

EAST ISLIP UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



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Superintendent of Schools

October 30, 2024

Dr. Betty A. Rosa
Commissioner of Education
New York State Education Dept - Board of Regents
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Commissioner Rosa and Members of the Board of Regents,

On behalf of the East Islip Union Free School District's Board of Education, we are writing to express our deep concerns and strong opposition of NYSED's regionalization plan of our local school district and the communities we serve. We understand the need to explore new strategies to ensure equitable access to high-quality education for all students across New York State. However, we feel that regionalization as a broad policy initiative may present challenges that could undermine the effectiveness and identity of our local schools.

First and foremost, we are concerned that regionalization could weaken the autonomy of local school districts. As a community, East Islip has prided itself on its ability to tailor educational programs and services to meet the unique needs of our students. Decisions made at the regional level, however well-intentioned, may not reflect the specific priorities and values of our district. Local boards of education are deeply connected to the residents they serve, allowing us to be responsive and adaptive in ways that a regional structure may not be able to replicate.

Additionally, we are concerned about the potential financial implications of regionalization. Consolidating services and pooling resources across multiple districts could result in unintended financial burdens on districts like East Islip, which already face challenges balancing the needs of students while maintaining fiscal responsibility. We fear that regionalization could result in the loss of local control over budgetary decisions, potentially leading to increased taxes for our community without a clear guarantee of improved services or outcomes.

We also want to highlight the importance of maintaining community identity within our schools. Our district has a strong tradition of community involvement, where students, parents, and staff work collaboratively to foster a positive and inclusive school culture. Regionalization risks diluting this sense of identity by broadening the scope of governance beyond our community. We believe this could adversely impact student engagement, parental involvement, and overall school spirit—essential factors in student success.

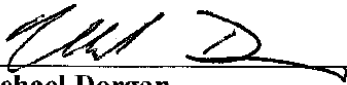
While we understand the potential benefits of regionalization, such as resource sharing and increased educational opportunities for students in under-resourced areas, we ask that the Board of Regents consider a more nuanced approach. One that takes into account the diversity of needs and circumstances across school districts like East Islip. Our district remains committed to supporting

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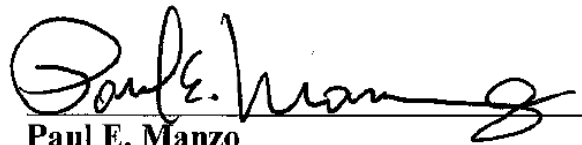
innovative solutions that promote equity and educational excellence across New York State, but we urge caution in adopting policies that could compromise the strengths of our local schools. We respectfully request that the Board reconsider any proposals or initiatives that push for regionalization, as we believe the long-term consequences could negatively impact the education and well-being of students across New York State.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working together to find solutions that will benefit all students while preserving the integrity and character of local school districts like ours.

Sincerely,



Michael Dorgan
President, East Islip UFSD Board of Education



Paul E. Manzo
Superintendent of Schools – East Islip UFSD



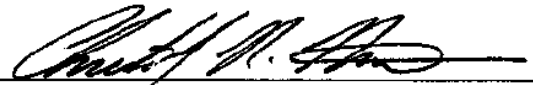
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President, EIASA



Christopher Zachry
Trustee, East Islip UFSD Board of Education



Christopher Neske
President, EITA



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