

***Semi Annual Report**

Submitted by

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I Introduction

Education law requires that the monitor assigned by the New York State Commissioner of Education (“the Commissioner”) to the Rochester City School District (RCSD or “the district”) provide semiannual reports to the Commissioner and the Board of Regents “on the academic, fiscal, and operational status of the school district. “

The role of the academic improvement and financial plans are to direct and guide the achievement of designated outcomes as a coordinated effort, working with all stakeholders. Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2020 required the Commissioner to appoint a monitor to the district to provide oversight, guidance, and technical assistance related to the academic and fiscal policies, practices, programs, and decisions of the district, the board of education (“the board”), and the superintendent. The monitor began on May 26, 2020. The primary responsibilities of the monitor include the following:

- Serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the board.
- Assist the board in adopting a conflict of interest policy that ensures board members and administrators act in the district’s best interest.
- Work with the board to develop a proposed academic improvement plan and proposed financial plan for the district no later than November 1, 2020, for the 2020-2021 school year and the four subsequent school years.
- Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year budget, ensure that the budget is balanced and consistent with the district’s long-term financial plan.

II Work of the Monitor During the 2021–2022 School Year

Finance

The Monitor:

- Provided guidance and technical support to the RCSD board during the budget development process. The monitor shared and discussed pros, cons, and concerns with administration, board commissioners and key external stakeholders throughout the development of the 2022–2023 school year budget. Ultimately, the monitor disapproved of the originally submitted RCSD budget because of the large deficit proposed in the draft budget.
- Supported the RCSD board by requiring all contracts and resolutions presented to the board include an executive summary and cost analysis. The monitor also worked to have adopted a protocol under which all documents presented to the board for action utilize reader friendly language to facilitate understanding.

- Developed recommendations resulting in upgrades to student; special education; financial; and human resource information management systems, such as PeopleSoft, PowerSchool, and Frontline. These systems have a direct impact on every core function of running a school district. In many cases, systems were so outdated in terms of basic functionality that they systems prevented staff from performing their duties in an efficient and productive manner.
- Supported the RCSD board with the advancement of an updated budget transfer policy and budget fund balance policy to ensure the board is aware of all major adjustments to the originally approved budget and the district maintains an adequate budget reserve for future district needs.
- Held regular meetings with district leadership responsible for transportation, finance, special education and grants to help improve program efficiencies:

Academics

The monitor:

- Approved federal funds needed to fully implement the district curriculum adoption plan and the district comprehensive assessment plan. This provided the resources to assess and monitor the needs of all RCSD student populations and purchase research and evidence based curricular materials that are culturally responsive and standards based.
- Provided support on how to appropriately braid and blend federal, state, and local funds to support district identified priorities. This funding approach was also approved by the monitor to provide an unprecedented amount of professional development to RCSD staff at all levels of the organization.
- Help to expedite and support a restructuring of the district's approach to summer school, resulting in an increase in localized student focused programming that expanded beyond traditional credit recovery to include new accelerated offerings located at new settings like St. John Fischer University.
- Participated in all executive leadership searches for staff who have any responsibility for oversight of receivership schools.
- Expedited the restructuring and associated funding of zone offices to provide increased resources for school chiefs, resulting in greater direct support to schools.
- Provided additional support for and monitoring of special education and bilingual education Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). This included recommending national experts in the field to support the district strategic plan.
- Held regular meetings with the following leaders to help improve student outcomes: school innovation, student placement, receivership schools, teaching and learning, special education, and grants.

Board Governance

The Monitor:

- Supported the board by recommending and participating in the onboarding and ongoing coaching of two new board members and two new board officers. Each board member leads a committee with additional support from the monitor specifically related to agenda development, including proposed essential questions for the board to pose to district leadership.
- Supported the board in keeping district leadership focused on the work during multiple investigations of alleged misconduct, the removal of a superintendent, and the selection of an interim superintendent for the 2022–2023 school year.
- Supported the board to implement a recommendation that the board initiate a process to review, and update all district policies. The updated budget transfer policy and budget balance resulted from this process
- Supported the board by attending monthly board officers’ meetings with district leadership at which key topics for the district community and topics related to the academic and financial improvement plans were addressed. This resulted in shorter and more efficient board meetings and improved working relationships between board and district leadership.
- Recommended the board maximize the use of BoardDocs, a web-based platform for school boards to manage meetings, agendas, corresponding documents and other board functions. This facilitated shorter and more efficient board meetings and improved functionality for board staff, particularly given the excessive number of board meetings.

