



OFFICE OF THE RECEIVER

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD Q2 2025–2026

Dr. William H. Kerr, Court-Appointed Receiver

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1. Authority and Purpose

On October 11, 2000, Eugene W. Hickok, then Secretary of Education, certified Duquesne City School District as a distressed school district pursuant to section 691 of the Public-School Code, which has been repealed. The School District was managed under a Board of Control, which had its first legislative action meeting on November 27, 2000. From 2000 until 2012, the District continually remained subject to a declaration of financial distress and operated under the Board of Control, when it was designated as a severe financial recovery school district. Consistent with the subsequent Financial Recovery Act 141 of 2012, the School District was placed in Receivership and a Financial Recovery Plan was implemented on April 2, 2013. Should any ambiguity exist between the original Financial Recovery Plan of 2013, the Duquesne City School District Financial Recovery Plan of 2025 shall take precedence.

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 Q2–2025–2026– October 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025**, is provided herein.

2. School District Receivership

The School District was placed under Receivership in 2013 due to financial instability and academic performance issues, following a comprehensive review of its operations. Receivership has involved measures such as advancing state subsidies, providing a transitional loan, offering targeted grants, and implementing professional development programs funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to address these concerns.

Receivership has enabled the School District to efficiently secure, manage, and stabilize its assets, while eliminating liabilities and resolving financial disputes. Key policies and procedures have been established to ensure proper accounting, cash flow management, debt service, and timely payments. This intervention has also supported student achievement, professional development, and financial accountability—forming a foundation for ongoing school improvement.

The various Court appointed Receivers and the PDE-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, the PDE, Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU), and Public Financial Management (PFM).

Each 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.

The Single Audit Report as of June 30, 2025, shows no current or potential litigation against Duquesne City School District, and the District is unaware of any unasserted claims or assessments.

3. School Improvement Efforts

Ongoing school improvement efforts to enhance curriculum, instruction, and assessment are part of the Duquesne City School District's approach to delivering quality educational programs and services. These initiatives involve collaboration among administration, faculty, and support staff. The District also incorporates financial sustainability, transparency, and accountability—including regular projection updates during the annual budget planning and approval process—as elements of its school improvement practices.

4. Act 47 of 2025, Section 1607

On December 2, 2025, the Court-Appointed Receiver presented Section 1607 of Act 47, which mandates a Feasibility Study for the Duquesne City School District, to the Board, administrators, and public. The same presentation was made to faculty and staff on December 3, 2025. Both sessions included questions and comments for follow-up as the feasibility study begins in early 2026.

Approved November 12, 2025, by the General Assembly of Pennsylvania and signed into law by Josh Shapiro, Governor.

SECTION 1607. ATTENDANCE IN OTHER DISTRICTS.

(B.3) FOR A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT ELIMINATED ITS HIGH SCHOOL UNDER SUBSECTION (B), IF SUFFICIENT FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE, THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH A PROJECT TEAM WHICH SHALL CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL, FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF CONSOLIDATION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH ANOTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT. THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

- (1.)THE ASSESSMENT SHALL INCLUDE A FEASIBILITY TO ANALYZE CONSOLIDATION WITH NO LESS THAN THREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS IDENTIFIED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION WHOSE BORDERS ARE NO MORE THAN SEVEN MILES FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S BORDER.
- (2.)THE FEASIBILITY STUDY SHALL INCLUDE A REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OFFERINGS AND SERVICES, FACILITIES UTILIZATION AND CAPITAL PLANNING, FISCAL ANALYSES, GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES, OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES AND STAKEHOLDER CONSIDERATIONS.
- (3.)THE SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT ELIMINATED ITS HIGH SCHOOL UNDER SUBSECTION (B) AND THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS IDENTIFIED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) SHALL COOPERATE WITH THE PROJECT TEAM CONDUCTING THE ASSESSMENT.
- (4.)THE PROJECT TEAM SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT, INCLUDING ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, TO THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

5. Quarterly Progress Report FY Q2-2025-2026 Highlights

- The Quarterly Receiver Advisory Committee meeting was held on October 14, 2025. Topics of discussion included administrative and financial updates, academic and educational programs, special education, human resources, dates of upcoming PDE meetings, and highlights from the Q1 2025–2026 Progress Report. Updates about the implementation of the 2025 Duquesne City School District Financial Recovery Plan and the Data Collection Instrument were presented. The remaining Receiver Advisory Committee meeting dates are January 13, April 14, and June 9, 2026.
- Three incumbent School Directors were re-elected on November 7, 2025, and received Certificates of Election. Two Board vacancies remain due to incomplete nomination filings and/or successful write-in candidates but they were not formally accepted. Applications for these positions are open until January 5, 2026, with interviews on January 13. A special meeting will be held to appoint two new members, who will take the Oath of Office, participate in AIU Act 55 training on January 24, and be seated at the January 27, 2026, Receiver Business Meeting.

