WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

<u>COUNTY OF ESSEX</u>

<u>AUDITORS' MANAGEMENT REPORT ON</u>

<u>ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS - FINANCIAL,</u>

<u>COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE</u>

<u>FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022</u>

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

COUNTY OF ESSEX

AUDITORS' MANAGEMENT REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE

FINDINGS - FINANCIAL,

COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

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Mount Arlington, NJ Newton, NJ Bridgewater, NJ

973.298.8500 nisivoccia.com

Independent Member BKR International

December 1, 2022

The Honorable President and Members of the Board of Education West Essex Regional School District County of Essex, NJ

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the Board of Education of the West Essex Regional School District in the County of Essex for the year ended June 30, 2022, and have issued our report thereon dated December 1, 2022.

As part of our audit, we performed procedures required by the New Jersey Department of Education, and the findings and results thereof are disclosed on the following pages, as listed in the accompanying table of contents. This letter does not affect our report dated December 1, 2022, on the financial statements of the Board.

We will review the status of the comments during our next audit engagement. We have already discussed these comments and suggestions with various management personnel, and we will be pleased to discuss them in further detail at your convenience, to perform any additional study of these matters, or to assist you in implementing the suggestions.

This report is intended for the information of the West Essex Regional School District's management and the New Jersey Department of Education. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.

Nisivoccia LLF nisivoccia llp

Man C Lee

Man C. Lee

Licensed Public School Accountant #2527

Certified Public Accountant

Scope of Audit

The audit covered the financial transactions of the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator and Treasurer of School Moneys, the activities of the Board of Education, the records of the various funds under the auspices of the Board of Education.

Administrative Practices and Procedures

Insurance

Multi-peril insurance coverage was carried in the amounts as detailed on Exhibit J-20, Insurance Schedule contained in the district's ACFR.

Officials in Office and Surety Bonds

Name	Position	Coverage
Michael Halik	Treasurer of School Monies	\$ 300,000
Melissa Kida	Business Administrator/Board Secretary	300,000

The District has Employee Dishonesty and Faithful Performance coverage through the School Alliance Insurance Fund as detailed on Exhibit J-20 of the ACFR.

P.L. 2020, c.44

Our audit procedures included an inquiry and subsequent review of health benefit data required per N.J.S.A. 18A:16-13.3 (Chapter 44) submitted for the year on audit. The Chapter 44 summary report was reviewed for reasonableness and timeliness.

The data submitted did include all health benefit plans offered by the school district or charter school.

The school district or charter school data certification was completed by the chief school administrator. The school district or charter school Chapter 44 data was submitted timely.

The data certification date does not reflect a submission date later than 60 days after the end of the enrollment period.

Tuition Charges

A comparison of tentative tuition charges and actual certified tuition charges was made. The actual costs were different than estimated costs. The Board made a proper adjustment to the billings to sending districts for the change in per pupil costs in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-3.1(f)3.

Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting

Examination of Claims

An examination of claims paid on a test basis, during the period under review indicated overall compliance with respect to signatures, certification or supporting documentation.

(Continued)

Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting (Cont'd)

Payroll Account and Position Control Roster

The net salaries of employees of the Board were deposited in the Payroll Account. Employees' payroll deductions and employer's share of fringe benefits were deposited in the Payroll Agency Account. Salary withholdings were promptly remitted to the proper agencies, including current year health benefits withholding due to the general fund.

All payrolls were approved by the Superintendent and were certified by the President of the Board, the Board Secretary/Business Administrators and the Chief School Administrator.

The required certification (E-CERT1) of compliance with requirements for income tax on compensation of administrators (superintendent, assistant superintendent, and business administrator) to the NJ Department of Treasury was filed in a timely manner.

Reserve for Encumbrances and Accounts Payable

A review of outstanding issued purchase orders was made on a test basis as of June 30, for proper classification of orders as reserve for encumbrances and accounts payable.

Classification of Expenditures – General and Administrative

The coding of expenditures was tested for proper classification in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-8.2 as part of our test of transactions of randomly selected expenditure items. We also reviewed the coding of all expenditures included in our compliance and single audit testing procedures. In addition to randomly selecting a test sample, our sample selection specifically targeted administrative coding classifications to determine overall reliability and compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(f). Overall compliance was noted.

