

Office of Internal Compliance

130 Trinity Avenue S.W.

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

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Sarah Smith Elementary School

August 31, 2018

Ms. Emily Boatright, Principal
Sarah Smith Elementary School
4141 Wieuca Road, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30342

Ms. Boatright,

The Office of Internal Compliance performed an operational and compliance audit on the Miscellaneous Cash Activity Account Fund (MCAAF) administered by Sarah Smith Elementary School. This report provides, as a follow up to the exit conference comments, written communication of the results of testing derived from certain audit procedures designed to meet the audit objectives.

Audit Objective

The objectives of the audit were to determine the processes utilized by Sarah Smith Elementary School to perform cash collections derived from school based activities and to determine whether disbursement processes were performed according to established procedures documented in the School Based Services (SBS) Financial Guidelines.

Audit Scope

The scope of the audit includes the review of financial records from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018 and operational procedures for administering the Miscellaneous Cash Activity Fund (MCAAF).

Audit Procedures

We performed the following tests to achieve our objective:

- ✓ Analyzed the Updated School Compliance and Audit Questionnaire
- ✓ Surveyed and Interviewed Selected School Personnel
- ✓ Reviewed Bank Reconciliations for Abnormal Reconciling Transactions
- ✓ Tested a sample of Receipts from Collection Approval to Bank Deposit
- ✓ Tested a sample of Disbursements from Request to Approval /Disbursement

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Audit Conclusion

The cash handling, recording, and depositing of the cash for the Miscellaneous Cash Activity Account Fund appear adequate, but lack administrative protocols. Based on the testwork performed, the following opportunities for improvements were identified and discussed with the school administrators during an exit conference. The opportunities are categorized as General Administration, Cash Receipt Analysis and Cash Disbursement Analysis.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Observation #1

- **No Sponsorship Agreements found and provided to OIC for SY 16-17 and SY 17-18**
- **No evidence of Sponsor training on file for SY 16-17 and SY 17-18**
- **No receipt books were found and provided to OIC for SY 16-17 and SY 17-18 for 12 of 15 Sponsors (80%)**

Sponsors should sign a Sponsorship Agreement before any school activity fund procedures are performed. These Sponsorship Agreements should be approved by the Principal prior to the collection any school activity funds and retained in school files. Failure to obtain Sponsorship Agreement can expose the school to unauthorized collection of funds and probability of lost/stolen funds

The current *SBS Financial Guidelines* require receipt books be issued to each sponsor and that those books be returned to the Secretary at the end of each school year for proper storage. The current *SBS Financial Guidelines* require school records be kept in accordance to the Records Retention Guidelines. School financial records must be retained in the school for a minimum of two years and maintained in storage for an additional three years.

Failure to adhere to the Records Retention guidelines may limit a school's ability to account for and reconcile funds received/disbursed and the ability to produce financial records if required.

Recommendation(s)

- School Leadership should ensure Sponsorship Agreements are obtained and proper training is provided to all Sponsors before any school activity fund procedures are performed.
- School leadership should ensure the Secretary and Sponsors follow the procedures outlined in the Receipt and Collections and Records Retention section of the SBS Financial Guidelines.

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Response

Sponsorship Agreements will be approved by the Principal and signed by the activity Sponsors prior to any collection of funds. All Sponsors will be assigned a receipt book prior to the collection of funds. These will be checked out before funds are collected and checked in at the end of each school year for proper storage and maintenance of records.

CASH RECEIPT ANALYSIS

Observation #2

- **Sponsors held funds for 1 to 112 days before being submitted to Secretary for posting and deposit**
- **There is no 2nd verifier to verify the collection of funds before money is sealed in the bank bag**
- **3 of 10 receipts (30%) had no check copies on file**
- **1 of 10 receipts (10%) had no bank bag seal on file**
- **1 void had no supporting documentation on file**

The current SBS Guidelines require Sponsors to submit funds daily to the Secretary. Failure to submit collected funds daily for deposit exposes the school to possible lost or stolen funds.

The Secretary is responsible for keeping adequate documentation for each deposit (e.g. deposit analysis, deposit slip detail form, deposit slip, check copies, bank bag seal, yellow copy of receipts, SABO receipt, receipt collection form) as best business practices. Failure to retain/attach proper documentation for deposits provides an opportunity for misuse of funds and allows for unaccounted funds. Also, failure to have a 2nd verifier to count funds before money is sealed in bank bag provides an opportunity for misuse of funds and allows for unaccounted funds.

