

MIDDLE BUCKS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

AUGUST 2010

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dr. Janice Kaufman, Joint Operating Committee Chairperson
Middle Bucks Institute of Technology
2740 Old York Road
Jamison, Pennsylvania 18929

Dear Governor Rendell and Dr. Kaufman:

We conducted a performance audit of the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology (MBIT) to determine its compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements and administrative procedures. Our audit covered the period September 24, 2008 through September 24, 2009, 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 MBIT complied, in all significant respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures. We appreciate the MBIT's cooperation during the conduct of the audit.

Sincerely,

/s/

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

August 27, 2010

cc: **MIDDLE BUCKS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY** Joint Operating Committee
Members



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Executive Summary

Audit Work

The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General conducted a performance audit of the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology (MBIT). Our audit sought to answer certain questions regarding the MBIT's compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures.

Our audit scope covered the period September 24, 2008 through September 24, 2009, 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.

School Background

According to School officials, in school year 2007-08 the MBIT provided educational services to 815 secondary pupils and 575 post-secondary pupils through the employment of 32 teachers, 34 full-time and part-time support personnel, and 7 administrators. The operation, administration and management of the school are directed by a joint operating committee (JOC) which comprises 9 members from the following school districts:

Centennial
Central Bucks
Council Rock
New Hope–Solebury

The JOC members are appointed by the individual school boards at the December meeting, each to serve a one year term. Lastly, the MBIT received more than \$623 thousand in state funding in school year 2007-08.

Audit Conclusion and Results

Our audit found that the MBIT complied, in all significant respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures. We report no findings or observation in this report.

Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations. With regard to the status of our prior audit recommendations to the MBIT from an audit we conducted of the 2005-06 and 2004-05 school years, we found the MBIT did not have any prior findings or observations.



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 September 24, 2008 through September 24, 2009, except for verification of professional employee certification, which was performed for the period June 24, 2008 through September 9, 2009.

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

While all LEAs 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 MBIT'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 objectives:

- ✓ Were professional employees certified for the positions they held?
- ✓ Are there any declining fund balances which may impose risk to the fiscal viability of the School?
- ✓ Did the School 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?
- ✓ Is the School taking appropriate steps to ensure school safety?
- ✓ Did the School use an outside vendor to maintain its membership data and if so, are there internal controls in place related to vendor access?
- ✓ Did the School take appropriate corrective action to address recommendations made in our prior audits?

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.

MBIT management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the School 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.

Our audit examined the following:

- Records pertaining to professional employee certification and financial stability.
- Items such as meeting minutes.

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

Findings and Observations

For the audited period, our audit of the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology resulted in no findings or observations.

Status of Prior Audit Findings and Observations

Our prior audit of the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology for the school years 2005-06 and 2004-05 resulted in no findings or observations.

Distribution List

This report was initially distributed to the institute of technology's superintendent of record, the joint operating committee, our website address at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us, and the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
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The Honorable Thomas E. Gluck
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