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**Testimony Regarding NJ QSAC**  
**By: Melanie Schulz, NJASA Director of Government Relations**  
**Joint Committee on Public Schools**

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Senator Rice, Assemblywoman Jasey and Members of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools:

On behalf of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), I would like to thank you for inviting our voice to your table this morning to discuss New Jersey's school monitoring law and Regulations.

I want to take some time during my testimony today to talk about the development of school district monitoring and how we got to the NJ QSAC process.

The Joint Committee on the Public Schools has a long history of discussing school monitoring. This has been written into the statutes for the purpose of having legislative responsibility regarding notice from the Executive Branch when the State Board of Education issues an administrative order to establish a district under full intervention, as well as timely updates on the status of those districts from the Commissioner of Education.

In 1991, (then) NJ Governor Jim Florio, signed a law to strengthen the school district monitoring system as well as the performance standards for evaluating public schools.

In addition, the new law created a Task Force on Educational Assessment and Monitoring and that group of 17, appointed by Commissioner of Education, Dr. John Ellis, worked for about 8 months to create the monitoring process that directly preceded the creation of NJ QSAC.

During this time, monitoring was suspended for 2 years.

At that time, both Jersey City and Paterson were in State Takeover.

When the new process was implemented, school districts had to have verified achievement on indicators for student performance, governance, program reviews and analysis of data through an on-site visit.

There were various levels of certification and this process also laid the groundwork for the eventual adoption of State standards for curriculum. The first set of curriculum standards were adopted in 1996.

While that monitoring law was implemented for over 10 years, in the early 2000s it became apparent that this statute needed updating.

Senator Rice, you were the primary sponsor of this effort in 2004 along with Senator Tom Kean, Jr.

The NJ Quality Single Accountability Continuum was a truly bipartisan effort (passing the Senate 40-0 and the Assembly 73-4-2).

While these statutes and all the amended versions are well intended and based on good effort, the consequences in the field always manifest themselves in a truly burdensome and time-consuming process.

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, technology has advanced to the point where school districts should not be so overburdened. Access to data should be seamless between districts and the NJ DOE. School districts provide massive amounts of information and data to the Department of Education annually that should be readily and remotely available to NJ QSAC reviewers.

I would ask that this legislative body support a review of the technology landscape at the NJ DOE and how information is passed and accessed between districts and the Department.

My members are here today to give you an up-close view of how their time and that of their faculty is diminished from the instructional day when they undergo a QSAC evaluation.

Thank you for allowing us to present on this vital topic.