



## **OFFICE OF THE RECEIVER**

### **QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD Q2 2024-2025**

**Dr. William H. Kerr, Court-Appointed Receiver**

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## **1. Authority and Purpose**

Consistent with the Financial Recovery Act 141 of 2012, the Duquesne City School District Financial Recovery Plan was issued on February 11, 2013, and implemented on April 2, 2013. On November 12, 2020, a Fourth Amendment was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and final approval granted by the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas on November 16, 2020.

Section 672-A (b) (2) of the Public-School Code of Pennsylvania requires a Quarterly Report for the Secretary of Education; therefore, the Quarterly Progress Report for **FY Q2-2024-2025 – October 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024**, is provided herein.

## **2. School District Benefits of Receivership**

Receivership of the School District was a result of fiscal instability and poor academic performance, considering all aspects of financially distressed operations. The benefits of Receivership have preserved, protected, and enhanced the value of assets through a variety of assistance including, but not limited to, an advance of state subsidies, a transitional loan, targeted grants, and professional development programs funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Under Receivership, the School District has been able to be more efficient to secure, manage, and stabilize assets from further deterioration. Equally important, liabilities and contested financial matters have been eliminated. District policies and procedures have been implemented and restrictions enacted for proper accounting by effectively managing cash flow, debt service, and timely payment of all financial obligations. Receivership has provided an intense level of intervention for student achievement and growth, professional development, and financial accountability – a triangular relationship for continuous school improvement.

Pursuant to Act 141 of 2012 and the implementation of the Financial Recovery Plan in 2013, the various Court appointed Receivers and the Department of Education assigned Chief Recovery Officers for the Duquesne City School District have been an integral part of the Financial Recovery Plan, as amended. Each has collaborated through interactive dialogue with key stakeholders of the School District, Pennsylvania Department of Education, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, and Public Financial Management.

Every fiscal quarter since 2013–2014, the Duquesne City School District has been in good financial standing. There have been no unpaid or contested invoices; and, all payroll, benefit expenditures, debt service obligations and tuition payments have been made in a timely manner. There is no threatened or pending litigation against the Duquesne City School District. Further, the School District is unaware of any other unasserted claims or assessments involving the School District.

## **3. Executive Summary**

Concerted efforts for continuous school improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment are an integral part of the Duquesne City School District delivery system for educational programs and services based on collaborative and professional working relationships among the administration, faculty, and support staff. Financial sustainability, transparency, and accountability – including updates of projections as part of the Annual Budget planning and approval process – are also an integral part of continuous efforts for school improvement.

## *Quarterly Progress Report FY Q2-2024-2025 Highlights*

- A Framework for the Future, Instructional Model and the guiding principles will be the hallmark of educational programs and services in the Duquesne K-8 School moving forward to improve the existing K-8 system. The framework and instructional models were developed with administrators, teachers, support staff, parents and community members over the course of the last several months.
- A House System for middle school grades 7-8 has been implemented for 2024-2025 and is based on the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta, GA. Using this system provides students with a sense of pride and belonging to their community, leadership skills, ownership, collaboration, and friendly competition. The House of Friendship, House of Courage, House of Dreamers, and House of Givers are an integral part of the learning experience for students.
- The primary goal of the Duquesne K-8 School is to be recognized as a “turnaround school” and a model for rebuilding educational programs, services, and activities in a financially distressed school district.
- The 2024-2025 Pre-K Counts program continues to be operated and staffed by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and grant funded by PDE. The quality pre-kindergarten program provides a strong start for children and for those who may also have language barriers (English not as the first language), a disability or developmental delay, or other issues that consider children at risk for failing in school.
- The 2024-2025 Head Start program continues to be operated by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and promotes school readiness of infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children from families with low income. The program engages parents or other key family members in positive relationships, with a focus on family well-being for successful learning outcomes and support for children.
- The Court-Appointed Receiver, Superintendent of Schools, Chief Financial Officer, Education Consultant, and Administrators participate in monthly Financial Recovery Plan Monitoring Meetings with the Special Advisor to the Secretary and PDE officials. Duquesne provides updates on RBM actions, Finance and Budget, Academics, Special Education, Operations, Human Resources, Administration and Governance, Act 141 Advisory Committee, and Contracted Services.
- The Superintendent, Court-Appointed Receiver, Chief Financial Officer, and Education Consultant continue to analyze and interpret all revenues and expenditures in the 2024-2025 General Fund Budget to ensure financial accountability and fiscal responsibility. Preparation for the 2025-2026 General Fund Budget is underway with internal administrative discussions. A Not-to-Exceed the Adjusted Act 1 Index Board Resolution for 2025-2026 tax levy was approved.
- All ESSER Final Expenditure Reports have been submitted; real estate collections are at 94% of the General Fund Budget.
- Research and development continues with the Fifth Amended Financial Recovery Plan which includes, but is not limited to, improving the existing Elementary / Middle School Educational Programs and Services; Academic Goals; Exit Criteria; Financial and Resource Management; Talent Management; and District Operations.

