Effective Public Policy"

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New Jersey Education Association President Barbara Keshishian: "The evolution of this law is a blueprint for effective public policy ..." (New Jersey Education Association, "'Win-Win' For Students, Teachers, And The Public," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Keshishian: "'We're happy to have been a part of the process that created this law ... It should go a long way to help us reach the goal of providing every child with the best teacher."

Better Education For Kids Executive Director Derrell Bradford: "This bill is monumental ... In 2009, if you told me we'd have tenure reform, I would have looked at you like you had two heads." (Heather Haddon, "Christie Hails Tenure Bill as Victory," *The Wall Street Journal*, 8/6/12)

New Jersey School Boards Association Executive Director Marie Bilik: "The new law creates an essential link between the tenure process and teacher performance. It also calls for an objective evaluation system to help ensure consistency ..." (New Jersey School Boards Association, "New Jersey School Boards Association Commends Christie, Legislators on Tenure Reform Act," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Bilik: "NJSBA thanks Governor Christie, Senator Teresa Ruiz and other legislative leaders for their work on this critical legislation ... The TEACHNJ Act represents a first step in ensuring quality instruction for all New Jersey children."

New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association Executive Director Patricia Wright: "NJPSA applauds the enactment of this vital legislation because it seeks to enhance the effectiveness of every educator working in New Jersey's public schools ..." (New Jersey School Boards Association, "New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association Statement on Enactment of Landmark Tenure Reform Legislation," Press Release, 8/6/12)

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Wright: "The legislation, coupled with the work of this Administration's Department of Education, through the Excellent Educators for New Jersey initiative (EE4NJ), are, and will, make New Jersey a national leader on ensuring that our most effective educators receive the support they need to help lead our children into the 21st century"

Wright: "[W]e believe this legislation serves as an essential fiber in the fabric of promoting our schools."

Education Commissioner Christopher Cerf: "This proves that education reform need not be a partisan issue ..."(Kate Zernike, "Christie Signs Bill Overhauling Job Guarantees for Teachers," *The New York Times*, 8/6/12)

Cerf: "For the first time we will tie the loss or acquisition of tenure to what matters most, effectiveness, especially how much students are actually learning rather than just the passing of time (seniority) ..." (Bob Jordan, "Tenure bill becomes law," *Asbury Park Press*, 8/7/12)

East Greenwich Township School Board President Adele Gallagher: "I think four years is fair. Everyone gets reviewed. If you are not a good teacher or not doing your job then you should not be kept ... But it also gives them a chance to correct any problems there may be." (Melissa DiPento, "School officials, teachers unions respond to Christie's tenure reform legislation," *Gloucester County Times*, 8/7/12)

Delsea Regional Superintendent Dr. Piera Gravenor: "It will be nice for the public to know that when a teacher is here and they have tenure, it's because of their quality of work." (Melissa DiPento, "School officials, teachers unions respond to Christie's tenure reform legislation," *Gloucester County Times*, 8/7/12)

Gravenor: "I think it's a big change for New Jersey, and I'm excited to see how it works ..."

Legislators

Senator Teresa Ruiz (D-Essex): "It was about what I thought was right and what we know, that the teacher has the greatest impact on our children and what happens in the classroom." (John Mooney, "Compromise, Caffeine, and Trade-Offs: Behind NJ's New Tenure Reform Bill," *NJ Spotlight*, 8/7/12)

Senator Kevin O'Toole (R-Bergen): "[This] landmark achievement of bipartisanship was made possible in large part by Gov. Christie's fierce leadership and sponsor Senator Ruiz helping to propel students' needs in front of special political interests." (Jarrett Renshaw, "Gov. Christie hails signing of tenure reform bill as 'a great day for good teachers'," *The Star-Ledger*, 8/7/12)

Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan (D-Middlesex): "This is meaningful tenure reform that does what's best for our children while balancing the protection of due process for our principals and teachers." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Diegnan: "Our focus will be where it should be - making sure we have the best teachers in the classroom."

