

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

**Recovery Plan
Quarterly Progress Report**

April 15, 2020

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 third quarter of fiscal year 2019 - 20 – January 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020. The previous quarterly progress report in the series is dated January 15, 2020.

**It is important to note that some of the data for this report was collected on March 13 due to the school closing. This data is treated as end of quarter data for purposes of this report.*

Executive Summary

Several highlights from the third quarter of the fiscal year 2019 - 2020 follow:

- Recovery Plan implementation continued, as amended.
- The Duquesne City School District (DCSD) continues to operate pre-kindergarten through sixth grade at the Duquesne Elementary School (DES).
- Operation of DES is planned for the foreseeable future.
- Student enrollment at DES at the end of March is 417, an increase of 28 students from the June 30 numbers and an increase of 54 from the same date one year ago. This continues to be seen as a favorable trend, perhaps indicative of increased confidence of parents and guardians in DES. See pages 3 and 4.
- Efforts continue to improve curriculum and instruction at DES. See details in the section of this report marked *Education*, which begins on page 3.
- Current secondary enrollment of Duquesne resident students at West Mifflin and East Allegheny is 343, 20 more than one year ago. See page 11.
- Annual tuition to be paid by Duquesne for students attending school elsewhere in 2019 - 2020 is projected to be \$9,321,663 an increase of 9% compared to the October 2019 estimate. This is mostly attributable to a 12.3% rate increase for regular education charter tuition and in part to a greater portion of tuition placements related to special education. See page 11.
- Current charter school enrollments in Kindergarten through grade 12 is 201, nine less than reported in March, 2019. See page 12.
- Continued efforts are being made to bring students back to Duquesne from charter schools.

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- 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 with the University of Virginia, supported by the PA Department of Education and designed to promote school turnaround, is currently being adjusted reflecting the temporary restrictions on travel and social distancing.
- A Fourth Amendment to the Recovery Plan is being prepared and should be submitted for PDE review within the next few weeks. Although mitigated by the current environment, the Fourth Amendment is designed to move the District into the future.

Supplemental Information

Please see the DCSD website, dukecity.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 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. Finance (page 8)
3. Governance and Administration (page 13)

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Education

Historic and current DES enrollments are displayed on the following table. Minor changes in grade enrollments have occurred since previously reported figures for December.

Duquesne Elementary School

Student Enrollment

March 2020

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
Sep 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
Sep 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
Sep 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

Enrollment increased slightly from December, 2019 to March, 2020. Enrollment is up 54 students from the same date last year, an increase of nearly 15%. This is encouraging since we continue to make efforts to bring students back to Duquesne.

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

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Duquesne Elementary School
Regular Education Sections and Class Size
March 31, 2020

Grade	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Sections	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	23
Average	14	16.3	19.3	17.7	17	19	21.5	24	18.1

Attendance

The following chart reflects very small changes from the January 2020 report as data catches up with reporting. In addition, please note that March data collection ends with the school closing on March 13.

Average Student Attendance
2019-20

Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent	Avg. % Excused	Avg. % Unexcused	Avg. % Unlawful
Aug	8	92.93	7.07	9.43	10.43	0
Sep	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
Total	128	91.93	8.07	8.04	11.85	0

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Technology

Curricular Changes 2019-2020 School Year, Q3

Kindergarten through 3rd grade students and teachers continue to use the ARC Core reading program. This reading program offers students literacy instruction and reading materials at their individual instructional level. The curriculum resource offers our teachers cultivated classroom libraries, thematic inquiry units, and teacher-led student conferencing to accelerate student growth and academic performance. As of mid March we have begun to use the platform digitally for virtual learning while the school is shut down.

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Building-wide, grades K-6 continue to use the iREADY benchmark assessment for mathematics. Additionally, grades 3-6 are now using the READY Mathematics program to support the district math curriculum. READY Mathematics allows our teachers to engage students in mathematical thinking while providing powerful teaching tools to strengthen our student's conceptual understanding. These instructional materials allow our teachers to deliver on-level instruction while providing intervention and enrichment to meet the needs of our students. We have made the transition to digital learning with these materials as of mid March to ensure rigorous content continues to be taught during the school closure.

Kindergarten through 6th grade students were taking common assessments until March 13, 2020. These assessments are aligned to our curriculum and the Pennsylvania Instructional Framework. The assessments allow our teachers to unpack standards and plan instruction at a deeper level. Common assessments will continue in the 2020-2021 academic school year.