- The School District acknowledged official notice from PDE of a proposed \$18,031,86 per-student tuition rate with Duquesne, East Allegheny, and West Mifflin School Districts, as outlined in Section 1607(b)(5) of the Pennsylvania School Code. The notice provided the new rate and calculation details.
- A Not-to-Exceed Act 1 Tax Resolution was approved at the December 2, 2025, RBM for 2026-2027, noting that the maximum Act 1 Index is capped at 5.8%. This equates to 1.309 mils which, if approved, will establish a new millage rate of 23.88 mils.
- PaTTAN, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, and Duquesne administrators collaborated to plan, schedule, and conduct student benchmark assessments which occurred between December 3-9, 2025, at Duquesne K-8 School. Visiting assessment team members focused on K-6 and 7-8 Acadience assessment measures. The next benchmark assessment period will be conducted in May. The Department of Education provided a \$50,000 grant to the School District for Allegheny Intermediate Unit consulting services for School Improvement Planning and Education Subscription Services for Acadience K-6 and 7-8 Reading and Mathematics assessments in the amount of \$6,440.45.
- The Duquesne Leadership Team and PFM Consultants met in early December regarding 2025-2026 model assumptions and financial projections. Discussion points included:
 - Updated revenue estimates based on the adopted 2025-2026 State Budget, which increased revenue from the 2025-2026 budgeted \$16,520,402 for BEF, SEF, and Ready to Learn supplements to \$16,774,618, resulting in a positive impact of \$254,216.
 - Tuition rate calculations for respective regular and special education cyber charter schools, resulting in an estimated cost avoidance of \$64,311 in 2026 -2027.
 - DEA teacher contract negotiations, starting January 1, 2026, noting that the first initial “Meet and Greet session” is set for January 8.
 - Preliminary baseline projections, which do not include tax increases, produce a negative operating result of \$509,041 for 2026-2027.
 - Model assumptions and financial projections indicate revenues will increase by a compounded annual growth rate of 2.0% and expenses will increase by a rate of 4.1% annually.
- The 2025–2026 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 2025–2026 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, Chief Recovery Officer, Superintendent of Schools, Business Manager, 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, Educational Technology, Student Highlights, Human Resources, Administration and Governance, Act 141 Advisory Committee, and Contracted Services.

- The Court-Appointed Receiver, Chief Recovery Officer, and Superintendent of Schools continue to collaborate with the Duquesne Director of Information Technology to review the Financial Recovery Plan and Data Collection Instrument. The Superintendent and CRO evaluate supporting evidence submitted by Administrators and grant approval prior to the Court-Appointed Receiver’s final review and authorization. The next batch of 2025-2026 evidence submissions will be forwarded to PDE and PFM concurrently with the Q2 Progress Report.
- Current secondary (9–12) enrollment of Duquesne resident students at West Mifflin and East Allegheny is 265.
- Annual tuition to be paid by Duquesne for students attending schools elsewhere in 2025–2026 is projected to be \$10,185,356.81
- Current charter school enrollment K–12 is 216.
- Steel Center Career and Technical Education enrollment is twenty-nine (29); CTE tuition per student is estimated to be \$5,910.57 for 2025–2026.
- Mon Valley Special School student enrollment is eight (8) with an overall estimated tuition cost of \$601,405.00 for 2025–2026.

6. Supplemental Information

The DCSD website, www.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 and Quarterly Progress Reports are posted for accountability, transparency, and fiscal responsibilities.

“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.

7. Regular Education – Student Enrollment

Duquesne K-8 student enrollments, for 2024–2025 and 2025–2026, are displayed on the following table.

**Duquesne K-8 School
Student Enrollment
December 31, 2025**

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Sept 2024	64	63	53	56	43	55	52	42	45	473
Dec 2024	67	62	52	56	41	51	51	41	52	473
Mar 2025	72	64	50	58	40	51	48	41	50	474
Jun 2025	71	62	48	55	39	50	48	41	49	463
Sept 2025	54	63	55	46	56	34	48	51	38	442
Dec 2025	57	57	56	46	57	37	49	51	38	448

8. 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, 2025**

Grade	Sections (Classroom Size)	Enrollment	ESL Enrollment
Kindergarten	3 (19.0)	57	10
First Grade	3 (19.0)	57	15
Second Grade	3 (18.3)	55	14
Third Grade	2 (23.0)	46	9
Fourth Grade	3 (19)	57	18
Fifth Grade	2 (18.5)	37	10
Sixth Grade	2 (24.5)	49	12
Seventh Grade*	4 (12.7)	51	13
Eighth Grade*	4 (9.5)	38	12
TOTALS	22	448	113

**Blended grade levels*

9. Average Student Attendance

**Duquesne City School District
Average Student Attendance
2025–2026**

2025-2026 Month	Day Count	Avg. Monthly % Present	Avg. % Absent Count	Avg. Excused Count	Avg. Unexcused Count	Avg. Unexcused Count
Aug	3	93.17%	6.83%	8	2.5	0
Sept	20	90.99%	9.01%	15.44	3.25	0
Oct	22	91%	9%	13.34	1.95	0
Nov	15	89.91%	10.09%	16.96	2.23	0
Dec	14	86.34%	13.66%	17.57	2	0
Total	74	90.17%	9.83%	14.81	2.27	0

10. Significant Observations

Ending Q2 -2025-2026 student enrollment is 448 and the ESL enrollment is 113 students, indicating an offsetting number of incoming and outgoing students, including eleven (11) more ESL students ending Q1-2025-2026.

11. Student Enrichment and Support Programs

Boys & Girls Club – 36 students enrolled (Grades K-8)

Oasis Tutoring – 0 Students received services (1-3)

Eighth Grade student participated in the *YouthWorks Hire Me Program*, sponsored by Goodwill Industries. The program provided the students with an opportunity to visit Wilberforce University and Central State University, two historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) based in the state of Ohio. The experience awarded our students an opportunity to explore both colleges and to gain first-hand experience of college life. Students also benefited from college students explaining the history of the universities, such as cultural and heritage achievements and how each contributes to society. Our students were able to engage further with questions and were given complementary university t-shirts.

Our Eighth Grade students were taken on a field trip to explore the electives offered by West Mifflin High School. Students were able to visit classrooms and ask questions related to the class offered. This provided the students with the opportunity to see what the school has to offer before deciding which high school they want to attend – East Allegheny Jr / Sr or West Mifflin Area High School. Students are scheduled to visit East Allegheny Jr / Sr High School in January.

The School District continues to maintain a strong and productive partnership with PACS (Pittsburgh Area Community Schools.) This collaboration has brought together educators, students, and families in a unified effort to surround students with a community of support – helping every child succeed both in school and in life. The PACS Coordinator provides direct socio-emotional enrichment and facilities support services such as grief counseling, on-site food pantry access, and clothing support for families in need. PACS distributes weekend food bags to students experiencing food insecurity and / or homelessness and participating in both school-sponsored and PACS-organized family engagement activities. Monthly attendance meetings are held between PACS staff, the Director of Truancy Services, the Administrative Coordinator for Attendance, and the Building Principal to develop and monitor attendance incentives that promote positive attendance habits among students and families.

A robust K-8 STEM Coding Program is supported by an external provider who collaborates with teachers during grade-level meetings. This program ensures all students receive hands-on coding and STEM instruction on a rotating weekly basis, enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Attack Theater, an arts-integration organization, provides an external facilitator to work collaboratively with teachers in grades 3-5. Through the combination of modern dance, live music, and interdisciplinary arts, Attack Theater engages students in creative, movement-based learning experiences that enrich classroom instruction and fosters self-expression. A winter performance was given, focused on the holiday spirit.

The Boys and Girls Club continue to provide valuable after-school programming, with (36) K-8 grade students enrolled. The program supports academic enrichment, social-emotional development, and recreational opportunities in a safe and structured environment.

Parent Engagement Activities

School-level personnel successfully coordinated and participated in several fall family and community engagement events, fostering meaningful connections between families, students, and staff.

- ***Literacy Night:*** The event provided hands-on, interactive activities designed to support literacy development for students in grades K-8. Staff facilitated demonstrations and led discussions to help attendees incorporate literacy strategies into daily routines, providing ways families can

be engaged in practical literacy exercises that can be continued at home. To encourage reading beyond the classroom, each student received a bag of books.

- ***Cultural Night***: Focused on celebrating diversity and supporting our English Language Learners, this event featured interactive tables highlighting different countries and cultures from around the world. Families engaged in samples of traditional foods and learned about global traditions. Pittsburgh Area Community Schools (PACS) generously donated turkeys and food items to support our families, reinforcing the school's commitment to community partnerships and family well-being.
- ***Middle School Parent Night***: Centered on familiarizing families with the Middle School House System, parents and guardians participated in house challenges alongside their students. The event provided them with a firsthand experience of the school's culture and student engagement strategies. A meal was provided, creating a welcoming space for families to ask questions, connect with middle school teachers and administrators, and deepen their understanding of the academic and social-emotional programs offered.

Essential events such as these strengthen school-family partnerships, promote cultural awareness, and support student learning both in the classroom and at home.

12. State Monitoring

The District does not currently have any updates regarding state monitoring.

13. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

A. Curriculum and Instruction

DCSD have partnered with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 (AIU3) to provide comprehensive content coaching to all teachers. This collaboration has included structured professional development sessions in addition to ongoing classroom-based monitoring and coaching to support instructional improvement.

