



Harrisburg City School District
Amended Recovery Plan
Report for Quarter 2
October 1 – December 31, 2022



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1. Authority & Purpose

In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Financial Recovery Act 141 of 2012, the Harrisburg City School District executed the third iteration of its financial recovery plan in August 2021 under the leadership of former Receiver Dr. Janet C. Samuels, who retired from the role on January 28, 2022, and Dr. Lori A. Suski, who succeeded her as Receiver on January 29, 2022.

On June 17, 2022, the Honorable William T. Tully issued an order pursuant to Section 671-A of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, placing the Harrisburg City School District under Receivership for a new three (3) year period. Dr. Suski was reappointed Receiver effective June 17, 2022 – June 17, 2025.

On August 29, 2022, Acting Secretary of Education, Eric Hagarty, appointed Dr. Travis Waters as the new Chief Recovery Officer for Harrisburg City School District on a part-time basis to assist with the monitoring of the Amended Recovery Plan and to serve as an advisor to the Receiver.

Section 672-A (b) (2) of the Pennsylvania Public School Code requires the submission of a quarterly report to the Secretary of Education. This report reflects the period from October 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, which is the second quarter of the 2022-23 fiscal year. During this quarter, at the request of the Receiver and with agreement from the PA Department of Education, Mass Insight returned to the Harrisburg School District to conduct a second diagnostic evaluation via their contract with Public Financial Management.¹

¹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zlxNQVUAoWKIF-K0gU5R4mSaBCuAXb0K/view?usp=share_link

2. District Demographics

Student enrollment in Harrisburg School District has increased overall slightly this quarter, but placements have shifted. A total of 6,345 students are attending brick-and-mortar District schools K-12, which is a decrease of 69 students from the prior quarter. The District elementary schools, which house kindergarten through Grade 5, have a total enrollment of 2,817 students which is broken down by building in the chart below. There is only one Pre-K Counts 4-year-old classroom housed in the District this year at Ben Franklin Elementary School.

Ben Franklin Elementary School	756 students (includes one PK-4 classroom)
Melrose Elementary School	610 students
Foose Elementary School	557 students
Scott Elementary School	490 students
Downey Elementary School	404 students

The District middle schools, which house Grades 6 – 8, have a total enrollment of 1,573 students which is broken down by building in the chart below. Marshall also includes a classroom of Grade 5 students due to overcrowding issues at Melrose.

Rowland Academy	599 students
Camp Curtin Academy	486 students

Marshall Math/Science Academy	402 students (Grades 5 – 8)
Marshall Academy	86 students (Grades 5 – 8)

The high school continues to operate two campuses with a total enrollment of 1,563 students attending the brick-and-mortar school buildings:

Harrisburg HS - John Harris Campus	1240 students
Harrisburg HS – SciTech Campus	323 students

Cougar Academy is now operating as a K-12 blended learning school with a total of 392 students enrolled. There are 583 students attending Harrisburg Virtual Learning Academy (HVLA), the District’s own cyber program, as of December 31, 2022. This is an increase of 154 students since September 30, 2022. The breakdown of assigned building for HVLA students appears in the chart below. It should be noted that nearly one third of students at John Harris campus have opted in to the HVLA program. The Administration must get to the root cause of this mass exodus out of the brick-and-mortar building. With fewer students, it will be necessary to look at right sizing the staffing complement.

John Harris Campus – Harrisburg HS	272 students
Rowland Academy	79 students
Camp Curtin	64 students
Ben Franklin	45 students
Foose	26 students
Scott	25 students

Melrose	21 students
Cougar Academy	16 students
Harrisburg High School: SciTech Campus	13 students
Downey	11 students
Marshall Math/Science Academy	7 students
Marshall	4 students

There are 188 students in outplacements as of December 31, with 67 of them identified as special education students.

Outplacement Enrollments 2022-23 SY
Updated 12/19/22 12:00pm

Building	Type of School	Reported Outplacement Monthly Enrollments									
		August		Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec	
		REG ED	SPEC ED	REG ED	SPEC ED	REG ED	SPEC ED	REG ED	SPEC ED	REG ED	SPEC ED
Catapult Learning (Capital Academy)	Placement	0	26	0	26	0	29	0	31	0	29
Cougar Paws	Placement	24	1	24	1	29	1	33	1	28	1
Cougar Achieve	Placement	8	0	11	0	23	1	27	1	26	1
Cougar Excel	Placement	27	12	38	12	40	12	45	14	46	12
Cougar Middle Years	Placement	9	0	13	0	18	0	21	0	21	1
Merakey	Placement	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	4	0	3
New Story New Cumberland & Harrisburg	Placement	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	16	0	16
The Vista	Placement	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Yellow Breeches	Placement	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3
Total		68	64	86	64	110	68	126	71	121	67
		132	150	178	197	188					

There are 251 Harrisburg School District students attending Dauphin County Technical School (DCTS) for Grades 9-12 in 2022-23. This is an increase of 49 students over the 2021-22 school year, and may be due, in part, to conversations the Superintendent and Receiver had with the Administrative Director of DCTS last spring regarding perceived disproportionality of acceptance of Harrisburg students into DCTS.