Professional Development 2019-2020 School Year, Q3

Professional development (PD) for the staff of Duquesne City School District has continued to occur in multiple content areas with a strong focus on unpacking standards and aligning instruction. Professional development continues to take place regularly in the following areas:

PBL/Collaborative Design

Our teachers meet on Tuesday mornings to plan and collaborate implementing the key elements of Project Based Learning into their classrooms. As of March 13, all teachers were working on their second PBL projects for this academic year.

ELA/Success Maker/ARC

The K-3 teachers have continued to receive monthly professional development from American Reading Company (ARC). Our ARC coach implements on site professional development with our teachers in implementing the program and closing the achievement gap in our K-3 students. Monthly sessions took place up to March 13, 2020. The remainder of our professional development has focused on the transition of the materials and resources to a digital platform.

Math/Ready

Math teachers in grades 3-6 received continued on site training from our Curriculum Associates representative for READY Math and the iREADY intervention resource. Professional development was focused around using benchmark data to drive class instruction as well as learning how to increase rigor and math discourse in the classroom. As of late March, teachers received professional development about how to use digital resources and resources provided by Curriculum Associates to teach grade level standards and content.

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UVA

The consultants from UVA conducted a site visit on March 2nd and 3rd. They spoke with the Superintendent, Principal and the School Level Leadership Team. They provided feedback on what they were doing well as well as provided some guidance on how to continue to grow and make sustainable change. The next visit is scheduled during the summer for 3 days, which may become a virtual session depending on the guidelines at the time.

Curricular Practices

The Duquesne City School District continues professional development around the unpacking of PA Core standards and eligible content. Weekly PLC's and grade level data meetings are conducted with all teachers, led by the Director of Curriculum and the Director of Literacy and Innovation, around aligning district resources and classroom instruction to our district curriculum adopted from the Pennsylvania Instructional Framework.

ESL

The district's two ESL teachers have been receiving monthly professional development sessions from the ESL consultant, Deborah Hioutis and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. Topics include best literacy practices for EL students as well as working with general education teachers to adapt instructional material to meet the needs of our EL students.

Special Education

There were no state visits in the last quarter.

IEP meetings continue as scheduled.

Student Services

The current number of students referred to IST and DSAP to date are as follows:

IST

Tier 2:	54
Closed:	30

Tier 2 students include our McKinney-Vento and In-district foster care populations.

DSAP

Active:	6
Closed:	4

All resources and interventions currently allotted to all of our student body this school year have had a very positive effect on the district. The student services procedures and protocols have been broken down into tiers in which academics, behavior, attendance and at-risk behavior are

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all categorized on a situational basis and the proper resources and interventions put in place to yield success. Collaborating programs, such as OASIS tutoring, Communities In Schools, Auberle therapy services and SNAP, as well as the integrated mentoring services within the District have all proven to be beneficial resources for our students in need. The district remains satisfied with the efficiency of the student services processes this year in providing all the proper support to our students, their families, and our community - the district's top priorities.

Other

Significant Activities

Negotiations with the Duquesne Education Association (DEA) began on January 9 with the initial meeting of negotiating teams. The district received the initial proposal from the DEA but plans to present the District's counter-proposal have been interrupted by the coronavirus restrictions. Negotiations will continue as circumstance allows by whatever medium is agreed upon by the parties.

The Receiver, CRO, and Superintendent met with Allegheny Intermediate Unit representatives about establishing a 501 3(c) Education Foundation for DCSD. Research and development will continue for the purpose of generating new revenues that directly impact students based on enhancing relationships with business, education, and community partnerships. Planning will continue even though implementation may be impacted for the foreseeable future.

The addition of the Chief Recovery Officer has provided the opportunity for the Receiver, Chief Recovery Officer and the Superintendent to plan more expansively for the future of the District. Among the areas of attention are the facilities, a fourth amendment to the Recovery Plan, and updating of the District policies. During this quarter, the Receiver, acting as the Board of Education, adopted the following new or revised board policies:

- 117 Homebound Instruction, revised
- 137 Home Education Programs, revised
- 210.3 Medical Marijuana Use in School by Qualifying Students (Adoption, new policy)
- 262 Federal Fiscal Compliance
- 625 Procurement Cards
- 626.3 Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- 626.3 Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attachment (Individual Disclosure Form)

Settlements

There were no settlements entered into during the third quarter.

Several grievances from the DEA are moving through the contractual steps. The DEA and the District have reached agreement that grievances will be put in abeyance until normalcy is achieved.

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Finance

The implementation of the 2019 - 2020 General Fund Budget has continued through the third 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.