Teachers are participating in weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), organized both by grade level and bi-monthly for content area. These PLCs will serve as a forum for educators to examine classroom- and student-level data in order to inform instructional planning. Meetings include opportunities for vertical alignment across grade levels and interdisciplinary collaboration. Data sources used during PLCs will include benchmarking assessments, daily exit tickets, anecdotal records, and proficiency data from online learning platforms. During the 2025–2026 school year, PLCs have implemented a new data-driven protocol aligned to the District-led book study of *Leverage Leadership* and the Financial Recovery Plan.

The District continues to prioritize personalized learning across all grade levels. Teachers craft lesson plans and create individualized learning paths to ensure students receive instruction tailored to their current skill levels, with a focus on accelerating growth and closing achievement gaps.

DCSD is piloting *Illustrative Mathematics* during the 2025–2026 school year as a core curricular resource. Teachers received professional development on this program and content coaches from the AIU have been instrumental in supporting teachers with this new math resource which is a shift in teaching and learning. Illustrative Math focuses more on conceptual math concepts instead of traditional behavioral math concepts. Additionally, the AIU content coaches are providing targeted coaching and ongoing professional development to support effective implementation of this new resource.

B. Professional Development

- Run, Hide, Fight
- VILS Training LSX2 for Grades 5-8
- Heggerty Training for Grades K-2
- Illustrative Math Grades 3-8
- Magic School AI
- Augmented Reality
- Discovery Education for Social Studies and Science teachers
- See the Good (SEL curriculum pilot for K-3 teachers)
- PVAAS Training from the AIU
- New processes for IST/DSAP
- DOK Questioning

C. Benchmark Assessment

With technical assistance and implementation support from the PA Department of Education (PDE), the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) and PaTTAN, the District initiated the use of Acadience as a universal screening and benchmark assessment system for students in grades K-8. The adoption of Acadience represents a key component of the District's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and its ongoing efforts to systematically identify instructional strengths, learning gaps, and areas requiring targeted intervention in both Reading and Mathematics.

Acadience provides reliable, research-based measures that assess foundational literacy and numeracy skills aligned to grade-level expectations. The assessment data enables educators and administrators to make timely, data-informed instructional decisions, differentiate instruction, and design intentional opportunities for both acceleration and remediation. At the classroom and building levels, Acadience data is used to inform small-group instruction, intervention placement, progress monitoring, and instructional planning aligned to individual student needs.

The winter benchmark administration occurred between December 2 – 12, 2025. To ensure fidelity of implementation and consistency across grade levels, PaTTAN staff conducted a comprehensive assessment sweep of all students in grades K-8. This approach supported standardized administration procedures and provided the District with a complete baseline dataset to guide instructional and school improvement planning.

Due to the timing of the initial implementation and the winter benchmark window, Acadience will be administered twice during the 2025–2026 school year – once in December and once in May. Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, the District plans to fully implement the recommended three (3) benchmark administrations (fall, winter, and spring.) This expanded assessment schedule will allow the District to more effectively monitor student growth over time, identify trends in learning gaps earlier in the school year, evaluate the impact of instructional interventions, and make proactive adjustments to curriculum and instructional practices.

The continued use of Acadience will strengthen the District's capacity to support equitable access to high-quality instruction, ensure early identification of academic needs, and align instructional responses to data-driven insights across all grade levels.

14. Technology, Digital Learning, and Innovation

Building upon the technology, digital learning, and infrastructure initiatives outlined in the first quarter of the 2025–2026 school year, the District continued to advance operational readiness, instructional

support, and assessment reliability throughout Quarter 2. These efforts further strengthen system stability, improve service delivery, and ensure uninterrupted access to instructional and assessment platforms.

During Quarter 2, Acadience Learning Online (ALO) Middle of Year (MOY) benchmark assessments for the 2025–2026 school year were successfully completed. From an information technology perspective, thirteen (13) iPads were provisioned and configured specifically for this assessment window, along with the creation of thirteen (13) corresponding ALO use accounts utilized by PATTAN staff during testing. To support a smooth and consistent testing process, an informational packet was assembled for each device and account, providing proctors with all necessary credentials and procedural guidance. The testing window concluded with no internal technical issues, ensuring assessment completion without interruption.

In preparation for upcoming WIDA assessments, taking place from January to early February 2026, the District completed updates and configuration of its internally hosted DRC COS server infrastructure. Two servers—a Windows Server 2019 instance and an Ubuntu Server 24.04 instance—were updated with the latest configurations and content provided by DRC. These systems are fully prepared for student testing and aligned with current assessment requirements. Additionally, an internal knowledgebase document was created and published to assist instructional staff with student access procedures, leveraging DRC-hosted authentication services in conjunction with the District’s internal content servers.

The District’s internally hosted ticketing system, utilizing the OS-Ticket platform, continues to operate reliably and has contributed to improved response times and reduced instructional downtime. The system’s reporting and issue-tracking capabilities remain a valuable operational resource, supporting efficient prioritization and resolution of technology-related concerns across the District.

