

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

**Recovery Plan  
Quarterly Progress Report**

April 15, 2017

***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 2016-2017, i.e. January 1, 2017 through March 31, 2017. The previous quarterly progress report in the series is dated January 15, 2017.

***Executive Summary***

Several highlights of interest from this report follow.

- Recovery Plan implementation has continued through the third quarter.
- The Duquesne City School District (DCSD) continues to operate pre-kindergarten through sixth grade at the Duquesne Elementary School (DES).
- Continued operation of DES is planned for the foreseeable future.
- Efforts to improve curriculum and instruction at DES continue.
- DCSD finances have been stable and are projected to be sustainable.
- Student enrollment at DES increased during the quarter from 324 to 335.
- Total charter school enrollments in kindergarten through grade 12 has decreased from 230 to 207 since the beginning of the school year.
- Annual tuition to be paid by Duquesne for students attending school elsewhere in 2016-2017 is projected to be \$7,317,637, which constitutes 41% of the General Fund Budget.
- The DCSD Financial Statements as of June 30, 2016, published during the quarter, present a favorable financial position.
- The Independent Auditor's Report published with the Financial Statements includes an unqualified auditor's opinion.

***Supplemental Information***

Please see Appendix A on page 9 for a historical summary of the severe financial recovery status and receivership of the DCSD.

Appendix B on page 11 contains an excerpt from the Second Amendment to the Recovery Plan which specifies criteria for the DCSD to exit financial recovery status.

Appendix C on page 12 is an outline summary of DES curriculum, programs and services.

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

***Implementation Narrative***

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

1. Education (page 2)
2. Finance (page 4)
3. Governance and Administration (page 7)

***Education***

Historic and current student enrollments at DES are displayed on the following table. Although enrollment is 13 less than one year ago, enrollment increased by 11 during the third quarter.

Duquesne Elementary School Student Enrollment March 31, 2017									
Grade >	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Jun 2013	-	73	61	53	36	40	37	32	332
Sep 2013	-	72	79	61	49	37	39	33	370
Dec 2013	-	69	74	60	46	38	40	29	356
Mar 2014	-	72	68	65	47	44	37	29	362
Jun 2014	-	74	68	60	42	44	31	35	354
Sep 2014	15	52	68	63	51	36	40	32	357
Dec 2014	15	56	66	65	51	32	38	33	356
Mar 2015	13	55	62	64	51	31	39	34	349
Jun 2015	13	53	59	64	49	30	39	34	341
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

Another look at enrollment is the following tabulation of current general education sections and average class size at each grade.

Duquesne Elementary School Regular Education Sections March 31, 2017									
Grade >	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Sections	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	19
Average	14.5	18.0	14.7	20.0	16.5	19.3	21.0	17.5	17.6

## **Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017**

The Curriculum Steering Committee has continued its work with implementation and oversight of educational initiatives at Duquesne. Under the leadership of Principal Jennifer Jennings, the committee meets regularly to discuss issues of student achievement, curriculum, effective instruction, professional development and administrative support at DES. Other members of the Steering Committee are Superintendent Barbara McDonnell, Assistant Principal Stanley Whiteman, Special Education Consultant Debra Zimarowski, Federal Programs Consultant Nancy Olenik, and DES's four instructional coaches: Michelle Kimmell, Celeste Rudge, Jamie Schmidt and Samantha Utley. Furthermore, Academic Recovery Liaison (ARL) Barbara Mehalov regularly assists the Committee.

The Steering Committee's recent focus has primarily been on three areas. The first has been data analysis with respect to progress monitoring. The second area of attention has been professional development in regard to writing, reading comprehension and multi-step math problems. Finally, the Steering Committee has been and remains involved in planning for the 2017-2018 school year.

Dr. Linda Lane has continued in her role as consultant to Principal Jennifer Jennings on matters of instructional leadership and school culture. Dr. Lane and Mrs. Jennings met on nine occasions during the third quarter: January 5, 18, 23, 27, February 3, 15, March 2, 6 and 28.

Academic Recovery Liaison (ARL) Mrs. Barbara Mehalov visited DES on January 4, 20, February 6, 24, March 9, 16 and 28. Working with DES Principal Mrs. Jennifer Jennings and Assistant Principal Mr. Stanley Whiteman, Mrs. Mehalov regularly contributes to improved administrative practice and remains a valuable resource in regard to curriculum, instruction and assessment. There were no School Improvement Grant (SIG) or Priority School monitoring visits during the third quarter.

