



Debbie Lubben
Special Education Chair
February 2017 Report

This year has brought the country a new president. As new president he nominated a new Secretary of Education. As we all know this was a hot topic through out the country. His nominee was Betsy DeVos from Michigan. The vote came down to a 50/50 split in the Senate which left Vice-President Pence the deciding vote to confirm Ms. Devos into the position of Education Secretary. The two republican senators that voted with the democrats: were Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Senator Susan Collins of Maine. As reported in the New York Times: *Senator Collins said, "She respects Ms. DeVos's clear devotion to students and "valuable work" in education. But she said she remained troubled by Ms. DeVos's focus on alternatives to public education,as well as what Ms. Collins called a "lack of familiarity" with federal laws protecting children with special needs and disabilities".* The article can be found at www.nytimes.com/2017/02/01/us/politics/trump-cabinet-nominations-senate.html.

As we know students with special needs are protected with certain rights under the federal IDEA laws. The NYS PTA in the January edition of Advocacy Newsbrief printed the following: *Students with disabilities who are enrolled in either public charter schools or traditional public schools have important rights guaranteed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). For further information can go to the following link <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201612-504-charter-school.pdf>*

As this year progresses we will continue to have to watch and advocate for our children with special needs as well as all children in order to provide them with an appropriate education.

NYS PTA NEWS

The January edition of the Advocacy Newsbrief is currently on the NYSPTA website. There is valuable information about the civil right for students with special needs, juveniles in correction facilities being identified with special needs, CURES Act (Part of the bill will allow individuals with disabilities who are competent the ability to create their own special needs trust (SNT), without having to go to court or rely on family members to do so) and information from the

Board of Regents about approved changes to regulations relating to topics that impact students with disabilities. For further information please go to

<http://www.nyspta.org/Advocacy/ANewsbriefs-0117.cfm#SpecialEducation>