


Internal Audit Unit
MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Rockville, Maryland

May 31, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Mrs. Megan H. Murphy, Principal
Sequoyah Elementary School

From: Mary J. Bergstresser, Supervisor, Internal Audit Unit 

Subject: Report on Audit of Independent Activity Funds for the Period
April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2022

Independent Activity Funds (IAFs) of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are established to promote the general welfare, education, and morale of students, as well as to finance the recognized extracurricular activities of the student body. School principals are the fiduciary agents for the IAFs charged with determining the manner in which funds are raised and expended for activities such as field trips, admission events, and fund-raisers. They are responsible for ensuring that the IAFs are administered in accordance with Board of Education policies and MCPS regulations and procedures.

The IAF audits are conducted regularly to evaluate compliance with policies, regulations, and procedures, and to review processes for continuous improvement. Generally accepted audit procedures guide the work of the auditors who examine samples of the IAF records and financial accounts selected from documentation of various activities to verify their accuracy, as well as to assess the effectiveness of financial control procedures. An IAF audit does not review every transaction or school activity but seeks to provide reasonable assurance that any significant errors or omissions in the financial records are detected.

At our May 25, 2022, meeting with you; Mrs. Jessica Bay Graber, assistant principal; and Mrs. Mary C. Hopenick, school administrative secretary (secretary), we reviewed the prior audit report dated May 14, 2019, and the status of present conditions. It should be noted that your appointment as principal was effective July 1, 2021. This audit report presents the findings and recommendations resulting from our examination of the IAF records and financial accounts for your school for the period designated above.

Findings and Recommendations

Cash and checks collected by sponsors and others for IAF activities must be remitted promptly to the secretary. These receipts must be deposited promptly, and all receipts must be deposited on the last working day of each month and before each weekend or holiday (refer to the *MCPS Financial Manual*, chapter 7, pages 4-5). We found instances in which funds were held by sponsors

rather than being remitted on a daily basis to the secretary and they were not always promptly deposited into the school's bank account. To minimize the risk of loss and provide availability of funds to meet school needs, all funds collected must be remitted daily to the secretary for prompt deposit.

Sponsors of field trips must have a complete class or club roster of student names to annotate the amount each student paid, date paid, eligible students who did not participate in the trip, and students who received waivers, scholarships, or reduced fees. This data, together with a list of all chaperones and volunteers, must be provided to the secretary at the completion of each trip and compared to remittances recorded in the trip account history report. We found that not all sponsors are providing completed data at the conclusion of each trip and that data is not being compared to the final account history report. All sponsors are required to submit MCPS Form 280-41, *Field Trip Accounting*, or equivalent, and follow the procedures outlined above. This data must be reconciled by the secretary with remittances recorded in activity accounts (refer to the *MCPS Financial Manual*, chapter 20, page. 10).

MCPS Regulation DMB-RA, *Control of Admission Receipts*, sets forth procedures for the control of admission receipts for school events. The accounting for these events must be controlled with serially numbered tickets; separation of duties; use of the required MCPS Form 280-50, *Tickets and Cash Report of Admissions Manager*, for tracking and reconciling sales; and perpetual inventory of tickets (refer to the *MCPS Financial Manual*, chapter 20, page 13). We found that the MCPS Form 280-50, on file for the spring musical did not indicate which MCPS roll of tickets were used or what the numbers were for the tickets returned. Without the numbers for the tickets returned, we were unable to reconcile the tickets sold to funds remitted. In addition, a perpetual inventory for the admission tickets was not maintained by the school and the account balance was never transferred to the benefiting account. We recommend that procedures for the sale of tickets be reviewed with appropriate staff prior to events; all tickets be serially numbered and issued by the ticket controller; and that a perpetual inventory is maintained. At the completion of the event, the account balance should be transferred to the benefiting account.

Notice of Findings and Recommendations

- Cash and checks (funds) collected by sponsors must be promptly remitted to the secretary.
- Cash and checks (funds) remitted by sponsors must be promptly receipted and deposited in the bank by the secretary in accordance with Chapter 7 of the *MCPS Financial Manual*.
- Final field trip records prepared by sponsors must provide comprehensive data to account for all students eligible to participate, and the secretary must reconcile funds (**repeat**).
- Admission events must be conducted in accordance with MCPS Regulation DMB-RA.

Other matters were discussed and satisfactorily resolved. We appreciate the cooperation and assistance of your staff. In accordance with MCPS Regulation DIA-RA, *Accounting for Financial Operations/Independent Activity Funds*, using the attached action plan, please provide a written response to the Internal Audit Unit within 30 calendar days of this report. In your response, please share a detailed plan for addressing these issues, including appropriate staff training and support.

Prior to returning your completed audit action plan, please contact Dr. Sarah E. Sirgo, director of learning, achievement, and administration, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools, for written approval of your plan. Based on the audit recommendations, Dr. Sirgo will indicate whether she will conduct an electronic review of your action plan or schedule a time to meet in person with you and your school administrative secretary to support you with developing a well-defined plan to address the findings.

MJB:AMB:lsh

Attachment

Copy to:

Members of the Board of Education

Dr. McKnight

Mr. D'Andrea

Ms. Dawson

Ms. Reuben

Mrs. Williams

Mrs. Dyson

Mr. Reilly

Mrs. Chen

Mrs. Eader

Mr. Klausling

Dr. Sirgo

Mrs. Ripoli

Dr. Sirgo

Ms. Webb

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Report Date:	Fiscal Year:
School:	Principal:
OTLS Associate Superintendent:	OTLS Director:
<p><u>Strategic Improvement Focus:</u> As noted in the financial audit for the period _____, strategic improvements are required in the following business processes :</p>	

Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Monitoring Tools / Data Points	Monitoring: Who & When	Results/Evidence

Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Monitoring Tools / Data Points	Monitoring: Who & When	Results/Evidence

OFFICE OF TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SCHOOLS (OTLS) REVIEW & APPROVAL	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Please revise and resubmit plan by _____
Comments: _____ _____	
Director: <u> <i>Sarah Sirgo</i> </u>	Date: _____