



August 6, 2024

Hon. Thomas P. DiNapoli
New York State Comptroller
110 State Street, 15th Floor
Albany, NY 12236

Dear Comptroller DiNapoli:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 170 of the Executive Law, the following are actions the State Education Department (SED) has taken, or will be taking, to implement the recommendations contained in the Office of the State Comptroller's (OSC) Final Audit Report (2022-S-45) *Positive Beginnings, Inc. (Positive Beginnings) - Compliance with the Reimbursable Cost Manual*.

Recommendation 1:

"Review the recommended disallowances identified by our audit and make the necessary adjustments to the costs reported on Positive Beginnings CFR and to Positive Beginnings tuition reimbursement rates, as warranted."

SED is currently in the process of reviewing the Consolidated Fiscal Report (CFR) and OSC audit work papers and will make necessary adjustments and recover any overpayments, as appropriate, by recalculating tuition rates. NYSED will further review the employee staffing and bonus payment recommendations to determine if the adjustments are appropriate.

Recommendation 2:

"Remind Positive Beginnings officials of the pertinent SED requirements that relate to the deficiencies we identified."

SED will continue to provide technical assistance whenever requested and will strongly recommend Positive Beginnings officials avail themselves of our assistance to help them better understand the rules for cost reporting and criteria for cost reimbursement as presented in the CFR, Regulations and the Reimbursable Cost Manual (RCM).

Furthermore, SED will alert Positive Beginnings of online training that is available on SED's webpage. SED recommends that all individuals signing the CFR certification statements, namely the Executive Director and Certified Public Accountant, complete this

training. This training is a requirement for preschool special education providers upon approval and reapproval.

Furthermore, SED will require Positive Beginnings to identify the actions it has taken to cure and correct the deficiencies and/or violations identified in the audit. Positive Beginnings submission to SED must be certified by its Chief Executive Officer, with an attestation from each director, officer, trustee, and shareholder, must contain all relevant information describing how policies, procedures and practices have been revised to address the specific findings of the audit, and how systemic changes to the internal controls and financial oversight have been implemented.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Nell Brady, Director of the Rate Setting Unit at 518-474-1298.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon Cates-Williams".

Sharon Cates-Williams

cc: Christopher Suriano
Christina Coughlin
Suzanne Bolling
James Kampf
Jeanne Day
Nell Brady
Jennifer Finucan
William Meissner
Rebecca Jones
Mary Moore