



Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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April 12, 2022

By email and first class mail

Dr. Anthony C. Azar
Superintendent of Schools
Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District
2700 Regional Rd
North Dighton, MA 02764

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22 APR 20 AM 9:49
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE
D-1A REG'L. SCH. DIST.

Dear Superintendent Azar,

In your recent e-mail, you indicate that the Town of Rehoboth continues to explore the withdrawal of grades K-8 from the Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District Agreement (Agreement). You have asked whether there are any changes in the state requirements from those presented in my correspondence of August 9, 2021.

The state requirements have not changed. Notwithstanding the language in your Agreement, the withdrawal of grades K-8 constitutes an amendment to the existing Agreement. All amendments to regional school district agreements are *subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and would not be in effect unless approved by the Commissioner*. Furthermore, any change in the composition of the Dighton Rehoboth Regional School District (District), including membership or grades, would require the submission of a long-range education plan from each of the proposed new school districts, as outlined in regional school district regulations ([603 CMR 41.02\(2\)](#)).

As previously noted, a series of steps must be taken by the member towns and the District and information provided by each to the Department before the Commissioner would entertain an amendment to reconfigure the District and approve the creation of two new school districts. Outlined below is a summary of the key steps in such a process:

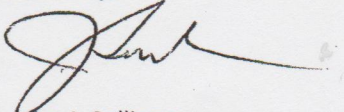
- Each town must submit to the Department a long range education plan to document how it will serve and support its elementary and middle school populations.
- The District must provide information to the Department to document how such withdrawal will affect its grade 9-12 student population and regional operations.
- Each long range plan must address the requirements of 603 CMR 41.02(2) as well as describe:
 - how each new entity will be governed and managed,
 - how it will be funded,
 - how the reconfiguration and separation will impact students, staff and parents,
 - how all outstanding obligations to the District will be met, and
 - the fiscal implications on each district.

- The District must provide an amendment to the Agreement reflecting the proposed reconfiguration. The amendment must reflect the grade levels to be served by the reconfigured regional district and must meet current law and applicable regulations. As previously noted, any required Agreement changes unrelated to the grade range reconfiguration would need the approval of both member towns' appropriating authorities.
- Department staff would work with District and municipal officials to ensure that each long range plan appropriately addresses the components of the regulations and that the amendment to the District Agreement satisfies and meets local approval requirements and process, as stated in the Agreement.
- Once all requirements are finalized and accepted by Department staff, and once all needed local approvals and/or votes have taken place, the amendment reflecting the changes to the District Agreement and the long range plans reflecting the assumption of K-8 education by the two towns must be submitted for the Commissioner's consideration.
- In order for the amendment and change in grade configuration to be effective on July 1 of a fiscal year, all approvals, including the Commissioner's, must be obtained no later than the preceding December 31.

In summary, following a town vote to withdraw grade levels from the District, regional school district regulations require that the documentation noted above be submitted for the Commissioner's consideration to reflect the change in the District Agreement and the assumption of K-8 education by the member towns. All required documentation and needed local votes must be submitted and the Commissioner's approval secured before December 31 of any given year in order for the change/amendment to be in effect the following July 1.

I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



John J. Sullivan
Associate Commissioner

c: Robert Baxter, School Business Official
Adam Blaisdell, Assistant Superintendent
Kristin Donahue, Special Education Director
Christine Lynch, Office of Regional Governance
Michelle Griffin, Office of Regional Governance