GREENSBURG SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

JUNE 2011

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Ms. Trudy Ivory, Board President
Greensburg Salem School District
1 Academy Hill Place
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601

Dear Governor Corbett and Ms. Ivory:

We conducted a performance audit of the Greensburg Salem School District (GSSD) to determine its compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements and administrative procedures. Our audit covered the period May 15, 2009 through November 24, 2010, except as otherwise indicated in the report. Additionally, compliance specific to state subsidy and reimbursements was determined for the school years ended June 30, 2008 and June 30, 2007. Our audit was conducted pursuant to 72 P.S. § 403 and in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Our audit found that the GSSD complied, in all significant respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures.

We appreciate the GSSD's cooperation during the conduct of the audit.

Sincerely,

/s/
JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

June 2, 2011

cc: **GREENSBURG SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT** Board Members

JACK WAGNER

AUDITOR GENERAL

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AUDITOR GENERAL

Executive Summary

Audit Work

The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General conducted a performance audit of the Greensburg Salem School District (GSSD). Our audit sought to answer certain questions regarding the District's compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures.

Our audit scope covered the period May 15, 2009 through November 24, 2010, except as otherwise indicated in the audit scope, objectives, and methodology section of the report. Compliance specific to state subsidy and reimbursements was determined for school years 2007-08 and 2006-07.

District Background

The GSSD encompasses approximately 50 square miles. According to 2000 local census data, it serves a resident population of 28,067. According to District officials, in school year 2007-08 the GSSD provided basic educational services to 3,087 pupils through the employment of 202 teachers, 104 full-time and part-time support personnel, and 16 administrators. Lastly, the GSSD received more than $14.8 million in state funding in school year 2007-08.

Audit Conclusion and Results

Our audit found that the GSSD complied, in all significant respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures. For the audited period, our audit of the GSSD resulted in no findings or observations.

Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations. There were no findings or observations in our prior audit report.

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AUDITOR GENERAL

Audit Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

Scope

What is a school performance audit?

School performance audits allow the Department of the Auditor General to determine whether state funds, including school subsidies, are being used according to the purposes and guidelines that govern the use of those funds. Additionally, our audits examine the appropriateness of certain administrative and operational practices at each Local Education Agency (LEA). The results of these audits are shared with LEA management, the Governor, the PA Department of Education, and other concerned entities.

Our audit, conducted under authority of 72 P.S. § 403, is not a substitute for the local annual audit required by the Public School Code of 1949, as amended. We conducted our audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Our audit covered the period May 15, 2009 through November 24, 2010, except for the verification of professional employee certification which was performed for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.

Regarding state subsidy and reimbursements, our audit covered school years 2007-08 and 2006-07.

While all districts have the same school years, some have different fiscal years. Therefore, for the purposes of our audit work and to be consistent with Department of Education reporting guidelines, we use the term school year rather than fiscal year throughout this report. A school year covers the period July 1 to June 30.

Objectives

What is the difference between a finding and an observation?

Our performance audits may contain findings and/or observations related to our audit objectives. Findings describe noncompliance with a law, regulation, contract, grant requirement, or administrative procedure. Observations are reported when we believe corrective action should be taken to remedy a potential problem not rising to the level of noncompliance with specific criteria.

Performance audits draw conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence. Evidence is measured against criteria, such as, laws, regulations, and defined business practices. Our audit focused on assessing the GSSD's compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements and administrative procedures. However, as we conducted our audit procedures, we sought to determine answers to the following questions, which serve as our audit objectives:

- ✓ Were professional employees certified for the positions they held?
- ✓ In areas where the District receives state subsidy and reimbursements based on pupil membership (e.g. basic education, special education, and vocational education), did it follow applicable laws and procedures?

- ✓ Is the District's pupil transportation department, including any contracted vendors, in compliance with applicable state laws and procedures?
- ✓ Are there any declining fund balances which may impose risk to the fiscal viability of the District?
- ✓ Did the District pursue a contract buyout with an administrator and if so, what was the total cost of the buy-out, reasons for the termination/settlement, and do the current employment contract(s) contain adequate termination provisions?
- ✓ Were there any other areas of concern reported by local auditors, citizens, or other interested parties which warrant further attention during our audit?
- ✓ Did the District use an outside vendor to maintain its membership data and if so, are there internal controls in place related to vendor access?
- ✓ Is the District taking appropriate steps to ensure school safety?

Methodology

What are internal controls?

Internal controls are processes designed by management to provide reasonable assurance of achieving objectives in areas such as:

- Effectiveness and efficiency of operations;
- Relevance and reliability of operational and financial information;
- Compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements and administrative procedures.

Government Auditing Standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings, observations and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

GSSD management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the District is in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures. Within the context of our audit objectives, we obtained an understanding of internal controls and assessed whether those controls were properly designed and implemented.

Any significant deficiencies found during the audit are included in this report.

In order to properly plan our audit and to guide us in possible audit areas, we performed analytical procedures in the areas of state subsidies/reimbursement, pupil membership, pupil transportation, and comparative financial information.

Our audit examined the following:

- Records pertaining to bus driver qualifications, professional employee certification, and financial stability.
- Items such as Board meeting minutes.

Additionally, we interviewed selected administrators and support personnel associated with GSSD operations.

Findings and Observations

For the audited period, our audit of the Greensburg Salem School District resulted in no findings or observations.

Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations

Our prior audit of the Greensburg Salem School District resulted in no findings or observations.

JACK WAGNER

AUDITOR GENERAL

Distribution List

This report was initially distributed to the superintendent of the school district, the board members, our website address at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us, and the following:

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