Board Secretary's Records

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the Board, we considered the condition of the Board Secretary's records for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide specific assurance on the condition of the records. Based on these procedures, we have no comments.

Treasurer's Records

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the Board, we considered the condition of the Treasurer's records for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide specific assurance on the condition of the records. Based on these procedures, we have no comments.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The E.S.E.A financial exhibits are contained herein within the Special Revenue Section of the District's ACFR. This section of the ACFR documents the financial position pertaining to projects under Title I and Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended and reauthorized.

(Continued)

Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting (Cont'd)

Other Special Federal and/or State Projects

The financial exhibits are contained within the Special Revenue Section of the ACFR. This section of the ACFR documents the financial position pertaining to the aforementioned special projects.

The District's Special Projects were approved as listed on Schedule A and Schedule B located in the ACFR.

Our audit of the federal and state funds on a test basis indicated that obligations and expenditures were incurred during the fiscal year or project period for which the project was approved.

T.P.A.F. Reimbursement

Our audit procedures included a test of the biweekly reimbursements filed with the Department of Education for district employees who are members of the Teachers Pension and Annuity Fund. No exceptions were noted.

T.P.A.F. Reimbursement to the State for Federal Salary Expenditures

The T.P.A.F. Reimbursement to the State for Federal Salary Expenditures was remitted to the State of New Jersey prior to the required deadline of October 1, 2022. The reimbursement form was reviewed and no exceptions were noted.

Travel Expense and Reimbursement Policy

Travel regulations require each District to adopt a formal policy and procedure pertaining to travel and expense reimbursement for its employees and board members. The regulations include requirements for the District to establish a maximum travel amount for the year and to ensure that the maximum amount is not exceeded. The regulations also require that all travel must be preapproved by the Board of Education and Superintendent and that a brief report detailing the key issues addressed at the travel event must be submitted after the travel event has occurred. Overall compliance was noted.

School Purchasing Programs

Contracts and Agreements Requiring Advertisement for Bids

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3 states:

a. "When the cost or price of any contract awarded by the purchasing agent in the aggregate, does not exceed in a contract year the total sum of \$17,500, the contract may be awarded by a purchasing agent when so authorized by resolution of the Board of Education without public advertising for bids and bidding therefore, except that the Board of Education may adopt a resolution to set a lower threshold for the receipt of public bids or the solicitation of competitive quotations. If the purchasing agent is qualified pursuant to subsection b. of section 9 of P.L.1971, c. 198 the Board of Education may establish that the bid threshold may be up to \$25,000. Such authorization may be granted for each contract or by a general delegation of the power to negotiate and award such contracts pursuant to this section.

(Continued)

School Purchasing Programs (Cont'd)

Contracts and Agreements Requiring Advertisement for Bids (Cont'd)

b. Commencing in the fifth year after the year in which P.L.1999, c. 440 takes effect and every five years thereafter, the Governor, in consultation with the Department of Treasury, shall adjust the threshold amount and the higher threshold amount which the Board of Education is permitted to establish as set forth in subsection a. of this section or the threshold amount resulting from any adjustment under this subsection, in direct proportion to the rise or fall of the index rate as that term is defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2, and shall round the adjustment to the nearest \$1,000. The Governor shall notify all local school districts of the adjustment no later than June 1 of every fifth year. The adjustment shall become effective on July 1 of the year in which it is made "

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4 states, "Every contract for the provision or performance of any goods or services the cost of which in the aggregate exceeds the bid threshold, shall be awarded only by resolution of the Board of Education to the lowest responsible bidder after public advertising for bids and bidding therefore, except as is provided otherwise in this chapter or specifically by any other law"

The bid thresholds in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2 and 18A:18A-3(a) are \$44,000 (with a Qualified Purchasing Agent) and \$32,000 (without a Qualified Purchasing Agent), respectively. The law regulating bidding for public school student transportation contracts under N.J.S.A. 18A:39-3 is \$20,200 for 2021-22.