On March 16, Mr. Kahleel Desaque, the Director of School Improvement at PDE, and Dr. Glenn Zehner, the Lead Academic Liaison, accompanied Ms. Mehalov on her visit to DES. Toward the end of the visit Mr. Desaque took time to meet with Ms. Barbara McDonnell, Superintendent, Mrs. Nedene Gullen, Business Manager, Dr. Paul Rach, Chief Recovery Officer and Dr. Paul Long, Receiver.

Ms. Cortney Verner led the Cyclical Monitoring for Continuous Improvement (CMCI) for the DCSD, which was conducted from January 23 through January 25. At the conclusion of the monitoring visit, Ms. Verner briefed Special Education Consultant Ms. Debra Zimarowski, DES Principal Mrs. Jennifer Jennings, DES Assistant Principal Mr. Stanley Whiteman, Acting Superintendent Mrs. Nedene Gullen, Chief Recovery Officer Dr. Paul Rach, and Receiver Dr. Paul Long. Although the exit briefing was generally favorable, several action items were identified. To quote Ms. Verner, Duquesne special education has achieved a "huge jump" forward.

There have been no changes in instructional, instructional support and education administrative staffing during the third quarter, which would have an adverse educational effect.

## **Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017**

Benchmarking and diagnostic assessments of student learning in ELA and mathematics are conducted periodically at DES in kindergarten through sixth grade. The first and second of three rounds of benchmark assessments for grades three through six were previously reported. The third round will be conducted in the fourth quarter.

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSAs) and the Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessments (PASAs) will be administered in grades three through six as scheduled by PDE in April and May.

### ***Finance***

The audited Annual Financial Statements as of June 30, 2016 and auditors' opinion were published on February 27, 2017. The local independent auditor, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood LLP, rendered an unqualified ("clean") opinion.

Execution of the 2016-2017 GF Budget has continued during the third quarter. Throughout fiscal year 2016-2017 there have been no unpaid or contested invoices or debt service obligations, with the two exceptions as explained below. Furthermore, all payroll, benefit and tuition payments have been made on time.

The first payment exception is for tuition invoices received from the West Mifflin Area (WMA) School District. These invoices were billed at a tuition rate unilaterally increased by WMA, but were paid at the rate established by PDE. The second exception is tuition invoices for Duquesne resident students who attend the Steel Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE). Per long standing practice, these invoices had been sent to and paid by WMA. However, this school year, WMA unilaterally directed that the invoices be sent to Duquesne. Both of these exceptions are, in part, the subject of lawsuits filed by WMA against the PDE, Secretary Rivera, the DCSD and its Receiver.

The following fund balance analysis is based on audited year-end results for 2015-2016 and the DCSD GF Budget for 2016-2017.

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report**  
**April 15, 2017**

Duquesne City School District General Fund Fund Balance Analysis March 31, 2017		
Non-spendable		
Prepays	\$ 200,000	
Accrued debt service subsidy	118,320	
Total non-spendable		\$ 318,320
Restricted		0
Committed		
Committed for extraordinary educational needs	\$ 1,000,000	
Committed for increases in PSERS contributions	112,020	
Committed for increases in health benefit expense	922,200	
Committed for capital improvements	204,000	
Committed to refund Series 2013 Bonds when callable	1,750,000	
Total committed		3,988,220
Assigned		0
Unassigned		693,461
Fund balance appropriation for the 2016-2017 budget		0
Projected surplus (deficit) for the 2016-2017 budget		0
Total projected fund balance as of June 30, 2017		5,000,001

A key component of the DCSD's financial recovery is reduction long term liabilities, most importantly interest bearing debt. The summary of bonds and notes payable is shown on the following table.

Duquesne City School District Bonds and Notes Payable March 31, 2017			
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*	6,110,833	1,500,000	7,610,833
2017**	\$ 5,590,000	\$1,000,000	\$ 6,590,000

\* Audited financial statements

\*\* Projected

As in almost all school districts, the paramount aspect of finance at Duquesne is management of salary and benefit expenses. The following chart presents a summary of staffing at the DCSD as of March 31. The only changes since the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year were the addition of two institutional support staff members, both personal care assistants.

