

By KESHIA CLUKEY • October 31, 2016

## Zimpher says she's not been approached about Clinton job



Zimpher speaks on education at the White House in 2014.  
AP Photo/Charles Dharapak

MANHATTAN — Nancy Zimpher, the outgoing State University system chancellor, says her next career move won't fit into a "particular box."

That move, which she has not yet divulged in detail, could potentially take her into a post at the federal level, especially if Hillary Clinton wins the presidential election.

In an interview with POLITICO New York, Zimpher said her work with SUNY is not done.

"I've been in the profession long enough, working almost 40 years, that I feel welcomed on many fronts," Zimpher said following a SUNYCON event Friday in Manhattan.

She said her next job will likely be a hybrid of advocacy and higher education work, as a leader and faculty member.

"I don't need a particular box to fit into as long as the work is compelling," she said.

Zimpher, who in May announced she would be stepping down from the leadership role in June 2017, said she's heard the rumors about her name being mentioned for the next president's cabinet, should Clinton be elected. But said she has not yet been approached by anyone about that possibility.

And there is much work still to be done in New York, she said, as well as with a number of initiatives she has been working on nationally.

"I'm not worried," she added. "I don't think I'll be bored."

Zimpher plans to continue working on the multi-phase TeachNY effort launched this year to increase teacher recruitment efforts, improve teacher preparation and invest in professional development. State education leaders will

talk about TeachNY at four national meetings this year, she said.

"Those are things that would probably either need regulatory input from the state Education Department and or legislative input, so that's lots of work," Zimpher said. "We want some new policies this year, but we have to go beyond."

She also plans to continue work with the SUNY Completion Agenda, which under her tenure has set a target for awarding 150,000 degrees system-wide per year by 2025 — a significant jump from the nearly 96,000 awarded in the 2015-16 school year.

Zimpher also would like to continue work on remediation and "innovative practices," such as the University at Buffalo's "Finish in 4" initiative, which involves increasing resources for and communication with students to help them graduate on time. The program has since been replicated at several other campuses.

"I can, as a faculty member continue to engage in those initiatives," she said.

Zimpher does not plan, however, to be solely tied to New York State.

She plans to continue her work with The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network, which she co-founded. The national network, with partnerships across 69 cities, is focused on building community engagement to boost education from early childhood to when they enter the workforce. The network includes several locations in New York State, and is based in Cincinnati, where Zimpher has family and purchased a high-end condo in 2015.

"I'm a pretty mobile person," she said Friday. "Really, all of SUNY trains teachers from our community colleges to our four-year to our doctoral institutions, so that's work that's just distributed across the state, then back in Ohio is the headquarters for StriveTogether," she said. "So I know a lot of ways that I can continue to stay connected."

Though there are many factors that could change in the next eight months, including the coming presidential election, the outgoing chancellor made plain that she has no intention of retiring, and she's not leaving the field.

"Clearly I'm an educator," Zimpher said. "This is what I'm going to do, this is what I have done, this is what I know how to do. And I can do it in lots of different places."

*Benjamin Wermund contributed reporting.*