The Board of Education has the responsibility of determining whether the expenditures in any category will exceed the statutory thresholds within the contract year. Where question arises as to whether any contract or agreement might result in violation of the statute, the Attorney's opinion should be sought before a commitment is made.

Inasmuch as the system of records did not provide for an accumulation of payments for categories for the performance of any work or the furnishing or hiring of any materials or supplies, the results of such an accumulation could not reasonably be ascertained. Disbursements were reviewed, however, to determine whether any clear-cut violations existed. No exceptions were noted.

The results of our examination indicated that no individual payments, contracts, or agreements were made "for the performance of any work or the furnishing or hiring of any materials or supplies", in excess of the statutory thresholds where there had been no advertising for bids in accordance with the provision of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4, amended.

Resolutions were adopted authorizing the awarding of contracts or agreements for "Professional Services" per N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5.

The system of records did not provide for an accumulation of purchases for which the school board used contracts entered into by the State Department of Purchase and Property pursuant to Ch. 114, P.L. 1977, therefore, the extent of such purchases could not reasonably be ascertained.

(Continued)

School Food Service

The District does not participate in the Child Nutrition Program and therefore received no federal or state support.

Student Body Activities

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the Board, we considered the condition of the Student Activities records for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide specific assurance on the condition of the records. Based on these procedures, we have no comments.

Application for State School Aid

Our audit procedures included a test of information reported in the October 15, 2021 Application for State School Aid (A.S.S.A.) for on-roll, private schools for the disabled, low income students and bilingual education. We also performed a review of the District procedures related to its completion. The information on the A.S.S.A. was compared to the District workpapers with minor exception. The information that was included on the workpapers was verified on a test basis with minor exceptions. The results of our procedures are presented in the Schedule of Audited Enrollments.

The District maintained workpapers on the prescribed State forms or their equivalent.

The District's written procedures for the recording of student enrollment data appear to be adequate.

Pupil Transportation

Our audit procedures included a test of on-roll status reported on the 2021-2022 District Report of Transported Resident Students (DRTRS). The information that was included on the DRTRS was verified to the DRTRS Eligibility Summary Report without exception. The results of our procedures are presented in the Schedule of Audited Enrollments.

Our procedures also included a review of transportation related contracts and purchases. Based on our review, the District complied with proper bidding procedures and award of contracts. No exceptions were noted in our review of transportation related purchases of goods and services.

Testing for Lead of All Drinking Water in Educational Facilities

The District did submit the annual Statement of Assurance to the NJ Department of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-12.4(g).

Capital Assets

Finding 2022-001:

Our audit procedures included a review of the District's capital asset listing. Based on our review, the listing contains assets disposed of in prior years. As the District has reflected these disposals in its financial statements and is working with the capital asset appraisal company in order to rectify the issues, a formal recommendation is not deemed necessary at this time.

Management Suggestion

COVID-19 Federal Funding

It is likely that the District will undergo some review of its COVID-19 federal funding if only at a desk review level by state and/or federal agencies. We strongly suggest that the District ensures that these funds are utilized in accordance with the applicable federal requirements especially with respect to procurement. Additionally, we strongly suggest that the District ensures that these funds are accounted for in the state account numbers designated by the NJ Department of Education and that any applicable Board policies are current with respect to federal grant requirements.

Status of Prior Year Findings/Recommendations

The prior year recommendation regarding the formal approval of transportation contracts has been resolved in the current year.

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPLICATION FOR STATE SCHOOL AID SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF AUDITED ENROLLMENTS ENROLLMENT AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

		2022-23	Application	2022-23 Application for State School Aid	ool Aid				Sample for Verification	Verification		
	Reported on A.S.S.A.	ted on S.A.	Reported on Workpapers	ed on			Selecte	Sample Selected from	Verified per Registers	ed per sters	Errors per Registers	s per
	On Roll	Roll	On Roll	toll	Err	Errors	Work	Workpapers	On Roll	Soll	On Roll	loll
	Full	Shared	Full	Shared	Full	Shared	Full	Shared	Full	Shared	Full	Shared
Grade Seven	224		224				224		224			
Grade Eight	239		239				239		239			
Grade Nine	231		231				231		231			
Grade Ten	213		213				213		213			
Grade Eleven	225		225				225		225			
Grade Twelve	228		228				228		228			
Subtotal	1,360		1,360				1,360		1,360			
Special Education: Middle School	85		85				6		6			
High School	152		152				15		14		1	
Subtotal	237		237				24		23		1	
Totals	1,597	0-	1,597	0-	0-	0-	1,384	0-	1,383	0-		0-
Percentage Error					0.00%	0.00%					0.07%	0.00%