Student daily attendance has declined overall in the second quarter by nearly 7% compared with September 2022 data. Only Marshall Math/Science Academy has an attendance rate greater than 90% despite an overall decrease of approximately 4% this quarter. In addition to student attendance, employee attendance continues to be a concern. The Receiver has reminded the Administration and Chief Recovery Officer of the need to move ahead with the taskforce that is required of the Amended Recovery Plan to address both staff and student absenteeism.

Schools/District	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Benjamin Franklin	86.96	86.55	83.6	79.43
Downey	90.5	89.09	85.52	84.42
Foose	89.86	88.20	84.92	79.25
Marshall	88.83	87.46	86.67	80.08
Melrose	92.06	91.06	87.49	83.09
Scott	89.65	90.48	88.32	83.71
Camp Curtin	86.15	86.67	84.2	79.87
Cougar Academy	94.02	92.64	90.44	87.42
Rowland	87.61	87.51	85	82.07
Math/Science	94.54	94.79	92.12	90.64
John Harris	80.26	78.48	79.33	74.99
SciTech	91.9	89.41	89.15	87.51
District	88.07	87.16	85.22	81.47

3. Academic Achievement

Harrisburg School District's most significant struggle continues to be student achievement as measured by state assessments. The District's new Chief Academic Officer, Mrs. Portia Slaughter, presented the results of the 2022 PSSA Reading and Math Exams at the November 29, 2022 School Board Meeting.² Official notification was

² <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:8d6e01ef-6599-36ba-b3ed-6b3e7f969a43>

received in late December 2022 that in addition to John Harris High School, Rowland Academy and Downey Elementary School, two more schools have now been added to the list for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designation: Camp Curtin Academy and Scott Elementary School. Ben Franklin and Foose Elementary Schools are designated Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TSI) buildings. Report cards for each building are now available on the Future Ready PA website.³

The Act 141 Advisory Committee has expressed concern about the metrics delineated in the approved Amended Recovery Plan as they pertain to academic achievement. The annual achievement goals may be unrealistic given the academic setback caused by students of Harrisburg School District being fully remote from March 2020 – August 2021. The Receiver has notified Judge Tully of her intent to submit for consideration a proposed amendment to the academic goals to ensure that they are realistic and attainable.

The Superintendent's and Assistant Superintendent's Objective Performance Standards for 2022-23 include areas of both short and long-term focus. Increases in student achievement are directly impacted by the culture and climate of the schools. Thus, the immediate need is to shift the culture and climate to be better focused on academic rigor and high expectations for all students. Student violent behavior and other serious misconduct, often originating in neighborhoods and filtering into the school setting, is impeding teaching and learning. Students taunting adults, fighting, and smoking marijuana in restrooms is a regular occurrence at the high school level. During this quarter, the Receiver has approved the recommended expulsions of nine (9) students for

³ <https://futurereadypa.org/District/FastFacts?id=027213015118074173022047254151171040237023110022>

various incidents. The Receiver also requested that the current exclusionary process be reviewed. The Harrisburg School District continues to engage the solicitor to serve as the formal hearing officer for student expulsion proceedings, which is costly and time-consuming. A Waiver of Expulsion Hearing Agreement was developed this quarter to be presented as an option to parents in cases where there is no debate regarding a student's behavior and the parent and students agree to waive their right to a formal disciplinary hearing. The use of a waiver will expedite the disciplinary process and produce cost savings for the District.

The District is also looking closely at its alternative education programming to ensure that a continuum of services is available to meet the needs of all students. Currently, Specialized Education Services, Inc. (SESI) is operating the following programs at the Hamilton building: Paws K-5 and Middle Years 6-8 ("therapeutic support" alternative setting), Cougar Achieve 6-12 (Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth), and Cougar Excel 9-12 (for students who are credit deficient and looking to finish their high school education in an alternative setting). [See the *Outplacement Enrollment table on page 6 for the numbers of students in each program.*] While these programs are a tremendous benefit to the Harrisburg School District, the Administration and Receiver share concern that the level of therapeutic support provided is insufficient to address student needs. There is still a need for additional programming for students at the high school level who are regularly walking the halls, not attending classes, and disrupting the learning environment for others. While these students may not be in direct violation of the Student Code of Conduct, their persistent disregard for school rules and norms must be addressed. The District is currently exploring what options exist for such students –

placement in Excel, HVLA, or the creation of another alternative program outside of regular school hours.

