

STATE OF FLORIDA AUDITOR GENERAL

Operational Audit

Report No. 2025-018
September 2024

LAFAYETTE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General

Board Members and Superintendent

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, Robert (Robby) Edwards served as Superintendent of the Lafayette County Schools and the following individuals served as School Board Members:

	<u>District No.</u>
Darren Driver	1
Jeff Walker	2
Marion McCray, Vice Chair	3
Amanda Hickman, Chair	4
Taylor McGrew	5

The team leader was Joseph Holmes, and the audit was supervised by Glenda K. Hart, CPA.

Please address inquiries regarding this report to Edward A. Waller, CPA, Audit Manager, by e-mail at tedwaller@aud.state.fl.us or by telephone at (850) 412-2887.

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LAFAYETTE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SUMMARY

This operational audit of the Lafayette County School District (District) focused on selected District processes and administrative activities and included a follow-up on findings noted in our report No. 2022-020. Our operational audit disclosed the following:

Finding 1: District records did not always evidence that bank account reconciliations were promptly completed or that unclaimed funds were timely reported and remitted to the Florida Department of Financial Services.

Finding 2: District tangible personal property (TPP) records were not properly maintained and a physical inventory of TPP had not been completed since the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Finding 3: As similarly noted in our report No. 2022-020, the District did not always document compliance with State Board of Education (SBE) rules requiring student mental health instruction.

Finding 4: Contrary to State law and SBE rules, certain required plans and annual reports were not timely submitted to the Florida Department of Education.

Finding 5: District records did not always evidence that procurements were made in accordance with SBE rules or Board policies.

Finding 6: Contrary to State law and Board policies, the District did not, for the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 fiscal years, conduct school administrator or noninstructional personnel performance evaluations or base school administrator salary adjustments upon performance.

BACKGROUND

The Lafayette County School District (District) is part of the State system of public education under the general direction of the Florida Department of Education and is governed by State law and State Board of Education rules. Geographic boundaries of the District correspond with those of Lafayette County. The governing body of the District is the Lafayette County District School Board (Board), which is composed of five elected members. The elected Superintendent of Schools is the Executive Officer of the Board. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, the District operated one elementary and one middle/high school and reported 1,152 unweighted full-time equivalent students.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: Bank Reconciliations

State law¹ requires each school district to establish and maintain internal controls designed to, among other things, detect fraud, ensure reliability of financial records and reports, and safeguard assets.

¹ Section 1010.01(5), Florida Statutes.

Effective internal controls require that reconciliations of bank account balances to general ledger accounts be performed on a timely, routine basis (e.g., within 30 days after month end) and reviewed by supervisory personnel. Timely performed bank account reconciliations provide for prompt detection and correction of unrecorded and improperly recorded cash transactions or other errors and provide reasonable assurance that assets agree with recorded amounts.

State law² also requires that, before May 1 of each year, holders of funds presumed unclaimed as of the preceding calendar year and subject to custody as unclaimed property must file a report with and remit the unclaimed property to the Florida Department of Financial Services (FDFS). Pursuant to State law, the FDFS may impose and collect penalties for failure to timely report. Not more than 120 days and not less than 60 days prior to filing the report, the holder of the funds must use due diligence to locate and notify the apparent owners in writing³ that the entity is holding unclaimed property having a value of \$50 or more available for them to recover.

As of February 29, 2024, the District maintained 8 bank accounts with cash balances totaling \$3.8 million. To evaluate the propriety and timeliness of bank account reconciliations for the 8-month period July 2023 through February 2024, we requested for examination District records supporting the 64 required monthly reconciliations and found that, as of March 31, 2024:

- Reconciliations had not been completed for the months of November 2023 through February 2024 for 2 accounts with account balances totaling \$443,478 as of February 2024. Subsequent to our inquiry, the 8 reconciliations were completed in May 2024.
- The District maintained documentation supporting the performance of the other 56 required reconciliations; however, District personnel did not document the completion dates or supervisory review and approval. Accordingly, District documentation did not evidence the timeliness or review and approval of the reconciliation procedures performed.
- The outstanding checks listed on 4 reconciliations for the month of February 2024 included 41 stale-dated checks that totaled \$14,954 and ranged from 1 to 15 years old. Although uncashed checks are considered unclaimed property, District personnel had not performed the statutory due diligence notification procedures for the 32 stale-dated checks with a value of \$50 or more and totaling \$14,778, nor had District personnel reported and remitted any amounts to the FDFS.