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULE OF AUDITED ENROLLMENTS APPLICATION FOR STATE SCHOOL AID SUMMARY ENROLLMENT AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

		Private Schools for Disabled						
	Reported on ASSA as Private Schools	Sample for Verification	Sample Verified	Sample Errors				
Special Education:								
Middle School	6	2	2					
High School	32	8	8					
Totals	38	10	10	-0-				
Percentage Error				0.00%				

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULE OF AUDITED ENROLLMENT APPLICATION FOR STATE SCHOOL AID SUMMARY ENROLLMENT AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

	Resident Low Income		ne	Sample for Verification		
	Reported on	Reported on		Sample	Verified to	
	ASSA as	Workpapers as		Selected from	Application	Sample
	Low Income	Low Income	Errors	Workpapers	and Register	Errors
Grade Seven	4	4		1	1	
Grade Eight	4	4		1	1	
Grade Nine	6	6		1	1	
Grade Ten	3	3		1	1	
Grade Eleven	2	2				
Grade Twelve	8	8		2	2	
Subtotal	27	27		6	6	
Special Education:						
Middle School	2	2		1	1	
High School	9	9		1	1	
Subtotal	11	11		2	2	
Totals	38	38	-0-	8	8	-0-
Percentage Error			0.00%			0.00%

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPLICATION FOR STATE SCHOOL AID SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF AUDITED ENROLLMENTS ENROLLMENT AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

]	Resident LEP	Low Income		
	Reported on	Reported on		Sample	Verified to	
	A.S.S.A. as	Workpapers		Selected	Test Scores,	
	LEP Low	as LEP Low		from	Application	Sample
	Income	Income	Errors	Workpapers	and Register	Errors
Grade Ten	1	1		1	1	
Subtotal	1	1		1	1	
Special Ed - High School	1	1				
Subtotal	1	1				
Totals	2	2	-0-	1	1	
Percentage Error			0.00%			0.00%

		Res	sident LEP N	ot Low Income		
	Reported on	Reported on		Sample	Verified to	
	A.S.S.A. as	Workpapers as		Selected	Test Scores	
	LEP Not Low	LEP Not Low		from	and	Sample
	Income	Income	Errors	Workpapers	Register	Errors
Grade Seven	1	1		1	1	
Grade Eight	1		1			
Grade Nine	1	1				
Grade Eleven	2	2		1_	1_	
Subtotal	5	4	1	2	2	
Special Ed - Elementary						
Totals	5	4	1	2	2	-0-
Percentage Error		:	20.00%			0.00%

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULE OF AUDITED ENROLLMENT APPLICATION FOR STATE SCHOOL AID SUMMARY ENROLLMENT AS OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

			Transpo	ortation		
	Reported on DRTRS by DOE	Reported on DRTRS by District	Errors	Tested	Verified	Errors
Regular - Public Schools	887	887		16	16	
Regular - Special Education	144	144		3	3	
Transported - Non Public	1	1		1	1	
AIL Non- Public	153	153		3	3	
Special Needs - Private	19	19		2	2	
Totals	1,204	1,204	-0-	25	25	-0-
Percentage Error			0.00%			0.00%

	Reported	Recalculated
Average Mileage - Regular Including Grade PK Students	4.7	4.7
Average Mileage - Regular Excluding Grade PK Students	4.7	4.7
Average Mileage - Special Education with Special Needs	12.5	12.5

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EXCESS SURPLUS CALCULATION FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

