**FEMA Region 2**
One World Trade Center
285 Fulton Street, 52nd Floor
New York, New York 10007

FEMA

September 14, 2026

Jeffery M. Lanigan
Mayor, City of Rome
Rome City Hall
198 North Washington Street
Rome, New York 13440

Dear Mayor Lanigan:

Thank you for your July 17, 2026 letter to Director Pesapane conveying your request to use funding obligated under Tropical Storm Fred (DR-4625), with an incident period of August 18-19, 2021, for the demolition of the former Staley Elementary School building. As explained below, the Rome City School District (RCSD) is already approved to use established project funding to demolish this facility.

On March 28, 2025, FEMA approved the RCSD's DR-4625 Project 668464 to address disaster-related damage to Staley Elementary School, and then subsequently approved an alternate project to instead remodel and expand Clough Elementary School to absorb students displaced from the damaged facility. The first version of the project was approved on September 15, 2025, and consisted of remodeling classrooms and ancillary spaces, while the second version of the project was approved on January 13, 2026, and consisted of new construction for additional classrooms and ancillary spaces. Project funds may be used to address all work items in the approved alternate project, which includes the demolition of the former Staley Elementary School building.[1] As such, nothing specific to the RCSD's award, or the Public Assistance program more generally, prohibits the damaged facility's demolition. In fact, the RCSD is *required* to perform all approved scope items – to include demolishing the damaged facility – to avoid jeopardizing federal funding for a project that is not completed.[2]

This disaster is now five years beyond its declaration date and though the alternate scope of work was approved approximately a year ago, quarterly reporting and project drawdown metrics indicate that this project has yet to begin.[3] Please note, the current period of performance for Project 668464 will expire on October 8, 2027, and there is no guarantee that any extensions will be approved.[4] As this date rapidly approaches, FEMA encourages the RCSD to work diligently with its representatives of the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services to address any questions regarding award requirements and the proper and timely use of project funds.

[1] The first and second project amendments in Grants Portal reflect FEMA's approval of the subject demolition.
[2] 44 C.F.R. § 206.204(d)(2) (2020).
[3] As reported in the New York State Q3 QPR for FY2026 and IFMIS account details for this applicant.
[4] 44 C.F.R. § 206.202(f)(2) (2020).

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact our Region 2 Intergovernmental Affairs Specialist, Tayyaha Haroon, at Tayyaha.Haroon@fema.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER HARTNETT

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Christopher Hartnett
Regional Administrator
FEMA Region 2