In response to our inquiries, District personnel indicated that primarily because of staff turnover the reconciliations were not always timely prepared, dated, and reviewed and approved. By the completion of the annual financial report for the 2023-24 fiscal year, District personnel intend to complete and document all bank account reconciliations, including supervisory review and approval, and make any necessary corrections to the District general ledger. Additionally, because staff were unfamiliar with the unclaimed property requirements, State law was not followed; however, District personnel intend to perform due diligence procedures for all stale-dated checks identified and report and remit any required amounts by the May 1, 2025, report due date.

Absent timely prepared and reviewed bank reconciliations and appropriate corrections to the general ledger cash account, there is an increased risk that any cash transaction errors or fraud that may occur will not be timely detected. Additionally, the reliability of the general ledger financial information

² Section 717.117, Florida Statutes.

³ Section 717.117(7), Florida Statutes, specifies the information required in the written notice.

throughout the year and the Board's ability to effectively monitor the District's financial position is diminished. Further, noncompliance with State law governing unclaimed property increases the risk that the District will be assessed penalties.

Recommendation: The District should enhance procedures to ensure that monthly reconciliations of bank account balances to the general ledger and financial statement account balances are timely prepared and reviewed with reconciling items promptly identified, thoroughly investigated, adequately documented, and resolved. In addition, the District should establish procedures to ensure compliance with State law for any unclaimed property identified during bank account reconciliations.

Finding 2: Tangible Personal Property Inventories

Provisions in State law,⁴ State Board of Education (SBE) rules,⁵ FDFS rules,⁶ and Board policies⁷ require the District to maintain adequate records of tangible personal property (TPP), such as furniture, fixtures and equipment and motor vehicles. Those provisions also require that a complete physical inventory be taken annually, the results of the physical inventory be compared to the property records, and any differences be researched and resolved. All TPP items found during the inventory must be included in the property records, which must identify the inventory date and individual attesting to the item's existence. Items not located during the physical inventory must be investigated and, if the investigation determines that any item was stolen, the District is required to file a report with the appropriate law enforcement agency describing the missing item and the circumstances surrounding its disappearance.

The District reported TPP with costs totaling \$3.2 million at June 30, 2023. However, TPP records identifying additions, disposals, and depreciation for the 2021-22 or 2022-23 fiscal years were not maintained. To determine the additions to TPP reported on the financial statements for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2022, and June 30, 2023, respectively, District personnel added applicable capital outlay expenditures to the beginning balances reported. While this procedure may result in materially correct balances on the District financial statements, the District is responsible for maintaining appropriate TPP records in compliance with the State law, DFS rules, and Board policies.

In addition, as of May 17, 2024, the District had not completed a complete physical inventory of all District-owned TPP since the 2021-22 fiscal year.⁸ In response to our inquiry, District personnel indicated that maintenance of appropriate TPP records and completion of required physical inventory procedures did not occur due to staffing shortages and turnover. District personnel asserted that TPP record updates and physical inventory procedures would be properly completed before the 2023-24 fiscal year annual financial report is finalized.

Absent accurate TPP records and effective annual physical inventory procedures, the District cannot demonstrate compliance with State law, DFS rules, and Board policies; accountability over TPP is

⁴ Chapter 274, Florida Statutes.

⁵ SBE Rule 6A-1.001, Florida Administrative Code.

⁶ DFS Rules, Chapter 69I-73, Florida Administrative Code.

⁷ Board Policy 7.08, *Inventories and Property Records*.

⁸ While District records for the 2021-22 fiscal year evidenced a physical inventory was performed, including the inventory date, and the individual attesting to each item's existence, items not located during the physical inventory were not investigated, removed from the TPP records, or reported to law enforcement agencies.

diminished; and there is an increased risk that any loss or theft of District property will not be timely detected, reported to the appropriate parties, and correctly reflected in District TPP and accounting records.