EXCESS SURPLUS CALCULATION

REGULAR DISTRICT

SECTION 1

A. 4% Calculation of Excess Surplus

2021-22 Total General Fund Expenditures per the CAFR, Ex. C-1	\$ 49,643,739 (B)
Increased by:	
Transfer from Capital Outlay to Capital Projects Fund	\$ -0- (B1a)
Transfer from Capital Reserve to Capital Projects Fund	\$ -0- (B1b)
Decreased by:	
On-Behalf TPAF Pension and Social Security	\$ 8,596,446 (B2a)
Assets Acquired Under Leases and Financed Purchases	\$ -0- (B2b)
Adjusted 21-22 General Fund Expenditures [(B)+(B1's)-(B2's)]	\$ 41,047,293 (B3)
4% of Adjusted 2021-22 General Fund Expenditures [(B3) times .04]	\$ 1,641,892 (B4)
Enter Greater of (B4) or \$250,000	\$ 1,641,892 (B5)
Increased by: Allowable Adjustment	\$ 888,492 (K)
Maximum Unassigned Fund Balance [(B5)+(K)]	\$ 2,530,384 (M)
Maximum Unassigned Fund Balance [(B5)+(K)] SECTION 2	<u>\$ 2,530,384</u> (M)
	\$\frac{\$ 2,530,384}{} (M)\$ \$\$ 19,428,204 (C)\$
SECTION 2	
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22	
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1)	
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1) Decreased by:	\$ 19,428,204 (C)
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1) Decreased by: Year End Encumbrances	\$ 19,428,204 (C) \$ 398,968 (C1)
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1) Decreased by: Year End Encumbrances Legally Restricted - Designated for Subsequent Year's Expenditures	\$ 19,428,204 (C) \$ 398,968 (C1)
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1) Decreased by: Year End Encumbrances Legally Restricted - Designated for Subsequent Year's Expenditures Legally Restricted - Excess Surplus - Designated for Subsequent	\$ 19,428,204 (C) \$ 398,968 (C1) \$ -0- (C2)
SECTION 2 Total General Fund - Fund Balances @ 6/30/22 (Per CAFR Budgetary Comparison Schedule C-1) Decreased by: Year End Encumbrances Legally Restricted - Designated for Subsequent Year's Expenditures Legally Restricted - Excess Surplus - Designated for Subsequent Year's Expenditures	\$ 19,428,204 (C) \$ 398,968 (C1) \$ -0- (C2) \$ 500,000 (C3)

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EXCESS SURPLUS CALCULATION FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022 (Continued)

SECTION 3

Restricted Fund Balance - Excess Surplus [(U2)-(M)] IF NEGATIVE, ENTER -0-	\$ 500,000 (E)
Recapitulation of Excess Surplus as of June 30, 2022	
Restricted Excess Surplus - Designated for Subsequent Year's Expenditures Restricted Excess Surplus [(E)]	\$ 500,000 (C3) \$ 500,000 (E)
Total $[(C3)+(E)+(F)]$	\$ 1,000,000 (D)
Detail of Allowable Adjustments	
Impact Aid Sale and Lease Back Extraordinary Aid Additional Nonpublic School Transportation Aid	\$ -0- (H) \$ -0- (I) \$ 844,122 (J1) \$ 44,370 (J2)
Total Adjustments ((H)+(I)+(J1)+(J2))	\$ 888,492 (K)
Detail of Other Restricted Fund Balance	
Statutory restrictions:	
Approved unspent separate proposal	\$ -0-
Sale/lease-back reserve	\$ -0-
Capital reserve	\$13,877,236
Maintenance reserve	\$ 1,064,560
Emergency reserve	\$ -0- \$ 444,524 \$ -0-
Unemployment Compensation	\$ 444,524
Tuition reserve	
Other state/governmental mandated reserve	\$ -0-
Other Restricted Fund Balance not noted above	\$ -0-
Total Other Restricted Fund Balance	\$15,386,320 (C4)

WEST ESSEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

It is recommended that:

1.	Administrative Practices and Procedures
	None
2.	Financial Planning, Accounting and Reporting
	None
3.	School Purchasing Program
	None
4.	School Food Service
	None
5.	Student Body Activities
	None
6.	Application for State School Aid
	None
7.	Pupil Transportation
	None
8.	Facilities and Capital Assets
	None.
9.	Status of Prior Year Findings/Recommendations
	The prior year recommendation regarding the formal approval of transportation contracts has been resolved in the current year.