

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

JUNE 30, 2023

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
TABLE OF CONTENTS
JUNE 30, 2023

	<u>Page No.</u>
Independent Auditor's Report	1
Performance Audit Overview	2
Background	2
District Specific Summary	5
Audit Objectives	5
Audit Scope	6
Audit Methodology and Results	6
Conclusion	13



BELFINT • LYONS • SHUMAN
Certified Public Accountants

www.belfint.com

Independent Auditor's Report

Dr. Andrew O'Neal, Superintendent
Delmar School District
200 N. 8th Street
Delmar, Delaware 19940

Dear Dr. O'Neal:

We are pleased to present the attached report which provides the results of our performance audit of the Delmar School District's Local Funds' design and operation of internal controls and compliance with applicable State and District regulations and policies during the year ended June 30, 2023. The Office of Auditor of Accounts engaged Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A. to conduct a Performance Audit of the Delmar School District's Local Funds under OAOA Contract Number 22-CPA01_SDLOCALFUNDS.

The Office of Auditor of Accounts is authorized under 29 Del. C., §2906(f) to perform post-audits of local school district tax funds' budget and expenditures. The Delmar School District's management is responsible for the design and operation of internal controls over Local Funds and compliance with the applicable Delaware Code sections.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* as issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the District's response to the findings identified in our audit and described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Recommendations. The District's response was not subject to the other auditing procedures applied in the performance audit.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Delmar School District, the Delaware Department of Education, and the Office of Auditor of Accounts, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties. Under 29 Del. C. §10002(o), this report is a matter of public record, and its distribution is not limited. This report, as required by statute, will be provided to the Office of the Governor, Office of the Controller General, General Assembly, Office of the Attorney General, and Office of Management and Budget.

Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A.

June 13, 2025
Wilmington, Delaware

cc: Lydia York, Esq., CPA - State Auditor
Monet Smith - Chief Operating Officer

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT
JUNE 30, 2023

PERFORMANCE AUDIT OVERVIEW

Performance audits are audits that provide findings or conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence against criteria. Performance audits provide objective analysis to assist management and those charged with governance and oversight in using the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

BACKGROUND

Overview - Any Delaware School District may, in addition to the amounts apportioned to it by the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) or appropriated to it by the General Assembly, levy and collect additional taxes for school purposes upon the assessed value of all taxable real estate in the district except real estate exempt from taxation per 14 Del. C., §1902. The purpose of this performance audit is to determine whether internal controls over the collection and use of these real estate tax funds were designed and operated in accordance with Delaware law and District policy. For purposes of this report, real estate taxes levied for school purposes are referred to as “Local Funds.” Although there are other types of Local Funds, they are not included in the scope of our performance audit.

Laws and Regulations - The school district’s authority to levy taxes is governed by 14 Del. C., Ch. 19 for nonvocational districts. The legislative provisions and other policies relevant to local school taxes are summarized below. There are four categories of local school taxes: current expense, debt service, tuition, and match taxes summarized as follows:

Current Expense - Current expense tax rates are levied for general operation expenses incurred by the school district. Rate increases are approved via voter referendum.

Debt Service - Debt service tax rates are levied to cover the local share of the principal and interest payments on bonds funding major capital projects which, per Delaware Administrative Code Section 401, *Major Capital Improvement Program*, are projects costing \$1,000,000 or more. The local share of major capital projects is between 20% and 40% of the total cost per 29 Del. C., §7503(b) with the remaining balance financed by the State of Delaware. The project must be approved by the DOE and bond issuances are authorized via voter referendum. Per 14 Del. C §2116 and §2118(a), with a passing referendum, districts are authorized to levy a debt service tax sufficient to cover the local share of annual principal and interest payments plus 10% for expected delinquencies.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

BACKGROUND - CONTINUED

Laws and Regulations - Continued

Debt Service - Continued

The District is required to maintain debt service reserves, within a range of at least four months to no more than 110% of the following fiscal year's debt service payments based on the following opinions issued by the State of Delaware Attorney General:

- Attorney General Opinion 89-I017 from 1989 stated that, per the DOE, a sufficient reserve is at least four months of the following fiscal year's debt service payments.
- Attorney General Opinion 1W-024 from 1975 stated that a reserve is considered excessive when it is greater than 110% of total debt expenditures in the following year as districts' powers to levy taxes for debt service are limited per 14 Del. C., §2116 and §2118(a) to principal and interest and 10% for delinquencies.