Recommendation: The District should enhance procedures to provide proper accountability for District TPP. Such enhancements should include the maintenance of appropriate TPP records and documented completion of a physical inventory of TPP each year with a thorough investigation and resolution of TPP items not located during the physical inventory.

Finding 3: Resiliency Education

Pursuant to State law,⁹ the District received a mental health assistance allocation of \$160,605 for the 2023-24 fiscal year to implement the school-based mental health assistance program. SBE rules¹⁰ require the District to annually provide to students in grades 6 through 12 a minimum of 5 hours of resiliency education related to mental health awareness and assistance, including suicide prevention and the impacts of substance abuse. Failure to comply with SBE rule requirements may result in the imposition of sanctions specified in State law.¹¹

According to District personnel, students receive the required youth mental health awareness and assistance instruction through an online course. To determine whether the required instruction was provided, we requested for examination District records supporting the instruction in the one District school with students in grades 6 through 12. We found that 30 (5 percent) of the 564 students in grades 6 through 12 did not enroll in the course and 38 (7 percent) of the enrollees did not complete the course; therefore, 68 (12 percent) students did not receive the required instruction.

In response to our inquiry, District personnel indicated that students are responsible for enrolling in the youth mental health awareness and assistance course and school personnel are to monitor student enrollment, progress, and completion of the required course; however, District personnel did not follow through to verify and ensure that all applicable students completed the education requirements.

Without effective monitoring procedures to ensure that students complete the required instruction, a mental health services need may not be timely identified and appropriately met and, absent documentation evidencing youth mental health awareness and assistance instruction, the District cannot demonstrate compliance with SBE rules. In addition, documented instruction enhances public awareness of District efforts to provide essential educational services. A similar finding was noted in our report No. 2022-020.

Recommendation: The District should enhance monitoring procedures to verify and ensure that all students in grades 6 through 12 annually complete the required mental health awareness and assistance instruction.

⁹ Section 1011.62(13), Florida Statutes.

¹⁰ SBE Rule 6A-1.094124(4), Florida Administrative Code. Effective November 23, 2022, the title of the required instruction was revised to resiliency education.

¹¹ Section 1008.32, Florida Statutes.

Finding 4: Plans and Reports

SBE rules¹² require the District by December 1 of each year to submit to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) an instructional implementation plan that includes:

- The methods in which instruction will be delivered for each grade level.
- The professional qualifications of the person delivering instruction.
- A description of the materials and resources utilized to deliver instruction.

SBE rules¹³ also require the District to submit to the FDOE by July 1 of each year an instructional annual report for the previous school year that verifies the instruction completed, the instructors' professional qualifications, and what was used to deliver the instruction. Failure to comply with law or SBE rule requirements may result in the imposition of sanctions in State law.¹⁴

Our discussions with District personnel and examination of District records disclosed that the District Director of Teaching and Learning is responsible for submitting the instructional implementation plan and the instructional annual report. However, the District did not require someone to independently verify that the documents were submitted timely. We found that the:

- Instructional implementation plans for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years were submitted 90 days and 101 days late, respectively.
- 2022-23 fiscal year instructional annual report was submitted 26 days late.

In response to our inquiry, District personnel indicated that the reports require coordination and input from several District departments and, due to these factors, the plans and reports were not timely submitted. Notwithstanding, without timely submitted plans and reports, the District cannot demonstrate compliance with State law and SBE rules. Timely submitted instructional plans and reports help the FDOE monitor instruction methods, instructor qualifications, materials, and resources on a Statewide basis.

Recommendation: The District should enhance procedures to ensure that required instructional plans and reports are timely submitted to the FDOE. Such enhancements should include procedures requiring someone to independently verify and document compliance with the reporting requirements.

Finding 5: Competitive Procurement Process

SBE rules and Board policies¹⁵ require that sealed bids be requested for any purchase of materials, equipment, or services above \$50,000 unless the item is purchased based on an established State contract, through approved online procurement, based on established government agency or educational consortia contracts, or is otherwise exempt from bidding by Florida statutes or SBE rules. Board policies

¹² SBE Rule 6A-1.094124(7), Florida Administrative Code.

¹³ SBE Rule 6A-1.094124(1), Florida Administrative Code.

¹⁴ Section 1008.32, Florida Statutes.