- Financial Goals include: to invest in K-8 Academics; to stabilize tuition payments to East Allegheny and West Mifflin School Districts; to advocate for Cyber-Charter and Charter School tuition reforms; to increase local revenue for capital improvement projects; to implement cost saving initiatives; and to contain salary and benefit increases through DEA and DESPA contract negotiations.
- The Fifth Amended Financial Recovery Plan is designed with visionary, strategic, and operational goals and objectives for continuous school improvement based on a multi-year approach with flexibility related to student growth and achievement, academic programs and services, and financial sustainability and stability.
- School District Officials and Public Financial Management Consultants continue to discuss model assumptions and financial projections. Financial recommendations for future stability and sustainability include revenue and expenditure updates based on the following scenarios:
  - Scenario 1: Tax Scenario increases to the Adjusted Act 1 Index
  - Scenario 2: One Additional Year of the Adequacy Supplement
  - Scenario 3: Annual Increases to the Adequacy Supplement
  - Scenario 4: Reduced WM/EA Tuition Rate Growth Scenario
- Student Enrollment, as of December 31, 2024, is 473, including 106 ESL students.
- Current secondary (9-12) enrollment of Duquesne resident students at West Mifflin and East Allegheny is 268.
- Annual tuition to be paid by Duquesne for students attending schools elsewhere in 2024–2025 is projected to be \$9,163,940.00
- Current charter school enrollment K-12 is 210.
- Steel Center Career and Technical Education enrollment is thirty-four (34); CTE tuition per student is estimated to be \$5,969 for 2024 – 2025.
- Mon Valley Special School student enrollment is six (6) with an overall estimated tuition cost of \$452,500.00 for 2024–2025.

#### **4. Supplemental Information**

The DCSD website, [dukecitysd.org](http://dukecitysd.org), provides the general public with a historical summary of the School District's severe financial recovery status, its receivership, and criteria for exiting recovery status. The Financial Recovery Plan, as amended, and Quarterly Progress Reports are posted for accountability, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

“Rediscover Duquesne!” is an electronic monthly newsletter providing information and updates to parents, families, and community members about the School District. The production is in cooperation with the Duquesne Administration and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Communications Department.

## 5. Regular Education – Student Enrollment

Duquesne K-8 student enrollments, for 2022–2023, 2023–2024 and 2024–2025, are displayed on the following table.

### Duquesne K-8 School Student Enrollment December 31, 2024

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Sept 2022	47	52	50	58	45	46	52	58	41	451
Dec 2022	53	55	50	57	45	45	51	58	43	457
Mar 2023	56	55	50	56	46	43	47	61	44	458
June 2023	57	57	48	54	48	43	47	58	46	458
Sept 2023	55	53	60	45	52	47	41	48	54	455
Dec 2023	61	53	62	48	55	49	44	46	58	476
Mar 2024	62	55	60	48	59	51	46	49	61	491
June 2024	63	58	58	46	59	52	47	48	60	491
Sept 2024	64	63	53	56	43	55	52	42	45	473
Dec 2024	67	62	52	56	41	51	51	41	52	473

## 6. Regular Education – Sections, Class Size, and ESL Data

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

### Duquesne K - 8 School Regular Education Sections, Class Size, and ESL Enrollment December 31, 2024

Grade	Sections (Classroom Size)	Enrollment	ESL Enrollment
Kindergarten	3 (21.3)	67	13
First Grade	3 (21.0)	62	13
Second Grade	3 (17.6)	52	11
Third Grade	3 (18.6)	56	13
Fourth Grade	3 (14.3)	41	10
Fifth Grade	2 (27.5)	51	9
Sixth Grade	2 (26.0)	51	14
Seventh Grade*	4 (16.3)	41	12
Eighth Grade*	4 (11.2)	52	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>106</b>

\*Blended grade levels

## 7. Average Student Attendance

The following chart reflects two years of attendance. Subsequent to an internal audit by District Administration, data for the 2023-2024 school year has been amended.

### Duquesne City School District Average Student Attendance 2023 – 2024 and 2024-2025

2023-2024 Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent Count	Avg. Excused Count	Avg. Unexcused Count	Avg. Unlawful Count
Aug	7	90.31%	9.69%	8.85	18.57	0
Sept	19	90.71%	9.29%	9.36	18.52	0
Oct	22	90.57%	9.43%	9.45	19.22	0
Nov	18	89.13%	10.87%	12.02	21.88	0
Dec	16	84.9%	15.1%	11.59	35.68	0
Jan	19	88.94%	11.06%	9.28	25.57	0
Feb	19	86.79%	13.21%	12	30.68	0
Mar	19	87.74%	12.26	5.92	34.68	0
April	20	83.33%	16.67%	15.32	41.54	0
May	22	84.75%	15.25%	5.72	46.9	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>87.43%</b>	<b>12.57%</b>	<b>9.94</b>	<b>30.17</b>	<b>0</b>