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

Duquesne City School District 2016-2017 Staffing Summary March 31, 2017			
Professional staff	39	Administrators *	4
Instructional support staff	24	Coordinators and supervisors*	3
Other support staff	10	Confidential exempt staff	2

\* In addition to DCSD staff, part time consultants have been utilized to assist in the following areas: instructional leadership and school culture (Dr. Linda Lane), special education administration (Ms. Debra Zimarowski), business administration (Mr. James Graham), federal programs administration (Ms. Nancy Olenik) and communications coordination (Ms. Sarah McCluan). Additionally, the part time Academic Recovery Liaison (ARL), Mrs. Barbara Mehalov, who is compensated by PDE, provides consultative services for curriculum and instruction administration. Also, the part time Chief Recovery Officer (CRO), Dr. Paul J. Rach, and the full time Receiver, Dr. Paul B. Long, both compensated by PDE, participate in administration and governance of the DCSD.

The current collective bargaining agreement between the DCSD and the Duquesne Education Association (DEA) runs until June 30, 2017. Negotiations for a new contract began on February 21, 2017 and are continuing.

The current collective bargaining agreement between the DCSD and the Duquesne Educational Support Professionals Association (DESPA) runs until June 30, 2018. However, Para-educators and Personal Care Assistants, who had not been members of PESPA, voted to join the bargaining unit. Collective bargaining in regard to their inclusion in the bargaining unit began on February 21, 2017 and is continuing.

A major aspect of financial management at Duquesne is tuition for students attending school elsewhere. Current tuition enrollments are tabulated below.

Duquesne City School District Tuition Enrollments March 31, 2017				
Receiving Schools	Grades	Students December 31	Students March 31	Projected 2016-2017 Tuition
West Mifflin Area School District	7-12	285	274	\$3,143,418
East Allegheny School District	7-12	37	41	470,365
Charter schools, regular education	K-6	132	126	1,649,077
Charter schools, special education	K-6	17	19	608,362
Charter schools, regular education	7-12	43	46	602,044
Charter schools, special education	7-12	18	16	512,305
Special education schools	K-12	13	13	223,571
Other schools	K-12	9	9	108,495
Totals		554	544	\$7,317,637

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

During the third quarter, the total number of tuition students has decreased from 554 to 544. At the beginning of the school year, the number was 551. Charter school enrollment has decreased each quarter since the beginning of the school year from 230 in September, to 210 in December to the current enrollment of 207. Increases in individual tuition enrollment categories can be seen by comparing enrollments from December to March on the above table.

The annual tuition rate for Duquesne students who attend school in West Mifflin Area and East Allegheny is \$11,472.33. PDE regularly adjusts this rate, which applies to both regular education students and special education students.

Charter school tuition rates are normally set and regularly adjusted by PDE. The current annual tuition for each regular education student charter school student is \$13,087.91. For each special education student who attends a charter school, the current annual tuition is \$32,019.05. Both of these rates changed during the third quarter and are expected to remain in effect for the entire school year.

Enrollments of Duquesne students in charter schools at key months over the last several years are depicted below.

Duquesne City School District Charter School Enrollments March 31, 2017		
Month	Year	Enrollment
September	2012	129
January	2013	139
September	2013	146
February	2014	160
September	2014	177
March	2015	186
September	2015	186
March	2016	189
June	2016	192
September	2016	230
January	2017	210
March	2017	207

***Governance and Administration***

Superintendent Barbara E. McDonnell, M.Ed. returned from sabbatical leave for the restoration of health on March 14, and she resumed her duties. Ms. McDonnell is supervised by Chief Recovery Officer Paul J. Rach, Ed.D. Ms. McDonnell and Dr. Rach report to the Receiver, Paul B. Long, Ed.D., who 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. Long reports to Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera via Executive Deputy Secretary of Education David W. Volkman and Deputy Secretary of Education for

## **Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017**

Administration Debbie Reeves. At the ACCCP, Dr. Long reports to Senior Judge Judith L.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 Chambers
4. School Director Burton Comensky
5. School Director Laura Elmore
6. School Director Christine Matsko
7. School Director Rosia Reid
8. School Director Cedric Robertson
9. School Director Theresa Thomas

Members of the Duquesne City Board of School Directors participated in three receiver business meetings in the third quarter. Six school directors attended on January 24, four on February 28 and two on March 28. An executive session was held prior to each of the business meetings. The Receiver Advisory Council met twice during the third quarter, on February 14 and March 14.