At the October 24, 2022 Act 141 internal team meeting, the group discussed Pillar #3 – Student Stability – and the ongoing need for a strategy to address charter school recapture. Safety, culture and climate must be addressed to prevent students from exiting Harrisburg School District. Ms. Sheri Killian, Director of Virtual Learning, has been working with principals, secretaries and school counselors to better understand how to direct parents and students to HVLA when they express desire to leave the District. This year Sylvan Heights Charter School, Premier Charter School and the Capital Area School for the Arts (CASA) have charters that are up for renewal. Dr. Marisol Craig, Assistant Superintendent, is taking the lead on reviewing those applications.

Charter school enrollment is depicted in the chart below. The combined numbers reflect both regular and special education students enrolled in these entities. The most recently created charter school PA Steam Academy, has already exceeded its enrollment cap with plans to continue adding the next grade level annually.

Building	Enrollment Caps	Type of School	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
			Combined	Combined	Combined	Combined	Combined	Combined
ACHIEVEMENT HOUSE		CYBER	2	2	2	2	1	1
AGORA		CYBER	46	46	45	45	44	43
ASPIRA BILINGUAL CYBER CHARTER		CYBER	0	1	1	1	1	0
CASA		BRICK & MORTAR	24	24	24	24	24	24
COMMONWEALTH CHARTER ACADEMY		CYBER	512	512	512	538	552	550
INFINITY		BRICK & MORTAR	9	9	10	10	10	10
INSIGHT PA CYBER		CYBER	41	41	34	37	38	37
PA CYBER		CYBER	74	74	74	76	76	69
PA DISTANCE LEARNING		CYBER	18	18	18	21	21	21
PA LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL		CYBER	1	1	1	1	1	1
PA Steam Academy	120	BRICK & MORTAR	128	128	128	128	128	247
PA VIRTUAL		CYBER	11	11	11	11	10	0
PREMIER	191	BRICK & MORTAR	135	135	135	138	140	141
REACH		CYBER	100	100	100	101	105	101
SYLVAN HEIGHTS	220	BRICK & MORTAR	182	182	180	184	187	0
B & M Subtotal			478	478	477	484	489	422
Cyber Subtotal			805	806	798	833	849	823
GRAND TOTAL			1283	1284	1275	1317	1338	1245

Recognizing that the crisis of student misconduct demands leadership, a community forum was organized for October 18, 2022 at John Harris High School to inform parents and community members as to what the Harrisburg School District is proactively doing to prevent/respond to violence. Community leaders Sheila Dow-Ford and Joyce Davis served as moderators for the community forum which received a great deal of local news coverage. A follow-up community forum was held on December 13, 2022, where Superintendent Eric Turman and the new Director of Safe Schools Wendell Morris discussed their desire to establish a school police force in Harrisburg School District. The Receiver acknowledges that the Administration is frustrated by the slow to absent responsiveness of the local police department to address acts of violence in the schools; however, the problems that exist in the schools are not readily solved simply by on-site policing. The root cause of the behavioral challenges must be addressed. This is a sensitive but necessary topic to approach if change is ever going to occur.

A critical layer of mental health support which was introduced in the District in 2022 is made available via a contracted service with Effective School Solutions. Through this partnership, each school in the Harrisburg School District now has two certified mental health clinicians on site each day to work with the most at-risk students and families by providing tier 3 supports via individual, group and family counseling services. Each clinician is able to service a census of 10 students per caseload. In addition to the therapies provided by the mental health clinicians, the following one-hour training sessions are being offered in English and Spanish to District parents:

- Trauma-Attuned Model
- Fostering Resiliency

- Language of Behaviors
- Destigmatizing Mental Health
- School Avoidance

Additionally, over 200 District students are being seen by Pennsylvania Counseling Services therapists as a tier 2 mental health intervention. Another partnership was established within the Harrisburg School District in the summer of 2022 with LivingWell Institute to provide tier 1 service to both students and staff in need of holistic supports to take care of their body, mind and spirit. LivingWell Institute is not a behavioral health provider but assists schools and families with the process of integration of services. Many of the students within the Harrisburg School District have access to a variety of resources, but these services are often disjointed and not working in tandem to accomplish outcomes. The team at LivingWell is helping to integrate the various providers within the community and school to offer a seamless approach to meeting the social and emotional needs of students and staff. LivingWell has also helped to stand in the gap at both Ben Franklin and Melrose Elementary Schools this quarter by training community mentors to provide support in both buildings daily from 1:45 – 3:45 p.m. This innovative program has helped to break down barriers between school and community, provide teachers with planning and preparation time, and offer mentoring and arts exposure activities to students in Grades 4 and 5 in both schools.

In an effort to increase communication between home and school, Superintendent Turman and the District's Office of Federal Programs developed a new platform to regularly inform parents of school happenings and provide parents an opportunity to engage with the teachers and principals. These quarterly forums are called "Let's Chat,"

and commenced in November 2022. Unfortunately, parent attendance was very low to non-existent in some school buildings. However, the District will continue to offer these opportunities in January 2023 with the hope of seeing increased parent participation.

