

Carle Place Schools

Our Current Understanding of “Regionalization”,
NYSED’s Limits, and District Authority

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Superintendent of Schools



Mission & Vision

The members of the Carle Place School District work diligently to nurture **compassion** and **passion**, while honoring tradition and inspiring excellence, working collaboratively to shape the future of our students together.

We seek to accomplish this work through active learning and agency; within, between, and beyond the classroom - where students, teachers, and administrators work together to create a continuous cycle of success.



“All politics is local.”

~Thomas P. O'Neill



What is Regionalization?

- NYSED's Regionalization plan is being presented as a way for districts to potentially share staff, extracurricular programs and support services.
- The Regionalization process is being presented as a collaboration between BOCES and school districts.
 - Long Island districts have serious concerns...



Why is there so much concern ?

- NYSED's Regionalization plan was passed by emergency regulation, not the normal public process.
- Superintendents and school boards were not consulted.
- If left unchecked, Regionalization may erode local control.
 - *The Carle Place Board of Education, our community, and I will not give up local control.*



What do we oppose?

- Erosion of local control!
- Secrecy in the NYSED planning process.
- Mergers, reorganization, or elimination of local school districts.
- Being forced to take action or implement anything to which we do not give our explicit consent.
- A power grab by BOCES or NYSED.
- An end-run to create new accountability or decrease aid.



Can NYSED or BOCES force mergers?

- No. They cannot. That would require a change in the law.
- The Commissioner of Education, and the BOCES District Superintendents (DS) who are the commissioner's agents in the field, have no regulatory or statutory right to force district mergers or resource sharing agreements.
- School boards have legal control of those decisions.
- According to NYSED, “The regionalization Initiative is *not* about reorganization (e.g. merger, consolidation, annexation), nor does it mandate districts to participate in activities in the regional plan.
 - In plain language, *We do not have to do anything we do not want to do.*



What has Carle Place done so far?

- The Carle Place Board of Education sent a letter of opposition to the Commissioner and the Board of Regents.
- The *entire* Board and the Superintendent participated in a joint Nassau-Suffolk meeting of LI board members and superintendents with NYSED officials.
 - The Board and the Superintendent will continue to monitor the situation each day.



What did NYSED share in the webinar?

- Not promoting mergers or forced resource sharing.
- Deadlines are being relaxed.
- Superintendents are still required to attend Regionalization meetings.
- NYSED's approach will be “bottom up” approach and not “top down”.
- Districts will receive clarification about opting in to regionalized plans.
- “Upon completion of a regional plan, school districts need only pursue implementation of activities they have **agreed or consented** to for their local context.” (emphasis added)

Let's see exactly what NYSED said:

Fact from Fiction

- Regionalization is **NOT**:

- FALSE** ○ About eroding local control.
- FALSE** ○ About mergers, reorganization, or eliminating local school districts.
- FALSE** ○ A way to force districts into taking actions or including things in their regionalization plans that they do not want to undertake.
- FALSE** ○ Only about services and supports that the BOCES can provide, or a way to increase the power of a BOCES (i.e. "BOCES will govern local districts").
- FALSE** ○ A way to create new accountability systems.
- FALSE** ○ About District Superintendents developing the plan.

What did Long Island districts say?

- **Local control is non-negotiable.**
- We always act in students' best interest and will continue to do so.
- We value our existing BOCES partnerships for program enhancements and cost-saving.
- Local dollars must fund local schools.
- NYSED may not have considered the obligations of special education requirements and collective bargaining agreements.
- We are skeptical of past initiatives (ex: Common Core, Race to the Top) and resent Regionalization's potential drain on staff time and bandwidth.



What has NYSED shared since then?

- From a November 5th press release: "All school districts are required to participate in their local Regionalization conversation. Upon completing the regional plan, school districts are only required to implement activities they have agreed or consented to for their local context in the final plan. While we are currently in the 60-day public comment period on the proposed regulation, at Regent Tilles' request, we are reviewing the regulation's language and considering modifications based on how it is being interpreted in the field. For additional information on this initiative, please see the attached infographic and the FAQs on our website."
 - In plain language, *We do not have to do anything we do not want to do.*



Opposition matters!

- On November 6, Regents Roger Tilles recommended that “the regulation be amended to clarify that districts will not be required to share staff, services, or programs unless they agree to do so.”
- As a result, NYSED made the following statement on their website and to select news outlets: “at Regent Tilles' request, we are reviewing the regulation's language and considering modifications based on how it is being interpreted in the field. For additional information on this initiative, please see the attached infographic and the FAQs on our website.”



Don't we already have regional partners?

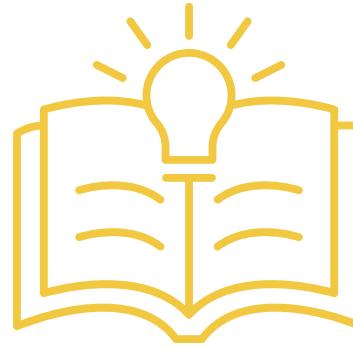
- Yes. We already work closely with BOCES and other districts on:
 - Barry Tech, LIHSA and special education programs
 - Back-office operations, security, and data management
 - Joint efforts to control prices on public bids for goods and services
 - Countywide and Quadrant planning and information sharing among superintendents and their districts
- We are always open to exploring new ways to voluntarily work with partners to make the best use of public funds!



Where do we go from here?

- Participate in required NYSED conversations and data reporting.
- Continue advocacy for local control.
- Stand with Long Island districts who share our values.
- Work with Nassau BOCES to build a plan that emphasizes local control and avoids any artificial partnerships.
 - Long Island districts have partnered with each other in many ways for years.





Learn & Advocate!



Recent Updates from NYSED:

- October 29, 2024 Presentation to Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association
 - Questions for Q&A
- N-SSBA's notes and position letter
- Opposition letter from Carle Place BOE (sent to Board of Regents, cc'd to NYSED Chancellor)
- NYSED Regionalization description and FAQ page

Make your voice heard!

- Contact information for NYSED and Governor Hochul

Questions and
Comments...