The Recovery Monitoring Tool remains an active and evolving component of District operations. Continuous improvements and usability enhancements are being implemented based on stakeholder feedback, allowing the process to remain responsive, efficient, and aligned with user needs. This interactive approach has resulted in a streamlined workflow supported by accessible tools and clear procedures.

To further enhance service capacity, the Information Technology Department engaged a contracted technology support professional from All Lines Technology, during Quarter 2. The technical support professional is supporting the Director of Information Technology and Truancy Services with Level 1 and select Level 2 support requests, as well as other technology-related responsibilities. This additional support has contributed to improved response times and increased student access to instructional technology and digital learning resources.

Looking ahead to the remainder of the 2025–2026 school year, the District will continue to expand student engagement in technology operations through the Student Tech Team initiative. This program is designed to support day-to-day technology needs while providing students with hands-on experience in information technology, digital responsibility, and workforce-relevant skills, further strengthening the District’s commitment to innovation and student-centered learning.

In addition to ongoing operational improvements, the District continues to conduct a comprehensive review of existing information technology contracts and service agreements to identify opportunities for improved efficiency, consolidation, and cost containment while maintaining service quality. This ongoing review process ensures that technology expenditures remain aligned with instructional priorities, operational needs, and long-term sustainability goals, while eliminating redundancies and optimizing vendor-supported services where appropriate.

The District’s phone system has recently undergone enhancements to improve usability and access to services. Automated call menus were updated to provide clearer navigation, improve call routing, and expand access to in-house services (e.g., PACS). The phone system now incorporates AI-generated voice prompts for improved clarity and consistency, as well as regularly updated informational options, including weekly lunch menu announcements. These updates enhance communication efficiency for families, staff, and community members while reducing call handling delays and improving overall user experience.

15. Special Education Services

A. Special Education Enrollment

As of December 31, 2025, the District had a total of 125 students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) who are being supported: (102) in-district, (21) specialized educational placements, and (2) Duquesne Cyber Academy.

B. Staffing

The Special Education Department began the school year fully staffed with a total of ten (10) special education teachers, one speech and language pathologist, and one half-time cyber academy teacher. The District has also partnered with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to provide a half-time speech and language pathologist for the remainder of the school year to support the needs of our students.

Support Category	No. of Teachers
Learning Support	3.5
Emotional Support	2.5
Autistic Support	1 (FT K-2)
Life Skills / Autistic Support	2
Speech and Language Support	1.5

C. During the 2025–2026 school year, the Special Education Department is prioritizing efforts to strengthen the capacity of our general education teachers in effectively implementing students’ IEPs within the regular education setting. Our goal is to ensure that every teacher has the knowledge, tools, and support needed to provide high-quality instruction that meets the diverse needs of all learners. By fostering collaboration between general and special education staff, offering targeted professional development, and providing practical resources, the district is committed to creating inclusive classrooms where students with disabilities can fully access the curriculum and thrive academically and socially.

16. Student Services

A. IST / DSAP Q4 Data

IST		DSAP	*
Total Students Referred	17	Total Students Referred	18
Referrals Reopened	0	Referrals Reopened	0
Cases Closed	1	Cases Closed	2
Cases Active	16	Cases Active	16

*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 twelve (12) students identified. All primary parents of families experiencing homelessness have been given the opportunity to utilize available resources depending on specific needs from Pittsburgh Area Community in Schools (PACS), Duquesne Family Center, Duquesne City School District, and Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

C. Foster Student Summary

School District personnel have identified five (5) in-district foster care students.

D. Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and MS House System

During the second quarter, the school recorded two-hundred and nine (209) discipline referrals, representing a 37% decrease from the same period last year. This reduction highlights the sustained impact of several key initiatives, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in grades K-6, the House System in grades 7-8, and the implementation of a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The newly assigned Assistant Principal – the former Dean of Students – has been key to the discipline data. The integration of Restorative Practices through the University of Pittsburgh has also continued to foster positive student relationships and build a stronger sense of community and accountability among students.

The PBIS framework continues to promote positive behavior through school-wide expectations: Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful. Students earn PBIS points (Duke Bucks) for demonstrating these expectations. Students who earn ten (10) or more points each week receive a PBIS certificate in recognition of their efforts.

The addition of the PBIS Store has been a tremendous success. Each week, students with ten or more Duke Bucks have the opportunity to shop for rewards. Top-earning students are recognized each month with certificates and “Duke” spirit merchandise.

17. 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. Supports include closely monitoring student needs to ensure resources are available and provided when needed. 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 school recorded 209 discipline referrals during the second quarter, representing a 37% decrease from the same period last year.

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 two in-person therapists which has been beneficial for students who need this support. The Instructional Support Team is being reconfigured this year to ensure teachers are providing the interventions and documenting the outcomes prior to the referral for special education and / or out-of-district placement.

Our school counselor provides weekly social-emotional learning lessons for all students in grades K-8, supporting both their personal growth and academic success. These lessons focus on key topics such as building positive relationships, managing emotions, developing empathy, and making responsible choices. At the middle school level, instruction also includes deeper discussions around peer pressure,

conflict resolution, digital citizenship, self-advocacy, and preparing for future academic and career goals.