2024-2025 Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent Count	Avg. Excused Count	Avg. Unexcused Count	Avg. Unlawful Count
Aug*	3	90.7%	9.3%	8.5	30.66	0
Sept*	19	90.11%	9.89%	21.86	21.76	0
Oct	23	90.19%	9.81%	22.89	21.65	0
Nov	18	88.87%	11.13%	20.94	30.5	0
Dec	14	83.52%	16.48%	27.67	49.46	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>88.63%</b>	<b>11.37%</b>	<b>22.49</b>	<b>29.15</b>	<b>0</b>

*\*August and September data updated from previous quarter*

## 8. Significant Observations

Q2-2024-2025 student enrollment is 473 and the ESL enrollment is 106 students, indicating an offsetting number of incoming and outgoing students, including two (2) more ESL students ending Q2-2024-2025.

## **9. Student Enrichment and Support Programs**

Boys & Girls Club - 40 students enrolled (Grades K-8)

Oasis Tutoring - 6 Students are receiving services (1-3)

The Caring Place, is an organization that provides a newly introduced weekly grief support group for students in grades 1-4, and 5-8. Thirteen (13) students are currently participating.

The partnerships continue with Eat n' Park and the United Way to provide food to the families and community members of Duquesne, including backpacks of food for students who qualify on the weekends. The Boys and Girls Club partnership continues with after-school activities for Duquesne City students.

Q2 discipline behavior referrals / incidents total 395 for the year to which is a 42% decrease from last year's second quarter. With the sustained efforts of Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) programming in grades K-6, House System in grades 7-8, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in place, student discipline continues to have support and interventions for positive and successful outcomes. In addition to Restorative Practices through the University of Pittsburgh, the following support services are highlighted:

The School District continues to engage with Pittsburgh Area Community Schools (PACS) which has been a highly successful collaborative partnership among educators, students, parents / guardians, and families. PACS strives to surround students with a community of support so that every student has the opportunity to succeed in and out of school. The PACS Coordinator meets with students to provide socio-emotional enrichment and other support services. Additionally, PACS orchestrates a food pantry, clothing, and other resources for students, their families, and community members.

School level personnel and students coordinated the District's first Cultural Night on November 21<sup>st</sup>. The event was a success and attendees engaged in learning about different cultures around the world.

Student programs such as the Goodwill HIRE Me Program and Attack Theater continue to enhance District programs. The Goodwill HIRE Me Program provides mentoring workshops to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students once per week. Students focus on job skills, resume writing, goal setting, interviewing, financial literacy, and learn about post-graduation option. Students are also provided college and university tours. Attack Theater fuses modern dance, original live music and interdisciplinary art forms to create engaging dance performances and interactive creative learning experiences. Representatives coordinate with the Physical Education and STEAM teachers to merge kinematics with content. Collaboration with K-5 teachers is scheduled for the spring semester in a District-wide effort of increasing kinesthetic learning to enhance concepts and engage students.

The Chill Mobile is a mental health and support resource for students, teachers, and parents in the Pittsburgh area via a customized 33-foot RV. The Chill Mobile, scheduled for three visits during the current school year, provides a calming space for students to learn coping skills and participate in interactive experiences.

Pressley Ridge, a non-profit social services agency, provides Emotional Support Services for grades K–8. Auberle, a non-profit social service agency, provides support for students through school-based therapy and SAP screening services. Auberle provides grade level support through their Stop Now and Think (SNAP) program to Fifth Grade students.

Under a Verizon Wireless grant, one (1) two-year Verizon Instruction Learning Technology Coach (VILC) / Cyber Teacher: Grades 5–8 position was created for the 2024–2026 school years. The VILC provides support to teachers to enhance personalized learning, student choice and voice, and assists with technology support in the classroom. To enhance student virtual learning experiences, students in grades 5–8 received iPads with 30GB of monthly data. They can now complete their schoolwork anywhere.

## **10. State Monitoring**

Federal Title Program monitoring is planned for Spring 2025. The monitoring dates have not yet been announced by PDE.

## **11. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**

### **A. Curriculum and Instruction**

DCSD is consulting with the AIU to provide coaching and support for 6<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics instruction based on PSSA and PVAAS data. Several sessions were established for instructional coaching, professional development, and observation and feedback. The second round of Common Assessments, as well as winter benchmarks, will be administered in January. PSSA testing for 24-25 will begin in April.

Teachers continue to engage in weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) for grade level and content area meetings. Teachers have the opportunity to meet with their grade level where they examine classroom and student level data to drive instruction as well as meeting vertically across grade levels and across content areas. Data includes benchmarking assessments, daily exit tickets, anecdotal notes, as well as proficiency data from online programming. PLC's will begin a new data driven protocol based on a book study by District administration, *Leverage Leadership*.