General**The monitor:**

- Served as a liaison between the district and State legislators, the Board of Regents, the New York State Education Department (NYSED), and various parent and community organizations.
- Provided coaching to board leaders and cabinet members individually and collectively.
- Participated in board and cabinet retreats.
- Attended all board business and board committee of the whole meetings
- Served as a collaborator and liaison for Facility Modernization Program (FMP) meetings.
- Approved district plans for use of Federal Title and stimulus funds prior to the district’s submission of the plans to NYSED.

III Summary of Current Academic, Fiscal, and Operational Status**Finance**

During the 2021–2022 fiscal/school year, the district made some progress with improving fiscal and operating procedures and systems. The amount of progress was impacted by the turnover of staff in the financial services areas and the departure of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in April 2022. While a person was engaged temporarily to cover the work responsibilities of the CFO, the position remained vacant until August 15, 2022. Staff positions remain vacant and continue to turn over. The constant turnover in the CFO and staff positions causes the district to lose momentum in addressing and improving

fiscal processes and procedures. This is the number one problem in the fiscal services area. Unless qualified staff are hired and retained, the district will continue to struggle operationally.

The field work for the 2021–2022 school year audit is scheduled to start on September 19, 2022, with a final audit report to be issued in October 2022. Based on the unaudited numbers, the district will have a general fund operating surplus of approximately \$24.7 million for the 2021–2022 school year versus a budgeted transfer from fund balance of \$33.1 million. This reflects a variance of actual versus budget of \$57.8 million (\$24.7 + \$33.1 million), meaning the district’s year end fund balance is expected to be \$57.8 million larger than projected in the 2021–2022 school year budget. Although an operating surplus is good news, the size of the surplus reflects that accurate budgeting remains a challenge for the district.

The general fund budget for 2021–2022 school year was \$840,274,692. The actual amount of State aid and other revenues came in \$12.0 million less than budgeted for, a negative variance of 1.4%. This was offset by positive variances for expense versus budget of \$69.8 million or 8.3%. The expense variances were in the following areas.

<u>Area</u>	<u>Amount (in Millions)</u>	<u>Variance Percentage</u>
➤ Salary and Benefits	\$27.9	6.1%
➤ Contract Transportation	\$13.7	20.5%
➤ Charter School Tuition	\$ 7.1	6.7%
➤ Special Education Tuition	\$ 5.4	24.7%
➤ BOCES Services	\$ 5.1	18.7%
➤ All Other Areas	<u>\$10.6</u>	6.7%
Total	\$69.8	

The district budget assumes that 100% of staff positions will be filled for the entire school year. Thus, any vacant and unfilled positions accumulate as savings in salaries and benefits. With the high staff turnover rate in the district, the savings were even greater than normal. Using past results, the district is going to explore budgeting at less than 100% for salaries and benefits when developing the 2023–2024 school year budget.

Expenses for transportation, charter school tuition, special education tuition, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) all were budgeted at amounts substantially higher than actual costs. The impact of the COVID pandemic on operations created budget uncertainty, which resulted in the district budgeting conservatively in these and other areas when making assumptions and calculations. For the 2022–2023 school year budget, the assumptions were made using post pandemic assumptions and, as a result, are expected to be much more accurate. However, the salaries and benefits were budgeted again at 100% for 2022-2023 school year, so a significant positive variance still can be expected in that area.

