



Gerry Bringmann
Legislative Advocacy Chair – Advocacy Team
gerardbringmann@gmail.com
legislature@suffolkpta.org

Report of November 18, 2019

The NYS Legislature remains relatively quiet, as our State Senators & Assemblymen won't be back in Albany until early January. On the County level, 17 of 18 incumbent Legislators, as well as County Executive Steve Bellone, won re-election. The one exception being William Lindsay, who was beaten by Anthony Piccirillo in the 8th District. While the Republicans picked up a seat this year, the Democrats still hold a (10-8) majority.

However, there are some updates & developments of interest to report:

- **Banning the Sale of Flavored Vaping Products** – While Suffolk County has made no recent movement to move a bill regarding this from the Health Committee to the full County Legislature for a vote, there has been considerable discussion regarding this on the State level. In fact, the NYS Senate Democrats held a hearing in Manhattan on Nov. 4th to hear testimony from students, experts and medical professionals about the dangers posed by these products. There is a major concern about the alarming rise in the number of teens vaping and bills limiting kid friendly flavors will likely be introduced when the State Legislators go back into session. In a related move, the House of Representatives Ways & Means Committee approved a bill sponsored by Representatives Suozzi & King, that would impose a federal tax on e-cigarettes roughly equal to that on tobacco. The measure now goes to the full House for a vote. It is hoped that the increased cost will help decrease youth vaping.
- **NYS Raised the Age of Cigarettes & Vaping Products to 21 Years Old** – This law, that passed during the last legislative session, just took effect last week on Wednesday, Nov. 13th.
- **Banning Tackle Football Under 13** – The State Assembly recently heard arguments on both sides of a heated debate regarding the banning of tackle football for children under the age of 13. It's still too early to tell if the John Mackey Youth Football Protection Act will gain any traction.
- **School Bus Cameras** – While Suffolk County has yet to follow Nassau County's lead in approving these cameras, Senator Chuck Schumer is pushing for a release of a federal report on the effectiveness of installing cameras on school busses to catch drivers who illegally pass these vehicles. The study could result in the release of federal monies to help fund this program.
- **Distribution of State Aid** – The NYS Senate is holding a series of invitation only discussions throughout New York State with Education Leaders, including one recently held here on Long Island. The discussions are focused on Foundation Aid, in part to deal with frustrations over the disparities between rich & poor districts. It remains to be seen at this time, if any changes will be made in the distribution formulas.
- **Assemblyman Joe DeStefano's Legislative Forum** – The Assemblyman is holding a public meeting this evening in Patchogue to discuss some controversial bills that are going to be under discussion in Albany during the upcoming legislative session. I would ask that we all push our State Senators & Assembly Members to hold meetings such as this so that they can hear, directly, the views of their constituents on proposed legislation. **The bills being discussed include:**

- **Bill S298B/A2912** – which would make Gardasil (HPV vaccine) mandatory for all children born after January 1, 2009 to attend school. It should be noted that HPV is non-communicable in a school setting.
- **Bill S3899/A937** – allows minors (boys & girls) to be given vaccines for sexual transmitted diseases without parental knowledge or consent.
- **Bill S2276/A2316** – makes annual flu shots mandatory for children to attend pre-school and/or daycare
- **Bill S4244/A6564** – would allow various vaccines to be administered without parental permission.

Still looking to hear back from some more School Districts that have a Legislative Committee. If possible, please report back to me on what issues your District views as their Legislative Priorities. I did hear back from Middle Country (& opened a line of communication with Islip) and hope to hear back from a few more to get a good sense of what our local districts are looking for legislatively.

As always, should anyone wish to get in contact me regarding any Federal, State or County legislative issues, please know the best way to get in touch is via email. My email address is **gerardbringmann@gmail.com**

Respectfully submitted ... Gerry Bringmann