



NJDOE News

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Education Commissioner Appoints State Monitor for Irvington

Frank M. Sinatra, a former superintendent in Perth Amboy who has extensive financial and business management experience in a number of New Jersey urban districts, has been appointed as the state monitor for the Irvington schools by Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy.

The appointment is a part of an intensive effort by Governor Jon S. Corzine and his administration to hold public officials accountable for their decisions regarding the use of public funds and to ensure that state aid is spent efficiently and effectively.

Under the "School District Accountability Act" signed by Governor Corzine last year, the Commissioner may appoint a state monitor in districts where serious fiscal deficiencies have been identified in the district's annual audit.

"The department has had significant concerns about the fiscal management in Irvington for some time," Commissioner Davy said. "Questions raised in past audits remain unaddressed. There has been staff turnover and some of the key fiscal staff are new in their positions. This is exactly the kind of district that the new law was designed to help."

Sinatra has signed a one-year contract. His salary will be \$650 per day, which is to be paid by the Irvington School District.

Commissioner Davy said DOE concerns about Irvington include:

- More than 30 audit findings identified two years ago have not been corrected. Some of these matters have a significant financial impact, such as the district's failure to record or not record disbursements and miscellaneous income in a timely manner.
- Inaccurate record-keeping or inadequate oversight has led to line item over-expenditures.
- The district continually fails to maintain an accurate listing of outstanding bills due.
- There is a lack of adequate financial records and internal controls for payroll operations. For example, supporting documentation for numerous payroll transactions, such as W-4 forms, is missing.
- The record-keeping for food service is inadequate and unreliable due to improper maintenance of the accounting system.

Sinatra retired in 1991 after serving as Perth Amboy superintendent since 1976. He joined the district in 1952 as an elementary school teacher, and also worked as a guidance counselor, a vice-principal, director of federal programs and board secretary/school business administrator before assuming the superintendent's position.

Since his retirement, he has served as interim superintendent in Jersey City, North Brunswick, Montville, Hopewell Valley Regional School District, Kinnelon and Lincoln Park, for periods ranging from a few months to several years. He served as the interim business administrator in Lincoln Park and Jersey City, and as a special assistant to the state Commissioner of Education assigned to Jersey City. He has also worked as a consultant in Newark, Paterson and Jersey City.

Sinatra holds B.S., M.Ed. and Ed.S. degrees from Rutgers, the State University. He lives in Perth Amboy.

For more information, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.