The net of revenue and expense was a positive variance to budget of \$57.8 million (\$69.8 million overprediction in expenditures less a \$12.0 million underprediction in revenues). This represents a positive variance to budget of 6.9% (\$57,800,000/\$840,274,692). The target positive variance for the district is a maximum of 2% (\$16.8 million) and ideally closer to or less than 1% (\$8.4 million). The budget process to be used for the 2023-2024 school year is being examined to understand the cause of past variances and to improve revenue and expenditure projections.

The general fund balance as of June 30, 2021, was \$135.8 million. With an operating surplus for the 2021–2022 school year projected at \$24.7 million the unaudited year end fund balance as of June 30, 2022, is projected at \$160.5 million. This provides fiscal stability for the district and allows the district to operate in the 2022–2023 school year without having to borrow during the year to cover cash flow needs. The low point for cash in the 2022–2023 school year is projected at \$37 million in the middle of January 2023.

In summary, the district continues to rebuild its fiscal strength to a solid level. However, it continues to struggle with continuity of senior management (including the superintendent and CFO) and support staff. The lack of continuity negatively impacts the ability to develop and implement an accurate annual budget, along with appropriate procedures and processes that result in efficient and effective operations. The district hired an experienced educator with CFO experience from Pennsylvania (Shawn Farr) who started on August 15, 2022. It is expected that he will bring consistency and improvement to the finance area going forward. At approximately the same time, the board terminated early the contract of the superintendent. Deputy Superintendent Carmine Peluso has been appointed as interim superintendent, and the search process for a permanent superintendent has started. The turnover in the superintendent position is a setback in leadership that adds to the difficulty of making improvement progress in the 2022–2023 school year.

Academics

During the 2021–2022 school year, the district made limited progress with improving academic outcomes. Unlike finance and operations, the Division of Teaching and Learning (T & L) has experienced a less significant turnover of staff. T & L acknowledges and tries to reinforce three guiding principles for improving academic outcomes for students: “1) Every child deserves to engage with grade-level content every day. 2) Our students must engage with high quality culturally responsive experiences where they are affirmed, seen and valued. 3) We have an obligation to provide equitable experiences to every child across the district that are not dependent on where they live or go to school.”

The district is to be applauded for instituting the comprehensive assessment program. District staff members now have easier access to data specifying the strengths and needs of students throughout the district. This type of data can inform decisions regarding staffing, master scheduling, curriculum, instruction, extended learning opportunities, Multitiered Student Supports (MTSS), summer school, and budgeting. The information gathered from assessments administered throughout the district also supported the adoption of curricular materials in English language arts (ELA), science, and math. Professional development was offered at an unprecedented rate to executive leadership, central office staff, school leaders, teachers and support staff from early spring to the end of the school year utilizing federal, state, and local funding. The board’s Educational Student Achievement (ESA) committee of the whole has been redesigned to adopt a long-term view of district educational issues that the board will act upon in the 2022–2023 school year.

Although some changes in practices, procedures, professional development, and procurement of resources have been initiated, data representing student outcomes indicates a need for a more cohesive, innovative, and accelerated approach to the district turnaround agenda. A needed area of focus is the development of a strategic plan that includes key metrics and milestones aligned to a district vision. This would support efforts to hold all staff members accountable to clearly defined expectations and goals for improved student outcomes. Recommendations rated red or yellow throughout the academic plan highlight missed opportunities for addressing identified obstacles to district success.

i-Ready is an online program for reading and mathematics used during the 2021–2022 school year to assess student needs, monitor progress, and provide opportunities for personalized learning in grades kindergarten through 8 throughout the district. The assessments were administered twice during the school year. The district expectation for the 2022–2023 school year is that the assessments will be administered three times. Below is a chart highlighting the most recent performance of RCSD students using i-Ready for ELA.

Spring 2022 I Ready Reading Diagnostic

Grade	2 or more grade levels below	1 grade level below	On grade Level	Above grade level
District Overall	51.0%	28.8%	19.2%	1.0%
Grade K	0.0%	49.3%	50.0%	0.8%
Grade 1	12.4%	68.1%	18.9%	0.7%
Grade 2	47.7%	36.0%	14.4%	1.8%
Grade 3	56.6%	17.7%	24.7%	0.9%
Grade 4	54.5%	30.8%	13.8%	0.9%
Grade 5	68.5%	18.0%	12.7%	0.9%
Grade 6	69.6%	16.2%	12.8%	1.5%
Grade 7	75.1%	12.2%	11.9%	0.8%
Grade 8	74.4%	12.3%	12.6%	0.7%

Below is a chart highlighting the most recent performance of RCSD students using i-Ready for math.