Tuition - Tuition tax rates are levied to cover educational expenses for in-district and out-of-district placements of students in special programs and schools. The rate is set annually by the school board based on anticipated needs in the district and does not require a voter referendum.

Match - Match funds provide a local match to State appropriations where required or allowed by law. Examples of Match programs include technology, minor capital improvements (MCIs), extra time, reading and math resource teachers, student success block grant, and opportunity fund. The following summarizes match taxes authorized for the year ended June 30, 2023:

Technology - These funds are intended to support the purchase and replacement of technology, technology maintenance through personnel or services, professional learning, or other technology needs intended to improve the school district. The FY 1999 Bond and Capital Improvements Act authorized appropriations for education technology and authorized school districts to indefinitely levy up to one half of the rate required to meet the district's match. Technology match taxes are currently set by a DOE memo issued in December 1998.

Minor Capital Improvements - Per Delaware Administrative Code 405, *Minor Capital Improvement Program*, minor capital pertains to projects costing less than \$1,000,000, intended to keep assets in their original condition. The maximum local share for minor capital expenditures is 40% per 29 Del. C., §7528(b). The State of Delaware provides the remaining balance up to a maximum dollar amount which is included in the Delaware Capital Budget annually.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

BACKGROUND - CONTINUED

Laws and Regulations - Continued

Match - Continued

Enhanced Minor Capital Improvements - The FY 2023 State of Delaware Capital Budget appropriated additional minor capital improvements funds to the school districts. The funds are not subject to the \$1,000,000 minor capital improvement restriction. An amendment to the FY 2023 State of Delaware Capital Budget authorizes districts to assess a local match on a 60% state and 40% local basis either in one fiscal year or over multiple fiscal years through fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Districts must obligate their minor capital improvement funds prior to utilizing the enhanced minor capital improvement funds, except for the purpose of remediating lead contaminated drinking water infrastructure.

Extra Time and Reading Resource and Math Resource Teachers - In accordance with 14 Del. C., §1902(b), the FY 2023 Operating Budget Epilogue sec. 361 authorizes school districts to levy a local match for Extra Time as well as Reading Resource Teachers and Mathematics Resource Teachers which were originally established by the following:

- Per the FY 2008 Operating Budget Epilogue, the extra time appropriation is intended for additional instruction for low achieving students and school districts were encouraged to match on a 70% state and 30% local basis.
- Per the FY 2010 Operating Budget Epilogue, the reading and math resource teacher appropriations are intended to fund state salaries for resource teachers in each school and districts were encouraged to match on a 70% state and 30% local basis.

Student Success Block Grant - The FY 2023 Operating Budget Epilogue sec. 370 authorizes school districts to assess a local match for costs relating to the Student Success Block Grant appropriations, which are intended for reading assistance in grades K through 4.

Opportunity Fund - The FY 2023 Operating Budget Epilogue sec 367 authorizes school districts to assess a local match for costs associated with Opportunity Fund appropriations intended to enhance services and provide additional supports to English Learner and low-income students, as well as be used for mental health services and/or for additional reading supports for grades K through 5. Per a June 2019 DOE Memo, schools are allowed to match on a 70% state and 30% local basis.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

BACKGROUND - CONTINUED

Laws and Regulations - Continued

Match - Continued

Substitute Teacher Block Grant - The State of Delaware FY 2023 Operating Budget Epilogue Sec. 391 authorizes school districts to assess a local match for costs associated with the Substitute Teacher Block Grant appropriations, which are intended to fund salaries for full-time substitute teachers in high need elementary, middle, and high schools, with populations of 50 percent or more low-income students.

Capitation - Districts may also levy a school capitation tax on all persons 18 years of age and older, determined by the board, provided that such school capitation tax is approved by the voters of the district in the same manner as required for the levy of taxes on the assessed value of real estate, per 14 Del. C., §1912.