18. District Cyber Academy and Marketing / Recruiting Plan

The District Cyber Academy, in partnership with Allegheny Intermediate Unit / Waterfront Learning, offers flexible, research-based online learning via Accelerate. One District teacher instructs students online and is available to support students through daily office hours. Students benefit from a high-quality curriculum and maintain access to all Duquesne programs, activities, sports, and clubs. The teacher is also responsible for contacting District families who have their K-8 student in another cyber school to discuss our program offerings. To date, one student has returned.

The 2025–2026 Marketing / Recruiting Plan is being reevaluated to ensure effectiveness. The District’s goal is to continue to boost student enrollment at Duquesne K-8 School and lower charter tuition costs. It leverages current resources, social media, and staff to engage the community and highlight Duquesne City School District’s legacy. The “REDISCOVER DUQUESNE” brand will continue to promote a flexible online education option for families.

19. Financial Recovery Plan

Judge Alan D. Hertzberg extended Receivership for three years (effective April 1, 2025–March 31, 2028), re-appointed the Court-Appointed Receiver, and approved the School District’s 2025 Financial Recovery Plan (FRP). The FRP is available to stakeholders and is posted on the School District’s website.

20. Budget and Finance (YTD)

A. Residency Verification Program

The School District currently enrolls an estimated 475 students in neighboring high schools, charter schools, and cyber charter programs. Of these, approximately 180 attend charter schools and 40 participate in cyber charter programs. The average tuition cost for charter and cyber charter schools is \$14,500, while high school tuition at East Allegheny and West Mifflin is set at \$18,031.87 for the 2025–2026 academic year, representing a significant budgetary consideration. The District employs all available resources to verify and reconcile student residency; however, monitoring remains challenging, particularly with transient populations.

The School District has begun using a single residency verification process for all students. Thomas Reuters Solutions, supported by a fraud prevention consultant, will provide data for follow-ups. The contract for residency verification services is \$11,000 annually for a three-year period. Similar school districts found 3-5% of students were out-of-district, covering cyber-charter, sending school, and brick-and-mortar charter enrollments. Two administrative staff members have unrestricted access to review new enrollments and verify residency documents for potential fraud.

B. The Court-Appointed Receiver, Chief Recovery Officer, and Superintendent of Schools continue to collaborate with the Duquesne Director of Information Technology to review the Financial Recovery Plan and Data Collection Tool. The Superintendent and CRO evaluate supporting evidence submitted by Administrators and grant approval prior to the Court-Appointed Receiver’s final authorization. 2025-2026 evidence submissions will be forwarded to PDE and PFM concurrently with the Q2 Progress Report.

C. Consistent with the Financial Recovery Plan, a Board Resolution was approved for School Year 2025-2026, with the following key components:

1. Instructs the Administration to develop Business Office and Human Resources Procedure Manuals, in collaboration with designated Administrators and aligned with the School District's Financial Recovery Plan, effective for the 2025–2026 school year.
2. Instructs the Administration to perform an internal Human Resources audit which will include best practices, actions taken, revised/new policies and procedures, employee position controls, and human resources software and online technology tools.
3. Instructs the Administration to perform a thorough review and update of all administrative, professional, and support staff job descriptions to ensure they meet all work expectations and responsibilities. The job descriptions will include provisions for additional work assignments, assigned supervision, annual performance evaluations, and performance improvement plans.
4. Establishes Guiding Principles and Goals to optimize budget and finance operations for greater efficiency and accountability, improved resource allocations, and increased transparency for all School District operations.

The 2025–2026 Final General Fund Budget was approved at the June Receiver Business Meeting, which includes a 1.39 mil increase with a balanced budget of \$22,919,191.00. The current real estate tax rate is 22.58 mils and existing rates for Act 511 taxes continue. The median assessed homestead property pays \$25.00 more for the year.

The 2025–2026 Act 1 Resolution was approved at the December Receiver Business Meeting. The Court-Appointed Receiver certified that increasing any tax at a rate less than or equal to the index will be sufficient to balance its final budget for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

The Annual Children Nutrition Financial Report (CFR) was submitted to PDE-DNF on December 17th following an internal review and verification procedures. The report is pending PDE approval, and the Business Manager is monitoring the submission portal for status changes or requests for clarification.

The Business Manager completed and filed the required July, August, September 2025–2026 Cash Flow Report for the Department of Education. It is intended as 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.

Each 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. The Annual Financial Report for 2024–2025 was filed with PDE on December 10, 2025.

The School District faces ongoing financial pressure from increasing charter school tuition costs. For 2025–2026, non-special education charter tuition is \$14,400.14 per student, up \$58.13 from last year, while special education tuition is \$38,951.71 per student, down \$3,017.92. The special education funding formula assumes only 16% of students qualify, but the District's actual rate is much higher at 28%, causing the formula to underestimate enrollment and misallocate funds.

