



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Interim Commissioner of Education
President of the University of the State of New York
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December 30, 2020

Ms. Regina Armstrong, Superintendent
Hempstead Union Free School District
185 Peninsula Boulevard
Hempstead, NY 11550

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

I am writing to inform you that, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 19 of the Laws of 2020, the academic and financial plans submitted by the monitor to the commissioner on December 1, 2020 and approved by the board of education of the Hempstead Union Free School District (the district) on December 5, 2020 have been received and may now be implemented by the district.

The next steps in the process will be as follows:

- District Budget:
 - The board of education will submit the district's proposed budget for the 2021-22 school year to the monitor no later than March 1, 2021. The monitor will review the proposed budget to ensure that it is balanced within the context of reasonable revenue and expenditure estimates and the provision of all mandated programs.
 - The monitor will also review the proposed budget to ensure that it, to the greatest extent possible, is consistent with the district's financial plan.
 - The monitor will present written findings on these matters to the board of education and the commissioner no later than forty-five days prior to the date scheduled for the district's annual budget vote. Over the next weeks, the New York State Education Department ("the Department") will provide guidelines regarding the process by which proposed budgets will be reviewed.
 - The commissioner may require the board of education to make amendments to the proposed budget consistent with any recommendations made by the monitor if the commissioner determines such amendments are necessary to comply with the financial plan and the law.
 - The district is required to make public the initial proposed budget, the monitor's findings, and the final proposed budget on the district's website

- at least seven calendar days prior to the date of the district's budget hearing.
 - In the event it is necessary for the board of education to conduct subsequent votes on the budget, the board of education, in conjunction with the monitor, shall develop and submit the district's revised budget for the 2021-22 school year to the commissioner no later than seven calendar days prior to the budget hearing.
 - Should the commissioner or her designee request additional information, the board of education shall promptly provide such information within three business days of such request.
- Required Reports:
 - The district will provide quarterly reports to the monitor and annual reports to the commissioner and the Board of Regents concerning the academic, fiscal, and operational status of the district as follows:
 - February 15, 2021 for the period from October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020;
 - May 15, 2021 for the period from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021;
 - August 15, 2021 for the period from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 which will incorporate the quarterly report for that period.
 - The monitor will provide semi-annual reports to the commissioner, who will provide them to the Board of Regents, the Governor, and the Legislature. Semi-annual reports shall include a listing of all the contracts into which the district entered throughout the year. These reports are due to the commissioner as follows:
 - March 15, 2021 for the period from July 1 – December 31 and
 - September 15, 2021 for the period from January 1 – June 30,
- Annual Plan Updates
 - The monitor will work with the district to annually update the academic and fiscal plans. Additional information and guidelines about how this process will proceed going forward will be provided by the department later this school year.

Please note that with the approval of these plans, the state monitor has the authority to:

- Recommend cost saving measures including, but not limited to, shared service agreements, that the board of education must consider by vote of a resolution at the next scheduled meeting of the board,
- Notify the board of education and the commissioner in writing when the district is deemed by the monitor to be violating an element of the plans. Within twenty days of such notice, the commissioner will determine whether the district is in violation of any of the elements of the plans as reported by the monitor and if warranted, will order the district to comply immediately with the plan and remedy any such violation.

The district must suspend all actions related to the reported violation of the plans pending a determination by the commissioner

The fiscal plan that has been agreed upon by the monitor and district acknowledges the likelihood that out-year budgets cannot be balanced, as required by law, without reductions in expenditures and/or increases in revenue. At our next quarterly meeting, we will expect the district to submit its contingency proposals for addressing any potential budget deficits that could occur in the 2020-21 and/or 2021-22 school years.

If you have any questions regarding your role and responsibilities in implementing the district's plans, please contact Deputy Commissioner Kim Wilkins.

We congratulate you on the progress to date and look forward to working with you as the process proceeds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Betty A. Rosa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Betty A. Rosa
Interim Commissioner

c: Lamont Johnson
William Johnson
John D'Agati
Kim Wilkins