DISTRICT SPECIFIC SUMMARY

The Delmar School District, located in Sussex County, operates 5th through 12th grade schools with over 1,400 students. The Delmar School District employs over 100 employees to educate and support its students. Delmar has one middle school and one traditional comprehensive high school. The Delmar School District Board of Education is the governing body of the District. The School Board includes five elected members who serve four-year terms. For the purposes of this report, Delmar School District is referred to as the “School District” or “District.”

AUDIT OBJECTIVES

The objectives established for the performance audit of the School District were:

Objective 1 - School District internal controls over the expenditure of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements of the *Delaware Code*, State of Delaware *Administrative Code*, State of Delaware *Budget and Accounting Policy Manual (BAM)*, School District Accounting Policies, and the School District Budget (the requirements).

Objective 2 - School District internal controls over the receipt of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements.

Objective 3 - School District real estate taxes were approved and calculated in accordance with the requirements.

Objective 4 - School District tuition tax funds are calculated and spent in accordance with the requirements.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT SCOPE

The period covered by the Performance Audit was July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. We sampled and examined transactions from the populations of expenditures and receipts of Local Funds for the period from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. In sampling these transactions, we relied on documentation provided by the School District, the DOE, and the State of Delaware's financial accounting and human resources systems.

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

To address the audit objectives of this performance audit, we performed the following procedures:

- A. Planning Phase: The audit relied on various sources of information and methods to properly plan the audit and to obtain an understanding of and assess Local Funds' processes for the School District, including the following:
 - 1. Reviewed the applicable sections of the *Delaware Code*, State of Delaware *Administrative Code*, State of Delaware *BAM*, School District Accounting Policies, and the School District Budget to gain an understanding of the legal and policy requirements governing Local Funds.
 - 2. Inquired about whether there were any findings and recommendations in reports resulting from previous audits that relate to the objectives of this audit and whether the recommendations have been implemented.
 - 3. Reviewed the Board of Education's meeting minutes for the audit period.
 - 4. Identified and reviewed contracts, agreements, and other important documents.
 - 5. Performed risk assessment procedures such as:
 - a. Obtained and documented an understanding of the School District and its environment and identified risks.
 - b. Conducted engagement team discussions, including discussions about the possibility of error or fraud involving Local Funds.
 - c. Made inquiries of management and others about risks (including fraud risks, related-party transactions, unusual transactions, and compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements).

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

- d. Obtained and documented an understanding of the School District's internal control system over Local Funds by performing walkthroughs.

- 6. Identified key internal controls over the District's Local Funds for testing.

- B. Performance Assessment: Based on the information gathered, we developed the following risk-based approach to assess the design and operation of internal controls over Local Funds with respect to the audit objectives:
 - 1. To assess the design and operation of disbursement internal controls, we sampled and tested transactions from the population of expenditures from Local Funds and Local Tuition Tax funds to determine that transactions were properly documented, authorized, and properly recorded; that products and services were received, and that transactions complied with State and District requirements.

 - 2. To assess the design and operation of procurement internal controls, we analyzed disbursements to vendors made from the District's State, Local, and Federal Funds' (excluding purchases made using Statewide contracts, those entered into by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB), Government Support Services Division (GSS)). Our analysis included all District funding (local, state, and federal) because the procurement requirements apply regardless of funding source. We analyzed procurements as follows:
 - a. Cumulative expenditures by vendor, with consideration to multiple purchase orders and multiple direct claim payments (purchases without purchase orders) for similar products and services, to test whether the cumulative amounts may have exceeded the applicable procurement thresholds.

 - b. Payments made via Purchasing Cards to test whether single payments (or multiple payments for similar products or services) may have exceeded the applicable procurement thresholds.

 - c. Payments to Single Payment Suppliers (suppliers that are paid only once) to test whether payments may have exceeded the applicable procurement thresholds.

 - d. In addition, we selected the following types of vendor transactions for testing:
 - i. A judgmental sample of vendors with cumulative purchase amounts meeting or exceeding the State and District procurement thresholds.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

- ii. A judgmental sample of unusual or higher risk vendor transactions.
- iii. A judgmental sample of purchasing card transactions and single payment supplier transactions meeting or exceeding the State and District procurement thresholds.