### ***Next Report***

The next quarterly Recovery Plan Progress Report will cover the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2016-2017, i.e. April 1 through June 30, 2017. That report will be filed in July.

### ***Acknowledgements***

The following individuals, all affiliated with the Duquesne City School District, contributed to this report.

1. Paul J. Rach, Ed.D., Chief Recovery Officer
2. Nedene M. Gullen, Acting Superintendent and Business Manager
3. Jennifer M. Jennings, M.Ed., Principal, DES
4. Stanley B. Whiteman III, M.Ed., Assistant Principal, DES
5. Debra M. Zimarowski, Special Education Consultant
6. James B. Graham, Business Consultant

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

**Appendix A**

***Recovery Plan Background***

This section is provided for readers who are not familiar with Duquesne's severe financial recovery status, receivership and/or the Recovery Plan.

The Duquesne City School District (DCSD) was declared to be in severe financial recovery status by the Secretary of Education on November 16, 2012. Preparation of the Recovery Plan began at that time. The Plan, completed and delivered on February 11, 2013, set forth measures to be taken to bring the School District out of severe financial recovery status, in accordance with the Public School Code. The Duquesne City Board of School Directors declined to approve the Plan. At that point, the Secretary of Education petitioned the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas (ACCCP) to appoint a receiver and order implementation the Recovery Plan, as prescribed in the Public School Code. The petition was granted on April 2, 2013, which marked the official implementation of the Recovery Plan.

The Recovery Plan addresses both finance and education. The dual goal of the Plan has been, and remains, to re-establish high quality public education for the students of Duquesne while achieving stable and sustainable finances for the DCSD.

The Recovery Plan presents several options as potential ways to accomplish Duquesne's educational and financial recovery. These options are briefly described below. It is noteworthy that all options envisage continued existence of the Duquesne City Board of School Directors and uninterrupted operation of the School District's administration in some capacity.

*Option 1.* The DCSD would continue to operate an elementary program at Duquesne Elementary School (DES). This scenario provided a baseline to develop and compare the other options. Also, the scenario served as a point of departure for the continued operation of DES in 2013-2014. Option 1 has been in effect since implementation of the DCSD Recovery Plan and is expected to remain in effect in the foreseeable future.

*Option 2A.* K-6 students would be placed in one or more schools of one or more well-qualified, nearby school districts. Placement would be based on agreement(s) between the receiving school district(s) and the DCSD, which would need to be voluntary and beneficial for all districts involved. Moreover, the tuition would have to be affordable to Duquesne. This scenario was vigorously pursued, but not achieved for the 2013-2014 school year. Recently, no substantive progress has been made with Option 2A, although it may become viable in the future.

*Option 2B.* This option was introduced in the Recovery Plan Second Amendment. Similar to Option 2A, Option 2B envisages a voluntary and mutually beneficial arrangement between the DCSD and a well-qualified, nearby school district or other local education agency (LEA). Duquesne students in grades one through six would attend school at the present location, the Duquesne Education Center (DEC), but the school would be operated by the outside LEA. The DCSD would pay tuition to the outside LEA to cover all instruction, instructional support and educational administration. Duquesne would provide administration and support services, and it

## **Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017**

would continue to operate pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes. Option 2B is not currently being pursued, but may be implemented in the future.

*Option 3.* Like Option 2A, Option 3 would place K-6 students in a school of a well-qualified, nearby school district. Unlike Option 2A, Option 3 would be based on new Pennsylvania law. The result would be an arrangement similar to how Duquesne's secondary education program is now conducted. To date, there has been no known legislative initiative to enable this option.

*Option 4A.* One or more traditional charter schools would enroll Duquesne students in grades K-6. Under existing law that prescribes the calculation of charter school tuition rates, Option 4A is not financially viable. New legislation to reduce tuition rates or some extraordinary revenue source would be required to make charter school tuition rates affordable. Therefore, Option 4A is now maintained only as a potentially viable option.

*Option 4B.* Another charter school possibility is Option 4B, which would lead to a K-6 conversion charter school at the DEC. Just like the traditional charter school in Option 4A, the conversion charter school option in Option 4B is not financially feasible. Once again, new legislation to reduce tuition rates or some extraordinary revenue source would be required to allow a conversion charter school. Therefore, Option 4B is only potentially viable.