All grade level teachers continue the use of personalized learning paths to meet students at their instructional level and to close achievement gaps.

New middle school elective choices include: District C, Drone Soccer, and Podcasting. The District's First Lego League students, the Duke Decoders, achieved 1<sup>st</sup> place for the third year in a row on Core Values in the big western PA Tournament on December 7<sup>th</sup>. They have qualified to attend States in Hershey, PA for First Lego League, to be held in February.

### **B. Professional Development**

Professional Development occurring during the second quarter of the 2024-2025 SY:



- VILS – Blended Learning, grades 5-8
- ST Math, grades K-8
- NWEA Map Assessments, grades K-8
- One Stone, grades 7-8
- Trauma Informed Practices, grades K-8
- Upchieve Tutoring, grades 6-8
- Sensitivity Training, grades K-8
- Canvas, grades K-8
- Second Step, grades K-5

**C. Assessment and Growth Scores, 2023-2024**

Despite low proficiency scores, PVAAS data indicates that most grade levels are showing adequate growth in ELA and math. Additional professional development, coaching, and targeting support and interventions have been scheduled for grade 6 math and grade 5 ELA based on PSSA and PVAAS results, as detailed below.

2023-2024 PSSA Results							
ELA Results							
	BB	B	P	A	A & P	Change from 22-23	Cohort change from 22-23
Grade 3	33%	56%	11%	0	11%	-10%	N/A
Grade 4	40%	42%	18%	0	18%	2%	-2%
Grade 5	60%	26%	14%	0	14%	-2%	-4%
Grade 6	53%	33%	12%	2%	14%	-9%	-2%
Grade 7	18%	64%	18%	0	18%	0	-5%
Grade 8	41%	44%	15%	0	15%	1%	-1%
Math Results							
	BB	B	P	A	A & P	Change from 22-23	Cohort change from 22-23
Grade 3	75%	14%	12%	0	12%	4%	N/A
Grade 4	75%	21%	4%	0	4%	-3%	-4%
Grade 5	78%	17%	5%	0	5%	3%	-2%
Grade 6	84%	11%	5%	0	5%	5%	3%
Grade 7	72%	24%	4%	0	4%	-1%	4%
Grade 8	83%	14%	0	2%	2%	0%	-3%
Science Results							
	BB	B	P	A	A & P	Change from 22-23	Cohort change from 22-23
Grade 4	16%	39%	38%	7%	45%	21%	N/A
Grade 8	59%	29%	9%	3%	12%	-17%	N/A

Subject	← Year	← Grade	Growth Color Indicator	
PSSA Math - 4-8	2024	4	✓ Meets	
		5	⬆ Above	
		6	⬇ Well Below	
		7	⬆ Above	
		8	⬆ Above	
		Across Grades	✓ Meets	
PSSA English Language Arts - 4-8	2024	4	✓ Meets	
		5	⬇ Well Below	
		6	✓ Meets	
		7	⬇ Below	
		8	✓ Meets	
		Across Grades	⬇ Well Below	
PSSA Science - 4,8	2024	4	✓ Meets	
		8	✓ Meets	

## 12. Technology, Digital Learning, and Innovation

Significant advancements in technology and infrastructure were performed this quarter to support students and staff. Over 500 outdated devices were inventoried and prepared for e-waste disposal, streamlining our operations and ensuring compliance with environmental standards. To enhance network reliability, 240V electrical lines were installed to provide universal power supply for our servers, securing network operations during power outages. Additionally, the District has partnered with service representatives to maximize remaining e-Rate funding, in hopes of securing vital resources for continued technology improvements.

To improve device maintenance, the District has partnered with Triple D iRepair to provide efficient repair services for teacher and student devices. The District has also applied for the Cybersecurity Pilot Program Grant to further safeguard digital infrastructures. Wireless connectivity has been boosted with the installation of five (5) Meraki Access Points on various building levels, improving internet accessibility for students and staff. Lastly, the implementation of a District-wide password reset policy strengthens cyber security measures and protecting sensitive information. Collectively, these efforts enhance the District's ability to deliver a secure, reliable, and supportive learning environment.

## 13. Special Education Services

### A. Special Education Enrollment

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the District had a total of 120 students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) who are being supported: (101) in-district, (16) specialized educational placements, and (3) Duquesne Cyber Academy.

## B. Staffing

The Special Education Department has begun the 2024–2025 school year fully staffed with a total of eleven (11) special education teachers, one speech and language pathologist, and two half-time cyber academy teachers. The District currently has two (2) Personal Care Assistant vacancies.

Support Category	No. of Teachers
Learning Support	4
Emotional Support	3
Autistic Support	1 (FT K-2)
Life Skills / Autistic Support	3
Speech and Language Support	1
Cyber Academy	1 (two, PT)

## C. Extended School Year

Baseline data has been collected on all academic and behavioral goals between December 8–20, 2024. Regression data will be collected between January 6–10, 2025 and recouplement data will be collected between February 3–14, 2025. The District will know which students qualify for Extended School Year programming by March 28<sup>th</sup>.

