



Report No. 2021-1

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**GWINNETT COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
SPLOST V AUDIT FY2020



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COVER LETTER

January 25, 2021

Mr. J. Alvin Wilbanks
Superintendent
Gwinnett County Public Schools
437 Old Peachtree Road NW
Suwanee, GA 30024-2978

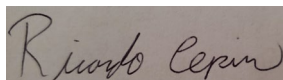
Dear Mr. Wilbanks,

MGT of America Consulting, LLC (MGT) is pleased to submit our report of the special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) audit. Gwinnett County Public Schools (District) contracted with MGT to conduct an audit of the District's operations as it related to the SPLOST V funds. The audit objectives included a review of the goals of the SPLOST V program and the extent to which the program is meeting expectations for the effective, efficient and economic use of the tax dollars collected. The audit scope included reviewing the SPLOST V operations for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 (FY2020).

The purpose of this report is to provide the District with independent, objective analysis, and information concerning the activities reviewed. Although MGT exercised due professional care in the performance of this audit, this should not be construed to mean that unreported noncompliance or irregularities do not exist. The deterrence of fraud and/or employee abuse is the responsibility of management. Audit procedures alone, even when carried out with professional care, do not guarantee that fraud or abuse will be detected.

MGT appreciates the cooperation and professional courtesies extended to the team.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Cepin, CPA, CFE
Senior Consultant
MGT of America Consulting, LLC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gwinnett County School District (District) is the largest school District in the State of Georgia. The District grew by approximately 500 students from the previous year and has an active enrollment of more than 180,000 students in 139 schools and special entity facilities. The District is also the largest employer in Gwinnett County with over 23,000 employees. The District is governed by a Board of Education (Board) consisting of five members elected from five county posts. The Board appoints a Superintendent to oversee the day-to-day administration of the District.

Since 1997, the District has benefitted from a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) for education. On November 3, 2015, the citizens of Gwinnett County approved an extension of the one percent SPLOST. This is the fifth renewal of this sales tax program (SPLOVST V). The referendum approved a maximum collection of \$950,000,000 over 5 years, from the date on which SPLOST IV expired (July 2017) through the earlier of 20 calendar quarters from the imposition date or the month in which collections reach \$950,000,000. A proportionate share of up to \$22,300,000 is to be distributed to the City of Buford Schools, an independent city school system within Gwinnett County. The remaining funds (up to \$927,600,000) are to be used to fund the District's 2018 Building and Technology Program.

Funds from SPLOST V may be used to pay the current expenses of the District related to the costs of:

- ◆ Developing sites for and constructing and equipping new schools, support facilities and athletic facilities.
- ◆ Making additions to, acquiring or renovating and equipping existing schools, support facilities and athletic facilities.
- ◆ Purchasing and refurbishing school buses and other support vehicles.
- ◆ Making existing lease/purchase payments with respect to the acquisition of new and existing schools and support facilities.
- ◆ Modernizing technology and making system-wide technology improvements in Gwinnett School District.

As part of the voters' approval process to fund SPLOST V, the voters also authorized the Board to issue general obligation debt in a principal amount not to exceed \$330,000,000 to be repaid with SPLOST V sales tax revenue.

The Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A. 20-2-491) requires public school systems to obtain continuing performance audits or performance reviews for expenditures of sales tax for capital outlay if the tax generates or is reasonably anticipated to generate \$5 million or more annually. To fulfill the audit requirement, in October 2018, the Board contracted with MGT of America Consulting, LLC (MGT) to conduct an annual audit and review of the SPLOST V funding program. This report serves as the final communication of the results of the audit. A description of the audit objective, scope, methodology, and conclusions can be found below. The **Current Situation** section of this report (pages 5 - 23) provides a detailed description of the work performed.

AUDIT SCOPE

The audit scope included reviewing the SPLOST V operations for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 (FY2020).

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

MGT's audit objectives included a review of the goals of the SPLOST V program and the extent to which the program is meeting expectations for the effective, efficient and economic use of the tax dollars collected.

METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the requirements of the audit contract, MGT developed an audit process focused on the evaluation of SPLOST V revenues and expenses by categories. The audit process included:

- ◆ Meetings with District personnel and review of financial information related to SPLOST V to determine whether the investment of sales tax proceeds received by the District has been conducted in a sound fiscal manner.
- ◆ Meetings with District personnel and review of fiscal information related to the SPLOST V funds for FY2020 to determine whether tax proceeds are disbursed in a fiscally responsible manner. Technology, equipment and transportation purchases were evaluated by a random selection process by reviewing supporting documentation stored within the District's records.
- ◆ Meetings with District personnel and review of the District's planned scope of the capital building program to gain an understanding of the type of work planned.
- ◆ Review of accounting records/reports for projects completed and compared work completed to funds expended. In addition, MGT auditors virtually verified new transportation and technology assets, as well as facilities which have undergone renovations or new construction.
- ◆ Review bidding and construction processes for all work, labor and material contracts to determine whether processes are consistent with best practices in accordance with industry standards.

CONCLUSIONS

Audit procedures disclosed that:

- ◆ Investment of sales tax proceeds received by the District has been conducted in a sound fiscal manner.
- ◆ Tax proceeds are disbursed in a fiscally responsible manner.
- ◆ Equipment and technology purchased with SPLOST are in the District's records and possession.
- ◆ Completed construction projects are well-built; they also coincide with the District's facilities plan and accounting records.

- ◆ The bidding and construction process is managed effectively and is in-line with best management practices and industry standards.
- ◆ The District complied with the applicable sections of Georgia’s Constitution and Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.). Specifically:
 - O.C.G.A. 48-8-141 – Authorizes sales tax for educational purposes in the same manner as county sales and use taxes.
 - O.C.G.A. 48-1-121 – Authorizes the use of tax proceeds and requires that a record be maintained of each project for which the proceeds of the tax are used.
 - O.C.G.A 20-2-491 -- Specifically provides that such tax proceeds shall be subject to a performance audit or performance review through a public request for proposals process with respect to any sales tax for education purposes.

CURRENT SITUATION

SPLOST V REVENUES

To accurately account for all revenues and expenses related to SPLOST V, the District designated Fund 227 as the fund to which all SPLOST V related transactions are recorded. Audit procedures disclosed that there are four possible sources of revenue (categories): SPLOST Tax Receipts, Interest Income, State Capital Outlay and Bond Revenue. Audit procedures also disclosed that approximately 80.8% of total revenues recorded in Fund 227 during FY2020 derived from SPLOST Tax Receipts. **Exhibit 1** below provides an overview of the total revenues by category recorded to Fund 227 during FY2020.

EXHIBIT 1 FY2020 SPLOST V REVENUES

REVENUE SOURCE	AMOUNT FOR FY2020	% OF TOTAL REVENUES
SPLOST Receipts	\$165,424,779.62	80.8%
Interest Income	\$915,319.78	0.4%
State Capital Outlay	\$ 38,305,851.70	18.7%
Bond Revenue ¹	\$0.00	0.0%
Total	\$204,645,951.10	100.0%

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

As shown in Exhibit 1 above, revenues received from SPLOST Tax Receipts accounted for approximately \$165.5 million (80.8%) of the total revenues recorded into Fund 227 during FY2020. As part of the auditing process, MGT auditors researched Georgia's Tax Center website to determine whether SPLOST Tax Receipts for FY2020 per the District's records agreed with the amounts per the State's website. Audit procedures disclosed that SPLOST V Tax Receipts for FY2020 per the District's record agreed with the amounts listed on the State's website.