Spring 2022 I Ready Math Diagnostic

Grade	2 or more grade levels below	1 grade level below	On grade Level	Above grade level
District Overall	51.6%	34.9%	13.4%	0.1%
Grade K	0.0%	67.1%	32.8%	0.1%
Grade 1	19.4%	65.2%	15.4%	0.0%
Grade 2	49.0%	42.0%	8.9%	0.1%
Grade 3	52.5%	34.7%	12.6%	0.2%
Grade 4	60.5%	27.6%	11.9%	0.1%
Grade 5	68.0%	21.0%	10.9%	0.1%
Grade 6	65.7%	21.8%	12.3%	0.2%
Grade 7	78.1%	14.0%	7.8%	0.1%
Grade 8	86.0%	10.9%	3.1%	0.0%

Math and reading data from i-Ready shows from grade 3 through grade 8, more than 50% of RCSD students are performing 2 or more grade levels below grade proficiency. i-Ready is a nationally used online program. The data from RCSD is significantly below state levels, but more disturbingly, it is below comparable member districts of the Council of Great City Schools.

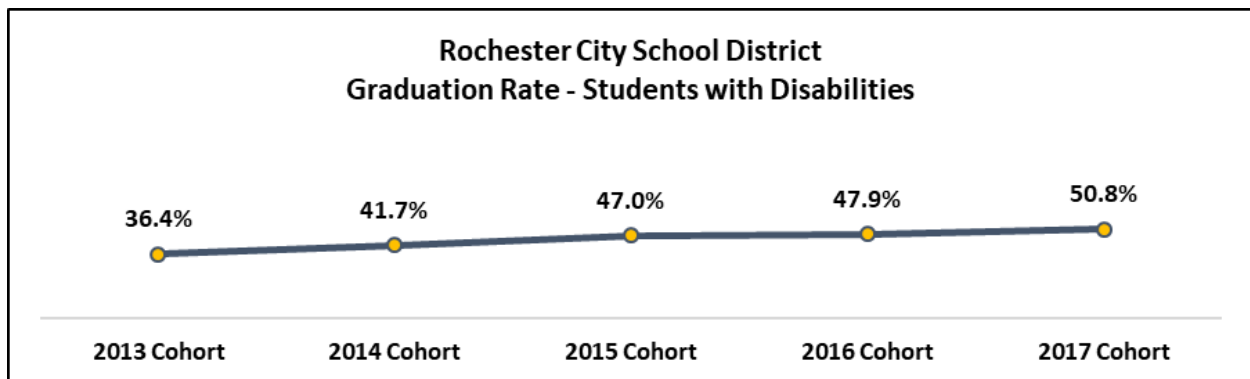
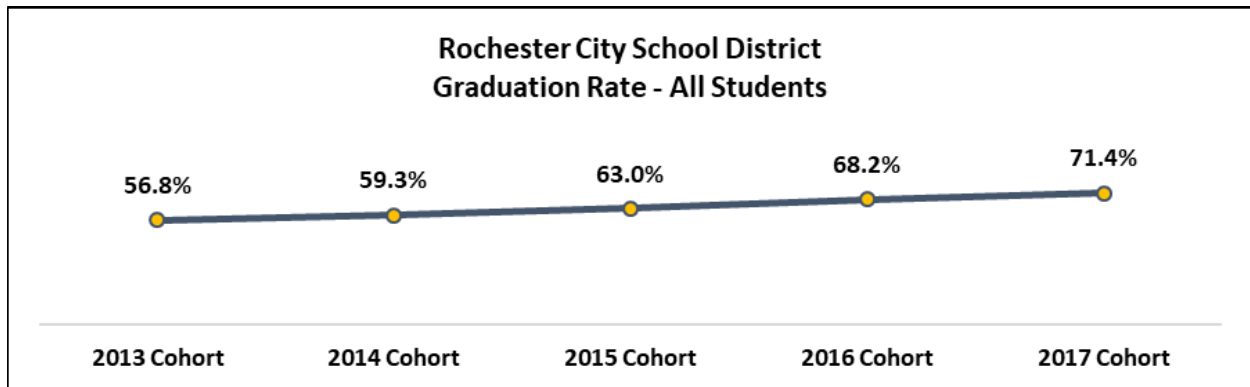
Regents

