



Smithtown Central School District

26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787

Mark Secaur, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
(631) 382-2006

October 25, 2024

Dear Smithtown School Community,

It has come to my attention that misleading information related to a New York State Education Department (NYSED) initiative called "Regionalization" has been shared widely and has understandably created concern within our community. The document in question is not from NYSED nor is it accurate. Once we were made aware of it, I notified Western Suffolk BOCES and asked for them to put together a response that addresses the misconceptions. While this is an initiative from NYSED, it will be led by BOCES and they are best equipped to address this. A short while ago, every Long Island Superintendent and School Board President received a letter drafted by the District Superintendents of the Nassau, Western Suffolk and Eastern Suffolk BOCES, and vetted by NYSED that stated the following:

This communication is necessary in light of recent social media posts and flyers suggesting that the goal of the initiative is to cede control of Long Island's schools to the BOCES. That is patently false and would require the adoption of legislation radically changing over one hundred years of law. To be clear: this initiative is simply about fostering informed local decision making, partnerships, and support for individual districts – with the goal of ensuring that students have access to the educational opportunities they need for success in school and beyond. The initiative will provide a platform for local education leaders to discuss and convey to NYSED the strategies and actions they will take to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students, and the resources they will need to achieve this goal. It will also create a direct line for individual and cooperating local districts to provide input as the State develops its legislative and budget priorities. Schools and districts may also use these planning conversations to identify and explore existing opportunities within the region.

While every district has to work in partnership with NYSED and the BOCES in their region, I can assure you that our first priority is to offer the best possible education to the students within the Smithtown Central School District. I believe it is both healthy and important to look upon any large-scale initiative with a critical lens to ensure that it meets the needs of our students and the staff who serve them, but I will not rush to judgment. This initiative is in the very early stages and we will have a seat at the table to protect the interests of our students as the plan evolves.

As I understand the goals of this plan, there will be very little impact, if any, to Smithtown due to the fact that we have the desired resources, programs and educational pathways in place already. I wrote "goals of this plan" intentionally because there is no plan yet, only a framework that may lead to a plan. I believe the eventual plan will seek to create efficiencies and partnerships that will be mutually beneficial to the districts that participate and work together to share resources. Our swim team's partnership with Hauppauge is a good example of where I think this is going. There are many districts that have difficulty providing a robust set of course offerings and programs due to a variety of factors and this may assist them.

As the plan evolves, we will collectively scrutinize it and continue our advocacy for Smithtown. We will also strive to keep the community informed throughout the process.

Detailed information regarding this NYSED initiative can be found via their website [HERE](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Secaur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Mark Secaur, Ed. D.
Superintendent