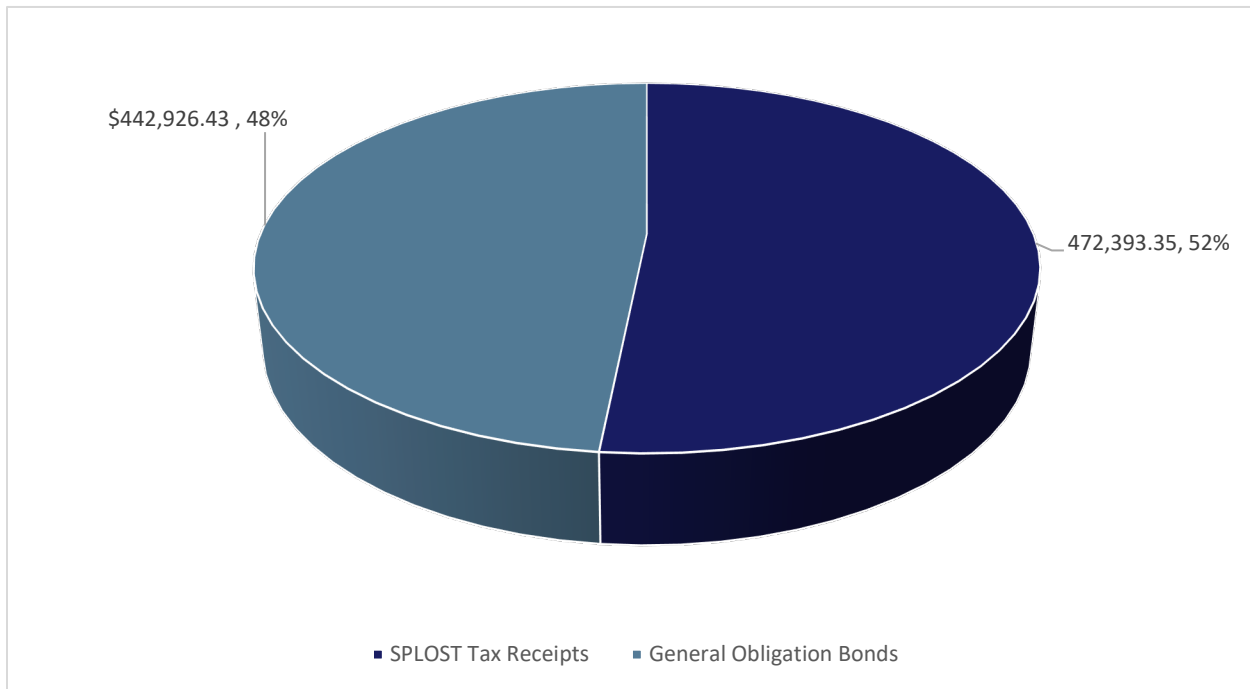
As illustrated in Exhibit 1 above, approximately \$915,000 (0.4%) of the total revenues recorded into Fund 227 during FY2020 derived from interest received from the investment of SPLOST V related funds. As part of the audit, MGT auditors inquired with District personnel and reviewed the account detail report of the investment account to gain an understanding of the sources of income (categories) that accounted for the investment income for FY2020. Audit procedures disclosed that the \$915,000 of investment income included income that derived from the investment of SPLOST Tax Receipts and SPLOST General Obligation Bonds issued prior to FY2020.

Upon gaining an understanding of the categories that make up the investment income, MGT auditors inquired with District personnel and reviewed supporting documentation to gain an understanding of the types of investment pursued by the District. Audit procedures disclosed that the excess of SPLOST Tax

¹ No SPLOST related general obligation bonds were issued during FY2020.

Receipts were invested into Georgia Fund 1². MGT auditors reviewed the Statement of Account from the State of Georgia Office of Treasury & Fiscal Services for the SPLOST Sales Tax account for FY2020 to gain an understanding of the interest that was earned during the year. The review disclosed that during FY2020, the District earned and reinvested \$472,393.35. **Exhibit 2** below provides an overview of SPLOST V related investment income by category (i.e., SPLOST Tax Receipts or General Obligation Bond) received during FY2020.

EXHIBIT 2 FY2020 SPLOST V INTEREST INCOME



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the results of the audit procedures, MGT concludes that the investment of sales tax proceeds received by the District has been conducted in a sound fiscal manner.

² Georgia Fund 1 is offered by the State of Georgia to counties, municipalities, public colleges and universities, boards of education, special districts, state agencies, and other authorized entities as a conservative, efficient, and liquid investment alternative. The primary investment objectives of Georgia Fund 1 are safety of capital, liquidity, yield, and diversification with primary emphasis on safety of capital and liquidity.

SPLOST V EXPENSES

In addition to tracking SPLOST V related expenses in Fund 227, the District has established approval limits to ensure that expenditures over certain amounts are authorized by someone with the proper authorization level, including but not limited to:

- ◆ Contracts for Facilities and Operations capital projects from budgeted funds with a value up to \$500,000 shall be made by the Chief Operations Officer once procedural requirements are met.
- ◆ Purchases from budgeted funds for any item or group of items with a value of \$100,001 - \$500,000 shall be made by the Director of Purchasing upon approval of the Chief Financial Officer once procedural requirements are met.
- ◆ Purchases from budgeted funds for any item or group of items with a value of \$500,000 - \$1,000,000 shall be made by the Director of Purchasing upon approval of the Superintendent once procedural requirements are met.
- ◆ Purchases from budgeted funds for any item or group of items with a value of \$1,000,000 or greater shall be made by the Director of Purchasing upon approval of the Board of Education once procedural requirements are met.
- ◆ Emergency purchases above \$1,000,000 or which have not been provided for in the budget may be made if critical to the continued operation of the District upon approval by the Superintendent. Such action shall be reported to the Board of Education at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

As previously indicated, funds from SPLOST V may be used to pay the current expenses of the District related to the costs of:

- ◆ Developing sites for and constructing and equipping new schools, support facilities and athletic facilities.
- ◆ Making additions to, acquiring or renovating and equipping existing schools, support facilities and athletic facilities.
- ◆ Purchasing and refurbishing school buses and other support vehicles.
- ◆ Making existing lease/purchase payments with respect to the acquisition of new and existing schools and support facilities.
- ◆ Modernizing technology and making system-wide technology improvements in Gwinnett County School District.

MGT reviewed the SPLOST V accounts payable detail for FY2020 to gain an understanding of the amount expended and the categories of the expenditures. The review disclosed that the District expended a total of \$208,928,084.19³ during FY2020. **Exhibit 3** below provides an overview of the total expenses by categories recorded to Fund 227 during FY2020.

