



State Board of Education Returns Additional Categories of Local Control to Paterson and Newark

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey State Board of Education today approved returning two areas of local control in two state-operated districts by granting control of operations to Paterson and control of fiscal management to Newark.

The state's school monitoring system – called the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum, or NJQSAC – is the framework that evaluates districts in five separate functional areas: governance, fiscal management, personnel, operations, and curriculum and instruction. NJQSAC is also the pathway for state-operated districts to regain local control by demonstrating a level of functionality in each of the five areas.

A 2005 law provides for state-run districts to regain control of areas in which they have consistently received strong scores on the NJQSAC state accountability scale, and the district must have adequate programs, policies and staffing to demonstrate that the growth is sustainable.

Prior to the adoption of NJQSAC, a 1987 statute enacted under former Gov. Thomas Kean authorized the state to take control of local district operations. State intervention in Jersey City took place in 1989, Paterson in 1991, and Newark in 1995. The state assumed control of Camden School District last year.

Today's approval expands the return of local control to Newark, which has had local control of operations since 2007.

The Newark School District received a score of 88% in fiscal management in this year's NJQSAC report, building upon a track record of success. The State Board of Education's resolution said Newark "has demonstrated substantial and sustained progress in improving its NJQSAC scores in Fiscal Management from meeting an initial 66% of the performance indicators in 2008 to having met 94% in 2009, 90% in 2010, 93% in 2011 and 88% of the performance indicators in 2012, as well as substantial evidence that the public school district has adequate programs, policies and personnel in place and in operation to ensure that the demonstrated progress in Fiscal Management will be sustained."

For Paterson, the State Board of Education passed a resolution saying the district "has demonstrated substantial and sustained progress in improving its NJQSAC scores in Operations from meeting an initial 73% of the performance indicators in 2008 to having met 85% in 2010 and 95% of the performance indicators in 2013." The district received a score of 85% in operations this year.

The Department of Education will work closely with local representatives on the return of partial local control to Paterson and Newark. The Department will develop a transition plan for the effective exercise of local fiscal and operational responsibilities and lay the foundation for a productive working relationship between the state superintendent in each district and the respective advisory school board during the transition.