¹⁵ SBE Rule 6A-1.012, Florida Administrative Rule, and Board Policy 7.14, *Purchasing Policies and Bidding*.

also require that written quotations be obtained from at least three sources prior to issuing a purchase order for materials, equipment, or services costing between \$5,000 and \$50,000.

During the period July 2023 through February 2024, the District expended \$549,355 from capital outlay funds. Our examination of District records supporting ten capital outlay expenditures totaling \$473,068 disclosed that the expenditures were for authorized purposes. However, we also found that compliance with the competitive procurement requirements was not always documented as:

- Although we requested, District records were not provided to evidence the bids received or process for selecting the vendor with the best value for the facilities access system and installation costing \$338,320 at two District schools. The District maintained the related request for proposal advertisement and Board-approved contract; however, according to District personnel, the bid documentation could not be located.
- For five expenditures that individually exceeded the \$5,000 threshold and collectively totaled \$122,222, District records did not demonstrate that the services were selected after receiving three written quotations. Specifically, for two expenditures totaling \$93,524 for heating and ventilation system replacements, District personnel indicated that verbal conversations were held with three vendors without documenting the competitive selection process. District personnel indicated that no written quotations were obtained for the other three expenditures totaling \$28,698 for groundskeeping equipment, an intercom system, and an air conditioner replacement.

Absent documentation to support the procurement of materials, equipment, or services following the required competitive procurement process, the District cannot demonstrate compliance with SBE rules and Board policies or ensure that goods and services are obtained at the lowest cost consistent with acceptable quality.

Recommendation: The District should enhance procedures to ensure that records are maintained to support that procurements are conducted in accordance with SBE rules and Board policies.

Finding 6: Performance Evaluations and Salary Schedule

State law¹⁶ requires the Board to adopt salary schedules that provide annual salary adjustments for school administrators based upon student performance and instructional leadership and that a performance evaluation be conducted for each school administrator at least once a year based, in part, upon student performance and instructional leadership. In addition, for the purpose of increasing student academic performance by improving the quality of instructional, administrative, and supervisory services, State law¹⁷ requires the District Superintendent to establish procedures for evaluating the performance of duties and responsibilities of District instructional, administrative, and supervisory personnel. Board policies¹⁸ require that each member of the staff receive, at a minimum, an annual evaluation by their immediate administrative supervisor.

The District employed 216 individuals during the period July 2023 through February 2024 who received compensation totaling \$6.9 million. We examined District records for 12 selected instructional personnel, 10 selected educational support and paraprofessional personnel, and the 5 school administrators to

¹⁶ Sections 1012.22(1) and 1012.34(3)(a), Florida Statutes.

¹⁷ Section 1012.34(1)(a), Florida Statutes.

¹⁸ Board Policy 6.81, *Assessment of Employees*.

determine whether annual performance evaluations were performed in accordance with State law and Board policies. In addition, we examined District records to determine whether the annual compensation adjustments for the 5 school administrators were based upon documented student performance and instructional leadership. We found that for:

- 7 educational support and education paraprofessionals personnel compensated a total of \$215,029, annual performance evaluations had not been conducted for 3 to 13 years or an average of 8 years.
- 4 administrators compensated a total of \$319,355, evaluations had not been conducted for 4 to 6 years or an average of 5 years. In addition, the Board-adopted salary schedules for each of the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years did not base any annual adjustments upon performance for the 5 school administrators.

In response to our inquiries, District personnel indicated that the District did not have a dedicated human resources department to ensure compliance with State law and Board policies; however, performance evaluations would be completed annually going forward and salary schedules adopted by the Board for school administrators would provide for annual adjustments based on performance. Absent the conduct of personnel performance evaluations and school administrator salary adjustments based upon performance, the District cannot demonstrate compliance with State law and Board policies and there is an increased risk that personnel whose performance exceeds management's expectations will not be properly recognized and compensated.

Recommendation: The District should comply with State law and Board policies by ensuring that personnel performance evaluations are conducted annually and Board-adopted salary schedules provide for annual salary adjustments for school administrators based upon performance.