**EXHIBIT 3
FY2020 SPLOST V EXPENSES BY CATEGORY**

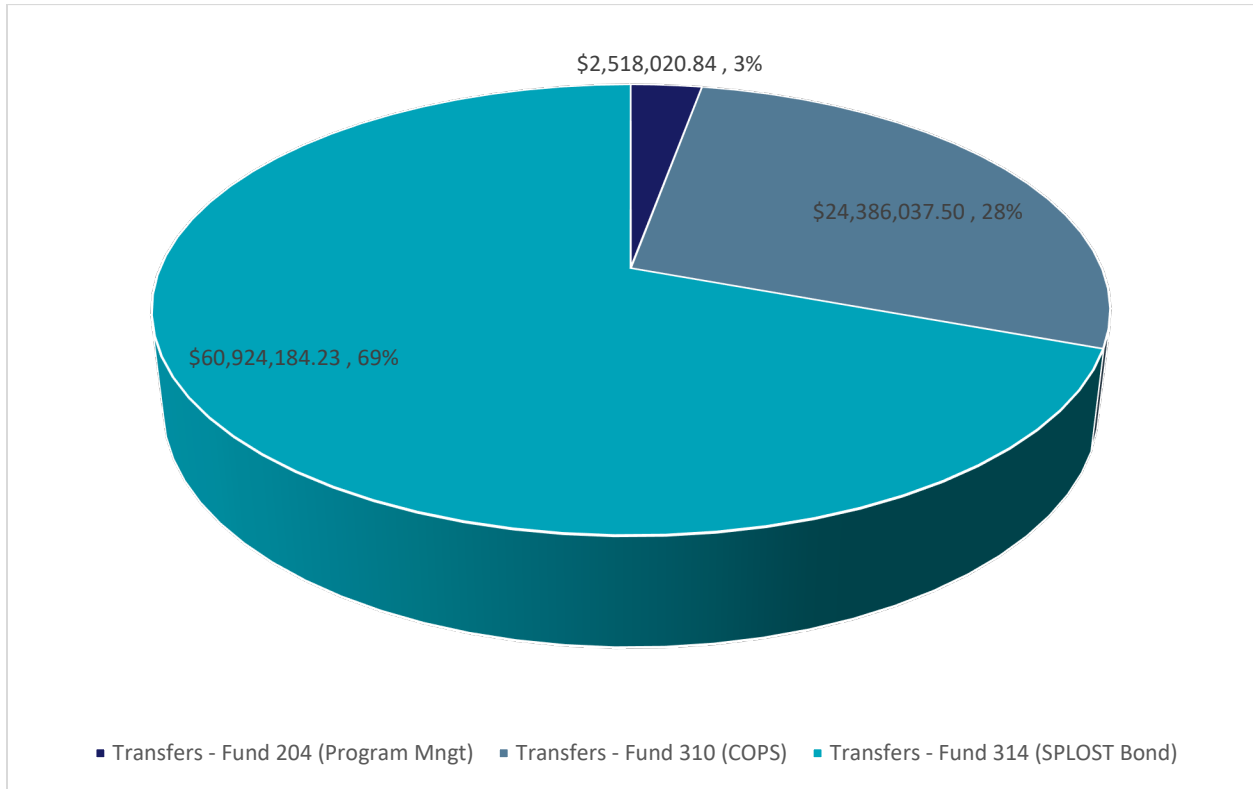
ACTIVITY	ACTUAL EXPENSES FOR FY20	% OF TOTAL EXPENSES
Budgets	\$180,167.48	0.09%
Fleet Maintenance	\$40,278.00	0.02%
Bus Replacement	\$3,690,060.00	1.77%
Data Governance	\$5,014,446.89	2.40%
Information Security	\$3,785,051.96	1.81%
Technology	\$48,238,941.00	23.09%
Land Purchases	\$1,628,654.48	0.78%
Construction	\$52,570,972.52	25.16%
Storage & Moving	\$54,535.70	0.03%
Equipment	\$5,896,733.59	2.82%
Transfers - Fund 204 (Program Mngt)	\$2,518,020.84	1.21%
Transfers - Fund 310 (COPS)	\$24,386,037.50	11.67%
Transfers - Fund 314 (SPLOST Bond)	\$60,924,184.23	29.16%
Total	\$208,928,084.19	100.00%

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

As illustrated in Exhibit 3 above, approximately 42.04% of the total expenditures for FY2020 were transfers to other funds, including Fund 314 (SPLOST Bond) for the principal and interest payments of the SPLOST General Obligation Bonds. **Exhibit 4** on the following page provides an overview of the amounts transfer and their percentage of the total transfers.

³ Includes amounts transfer to other funds totaling \$87,828,242.57.

**EXHIBIT 4
FY2020 SPLOST V TRANSFERS**

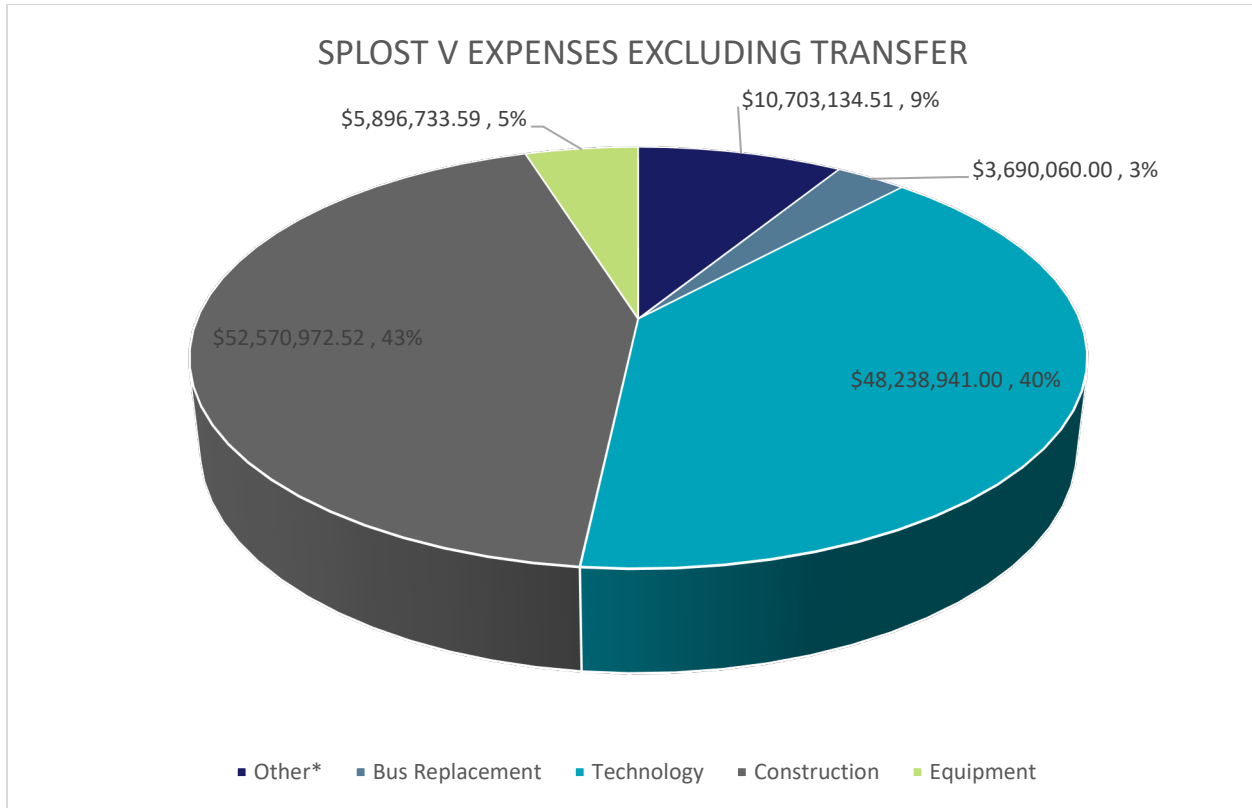


Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

Transfers to SPLOST bond principal and interest made up approximately 69% of the total transfers. This equated to \$60,924,184.23. Certificates of Participation (COPS) principal and interest transfers equal 28% of the total transfers and program management was only 3%.