The following chart provides a visual with specific data to Duquesne's preliminary Average Daily Membership for 2025–2026; Special Education Population with 16% assumption required by PDE; Actual Special Education Population of the District at 28%; and Additional Cost to the District using the required 16% assumption.

Categories and Descriptions	Average Daily Memberships	Special Education Tuition Rate for 2025-2026	Number of Special Education Students at Charter Schools as of December 31, 2025	Charter School Tuition Cost for Special Education Students
DCSD Average Daily Membership for 2024-2025	941.138	-	-	-
Special Education Population with 16% assumption required by PDE	150.82	\$38,951.71	53	\$2,064,440.63
Actual Special Education Population of District is 28%	237.166	\$29,980.20	53	\$1,588,950.60
Additional Cost to District using required 16% assumption	-	\$8,971.51	-	\$475,490.03

21. General Fund Balance Analysis

Duquesne City School District General Fund Balance Analysis June 30, 2025

GF Balance Analysis June 30, 2025		
Non-spendable		
Pre-paid	\$115,392	-
Other	-	-
Total non-spendable	-	\$115,392
Restricted	-	-
Committed	-	-
Unassigned	-	\$1,802,695
Assigned		\$3,125,000
Total fund balance as of June 30, 2025 (audited)	-	\$4,227,762
Surplus (deficit) for FY 2024-2025	-	\$815,325
Total fund balance as of June 30, 2025 (audited)	-	\$5,043,087

22. Bonds and Notes Payable

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

Bonds and Notes Payable December 31, 2025

Fiscal Year Ending June 30	Bonds Payable	Notes Payable	Total Bonds and Notes Payable	Total Annual Debt Service
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

Fiscal Year Ending June 30	Bonds Payable	Notes Payable	Total Bonds and Notes Payable	Total Annual Debt Service
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
2028**	8,355,834	-	8,355,834	758,374

*Audited financial statements

**Projected

23. 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, 2025

Receiving Schools	Grades	Students September 30	Students December 31	Projected 2025-2026 Tuition
West Mifflin Area School District	9 – 12	234	238	\$4,219,582.68
East Allegheny School District	9 – 12	27	27	486,860.22
Charter schools, regular education	K – 8	131	129	1,857,618.06
Charter schools, special education	K – 8	39	43	1,639,037.49
Charter schools, regular education	9 – 12	30	34	489,604.76
Charter schools, special education	9 – 12	8	10	335,688.04
Special Education schools	K – 12	22	25	1,120,082.16
Totals		491	506	\$10,148,473.41

Special Education Schools (Out-of-District)	Qtr 2 Enrollment
Western PA School for the Deaf	2
The Children’s Institute	2
Mon Valley	8
PACE	2
Pathfinder	1
PLEA	2
Steel City Academies	7
Wesley Spectrum	1
Total	25

Changes in individual tuition enrollments in the categories of receiving schools can be seen by comparing enrollments from September 30, 2025 to December 31, 2025 in the Tuition Enrollment table above. Enrollment figures for East Allegheny and West Mifflin were reconciled at the end of FY 2024–2025. The Tuition Enrollment 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 265 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 \$18,031.86 that Duquesne will pay East Allegheny and West Mifflin School Districts in 2025–2026, based on Section 1607(b)(4) of the Pennsylvania School Code. [For comparison purposes, the School District pays a tuition rate of \$14,400.14 for Charter School students.]

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.

Duquesne City School District, Act 1 Index

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
Projected Base Index	4.0%	3.7%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%	3.0%	2.8%
Projected Act 1 Index	6.6%	6.1%	5.6%	5.3%	5.3%	5.0%	4.6%

24. 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 academics, the arts, athletics, and other school community activities.

Duquesne Education Foundation representatives met with School District officials and discussed available options for applying for Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program to support

student scholarships, educational field trips, and other educational opportunities for students and staff. The EITC application was submitted to the State Agency on December 3, 2025.

25. Human Resources – Personnel / Staffing Assignments

Settlements and other Personnel Actions

There were no personnel settlement agreements this Quarter.

Personnel / Staffing Assignments

The following chart presents a summary of staffing at the DCSD as of December 31, 2025. Parentheses indicate changes from the September 30, 2025, summary.

**Duquesne City School District
2025–2026 Staffing Summary
December 31, 2025**

DCSD Staffing Summary			
Professional Staff (0)	44	Administrators (0)	4
Instructional Support Staff (-1)	11	Coordinators and Supervisors (0)	4
Other Support Staff (0)	9	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 a paraprofessional, the School District made adjustments to streamline support services more efficiently.

Following the retirement of the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, the job titled was modified to include Educational Technology, one individual was hired.