For vendor relationships governed by Statewide contracts, we selected and tested a sample of significant transactions to verify that District's purchases complied with the terms of the agreements entered into by the OMB's GSS Division.

- 3. To assess the design and operation of payroll internal controls:
 - a. Sampled and tested transactions from a population of current year payroll change events, affecting local funds' payroll expenditures for the following:
 - i. Employees' annual salary increases agreed to published and approved salary tables.
 - ii. Changes to payroll, other than annual salary increases, agreed to supporting documentation and were properly approved.
 - b. Sampled and tested transactions from a population of current year payroll expenditures from Tuition Local Funds to verify employees, whose salaries and wages during the fiscal year were funded with Tuition Local Funds, responsibilities were consistent with the District's special education programs.
 - c. Sampled and tested management's reconciliation, review, and approval of bi-weekly payrolls.
- 4. To assess the design and operation of internal controls over the approval and calculation of real estate taxes, including tuition tax:
 - a. Compared taxes levied per official tax warrants to supporting rate calculations, budgets, and amounts authorized by referendum, relevant legislation (including tax revenue reserve limits), and District approval.
 - b. Analyzed tax revenue reserves at the beginning and end of the fiscal year, as applicable.
 - c. Verified local tax fund receipts were properly recorded to the related tax appropriation based on the official tax warrant.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

Objective 1 - School District internal controls over the expenditure of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements.

Results - Except as detailed in Finding Number 1 in the *Schedule of Findings and Recommendations*, we found the design of the key internal controls over payroll, non-payroll, and debt expenditures of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements during the period from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Non-Payroll Expenditures - To assess the operation of the internal controls over non-payroll expenditures of Local Funds, we selected a random sample of 35 disbursement transactions and two significant disbursement transactions (excluding transactions from tuition Local Funds tested in Objective 4). Our review of the selected transactions determined that the purchases complied with both State and District requirements and that the transactions were properly approved by the District as evidenced by approval on invoices and receipts as well as in First State Financials (FSF), the Delaware State accounting system.

School districts are allowed, but not required, to use State-wide contracts procured by the OMB's GSS Division. We selected five significant transactions from a population of nontuition Local Fund disbursements made to vendors with statewide contracts in conjunction with the procedures performed over procurement. We compared the terms of the invoices and the District's contracts to the State-wide contracts and found that the transactions were properly approved by the District as evidenced by approval on invoices and receipts as well as in FSF.

Procurement - To assess the District's compliance with both State and District procurement requirements, we analyzed the District's total FY 2023 disbursement population and, using a risk-based approach, we selected the following samples:

- A judgmentally selected sample of one vendor with cumulative expenditures exceeding the \$10,000 procurement threshold per the *BAM* (this is the lowest threshold that requires competitive purchasing).
- There were no procurement card purchases made by the District that exceeded \$10,000; therefore, a sample of these transactions was not selected.
- There were no single-payment supplier purchases made by the District that exceeded \$10,000; therefore, a sample of these transactions was not selected.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

Objective 1 - Continued

Results - Continued

Procurement - Continued

We examined documentation for the vendor selected and found that the purchasing process for goods and services purchased from the vendor during the fiscal year was in compliance with State and District procurement requirements.

Payroll Expenditures - To assess the operation of the internal controls over payroll expenditures made from Local Funds, we selected a random sample of 15 Local Funds pay rate changes processed during the fiscal year, other than annual salary increases. Our examination of the transactions determined that pay rate changes were supported and properly approved in accordance with the requirements.

To test the employees' annual increases, we selected a random sample of five annual step increases and agreed each employee's salary in the State's payroll system, Payroll and Human Resource State-wide Technology (PHRST), to the District's approved FY 2023 salary schedules.

We reviewed evidence of the District's bi-weekly payroll reconciliation and approval process for a random sample of four bi-weekly payroll cycles and determined that authorized personnel at the District performed and maintained evidence of a review of bi-weekly payroll expenditures.