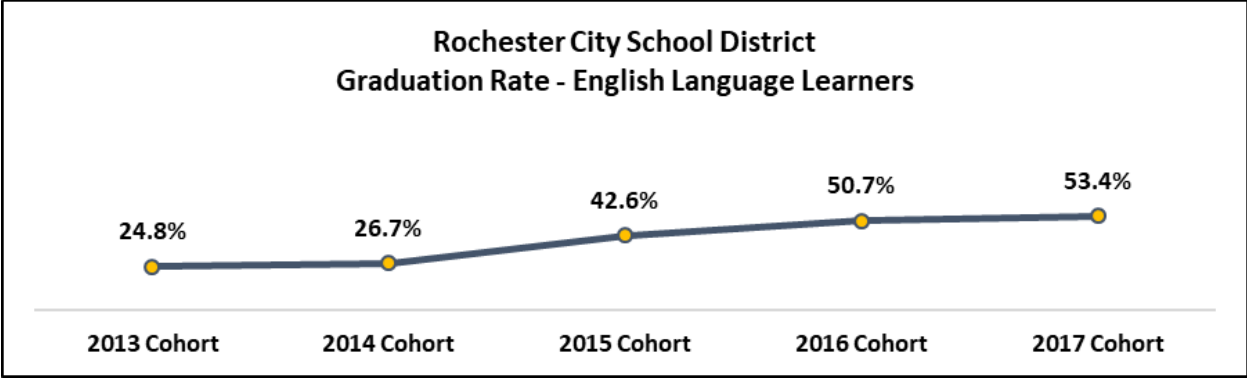
The New York State (NYS) Regents Exams are a set of tests administered to students in the state of New York. Generally, students must pass the Regents ELA examination as well as a Regents examination in

math; science; and social studies; plus, a fifth examination, which may be a Regents or another NYSED approved examination, in order to earn a Regents or local diploma. (Because the pandemic disrupted the administration of Regents examinations during the 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022 school years, students graduating in the 2021–2022 school year were exempted from certain graduation assessment requirements.) Only 25.2% of the RCSD students who took the Algebra I Regent exam earned a passing score. The percentage of students passing represents a decline of 6.9% from the previous school year. There was also a decline of 5.8% in the ELA Regents passing rate from the previous school year. Only 49.3% of the RCSD students who took the ELA Regents exam earned a passing score. A similar trend appeared for the remaining Regents data for the 2021–2022 school year.

High School Graduation Rates

Graduation rates for RCSD have been on steadily increasing; however, there are at least three disturbing trends that could derail progress in this area. First, only half of the students with disabilities (SWD) are graduating. At a graduation rate of 50.8%, SWDs are graduating nearly 20 percentage points below their peers. The district cannot embark on a district turnaround effort with 18% of its student population graduating at 50%. Secondly, students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) are another student population graduating just above 50%, at 53.4%. ELL students represent 16.5% of the RCSD student population. The district will have to implement targeted strategies for the academic success of more than one-third of the RCSD student population.





Finally, a strong indicator of on-time high school graduation is the ability for high school freshmen to pass the requisite courses and earn enough credits to become sophomores in good standing following the first year of high school. This is an indicator on the RCSD Strategic Plan. The chart below shows the district’s inability to reach this target for any RCSD student population.

