Funke: RCSD needs state monitor of its finances

RCSD

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Rochester Democrat and Chronicle USA TODAY NETWORK

Recriminations for the Rochester City School District continued to pour in Monday, as state Sen. Rich Funke promising legislation to appoint a state fiscal mon-itor over the district.

Such a position would come somewhat short of the full state takeover that Funke and Mayor Lovely Warren, among others, favor. But the recent revelation of a $50 million shortfall in the district, confirmed by four sources to the Democrat and Chronicle, has provided a fresh target for specific state oversight.

The monitor, Funke wrote in a letter to the state, would “have the authority to oversee and veto monetary decisions and budgeting practices of the Board and the administration.”

He also called for an investigation by state Attorney General Tish James; a forensic audit by Comptroller Thomas Di-Napoli; and some unspecified intervention by the state Education Department.

Funke

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to “address the haphazard and ineffectual governance model in RCSD.”

State Assemblyman Harry Bronson, a Democrat, echoed the Republican Funke’s call for a comptroller audit. “Notwithstanding the school district has reportedly indicated more details are forthcoming, an independent review by your office is necessary to that the residents of Rochester have full, complete and accurate information about the fiscal situation of the RCSD,” Bronson wrote to DiNapoli.


An RCSD finance team is hunkered down at central office attempting to pinpoint what went wrong, exactly. Superintendent Terry Dade said he does not plan on any layoffs to solve the crisis.

The missing $50 million is in addition to the annual structural budget deficit. That, too, is projected to be at least $50 million.

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