

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Shippensburg Area School District Cumberland County, Pennsylvania

June 2016



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Ms. Beth Bender, Superintendent
Shippensburg Area School District
317 North Morris Street
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania 17257

Mr. Mark Buterbaugh, Board President
Shippensburg Area School District
317 North Morris Street
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania 17257

Dear Ms. Bender and Mr. Buterbaugh:

We have conducted a performance audit of the Shippensburg Area School District (District) for the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2015, except as otherwise stated. We evaluated the District's performance in the following areas as further described in the appendix of this report.

- School Safety
- Bus Driver Requirements
- Administrator Contract Buy-Out

The audit was conducted pursuant to Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 72 P.S. § 403, and in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings 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.

Our audit found that the District performed adequately in the areas listed above.

We appreciate the District's cooperation during the course of the audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene A. DePasquale".

Eugene A. DePasquale
Auditor General

June 16, 2016

cc: **SHIPPENSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT** Board of School Directors

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Background Informationⁱ

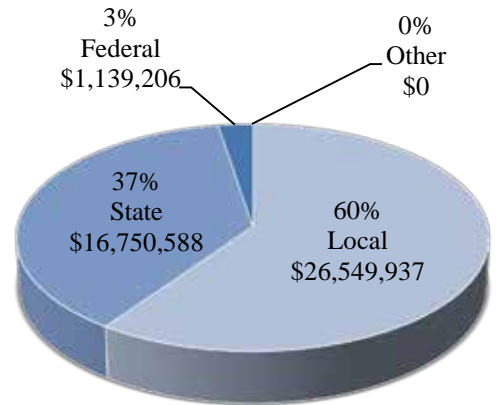
School Characteristics 2015-16 School Year ⁱⁱ	
Counties	Cumberland/Franklin
Total Square Miles	121
Resident Population ⁱⁱⁱ	28,194
Number of School Buildings	6
Total Teachers	221
Total Full or Part-Time Support Staff	145
Total Administrators	19
Total Enrollment for Most Recent School Year	3,343
Intermediate Unit Number	15
District Vo-Tech School	Franklin County Career and Technology Center

Mission Statement

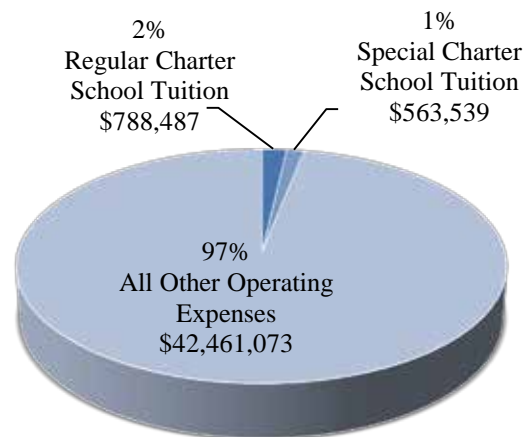
“The mission of the Shippensburg Area School District, in collaboration with educators, parents and community members is: to engage each student in a comprehensive educational program; to maximize every individual’s potential; to ready each student for college or career; and to inspire every student to compete in a dynamic global community. This District strives to surround students, educators, parents and community members with the resources and support needed to learn and grow to their maximum potential.”

Financial Information

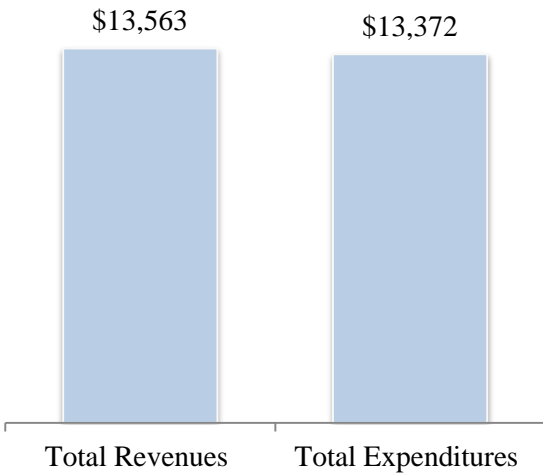
Revenue by Source for 2014-15 School Year