## D. 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition

The District has thirteen (13) 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with IEPs that are expected to transition to 9<sup>th</sup> grade at either East Allegheny or West Mifflin Area School District. Families will be contacted during January to confirm which school each student will be attending for the 2025-2026 school year.

# 14. Student Services

## A. IST / DSAP Q2 Data

IST		DSAP	*
Total Students Referred	25	Total Students Referred	25
Referrals Reopened	0	Referrals Reopened	0
Cases Closed	5	Cases Closed	4
Cases Active	35	Cases Active	41

\*McKinney-Vento Data included in DSAP

## B. McKinney-Vento Summary

School District personnel transported all accounted for McKinney-Vento families daily to and from school. There are currently sixteen (16) students identified. All primary parents of families experiencing homelessness have been given the opportunity to utilize available

resources depending on specific needs from the Duquesne Family Center, Duquesne City School District, and Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

### **C. Foster Student Summary**

School District personnel have identified one (1) in-district foster care student.

## **15. Mental Health and Behavior Support Services**

The Youth Engagement Support Services (YESS) Pressley Ridge partnership continues to provide ongoing support for students in their classrooms. We continue to see improvements with the students because they are having their needs met, a testament to the supports in place. The evidence collected has shown decreased security calls and decreased discipline reports for students on teacher caseloads. The program closely monitors student needs to ensure resources are available and provided when needed.

The District also uses Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to encourage constructive behavior from students in grades K-6. With the points-based structure, students have the opportunity to be awarded daily points for following school-wide expectations: Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful. Students who earn ten (10) or more points by the end of a given week receive a PBIS certificate and are entered into a grade level drawing. The winners of the drawing are then allowed to shop for items in the school's PBIS Store.

The Mental Health and Behavior Support team reviews all students receiving services through the Student Assistance Program (SAP) and ensures there are supports in place for students; Auberle has provided an in-person therapist which has been beneficial for students who need this support. The District is still exploring additional partnerships with outside agencies to include a second organization to provide School-Based Therapy to meet the increasing needs of our students. The Instructional Support Team continues to share intervention strategies with teachers to provide targeted support for students as needed.

## **16. District Cyber Academy and Marketing / Recruiting Plan**

The District Cyber Academy, in partnership with Allegheny Intermediate Unit / Waterfront Learning, provides asynchronous online learning through the platform, Accelerate. Parents inquiring about cyber education are encouraged to take advantage of the District Cyber Academy. School District teachers provide online instruction and are available for student and parent consultations. The District Cyber program is research-based and embraces best practices for online learning, offering Duquesne children flexible and high-quality curriculum and instruction. A District cyber student has all the benefits of a Duquesne student, including participation in all programs, activities, sports, and clubs.

The Marketing / Recruiting Plan for 2024–2025 is a continuous effort to increase the overall student enrollment at the Duquesne K-8 School and to reduce the amount of charter / cyber and brick and mortar charter school tuition paid by the School District. The plan includes the use of current resources, social media, and personnel to engage the community in legacy-building and to

share the traditions, pride, and history of Duquesne City School District. “**REDISCOVER DUQUESNE**” is the marketing brand to promote a flexible, online cyber education option for parents and families.

### **17. Financial Recovery Plan (YTD)**

The District Administration continues to work with Public Financial Management consultants regarding model assumptions and financial projections based on the 2024-2025 General Fund Budget. The development of a Fifth Amended Financial Recovery Plan is underway using a multi-year approach, including strategic and operational goals for continuous school improvement and financial sustainability for future years. The Fifth Amended Financial Recovery Plan will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education in February 2025.

### **18. Budget and Finance (YTD)**

The 2024-2025 General Fund Budget includes a 1.71 mil increase with a balanced Budget of \$21,809,299. The new real estate tax rate is 21.19 mils and existing rates for Act 511 taxes continue. The School District’s property tax reduction allocation for 2024-2025 is \$539,953.38. The median assessed homestead property will pay \$22.59 more for the year. Year over year, expenses decreased 1% (\$236K) due to renegotiated transportation contract and creative staffing solutions.

The following Board Resolution was approved at the Receiver Business Meeting on October 22, 2024:

The Receiver, acting as the Board of School Directors, will ensure compliance with Finance and Budget policies and procedures through the Superintendent of Schools and the Chief Financial Officer for fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability, as follows:

- (1) Maintain financial fiscal responsibility through School District policy that follows the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Department of Education for meeting Medicaid requirements for the Access program.
- (2) Verify and approve Child Accounting enrollment and invoices for payment to outside school districts according to the Public-School Code and continue facilitating the education of students through electronic notification and follow-up administrative procedures.
- (3) Manage School District depository needs for the fluid cash requirements to maintain effective and efficient financial operations. The School District shall adhere to the Local Unit Government Debt Act and all Pennsylvania Public School Code regulations regarding debt service obligations and payments.

