PELHAM UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Corrective Action Plan related to the
Internal Audit Report on Detailed Testing-Human Resources, Employee Benefits & Payroll
Dated October 3, 2025

Recommendation 1
Assess the Department's Staff and Duties
Complete an assessment to determine whether current staffing levels in the Department are adequate to support the operations and duties. The current structure may not be sustainable long term and may increase the risk of delays, errors, and compliance gaps. The District should consider reassigning duties, hiring additional support staff, or leveraging automation within the nVision system to improve workload distribution and enhance processing efficiency. The District should also consider exploring cross-training opportunities with additional staff for coverage in case of absences and to reduce dependency risk.

District Response
Since completion of the audit fieldwork, the District added 0.5 FTE staff in the Human Resource (HR) Department to assume some duties. While the HR Department could use additional staffing, the budget does not currently support this initiative. In 2025-26, the District budgeted funds to implement a new software program to support some components of the HR function and began implementation during the summer. The implementation has proved challenging and the District is working with the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center to address issues with the program and/or source a new vendor.

Implementation Date: **June 30, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible: **Trisha Fitzgerald, Executive Director for Human Resources & Leadership**

Recommendation 2
Web-Based Program
Consider implementing the use of a web-based program (e.g., FileBound, SchoolFront, Frontline Central, etc.) to maintain the employees' files in the HR area. This would enhance operational efficiencies related to the retention of records and search/retrieval process to view documents, as well as reduce the need for maintaining hard copy records. We suggest a web-based program with functionality that provides automated reminders for missing or unsubmitted documents to allow the Department to determine if any records still need to be completed or provided.

District Response
In 2025-26, the District budgeted funds to implement a new software program to support the HR function and began implementation during the summer. The implementation has proved challenging and the District is working with the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center to address issues with the program and/or source a new vendor.

Implementation Date: **June 30, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible: **Trisha Fitzgerald, Executive Director for Human Resources & Leadership**

Recommendation 3
Leave of Absence Processes
Enhance the processes regarding LOA administration by implementing the following:
a) Require that LOA request forms are signed by the employee and submitted for Board approval prior to the LOA start date whenever feasible.
b) Issue and obtain the "Reply to Application for Leave" form to the employee immediately following Board approval, ideally before the employee begins a LOA.
c) Request the employee to sign the "Reply to Application for Leave" form within two weeks of receiving it to confirm understanding and acceptance of the LOA terms.

d) Consistently enter the Board approval dates of each LOA into the HR system and attach the corresponding Board minutes to the finalized LOA documentation in each file.
e) Attach a copy of the applicable Board minutes to the approved LOA documentation maintained in the employee's HR file.
f) Create a standardized checklist for each LOA case to ensure all required documents are collected, signed, and filed-such as the "Reply to Application for Leave" form, Board approval, HR letter, employee acknowledgment, and department notification.
g) Utilize the nVision system or another workflow management tool to track key LOA dates (e.g., submission, approval, return-to-work) and trigger automatic reminders to HR and employees to reduce potential delays and missed actions.
h) Develop a formal protocol for notifying affected departments (Payroll, IT, Security, etc.) when an employee begins or returns from a LOA . Include a routing slip or secure email confirmation process that documents when and to whom the notice was sent.
i) Perform periodic (e.g., quarterly, or semi-annually) reviews on a sample basis of active LOA files to confirm that all required forms, signatures, and supporting documents are present and timely. Any findings should be logged and shared with HR leadership for follow-up.

District Response

In 2025-26, the District budgeted funds to implement a new software program to support the HR function and began implementation during the summer. The implementation has proved challenging and the District is working with the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center to address issues with the program and/or source a new vendor. The District will review its current LOA file checklists to include recommended items and will establish procedures to review the completeness of files, when feasible, such as a summer intern. The District will also draft a checklist for employees so that they are aware of needed documentation and timelines.

Implementation Date: **December 1, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible: **Trisha Fitzgerald, Executive Director for Human Resources & Leadership**

Recommendation 4
Annual Performance Evaluations

Ensure that all active employees receive annual performance evaluations as required by Board policy and applicable contracts. Consider assigning a staff member to track the completion of evaluations within the departments and schools and to follow up on any missing or overdue reviews. In addition, develop procedures to maintain written evaluations in the employees' HR files to be readily accessible for review and include the following:
a) Document exceptions, such as employee LOA, in the HR file when evaluations cannot be completed within the regular cycle.
b) Conduct an annual review of the employee evaluation files to verify compliance and identify any gaps in documentation.
c) Strengthening documentation practices, implementing tracking systems for evaluations and LOA, and assessing staffing capacity or automation opportunities to support operational efficiency and compliance.

District Response

During the latter part of school year 2024-25, the District focused on ensuring that performance evaluations were completed. At the completion of the 2024-2025 school year, the District witnessed an increased level of compliance over previous years. Part of this was attributed to increased clarity of evaluation deadlines and review of submitted documents. The District would like to increase capacity of a digital evaluation system to better track and review staff evaluations.

Implementation Date: **December 1, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible: **Trisha Fitzgerald, Executive Director for Human Resources & Leadership**

Recommendation 5
Completeness of Employee HR Files

Establish procedures to ensure that the employee HR files are complete and include the appropriate documents within their records related to hiring and separation of employees. We recommend that the District enhance the processes by implementing the following:

a) Require the use of an updated and standardized checklist for all new hires, ensuring it includes all required documents (e.g., appointment letters, Board minutes, background checks, credentials, transcripts, salary verification), and including the completed checklist in the employees' HR file.

b) Maintain a copy of the official Board appointment minutes in each employee's HR file. Where timing is delayed, include interim documentation (e.g., confirmation email) until formal minutes are available.

c) Require that official transcripts, certifications, and other required credentials be verified and documented prior to the employee's start date. Unopened documents should be reviewed and included in the file with verification notation.

d) Ensure that offer and appointment letters are sent in advance of the employee's start date and reference Board approval, where applicable. Include a signed acknowledgment from the employee confirming receipt and acceptance.

e) Perform periodic reviews of new hire files (e.g., quarterly, or semi-annually) to ensure compliance with documentation standards. These reviews should be conducted by someone independent of the hiring process.

f) Utilize checklists, ensure timely Board approvals, credential verifications, maintain detailed records for salary and payouts, and conduct periodic file audits. These steps will enhance compliance, reduce risk, and promote enhanced efficiency during staff transitions.

District Response

The District will review its current HR file checklists to include all recommended items and will establish procedures to review the completeness of files, when feasible, by someone independent of the hiring process, such as a summer intern.

Implementation Date:	**June 30, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible:	**Trisha Fitzgerald, Executive Director for Human Resources & Leadership**

Recommendation 6
Utilize Payroll Checklists

Create payroll checklists that include the key steps performed during the processing and review of each payroll cycle and any other key procedures (e.g., mid-year salary increases, vacation day buyouts, etc.) completed by the Payroll Clerk.

District Response

The Payroll Clerk maintains documentation of key payroll procedures; however, a payroll processing checklist will be developed to support the processing and review of each payroll to help ensure the accuracy and completeness of each payroll.

Implementation Date:	**June 30, 2026**
Person(s) Responsible:	**James Hricay, Assistant Superintendent for Business**