Percentage of Grade 9 Cohort on Track to Graduate by Year End

Subgroup	Strategic Plan Target	% on Track	Target Met
All Students	88%	50.8%	No
Black	79%	49.2%	No
Hispanic	81%	47.0%	No
SWD	75%	37.6%	No
ELL	83%	58.3%	No

In summary, the district continues to struggle to provide the academic programming and supports required for a comprehensive and sustainable district turnaround. The numerous red ratings assigned to recommendations in the Academic Improvement Plan underscore the lack of progress the district continues to experience in the area of academic scholarship. The potential violations identified in the next section of this report provide specific action steps the district should execute to realize positive financial and academic outcomes. In addition, stable leadership, a vision for the future, and a commitment to execute the academic, financial, and RCSD strategic plans could provide a foundation for a financially sound and academically strong RCSD.

IV Monitor’s Response to District Annual Report

The monitor agrees with the ratings provided by the district in the district’s annual report. The monitor previously submitted 10 notice of violations that were accepted by Commissioner Rosa. There were 7 identified violations of the Academic Improvement Plan and 3 violations of the Financial Plan. The monitor and the superintendent meet monthly to monitor progress in resolving the identified violations. The monitor is preparing to notify the Commissioner of additional plan violations based on the three criteria she used to identify the first set of violations that she submitted to Commissioner Rosa. These criteria are as follows:

- Direct impact on positive student outcomes
- Direct impact on the financial stability of the district

- Direct correlation with Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) or American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding

The state monitor plans to submit to the Commissioner notifications regarding 12 violations of the Academic Improvement Plan, all pertaining to the instructional transformation domain of the Academic Improvement Plan. The monitor plans to submit notifications regarding 6 violations of Finance Improvement plan. Six of the notifications involve violations previously reported to the Commissioner.

Recommendation Number	Text of Recommendation (from Annual Plan Update)	Implementation Status of Recommendation as of June 30, 2022, as Reported by District	Implementation Status of Recommendation as of June 30, 2022, as Assessed by Monitor
Academic Table 9, R3	By February 2021, the District administration shall submit the first draft of the RCSD Secondary Course of Studies to the ESA COW and State Monitor for review	RED	RED No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.
Academic Table 9, R5	Implement a yearly training for school counselors that includes technical knowledge in the areas of transcript review and development, master scheduling, analysis of foreign transcripts, familiarity with the RCSD Course of Studies, Freshman Academy Design, and CTE counseling. 9.5.1 By July 2021, the administration shall implement yearly training for school counselors.	RED	RED No evidence of this work has been shared. If the work was done, recent graduation audit findings indicate it was not effective or was not monitored for results. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.

Academic Table 9, R6	By September 1, 2021, all school leadership teams shall be trained on the Power school Student Information System, with a focus on modules for attendance (including no-show tracking), grading, master scheduling, parent portal, behavior tracking, health, early warning, and graduation tracking	RED	RED No evidence of this work has been shared. If the work was done, recent graduation audit findings indicate it was not effective or was not monitored for results. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes
Academic Table 9, R8	By May 31, 2022, develop or modify the following policies: Grading, Retention, and Promotion. The secondary course catalog should include all updated policies.	RED	RED No evidence work has started. Direct impact on positive student outcomes. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.
Academic Table 9, R16	Create a course of studies that includes updating policies for curriculum and instruction, updated CTE offerings, and updated pathways to college and career. 1. Annually by January 15, 2022, the District administration shall submit the semi-final draft of the RCSD Secondary Course of Studies to the ESA COW and State Monitor. A final draft of the RCSD Secondary Course of Studies should be presented to the State Monitor, the Executive Steering Committee of School-Based Teams, selected student groups, and the Board for final approval before February 15, 2022. (M)	RED	RED No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.
Academic Table 9, R17	School counselors should transition to the Division of Teaching and	RED	RED