PRIOR AUDIT FOLLOW-UP

The District had taken corrective actions for findings included in our report No. 2022-020, except that Finding 3 was also noted in that report as Finding 1.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The Auditor General conducts operational audits of governmental entities to provide the Legislature, Florida's citizens, public entity management, and other stakeholders unbiased, timely, and relevant information for use in promoting government accountability and stewardship and improving government operations.

We conducted this operational audit from February 2024 through June 2024 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. 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.

This operational audit focused on selected District processes and administrative activities. For those areas, our audit objectives were to:

- Evaluate management’s performance in establishing and maintaining internal controls, including controls designed to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse, and in administering assigned responsibilities in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other guidelines.
- Examine internal controls designed and placed in operation to promote and encourage the achievement of management’s control objectives in the categories of compliance, economic and efficient operations, reliability of records and reports, and safeguarding of assets, and identify weaknesses in those controls.
- Determine whether management had taken corrective actions for findings included in our report No. 2022-020.
- Identify statutory and fiscal changes that may be recommended to the Legislature pursuant to Section 11.45(7)(h), Florida Statutes.

This audit was designed to identify, for those areas included within the scope of the audit, weaknesses in management’s internal controls significant to our audit objectives; instances of noncompliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other guidelines; and instances of inefficient or ineffective operational policies, procedures, or practices. The focus of this audit was to identify problems so that they may be corrected in such a way as to improve government accountability and efficiency and the stewardship of management. Professional judgment has been used in determining significance and audit risk and in selecting the particular transactions, legal compliance matters, records, and controls considered.

As described in more detail below, for those programs, activities, and functions included within the scope of our audit, our audit work included, but was not limited to, communicating to management and those charged with governance the scope, objectives, timing, overall methodology, and reporting of our audit; obtaining an understanding of the program, activity, or function; identifying and evaluating internal controls significant to our audit objectives; exercising professional judgment in considering significance and audit risk in the design and execution of the research, interviews, tests, analyses, and other procedures included in the audit methodology; obtaining reasonable assurance of the overall sufficiency and appropriateness of the evidence gathered in support of our audit findings and conclusions; and reporting on the results of the audit as required by governing laws and auditing standards.

Our audit included the selection and examination of transactions and records, as well as events and conditions, occurring during the 2023-24 fiscal year audit period, and selected District actions taken prior and subsequent thereto. Unless otherwise indicated in this report, these records and transactions were not selected with the intent of statistically projecting the results, although we have presented for perspective, where practicable, information concerning relevant population value or size and quantifications relative to the items selected for examination.

An audit by its nature does not include a review of all records and actions of management, staff, and vendors, and as a consequence, cannot be relied upon to identify all instances of noncompliance, fraud, waste, abuse, or inefficiency.

In conducting our audit, we:

- Reviewed applicable laws, rules, Board policies, District procedures, and other guidelines, and interviewed District personnel to obtain an understanding of applicable processes and administrative activities and the related requirements.

- Reviewed Board information technology (IT) policies and District procedures to determine whether the policies and procedures addressed certain important IT control functions, such as security and user authentication.
- Evaluated District procedures for maintaining and reviewing employee access to IT data and resources. We examined selected user access privileges to District enterprise resource planning (ERP) system finance and human resources (HR) applications to determine the appropriateness and necessity of the access privileges based on employee job duties and user account functions and whether the access privileges prevented the performance of incompatible duties. We also examined the administrator account access privileges granted and procedures for oversight of administrative accounts for the applications to determine whether these accounts had been appropriately assigned and managed. Specifically, we examined District records supporting the propriety of update access privileges to selected critical ERP systems for finance and HR application functions for the 20 employee accounts during the period July 2023 through February 2024.
- Evaluated District procedures to prohibit former employee access to electronic data files. We reviewed selected user access privileges for the ten employees who separated from District employment during the period July 2023 through February 2024 to determine whether the access privileges were timely deactivated.
- Examined selected application security settings to determine whether authentication controls were configured and enforced in accordance with IT best practices.
- Evaluated District procedures for protecting the sensitive personal information of students, including social security numbers. Specifically, we examined the access privileges of the eight employees who had access to personal information of students during the period July 2023 through February 2024 to evaluate the appropriateness and necessity of the access privileges based on the employee's assigned job duties.
- Inquired whether the District had expenditures or entered into any contracts under the authority granted by a state of emergency declared or renewed during the audit period.
- From the population of expenditures totaling \$549,355 during the period July 2023 through February 2024 from nonvoted capital outlay tax levy proceeds, Public Education Capital Outlay funds, and other restricted capital project funds, examined documentation supporting selected expenditures totaling \$473,068 to determine whether the District complied with:
 - The restrictions imposed on the use of these resources, such as compliance with Section 1011.71(2), Florida Statutes.
 - The competitive selection requirements of State Board of Education (SBE) Rule 6A-1.012, Florida Administrative Code, and Board Policy 7.14, *Purchasing Policies and Bidding*.
- For the workforce education program funds expenditures totaling \$71,126 during the period July 2023 through May 2024, examined supporting documentation to determine whether the District used the funds for authorized purposes (i.e., not used to support K-12 programs or District K-12 administrative costs).
- Examined District records supporting the 221 reported contact hours for the five adult general education instructional students during the Fall 2023 Semester to determine whether the District reported the instructional contact hours in accordance with SBE Rule 6A-10.0381, Florida Administrative Code.
- Examined the District Web site to determine whether the 2023-24 fiscal year proposed, tentative, and official budgets were prominently posted pursuant to Section 1011.035(2), Florida Statutes. In addition, we determined whether the District Web site contained, for each public school within the District and for the District, the required graphical representations of summary financial

