

Tioga Independent School District

Josh Ballinger, Superintendent
Keith Kirkland, High School Principal
Jana Smith, Elementary/Middle School Principal



March 20, 2023

Subject: Assignment of Accreditation Status to the Tioga ISD

Tioga ISD Community,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the 2022-2023 accreditation status of the Tioga ISD is Accredited-Warned. Under state law, the accreditation statuses that may be assigned to districts include Accredited, Accredited-Warned, Accredited-Probation, and Not Accredited-Revoked. A status of Accredited-Warned means that a district exhibits deficiencies in performance that, if not addressed, will lead to probation or revocation of the district's accreditation status.

The Tioga ISD has been assigned an Accredited-Warned status due to the ratings assigned to the district in the state's financial accountability rating system (FIRST). Specifically, the Tioga ISD was assigned a 2021 (Fiscal Year 20) and 2022 (Fiscal Year 21) financial accountability rating of F-Substandard Achievement on FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas).

The district is taking the following steps to address the areas of identified deficiency. The General Fund ended Fiscal Year (FY) 22 with a deficit fund balance of \$1,611,056, a decrease of \$1,192,633 from the prior fiscal year. The resources available for appropriation were \$2,293,069 lower than budgeted for the General Fund. This is primarily due to a reduction in State Aid Formula allotment for overpayment in FY 21 of \$1,361,804 and over budgeting local revenue by \$495,851. The district was over budget in six functional categories at year end for FY 22. The TISD School Board filed for financial exigency with TEA November 2022 to help correct the same issues with budgeting for FY 23 (current FY). A Reduction In Force of \$1,000,000 annualized salary was performed in December 2022. Conversations/options explored with legal counsel about debt issues in January/February 2023.

Under law, if the current accreditation concerns for the district are not addressed, the district may be assigned an accreditation status of Accredited-Probation or Not Accredited-Revoked. A Not Accredited-Revoked status means that the TEA no longer recognizes the district as a Texas public school. Districts with an accreditation status below Accredited also may be subject to additional accreditation sanctions as referenced in statute/rule.

For more information regarding the assignment of accreditation statuses to school districts, you may access the TEA website at <http://www.tea.texas.gov/accredstatus/>. This website will provide you with background information as well as links to the Texas Education Code and current commissioner's rules related to accreditation. If you have additional questions regarding the assignment of an Accredited-Warned status to the Tioga ISD, or if you would like additional information about the district's ongoing improvement efforts, please contact Josh Ballinger by using any of the listed methods below.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Ballinger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Josh Ballinger, Superintendent
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