



Chester Upland School District Receivership

The Honorable Judge Barry C. Dozor

Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County, PA; Docket No. CV-2012-009781

January 2021 Receivership Update

By: Receiver, Dr. Juan Baughn

I. Five Priority Initiatives

1. Outsourcing of Functional Areas - OUTSOURCED TO CCIU.

- i. The CCIU transition is a work in progress with much work still to be done.
- ii. The Receiver has initiated a cost/benefit assessment and will obtain a budget to actual cost comparison from CCIU through December 31, 2020.
- iii. CCIU and the Superintendent have made advancements in the District in the following areas:

1. Student Services

- Management of day-to-day operations, several of which are directly associated with special education state and federal mandates.
- Implemented several structures to support regulatory and legal compliance in all areas of special education.

2. Federal Programs

- Gained access to eGrants to review program narratives and budgets for Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, CARES/ESSER, School Improvement, Ready to Learn, Continuity of Education Equity Grant and Special Education COVID-19 Grant.
- Initiated preparations for the Federal Programs Advisory Committee meeting to take place in Spring 2021.

3. Human Resources

- Hired three new CUSD employees either for grant funded positions or to fill replacement openings.
- Managed District COVID-related matters, ADA requests, and requests for EFMLA and FMLA received.
- Procedures have been created for some HR processes, including: Requisition, Recruit and Hire, Terminations, Attendance, Certification Review and Leaves of Absences.

4. Administrative Services

- On-site daily at CUSD in business office, transportation, and facilities by September 21, 2020 to begin transition work.
- Hired Chief Operating Officer, Comptroller, Transportation Coordinator, and Purchasing Clerk.
- CCIU addressed hundreds of open requests from independent auditors Maillie LLC since engagement.
- Stabilized business office workflow problems created by vacant positions, absences, and lack of procedures.
- Completed and submitted Annual Financial Report (AFR) to PDE by November 30, 2020 deadline.
- Prepared several budget status reports and budget projection formats for Receiver, School Board, and Superintendent.
- Assisted with development and revisions to \$3.5 million DCIU CARES grant. Facilitated purchases, reporting, and reimbursement.

- Assisted with development of initial school reopening plans for November 2020. COVID-19 case counts precluded reopening.
 - Developed and administered request for proposal for masonry and concrete repairs. Proposals submitted to CUSD Director of Facilities on November 23, 2020 for review and recommendations.
 - Initiated building inspection schedule and protocols for CUSD staff.
 - Provided extensive responses to request for financial and budgetary information made by potential bidders for education services.
5. **Information Technology**
- Addressed urgent concerns, such as the failure of communication infrastructure within the District.
 - Managed CARES-eligible technology expenditures which will enable the District to create a technological infrastructure to support remote instruction and communication with families.
- iv. CCIU has provided the Receiver a list of priorities/next steps in these areas which address many of the specific initiatives set forth in the Financial Recovery Plan.
2. **Consider outsourcing of management or operations of the schools (i.e., comprehensive RFP process) – IN PROCESS.**
- i. Retained Dr. Leroy Nunery to lead the RFI/RFP process.
 - ii. RFP has been issued and is posted on the CUSD website.
 - iii. Requested information is available to all bidders via an electronic document room.
 - iv. Some information from the bidders' electronic document room has been posted to the CUSD website, after clearance by legal counsel.
 - v. Deadline for submission of response to RFP's is January 22, 2021.
3. **Prepare comprehensive facilities assessment (i.e., independent assessment of facilities' needs along with priorities and timetable) – IN PROCESS.**
- i. The Receiver has requested a comprehensive facilities assessment.
 - ii. The Receiver also will consider bidders' recommendations regarding facilities if included in their responses to the RFP.
4. **Comprehensive assessment of Special Education costs and infrastructure and potential more cost-effective delivery models – OUTSOURCED TO CCIU.**
- i. Special Education has been restructured throughout the District.
 - ii. CCIU has hired a new team to lead Special Education.
 - iii. The team is progressing well given the constraints of COVID-19.
5. **Independent assessment of educational and School District leadership.**
- i. Now that the CCIU transition has progressed substantially, Superintendent Dr. Carol Birks will begin the assessment of the educational and School District leadership.

II. School Board Involvement with the Receivership

1. The Receiver has collaborated with the Board routinely with budget and finance updates and planning through the School Board Committee structure.
2. The Receiver has involved the Board as a sounding board for Receivership strategic issues.
3. The Receiver has included several Board members on the RFP Review Task Force.

III. Communication with Pennsylvania Department of Education

1. The Receiver has remained in regular contact with PDE and continues to keep PDE apprised of Recovery Plan execution progress.
2. PDE participated in reviewing the CCIU contract before it was approved.
3. Receivership Strategic Advisor, Jack Pund, will reengage with PDE regarding the financial section of the recovery plan once the June 30, 2019 final audit report is released.

IV. Executive Summary of Recovery Plan Dashboard

1. The "Recovery Plan Dashboard" has been drafted and is under final review for tracking the progress of all Recovery Plan initiatives. Once the Recovery Plan Dashboard is approved, the Receiver plans to have it available on the District's website so that the community is apprised of the Receivership's progress. The plan is for quarterly updating.