efficiency data and fiscal trend information for the previous 3 years, and a link to the Web-based fiscal transparency tool developed by the Florida Department of Education.

- Requested for examination the bank account reconciliations for the eight District bank accounts during the period July 2023 through February 2024 to determine whether the reconciliations were timely and evidenced supervisory review and approval. In addition, we determined whether the District, pursuant to Section 717.117, Florida Statutes, performed the required due diligence procedures and reported and remitted unclaimed funds due and owed to the Florida Department of Financial Services (FDFS).
- Evaluated District compliance with Chapter 274, Florida Statutes; FDFS Rules, Chapter 69I-73, Florida Administrative Code; and Board Policy 7.08, *Inventories and Property Records* by examining District records supporting the annual tangible personal property (TPP) physical inventory process. Specifically, we determined whether the District's inventory process was sufficient to ensure that annual TPP inventories are conducted, the inventory results are reconciled to the TPP records, appropriate follow-up is made for any missing items, and law enforcement is timely notified for any items that could not be located and considered stolen.
- Evaluated District procedures for identifying and inventorying attractive items pursuant to FDFS Rules, Chapter 69I-73, Florida Administrative Code.
- From the compensation payments totaling \$11.7 million to 249 employees during the audit period, we:
 - Examined District records supporting compensation payments totaling \$105,535 to 30 selected employees to determine whether the rate of pay complied with the Board-approved salary schedule and whether supervisory personnel reviewed and approved employee reports of time worked.
 - Examined documentation for 12 selected instructional personnel and 5 school administrators with total compensation of \$1,002,527 to determine whether the District had developed adequate performance assessment procedures for instructional personnel and school administrators based on student performance and other criteria in accordance with Section 1012.34(3), Florida Statutes, and determined whether a portion of each selected instructional employee's compensation was based on performance in accordance with Section 1012.22(1)(c)4. and 5., Florida Statutes.
 - Examined documentation for 10 selected educational support personnel with total compensation of \$281,707 to determine whether the District had completed performance assessment procedures for noninstructional personnel in accordance with Board policies and Section 1012.34(1)(a), Florida Statutes.
- Reviewed the District's 5-year facilities work plan for the audit period and determined whether the District maintained records that supported the information reported in the plan.
- From the most recent annual fire safety, casualty safety, and sanitation inspection reports, examined documentation for the 11 reports with 46 noted deficiencies during the period July 2023 through February 2024 to determine whether timely action was taken to correct previously cited deficiencies.
- Examined District records to determine whether the Board had adopted appropriate school safety policies and the District implemented procedures to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of students and compliance with Sections 1006.07, 1006.12, and 1011.62(12), Florida Statutes.
- Examined District records to determine whether the Board had adopted appropriate mental health awareness policies and the District had implemented procedures to promote the health, safety, and welfare of students and ensure compliance with Section 1012.584, Florida Statutes; Section 1011.62(13), Florida Statutes; and SBE Rule 6A-1.094124, Florida Administrative Code.