Select Expenditures for 2014-15 School Year

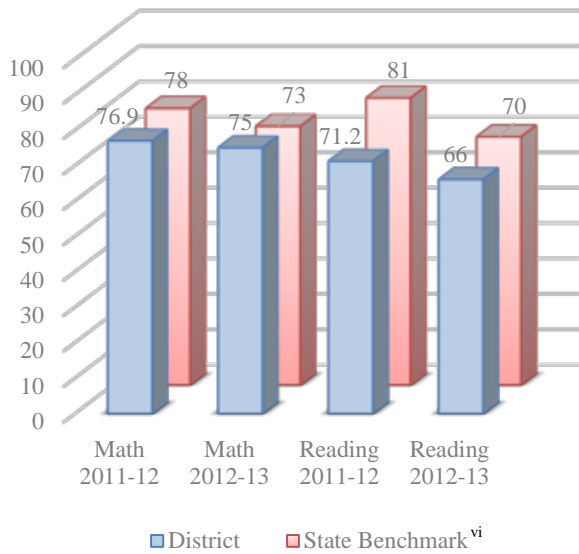


**Dollars Per Student
2014-15 School Year**



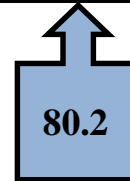
Academic Information

Percentage of District Students Who Scored "Proficient" or "Advanced" on 2011-12 and 2012-13 PSSA^{iv v}



District's 2012-13 SPP Score^{vii}

A	B	C	D	F
90-100	80-89.9	70-79.9	60-69.9	<60
▲	▲	■	▼	▼



**Individual Building SPP and PSSA Scores^{viii}
2012-13 School Year**

School Building	SPP Score	PSSA % School Proficient and Advanced in Math	PSSA % Statewide Benchmark of 73% Above or Below	PSSA % School Proficient and Advanced in Reading	PSSA % Statewide Benchmark of 70% Above or Below	Federal Title I Designation (Reward, Priority, Focus, No Designation)^{ix}
Grace B Luhrs University Elementary School	88.5	95	22	83	13	No Designation
James Burd Elementary School	81.4	80	7	75	5	No Designation
Nancy Grayson Elementary School	80.1	81	8	74	4	No Designation
Shippensburg Area Middle School	79.5	79	6	69	1	Not Applicable
Shippensburg Area High School	56.6	30	43	35	35	Not Applicable
Shippensburg Intermediate School	83.2	81	8	64	6	No Designation

Findings and Observations

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

Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations

Our prior audit of the District released on January 14, 2013, resulted in one finding. As part of our current audit, we determined the status of corrective action taken by the District to implement our prior audit recommendations. We reviewed the District's written response provided to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), interviewed District personnel, and performed audit procedures as detailed in each status section below.

Auditor General Performance Audit Report Released on January 14, 2013

Prior Finding: **District Lacks Sufficient Internal Controls Over its Pupil Membership Data**

Prior Finding Summary: Our prior audit of the District's controls over child accounting data integrity found that internal controls needed to be improved. Specifically, the District did not adequately resolve differences between Student Information System (SIS) system and the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

Prior Recommendations: We recommended that the District should:

1. Review the SIS and PIMS reports to ensure that membership days are in agreement.
2. Review the SIS and PIMS reports to verify that the membership days are being accurately calculated based on the students enrollment dates.
3. Review the SIS and PIMS reports to ensure that the students' names and membership days are the same on both reports.
4. Review the districts of residence for all institutionalized wards of the state to ensure that the proper code is used for the district of residence.
5. Review the district of residence for all non-resident foster students to ensure that the actual district of residence of the natural parent/adoptive parent/legal guardian is listed.
6. Ensure that the membership days for full-year students correspond to the term length being reported to PDE.

7. Ensure that students enrolled for only part of the year at the Franklin County Career and Technology Center are not included in membership at both locations.
8. Ensure that the grade listed for students is the same on both the SIS and PIMS reports.
9. If data is revised on the PIMS reports, this should be corrected in the SIS and run new/corrected reports, or notations of the changes should be made to the SIS reports along with their effect on membership totals.

Current Status:

During our current audit, we found that the District implemented our prior audit recommendations. The District ensures that SIS and PIMS reports are in agreement and membership days are being calculated accurately.

Appendix: Audit Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

School performance audits allow the Pennsylvania 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, PDE, and other concerned entities.

Our audit, conducted under authority of Section 403 of The Fiscal Code,¹ is not a substitute for the local annual financial 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. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings 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.

Scope

Overall, our audit covered the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2015. In addition, the scope of each individual audit objective is detailed on the next page.

The District's management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls² to provide reasonable assurance that the District is in compliance with certain relevant state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures (relevant requirements). In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the District's internal controls, including any information technology controls, that we consider to be significant within the context of our audit objectives. We assessed whether those controls were properly designed and implemented. Any deficiencies in internal controls that were identified during the conduct of our audit and determined to be significant within the context of our audit objectives are included in this report.

¹ 72 P.S. § 403.

² 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; and compliance with certain relevant state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures.

Objectives/Methodology

In order to properly plan our audit and to guide us in selecting objectives, we reviewed pertinent laws and regulations, board meeting minutes, academic performance data, financial reports, annual budgets, and new or amended policies and procedures. We also determined if the District had key personnel or software vendor changes since the prior audit.

