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"BRIGHTER TOGETHER"

Annette Speach
Superintendent of Schools
www.nscsd.org

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Dear NSCSD Community:

On Friday, August 17, the North Syracuse Central School District was notified that New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo had signed a bill forgiving the district of an approximately \$20 million penalty for the late filing of paperwork related to certain capital projects dating back over 20 years.

As we now begin the 2018-2019 school year with this enormous burden taken from our shoulders, we breathe a collective sigh of relief and want to take a moment to thank everyone that made this possible. The support we received during this tumultuous journey has been overwhelming and inspirational. We have seen a true setting aside of political differences and opinions as our lawmakers, agencies, unions, citizens, teachers and students all came together to do the right thing for the children of our community.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Senator John DeFrancisco and Assemblyman Al Stirpe who drafted the bills that successfully passed through the state legislature. In addition, we appreciate the efforts of Senator David Valesky, Assembly members Pamela Hunter and William Magnarelli and County Executive Joanie Mahoney for stepping forward to support our cause. Penalty relief would not have been possible without our students, employees and community members who wrote letters to the legislators and governor.

We were so fortunate to have the support of the New York State School Boards Association and the New York State Association of School Business Officials. They marshalled their resources to ensure that our case was effectively presented in the legislature. Finally, we appreciate the special relationship we have with our local New York State United Teachers Union leadership. Without their partnership, we would not have overcome this challenge.

*We hope that this difficult situation will serve as an illustration for our students on how to successfully overcome adversity. North Syracuse Central School District's **Vision2020** incorporates the concepts of trust and respect. A prerequisite of trust and respect is transparency and communication. Therefore, when confronted with the penalty, we openly shared all of the facts with our constituents and the media. The tough questions asked were appropriate. We shared your anger and disappointment. However, in order to serve the best interests of our entire community, differences were put aside and we all worked together to successfully repair the damage and become a better, stronger and more fiscally sound organization.*

We are grateful that you moved forward with us as a united team committed to penalty relief.

Thank you to the tremendous North Syracuse Central School District community. You have proven to be champions of our children's education.

Annette Speach
Superintendent of Schools

Michael Shusda
Board of Education President