



# DEPEW UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Offices  
5201 S. Transit Road  
Depew, New York 14043-4335  
[www.depewschools.org](http://www.depewschools.org)

Jeffrey R. Rabey, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
(716) 686-5105  
Fax (716) 686-5101

Susan Arena  
Business Administrator  
(716) 686-5110  
Fax (716) 686-5112

June 15, 2021

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

As the very proud Superintendent of the Depew Union Free School District, it is with great hesitation that I tender my resignation for the purpose of retirement effective at the end of the next academic year, June 30, 2022. After 30 years in public education; 17 as a Superintendent of Schools and 12 in the Depew Union Free School District, I will be retiring from public education. I am making this announcement early, so that the Board of Education can effectively plan for this critical transition. My hope would be to assist and mentor the new superintendent, as they would assume the leadership role within the Depew School-Community on July 1, 2022.

The number of talented people that I have had the honor to work alongside are too numerous to mention here individually. Nevertheless, I want all of the Board of Education members, administrators, teachers and staff to know that they have had a positive impact on both my professional and personal life. I sincerely appreciate the unwavering dedication and hard work toward the success of our students. There are still twelve months of my career remaining and I look forward to completing the many initiatives and projects that are in progress. I will continue to push for improved student achievement, which has been a major emphasis of my career.

I want to publicly thank all of the Board of Education members, especially those who hired me in 2010, for giving me the opportunity to serve the Depew School-Community and for supporting the decisions made during my leadership. Together, with a caring and committed staff, we have shaped one of the highest quality educational institutions in New York State; one that we can all be proud of. I also want to thank the many parents and community members who have served unselfishly on numerous committees over the years. The work of these people provided excellent advice and guidance, which helped mold district decisions for future generations.

In my time as Superintendent, we have presented balanced budgets that stayed under the statutory tax cap every year, all while preserving and adding staffing, growing programs for students and remaining fiscally responsible to the taxpayers of the community. We have created eleven successful budgets, thus far, and moved the District into one of the most economically sound school districts within New York State.

We designed, promoted and implemented over \$68 million in Capital projects, which responsibly downsized facilities, upgraded and maximized remaining facilities, created a new athletic complex and upgraded several safety and security measures.

***"Inspiring, Challenging, Achieving"***

Together we have negotiated and approved multi-year concessionary collective bargaining agreements for every bargaining unit within the District, along with multiple individual contracts that were fair and balanced for all employees, as well as fiscally sound for our taxpayers.

We transformed our Health Insurance Benefits programming from a Community Rated Plan with annual double percentage point increases to an Experienced Rated Plan with minimal annual increases, immediately saving the school-community almost \$1 million. We then gathered data for approximately three years, shifted to a Self-Funded Health Insurance Plan in 2016, which will ultimately provide the District with millions of dollars of recurring savings. Finally and after a few years of active legislative advocacy, we were able to establish a Health Insurance Benefits Reserve Fund. This fund will protect the District well into the future.

Together, we focused on student achievement and our graduation rates. We now have 10 Advanced Placement Courses and 19 Advanced Studies/College Credit Courses. Every student has access to an iPad or a Chromebook with wireless access on almost all of our school buses. Our highly successful Academy of Finance, a “school within a school” is affiliated with the National Academy Foundation. Our curriculum is aligned with a laser focus on science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. We have been able to add Girls’ Golf, Girls’ and Boys’ Ice Hockey, Girls’ and Boys’ Lacrosse and Unified Bowling and Basketball for a total of 48 Varsity, Junior Varsity and Modified sports teams. Our graduation rate moved from 80% in 2010 to 97% in 2021 with well over 85% of our graduates attending a post-secondary institution. In 2016, we posted a High Achievement Index ranking of 11 out of 96 districts within Western New York.

During the past 15 months, we successfully navigated through an unprecedented pandemic that entailed feeding children, securing one-to-one devices for instruction, designing different learning models, performing safety checks on children and their families, providing COVID-19 testing and vaccination opportunities, as well as providing childcare for working parents/guardians.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the handful of co-leaders, who have served on the Administrative Team over the years. They hold tough jobs that require creative talents to find solutions that cannot be found in any textbook. These leaders are good people who I tremendously respect and enjoy working with on a daily basis. When the end of next year finally arrives, it is my greatest hope that the legacy I leave in the Depew Schools is a stronger organization than when I arrived. Thank you to everyone for the guidance and support given to me during my superintendency in Depew.

***Once A Wildcat, Always A Wildcat!***

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey R. Rabey Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Depew Union Free School District

***“Inspiring, Challenging, Achieving”***