

JERICHO UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
99 CEDAR SWAMP ROAD
JERICHO, NEW YORK 11753-1202
516-203-3600

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November 19, 2024

Dr. Betty A. Rosa, Commissioner of Education
Mr. David Frank, Assistant Commissioner
Dr. Lester W. Young, Jr., Chancellor Board of Regents

Dear Commissioner Rosa, Mr. Frank and Dr. Young:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the recently announced Emergency Rule on Regionalization ("Emergency Rule") and its potential impact on our students, educators and community at large.

First and foremost, we believe that any significant changes and/or initiatives that affect our District should only be implemented with the explicit approval of our local Board of Education ("Board"). Our Board has a deep understanding of the unique needs, priorities and challenges of our students and community, and it is essential that we maintain local control over decisions that directly impact our educational system. We respectfully insist that no directives related to regionalization be imposed without the active engagement and consent of locally elected board of education.

The Board of Education is entrusted with the responsibility of making decisions that are in the best fiscal and educational interests of our students and community. It is crucial that any plan that affects our governance and operational structure be approved by our Board after thorough consideration and discussion.

We understand that NYSED officials have communicated that they will not take away local control; however, we are concerned that the letter of the law does not match this assurance. We have received mixed messages as to whether the State has the ability to change the language of the Emergency Rule or whether they affirmatively chose not to, which has led to uncertainty and fear in our community.

We recognize the State's commitment to addressing the challenges facing our educational system, and we appreciate the complexity of balancing resources and ensuring educational equity across New York State. We further recognize the importance of fostering greater efficiency and collaboration across districts, and we are committed to working together toward solutions that benefit all students. However, we urge NYSED to reconsider the Emergency Plan as currently

proposed. We insist that no plan be implemented without the specific approval of our Board of Education. Local control is of primary importance to our Board and its stakeholders.

Sincerely,

The Jericho Board of Education

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