26. Board Operation Guidelines, Board Policies and Administrative Regulations

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

Board Policies

- 101.1 Academic Standards
- 105 Curriculum Development
- 122 Extracurricular Activities
- 122.1 Non-School Sponsored Student Groups (new)
- 123 Interscholastic Athletics
- 209.2 Diabetes Management
- 626.4 Travel Reimbursement
- 817 District Social Media (new)

Administrative Regulations

- 122-AR-0 Extracurricular Activities (new)
- 122-AR-1 Extracurricular Activity Acknowledgement Form (new)

122-AR-5 Request Form for Student Extracurricular Meetings (new)
122.1-AR-0 Non-School Sponsored Student Groups (new)
122.1-AR-1 Non-School Sponsored Student Group Acknowledgement Form (new)
122.1-AR-2 Request Form for Non-School Sponsored Student Groups (new)

27. Facilities and Property Services - Maintenance, School Safety and Security

A. Maintenance

The Director of Facilities, Transportation and Security and the Maintenance Technician completed several preventative and routine maintenance repairs during this quarter. These include, but are not limited to, continuing efforts to upgrade and repurpose the useful spaces of the facility; repair building exterior doors and latch sensors; replacement of garage door springs; transitioning all District grounds equipment to winterization for snow removal and storage; new brush installed on Kubota tractor; Salt Dog installed on District truck; and gymnasium roof HVAC units semi-annual inspection and preventive maintenance occurred.

To date, the Director of Facilities, Transportation and Security and the Maintenance Technician have scheduled and been present for several facility inspections to include, but not limited to, elevator and dumb-waiter inspections, smoke detector sensitivity and fire panel inspection, water chemical testing, and CM Regents annual facilities and property evaluation. All inspections passed, and recommendations have been satisfied.

B. School Safety & Security

Fire drills were held monthly within the quarter. The District held its full building evacuation on November 5, 2025 within the first 90 days of the school year.

Monthly “Safety and Security” meetings, as well as “Threat Assessment” meetings have been held and scheduled throughout the year. Additional “Threat Assessment” training is also scheduled for the staff.

Medical AEDs, Stop the Bleed kits, and first aid stations have been evaluated on a daily and weekly basis by the nurse. All items have been cleared for ready use during the quarter.

Security held a professional development day for District teachers and staff on October 10, 2025. Several presenters discussed and provided training surrounding active school shootings and the emergency SRP (Standard Response Protocol). The teachers and staff participated in several interactive training sessions, including a lock-down active shooter scenario, a fire drill, and a mock exercise for a full evacuation to our LZ location.

Several safety program training sessions provided to students throughout the second quarter include:

- Safe2Say PSA, for 7-8 grade
- Rocket Rules
- Holidays, Candy vs Drugs Identification
- Crossing Safely, for K-2 grade
- Rocket Rules “*Drug Safety and Peer Pressure*” for 3-5 graders.

The Act 44 Coordinator attended the AIU quarterly meeting on November 13th for Safety and Security Coordinators. The District's Coordinator is also part of the AIU regional mutual assistance group and has attended additional training for support.

In collaboration with IT, the Director of Information Technology has installed six additional HALO detector systems to the school's security infrastructure. All student restrooms across five floors are actively scanned for a multitude of safety requirements, including but not limited to vape and tobacco use, aggressive behavior, atmosphere wellness, and help assistance. IT has also added security filters on the network to administer negative and concerning criteria to better address policy enforcement and student threat assessment subjective searches. Camera adjustments have also been made to the perimeter of the school to address several blind spot locations caused by seasonal changes.

28. 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 April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2028. 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 Dr. Carrie Rowe, 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 (2) Receiver Business Meetings, October 27 and December 2 (Regular Agenda and Reorganization Meetings).

School Board members in attendance at the Receiver Business Meetings: October 28 (8) and December 2 (7).

29. Next Report

The next Quarterly Progress Report will cover the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2025–2026, January 1, 2026, through March 31, 2026. That report is expected to be filed by April 15, 2026.

30. Acknowledgements

The following individuals contributed to this report:

- William H. Kerr, Ed.D., Court-Appointed Receiver
- John Hansen, Ed.D., Chief Recovery Officer
- Sue A. Mariani, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
- Devin M. Fortna, B.S., Business Manager
- Ryan Matsook, M.S, LOE, Director of Curriculum, et al
- Pam Zackel, M. Ed., Director of Special Education
- Charles Robinson, Director of Information Technology and Truancy Services
- Erica Slobodnik, M. Ed., K-8 Building Principal / LEA / Federal Programs Coordinator
- Jennifer Yocca, M.Ed., Assistant Principal / Coordinator of ELL and Transition Services
- Brian Stowell, MBA, Director of Facilities, Transportation, and Security
- Brandon Irdi, Act 44 Safety and Security Coordinator
- Crystal Irdi, AAS, Executive Assistant / Coordinator for Human Resources, Food and Nutrition Services, and Open Records / Board Secretary
- Sara Fite, Administrative Coordinator for Enrollment, Attendance, Homeless and Foster Care Services