The Chief Financial Officer completed and filed the required 2024–2025 Cash Flow Reports through October 31<sup>st</sup> for the Department of Education. It is intended to be a monthly report, with some flexibility, which shares financial data by the School District accounting for local revenue and expenditures and PDE accounting for state and federal funds and deductions.

Every fiscal quarter since 2013–2014, the Duquesne City School District has been in good financial standing. There have been no unpaid or contested invoices; and, all payroll, benefit expenditures, debt service obligations and tuition payments have been made in a timely manner.

A significant financial challenge facing the School District continues to be the rising costs of charter school tuition. Actual charter school rates, as calculated on the PDE-363 for FY 2024–2025 reflect the last year of federal ESSER funding revenue. The tuition rate for each non-special education charter school student for 2024–2025 was \$14,342.01 (\$783.33 higher than the previous year) based on actual, calculated rates. For each special education student who attended a charter school, the student rate was \$35,934.19 (\$950.01 lower than the previous year) based on actual, calculated rates. The District continues to face an unprecedented 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 at 25.2%, the formula incorrectly divides total special education expenditures by a smaller number of students than are enrolled at Duquesne.

The following chart provides a visual with specific data to Duquesne’s preliminary Average Daily Membership for 2023–2024; Special Education Population with 16% assumption required by PDE; Actual Special Education Population of the District at 25.2%; and Additional Cost to the District using the required 16% assumption.

Categories and Descriptions	Average Daily Memberships	Special Education Tuition Rate for 2024-2025	Number of Special Education Students at Charter Schools as of December 31, 2024	Charter School Tuition Cost for Special Education Students
DCSD Average Daily Membership for 2023-2024	926.952	-	-	-
Special Education Population with 16% assumption required by PDE	148.312	\$35,934.19	47	\$1,688,916.93
Actual Special Education Population of District is 25.2%	233.715	\$27,913.91	47	\$1,311,953.65
Additional Cost to District using required 16% assumption	-	\$8,020.28	-	\$376,953.28

## 19. General Fund Balance Analysis

**Duquesne City School District  
General Fund  
Balance Analysis  
June 30, 2024**

<b>GF Balance Analysis June 30, 2024</b>		
Non-spendable		
Pre-paid	\$128,647	-
Other	-	-
Total non-spendable	-	\$128,647
Restricted	-	-

<b>GF Balance Analysis June 30, 2024</b>		
Committed	-	-
Unassigned	-	\$1,724,115
Assigned		\$2,375,000
Total fund balance as of June 30, 2023 (audited)	-	\$1,617,125
Surplus (deficit) for FY 2023-2024	-	\$2,610,634
<b>Total fund balance as of June 30, 2024 (unaudited)</b>	-	<b>\$4,227,759</b>

## 20. Bonds and Notes Payable

The Department of Education approved a Transitional Loan Agreement Amendment in 2022 for remaining amortized payments: Final Repayment of \$221,666 due June 30, 2025.

A summary of bonds and notes payable is shown in the following table.

### Bonds and Notes Payable December 31, 2024

<b>Fiscal Year Ending June 30</b>	<b>Bonds Payable</b>	<b>Notes Payable</b>	<b>Total Bonds and Notes Payable</b>	<b>Total Annual Debt Service</b>
2014*	9,272,501	\$1,000,000	10,272,501	-
2015*	6,616,667	2,335,000	8,951,667	2,926,206
2016*	6,110,883	1,500,000	7,610,833	1,553,989
2017*	5,590,000	1,000,000	6,590,000	1,224,589
2018*	5,054,167	1,000,000	6,054,167	729,888
2019*	4,503,333	850,000	5,353,333	883,639
2020*	3,122,500	790,000	3,912,500	1,610,764
2021*	11,661,667	730,000	12,391,667	3,105,492
2022*	10,980,834	665,000	11,645,834	1,075,424
2023*	10,935,000	443,334	11,378,333	584,191
2024**	10,319,167	221,666	10,540,833	1,153,990
2025**	9,803,334	-	9,803,334	1,042,391
2026**	9,337,500	-	9,337,500	758,374
2027**	8,856,667	-	8,856,667	756,174

\*Audited financial statements

\*\*Projected

## 21. Receiving Schools, Tuition Enrollments, and Projected Costs

After personnel costs for the Duquesne City School District's staff, the next largest categories of spending are tuition costs for secondary schools and charter schools. These two costs contribute to the School District's long-term financial challenges.

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 student enrollment trends.