Title I and Title II realized a slight increase in funding that was applied to salaries. Pre-K Counts provided an additional \$75,000 in funding to accommodate 9 more slots for this year only. Both budgets required a budget revision.

The following fund balance analysis is based on audited year-end results for 2018 - 2019. The 2018 - 2019 deficit of \$513,204 resulted in a total General Fund Balance of \$4,436,138 as of June 30, 2019. The 2019 – 2020 General Fund Budget projects a deficit of \$1,556,696. This number has become fluid with the impact of the pandemic as yet unknown.

**Duquesne City School District
 General Fund Balance
 Fund Balance Analysis
 June 30, 2019**

Non-spendable		
Prepays	\$199,737	
Other	0	
Total non-spendable		\$199,737
Restricted		0
Committed		
Assigned for extraordinary educational needs	\$1,000,000	
Assigned for increases in PSERS contributions	305,000	
Assigned for increases in health benefit expense	907,463	
Assigned for capital improvements	250,000	
Assigned to refund Series 2013 Bonds when callable	1,420,000	
Total Assigned		3,882,463
Unassigned		353,938
Total fund balance as of June 30, 2019 (audited)		4,436,138
Surplus (deficit) for the 2019-2020 budget		(1,556,696)
Projected fund balance as of June 30, 2020		\$2,879,442

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Bonds and Notes Payable

A summary of bonds and notes payable is shown on the following table. There is no change from the July 2018 projection in the Bonds and Notes Payable chart illustrated below. It is included for convenience in having all of the financial information readily available in this report.

Duquesne City School District
Bonds and Notes Payable
March 31, 2020

Fiscal Year Ending June 30	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
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**	1,706,667	730,000	2,436,667
2022**	250,833	665,000	915,833
2023**	\$215,000	\$ -	\$215,000

* Audited financial statements

** Projected

Personnel

The following chart presents a summary of staffing at the DCSD as of March 31, 2020. Numbers in parentheses indicate changes from the January report.

Duquesne City School District
2019 - 2020 Staffing Summary
March 31, 2020

Professional Staff	41.5	Administrators* (-1)	3
Instructional support staff (+2)	27	Coordinators and supervisors* (+1)	4
Other support staff (- 3)	11.5	Confidential exempt staff	2

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The decision by Dr. Stanley Whiteman to accept another position and leave the District prompted another reorganization of administrative personnel. Rather than replace Dr. Whiteman's position, the superintendent recommended and the Receiver approved moving reading coach Celeste Rudge to Director of Literacy and Innovation and assign some of Dr. Whiteman's duties to another staff member. This change enhances our ELA instruction. The additional instructional support personnel noted in the chart above are direct result of increases in enrollment and the number of new enrollees who are EL students.

One teacher remains on leave as of the end of March. We have accepted the resignation of the elementary secretary and will replace her as soon as practicable. In addition, we intend to employ a full-time maintenance person to replace our previous person who sadly passed away, which will eliminate current expenditures for outside contractors who are performing the work.

* In addition to DCSD staff, part-time consultants have been utilized to assist in the following areas: special education administration (Keystone Consulting), business administration (Aaron Hassett and James Graham), federal programs administration (Nancy Olenik) and communications coordination (Sarah McCluan). Also, the full time Receiver, Paul J. Rach, Ed. D. and the full time Chief Recovery Officer, William H. Kerr, Ed. D., who are compensated by PDE, participated in administration and governance of the DCSD. The district maintained the contractual agreement with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to provide business management services to the district for 2019 – 2020. This plan was implemented July 1, 2018, and includes an annual opt-out provision should either entity find the situation untenable. The agreement was amended in January 2020 by both parties to address reconciliation language for year-end costs incurred by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for any additionally requested business office services.

A major aspect of financial management at DCSD is tuition for students attending school elsewhere. Current tuition enrollments are tabulated below. The chart also compares the list of enrollments to the December 2019 totals to give some perspective on the trend data.

