

Lawyer gets Regents term

Rochester's Brown given 5 more years

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ALBANY - The former head of the Ithaca teachers union was appointed Tuesday to the state's education policy board, while a Rochester lawyer was reappointed to a new five-year term.

Susan Mittler, who led the Ithaca Teachers Association from 1994 to 2012, was elected Tuesday to the state Board of Regents by Democrats in the state Legislature, who provided her with ample votes without Republican support. Democratic lawmakers also approved T. Andrew Brown, a Rochester-based lawyer, and Manhattan's Nan Eileen Mead for new terms. "(Mittler) knows well that if we want the best for our children, we have to recruit, train and then continue supporting excellent teachers who know their field and care deeply about children," said Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, an Ithaca Democrat who nominated Mittler for the post.

The Board of Regents sets education policy in the state. The powerful board has received increasing attention with the rollout of the Common Core education standards in recent years. The 17-member board is picked by a joint session of the state Legislature. But Senate Republicans have traditionally boycotted the vote since the process is controlled by Democrats, who control a majority of the 213 legislative seats. Regents are elected to five-year terms, and three districts were up for election this year. The vote had been set for last week, but was postponed by the recent winter storm.

Mittler, who taught for 33 years in Ithaca schools, was selected to replace James Tallon of Binghamton, a former state assemblyman and current president of the University Hospital Fund.

Tallon declined to seek a fourth, five-year term this year. He was honored with an Assembly resolution following the vote for Mittler.

Mittler will represent the state's sixth judicial district, which stretches across the Southern Tier and into the Catskills.

Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, D-Endwell, Broome County, said Mittler has "distinguished qualifications." "We are so honored that she is joining the regents and we look forward to having a very long and productive working relationship with her in the future," said Lupardo, who seconded Mittler's nomination.

Brown, meanwhile, will return to the Board of Regents for a second term. He was first elected in 2012, and previously served as an attorney for the city of Rochester and Monroe County. Brown became the vice chancellor of the board—the second-ranking position—last year, when Betty

Rosa was elevated to chancellor after Merryl Tisch declined to seek re-election.

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Susan Mittler, right, after she was voted to the Board of Regents on Tuesday. She sat with James Tallon, whom she is replacing on the board, and Chancellor Betty Rosa, left.

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