



**Office of
General Services**

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**FREE MONTHLY SATURDAY TOURS OF STATE EDUCATION BUILDING
AND NEW YORK STATE CAPITOL TO BEGIN AUGUST 12**

Regular Education Building tours being offered to the public for the first time

State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia and State Office of General Services Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced visitors to Albany will now have the opportunity to take free tours of both the State Education Building and the Capitol on the second Saturday of each month, starting August 12. Tours of the Education Building will be offered at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., and tours of the Capitol will be given at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Each of the tours can accommodate 25 people and reservations are required. Reservations can be made at: www.empirestateplaza.org. Visitors can choose to register for both or either the State Education Building tour and/or the New York State Capitol tour.

“We’re pleased to open the State Education Building for free, regular public tours for the first time,” said Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa. “The Education Building was a modern marvel when it was built over 100 years ago and continues to amaze and delight today with its stunning architecture, art and history. I encourage adults, families and students to register for a tour and learn about this grand, historic building.”

“The State Education Building is a magnificent architectural gem and we’re proud to open it to public tours,” said State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia. “The building is full of history and intricate details that the public deserves to see and appreciate. We’re also pleased to work with the State Office of General Services to promote this tour and give visitors an opportunity to spend an afternoon exploring the historic State Capitol and State Education Building.”

“We are very pleased to collaborate with our colleagues at the State Education Department to make the best use of public facilities and expand opportunities for the people who come from around the world to see all the wonderful things New York’s capital city has to offer,” State Office of General Services Commissioner RoAnn Destito said. “Tours of the Education Building will nicely complement our award-winning Capitol and Empire State Plaza tours, and I urge everyone to come and see and learn about these architectural gems.”

New York State Museum staff will lead the 45-minute Education Building tour, and visitors will have the opportunity to explore the historic Chancellors Hall, Regents Room and the Rotunda adorned with murals by Albany native Will H. Low. The State Education Building is located at 89 Washington Avenue, Albany. This is the first time the building has been made available for regular public tours since the State Museum and Library were moved from the Education Building to the Cultural Education Center in the 1970s.

State Capitol tours conducted by the State Office of General Services begin at the Empire State Plaza Visitor Center, located on the Concourse level of the Plaza. Highlights of the tour can include the legislative chambers, Hall of Governors, Governor’s Reception Room, Hall of New York, historic staircases and carvings.

The New York State Education Building was designed by renowned New York City architect, Henry Hornbostel, one of 63 architects to submit plans, and was constructed by the Rochester firm R. T. Ford and Company. Construction began in 1908 and the building was dedicated in 1912. At the time, the cost to construct the building amounted to approximately \$4 million and covered everything from the purchase of the land to building construction. The Education Building was the first major building constructed in the United States solely as a headquarters for the administration of education. In addition to State Education Department staff, the Education Building originally housed the State Library and State Museum—now currently in the Cultural Education Center.

Sitting atop Albany’s State Street hill, the New York State Capitol has served as the seat of government for New York since the 1880s. The building is a marvel of late 19th century architectural grandeur, built by hand of solid masonry over a period of 32 years.

More information on the history of the State Education Building is available here:
<http://www.nysed.gov/nysed-building>.

Photos of the State Education Building are available here:
<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/about/press/kits/new-york-state-education-building-photos>.

Visit the Office of General Services website for more information about weekday tours, special exhibits and the history of the Capitol, Empire State Plaza, and the Empire State Plaza Art Collection: www.empirestateplaza.org.