As the District takes on new long-term construction, renovation, and technology projects during the first couple of years of SPLOST V, MGT auditors expected the technology and construction categories/activities to account for a large percentage of the expenses when excluding the transfers. **Exhibit 5** below provides an overview of total SPLOST V related expenses for FY2020 when not taking into consideration transfers to other funds.

**EXHIBIT 5
SPLOST V EXPENSES EXCLUDING TRANSFERS**



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, 2020 from data provided by the District (other* - include the amounts recorded to budgets, moving/storage, support vehicles, land purchases, information security and data governance).

For FY2020, 43% of SPLOST V funds were expended on construction and renovations related activities. This was followed by 40% being expended on technology related activities. Equipment and bus replacement complete the top four at 5% and 3%, respectively. With technology and construction accounting for over 83% of total expenditures not including transfers during FY2020, the expenditures of the program met MGT’s expectations.

As part of audit testing, MGT auditors selected and tested a sample of transactions for each of the top three categories (i.e., technology, construction, and equipment) and transportation for testing. The details and results of each test can be found in the applicable section below.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the results of the audit procedures, MGT concludes that tax proceeds are disbursed in a fiscally responsible manner.

CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

According to section 5 of the resolution for the current SPLOST V, the specific capital outlay projects to be funded by SPLOST proceeds include:

- (a) Acquiring and developing sites for and constructing and equipping new schools, support facilities and athletic facilities specifically including, but not limited to, the following:
 - (i) Norcross High Cluster High School
 - (ii) Meadowcreek Cluster High School
 - (iii) Meadowcreek Cluster Elementary School
 - (iv) Berkmar Cluster Elementary School

- (b) Acquiring and developing sites for and making additions to and/or renovating, equipping and modernizing existing schools, support facilities and athletic facilities specifically including, but not limited to, the following:
 - (i) Chesney Elementary School
 - (ii) Richards Middle School
 - (iii) Berkeley Lake Elementary School
 - (iv) Parkview High School
 - (v) Brookwood High School
 - (vi) Lilburn Middle School
 - (vii) Grayson High School
 - (viii) Berkmar High School
 - (ix) Benefield Elementary School

The District developed a facilities plan (The Plan) for the five-year time period of SPLOST V funding, as shown in **Exhibit 6**. The Plan includes the projects for which the District anticipates receiving sufficient funds over the five-year period. The funding will come from a combination of special purpose local option sales tax (E-SPLOST) revenue, state capital outlay dollars, and interest earnings on E-SPLOST bond proceeds. To jumpstart the program, the E-SPLOST bond includes authorization to sell general obligation bonds to be repaid with sales tax proceeds. Should funding be insufficient, the list of projects is subject to revision.

**EXHIBIT 6 SPLOST V PROJECTS
"THE PLAN"**

YEAR OPENING	PROJECT	NEW OR ADDITION/RENOVATION	# CLASSROOMS/ INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS
2018	Norcross Cluster Theme HS	New	79
	Meadowcreek Cluster Theme HS	New	79
2019	Meadowcreek Cluster ES	New	93
	Richards MS	Addition/Renovation	37
2020	Berkmar Cluster ES	New	76
	Chesney ES	Addition/Renovation	20
	Berkeley Lake ES	Addition/Renovation	16
	Parkview HS	Addition/Renovation	20
	Brookwood HS	Addition/Renovation	21
2021	Lilburn MS	Addition/Renovation	26
	Grayson HS	Addition/Renovation	24
	Berkmar HS	Addition/Renovation	4, plus new theater
	Benefield ES	Addition/Renovation	15
			Total = 510
2017 - 2022	Technology improvements system wide to support teaching and learning: expansion of eCLASS; student performance analysis systems; improved audiovisual and broadcast media capabilities; expanded support for wireless connectivity; student data security systems; student information system support; safety and security upgrades		
	System wide facility modifications, renovations, and infrastructure improvements: carpeting, painting, roofing, HVAC upgrades; buses (new/refurbished); facility modifications for high school academies; ADA improvements; furniture/fixtures/equipment growth and replacement; Fine Arts program growth and replacement		

Source: Gwinnett County Public Schools, 2018.

The construction activities are generally in accordance with the SPLOST resolution and The Plan, with two exceptions. The first exception is that Lilburn Middle School was moved forward in the schedule, and instead of a FY2021 completion, was completed in FY2019. This change was made to ease scheduling of projects and lessen impacts on students and staff.

The second exception involves the planned new elementary schools for Meadowcreek and Berkmar Clusters. During the land acquisition phase, it was discovered that there was a lack of suitable land available for the planned new Berkmar Cluster Elementary School. Because of this, the projects were changed to building additions at Meadowcreek Elementary School and Ferguson Elementary School. During the initial phases of these projects, the situation was further complicated when enrollment

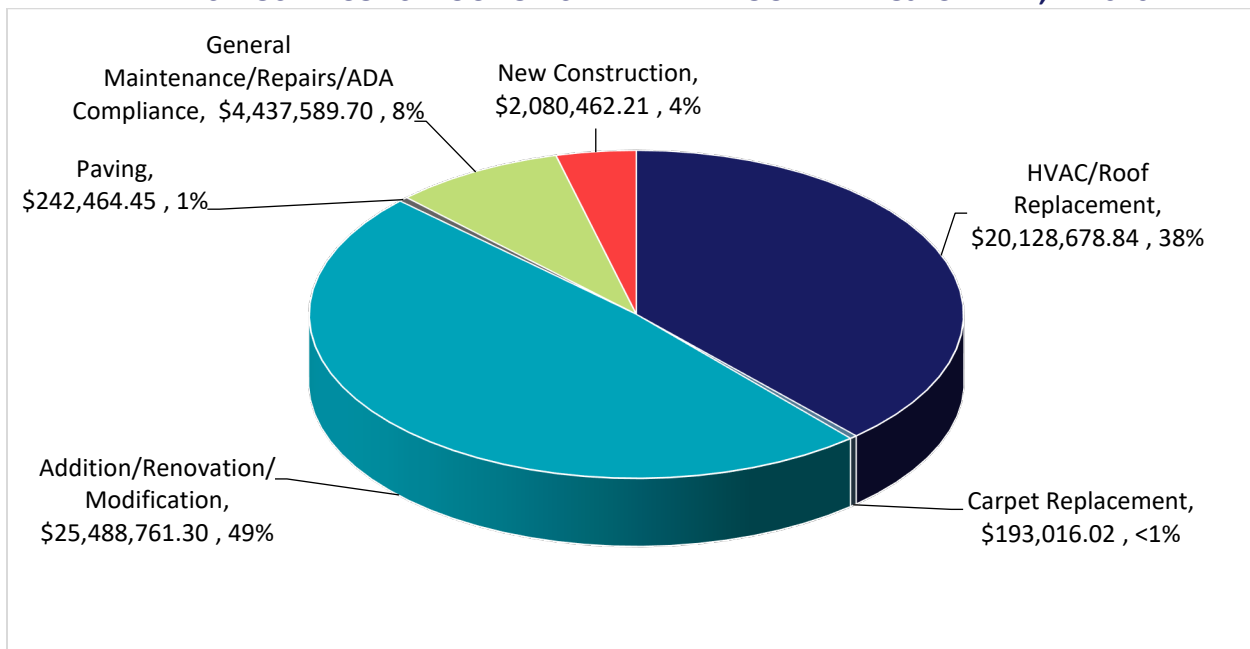
numbers for the fall were lower than expected. Due to the lower than expected enrollment numbers, the additions at Meadowcreek and Ferguson Elementary Schools were placed on hold.

