

# PERFORMANCE AUDIT

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## Wissahickon School District Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

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April 2015



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

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Mr. Charles McIntyre, Board President  
Wissahickon School District  
601 Knight Road  
Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002

Dear Governor Wolf and Mr. McIntyre:

We conducted a performance audit of the Wissahickon School District (District) to determine its compliance with certain relevant state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures (relevant requirements). Our audit covered the period April 22, 2011 through September 12, 2014, except as otherwise stated in the report. Additionally, compliance specific to state subsidies and reimbursements was determined for the school years ended June 30, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Our audit was conducted pursuant to Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 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 District complied, in all significant respects, with relevant requirements.

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

Sincerely,

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

Eugene A. DePasquale  
Auditor General

April 8, 2015

cc: **WISSAHICKON SCHOOL DISTRICT** Board of School Directors

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## **Executive Summary**

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### **Audit Work**

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

Our audit scope covered the period April 22, 2011 through September 12, 2014, except as otherwise stated in the audit scope, objectives, and methodology section of the report. Compliance specific to state subsidies and reimbursements was determined for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years.

### **District Background**

The District encompasses approximately 23 square miles. According to 2010 federal census data, it serves a resident population of 31,923. According to District officials, the District provided basic educational services to 4,434 pupils through the employment of 397 teachers, and 37 administrators during the 2011-12 school year. The District received \$14.1 million in state funding in the 2011-12 school year.

### **Audit Conclusion and Results**

Our audit found that the District complied, in all significant respects, with certain relevant state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures. Our audit resulted in no findings or observations.

**Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations.** Our prior audit did not include any findings or observations.

## Audit Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

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### Scope

*What is a school performance audit?*

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, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and other concerned entities.

Our audit, conducted under authority of Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 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 April 22, 2011 through September 12, 2014, except for the verification of professional employee certification which was performed for the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

Regarding state subsidies and reimbursements, our audit covered the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years.

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 Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) 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 statute, regulation, policy, 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 and defined business practices. Our audit focused on assessing the District's compliance with certain relevant 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?
  - To address this objective, auditors reviewed and evaluated certification documentation for 52 teachers and administrators out of a total population of over 340 teachers and administrators for the 2013-14 school year.

- ✓ Did the District ensure that bus drivers transporting District children at the time of the audit have the necessary license, physicals, training, background checks, and clearances as outlined in 24 P.S. § 1-111, 24 P.S. § 2070, 67 P.S. § 71.1, 22 PA Code Chapter 8, and 23 PA C.S. § 58-6354, and did they have written policies and procedures governing the hiring of new bus drivers?
  - To address this objective, the auditors selected 5 drivers out of the list of 31 drivers who transported students for the 2013-14 school year. Auditors ensured that all of the drivers selected for review included both district-employed and contractor-employed drivers, as appropriate.
  
- ✓ Did the District have sufficient internal controls to ensure that the membership data it reported to PDE through the Pennsylvania Information Management System was complete, accurate, valid, and reliable for the most current year available?
  - To address this objective, the auditors randomly selected 20 out of 4,432 total registered students (five (5) resident, five (5) non-resident, five (5) intermediate units, and five (5) area vocational-technical schools) from the vendor software listing and verified that each child was appropriately registered with the District.
  
- ✓ Did the District take appropriate steps to ensure school safety?
  - To address this objective, the auditors reviewed a variety of documentation including safety plans, training schedules, anti-bullying policies, and after action reports to assess whether the District followed best practices in school safety and 24 P.S. Sect. 13-1302, 1302.1A, 13-1303.1, and 13-1303 A. Generally, the auditors evaluate the age of the plan, whether it is being practiced through training and whether the school has an after action

process for trying to improve on the results of its training exercises.

## 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 certain relevant state 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 results and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our results and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The District's management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls 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, as they relate to the District's compliance with relevant requirements 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.

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 and reimbursements, pupil transportation, and comparative financial information.

Our audit examined the following:

- Records pertaining to pupil membership, bus driver qualifications, professional employee certification, and financial stability.
- Items such as board meeting minutes and policies and procedures.

Additionally, we interviewed select administrators and support personnel associated with the District's operations.

## **Findings and Observations**

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**F**or the audited period, our audit of the Wissahickon School District resulted in no findings or observations.



## **Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations**

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**O**ur prior audit of the Wissahickon School District did not include any findings or observations.

## **Distribution List**

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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  
Acting Secretary of Education  
1010 Harristown Building #2  
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School Board and Management Services  
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This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.PaAuditor.gov](http://www.PaAuditor.gov). Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 231 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: [news@PaAuditor.gov](mailto:news@PaAuditor.gov).