Superintendent Turman also collaborated with Ms. Amy Rote, President and CEO of Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Capital Region this quarter. Their collective goal is to encourage community members to become school-based mentors for students in the Harrisburg School District. Introductory meetings were held in November 2022, and to date, approximately 30 adults have registered, been screened and properly vetted, obtained clearances, and are in the process of being matched with District students whose parents agree to have their child participate in the mentorship program in the schools. This opportunity is similar to the community-based Big Brothers and Big Sisters mentoring program but will be limited strictly to school hours on site in District buildings.

Continuous efforts to find creative ways to address the concerns for school violence resulted in a meeting held on December 8, 2022 with officials at Temple University Harrisburg, a local post-secondary educational partner. The discussion centered on a program that Temple University is using with Philadelphia schools called CURE VIOLENCE. A follow-up meeting on this topic is scheduled for February 27, 2023.

While the short-term goal of the District is to improve the culture and climate, the long-term focus is on how to better prepare children to be successful when they enter the school system in kindergarten at 5 years of age. The 2022-23 kindergarten class is comprised of 80% of students who have tested below benchmark on readiness skills assessments. To ensure that students are ready to succeed upon entrance into formal

schooling, the District is embarking on various partnerships to enhance its relationships with agencies that promote early learning.

The Receiver and Chief Recovery Officer continue to take an active role in developing relationships with local leaders of early childhood initiatives. Communities Practicing Resilience's subcommittee called "Ready to Enroll" met on October 4, 2022 with United Way, Dauphin County Children & Youth, and Head Start to discuss ways to address trauma of young children. A meeting was held on October 18, 2022 with Randie Yeager of Dauphin County Children & Youth and Kim Istvan and Stephanie McAuliffe of United Way to discuss expansion of the "Ready for School, Ready to Succeed" program. There was discussion about how to build the collective impact by collaborating on a resource mapping exercise. Individuals agree that resources for families do exist, but people are not always knowledgeable about how to access them or at what point intervention should occur with the goal of preventing trauma instead of responding to it.

A meeting was held on November 8, 2022 with Senate Alexander, CEO, and Melissa Doster, Center Director, of the new Catherine Hershey School for Early Learning that broke ground on N. 6th and Muench Streets in the City of Harrisburg. This new Harrisburg-based facility will open in the fall of 2024. The Receiver requested that Harrisburg School District's K-2 teachers be included in professional development opportunities where possible since the Catherine Hershey School is partnering with Lower Dauphin, Derry Township, and Palmyra School Districts to share professional development opportunities at their Hershey site which opens in the fall of 2023.

The other end of the long-term focus is preparing students for life beyond high school. Therefore, Superintendent Turman took a few members of his cabinet to visit

Atlanta, GA in early November 2022. The team visited several schools to learn more about how to structure a career pathways initiative. Their intent is to reintroduce a model at the high school level in the future to ensure that all students are college and/or career-ready upon graduation. Harrisburg School District had the ROAR Academies in place several years ago, but they were eliminated due to budgetary constraints. Superintendent Turman is eager to bring back some academies to better focus students on their futures after graduation. To that end, he is also working with the National Center for College and Career Transition (NC3T) to develop a profile of a graduate for Harrisburg School District. The profile should be completed by the next quarter.

4. Administration and Governance

The annual School Board reorganization meeting occurred the first week of December 2022. Brian Carter was re-elected President. Roslyn Copeland was elected Vice-President. The Receiver appointed Board members to serve as representatives as follows: 1) Dauphin County Technical School Joint Operating Committee – Danielle Robinson and Brian Carter; 2) PSBA Liaison – Danielle Robinson; 3) Act 141 Advisory Committee - Doug Thompson Leader and James Thompson; 4) LERTA Board – Steven Williams; and 5) HACC Delegate – Roslyn Copeland. The Receiver continues to model for the Board how to conduct civil, professional meetings and has encouraged the elected Board to ask questions, participate in discussions, and attend required trainings offered by PSBA.

The District Office exists to support schools and should be organized accordingly. The Superintendent of Schools is the public-facing leader of the District and is responsible to

bring the vision of the District to fruition. Sometimes conflict over vision and authority is apparent and requires a clearly defined lane to avoid questions from employees and community. The pressing issue in the District is the need to get buildings under control. There are numerous new administrators who lack the experience and knowledge to effectively lead a building. The Receiver has been strongly recommending that a principal coach be hired to work with novice administrators. The Administration has opted to create a new job description for a Director of Schools role. This position would work directly with building level leaders to help them further develop, refine and implement both managerial and instructional leadership skills. The Administration intends to interview for this position in February 2023.

With the resignation of Cougar Academy Principal Dr. Bonnie Sypolt in the fall of 2022, Dr. Danielle Curzi, Director of Extended Learning, was asked to oversee Cougar Academy until a new principal was hired. Ms. Jennifer Jenkins was hired as the new principal of Cougar Academy this quarter. Ms. Jenkins most recently worked in the Susquehanna Township School District.

Safety and security of District schools remains a high priority within the Harrisburg School District. Mr. Wendell Morris began his work as the Director of Safe Schools on October 10, 2022. Mr. Morris has been stationed at the John Harris High School campus due to the extreme need for additional safety support there. Mr. Morris directly supervises the Safety Leads at the elementary, middle and high school levels who provide direction to the 40+ safety monitors the District employs to keep students and staff safe in the buildings. Mr. Morris is a 25+ year veteran of the Pennsylvania State Police and has taken a lead role in helping to develop District safety and security plans, implement safety

recommendations derived from the recently conducted Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (RVATs), and provide guidance to the Superintendent regarding ways to enhance safety and security in all District schools. Mr. Morris and Mr. Turman have expressed interest in the District forming its own School Police unit since the District has been unable to secure a School Resource Officer from the City of Harrisburg/Harrisburg Police Bureau. Mr. Turman and Mr. Morris visited Central Dauphin School District to learn more about their police force. The Receiver is not ready to make a decision regarding a District police force at this time. The cost of such a venture may be prohibitive and concern exists among community regarding the potential “school to prison pipeline” that could be created by having a police force present in District schools. Further discussions with local leaders and the elected School Board is needed before a decision is made.

Dr. Susan Sneath, who had been working as the Chief Academic Officer via the contracted services provided to Harrisburg School District through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU), announced her retirement effective February 24, 2023. Ms. Portia Slaughter has been serving as the newly appointed Chief Academic Officer as a Harrisburg School District employee over the past few months, but the transition is coming to an early end with Dr. Sneath’s impending retirement. The Administration has recommended that the Office of Academics be restructured effective July 1, 2023, with the end of the MCIU contract. Therefore, the Director of Academics roles currently held by Mr. Ed Gooch and Mrs. Jackie Castleman will be eliminated and replaced with two newly created Harrisburg School District administrative positions – Director of Schools and Director of Early Childhood. The need for both positions was explained in previous sections of this report.

This quarter the Receiver also engaged the services of Robert Copeland LLC and Devopar LLC. Mr. Robert Copeland is supporting the Office of the Superintendent with executive coaching while Mr. Chris Celmer is supporting the Office of the Receiver with various recovery plan initiatives that are underway since Dr. Travis Waters, Chief Recovery Officer, is working part-time in Harrisburg School District. Mr. Celmer retired from MCIU on December 31, 2022, and is Vice-President of Devopar LLC. Since Mr. Celmer has played a crucial role in getting Harrisburg School District on solid footing the past three years, it makes sense to have him continue to support the efforts during this time when Dr. Waters is unavailable to serve as CRO in a full-time capacity. The current contract with Devopar runs through August 31, 2023.

Public Financial Management (PFM) continues to meet with the Receiver and CRO on a biweekly basis to lend technical assistance and support for the Amended Recovery Plan. To support the goal of the elected School Board of Directors to effectively meet the criteria to exit receivership by June 17, 2025, PFM developed an exit framework for the Administration to utilize.⁴ Monthly Act 141 internal meetings were held this quarter on October 24 and December 5, 2022 to develop the criteria. The Receiver suggested that the Act 141 Advisory Committee also engage in this same exercise as the advisory body for the Amended Recovery Plan. The committee met this quarter on October 13⁵, November 12⁶ and December 8, 2022⁷ and continues to discuss how the District should align the exit framework goals to the Comprehensive Plan which is also currently

⁴ [HSD Exit Framework 9.1.22 FINAL \(002\).pdf](#)

⁵ See page 27 for meeting minutes

⁶ See page 28 for meeting minutes

⁷ See page 30 for meeting minutes

underway. Prioritization of goals is critical to ensuring that the District remains focused on the areas necessary to demonstrate that it is ready to be back under local control in a few years.

5. Operations

This quarter the District closed out the Severance Field synthetic turf and track replacement project that occurred over the summer of 2022. Since the project did not meet the intended substantial completion date, Mr. John Reedy, Chief Operations Administrator for Harrisburg School District, successfully obtained cost reductions to account for the completion delay.

The Receiver and Superintendent Turman continue to meet weekly with Ms. Beth Trapani of Trapani Communications, a contracted service provider who has been working with Harrisburg School District the past few years on crisis communications. The Receiver believes it is imperative that the District showcase more of the positive happenings within the District with parents and staff as priority audiences. There is also a need for a protocol for building level administrators to rely upon when a crisis occurs. A quarterly District newsletter is needed to promote positive events happening throughout the District. While the District has a full-time public relations coordinator, there is a need to have her efforts more focused. She is often pulled into various projects which detract from her ability to get positive messaging out regularly.

The Receiver approved a contract with PASPA to conduct an audit of the processes and operations of the District's Office of Human Resources to evaluate areas to improve efficiency and effectiveness of services.

An agreement with Fidevia, LLC was developed to provide construction management services for the Steele Elementary School renovation project. Selective demolition of portions of the Steele building began this quarter. The project will go out for bid in January 2023.

This quarter a total of 565 Well Air units were installed in District schools. These units are designed to improve air quality and reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses. The District purchased these units using available ESSER funds.

The District is working with food service consultant Carol Gilbert to develop the Request for Proposal (RFP) for food service. An RFP was also issued this quarter for contracted custodial services as the agreement with Aramark is set to expire in June 2023. The transportation agreement with Krapf is set to auto-renew in January at an increase of 5%. The District has a two-year extended contract with Boyo for special education transportation services.

An important discussion commenced this quarter regarding the need for a centralized procurement process in the Harrisburg School District. The existing process for procuring goods and services needs to be streamlined for efficiency and to better cultivate an awareness of minority/women business enterprises (MBE/WBE). The District has engaged in significant dialogue this quarter regarding a request from some community leaders that a disparity study be conducted. A subcommittee of Board and Administration worked with the Receiver to study this request, and a decision was made to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be issued in February or March 2023.

A Request for Proposal was also discussed this quarter for a parcel of land known as the Joshua Farm. In spring of 2022, the Receiver approved a one-year land lease agreement with Wildheart Ministries to care for this property. There is a long history associated with this property and discussions about its use occurred between former Receiver Dr. Janet Samuels and former Acting Superintendent Chris Celmer prior to the current Receiver being appointed. After the lease agreement was approved in April 2022, some individuals in the community approached Superintendent Turman and some School Board members expressing concern that the opportunity to acquire the Joshua Farm was not made available to all residents of Harrisburg. Therefore, the Receiver has requested that Devopar LLC develop an RFP to be issued in the coming quarter so that all individuals have equal opportunity to compete for the land use. The District is interested in the Joshua Farm being made available to District students for environmental and agricultural lessons.

6. Financial Management

The sale of unused District facilities is a critical piece of the Amended Recovery Plan. The Administration is recommending the sale of the vacant William Penn property. In the fall of 2021, former Receiver Dr. Janet Samuels engaged the services of commercial realtor, Seymour Barget, who brought forward a handful of offers for the William Penn property. However, the decision was made to not accept any of the offers and remove the property from the active market. Discussions about William Penn began anew in 2022, and the Receiver was approached by a local individual who recently met with the mayor to discuss his desire to develop and submit a proposal for the property. That meeting occurred on October 17, 2022, and there has been no further communication from the

individual since then. Meanwhile, the Chief Operations Administrator arranged tours of the William Penn building for the Receiver, Superintendent and elected School Board members. The building is in complete disarray, has been vandalized numerous times, and is costing the District over \$90,000 per year to insure due to the fire hazards. A recommendation will be made to the Receiver in the coming months regarding the status of this property.

The District has approximately \$100 million in capital needs and is awaiting the final draft of the feasibility study that was recently conducted by architect of record Crabtree Rohrbaugh & Associates.

Cash flow projection sheets⁸ are regularly submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education by Dr. Marcia Stokes, Chief Financial Officer. A zero-based budgeting approach has been enacted for the development of the 2023-24 budget. With the Act 1 Index at 6.2%, the Administration has recommended to the Receiver to adopt the resolution at the January 2023 Board meeting.

Under the direction of Chief Financial Officer, Dr. Marcia Stokes, Ms. Nicole Fry, Business Administrator, has been updating the Student Activities Handbook and cleaning up the position control system for payroll/benefits. In the process of scrubbing data, it was determined that numerous employees were still being carried on District benefits after resigning from the District. Dr. Stokes and Ms. Zula, Director of Human Resources, have

⁸ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:5d34c1d9-f144-3cfd-ae0f-263d0a323e3d>

developed a written procedure for staff to implement to ensure that benefits are terminated when employees resign from the District.

Newly hired ESSER Administrator, Dr. Christy Thompson, has been working with each building principal to ensure that ESSER funds are being expended per the approved budget. She has developed monitoring and tracking templates for each vendor to submit monthly to the District to comply with the reporting requirements of the grants.

BBD, LLP, completed its audit of the 2021-22 financial statements. The Receiver is pleased to report that there were no audit findings due to the efforts of Dr. Stokes and the business office team who have worked hard to put proper accounting procedures in place. A public presentation of the audit is scheduled for the January 24, 2023 School Board/Receiver General Business Meeting.

Public Financial Management (PFM) has provided a draft debt management policy for the District's review, and Dr. Stokes has recommended a few minor revisions. The policy will be taken to the February 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting of the School Board for first reading.

The Administration has been exploring a potential partnership with Lincoln Benefits Trust to manage the health care benefits for the Harrisburg School District. The District explored this opportunity years ago; however, at the time, the Trust did not have faith in the solvency of the Harrisburg School District. That faith has been restored to the extent that the Trust is willing to entertain the District possibly joining the consortium.