The remaining FY2020 projects, Chesney ES Addition/Renovation, Berkeley Lake ES Addition/Renovation, Parkview HS Addition/Renovation and Brookwood HS Addition/Renovation, were all complete at the time of review.

For FY2021, the planned addition/renovation projects at Berkmar HS, Benefield ES, and Grayson HS are all currently in progress with expected completion in August 2021. As planning has progressed since the development of the plan, several projects are being funded by SPLOST in addition to those originally planned for FY2021 and FY2022. For FY 2021, an addition/renovation is underway for Central Gwinnett HS with expected completion in August 2021. Planned for completion in FY2022, two major projects that are in the early phases of construction are an addition for Jones MS, and a new Seckinger High School.

The total expenditure on construction projects during the fiscal year was \$52,570,972.52 which is 25.2% of total SPLOST V funding for FY2020. The largest project was the Brookwood HS Addition/Renovation project which totaled \$9,294,914.12 in expenditures in FY2020. In FY2020, SPLOST funding was used in 77 separate construction projects at 56 different facilities, totaling \$52,570,972.52. Along with funding for specific projects, \$4,437,589.70 of SPLOST expenditures were used for general funding of needed maintenance and repairs of existing facilities. FY2020 SPLOST funding was used on a number of different types of projects including new construction, additions, renovations, building modifications, roof replacements, carpet replacements, HVAC upgrades, general maintenance, and repairs. **Exhibit 7** shows a breakdown of how the SPLOST funding was used for different types of projects.

**EXHIBIT 7
SPLOST V CONSTRUCTION SPEND BREAKOUT BY PROJECT TYPE, FY2020**



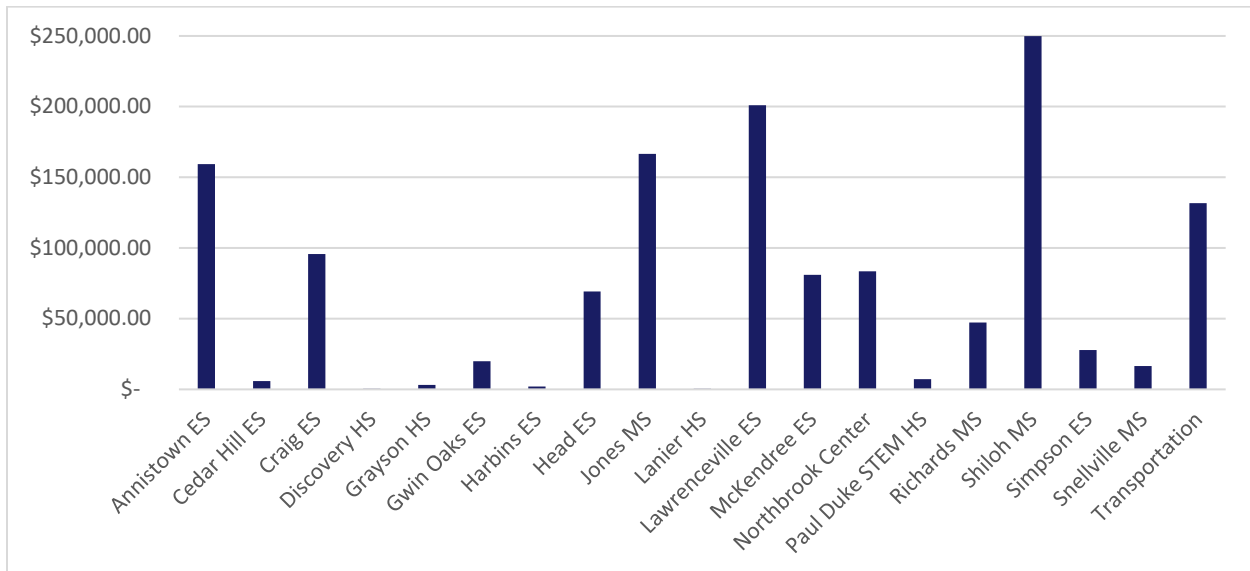
Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

The largest category of projects was additions/renovations/modifications, with 49% of the total SPLOST spending during FY2020. Spending on HVAC and Roof Replacement projects was also significant, at 38%

of FY2020 SPLOST spending. General maintenance, repairs, and ADA compliance make up 8% of the construction spending, these projects include code compliance, preventative maintenance, emergency repairs, and grounds maintenance. A small amount of SPLOST funding also went to paving and carpet replacement projects during FY2020. According to The Plan, part of the goal for 2017-2022 includes “System wide facility modifications, renovations, and infrastructure improvements: carpeting, painting, roofing, HVAC upgrades...facility modifications for high school academies”. Based on the spending in FY2020, the District is making substantial progress toward these goals since the spending aligns very well with the goals outlined in The Plan.

The expenditures in FY2020 were used to benefit 56 different facilities in 77 specific projects. This is in addition to general maintenance and repairs across all facilities. Since these projects are so numerous, they are broken down below in three different cost ranges. **Exhibit 8** shows total expenditures less than \$250,000 by facility, **Exhibit 9** shows total expenditures between \$250,000 and \$1 million by facility, and **Exhibit 10** shows total expenditures greater than \$1 million by facility.

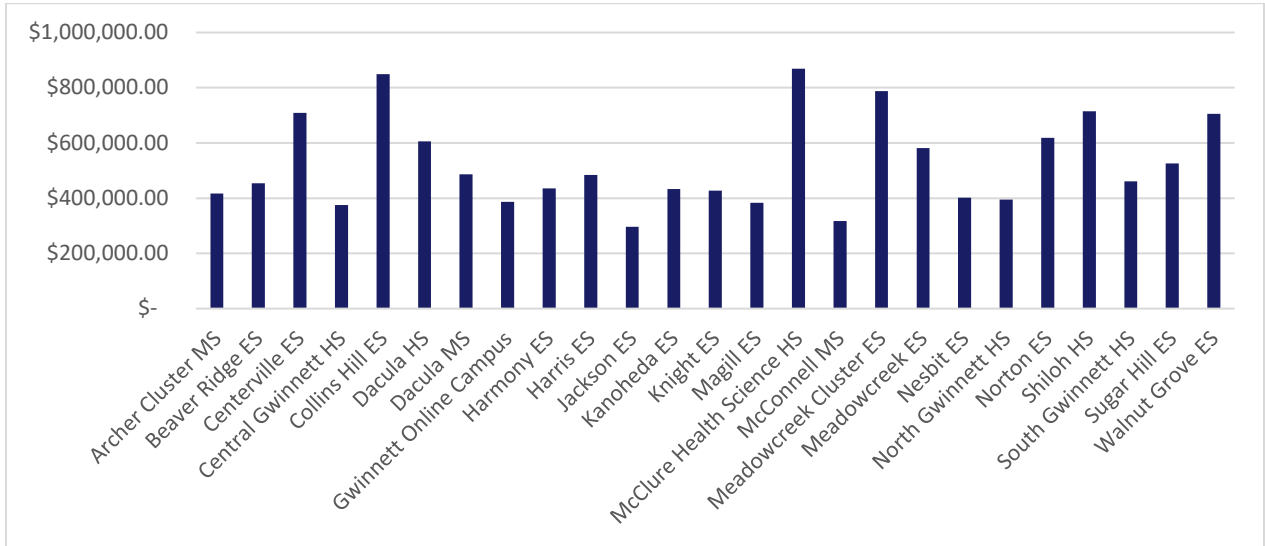
EXHIBIT 8
SPLOST V CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES LESS THAN \$250,000, BY FACILITY, FY2020



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

The projects in this range include primarily painting, carpet replacements, roof replacements, and new construction and addition projects that are winding down or in pre-construction phases. **Exhibit 9** demonstrates projects in the next cost tier, greater than \$250,000 but less than \$1 million.

