

Kon  
Jane  
Rachelle  
Rebekah  
Tom

**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



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TRANSPORTATION

**SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE  
48TH DISTRICT  
OSWEGO, JEFFERSON, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTIES**

April 12, 2016

Thomas R. Burns  
District Superintendent/Executive Officer  
St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES  
Educational Services Center  
P.O. Box 231 - 40 W. Main Street  
Canton, NY 13617

Dear Mr. Burns:

I want to thank you for hosting me at the Learning Farm for the announcement of \$200,000 I secured in new state funding for the "North Country Agricultural Studies Academy."

This ambitious and innovative program will give future farmers and ag professionals the hands-on lessons and experience they need to launch their successful careers or continue their education. It's also a perfect complement to the work that BOCES is already doing to help expand opportunities for our students and communities.

As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I've been focused on finding ways to strengthen family farming in New York, and the Ag Academy is a perfect fit for that effort to entice a new generation of farmers. I applaud your vision and willingness to work collaboratively to make the Academy a reality, and I look forward to joining with you again to see fruits of your hard work when classes get underway.

Congratulations to you and all the leaders and staff at CCE and BOCES, and best wishes for the success of the North Country Agricultural Studies Academy.

Sincerely,

Senator Patty Ritchie

P.S. The new North Country Agricultural Studies Academy has potential to become a model for our entire state in ways that rural communities and groups can come together to develop innovative new educational opportunities for students and future leaders. I've enclosed a video from my recent announcement and visit to the Academy. I hope you find it informative.

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