

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

STATEMENT OF NAFIS J. NICHOLS

RECEIVER OF THE CHESTER UPLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

This is a critical time within the Chester Upland School District to realign our commitment to a future focused on the intentional success of all students and families.

As a long-time active member of this community, a professional with over a decade of public servitude geared towards Chester youth, coupled with hands-on financial experience that is specifically unique to this city-- I am confident that achievement is attainable through collaboration and dedication to the restoration and advancement of CUSD.

As I enter into my third full week as appointed Receiver, I am excited to outline an immediate plan of action for the students, parents, faculty, staff, and community. This plan will begin the process of transforming our school district and returning it to financial solvency. Working very closely with Dr. Craig Parkinson (Superintendent of Schools), Dr. Michael Pladus (Chief Recovery Officer), the CUSD school board members, MCIU, the PA Department of Education, and other educational advocates; we are devoted to providing unwavering support to our youth, and we are certain that we will not fail! While the unforeseen assembly of this team may have been less than conventional, it is developing into a well-oiled machine.

A significant component of my initial efforts will be to evaluate and correct environmental and health safety hazards that may be present in some of our buildings. I plan to update the Court of Common Pleas and the community regularly with information about the progress of these efforts.

Judge Dozor, who oversees the Receivership of CUSD for the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, has offered a roadmap to assist our District, developed from the extensive experience of past Receivers. I take the Judge's recommendations and the Court's orders seriously and with great respect. Accordingly, the following is a list of action items I will be pursuing:

1. Contract with a reputable environmental and physical plant consultant to evaluate the status of all buildings' conditions in CUSD. By October 31st, I plan to submit to the Court and the community an initial report detailing these conditions and any repairs that need to be made. This report will look at

- HVAC, windows and doors, roofs, water and gas systems, and general facility conditions.
2. Following the initial environment and safety conditions report, I will contract for a Phase II Environmental Site study to be completed for all CUSD buildings. A full report of this study will be submitted to the Court and the community no later than February 28, 2022. Included in this report will be tangible recommendations for improvements and repairs to all buildings.
 3. I will evaluate all vendor and administrator contracts entered into and/or severed prior to my appointment as Receiver. I will prepare a report to be filed with the Court and presented to the community detailing my findings before the end of the 3rd fiscal year quarter.
 4. I will be reviewing past audits and ensuring that all audits are compliant and filed timely.
 5. Work closely with Dr. Parkinson to bring new and exciting educational opportunities for students, as well as new and innovative extracurricular activities.
 6. I will also be filing with the Court and presenting to the community a quarterly *report card* detailing CUSD's progress in achieving stability.

As Receiver, I will work tirelessly to restore confidence throughout the district and community. On behalf of our bright students, impacted most by our decision-making, it is imperative that we commit to moving forward as one. And while these tasks may make the road seem difficult, I am confident because I know I am not walking it alone. I am committed to the redirection of our great school district. I encourage ideas and support from all of the great minds that the CUSD has produced, and welcome resources from all anchor institutions that make up our community to provide the best educational environment for our youth.

I look forward to working with the District's staff and Administration, the Court of Common Pleas, and school district stakeholders to make timely recommendations and improvements for CUSD's operations. I am confident that united under one common goal to prepare each student for success, we will transform the Chester Upland School District into one that we all can be proud of.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nafis J. Nichols,

Receiver . .