**Duquesne City School District  
Tuition Enrollment  
December 31, 2024**

<b>Receiving Schools</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Students Sept. 30</b>	<b>Students Dec. 31</b>	<b>Projected 2024-2025 Tuition</b>
West Mifflin Area School District	9 – 12	262	248	\$4,299,905.00
East Allegheny School District	9 – 12	19	20	346,767.00
Charter schools, regular education	K – 6	90	99	1,419,859.00
Charter schools, special education	K – 6	33	25	882,314.00
Charter schools, regular education	7 – 12	49	64	917,889.00
Charter schools, special education	7 – 12	18	22	726,390.00
Special Education schools	K – 12	10	10	570,816.00
<b>Totals</b>		<b>481</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>\$9,163,940.00</b>

Changes in individual tuition enrollments in the categories of receiving schools can be seen by comparing enrollments from September 30, 2024, to December 31, 2024 in the table above. Enrollment figures for East Allegheny and West Mifflin will be reconciled at the end of FY 2024–2025. 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.

There are currently 268 secondary students in grades 9-12 in the East Allegheny and West Mifflin Area School Districts. Tuition costs for these students continue to increase each year; and raising taxes to the Act I Index still fails to cover one-half of the annual increase.

The School District received correspondence from the Pennsylvania Department Education regarding the calculated student tuition rate of \$17,338.33 that Duquesne will pay East Allegheny and West Mifflin School Districts in 2024–2025, based on Act 35 of 2023, Section 1607(b)(4) of the Pennsylvania School Code.

For comparison purposes, the School District pays a tuition rate of \$14,342.01 for Charter School students which is much less than the \$17,338.33 per pupil tuition paid to East Allegheny and West Mifflin School Districts.

The Commonwealth’s Independent Fiscal Office indicates that the District’s Projected Base Act 1 Index is expected to decrease slowly as shown in the chart below; however, the District’s tuition rate is expected to be \$20,472 by the 2029–2030 school year.



**Duquesne City School District, Act 1 Index, 2023-2024 to 2029-2030**

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
Projected Base Index	4.1%	5.3%	4.0%	3.6%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%
Projected Act 1 Index	6.7%	8.8%	6.6%	5.9%	5.3%	5.1%	5.0%

**22. Duquesne City Education Foundation**

The Duquesne City Education Foundation articles of incorporation and by-laws as a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit, charitable organization was established. The Foundation supports Duquesne City School District by encouraging innovation, recognizing excellence, creating vital partnerships, and developing community philanthropy. It is expected that Foundation revenues will help support academic programs, athletics, and other school community activities. An Appeal Letter to alumni and community members and plans to review 2025 organization goals will be finalized in January 2025.

**23. Human Resources – Personnel / Staffing Assignments**

*Settlements and other Personnel Actions*

There were no personnel settlement and releases during this Quarter.

*Personnel / Staffing Assignments*

The following chart presents a summary of staffing at the DCSD as of December 31, 2024. Parentheses indicate changes from the September 30, 2024, summary.

**Duquesne City School District  
2024-2025 Staffing Summary  
December 31, 2024**

<b>DCSD Staffing Summary</b>			
Professional Staff (0)	46	Administrators (0)	5
Instructional Support Staff (-1)	10	Coordinators and Supervisors (0)	4
Other Support Staff (0)	10.5	Confidential Staff (0)	4

Staffing Changes reflect resignations, replacements, and new hires to meet the changing needs of the School District:

Following the resignation of one paraprofessional, one qualified personal care assistant was reassigned.

Following the resignation of one personal care assistant, one personal care assistant was hired and has since been reassigned to an open paraprofessional position and due to the changing needs of the School District, two personal care vacancies exist.

Following the resignation of one elementary level classroom teacher and one vacancy from the previous quarter, two elementary level classroom teachers were hired.

Following the resignation of the Chief Financial Officer, the position title has been remodified to Business Manager; one vacancy exists.

## **24. Board Policies and Administrative Regulations**

The following Board Policies and Administrative Regulations are new or revised and approved during this Quarter:

### **Board Policy**

103 Discrimination / Harassment Affecting Students  
103.1 Nondiscrimination – Qualified Students with Disabilities  
104 Discrimination / Harassment Affecting Staff  
227 Controlled Substances / Paraphernalia  
247 Hazing  
249 Bullying / Cyberbullying  
601 Fiscal Objectives  
602 Budget Planning / Preparation  
604 Budget Adoption  
605 Tax Levy  
616 Payment of Bills  
619 District Audit  
620.1 Fund Balance and Stabilization Fund (new)  
707 Use of School Facilities  
918 Title I, Parent and Family Engagement – Attachment No. 1