The current *SBS Financial Guidelines* require school records be kept in accordance to the Records Retention Guidelines. School financial records must be retained in the school for a minimum of two years and maintained in storage for an additional three years. Failure to adhere to the Records Retention guidelines may limit a school's ability to account for and reconcile funds received/disbursed and the ability to produce financial records if required.

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Recommendation(s)

- School leadership should ensure the Secretary and Sponsors follow the procedures outlined in the Receipt and Collections section of the SBS Financial Guidelines which states Sponsors are required to write receipts and submit funds daily to the Secretary.
- The Secretary should ensure check copy, deposit slip, bank bag seal, SABO receipt and deposit slip detail forms are all attached to the Deposit Analysis for accuracy and documentation retention purposes.
- 2nd verifier should be designated to count funds before money is sealed in bank bag to ensure accuracy and best practices. 2nd verifier should sign the Deposit Analysis as proof of count.
- School leadership should ensure the Secretary and Sponsors follow the procedures outlined in the Receipt and Collections and Records Retention section of the SBS Financial Guidelines.

Response

The Secretary will adhere to the procedures outlined in the Receipt and Collections section of the SBS Financial Guidelines. Sponsors are required to write receipts and submit funds daily to the Secretary. The Deposit Analysis will include appropriate documentation including check copy, deposit slip, bank bag seal, SABO receipt and deposit slip detail forms. There will be a 2nd verifier to count funds before money is sealed in bank bag to ensure accuracy and best practices. The 2nd verifier will sign the Deposit Analysis as proof of count. All procedures outlined in the Receipt and Collections and Records Retention section of the SBS Financial Guidelines will be followed by the Sponsors and Secretary. The Principal will monitor this process.

Observation #3

- **2 of 8 (25%) bank reconciliations were not signed timely by the Principal. The bank reconciliations were signed 9 to 11 business days late from the time it was received from Special Revenue Accounting.**

The SBS Financial Guidelines require the Principal to review the entire packet and then sign each form that requires his/her signature and email those documents no later than the 15th of each month.

Failure to review Bank Reconciliation Reports may result in school leadership being unable to address financial issues and irregularities in a timely manner.

Recommendation(s)

- School leadership should ensure Bank Reconciliation Reports are reviewed, signed, dated and returned no later than the 15th of the month and/or no later than 5 business days if received after the 15th of the month from Special Revenue Accounting.

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- School leadership should ensure the Secretary follow the procedures outlined in the Records Retention section of the SBS Financial Guidelines.

Response

Bank Reconciliation Reports will be reviewed, signed, dated and returned no later than the 15th of the month and/or no later than 5 business days if received after the 15th of the month. School leadership will ensure the procedures outlined in the Records Retention section of the SBS Financial Guidelines are followed.

CASH DISBURSEMENT ANALYSIS

Observation #4

- 9 of 10 (90%) checks had no written prior approval before purchase was made
- 1 of 10 (10%) checks had no supporting documentation on file

The current SBS Financial Guidelines require employees to obtain written approval by the Principal prior to making purchases and prior to checks being generated. Failure to obtain prior written approval for purchases may prevent a purchase from taking place and an employee from receiving reimbursement.

The current *SBS Financial Guidelines* require school records be kept in accordance to the Records Retention Guidelines. School financial records must be retained in the school for a minimum of two years and maintained in storage for an additional three years. Failure to adhere to the Records Retention guidelines may limit a school's ability to account for and reconcile funds received/disbursed and the ability to produce financial records if required.

Recommendation(s)

- School leadership should ensure prior written approval (via the Pre-Authorization Disbursement Request form) before making purchases and requesting reimbursement.
- School leadership should ensure all checks supporting documentation is kept in school files for document retention purposes.

Response

School leadership will ensure prior written approval for all purchases is secured before purchases are made and reimbursement is requested. The Pre-Authorization Disbursement Request form will

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be secured, signed and turned in prior to purchases. All documentation will be maintained in school files for retention purposes.

We want to thank you and your school personnel for their warm welcome and participation throughout this process. It was truly a pleasure working with everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Brown'.

Connie Brown, CIA, CRMA
Executive Director, Internal Compliance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tiffany Cherry'.

Tiffany Cherry, CFE
Lead Internal Auditor