- Evaluated District procedures for identifying facility maintenance needs and establishing resources to address those needs. We also compared maintenance plans with needs identified in safety inspection reports, reviewed inspection reports for compliance with Federal and State inspection requirements, evaluated District efforts to timely resolve any previous deficiencies identified during inspections, and tested the work order system for appropriate tracking of maintenance jobs.
- Evaluated District procedures for determining Maintenance Department staffing needs. We also determined whether such procedures included consideration of appropriate factors and performance measures that were supported by factual information.
- Determined whether non-compensation expenditures were reasonable, correctly recorded, adequately documented, for a valid District purpose, properly authorized and approved, and in compliance with applicable State laws, SBE rules, contract terms, and Board policies, and applicable vendors were properly selected. Specifically, from the population of non-compensation expenditures totaling \$4.7 million during the period July 2023 through February 2024, we examined documentation supporting 30 selected payments for general expenditures totaling \$45,094.
- Examined District records to determine whether Board policies and District procedures ensure, prior to payment, that vendor change requests are properly verified and documented during the period July 2023 through April 2024.
- From the population of payments totaling \$347,226 during the period July 2023 through February 2024, related to 13 contracts for services, examined supporting documentation, including the contract documents, for 11 selected payments totaling \$102,443 to determine whether:
 - The District complied with SBE Rule 6A-1.012, Florida Administrative Code.
 - The contracts clearly specified deliverables and the time frames for the deliverables, documentation requirements, and compensation.
 - District records evidenced that services were satisfactorily received and conformed to contract terms before payment.
 - The payments complied with contract provisions.
- Communicated on an interim basis with applicable officials to ensure the timely resolution of issues involving controls and noncompliance.
- Performed various other auditing procedures, including analytical procedures, as necessary, to accomplish the objectives of the audit.
- Prepared and submitted for management response the findings and recommendations that are included in this report and which describe the matters requiring corrective actions. Management's response is included in this report under the heading **MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE**.

AUTHORITY

Section 11.45, Florida Statutes, requires that the Auditor General conduct an operational audit of each school district on a periodic basis. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 11.45, Florida Statutes, I have directed that this report be prepared to present the results of our operational audit.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherrill F. Norman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE



ROBERT EDWARDS
SUPERINTENDENT

Lafayette County School Board

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September 13, 2024

Ms. Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Ms Norman:

Lafayette County School Board is happy to address the preliminary and tentative audit findings reported during our recent operational audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. The following items have been addressed and/or corrective action taken:

- **Finding No. 1: Bank Reconciliations**
As of June 30, 2024 three of the eight bank accounts are balanced and reconciliations completed. The district is making every effort it can to ensure bank accounts are reconciled in a timely manner and balance to the general ledger.
- **Finding No. 2: Tangible Personal Property Inventories**
As of June 30, 2024 physical inventory is being conducted and inventory records are being updated. Moving forward the district will complete physical inventory each year.
- **Finding No. 3: Resiliency Education**
The District has enhanced its monitoring procedures by adding a second and third layer of monitoring to ensure all students in grades 6 through 12 annually complete the required mental health awareness and assistance instruction.
- **Finding No. 4: Plans and Reports**
The district will better monitor when and what reports are due to ensure that required instructional plans and reports are submitted to FDOE in a timely manner.
- **Finding No. 5: Competitive Procurement Process**
To ensure procurements are conducted in accordance with SBE rules and Board policies, the district will require all support related to procurements to be filed and maintained in the district office.
- **Finding No. 6: Performance Evaluations and Salary Schedule**

DARREN DRIVER
DISTRICT ONE

JEFF WALKER
DISTRICT TWO

MARION C. McCRAY
DISTRICT THREE

AMANDA HICKMAN
DISTRICT FOUR

TAYLOR McGREW
DISTRICT FIVE

- An Equal Opportunity Employer -

The district will conduct annual personnel performance evaluations and school administrators will receive annual evaluations and salary adjustments based on performance.

Thank you for pointing out areas our district can improve upon during the operational audit.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Edwards". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Edwards
Superintendent of Schools