



**LEVITTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Levittown Memorial Education Center  
150 Abbey Lane  
Levittown, NY 11756



October 28, 2024

**Board of Education**

Jennifer Messina, President  
Peggy Marengi, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Christina Lang, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Marianne Adrian  
Phyllis Dalton  
James Moran  
Michael Pappas

Mr. David Frank  
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Education Policy  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 112 E  
Albany, NY 12234

We are writing to express our deep concerns regarding the recently adopted regionalization plans for BOCES regions. We respectfully urge NYSED to reconsider this decision until there has been an opportunity for comprehensive stakeholder engagement and input.

Our concerns include but are not limited to:

**1. Lack of Stakeholder Participation and Transparency**

The implementation of this initiative through emergency rules has notably excluded critical stakeholders, including local Boards of Education. We seek clarity on whether there will be public meetings that allow board members, parents, and community members to engage meaningfully in this process prior to its implementation. Understanding the long-term consequences of regionalization is essential; thus, it is imperative that all stakeholder groups impacted by these decisions have a platform for participation from the very beginning, not after the plan has been enacted.

**2. Potential Loss of Local Control**

There is significant apprehension that regionalization may result in a loss of local control over educational decisions. This forced and rushed approach could threaten the autonomy of individual districts. Additionally, the exclusion of the Big Five districts—serving two-thirds of the state’s student population—raises serious questions about the equity intentions of this proposal.

**3. Unclear Decision-Making Process and Overall Authority**

The criteria for approving regionalization plans remain unclear, as does the decision-making process. We need clarity on how many component districts must agree to a plan for it to move forward. Will a majority among Boards of Education be required? Furthermore, will districts be compelled to implement regionalization plans with which they disagree? The lack of transparency surrounding these questions raises serious concerns about the management of this process and whether local voices will be adequately heard.

#### 4. Ambiguous Goals and Overall Agenda

Levittown School District boasts a 97% graduation rate and its schools are highly ranked, providing students who attend with a strong educational foundation that offers limitless opportunities for graduating students. There needs to be clearly defined benefits for school districts such as Levittown to consider before determining if they will participate in a regionalization plan that threatens to undermine these successes.

In light of these concerns, we strongly urge NYSED to pause the implementation of this emergency rule. A commitment to developing a more inclusive and transparent process that includes input from all affected stakeholders is essential. The restructuring of our educational system is too critical to be dictated by rushed, top-down mandates that overlook the valuable insights of local Boards of Education and the communities they represent.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We look forward to your response and to understanding how NYSED plans to engage local stakeholders in a more meaningful way moving forward.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Messina*

Jennifer Messina  
President, Board of Education

*Phyllis Dalton*

Phyllis Dalton  
Trustee, Board of Education

*Peggy Marenghi*

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1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Board of Education

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cc: Dr. Betty A. Rosa, Commissioner of Education  
Mr. Steven Rhoads, NYS Senator, 5<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Mr. John Mikulin, NYS Assemblyman, 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Mr. David McDonough, NYS Assemblyman, 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly District