

**The Duquesne City School District  
300 Kennedy Avenue  
Duquesne, PA 15110**

**Recovery Plan  
Quarterly Progress Report**

**July 14, 2021**

***Purpose***

This report updates progress on the Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan, which was issued on February 11, 2013 and implemented on April 2, 2013. Section 672-A(b)(2) of the Public School Code of Pennsylvania requires this report. The period covered is the Fourth Quarter of fiscal year 2020-2021 – April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. The previous quarterly progress report in the series is dated April 23, 2021.

***Executive Summary***

Several highlights from the Fourth Quarter of the 2020-2021 school year follow:

- Chief Recovery Officer Dr. William H. Kerr was appointed to the Receiver position by the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, effective April 1, 2021, as recommended by Noe Ortega, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education.
- Dr. Sue A. Mariani has successfully completed all educational program requirements and has earned her doctorate degree from California University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Mariani also recently graduated from the National Superintendents Institute, sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators.
- Recovery Plan implementation continues as amended.
- The Duquesne City School District (DCSD) continues to operate pre-kindergarten through sixth grade at the Duquesne Elementary School (DES). However, the school year started with online instruction due to the pandemic. In-person instruction began on October 26, with approximately 70% of the students in attendance. Reports of positive COVID cases prompted the return to full online instruction on December 14, with in-person instruction commencing again on January 4 and continued through March. Due to several employee cases of COVID positive testing, virtual learning resumed March 25 to April 14. In-person instruction was instituted April 16 through June 4.
- Operation of DES as a “turnaround school” is planned for the foreseeable future.
- Student enrollment at DES on June 4 was 360, reflecting the continued impact of the pandemic. Elementary ELL students were reported to number 44. **See page 3.**
- Efforts continue to improve curriculum and instruction at DES. Details of these efforts are outlined in the section of this report marked *Education*. **See page 3.**
- Current secondary enrollment of Duquesne resident students at West Mifflin and East Allegheny is 335. **See page 13.**

- Annual tuition to be paid by Duquesne for students attending schools elsewhere in 2020 – 2021 is now projected to be \$9,614,585. **See page 13.**
- Current charter school enrollment in Kindergarten through grade 12 is 214. **See page 14.**
- Continued efforts are being made to bring students back to Duquesne from charter schools. Much of this effort is currently via social media due to the restrictions brought about by the pandemic. However, moving forward, the recruitment effort by the Administration will expand through a new Marketing Recruitment and Strategy Plan for 2021 – 2022.
- There were no unpaid or contested invoices or debt service obligations during the quarter, and all payroll, benefit expenditures, and tuition payments were made in a timely manner.
- The DCSD partnership continues with the University of Virginia, supported by the PA Department of Education and designed to promote school turnaround. The District will be participating in the next chapter of the University of Virginia (UVA) Partners in Educational Leadership Partnership program, Accelerate. This component will provide professional development to sustain progress and to continue incorporating the 90 day plans for focused “turnaround school” principles.
- The Fourth Amendment to the Recovery Plan was provisionally approved by PDE on November 12, followed by approval by Senior Judge Judith Friedman from the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas on Monday, November 16. The Fourth Amendment is designed to move the District into the future. The District awaits final approval from PDE for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Reconfiguration Plan, noting that notification from the School Services Division is anticipated in July 2021. Judge Alan Hertzberg, successor to Judge Friedman, was updated on the Reconfiguration Plan.
- The ESCO/GESA project work, under the auspices of the McClure Group, began in May and continues through the summer 2021. The Superintendent, Receiver, Business Manager, and Facilities Director attend bi-weekly job conferences. Regular written progress reports / updates and photographs are provided for the Administration and elected Board, noting the same information is posted on the DCSD website for public viewing.

### ***Supplemental Information***

Please see the DCSD website, [dukecitysd.org](http://dukecitysd.org), for a historical summary of the school district's severe financial recovery status, its receivership and criteria for exiting recovery status. Quarterly Recovery Plan Progress Reports and the Amendments are also available there.

### ***Implementation Narrative***

Information on Recovery Plan implementation is set forth in the following three sections of this report:

1. Education (page 3)
2. Budget and Finance (page 10)
3. Governance and Administration (page 15)

**Notation:** *The Receiver, Superintendent, and Business Manger have been and continue to be in regular communication through Zoom meetings, emails, and text messages. Concerted efforts for continuous school improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment are an integral part of the Duquesne educational and service delivery system.*

**Education**

Recent historic and current DES enrollments are displayed on the following table.

**Duquesne Elementary School  
 Student Enrollment  
 June 30, 2021**

Grade >	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Sep 2015	24	56	48	50	59	39	36	40	352
Dec 2015	24	59	45	45	62	38	36	40	349
Mar 2016	27	60	46	45	58	39	36	37	348
Jun 2016	26	57	48	43	59	41	37	39	350
Sept 2016	23	50	45	42	35	52	39	34	320
Dec 2016	26	51	43	41	33	54	42	34	324
Mar 2017	29	54	44	40	33	58	42	35	335
Jun 2017	26	53	47	40	34	57	43	36	336
Sept 2017	29	39	47	46	42	35	52	41	331
Dec 2017	29	46	51	49	39	40	56	45	355
Mar 2018	30	48	54	52	42	41	60	46	373
Jun 2018	30	48	56	53	40	42	58	46	373
Sept 2018	32	60	45	44	53	38	37	59	368
Dec 2018	31	58	43	47	52	35	37	60	363
Mar 2019	30	58	43	47	52	35	37	60	363
Jun 2019	30	58	54	53	58	39	42	55	389
Sept 2019	41	62	60	55	55	57	42	47	419
Dec 2019	42	62	58	55	47	55	43	44	406
March 2020	42	65	58	53	51	57	43	48	417
June 2020	42	65	58	53	51	58	43	48	418
Sept 2020	13	54	61	51	47	55	52	42	375
Dec 2020	12	51	54	46	43	53	51	39	349
March 2021	12	51	55	47	43	52	53	40	353
June 2021	13	51	57	48	44	53	53	41	360

The following tabulation reflects current regular education sections and average class size at each grade level.

**Duquesne Elementary School**  
**Regular Education Sections and Class Size**  
**June 30, 2021**

Grade	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Sections	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	22
Average	6	17	19	16	14.6	17.6	17.6	20.5	16

**Attendance**

The following chart reflects two years of attendance, including attendance in the virtual instructional model from March 16, 2020 through October 23, 2020, then both virtual and in-person attendance for October 26 through December 11, and virtual again from December 14 until the holiday break. In-person instruction was restored on January 4, 2021. Due to several employee cases of COVID positive testing, virtual learning was initiated March 25 to April 14. In-person instruction resumed April 16 through June 4.

**Duquesne City School District**  
**Average Student Attendance**  
**2019-20 and 2020-21**

Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent	Avg. % Excused	Avg. % Unexcused	Avg. % Unlawful
2019-20						
Aug	8	92.93	7.07	9.43	10.43	0
Sept	20	93.62	6.38	7.02	9.57	0
Oct	22	91.03	8.97	9.75	12.86	0
Nov	18	90.03	9.97	10.3	14.22	0
Dec	14	90.79	9.21	7.28	14.92	0
Jan	18	92.67	7.33	7.63	9.44	0
Feb	18	93.77	6.23	5.66	8.8	0
March	10	90.59	9.41	7.28	14.54	0
April	online					
May	online					
June	online	87.94	12.06	-	-	-
Totals	180	91.49	8.51	8.04	11.85	0
2020-21	Online					
Aug	9	91.32	8.68	1	26.77	0
Sept	21	88	12	1.61	34.76	0
Oct	*22	89.58	10.42	1.63	30.59	0
Nov	*21	87.05	12.95	5.8	28.52	0
Dec	*20	87.77	12.23	2.07	26.55	0
Jan	*21	90.72	9.28	3.76	22.04	0
Feb	*20	91.17	8.83	3.45	23.39	0

Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent	Avg. % Excused	Avg. % Unexcused	Avg. % Unlawful
March	*23	90.48	9.52	2.97	25.86	0
April	*22	87.24	12.76	5.88	29.59	0
May	21	87.55	12.45	4.9	32.33	0
June	3	87.96	12.04	0	33	0
Totals	207	90.41	9.59	5.18	22.63	0

\*- Partial online instruction

The Duquesne City School District faculty, with the support of the Administration, continues to ensure that each and every student is accounted for during both in-person and virtual instruction. Students who report connectivity issues are assisted by members of the administrative team to resolve those issues.

### Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Technology

#### *Curricular Changes 2020-2021 School Year, Q4*

Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and teachers are continuing to use the ARC Core reading program that was implemented in 2019 - 2020. ARC offers digital components to assist in virtual and remote learning and supports student literacy instruction with online reading materials at each student's instructional level. The program offers our teachers cultivated classroom libraries, thematic inquiry units, and teacher-led student conferencing to accelerate student growth and academic performance. Materials can be implemented digitally as well so that students do not experience a break in instruction if school is needed to be remote. The following table shares data of reading proficiency levels for our Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students as of June 2021. These numbers obviously reflect the learning loss due to COVID and the student closure in the 19-20 school year.

Kindergarten through Third Grade Reading Proficiency Percentages

Grade Level	Emergency	At Risk	Proficient
Kindergarten	12%	40%	48%
First Grade	40%	21%	39%
Second Grade	43%	16%	41%
Third Grade	21%	11%	68%

As a whole, there was reading growth made by students despite the current proficiency levels. Below is a table of proficiency data from October 2020 to June 2021. As indicated, building wide, there were increases in the number of students' proficiency and reading at grade level.

Kindergarten through Third Grade Reading Proficiency Comparison

Grade Level	Emergency	At Risk	Proficient
October 2020	34%	35%	31%
June 2021	29%	23%	48%

Students in grades 4-6 used iLit for their reading instruction and took the GRADE assessment for their end of the year benchmark. The following table shares data of reading proficiency levels for our 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students as of June 2021. These numbers obviously reflect the learning loss due to COVID and the school closure in the 19-20 school year. Due to some students still being remote or out of school due to COVID concerns, not all students completed the end of the year benchmark assessment.

**Grades 4 -6 Reading Proficiency by Percentage**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Below Level</b>	<b>On Level</b>	<b>Above Level</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade (45 students tested)	78%	8%	14%
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade (34 students tested)	65%	9%	26%
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade (35 students tested)	68%	9%	23%

All grades K-6 used READY math for core math instruction as well as the iREADY math program for math enrichment and remediation. This platform can be accessed in school or remotely so that students have continual access to math instruction and learning. The following table shares data of math proficiency levels for our Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students as of June 2021 as measured on their end of the year diagnostic assessment. These numbers obviously reflect the learning loss due to COVID and the school closure in the 19-20 school year.

**READY Math End of Year Diagnostic Assessment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>On Grade Level (Tier 1)</b>	<b>One Grade Level Below (Tier 2)</b>	<b>Two Grade Levels Below (Tier 3)</b>
Kindergarten	51%	49%	
First Grade	26%	58%	18%
Second Grade	15%	53%	32%
Third Grade	9%	50%	41%
Fourth Grade	15%	34%	51%
Fifth Grade	23%	28%	49%
Sixth Grade	30%	12%	58%

As a whole, there was math growth made by students despite the current proficiency levels. Below is a table of proficiency data from September 2020 to June 2021. As indicated, building wide, there was an increase in the number of students' proficient and performing at grade level.

**READY Math Proficiency Assessment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>On Grade Level (Tier 1)</b>	<b>One Grade Level Below (Tier 2)</b>	<b>Two Grade Levels Below (Tier 3)</b>
October 2020	21%	44%	35%
June 2021	26%	39%	35%

***Professional Development 2020-2021 School Year, Q4***

Professional development (PD) for the staff of Duquesne City School District has continued to occur in multiple content areas during morning professional development time. Topics included PSSA assessment as well as ELA and Math common planning. Prior to school being completed in June, teachers received a professional development session from Curriculum Associates for our iREADY math program. The focus of this session was unpacking the first unit and beginning the new school year off strong. Based on teacher feedback, teachers appreciated the session before the summer break as they can begin planning and organizing lessons throughout the summer.

Communities in Schools SEL completed their Professional Development with the teaching staff in May. They were able to provide the teachers with some practical tools for themselves after a year of the pandemic to address professional development needs. Using ESSER money, the School District is looking to partner with CIS again to provide more intense SEL strategies and tactics for students and staff on a regular basis throughout the new school year.

The Superintendent has been working collaboratively with Clairton and Penn Hills superintendents for a professional development partnership program with Carnegie Learning. Use of ESSER funding will focus on standards alignment, learning how to scaffold for enrichment as well as remediation and best practices of pedagogy to address learning loss due to the pandemic. Duquesne, Clairton and Penn Hills will be focusing on grade 6-8 Math to address the Algebra concepts for the Algebra I Keystone exam. Duquesne and Clairton will partner together for grades K-2 for a Math segment in understanding numbers and number sense to gain a better foundation in math for later years. The professional development sessions will begin in August 2021 before students return to school.

***Special Education***

There were no state visits in the Fourth Quarter.

IEP meetings continue as scheduled.

***Summer Sessions***

The Boys and Girls Club partnership continues. Due to the renovation project this summer, the Club will be operating their summer programming, including one that the School District will partner for summer STEM learning with our regular education students. The School District received a \$10,000 grant from the AIU to provide program transportation for our students. The program started June 14 and will continue until August 13 for 19 students who are enrolled in the program. The School District will be providing Extended School Year programming starting on July 6 through August 6, Monday - Thursday.

### ***Student Services***

The current numbers of students referred to IST / DSAP April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021 are as follows:

IST – April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021

- Total student referred = 5
- Cases closed = 21
- Cases currently Active = 25

Yearly IST – cumulative 2020-21 school year

- Total number of students referred = 201
- Total number of closed student cases = 176
- Total current number of active student cases = 25

DSAP – cumulative 2020-21 school year

- Total students referred = 17
- Cases closed = 14
- Cases currently active = 3

Please note that a portion of the figures above reflect referrals during virtual learning. The Administration believes these figures are somewhat lower than would be expected in brick-and-mortar operations.

In addition, the District continues to collaborate with Eat n’ Park in regard to supporting our students and families with a backpack feeding program that intentionally supports the District’s McKinney-Vento population, in-district foster care population and all families in need of additional support.

The District continues to collaborate with the United Way and Eat n’ Park in regard to supporting our students and families with a backpack feeding program that intentionally supports the District’s McKinney-Vento population, in-district foster care population and all families in need of additional support. Due to the building renovation, food distribution will occur on Tuesdays only beginning in June through August. It includes food distribution at the school lobby and at designated bus stops. The School District received a \$15,000 grant from the “No Kid Hungry” program to provide a bus to transport and distribute food during summer 2021.

### **Other Significant Activities**

Negotiations with the Duquesne Education Support Professionals Association (DESPA) began on January 8 with the obligatory first session. DESPA did not offer a proposal at that time, but submitted their initial proposal on February 17, which was under review by the District. The UniServ Rep agreed to wait on negotiations until after the DEA extended teacher contract was signed. The School District offered a counter proposal recently and met with DESPA on June 18. The DESPA Uniserv representative responded unfavorably to the counterproposal and ended the meeting abruptly. No other negotiation sessions are scheduled at this time; however, it was mutually agreed upon on July 1 to extend the terms and conditions of the current contract, anticipating that negotiation sessions will be eventually scheduled.



A newly formatted and updated Act 93 Administrative and Supervisory Agreement is nearly complete based on “meet and discuss” sessions with Act 93 Group representatives and the Receiver, Superintendent, and Business Manager. There were recommended changes for healthcare insurance options, including employee premium monetary contributions, and fringe benefit adjustments were made for a cost-savings to the School District. The Agreement is under review by the District Solicitor and a final review will be conducted by the Act 93 Group representatives in the near future. Then, it is anticipated that the Receiver will approve the three-year Agreement.

The School District was notified by the Solicitor’s office that additional information is required to meet IRS criteria for final approval of the Duquesne City Education Foundation. Additional information has been sent to the Solicitor. Once the information is compiled, it will be sent immediately to the IRS. Soon after approval is received, the official appointment of nine representatives will take place and the organization will formally begin meeting. This process has been on-going and taking much longer than expected

During the Fourth Quarter, the following Board Policy was approved:

1. Policy 800.2 Electronic Signatures/Records

The Superintendent’s scheduled monthly informational meetings with East Allegheny (EA) and West Mifflin (WM), intended to improve communication surrounding the 7<sup>th</sup> grade transition plan, continued throughout the quarter. EA/WM indicated there will be no furloughs in respective school districts due to the transition of 7th grade students to Duquesne. The meetings took place virtually on April 26 and May 24. June 28 was cancelled due to conflicting schedules and vacation leaves; however, a written update was sent by Duquesne via email to East Allegheny and West Mifflin. Minutes of each meeting were distributed to the respective school districts and to PDE.

The Superintendent, Receiver, Business Manager, Duquesne administrators, and parent/elected School Directors participated in the April 6 and June 22 Education Advisory Council meetings. At the June 22 meeting, the School District provided a Reconfiguration update and West Mifflin and East Allegheny School Districts offered programmatic updates. Ms. Danielle Mariano provided updates regarding the American Rescue Plan ESSERS III.

A Resolution, advocating a change in the established state tuition for students attending EA and WM, the Act 141, 24 P.S. Education § 16-1607 (b) (4) formula, which brings attention to the increasing costs and seriousness of the negative financial effect of student tuition expenditures paid for Duquesne students, was approved at the March RBM and was distributed to the legislators representing Duquesne City School District. A follow-up letter regarding the topic, as a call for action, will be sent to the legislators in July and a copy will be provided to PDE.

**Settlements and other personnel actions**

There were no settlements entered into during the Fourth Quarter.

## **Budget and Finance**

The implementation of the 2020–2021 General Fund Budget continued through the Fourth Quarter. There have been no unpaid or contested invoices or debt service obligations during the quarter. Furthermore, all payroll, benefit expenditures and tuition payments have been made on time.

During the May and June RBM sessions, the Business Manager presented the respective preliminary and final 2021-2022 General Fund Budget of \$21,260,252. At the June 15 RBM, the Elected Board approved the Tax Levy Resolution with no increase in the tax levy of 17.5 mils on a vote of 5 ayes and 2 abstentions. The School District is taking a conservative approach with the new budget, anticipating that the School District will receive level funding for regular and special education; however, use of the fund balance will be necessary to continue 2021-2022 educational programs, services, and activities. A primary goal is to increase the fund balance and reduce a deficit of nearly \$2.5M.

During RBM sessions, the Superintendent has addressed Stakeholder Outreach Engagement / Consultation regarding the use of ESSER funds. The Re-opening Plan of School Committee, composed of key school and community stakeholders, serves as the ESSER Advisory Committee and has been meeting regularly to seek input and feedback for effectively addressing the educational, financial, and operation needs of the School District.

In addition to previously awarded CARES Act grants of \$496,700 (ESSER, net of nonpublic share) and \$151,690 (PCCD), the District expects to receive approximately \$2,381,000 in additional funds through “ESSER II” as a result of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA Act) passed in December of 2020 and approximately \$4,822,000 via “ESSER III” authorized under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP Act) of 2021. These funds will be implemented over a multi-year period through 2024 to maintain existing educational service levels, provide resources to ensure the health and safety of staff, and to address learning loss as a result of the pandemic.

On June 30, Governor Tom Wolf signed the 2021-2022 State Budget which will directly benefit the Duquesne City School District. The Level-Up funding initiative will provide a \$100 million equity supplement, shared among Pennsylvania's 100 poorest school districts in addition to the state's basic education subsidy for all districts. For Duquesne, the Level-Up funding equates to \$249,909 and the funds will be applied conservatively to meet the financial challenges of the School District based on transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility now and in the future.

The Receiver, Superintendent, and Business Manager have been participating in meetings with PFM to review a new 5-year financial projections of budget revenues and expenditures, debt service, and other associated aspects. Follow-up sessions were held on March 24 and April 2; now that the 2021-2022 General Fund Budget has been adopted, another meeting date with PFM will be scheduled for July.

On January 1, 2021, the District implemented Oracle business software in partnership with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. The second transitional phase from fiscal year 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 was smooth and seamless. The Oracle software will improve the overall efficiency and cost-effectiveness of Business Office operations.

The following fund balance analysis is based on audited year-end results for 2019–2020. Due to cost saving measures and grant revenues from federal stimulus packages, the 2020–2021 budgeted deficit of nearly \$2.5 million is expected to shrink but not be eliminated. The budgeted deficit would result in a June 30, 2021 fund balance of approximately \$66,000. An updated projection will be provided in the October 2021 report, and final audited results will be available in the January 2022 report.

**Duquesne City School District  
 General Fund  
 Balance Analysis  
 June 30, 2021**

Non-spendable		
Prepays	\$242,778	
Other	0	
Total non-spendable		\$242,778
Restricted		0
Committed		0
Assigned for extraordinary educational needs	\$1,000,000	
Assigned for increases in PSERS contributions	305,000	
Assigned for increases in health benefit expense	700,000	
Assigned for capital improvements	250,000	
Total Assigned		2,255,000
Unassigned		39,966
Total fund balance as of June 30, 2020 (audited)		2,537,744
Surplus (deficit) budgeted for the 2020-2021 budget		(2,471,568)
Projected fund balance as of June 30, 2021		\$66,176

***Bonds and Notes Payable***

A summary of bonds and notes payable is shown on the following table. Due to the restructuring of existing debt and the issuance of new debt, this table has been updated. While outstanding debt has increased, net debt service expense for the 2020-21 school year remains relatively unchanged (0.4% increase, net of reimbursements) and net debt service expense for the 2021-22 school year was reduced by \$288,049 (25.3%) which will assist the School District’s cash flow in the near-term future.

**Bonds and Notes  
 Payable  
 June 30, 2021**

Fiscal Year Ending <i>June 30</i>	Bonds Payable	Notes Payable	Total Bonds and Notes Payable
2012*	\$14,124,167	0	\$14,124,167
2013*	13,173,333	0	13,173,333
2014*	9,272,501	\$1,000,000	10,272,501
2015*	6,616,667	2,335,000	8,951,667

Fiscal Year Ending <i>June 30</i>	Bonds Payable	Notes Payable	Total Bonds and Notes Payable
2016*	6,110,883	1,500,000	7,610,833
2017*	5,590,000	1,000,000	6,590,000
2018*	5,054,167	1,000,000	6,054,167
2019*	4,503,333	850,000	5,353,333
2020*	3,122,500	790,000	3,912,500
2021**	11,661,667	730,000	12,391,667
2022**	10,980,834	665,000	11,645,834
2023**	10,935,000	0	10,935,000
2024**	10,319,167	0	10,319,167
2025**	\$9,803,334	0	\$9,803,334

\* Audited financial statements

\*\* Projected

### Personnel

The following chart presents a summary of staffing at the DCSD as of June 30, 2021.

Parentheses indicate changes from the January report. The net change from the June 2020 report is 4.5 fewer employees.

#### Duquesne City School District 2020 - 2021 Staffing Summary June 30, 2021

Professional staff	40	Administrators	4
Instructional support staff	22	Coordinators and supervisors	3
Other support staff (+.5)	13.5	Confidential exempt staff	3

Other significant staffing situations include:

1. Maternity Leave: Kindergarten teacher – returning September, 2021
2. There were no resignations or new hire(s). Special teachers / itinerants were assigned as long-term and / or day-to-day substitutes.
3. Part-time consultants have been utilized to assist in the following areas: special education administration (Keystone Consulting), business administration (James Graham), and communications coordination (Sarah McCluan). The District maintains a three-year contractual agreement with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to provide business management services (Aaron Hassett). The Department of Education approved a Service agreement with Receiver Dr. William H. Kerr beginning April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. Upon the discretion of the Secretary of Education, the Service Agreement may be extended up to an additional three-year period.

**Tuition**

Tuition for students attending school elsewhere continues to be a major financial management challenge for DCSD. Current student tuition enrollments are tabulated below. The chart also compares the list of enrollments to the prior quarter's totals to give some perspective on the trend data.

**Duquesne City School District  
 Tuition Enrollment  
 June 30, 2021**

Receiving Schools	Grades	Students March 31	Students June 30	Projected 2020-2021 Tuition
West Mifflin Area School District	7 – 12	320	318	\$4,362,156
East Allegheny School District	7 – 12	20	17	269,540
Charter schools, regular education	K – 6	110	107	1,567,334
Charter schools, special education	K – 6	31	28	968,836
Charter schools, regular education	7 – 12	54	54	790,991
Charter schools, special education	7 – 12	29	25	865,032
Special education schools	K – 12	24	23	776,414
Other schools	K – 12	1	1	14,282
<b>Totals</b>		<b>589</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>\$9,614,585</b>

Changes in individual tuition enrollments in the categories of receiving schools during the Fourth Quarter of the new year can be seen by comparing enrollments from March 31, 2021 to June 30, 2021 on the above table. Tuition enrollments decreased on the whole, led by charter school enrollments which declined by ten from 224 to 214 students. The District will continue to monitor the Student Tuition Enrollment figures.

It should also be noted that the table above includes Allegheny Intermediate Unit special education classroom tuition, whereas the tuition schedule on the Annual Financial Report does not include these costs.

The annual tuition rate for DCSD students who attend school at West Mifflin Area and East Allegheny is \$14,278.70 for the 2020 - 2021 school year. Tuition was calculated by PDE and communicated to the District, with the District given an opportunity for comment. The tuition rate formula continues to be an ever-growing financial burden for the District due to the fact that it will never remain flat or decrease, but instead will grow by at least the District's Act 1 Index (4.2% in 2020-21, 4.9% in 2021-22, and projected to be 5.4% in 2022-23). In the current year, Duquesne City School District will face an incremental expense increase of \$200,000 due to the tuition rate

alone. By 2023-24, that one-year increase will be \$300,000. Raising taxes to the Act 1 Index fails to cover one-third of that annual increase.

A significant financial challenge facing the District continues to be the rising cost of charter school tuition. Legislative remedies are needed that address accountability to control the quality and cost of these programs. It should be noted that the Receiver, acting as the Board of Education, adopted a Board Resolution on school funding reform for charter schools.

The annual tuition rate originally budgeted for each regular education charter school student for 2020-21 was \$15,466.53 based on actual, calculated rates from the 2019-20 school year. For each special education student who attends a charter school, the original budgeted annual tuition was \$32,705.15. Actual charter school rates for the current year have been calculated at \$14,647.98 and \$34,601.28 for regular education and special education, respectively. The District continues to face an unrepresentative special education calculation due to the nature of the formula assuming a 16% special education population. Because the District’s special education population is appreciably higher, the formula incorrectly divides total special education expenditures by a smaller number of students than are actually enrolled at Duquesne.

Enrollments of DCSD students in charter schools at key months over the last several years are depicted below. Total charter school enrollment is approximately 8% higher than in June of 2020.

**Duquesne City School District  
 Charter School Enrollments  
 June 30, 2021**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>
September	2015	132	54	186
March	2016	129	60	189
June	2016	131	61	192
September	2016	172	58	230
March	2017	145	62	207
June	2017	145	58	203
September	2017	160	52	212
December	2017	162	62	224
March	2018	158	54	212
June	2018	147	51	198
September	2018	152	51	203
December	2018	156	52	208
March	2019	154	56	210
June	2019	135	78	213
September	2019	109	95	204
December	2019	112	98	210
March	2020	128	73	201
June	2020	127	72	199
September	2020	137	87	224
December	2020	141	83	224

<b>Month</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>
March	2021	141	83	224
June	2021	135	79	214

### **Facilities and Property**

The School District ESCO/GESA project is progressing and is on schedule. Maintenance and custodial staff are working in tandem with the construction workers, noting that classrooms are cleared and re-established as ductwork, electrical upgrades, and ceiling tile replacements are completed. Work began on the 9th floor and continues on each descending floor based on a specific schedule, noting all safety and security measures have been implemented. In June, the new boilers arrived for installation and the roofing materials were delivered for the total roof replacement. All renovation work is expected to be completed by August 22, 2021.

### ***Safety***

The Health and Safety Plan implemented at the beginning of the school year remains in place and the 2020-2021 Report was presented in the RBM executive session on June 15.

Mr. Stowell, Mr. Harper, Mr. Little, and Security Officer Coleman have earned Threat Assessment C-Stage 1 & 2 Certifications.

### **Governance and Administration**

Dr. Sue A. Mariani, Chief School Administrator, is supervised by Dr. William H. Kerr, who was appointed Receiver, effective April 1, 2021. Dr. Kerr reports to the Duquesne City Board of School Directors, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas (ACCCP). At PDE, Dr. Kerr reports to Secretary of Education Noe Ortega via Dr. David Volkman, Special Advisor to the Secretary, and Danielle Mariano, Deputy Secretary for Administration. At the ACCCP, Dr. Kerr reports to Judge Alan Hertzberg.

The Duquesne City Board of School Directors, with whom the administration meets in executive session at every Receiver Business Meeting, consists of the following members:

1. Board President DeWayne Tucker
2. Board Vice President Calvin Harris
3. School Director Sonya Gooden
4. School Director Burton Comensky
5. School Director Laura Elmore
6. School Director Rosia Reid
7. School Director Cedric Robertson
8. School Director Maxine Thomas

## 9. School Director Candice Butler

Elected members of the Duquesne City Board of School Directors participated in two virtual Receiver Business Meetings during the Fourth Quarter (May 11 and June 15) and one Special Board Session on June 15 for approval of the Tax Levy Resolution. Participation of elected Board members was May - 7 and June - 7.

### **Next Report**

The next Quarterly Recovery Plan Progress Report will cover the First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022, July 1 through September 30, 2021. That report is expected to be filed in October 2021.

### **Acknowledgements**

*The following individuals contributed to this report:*

- William H. Kerr, Ed.D., Receiver, DCSD
- Sue A. Mariani, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, DCSD
- Aaron Hassett, Business Manager (AIU Service Agreement)
- Jamie Schmidt, Ed.D., Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, DES
- Celeste Rudge, M. Ed., Director of Literacy and Innovation, DES
- Joseph Merhaut, Ed.D., Special Education Consultant (Keystone Consulting)
- Eric Harper, Principal, DES
- George Little, Assistant Principal, DES
- Brian Stowell, Attendance Improvement Coordinator, Act 44 Safety and Security Officer, and Facilities Director, DES
- Crystal Irdi, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Secretary/RTK, DCSD
- James E. Miller III, Technology Coordinator, DES