	<p>Learning during the 2022-23 school year. Implement a yearly training for school counselors that includes technical knowledge in the areas of transcript review and development, master scheduling, analysis of foreign transcripts, familiarity with the RCSD Course of Studies, Freshman Academy Design, and CTE counseling, aligned to the ASCAA Professional Standards and Competencies.</p>		<p>No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.</p>
Academic Table 9, R19	<p>A multi-year CTE plan should be co- developed with school leaders, industry experts, and community stakeholders to be shared with the executive cabinet and implemented by February 2022. 9.19.1 The CTE plan should be shared with the following: 1. State Monitor 2. Executive Cabinet 3. Board 4. Executive Steering Committee of School-Based Teams, 5. Chiefs 6. Principals 7. PTA/PTO Leadership</p>	RED	<p>RED</p> <p>No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Impact on FMP and school reconfiguration. Direct impact on positive student outcomes. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.</p>
Academic Table 9, R20	<p>Revamp the high school selection process to: 1) Become more family and student- friendly 2) Include more family and student involvement 3) Better align with the budget and staffing schedule Develop a comprehensive, user-friendly course of studies that clearly outlines all the necessary information for users to chart the instructional pathways</p>	RED	<p>RED</p> <p>Minimal evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.</p>

	<p>offered by the district to ensure successful on-time graduation, resulting in a college and career-ready graduate. Establish a laser-like focus on the Grade 8 to 9 transition, including a freshmen academy structure.</p> <p>Create a portfolio of high school programming based on need, interest, and industry outlooks.</p> <p>Create a yearlong Virtual Academy for grade 8 through grade 12 coursework, offering core, enrichment, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and college courses. The District administration shall adhere to the following:</p> <p>1. By December 15, 2021, submit the final draft of a revised RCSD high school selection process to the Instructional Council and the Monitor.</p>		
Academic Table 9, R23	<p>Quarterly RCSD reports of students on track to graduate shared as follows: a) State Monitor b) ESA Committee c) Executive Leadership d) Executive Steering Committee of School-Based Teams e) Chiefs f) Principals g) PTA/PTO Leadership (N)</p>	RED	<p>RED</p> <p>No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.</p>
Academic Table 9, R26	<p>Effective January 1, 2022, establish a process to share samples of evidence of the implementation of the Response to intervention (RTI) and Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) process for students in grades 3, 6, 8,</p>	RED	<p>RED</p> <p>Inconsistent practice and missing school data Direct impact on positive student outcomes.</p>

	and 9 to the State Monitor during the 4-6-week cycle reviews with Chief		
Academic Table 9, R27	The District administration shall, on an annual basis, adhere to the following: 1. By February 2021, identify Problems of Practice as areas of focus for low-performing schools. 5. Beginning September 2021, maintain a dashboard of leading indicators for all schools. Require school chiefs to report on the progress of their zone schools once a month at cabinet meetings.	RED	RED Evidence available for only the first year. Annual requirement. Direct impact on positive student outcomes.
Academic Table 9, R31	Hold District personnel accountable for student performance outcomes. Schedule of evaluations should be developed on or before August 2021. All personnel should be evaluated every year.	RED	RED No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year.
Finance Table 4, R2	The Board and administration shall examine all contracts and programs providing direct service to students for the following: * Evidence of impact on student outcomes * Alignment to the strategic plan * Duplication of efforts * Cost-effectiveness * Feasibility * Equity * Need * Sustainability Board and administration should refrain from continuing to allocate scarce funds to programs and initiatives that do	<u>YELLOW</u>	RED Lack of evidence, concern about impact the budget development process. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.
Finance Table 4, R5	All three District management systems	BLUE	RED

	shall be upgraded, with a comprehensive training plan for a cross-functional, interdepartmental team of staff members. A policy shall be adopted committing the District to keep all three systems upgraded.		Minimal evidence this work has started. Some systems had not been updated in the last ten years. Significant impact on basic district functions, like staffing, budgeting, Medicaid reimbursement. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.
Finance Table 5, R12	Conduct a financial audit of the RCSD athletic department.	RED	RED No evidence work has started. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.
Finance Table 7, R5	Pilot participatory, equity- based budget practices beginning with the 2022-23 school year budget development. Adopt a model for budget development that ensures equitable access to resources for the 2022-23 school year budget. (N)	RED	RED No evidence work has started. Direct impact on the financial stability of the district.
Finance Table 9, R5	Annually, by September 1, the District shall submit to the monitor an updated five- year financial plan such that, for each school year, the annual aggregate operating expenses do not exceed annual aggregate operating revenues, and the major operating funds of the District are balanced in accordance with accepted accounting principles. The financial plan shall include statements of all estimated revenues, expenditures, and cash flow projections of the District.	GREEN	RED Quality of the content included in the long-range financial plan and the practicality of the timeliness of submission.
Finance Table 9, R8	Effective immediately, initiate a minimum of	RED	RED