The First Amendment to the Recovery Plan dealt solely with obtaining an interest free loan from the Financial Recovery Transition Loan Program. The Amendment was reviewed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and subsequently approved by the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas (ACCCP) on December 19, 2013.

To meet a need to update the original Recovery Plan and to obtain a second Transition Loan, the Second Amendment to the Recovery Plan was prepared, reviewed by PDE and submitted to the ACCCP for approval. On November 18, 2014, the Court approved the Amendment and ordered its implementation.

On March 28, 2016 the Secretary of Education petitioned the ACCCP to extend the DCSD receivership for three years. Although progress had been made in the educational and financial recovery of the DCSD, recovery status exit criteria had not yet been completely achieved. The receivership extension was set to run from April 2, 2016 to April 2, 2019.

Apart from Option 1, i.e. operation of pre-kindergarten through sixth grade at the Duquesne Elementary School (DES) by the Duquesne City School District (DCSD), other recovery options (2A, 2B, 3, 4A or 4B) have not been feasible. Therefore, Option 1 has been in effect since the Recovery Plan was implemented and for the entire receivership of the DCSD. Nevertheless, potential opportunities for moving forward with one of the other options have been and will continue to be monitored.

The above text gives only a brief summary of the Recovery Plan preparation and implementation. The full Recovery Plan, amendments to the Recovery Plan, and quarterly progress reports are posted on the Duquesne City School District's website: [www.dukecitysd.org](http://www.dukecitysd.org).

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

**Appendix B**

***Exit Criteria\****

The criteria for the Duquesne City School District to exit financial recovery status, set in the original Recovery Plan, are reaffirmed and up-dated as follows.

1. The Pennsylvania School Performance Profile score for DES will reach or exceed 70.0.
2. DES will have exited federal Title I Priority School status.
3. The DES Comprehensive Plan for the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017 will be substantially accomplished.
4. The DCSD will maintain a positive annual fund balance for at least three years, beginning at the close of fiscal year 2014-2015, as reported on audited annual financial statements.
5. From July 1, 2014, the DCSD will not request or require an advance on its basic education subsidy.
6. From July 1, 2014, all DCSD employee salaries, wages and withholdings will be paid on time.
7. From July 1, 2014, the DCSD will not default on any bonds, notes or lease rentals and is not subject to withholdings by the Secretary of Education for debt service payments under Section 633 of the Public School Code.
8. Scheduled annual debt service will not exceed \$100,000 per year for all future years.
9. The DCSD will not satisfy the criteria for determination of recovery status, as established in regulations promulgated under Section 621-A(a)(2) of the Public School Code of Pennsylvania, and/or as contained in State Board of Education Regulations, Chapter 18, Financial Recovery.
10. The City of Duquesne must emerge from Act 47 (or superseding legislation) municipal recovery oversight per Section 625(A)(c) of the Public School Code of Pennsylvania.

\* Excerpted from the Second Amendment to the Recovery Plan, dated November 18, 2014

## **Appendix C**

### ***Duquesne Elementary School Is an Excellent School!***

The most important aspect of quality education at Duquesne Elementary School is its caring, dedicated and skilled teachers and staff members. These committed people are involved with many good things that are going on at DES in regard to curriculum, instruction, programs, services and student achievement. All together, these make DES a truly excellent school.

Read on!

### ***Curriculum***

- Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1 through 6
  - o 181 school days
  - o Full day pre-k and kindergarten
- Pennsylvania Core Standards
- Pennsylvania Instructional Frameworks
- Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System
- Curricular materials
  - o English Language Arts (ELA): Journeys
  - o Mathematics: Go Math
  - o Science, grades 3 through 6: Boiler Room, a science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) classroom
  - o Science, pre-k through 2: Creation Station, a STEAM classroom
  - o Social Studies: embedded in Journeys series
- Special Education
  - o Speech and Language
  - o Learning Support
  - o Emotional Support
  - o Autistic Support
  - o Life Skills
  - o Transition to school age services
  - o Transition to secondary school
  - o Occupational therapy, physical therapy and adaptive physical education through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU)
- Gifted and Talented Education
- Related Arts
  - o Music
  - o Art
  - o Library and Media
  - o Physical Education
- English as a Second Language instruction
- Technology
  - o 21st century classrooms
    - High definition projector and interactive white board in every classroom

## Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017

- Five student iPads in every classroom
  - A MAC Book and an iPad with Apple TV for every teacher
  - Kindle Fire tablets in pre-k, kindergarten and grade 1
- Two installed computer labs
- Two mobile computer labs
- Two 3-D printer-scanners
- School library
  - Library and media instruction
  - Circulation of books with take home privileges
  - State of the art library software
  - Designated a Common Sense Media Library
  - Supplemented by a Carnegie Branch Library, on the school premises
- Regular field trips
  - Educational and fun
  - Pre-k through sixth grade
  - Virtual field trips also

### *Instruction*

- Small class size
  - Average number of students per class
    - Pre-kindergarten: 15
    - Kindergarten: 18
    - Grade 1: 15
    - Grade 2: 20
    - Grade 3: 17
    - Grade 4: 19
    - Grade 5: 21
    - Grade 6: 18
- Instructional staffing
  - 39 professional staff (which includes teachers, instructional coaches, guidance counselor, psychologist and school nurse)
    - All highly qualified
    - All fully certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education
    - 64% have advanced degrees
    - Student to teacher ratio: 9 to 1
  - 18 para-educator staff members who assist classroom teachers
  - 4 personal care assistants who help students with special needs
- Planning for educational improvement
  - School Level Comprehensive Plan emphasizing:
    - Appropriate use of academic data
    - Standards aligned curriculum
    - Effective instruction
    - Instructional leadership
    - Safe school environment
  - School Improvement Plan, addresses federal programs and grants

## Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017

- Cyclical Monitoring for Continuous Improvement (CMCI) for special education
- Special Education Plan, embedded in the District Level Comprehensive Plan
- District Level Comprehensive Plan, which supports and coordinates the above educational plans
- Collaborative implementation of plans by the Steering Committee
  - Leads and coordinates curriculum renewal
  - Assists and mentors teachers on curriculum and instruction
  - Contributes to professional development for teachers
  - Made up of four Instructional Coaches, Principal, Assistant Principal, Special Education Consultant and Superintendent
- Ensuring accountability with the Pennsylvania Educator Effectiveness Evaluation process
  - Principal
  - Assistant Principal
  - All teachers
  - School Psychologist
  - School Counselor
  - School Nurse
- Helping teachers build professional capacity
  - Professionally embedded learning
  - Four full time instructional coaches
  - External support
    - Special Education Consultant
    - Federal Programs Consultant
    - Academic Recovery Liaison
    - School Culture Consultant
  - Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU)
    - Head Start
    - Professional development classes and resources
  - Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)
    - Professional development for faculty, staff and administrators
    - Special education resources
- Rigorous and collaborative professional development (PD) for teachers
  - Daily 45 minute sessions scheduled to include:
    - ELA content specific sessions
    - Mathematics content specific sessions
    - Technology integration classes
    - Grade level meetings for analysis of student academic data
  - Five half day PD programs per year, on clerical days
  - Eight full day PD programs per year, on in-service days
  - Social and emotional class team training
  - Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training for faculty and staff
  - Other emergency training such as first aid and CPR
- Tools to help teachers achieve better instruction
  - Multi-Tier System of Support
  - Daily Five reading instruction
  - Daily Three math instruction

## Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017

- Flex Time for remediation and enrichment to meet every student's individual educational needs

### *Programs*

- Extended Day Program (EDP)
  - Tutoring by certified professional teachers
  - Intramural sports
  - Art Club
  - Instrumental music instruction
  - STEAM activities
- Special events
  - Black History Celebration
  - Holiday Concert
  - Spring Musical
  - Kindergarten graduation
  - Sixth Grade Promotion
  - Regular family movie nights
  - Fall and Spring Talent Shows (PTA)
  - Dances (PTA)
- OLWEUS
  - Anti-bullying program
- Be There Buddy
  - Attendance improvement and truancy reduction
  - Motivational
  - One-to-one adult to student pairings
  - Supported by the United Way
- Student Mentoring
  - One-to-one adult connections with students
  - Development of student leadership
  - In conjunction with the Mentoring Partnership of Pittsburgh
- Character Building lessons
  - Focus on self-esteem, teamwork, coping, problem solving and self-advocacy
  - Kindergarten through sixth grade
- Healthy Lifestyles
  - Fifth and sixth grades
  - Age appropriate instruction in hygiene, development, peer pressure, language and behavior
  - Classes grouped by age and gender
  - Parent permission required
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Prevention
  - Fifth and sixth grades
  - Instruction about making good, healthy choices concerning tobacco, alcohol, prescription and non-prescription drugs, addiction and peer pressure
  - Supported by Allegheny County juvenile counselors
  - Parent permission required