### **Administrative Regulation**

104-AR-0 Reasonable Break Time and Lactation Accommodations (new)  
222-AR-0 Tobacco and Vaping Products (new)  
222-AR-1 Tobacco and Vaping Products Violation – Parental Notification (new)  
227-AR-0 Controlled Substances / Paraphernalia (new)  
237.2-AR-0 Student Phone Policy and Procedures  
247-AR-0 Hazing (new)  
247-AR-2 Notice of Complainant and/or Parents/Guardians Complainant (new)  
249-AR-0 Bullying / Cyberbullying (new)  
249-AR-2 Notice of Complainant and/or Parents/Guardians Complainant (new)  
351-AR-0 Drug-Free Workplace Notice (new)  
351-AR-1 Record of Reasonable Suspicion of Controlled Substance Abuse (new)  
616-AR-0 Purchasing / Accounts Payable / Cash Disbursement (new)  
707-AR-1 Rules for Use of School Facilities

## **25. Facilities and Property Services – Maintenance, School Safety & Security**

### **A. Maintenance**

Semi-annual maintenance was performed on HVAC systems and boilers per a multi-year agreement with The McClure Company. District equipment and facilities have been winterized for the season. Additional facility, property, and equipment repairs / replacements were made, as needed.

To address lavatory faucets being left on after use and to update facilities for more efficient utility usage, the maintenance team began replacing units with self-closing spigots.

The maintenance team transformed a classroom into the Drone Soccer Room to enhance student programs.

### **B. School Safety & Security**

District safety and security meetings have been held each month of the quarter. Participation with stakeholders has exceeded 80% in each meeting. The Coordinator of Safety and Security participates in weekly virtual meetings with the AIU Director of Safety and Security. Fire and evacuation drills were held throughout the quarter with increased “Standard Protocol” signs posted in key areas within the building assisting with building evacuation efficiencies.

Administrative regulations relating to cell phone possession and use during the academic day for grades 4-8 has been updated, moving cell phone storage from individual Yondr pouches and implementing secure classroom cases instead. Classroom cases have proven to be more cost efficient, have increased student accountability and engagement, and have decreased student discipline related to improper cell phone usage.

Due to a significant increase in the need for additional video surveillance to ensure building safety, the Technology Department installed new cameras, configured switches, and resolved numerous network issues that have arose over time. These initiatives support a more robust digital security infrastructure and enhances staff and student safety.

District Administration met with City of Duquesne Officials to discuss emergency coordination efforts with local EMS, Fire, and Police entities and District safety procedures. Topics discussed include Incident Command Structure (ICS), Standard Response Protocols (SRP), new building floor assignments, providing remote camera and physical building access for police, after hour alarm scenarios, and fire / evacuation drill procedures.

The “Rocket Rules” safety and security awareness program continued to be presented throughout the lower grade levels to teach students emergency preparedness, safety awareness and social emotional skills for targeted age groups.

## **26. Governance and Administration**

Dr. Sue A. Mariani, Chief School Administrator, is supervised by Dr. William H. Kerr, who was reappointed as the Court-appointed Receiver, effective March 31, 2022, through April 1, 2025. 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. Dr. Kerr reports to Judge Alan D. Hertzberg and to Angela Fitterer, Interim Secretary of Education, via Dr. Gina Colarossi, Special Advisor to the Secretary.

The Duquesne City Board of School Directors, with whom the administration meets in Executive Session prior to every Receiver Business Meeting, consists of the following members:

1. Board President Sonya Gooden
2. Board Vice President Rosia Reid
3. School Director Jocelyn Brown
4. School Director Candice Butler-Davis
5. School Director Burton Comensky
6. School Director Laura Elmore
7. School Director Calvin Harris
8. School Director Connie Lucas-Kemp
9. School Director Cedric Robertson

Members of the Duquesne City Board of School Directors participated in two Receiver Business Meetings during the Second Quarter: October 22 and December 3, 2024. In a special voting session, the Board held its Reorganization Meeting on December 3, 2024, and elected officers for 2024-2025. The elected Board President appointed Board representatives to the Steel Center CTE and Southeastern Mon Valley Special School.

School Board members in attendance at the Receiver Business Meetings: October (6) and December (5).

## **27. Next Report**

The next Quarterly Progress Report will cover the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2024–2025, January 1, 2025, through March 31, 2025. That report is expected to be filed in April 2025.

## **28. Acknowledgements**

*The following individuals contributed to this report:*

- William H. Kerr, Ed.D., Court-Appointed Receiver
- Sue A. Mariani, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
- Jennifer Tressler, B.S., CPA, Chief Financial Officer

- Jamie Schmidt, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer / Federal Programs Coordinator
- Stephen M. Vak, Ed.D., Education Consultant
- Celeste Rudge, M. Ed., Director of Literacy and Innovation
- Brandon Kash, M. Ed., Director of Technology, Digital Learning and Innovation
- Pam Zackel, M. Ed., Director of Special Education
- Erica Slobodnik, M. Ed., K-8 Building Principal
- Brian Stowell, MBA, Director of Facilities, Transportation, and Security
- Brandon Irdi, Act 44 Safety and Security Coordinator
- Crystal Irdi, AAS, Human Resources Assistant / Board Secretary / Open Records Officer
- Sara Fite, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent / Attendance Coordinator