	four strategies for implementation to reduce District reliance on transportation and submit them to the State Monitor. (N)		No evidence of this work has been shared. Loss of another school year.
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V Monitor Priorities for the Next School Year

The monitor will prioritize the following six areas for the 2022_2023 school year in the area of academics:

1. Teaching and Learning
 - a. Math
 - b. Science
 - c. Literacy
 - d. Career and Technical Education (CTE)
2. Receivership School Turnaround
3. Secondary school redesign
4. Secondary course of studies
5. Student placement
6. Evaluation of federal and state funded programs and initiatives

The monitor will prioritize the following six areas for the 2022_2023 school year in the area of finance:

1. FMP and school reconfiguration
2. Balanced budget and adherence to fund balance requirements
3. Long-range financial planning, including the transition to post COVID funding
4. Reducing transportation costs
5. Optimizing ARP, CRSSA, and Title funding to support district goals
6. Monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the area of human capital, finance, and accountability

VI Conclusion

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of many staff members who have persevered through an inconstant financial situation, a turnover of district leadership, a reorganization of key central offices, ever present state monitoring, and the ravages of a global pandemic. I would like to thank the central office staff, cabinet members, board, and NYSED staff for challenging, guiding, and supporting me with this work. I would also like to extend my gratitude to those colleagues who have moved on from RCSD since my tenure as monitor began. Your contributions to this work are greatly appreciated.

The RCSD administration and board have a responsibility to examine the systems and structures preventing the district from becoming a formidable institution of academic excellence in the Rochester community. While difficult foundational work is occurring in the area of instructional transformation, student attendance data, and student suspension data, student achievement data reflect a great need for continued improvements. Information revealed through a high school graduation audit further confirms the need for an accelerated implementation of research and evidence-based strategies before one can confidently attest that RCSD students graduate college and career ready. Although the district has adhered to many recommendations from the financial plan by initiating the implementation of systems to better manage the functions of the finance, human capital, operations, accountability and special

education departments, there remains a need to address the misalignment of organizational structures required to best support the current demographics of RCSD. One example of the misalignment is the district's inability or unwillingness to actively address the declining enrollment of students attending RCSD. There are still strongly held beliefs and practices that contribute to inefficiencies and high costs for the district. In addition, the complacency embedded in these beliefs and practices, if unchecked, could undermine newer systems and protocols referenced in both the academic improvement and financial plans.

Despite the unspoken and spoken demands of RCSD students for better school experiences, greater equity, access to district resources, better preparation for the demands of post-secondary life, and more acknowledgement of their social and cultural capital, too many RCSD decisionmakers remain steadfast in adhering to a collection of norms representing a bygone era. The New York Board of Regents has expressed its desire to significantly expand possible pathways for students to demonstrate they are ready to graduate from high school. The district struggles to find an effective model for utilizing resources in an equitable, student focused manner. The district must also find the right compliment of partners to educate the whole child in a way that prepares students for an unknown future. The first step is knowing and then effectively managing district resources.

Serving as monitor affords me access to tools for supporting the work of district improvement. I will continue to exercise my duties supporting the new interim superintendent, the new board president, and the RCSD community by 1) leveraging the recommendations embedded in the academic improvement and financial plans, 2) participating as an ex-officio member of the board, 3) continuing my role as pre-approver of spending plans for state and federal grants, 4) actively engaging in my role as liaison and pre-approver for FMP, and 5) coaching participants in the development of a balanced budget and a long-range fiscal plan.