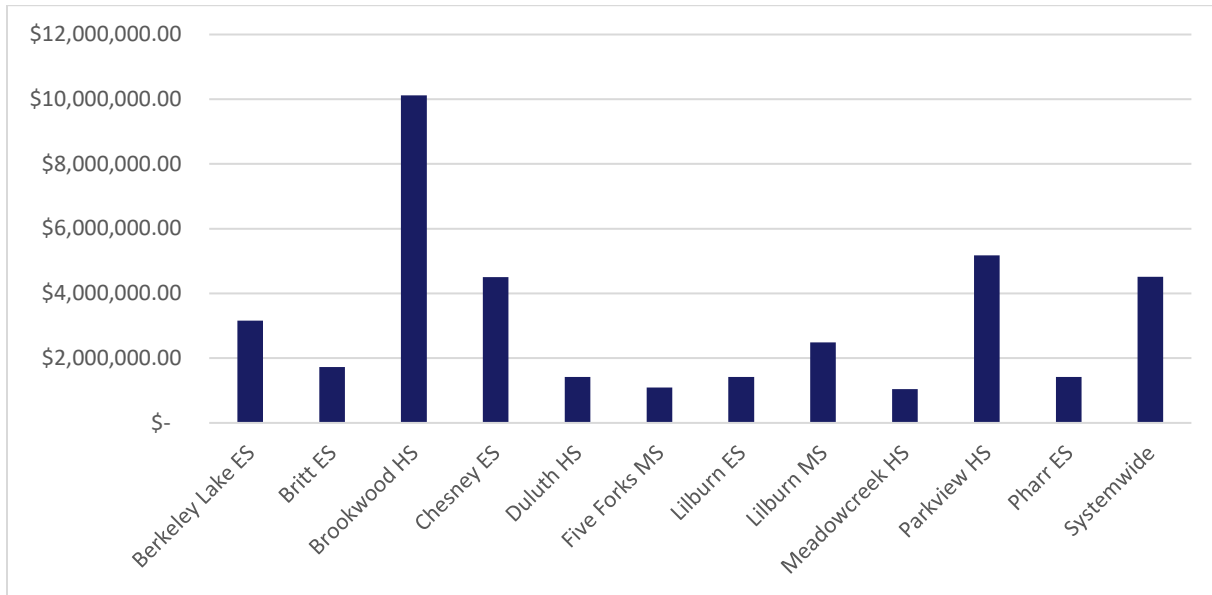
**EXHIBIT 9
SPLOST V CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES GREATER THAN \$250,000
BUT LESS THAN \$1 MILLION, BY FACILITY, FY2020**



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

Projects in this range are largely HVAC upgrades and roof replacements. Some of these are also costs for larger projects that are starting up or winding down, or spending on large projects that span more than one year. **Exhibit 10** on the following page shows schools where the SPLOST expenditures were greatest.

EXHIBIT 10
SPLOST V CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES GREATER THAN \$1 MILLION,
BY FACILITY, FY2020



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by the District.

Many of the schools where spending was greater than \$1 million were those that had building additions or renovations. The greatest expenditures occurred at Brookwood HS, where there was a major addition/renovation project in addition to roof replacement and site stabilization projects. Some of these are also HVAC projects on larger facilities, or schools that have several types of projects that occurred during FY2020.

MGT reviewed records for completed projects to verify the contracting process and ensure consistency with industry standards and best practices. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the typical on-site review was conducted virtually through review of documents and evidence provided by GCPS personnel. The following six (6) projects were selected for individual review:

1. Berkeley Lake Elementary School – Building Addition and Renovation
2. Britt Elementary School – HVAC/Roof Replacement
3. Dacula High School – Roof Replacement
4. Chesney Elementary School – Building Addition and Renovation
5. Brookwood High School – Building Addition and Renovation
6. Parkview High School – Building Addition and Renovation

Berkeley Lake Elementary School —Using funding from SPLOST V, an addition and site improvements are being constructed at Berkeley Lake Elementary School. The two-story addition includes classrooms and a new media center. The existing building is also being updated, including HVAC updates. The site improvements included a new parking area as well as refurbished driveway and bus lanes. The project was complete at the time of review.

Britt Elementary School —SPLOST V funding was used to replace the HVAC and recover the roof at Britt Elementary School. The project was complete at the time of review.

Dacula High School — SPLOST V funding was used to replace the roof on Dacula High School as part of a larger roofing project that included Gwinnett Online Campus and Hurricane Shoals Transportation Training Facility. At the time of review, this project was complete.

Chesney Elementary School — A building addition to Chesney Elementary School was constructed using SPLOST V funds. The two-story addition includes general classrooms and a cafeteria expansion. The project also included some updates to the existing building's electrical systems. The project was complete at the time of review.

Brookwood High School —SPLOST V funds are being used to build an addition at Brookwood High School. The two-story addition was incomplete at the time of the site visit but will include general classrooms and special education amenities. The two-story addition is replacing a one-story portion of the existing building, which was demolished. The project also includes some interior renovations to the existing building. The project was complete at the time of review.

Parkview High School —SPLOST V funding was used to construct a 2-story addition at Parkview High School. The addition included mostly general classrooms, and the project also included renovations for the existing building. The project was complete at the time of review.

BIDDING AND CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

MGT also reviewed the bidding and construction process for Gwinnett County Public Schools projects, and reviewed documents from the six (6) projects that were selected to verify conformity with industry standards and best practices. MGT found that there were no major changes to the GCPS bidding and construction process and practices between FY2019 and FY2020.

Gwinnett County Public Schools utilizes the design/bid/build construction delivery method for most of its capital improvement projects. Before any contractor is allowed to bid on a project, they are screened using a prequalification process. This typically involves ensuring that a contractor has the proper credentials and financial capability to complete a project. The prequalification requirements are laid out on the District's website and also in the proposal requests for projects. The typical requirements are the standard AIA form 305A as well as proper insurance, bonding, and attendance at a pre-bid conference. This process is sufficient to ensure that contractors are sufficiently able to complete projects in a timely manner, and at a high level of quality.

Projects over \$100,000 are advertised on the District's website for a 30-day time period. Bids are received and opened in a public opening attended by the project architect and all participating contractors. The bids are read aloud and recorded. The apparent low bidder is awarded the project and officially receives a contract once the Board approves the project and the bonds are verified.

Some projects are completed by contractors under unit price agreement contracts. Under these contracts, a contractor agrees to a certain rate for a specific type of work. These contracts are competitively bid similar to contracts for individual projects, and typically last three years. The District often uses these types of contracts for maintenance work such as painting, roofing, electrical, carpet replacement, etc. These types of contracts can be beneficial, as the District can utilize these agreements

at specific rates when there is a high workload demand, such as during the summer when there is a heavy push to complete a large amount of work in a short time period.

On difficult and complicated projects, the District has utilized the construction manager at risk delivery method. In this method, the school district advertises the project publicly and receive proposals from qualified firms. These proposals are independently scored by a team of professionals and the highest scoring firms are shortlisted to present their qualifications, project team, and project approach for the project. The highest scoring firm is selected as a construction manager at risk. The successful firm is approved by the Board at a regular scheduled school board meeting and awarded the project. This method is often beneficial to the District because the selected construction manager at risk is liable for any construction costs that exceed an agreed upon guaranteed maximum price. This was the delivery method used for construction of the new Paul Duke STEM High School as well as the McClure Health Sciences High School, which were both funded through SPLOST V.