Assemblyman Ralph Caputo (D-Essex): "This is a significant step toward creating a sustained process to expeditiously remove ineffective teachers from our schools." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Assemblyman Albert Coutinho (D-Essex): "The winners today are students and taxpayers." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Coutinho: "These reforms will ensure that our students have the best and most effective teachers in the classroom and that taxpayer money isn't wasted on a long and arduous process of removing the ineffective ones."

Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-Mercer): "This is sensible tenure reform that ensures only the best teachers will be in our classrooms ... We're streamlining the process but also ensuring fairness, and in the end our children win." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Assemblyman Craig Coughlin (D-Middlesex): "This reform emphasizes quality teaching and ensures only the best for our students." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Assemblywoman Mila Jasey (D-Essex/Morris): "These historic reforms balance the needs of our students while ensuring that teachers are treated fairly ... This will help us remove any 'bad apples' swiftly while, at the same time, making sure good teachers aren't unfairly targeted for political reasons or otherwise. In the end, it's the students who will win out." (Assembly Democrats, "Diegnan, Caputo, Coutinho, Jasey, Watson Coleman & Coughlin Tenure Reform Bill Now Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Assemblyman Jay Webber (R-Morris, Essex and Passaic): "New Jersey's education system has taken a giant leap into the 21st century ... This new measure will go a long way in ensuring that students will now have the most qualified

teachers in their classrooms." (Assembly Republicans, "Webber Tenure Reform Bill Signed Into Law," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Webber: "For years, we have had a system that rewards mediocre teacher performance and offers no reward for excellence. That was unfair to good teachers, their students, parents, and taxpayers, and it was past time for reform."

Senator Joe Kyrillos (R-Monmouth): "Congratulations to Governor Christie, Senator Ruiz, Senator O'Toole and other colleagues for making this significant bipartisan step toward overhauling New Jersey's antiquated tenure laws." (Senate Republicans, "Kyrillos: Full Tenure Reform Improves Education, Lowers Taxes," Press Release, 8/6/12)

Newspapers

Los Angeles Times: "New Jersey's Fairer Way To Fire Teachers" (Editorial, "New Jersey's fairer way to fire teachers," *Los Angeles Times*, 8/8/12)

"[J]ust this week, the state of New Jersey proved that it doesn't have to be difficult to be fair to teachers while weeding the ineffective ones from the classroom."

"Such reform requires a governor who is dedicated to the welfare of students; Christie has made education a cornerstone of his administration, while California Gov. Jerry Brown has yet to articulate a set of educational priorities."

"Ousting teachers in California is protracted, expensive and nearly impossible. Here's a better way."

The New York Post: "Christie Delivers" (Editorial, "Christie Delivers," *The New York Post*, 8/8/12)

"Now, incredibly, Jersey has a beefed-up law that passed with bipartisan political support and the teachers union's blessing."

"Christie's triumph shows that it's possible to make teachers more accountable, and with their union's blessing."

The New York Times: "It will be harder for public-school teachers in New Jersey to get tenure and easier to fire bad ones under legislation signed on Monday by Gov. Chris Christie that overhauls the state's century-old tenure law." (Kate Zernike, "Christie Signs Bill Overhauling Job Guarantees for Teachers," *The New York Times*, 8/6/12)

The Wall Street Journal: "[The bill] marks a significant shift in the nation's oldest teacher job-security law, requiring all teachers to undergo annual performance reviews and making it easier to fire poorly performing educators." (Heather Haddon, "Christie Hails Tenure Bill as Victory," *The Wall Street Journal*, 8/6/12)

"Education policy observers said the law signed Monday was most significant for where it occurred: in a blue, East Coast state with a strong organized-labor movement and a Legislature controlled by Democrats."

The Philadelphia Inquirer: "The bill-signing at a middle school in central New Jersey was a historic moment, marking the state's most significant changes to teacher-tenure rules in a century." (Matt Katz, "Teacher-tenure law helps bridge gap between Christie and union leaders," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/7/12)

The Associated Press: "The changes are the largest ever to job protections for New Jersey public-school educators since New Jersey became the first state with a teacher-tenure law more than a century ago." (Angela Delli Santi, "Christie Signs Major Teacher-Tenure Overhaul," *The Associated Press*, 8/6/12)

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