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Duquesne City School District

Tuition Enrollment

March 31, 2020

Receiving Schools	Grades	Students December 31	Students March 31	Projected 2019-2020 Tuition
West Mifflin Area School District	7 – 12	319	319	\$4,371,311
East Allegheny School District	7 – 12	23	24	322,026
Charter schools, regular education	K – 6	88	104	1,608,498
Charter schools, special education	K – 6	24	24	784,924
Charter schools, regular education	7 – 12	76	51	804,260
Charter schools, special education	7 – 12	18	22	719,513
Special education schools	K – 12	18	18	653,984
Other schools	K – 12	4	4	57,147
Totals		570	566	\$9,321,663

Changes in individual tuition enrollments in the categories of receiving school during the third quarter can be seen by comparing enrollments from December 31 to March 31 on the above table. Charter school enrollments decreased by nine students when compared to the previous quarter and when compared to the same quarter in 2019. There was a notable shift in elementary versus secondary totals that the district will continue to monitor and analyze, even though there is no impact on expenditures

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 \$13,703.17 for the 2019 - 2020 school year. Tuition was calculated by PDE and communicated to the district, with the district given an opportunity for comment. An updated enrollment count was not provided by West Mifflin Area School District in advance of this report. Updated enrollment data for East Allegheny School District was available and reflected a slight net change.

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One of the most significant financial challenges facing the district is 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 resolution on school funding reform for charter schools.

The annual tuition rate originally budgeted for each regular education charter school student for 2019 – 20 was \$13,774.19 based on actual, calculated rates in 2018 – 19. For each special education student who attends a charter school, the original budgeted annual tuition was \$32,857.06. The realized regular education rate has been set at \$15,466.53, an increase of 12.3%. This tuition increase will cause incremental charter school expenditures of approximately \$277,500 attributed to rate alone as compared to the 2018 – 19 school year. The realized special education rate has been set at \$32,705.15, a decrease of 0.5%. This tuition decrease will result in savings of approximately \$7,000 attributable to rate as compared to the prior school year.

Enrollments of DCSD students in charter schools at key months over the last several years are depicted below. Total charter school enrollment is at its lowest March level since March of 2016, while total district enrollment is more than 15% higher over that same timeframe. This continues to reflect the district’s efforts in the “Bring Your Kids Home” campaign.

Duquesne City School District
Charter School Enrollments
March 31, 2020

Month	Year	Elementary	Secondary	Total Enrollment
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

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Facilities

During the third quarter the District advertised for and received proposals to complete a feasibility study on the building and the athletic stadium. The purposes of the study are to assess educational capacity at the building, identify significant repairs or replacements in the near future, and assess needed repairs or replacements at the stadium. Proposals were received and are being reviewed with virtual interviews of the respondents scheduled for April 14.

Equipment

No major expenditures were required in the third quarter. Regular, day-to-day maintenance activities continued. The District is currently utilized outside contractors for this work.

Safety

In an action related to the departure of Dr. Whiteman, Brian Stowell was appointed Act 44 Safety and Security Coordinator for the District.

Governance and Administration

The DCSD Superintendent of Schools is Sue A. Moyer. She is supervised by Receiver Paul J. Rach, Ed. D. Both Ms. Moyer and Dr. Rach took their respective offices on March 1, 2018. Chief Recovery Officer William H. Kerr, Ed. D. was appointed October 1, 2019 and reports to the Receiver. Dr. Rach 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. Rach reports to Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera via Executive Deputy Secretary of Education David W. Volkman, D. Ed. And Deputy Secretary of Education for Administration Debbie Reeves. At the ACCCP, Dr. Rach reports to Senior Judge Judith A. Friedman. The Duquesne City Board of School Directors 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

Members of the Duquesne City Board of School Directors participated in three Receiver Business Meetings in the third quarter (January 28, February 25 and a virtual meeting on March 24). Attendance by school directors was five (two medical excuses) and eight (one medical

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excuse) respectively for the regular meetings and three for the virtual meeting. We are taking steps to improve attendance at virtual meetings in the likelihood that this practice will continue in the near future.

Next Report

The next quarterly Recovery Plan Progress Report will cover the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2019 – 2020, April 1 through June 30, 2020. That report is expected to be filed in July.

Acknowledgements

The following individuals contributed to this report.

- Paul J. Rach, Ed.D., Receiver, DCSD
- William H. Kerr, EdD., Chief Recovery Officer, DCSD
- Sue A. Moyer, M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools, DCSD
- Jamie Schmidt, M.Ed., Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, DES
- Celeste Rudge, M. Ed., Director of Literacy and Innovation, DES
- Eric Harper., Principal, DES
- James E. Miller III, Technology Coordinator, DCSD
- Joseph Merhaut, Ed.D., Special Education Consultant (Keystone Consulting)
- James B. Graham, Business Consultant
- Aaron Hasset, Business Manager, contract with AIU
- George Little, Social Services Coordinator, DES
- Brian Stowell , Attendance Improvement Coordinator, Act 44 Safety and Security Officer, DES
- Crystal Irdi, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Secretary, DCSD