The District also works diligently to ensure that projects are completed on time. Before a contractor is selected, they are screened through the process described above to ensure that the selected contractor has the ability to produce quality work in a timely manner. Many projects are bid well ahead of time, so the contractor has plenty of time to prepare. For new construction and addition projects, the District coordinates with the project contractors and architects on a daily basis in addition to a detailed monthly meeting to ensure that any potential issues are caught early, and there are no surprises. If a contractor does end up behind schedule on a project by 10 days or more, the District requires them to revise the work plan and provide a recovery schedule in order to complete the work by the deadline.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the results of the audit procedures, MGT concludes that the bidding and construction process is managed effectively and is in-line with best management practices and industry standards. Construction spending also coincides with planned activities and as outlined in The Plan, aside from a few reasonable changes due to unforeseen conditions. Construction projects were completed well and were finished as reported in the District's accounting records.

TECHNOLOGY

As indicated above, SPLOST V funds can be used for the purpose of modernizing technology and making system-wide technology improvements in the District. As part of the audit, MGT inquired with appropriate personnel to gain an understanding of the technology function in the District. In response to audit inquiries, District personnel indicated that during FY2020, the District recorded technology expenditures into one of three project types and that each project type is used for a specific purpose. A description of each project type is provided below:

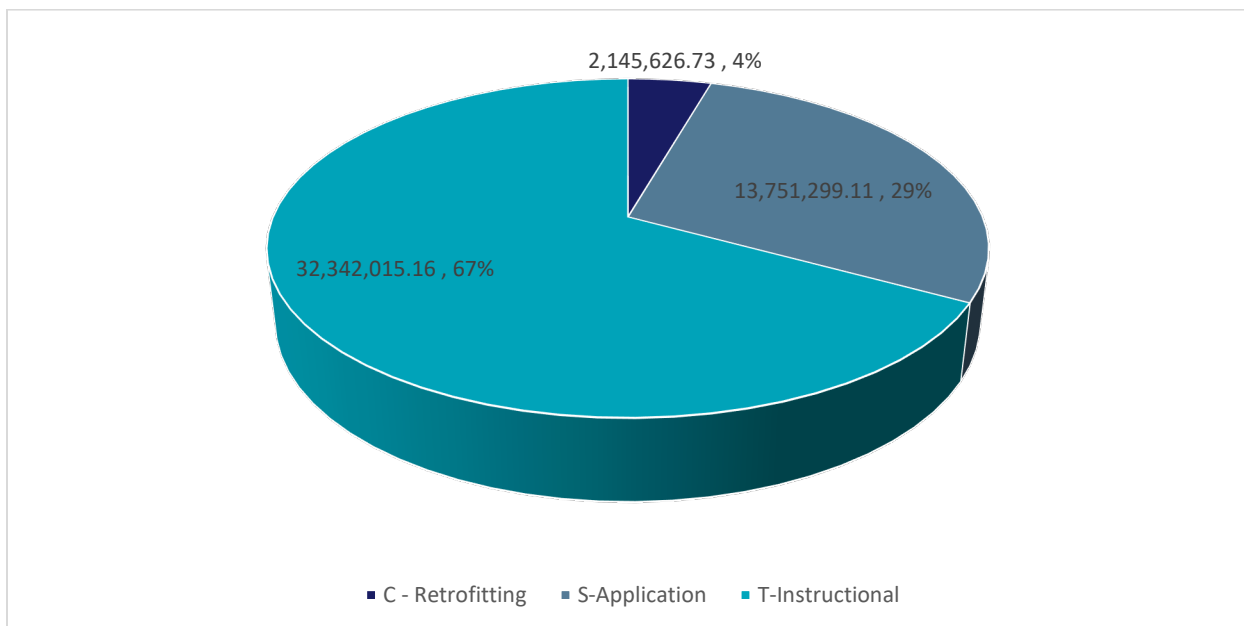
C-Projects-- this category of expenditures refers to projects related to new and retrofitting of schools. These include all information technology components related to wireless points of presence, technology devices, and supporting infrastructure to either bring a new school online or to retrofit an existing school, as well as the necessary infrastructure purchases, implementation, installation, upgrades or vendor fees for providing infrastructure related services throughout the District's school buildings.

S-Projects-- this category of expenditure refers to all application development costs associated with the development, maintenance licensing, or upgrades associated with district-level information technology and is either vendor provided, or district-developed applications.

T-Projects-- this category of expenditure refers to all costs associated with instructional technology or education program projects. This includes infrastructure purchases, implementation, installation, upgrades or vendor fees for providing infrastructure related services.

Exhibit 11 below shows the total technology related expenditures by project type during FY2020.

EXHIBIT 11
FY2020 TECHNOLOGY RELATED EXPENDITURES BY PROJECT TYPE



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

As illustrated by Exhibit 11, instructional technology related expenditures accounted for approximately 67% of total technology related expenditures during FY2020. While application and retrofitting related expenditures accounted for approximately 29% and 4% of total technology related expenditures, respectively.

District personnel also indicated that in addition to tracking technology related expenditures by project type, the District records technology related expenditures by account. **Exhibit 12** provides an overview of the expenditures by account for FY2020.

EXHIBIT 12
FY2020 TECHNOLOGY RELATED EXPENDITURES BY ACCOUNT

ACCOUNT	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
300007	Other Professional & Technical	\$19,495,667.84	40.41%
432001	Maintenance Technology Related	\$933,660.00	1.94%
612000	Computer Software	\$1,852,473.55	3.84%
615000	Expendable Equipment	\$1,289,500.69	2.67%
616000	Expendable Computer Equipment	\$19,849,818.02	41.15%
734000	Computer Equipment	\$4,817,820.90	9.99%
Total		\$48,238,941.00	100.0%

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

After gaining an understanding of the three different types of technology related expenditures, MGT personnel randomly selected a sample of six (6) technology related purchases for testing. **Exhibit 13** provides an overview of the technology purchases selected for testing.

EXHIBIT 13
LIST OF AUDITED TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT FOR FY2020 SPLOST V FUNDED

PROJECT ID	DESCRIPTION	COST
T-100	EMTEC INC, ROCKBRIDGE ES - AD	\$1,644.00
T-100	AMITRACE INC, BROADCAST AV	\$798.40
T-400	EMTEC INC, HS SERVICES	\$1,532.00
T-100	B&H PHOTO, AV-WILL COX FLAT	\$377.99
T-100	EMTEC INC, LEVEL CREEK ES	\$465.50
T-700	EMTEC INC, FY20 INFRASUPPORT	\$22,210.20

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

As part of audit testing, MGT personnel reviewed supporting documentation (e.g., invoices and file copies of the checks) stored within the District's records to determine if the amounts per the documentation

agreed to the financial records and whether the expenditures appeared to be allowable under SPLOST. Audit tests disclosed that for all IT related sample items tested the amount per the supporting documentation agreed with the amount per the financial records and the expenditures appeared to be allowable under SPLOST.

