



Via Regular and Electronic Mail

6 February 2019

Commissioner Lamont Repollet, Ed.D.
New Jersey Department of Education
P. O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

Dear Commissioner Repollet:

I write on behalf of We Raise New Jersey to urge that you seek immediately a legislative remedy to the December Appellate Court decision concerning New Jersey's high school graduation requirement.

It is our understanding that the remedy embodied in Senate bill 3381 and Assembly bill 4957, sponsored by Senator M. Teresa Ruiz and Assemblywoman Pamela R. Lampitt respectively, were the products of deliberations between the Murphy Administration and the sponsors, who are the chairwomen of their houses' Education Committees.

We believe that the legislation is the right response to the court decision and will avert the chaos that will result in the absence of legislative action.

We commend you and the sponsors for devising this response swiftly. As Senator Ruiz correctly stated at the 28 January Senate Budget Committee meeting at which her bill was scheduled to be considered, the bill preserves and authorizes the regulations that were the product of the State Board of Education's thoughtful deliberations. Furthermore, with the necessary legislative authorization, the regulations can be implemented without causing any disruption for students, families, and high schools.

Consequently, we were perplexed and disappointed by the Murphy Administration's decision to request a delay in Senate bill 3381's consideration. Regardless of the action that the Appellate Court may take in response to the motion before it, *legislation is needed*. We do not understand, therefore, the rationale for requesting the delay. We are concerned too that the delay exposes the 2019 and 2020 graduating classes to unnecessary risks.

We believe that the need for immediate legislative action is undeniable. Accordingly, we ask that the Murphy Administration seek the assistance of Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Coughlin to pass the Ruiz and Lampitt bills before the Legislature suspends its regular activities while hearings on the State Budget take place.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gregg M. Edwards'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregg M. Edwards
Executive Director
We Raise New Jersey

cc: Hon. Stephen M. Sweeney,
President, New Jersey Senate
Hon. Craig J. Coughlin,
Speaker, New Jersey General Assembly
Hon. M. Teresa Ruiz,
Member, New Jersey Senate
Hon. Pamela R. Lampitt,
Member, New Jersey General Assembly
Hon. Thomas H. Kean, Jr.,
Senate Republican Leader
Hon. Jon M. Bramnick,
Assembly Republican Leader
Salma Chand, Esq.
Associate Counsel, Office of the Governor
Cary Booker II,
Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
Members, New Jersey State Board of Education

About Us:

We Raise NJ is a diverse coalition of New Jersey organizations and associations that are united in our belief that New Jersey students need and deserve a world-class education to effectively compete and succeed in our rapidly changing world. Our coalition organizes the power of each member organization into a collective voice to advocate for high-quality academic standards and aligned assessments, and to ensure that every child is prepared for college, career, and active citizenship in our communities. Coalition members include the New Jersey PTA, JerseyCAN, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, the New Jersey Business & Industry Association, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, and the New Jersey Charter Schools Association. Learn more at <http://weraisenj.org/> and see our [principles regarding state tests](#).