

# Detroit Public Schools Office of the Auditor General



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## FINANCIAL RELATED AUDIT OF KATHERINE WHITE ELEMENTARY School Year 2008-09

**REPORT NO: 09-190**

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**REPORT DATE: June, 2009**

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**DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
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**BACKGROUND**

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For School Year 2008 – 2009, approximately 650 students were enrolled at Katherine White Elementary, which has grade levels Kindergarten through Sixth. Ms. Verneice Gaines was the Principal during this time period and has been serving in this capacity since July 2003.

Ms. Laneice Moore, Clerical III, performed the bookkeeping duties and has been doing so since July 2004.

Katherine White Elementary maintains one commercial checking account at Comerica Bank, which was opened in March 2009. Primary sources of General School Funds are from student activities (i.e., field trips), fundraising activities, and local grants (e.g., Blue Cross Blue Shield). Sources of District Fund Revenues include Food Services (i.e., lunchroom).

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**AUDIT OBJECTIVES**

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The objectives of the audit were to ensure that:

- 1) The cash management system is effective in controlling the receipt, processing, deposit, and disbursement and accounting of funds to limit any risk of theft, misuse and/or misappropriation, and
- 2) General School funds (*for example, student fees, fundraising activities, grants, etc.*) and District funds (*for example, lunchroom receipts, fines, athletic/league game receipts, summer school tuition, etc.*) are properly accounted for, safeguarded and used as intended.

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**SCOPE & METHODOLOGY**

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The scope of the audit was to review the cash management activities from July 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009 for school year 2008-2009.

- 1) Interviewed key school officials to obtain an understanding of their cash management process.
- 2) Prepared a process narrative documenting the controls in place for each source of revenue.
- 3) Reviewed monthly cash receipt and cash disbursement ledgers: If the ledgers did not exist, transaction activities were compiled by totaling cash receipt records and reviewing the check register for cash disbursements.
- 4) Completed a cash receipt ledger template: The ledger was designed to identify funds, which may have been received but not deposited. Performed research as necessary.

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**SCOPE & METHODOLOGY (continued)**

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- 5) Performed a cash count: All cash on hand waiting to be deposited, as of the audit date, was counted under dual control by a field auditor and witnessed by a school official. The count did not include sealed cash for lunchroom deposits.
- 6) Compiled financial data via bank reconciliation templates: Reviewed reconciliations completed by the schools to identify banking irregularities and reconciling items outstanding for an extended period of time. Confirmed bank reconciliations were completed as reported to the Office of Central Accounting.

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**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

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**Table 1.1: Cash Receipts from General and District School Funds (July 2008 – March 2009)**

ACCOU TYPE	AMOUNT
<u>Commercial Checking Account Deposits</u>	\$12,453

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**AUDIT RESULTS IN BRIEF**

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Based on our audit of the Katherine White Elementary cash management process, we noted control weaknesses related to cash receipts, cash disbursements, and bank reconciliations:

- Non-compliance with District cash management policy and/or ineffective practices.
  - Per-numbered duplicate receipt form not always issued.
  - Bank reconciliations were not signed by the reviewer.

The detail of these findings and recommendations are included in the Findings Section of this report.

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**AUDIT FINDINGS**

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**1. Finding - School Administrative Financial Manual Non-Compliance:**

The following was noted during the test of compliance with the “School Administrative Financial Manual 2006 -07” (SAFM):

- Pre-numbered Duplicate Receipt forms were not always issued.
- Bank reconciliations were not signed by the reviewer.

**Cause**

School officials stated that they were unaware of the requirements to use certain forms for cash activity and check requests included in the District’s SAFM.

**Effect**

Lack of adherence to District policies related to cash receipts and disbursements results in non-standardize procedures that can vary with each school, which can result in processing inefficiencies. In addition, failure to request and approve cash disbursements can result in inappropriate or unauthorized purchases.

**Recommendation**

The Principal should ensure that all staff participating in financial transactions is familiar with and trained on District policy for cash management activities as detailed in the “School Administrative Financial Manual 2006-07.”

Also, the Principal should ensure that all individuals involved in the cash management process are aware of where current District polices are stored on the intranet, as well as appropriate contact information for those Central Accounting Office personnel responsible for assisting in the accounting process.

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**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

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*MEMORANDUM*

**TO:** Mr. Odell Bailey, General Auditor

**FROM:** Derrick R. Coleman, Regional Superintendent

**DATE:** July 23, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Katherine White Elementary School Financial Related Audit

This communication is written as a response to the audit findings on Katherine White Elementary School.

The audit results in brief discovered that Katherine White Elementary School has control weaknesses related to cash receipts, cash disbursements, and bank reconciliations. Pre-numbered duplicate receipt form was not always issued and bank reconciliations were not signed by the reviewer. The process of budgeting for Detroit Public Schools was established by the (DPS) Schools Administrative Financial Manual in (2006). Board records indicate that many principals have not been in-serviced on the SAFM manual.

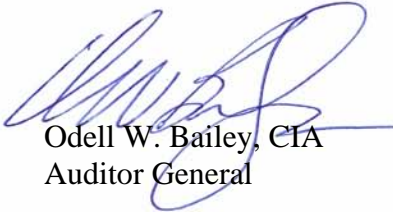
**Recommendations:**

The Principal of Katherine White Elementary School should ensure that all staff responsible for financial transactions, are trained on District policy for cash management activities, as detailed in the "School Administrative Financial Manual 2006-2007. The principal shall ensure that all individuals involved in the cash management process are aware of where current District policies are stored on the intranet, as well as appropriate contact information for those Central Accounting Office personnel responsible for assisting in the accounting process

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Our audit was performed in accordance with U.S. General Accounting Office Government Auditing Standards and Standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors.

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Odell W. Bailey, CIA  
Auditor General