



August 8, 2019

The Honorable Jorge O. Elorza
Mayor's Office
Providence City Hall
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mayor Elorza,

This letter serves as an introduction to the Proposal for Decision and Order regarding the Providence Public School District (PPSD) that we are delivering to you and other involved parties today. The primary element of my Proposal for Decision and Order regarding PPSD reads as follows:

"The Commissioner shall exercise all the powers and authorities delegated by the [K-12] Council to the Commissioner and all powers of RIDE over the budget, program and personnel of PPSD and over the school's governance and facilities. The Commissioner shall also exercise all powers and authorities currently exercised by the Providence School Board and Superintendent (Acting, Interim or Permanent), as well as all powers and authorities currently exercised by the Mayor of Providence and the Providence City Council as it pertains to PPSD and its schools."

Last year's RICAS results, the report of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, the voices of hundreds of community members at our nine (9) public forums, and extensive media coverage (local and national) have made it clear that PPSD is a fundamentally broken system and requires drastic intervention. This Proposal for Decision and Order is the next step in that process.

The bulk of this document is a Findings of Fact section that outlines in detail how PPSD has historically failed to meet performance expectations. The Findings of Fact further describe how RIDE has worked with PPSD to help address PPSD's system-wide challenges, with insufficient, if any, improvement in student outcomes. The lack of improvement, despite these supports, far exceed the Crowley Act's requirement of three years of progressive intervention and support.

This is a moment for sweeping, transformational change. While this Proposal for Decision and Order clarifies my role in directly taking control of PPSD, it is just one step in our journey to deliver for the students of Providence. If the Proposal for Decision and Order becomes final, I will be appointing a State Turnaround Superintendent and/or other designees, who will work with us and the community to develop, build support for, and implement a Turnaround Plan for the district.



As you know, pursuant to the Crowley Act, you and the other parties have 30 days to request an opportunity to “show cause” why this Proposal for Decision and Order should not become the Final Decision and Order. The specifics of that request are contained in the attached Order to Show Cause and (Proposed) Order of Control and Reconstitution. On September 13, 2019, I will convene an administrative hearing to review any evidence or testimony submitted by parties who accept the invitation to participate in the hearing.

I look forward to your continued collaboration and engagement in this effort. The community has embraced our efforts to call attention to the broken system, and we must all continue to come together to ensure that the community remains engaged in its transformation. It will take all stakeholders, working collaboratively for years, to turn PPSD into a model for the state and the entire nation.

While this is a challenging moment of changing roles and responsibilities, by working together we can quickly move to a better place where student outcomes drive every decision across the district. I am committed to that goal, and I know you share the same desire to spare no effort in delivering for Providence children and families.

Sincerely,

Angélica Infante-Green

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education