



NJDOE News

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Commissioner Davy Appoints State Monitor for Pleasantville

John J. Deserable, the assistant superintendent for business and the board secretary in the Evesham school district, has been appointed as the state monitor for the Pleasantville schools by Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy.

Deserable, who has also served as school business administrator in the Barrington and Stratford school districts during his 35-year career, is retiring from Evesham in June and will begin work in Pleasantville on July 1.

The appointment is part of an on-going effort by Governor Jon. S. Corzine and Commissioner Davy to hold school district officials accountable for their decisions regarding the use of public funds and to ensure that state school aid is spent efficiently and effectively.

Under the "School District Accountability Act" approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Corzine last year, the Commissioner has the authority to appoint a state monitor in districts where serious fiscal deficiencies have been identified. The Commissioner has already appointed monitors in Willingboro, Camden, Paterson and Irvington.

"Pleasantville certainly meets the criteria for a state monitor and is exactly the kind of district that the new law was designed to help," Commissioner Davy said.

"There are very serious weaknesses and lapses in many areas of the district's business operations," she said. "For several years running, there have been significant numerous audit findings and repeat audit findings. The most recent audit indicates the board is not receiving information that would ensure the appropriate oversight of the district's fiscal operations. For instance, the board did not receive any of the required monthly board secretary reports until the end of the 2005-06 school year."

Deserable has signed a two-year contract. His salary will be \$600 per day, which is to be paid by the Pleasantville school district.

The Commissioner noted that specific DOE concerns about Pleasantville raised in audit findings include:

- Bank accounts and the general ledger are not been properly reconciled.
- Recordkeeping is inadequate.
- The Board of Education does not receive accurate financial information for financial planning.
- Expenditures are not made in accordance with state requirements and district policies, and records were not maintained for certain expenditures.
- Purchasing systems are inadequate and lacking in controls.
- Budget transfers are made without proper authorization.
- Treasurer and Board Secretary reports are not presented to the Board in a timely manner.

Deserable, who currently resides in Blackwood, began his career in education as a teacher and coach in Deptford. He was the school business administrator and board secretary in Barrington in 1986-87 and then served for nine years in the same position in Stratford. He has worked in Evesham since 1996.

The former president of the Camden County Association of School Business Officials, he is a DOE-approved mentor for other business administrators and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Educational and Information Resource Center (ERIC).

Deserable holds a bachelor's degree in industrial technology and education and a master's degree (plus 30 additional graduate credits) in educational administration from Glassboro State College (now Rowan University.)

From 1971 until 1976, he was a police officer and Director of Public Safety in Franklin (Gloucester County). He also served on the Franklin Township Board of Education for eight years and is currently the Treasurer of School

Funds in Woodlynne.