Performance audits draw conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence. Evidence is measured against criteria, such as laws, regulations, third-party studies, and best business practices. Our audit focused on the District's efficiency and effectiveness in the following areas:

- School Safety
- Bus Driver Requirements
- Administrator Contract Buy-Out

As we conducted our audit procedures, we sought to determine answers to the following questions, which served as our audit objectives:

- ü Did the District take appropriate actions to ensure it provided a safe school environment?
 - To address this objective, we reviewed a variety of documentation including safety plans, risk assessments, and anti-bullying policies.
- ü Did the District ensure that bus drivers transporting District students had the required driver's license, physical exam, training, background checks, and clearances as outline in applicable laws?³ Also, did the District have adequate written policies and procedures governing the hiring of new bus drivers?
 - To address this objective, we selected 5 drivers out of the 64 bus drivers employed by the District. These five drivers were hired during the school year July 1, 2015 through May 10, 2016. We reviewed documentation to ensure the District complied with bus driver's requirements. We also determined if the District had written policies and procedures governing the hiring of bus drivers and if those procedures were sufficient to ensure compliance with bus driver hiring requirements.
- ü Did the District pursue a contract buy-out with an administrator and if so, what was the total cost of the buy-out, what were the reasons for the termination/settlement, and did the current employment contract contain adequate termination provisions?

³ 24 P.S. § 1-111, 23 Pa.C.S. § 6344(a.1), 24 P.S. § 2070.1a *et seq.*, 75 Pa.C.S. §§ 1508.1 and 1509, and 22 *Pa. Code Chapter 8.*

- To address this objective, we reviewed the contract, board meeting minutes, and payroll records for the only District contracted administrator who left the District during the period July 1, 2011 through February 24, 2016. We reviewed this former administrator's contract to determine the total cost of the buy-out, the reasons for the termination/settlement, whether the contract contained adequate termination provisions, and whether the termination provisions were followed.

Distribution List

This report was initially distributed to the Superintendent of the District, the Board of School Directors, and the following stakeholders:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf

Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Pedro A. Rivera

Secretary of Education
1010 Harristown Building #2
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

The Honorable Timothy Reese

State Treasurer
Room 129 - Finance Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Mrs. Danielle Mariano

Director
Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management
Pennsylvania Department of Education
4th Floor, 333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dr. David Wazeter

Research Manager
Pennsylvania State Education Association
400 North Third Street - Box 1724
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Mr. Lin Carpenter

Assistant Executive Director for Member Services
School Board and Management Services
Pennsylvania School Boards Association
P.O. Box 2042
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.

ⁱ Source: School district, PDE, and U.S. Census data.

ⁱⁱ Source: Information provided by the District administration.

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: United States Census <http://www.census.gov/2010census>

^{iv} PSSA stands for the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), which is composed of statewide, standardized tests administered by PDE to all public schools and the reporting associated with the results of those assessments. PSSA scores in the tables in this report reflect Reading and Math results for the “All Students” group for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

^v PSSA scores, which are Pennsylvania’s mandatory, statewide academic test scores, are issued by PDE. However, the PSSA scores issued by PDE are collected by an outside vendor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General and KPMG issued a material weakness in internal controls over PDE’s compilation of this academic data in the Single Audit of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014, citing insufficient review procedures at PDE to ensure the accuracy of test score data received from DRC.

^{vi} In the 2011-12 school year, the state benchmarks reflect the Adequate Yearly Progress targets established under No Child Left Behind. In the 2012-13 school year, the state benchmarks reflect the statewide goals based on annual measurable objectives established by PDE.

^{vii} SPP stands for School Performance Profile, which is Pennsylvania’s new method for reporting academic performance scores for all public schools based on a scale from 0% to 100% implemented in the 2012-13 school year by PDE.

^{viii} *Id.* Additionally, federal Title I designations of Priority, Focus, Reward, and No Designation are new federal accountability designations issued by PDE to Title I schools only beginning in the 2012-13 school year. Priority schools are the lowest 5%, focus schools are the lowest 10%, and reward schools are the highest 5% of Title I schools. All Title I schools not falling into one of the aforementioned percentage groups are considered “No Designation” schools. The criteria used to calculate the percentage rates is determined on an annual basis by PDE.

^{ix} Title I Federal accountability designations for Title I schools originate from PDE and are determined based on the number of students at the school who receive free and/or reduced price lunches. School lunch data is accumulated in PDE’s CN-PEARS system, which is customized software developed jointly with an outside vendor, Colyar, Inc. The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General and KPMG issued a significant deficiency in internal controls over the CN-PEARS system in the Single Audit of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014.