The Receiver authorized the PSBA Salary Study for the Act 93 group this quarter. Dr. Britta Barrickman of PSBA studied the salaries of Act 93 employees in comparison to the

market surrounding the District. Recommendations have been made to the Administration and Receiver for further consideration in the coming quarter in order to remain competitive with other school districts who are competing for the same candidates.

7. Revenue

The Receiver was approached by Dauphin County in early November 2022 to consider waiving the delinquent taxes on a few blighted properties to be sold to Integrity First Homebuyers. These properties are currently not receiving any real estate taxes, so having this buyer realize the benefit of preliminary abatement will restore the properties so they can be returned to the tax rolls.

This quarter the District received feedback from the ESSER pilot conducted by Deloitte last fall and has put into place various reporting structures as a result of the study.

The surplus from Dauphin County Technical School for the 2021-22 school year was \$180,000. These funds were returned to the Harrisburg School District during this quarter.

Mr. Celmer and Dr. Stokes have been compiling a list of properties within the boundaries of the Harrisburg School District for which a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement could be established. The goal during the next quarter is to arrange meetings with those institutions to discuss a PILOT arrangement.

A recent audit of Medical Access billing was performed for the 2017-18 school year. It was determined that the previous administration erred significantly in its billing procedures, and Harrisburg School District may have had to pay back nearly \$800,000 in revenue. Due to the efforts of Dr. Stokes and the support of the contracted service provider at Capital Area Intermediate Unit, that amount has been reduced to \$8,000. Yet,

this points to the need for a qualified Access Coordinator to be hired by Harrisburg School District to ensure that billing is being done correctly and timely. With over 1,300 IEPs, there is an opportunity to generate millions of dollars in additional revenue for the District. This has been a missed opportunity in Harrisburg School District in recent years that cannot continue. The Receiver has directed the Administration to invest in a qualified applicant who is capable of performing the duties correctly.

The District accepted an offer on the Woodward property this quarter in the amount of \$240,000. The District continues to explore options for the Wayne Avenue property which is a property of interest for a neighboring school district.

8. Workforce

The continued struggle of the human capital crisis reached new proportions this quarter at Ben Franklin and Melrose Elementary Schools. Superintendent Turman met with parents at Ben Franklin to discuss the potential reduction from full day to half day kindergarten due to the lack of teachers. Substitute teacher pay rate has been increased to \$350/day. The lack of certified teachers has exacerbated student misbehaviors. As of December 31, 2022, there are over 100 vacancies in the Harrisburg School District (which includes both teachers and support staff personnel).

This quarter the Receiver has had meetings with AFSCME representatives to address complaints made by a member who feels he is being unfairly treated by the Administration.

Contract negotiations with the Harrisburg Education Association are set to commence in January 2023. The District and the Association would like to see a multi-year contract

if authorization to enter into an extended agreement is received from the judge of the Court of Common Pleas since a multi-year agreement could, in theory, extend beyond the timeframe of the current receivership.

Harrisburg School District

Act 141 Advisory Committee Meeting

October 13, 2022

5:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Michele Rolko, Melanie Cook, Eric Turman, Doug Thompson Leader, James Thompson, Beth Light, Dr. Andria Saia, Eugene Spells, Dr. Travis Waters, Dr. Lori Suski

Dr. Suski announced that Latoya Elby-Newman would be joining the committee as a representative of AFSCME. Ms. Newman was not present at the meeting.

Dr. Suski distributed and reviewed minutes from the September 8th Act 141 Advisory Committee meeting and highlighted the possible outcomes, strategies, and obstacles for Pillar #1 – Academic Achievement – that had been suggested by the committee.

Dr. Suski shared that 2022 PSSA and Keystone Exam data had been released. She shared the composite percentages of proficient/advanced for MMSA since that was a building that was recommended in the previous meeting as a model. A discussion ensued regarding potential reasons for the deficient performance in Mathematics District-wide:

- Focus on ELA for professional development and not enough on Math
- Parents' lack of familiarity with Common Core Math
- Teachers not assigning consistent homework for Math
- Teachers not understanding concepts they are teaching in Math
- Curriculum alignment to the state tests?
- Not using available resources

The committee also discussed teachers' ability to engage parents as being problematic; students suffering from test fatigue; teachers doing their own lessons and not following approved curriculum; buy-in from teachers; focus on PVAAS (growth) data vs. achievement.

Dr. Saia recommended that the committee determine an "access point" otherwise the conversation becomes too overwhelming.

Dr. Suski informed the committee that Mass Insight would be returning to HBGSD to conduct a follow-up diagnostic to the original diagnostic performed in early 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 10 – 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Administration Building Board Room

Harrisburg School District

Act 141 Advisory Committee Meeting

November 10, 2022

5:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Doug Thompson Leader, Melanie Cook, Dr. Tamara Willis, Tim Wendling, Beth Light, Jim Thompson, Chris Celmer, Eric Turman, Dr. Marisol Craig, Adam Nornhold, Dr. Travis Waters, Dr. Lori Suski

Minutes from the October 13, 2022, meeting were distributed along with copies of an email from Jim Thompson providing feedback on the recent quarterly report by the Receiver.

