



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Suzi Oppenheimer

Senate Passes Legislation Allowing for School Closure Due to H1N1 Virus

SUZI OPPENHEIMER July 29, 2009

| COMMITTEE: **EDUCATION**

Senate Education Committee Chair, Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck), announced Senate passage of S.5462-A (Oppenheimer) relating to school closures due to the H1N1 flu virus (also known as the “swine flu”).

State law requires that schools remain open for instruction a minimum of 180 days in order to maintain eligibility for state financial aid. Many schools have experienced unanticipated closures this year due to the recent outbreaks of the H1N1 virus. Given the timing of these outbreaks, schools have had little flexibility to make up lost instructional days.

S.5462-A, introduced by Senator Oppenheimer, authorizes the State Education Commissioner to disregard any deficiency in the required number of school session days for schools that were forced to close during the 2008-09 school year due to an H1N1 outbreak.

“This legislation will prevent schools from losing state education aid as a result of H1N1-related school closures,” said Senator Oppenheimer. “Schools should not be penalized financially for trying to protect the health and safety of their students and staff. I am pleased to have sponsored this legislation, which passed the State Assembly (A.8710-Nolan) on June 22nd and was signed into law by the Governor on July 11, 2009.”