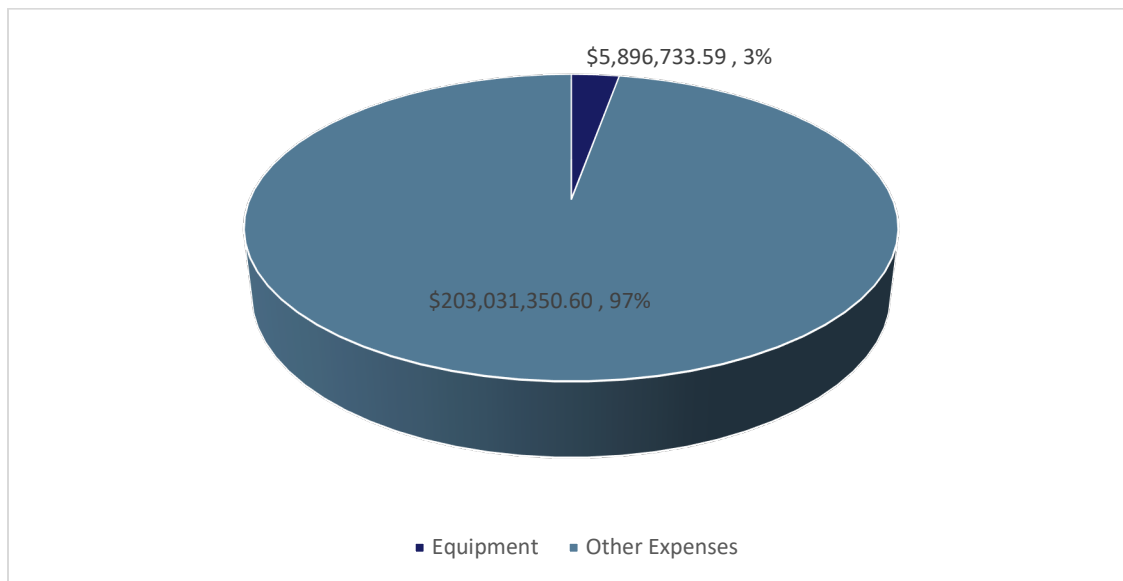
CONCLUSION:

Based on the results of the audit procedures, MGT concludes that IT related assets are properly recorded in the financial records and allowable under SPLOST.

EQUIPMENT

The District uses a variety of equipment to support daily operations and support the provision of education to the youth of Gwinnett County. **Exhibit 14** shows equipment as a percentage of total expenditures.

EXHIBIT 14
FY2020 SPLOST V EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURES AS % OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

SPLOST V funds for equipment expenditures totaled \$5,896,733.59 and made up approximately 3% of total SPLOST V spending for FY2020. As part of the audit process, MGT personnel randomly selected six (6) equipment related purchases for audit testing. **Exhibit 15** lists the equipment selected for testing.

EXHIBIT 15
SPLOST V FY2019 EQUIPMENT AUDITED

PROJECT ID	DESCRIPTION	COST
C-999-009	Growth and Replacement – Supply Req Caldwell	\$156.10
C-999-009	Growth and Replacement – Supply Req MoID	\$583.88
P-0030	Fine Arts Equipment – Hunt’s Photo	\$445.00
C-999-009	Growth and Replacement – BSN Sports	\$3,173.56
C-999-009	Growth and Replacement – Supply Req Kbel for Britt ES	\$541.60
C-999-009	Growth and Replacement – Georgia Spec	\$12,295.60

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

For each sample item, MGT reviewed supporting documentation (e.g., invoices, file copy of the checks, and, if applicable, data in the asset management system) stored within the District’s records to determine if the amounts per the documentation agreed to the financial records and if the expenditures appeared to be allowable under SPLOST.

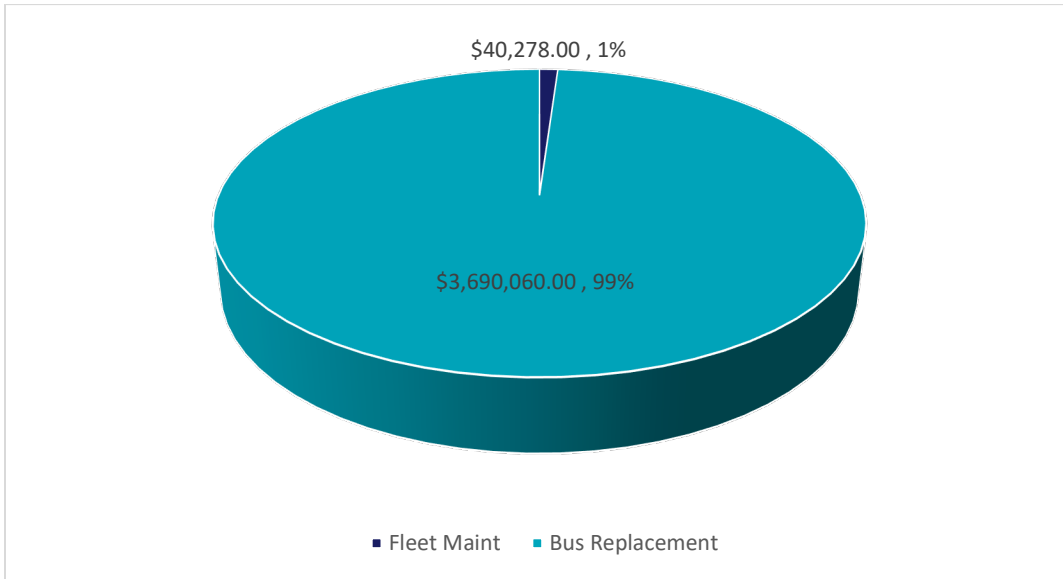
CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the audit procedures, MGT concludes that equipment related assets are properly recorded in the financial records and allowable under SPLOST.

TRANSPORTATION

The District owns and operates approximately 2000 buses across 5 regional transportation centers. A combination of new and refurbished equipment is used to transport students on a daily basis. School buses typically have a 15-year useful lifecycle before they are refurbished or taken out of service. Transportation spending for FY2020 SPLOST funds included bus replacement purchases and fleet vehicle purchases. The vast majority of this funding was used to replace buses that have reached the end of the useful lifecycle. **Exhibit 16** shows SPLOST funds that were spent on transportation by category in FY2020.

EXHIBIT 16
FY2020 SPLOST IV TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY



Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

SPLOST V funds for transportation expenditures consisted of 44 buses and one fleet vehicle. The bus replacements totaled \$3,690,060.00; this represents 99% of transportation related purchases. Fleet vehicle purchases totaled \$40,278.00 in FY2020, or 1% of overall transportation purchases. As part of the audit process, MGT personnel randomly selected seven (7) vehicle related purchases for audit testing. **Exhibit 17** lists the vehicles audited by description, Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), and Vehicle Number per the District’s records.

EXHIBIT 17
SPLOST V FY2020 VEHICLES AUDITED

ITEM DESCRIPTION	VIN	VEHICLE NUMBER
2020 Ford Van	1FTBW9CG3LKA35452	1035
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB8MCME0930	3577
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB2MCME0970	3617
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB7MCME0918	3565
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB2MCME0972	3619
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB5MCME0917	3564
Bus- New, 2020 Thomas Built Bus	4UZABRFB3MCME0964	3611

Source: Created by MGT of America Consulting, LLC, from data provided by GCPS.

For these seven (7) sample items, MGT reviewed supporting documentation (e.g., invoices, file copy of the checks, and data in the asset management system) stored within the District's records to determine if the amounts per the documentation agreed to the financial records and if the expenditures appeared to be allowable under SPLOST. Additionally, we verified the existence of each vehicle by agreeing the VIN Number per the asset management system to the VIN Number on the vehicle.

CONCLUSION

MGT concludes that transportation related assets are properly recorded in the financial records and allowable under SPLOST.