Dr. Waters reviewed the priorities for Pillar #1 – Academic Achievement – from the Exit Framework draft which were determined by the internal Act 141 team. Dr. Waters divided the Advisory Committee members into pairs and asked that each pair discuss one of the four (4) desired outcomes for Pillar #1 and recommend additions/deletions to the draft language provided.

The full group reconvened and began discussion of Desired Outcome #3. It was recommended that this becomes Outcome #1 due to its importance prior to students entering school. Additional language was recommended (in red).

Desired Outcome 3: Improved student readiness and early learning programs	
<p>Obstacles: Many students are below grade level before entering the District making it more difficult to catch up; limited resources and class size of existing pre-k programs; identify kids early; what daycare did they attend? (Quality of program is important.) Human capital is the obstacle. Need dual immersion.</p>	<p>Key Strategies: collaborate with early childhood programs, create school readiness programs with parents, implement the collective impact model – this is the access point for the District – shared agenda; shared goals and objectives; then assign roles; HBGSD is the backbone; partner with CHS to move students on a parallel track; hiring person to focus on Pre-K; existing daycares must be part of discussions; think outside the box – develop materials for parents to do with children prior to K-5; assess children prior to entrance into school on a monthly basis; train HBGSD students to work with the pre-school children; HBGSD needs to be part of MHS pipeline; sharing milestones and resources with parents; Why doesn't Harrisburg work</p>

with Nurse Family Partnership program - Federally funded program; Dauphin County Poverty Forum; bring in Head Start at ages 1 & 2 then have more Pre-K 3-4 classes; mutually reinforcing activities; constant communication; we could run Head Start through the District; Can we run two daycares in our District?

Measuring Progress: What does improving student readiness look like at HSD? How would we measure it? Assessments of Pre-K students using Kindergarten assessments (KBIT). What do we want an incoming profile of a kindergartner to look like? Should use paper and pencil as kids are not technologically proficient; P3 initiative – partner with United Way. We have two liaisons. Aligning assessments. Give daycares criteria for readiness. All students reading on grade level by Grade 3.

Dr. Waters indicated that the group would continue conversation regarding the other three (3) priorities at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2022, from 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Administration Building Board Room.

Harrisburg School District

Act 141 Advisory Committee Meeting

December 8, 2022

5:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Doug Thompson Leader, Melanie Cook, Dr. Andria Saia, Beth Light, Eric Turman (via Zoom), Dr. Marisol Craig, Dr. Sieta Achampong, Eugene Spells, Michele Rolko, Adam Nornhold, Dr. Travis Waters, Dr. Lori Suski

Minutes from the November 10, 2022, meeting were distributed.

Dr. Waters reviewed the priorities for Pillar #2 – Academic Achievement – from the Exit Framework draft which were determined by the internal Act 141 team. Dr. Waters asked Ms. Light to share the discussion her pair had at the previous meeting.

Additional language was recommended (in red).

Desired Outcome 3: Improved student readiness and early learning programs	
<p>Obstacles: Many students are below grade level before entering the District making it more difficult to catch up; limited resources and class size of existing pre-k programs; identify kids early; what daycare did they attend? (Quality of program is important.) Human capital is the obstacle. Need dual immersion.</p>	<p>Key Strategies: collaborate with early childhood programs, create school readiness programs with parents, implement the collective impact model – this is the access point for the District – shared agenda; shared goals and objectives; then assign roles; HBGSD is the backbone; partner with CHS to move students on a parallel track; hiring person to focus on Pre-K; existing daycares must be part of discussions; think outside the box – develop materials for parents to do with children prior to K-5; assess children prior to entrance into school on a monthly basis; train HBGSD students to work with the pre-school children; HBGSD needs to be part of MHS pipeline; sharing milestones and resources with parents; Why doesn't Harrisburg work with Nurse Family Partnership program - Federally funded program; Dauphin County Poverty Forum; bring in Head Start at ages 1 & 2 then have more Pre-K 3-4 classes; mutually reinforcing activities; constant communication; we could run Head Start</p>

through the District; Can we run two daycares in our District?

Measuring Progress: What does improving student readiness look like at HSD? How would we measure it? Assessments of Pre-K students using Kindergarten assessments (KBIT). What do we want an incoming profile of a kindergartner to look like? Should use paper and pencil as kids are not technologically proficient; P3 initiative – partner with United Way. We have two liaisons. Aligning assessments. Give daycares criteria for readiness. All students reading on grade level by Grade 3.

Dr. Waters indicated that the group would continue conversation at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 12, 2023, from 5:00-6:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Administration Building Board Room.