Debt Service Expenditures - We examined the requirement that the District maintain its debt service reserve, within a range of at least four months and no more than 110% of the following fiscal year's debt service payments. We also compared budget to actual debt service expenditures, at the District level, during our analysis of debt service real estate tax rate calculations in Objective 3. Because the payment of debt service is managed and initiated at a State-wide level by the State of Delaware Department of Finance, it is outside of the scope of this performance audit, and we did not assess the design or operation of internal controls over debt service expenditures.

Objective 2 - School District internal controls over the receipt of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements.

Results - We obtained the Sussex County School District Reports of Local Property Tax Collections. We recalculated the District's distribution of its receipts among the four categories of local taxes and determined that the District accurately distributed the receipts based on the official warrants and code requirements.

**DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023**

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

Objective 3 - School District real estate taxes were approved and calculated in accordance with the requirements.

Results - To determine if real estate taxes were approved and calculated in accordance with the requirements, we obtained the official tax warrant for FY 2023 and concluded the following:

- The District’s current expense rate was supported by a referendum passed in March 2015.
- The District assesses a local match tax for the following: Technology, Minor Capital Improvements, Enhanced Minor Capital Improvements, Extra Time, and Math Resource Teachers. We found the District’s match tax rates were consistent with relevant legislation and guidance.
- We compared debt service tax collections based on the debt service rate to principal and interest schedules for FY 2023 and FY 2024 and determined that the rate was sufficient to cover debt services expenditures in FY 2023 and provide the District with a reserve equal to approximately 35% of its FY 2024 debt payments as summarized below. District debt service reserves held as of June 30, 2023, were within the range set by the State of Delaware Attorney General.

July 1, 2022 Debt Service Reserve Balance	\$	58,920
FY 2023 Debt Service Activity		
Receipts		103,892
Expenditures		(107,770)
		55,042
June 30, 2023 Debt Service Reserve Balance	\$	55,042
Budgeted FY 2024 Debt Service	\$	157,577
Reserve to Expected Future Payments Ratio		35%

We accumulated information from the following sources to meet this audit objective - The FY 2023 Debt Service Tax Collections, FY 2023 Debt Service Expenditures, and FY 2023 Debt Service Reserves were obtained from the June 30, 2023 Daily Validity Report (Document Direct Report DGL060), which is a daily report on the status of appropriations. The FY 2024 Debt Service Principal and Interest were obtained from debt service schedules presented in the FY 2024 Final Budget.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL FUNDS PERFORMANCE AUDIT - CONTINUED
JUNE 30, 2023

AUDIT METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS - CONTINUED

Objective 3 - Continued

Results - Continued

- We compared actual tuition tax expenditures and funds transferred out to special programs and other districts to both actual revenues and budgeted expenditures and determined that the rate appeared to be sufficient to meet the District's obligations. Actual expenditures and revenues were obtained from the June 30, 2023 Daily Validity Report and budgeted expenditures from the District's FY 2023 Final Budget.

Objective 4 - School District tuition tax funds are calculated and spent in accordance with the requirements.

Results - We examined a random sample of three disbursement transactions made from tuition tax funds and determined that the purchases complied with State and District requirements and that the transactions were properly approved by the District as evidenced by approval on invoices and receipts, as well as in FSF.

We also examined the District's compliance with State and District procurement requirements, in conjunction with procedures performed over nontuition Local Funds. Results are reported in Objective 1.

We examined payroll expenditures made from tuition tax funds in conjunction with the procedures performed over nontuition payroll expenditures. Results are reported in Objective 1.

We also examined employee files for a random sample of five employees and determined that the employees' responsibilities were consistent with the functions of the District's special education programs and that the employees' salaries and wages were appropriately funded with tuition Local Funds.

We examined tuition tax fund calculations in conjunction with procedures performed over the nontuition Local Funds. Results are reported in Objective 3.

DELMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONCLUSION
JUNE 30, 2023

Based on the work performed in connection with this performance audit, we concluded the following:

Objective 1 - The School District's internal controls over the expenditure of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements.

Objective 2 - The School District's internal controls over the receipt of Local Funds were designed and operated in accordance with the requirements.

Objective 3 - The School District's real estate taxes were approved and calculated in accordance with the requirements.

Objective 4 - The School District's tuition tax funds were calculated and spent in accordance with the requirements.