

# A winning formula

Growing the seeds of excellent teaching  
in New York State



#### TODAY'S REALITY

New teachers enter the classroom **without a lot of real experience** teaching kids.

#### HOW GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EDUCATION PLAN

#### HELPS NEW YORK'S KIDS

Gov. Cuomo's plan creates a teaching residency program that combines graduate coursework with a full year of classroom experience, similar to the way doctors are trained.

#### WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK

- ➔ Graduates of the Boston Teacher Residency, a full-year residency program, outperform veteran teachers in math instruction by their fifth year in the classroom.<sup>1</sup>
- ➔ In top-performing Finland, teachers get a full year of residency experience before entering the classroom.<sup>2</sup>



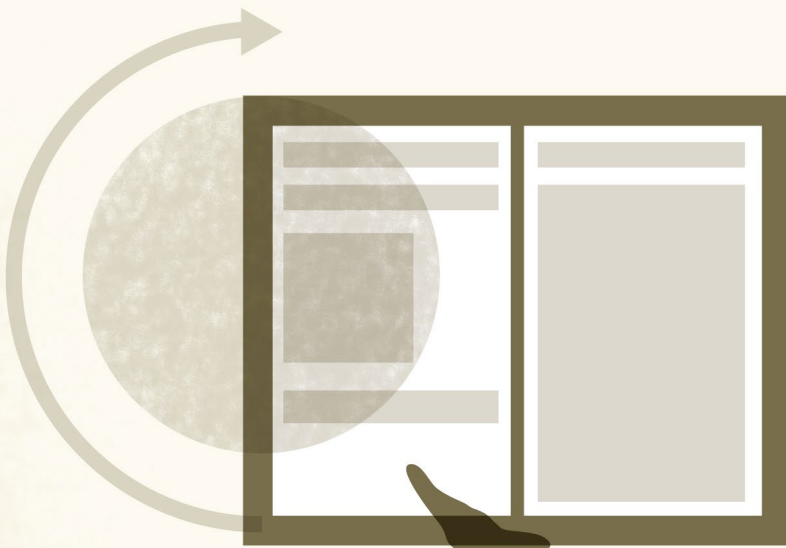
## TODAY'S REALITY

**Only 31 percent of New York students were proficient in reading and math in 2013, but 94 percent of evaluated teachers were rated effective.<sup>3</sup>**

## HOW GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EDUCATION PLAN

### HELPS NEW YORK'S KIDS

Gov. Cuomo's plan ensures teacher evaluations are based on fair, accurate measures of teachers' performance in the classroom. These measures will show us who needs help, who is effective and who isn't. Local evaluation measures that have been inflating teacher evaluation scores<sup>4</sup> will be replaced by a system where half of the evaluation is based on a strong measure of student learning growth (progress over a year) and half is based on traditional observations by both principals and neutral observers.



## WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK

➔ Research supports basing one-third to one-half of a teacher's evaluation score on student growth on the state assessment. A three-year study of 3,000 teachers in seven districts found that this approach makes evaluations strongly predictive of future student achievement in a teacher's classroom and produces reliable evaluations from year to year.<sup>5</sup>

## TODAY'S REALITY

New York teachers are **eligible for tenure after only three years on the job.**<sup>6</sup> Although tenure amounts to lifetime job protection, it is given to almost all eligible teachers outside of New York City (which changed its tenure rules in 2009–2010), regardless of whether they are effective in the classroom.<sup>7</sup>

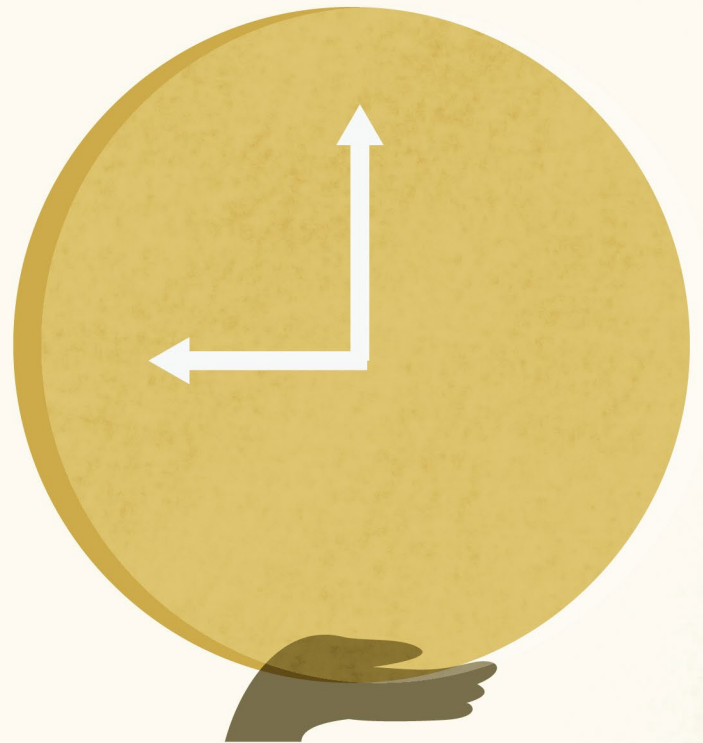
## HOW GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EDUCATION PLAN

### HELPS NEW YORK'S KIDS

Gov. Cuomo's plan makes getting tenure a reward for great teaching, rather than just for time served. Teachers will receive tenure after demonstrating consistent effectiveness over a five-year period.

### WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK

- ➔ A national survey of 10,000 public school teachers found that, on average, teachers think they should be eligible for tenure after 5.4 years on the job.<sup>8</sup>
- ➔ Since 2009–2010, New York City has required principals to consider teacher effectiveness when making tenure recommendations to the district. As a result, fewer teachers have received tenure. More importantly, non-tenured teachers have been more likely to leave their schools and be replaced by a more effective teacher.<sup>9</sup>



## TODAY'S REALITY

### Removing poorly performing teachers from the classroom is expensive and labor-intensive.

Hearings take an average of 190 days in New York City and 177 days in the rest of the state.<sup>10</sup> This system leaves students in classrooms with chronically ineffective teachers for months. Even when teachers are found guilty of incompetence or misconduct, they are rarely removed from the classroom.<sup>11</sup>



## HOW GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EDUCATION PLAN

### HELPS NEW YORK'S KIDS

Gov. Cuomo's plan streamlines teacher due process hearings<sup>12</sup> and creates an expedited hearing process for teachers accused of physically or sexually abusing students. It will get rid of the requirement that districts try to rehabilitate teachers found guilty of incompetence or misconduct before removing them from the classroom. Most importantly, the plan will make it illegal to assign a student to an ineffective teacher for two school years in a row.

## WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK

- ➔ Our least effective teachers produce only one-half to two-thirds of a year of student learning in one school year.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, students who are already behind are the most likely to be taught by ineffective teachers.<sup>14</sup> Making it easier to remove these teachers will boost student outcomes, especially for our most vulnerable kids. Research shows that removing an ineffective teacher can increase students' collective lifetime earnings by hundreds of thousands of dollars.<sup>15</sup>
- ➔ Being placed with an effective teacher for consecutive years can help a low-income student overcome the achievement gap.<sup>16</sup> Being placed with an ineffective teacher for consecutive years can do just the opposite, leading to larger achievement gaps for our most vulnerable students.<sup>17</sup> Making this practice illegal will prevent that from happening.
- ➔ Among New York City teachers who were found guilty of incompetent teaching, verbal abuse, excessive absence and/or hitting students between 1997 and 2007, three out of every five were returned to the classroom. Over this time period, only 61 total teachers (or 0.008 percent of NYC's annual teaching force) were removed for poor performance.<sup>18</sup>



## TODAY'S REALITY

**New York does little to reward its best teachers** or to encourage them to work where they are needed most: in struggling schools.

## HOW GOVERNOR CUOMO'S EDUCATION PLAN

### HELPS NEW YORK'S KIDS

Gov. Cuomo's plan creates a \$20 million Teacher Excellence Fund that will provide highly effective teachers up to \$20,000 in annual supplemental compensation. Districts, with the agreement of teachers' unions, will apply to participate in the Fund. They will be selected based on factors including whether the district will use the funds to encourage highly effective teachers to work in struggling schools.

## WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK

- ➔ In Tennessee, top-performing teachers in low-performing schools were more likely to stay in their schools when provided a \$5,000 retention bonus (equivalent to a 10 percent salary increase for teachers in these schools).<sup>19</sup>
- ➔ A federal program that offered highly effective teachers \$20,000 to switch to a hard-to-staff school for at least two years resulted in nine out of every 10 targeted vacancies being filled by these top-performing teachers. Reading and math achievement improved more in schools that received these teachers than in similar schools that did not.<sup>20</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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7. "New York Lawsuit," Partnership for Educational Justice, accessed February 23, 2015, <http://www.edjustice.org/projects/new-york-lawsuit/>. Prior to New York City's implementation of a new teacher tenure system in 2009-2010, 94 percent of eligible teachers were receiving tenure. See Susanna Loeb, Luke C. Miller and James Wyckoff, "Working Paper: Performance Screens for School Improvement: The Case of Teacher Tenure Reform in New York City," EdPolicyWorks, University of Virginia (September 2014), p. 3, accessed February 23, 2015, [http://curry.virginia.edu/uploads/resourceLibrary/31\\_Teacher\\_Tenure\\_Reform\\_in\\_NYC.pdf](http://curry.virginia.edu/uploads/resourceLibrary/31_Teacher_Tenure_Reform_in_NYC.pdf).
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