## **Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017**

- Live Well Allegheny
  - o Instruction on nutrition, exercise and healthy life styles
  - o In conjunction with the Allegheny County Board of Health
- Saturday basketball
  - o Ages 5 through 13
  - o In coordination with Boys and Girls Club and Dapper Dan Club
- Kids Cook
  - o Nutrition education aligned with Pennsylvania standards
  - o Hands-on cooking
  - o Conducted by Food Bank
- Junior Constables
  - o Opportunity for students to take responsibility and learn about service
  - o Students perform duties at school
- Gentlemen's Academy
  - o Character building
  - o Teaching self-esteem and self-discipline
  - o Proper manners, dress and grooming
- Parent and guardian engagement
  - o DES Parent Advisory Council
  - o Regular in-school events
  - o Annual open house
  - o Teacher conferences
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

### ***Services***

- Full time staff to assist and support students
  - o Principal
  - o Assistant Principal
  - o School Psychologist
  - o School Nurse
  - o Guidance Counselor
  - o Student Services Coordinator
  - o Behavior Intervention Specialist
  - o Behavior Support Specialist
  - o Behavior Specialist Para-educator
- Communications
  - o One Call automated telephone notification
  - o Social media: Facebook and Twitter
  - o Duquesne City School District (DCSD) website: [www.dukecitysd.org](http://www.dukecitysd.org)
  - o DCSD mobile app
  - o DCSD Communications Plan
- Free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for every student who has special needs
- Duquesne Student Assistance Program (SAP)
  - o Professionally trained members from DES faculty and staff as well as community agency representatives

## Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report April 15, 2017

- Evaluates and assists students to overcome behavioral and academic issues
- Coordinates in-school and outside help
- Parent permission required
- Getting to Duquesne Elementary School (DES)
  - A true neighborhood school, less than one mile from all homes in Duquesne City
  - Within one-half mile, many students walk
  - Local Duquesne bus routes
  - Transportation service for Pre-K students
- Full food service
  - Breakfast
  - Lunch
  - Late afternoon nutritional snacks
  - Evening meal for Extended Day Program
  - Special holiday meals
  - Nutritionally sound and appealing menus
  - Free of charge for all students
- Comprehensive safety and security
  - Full school access control
  - Permanent security staff
  - Crisis response planning, procedures and practice
  - Regular safety and security drills
  - Close proximity to Duquesne City Police and Fire Department, one block away
- On the premises of the Duquesne Education Center
  - Carnegie Branch Library
  - Head Start
  - The Family Center pre-school services
- Mon Yough Youth Services
  - Counseling and screening available at school

### ***Student Achievement***

- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - Every student has one or the other
  - Students identified with special needs have an IEP
  - Specific learning goals for each student, based on the student's needs
  - Objective progress monitoring
- Objective, proven assessments of students
  - Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
    - Benchmarking and diagnosis
    - Reading
    - K through grade 2
  - GMADE
    - Benchmarking and diagnostic
    - Mathematics
    - Pre-k through grade 2
  - Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)

**Duquesne City School District Recovery Plan Quarterly Progress Report  
April 15, 2017**

- Benchmarking and diagnostic
  - English Language Arts (ELA)
  - Grades 3 through 6
- Study Island
  - Benchmarking
  - Mathematics
  - Grades 3 through 6
- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
  - Summative
  - Annual
  - ELA: grades 3 through 6
  - Mathematics: grades 3 through 6
  - Science: grade 4
  - Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA): available for some students identified with special needs
- Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVAAS)
  - Measures growth of student learning over one year
  - Evidence of growth in learning met or exceeded the Pennsylvania standard for academic growth in 2016 for six out of seven grade level data categories (ELA and math in grades four, five and six, plus science in grade four).
  - School-wide, there was evidence that DES students exceeded the standard Pennsylvania academic growth in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in 2016.
  - In comparison to Pennsylvania elementary schools with similar portions of economically disadvantaged students and special education students, DES scores are in the norm for both ELA and math.
  - Source: [www.pvass.sas.com](http://www.pvass.sas.com)