

Make the Mark.

Atlanta Public Schools | May 2024

Office of Employee Experience and Performance Internal Audit –
Report #FY24-04



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May 24, 2024

Connie Brown, CPA, CIA, CRMA
Executive Director, Internal Compliance
Atlanta Public Schools
130 Trinity Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303-3624

Dear Connie:

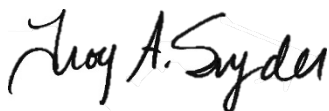
Plante Moran has performed consulting services for Atlanta Public Schools ("APS") consisting of an internal audit of the Office of Employee Experience and Performance function, as summarized in our professional services agreement dated June 27, 2022, and statement of work dated October 9, 2023.

We were not engaged to, and did not perform an audit, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion on APS's internal control environment. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. Had we performed additional procedures; other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

This report is solely for the information and use of the management and the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education and is not intended for use by anyone other than these specified parties.

We would like to recognize and thank the management and staff of APS for their cooperation and courtesy extended to us throughout this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Troy A. Snyder".

Troy A. Snyder, CICA
Engagement Partner

Executive Summary



Project Overview

The Atlanta Public Schools (“APS”) Audit Committee approved an internal audit of the Office of Employee Experience and Performance (“OEE&P”) function per the 2023-2024 risk assessment and internal audit plan on June 15, 2023. The Office of Internal Compliance (“OIC”) engaged Plante Moran to perform the internal audit of the OEE&P function. Within the OEE&P function, the internal audit encompassed the Office of Employee Relations (“OER”) department and the Employee Wellness department.

Objective & Scope

Plante Moran evaluated the OEE&P function, with a focus on the following areas during the 2022-2023 school year:

1. Ethics complaints regarding personnel matters
2. Employee misconduct investigations
3. Employee grievances
4. Adjudication of civil service hearings
5. Title IX investigations involving employees
6. Employee well-being programs

Specifically, we assessed District policies, procedures, and practices in alignment with Board policy and the Georgia Department of Education regulations. Our audit objectives included a review of the alignment of actual practices with Board policy and departmental procedures, identification of internal controls to support timely and accurate record-keeping and reporting, as well as identification of gaps and recommendations to mitigate risk to the District. Further detail regarding the audit objectives tested may be found on page five of this report.

Methodology

To evaluate the adequacy of the policies, procedures, and internal controls in place, Plante Moran performed the following:

1. Inspected District policies, procedures, and documentation in alignment with Board policy and the Georgia Department of Education regulations related to employee complaints investigations, grievances, civil service adjudication, Title IX investigations, and employee well-being programs.
2. Assessed alignment of Title IX complaint procedures with federal statute 34 CFR 106.45.
3. Assessed alignment of employee grievance policies with state regulation O.C.G.A. 20-2-989.6.
4. Performed sample-based testing of employee complaints.

5. Identified training required regarding ethics, employee conduct, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and Title IX.
6. Assessed roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the employee complaints, grievances, civil service adjudication, and employee well-being processes.
7. Conducted walkthrough interviews with the Executive Director, OEE&P to discuss practices and confirm observations.

Summary of Themes

The table below highlights overarching thematic areas of development that were identified during audit fieldwork.

No.	Area	Theme
1	Leadership transitions	The OEE&P function underwent a leadership transition in the 2022-2023 school year, with new roles and directors appointed. This change has spurred a series of improvements within the department, including the establishment of standard practices, enhanced documentation retention, and improved monitoring mechanisms.
2	Case oversight	OER previously did not have processes and procedures in place for effective case oversight. Manual data maintenance and tracking led to issues with data completeness, accuracy, and timely case completion. The implementation of the HR Acuity case management system in the 2023-2024 school year has improved OER's oversight capabilities by serving as a mechanism for effective case tracking, document retention, and case monitoring.
3	Standard operating procedures	OEE&P lacked standardized operating procedures for employee well-being and its current practices, as well as consistent guidelines for investigative procedures, case outcomes, and disciplinary actions based on allegations and disciplinary history.

Detailed Audit Results



Approach

Plante Moran conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the District's policies and procedures related to employee complaints, grievances, civil service adjudication, and well-being. This assessment focused on their completeness, clarity, and compliance with applicable federal and state regulations. Additionally, Plante Moran evaluated the implementation of these processes to ensure alignment with the District's policies and established procedures. Our testing included inquiry and sample-based testing to assess the following audit objectives:

No.	Audit Objective Description
Ethics Complaints, Grievances, and Employee Misconduct	
1a	Evaluate employee complaint, grievance, and misconduct policies and procedures for clarity and comprehensiveness of methods for reporting, investigation, monitoring, and closure of incidents.
1b	Validate that employee training programs address ethics and employee conduct policies, procedures, and practices.
2a	Evaluate the methods and processes for collecting allegations of employee misconduct incidents, ethics complaints, and employee grievances.
2b	Evaluate the processes for tracking and investigating employee misconduct incidents, ethics complaints, and employee grievances.
2c	Assess employee misconduct, ethics, and grievance investigations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Documentation of investigation outcomes, including considerations for fairness and equity of resolutions. 2) Objectivity of investigation procedures through alignment with policies and procedures. 3) Timeliness of investigation procedures and follow-up action items. 4) Record retention and protection of sensitive employee misconduct data in accordance with policy.
Adjudication of Civil Service Hearings and Title IX Complaints	
3a	Evaluate policies and procedures related to civil service hearing adjudication, including Title IX formal grievance process, for clarity, comprehensiveness, and alignment with federal regulations in academic and athletic programs.
3b	Evaluate the accessibility and dissemination of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation policies to all administrators, staff, investigators, and decision makers of the institution.
3c	Evaluate the accessibility of Title IX grievance process and educational materials to all administrators, staff, investigators, and decision makers of the institution.
4a	Evaluate the processes for tracking and investigating civil service adjudication cases.

No.	Audit Objective Description
Adjudication of Civil Service Hearings and Title IX Complaints (cont.)	
4b	<p>Assess civil service adjudication cases for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documentation of case adjudication outcomes, including considerations for fairness and equity of resolutions. 2. Objectivity of investigation procedures through alignment with policies and procedures, including avoidance of conflict of interest. 3. Timeliness of investigation procedures and follow-up action items to ensure timely case closure in accordance with policy. 4. Case record retention and protection of sensitive case data in accordance with policy.
Employee Well-Being Programs	
5a	Assess employee well-being policies, programs, resources available to employees, and initiatives.
5b	Evaluate the design of internal controls related to ensuring completeness and accuracy of employee well-being records, confidentiality of employee well-being data, employee eligibility for well-being programs, and prevention of program abuse.
6a	Evaluate policies and practices related to work-life balance and flexibility in work arrangements.
6b	Evaluate the design of internal controls related to eligibility tracking and monitoring compliance for work-life balance programs, as well as prevention of program abuse.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Our observations below are based upon corroborative inquiry with APS personnel as well as inspection of sample documentation. In response to our observations, recommendations are included for the District's consideration on how to resolve gaps where internal controls were not in place, internal controls were not designed effectively, or opportunities exist to reduce risk to the District.

Each recommendation was rated high or moderate based on priority in terms of impact on the process, internal controls, or efficiency of operations.

1. **High priority** indicates that the finding requires immediate attention, and the recommendation may have a significant impact on risk mitigation.
2. **Moderation priority** indicates that the finding should be addressed timely, and the recommendation may have a meaningful impact on risk mitigation.

The following table summarizes the findings identified through the audit.

High Priority	Moderate Priority	Total Findings
5	7	12

The table below summarizes the findings and related recommendations identified through the audit:

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
1	Policies and procedures related to handling of complaints, grievance appeals, and civil service adjudication cases are not detailed. The SOP does not include timelines for starting an investigation after receipt of an incident report, procedures for reassignment to home or administrative leave, and expectations for maintaining case documentation completely and accurately.	<p>OER is in process of updating standard operating procedures to comprehensively reflect current practices. The standard operating procedure should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timeline for initiating an investigation after receipt of an incident report. 2. Timeline for completing a case investigation. 3. Process for determining a reassignment to home or administrative leave and notification to the employee. 4. Process for providing respondents and complainants with an acknowledgment letter. 5. Expectations for maintaining case documentation and evidence in HR Acuity. 6. Monitoring procedures over open cases. 	High
<p>Management Response #1: The OER team is in the final stages of completing the revised Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual. The expected completion date is July 15, 2024. The manual will include all recommended updates.</p> <p>Implementation Date: July 15, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Kawana Findlay, OER Director</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
2	District procedures were not followed in documenting the approval evidence for case investigation reports.	<p>OER has implemented HR Acuity to track approvals obtained. HR Acuity should be used as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All levels of review and approval should be documented in HR Acuity, including any quality assurance or proofreading reviews performed by the Analyst or Administrative Assistant, as well as final reviews by OER Director and Chief Human Resources Officer. 2. Tracking tools and resources within HR Acuity should be utilized to document review status of the case investigation to ensure all levels of review are completed. Review status should be part of the OER Director's weekly monitoring of case investigation. 3. All levels of the review process and review procedures performed should be documented within OER's standard operating procedures. 	High
<p>Management Response #2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommendation has been implemented. All cases are loaded into HR Acuity from inception. Once the investigator completes a case file, it is sent to OER Business Analyst for proofreading. Once edits are completed, the case is sent electronically to HR Acuity for Approval. Approval is set by the investigator, Director, Executive Director, and Chief of Human Resources. 2. Recommendation has been implemented. The OER Director runs weekly case reports and reviews case status. 3. Recommendations will be implemented in the revised SOP to be completed by July 15, 2024. <p>Implementation Date:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. September 1, 2023 2. September 1, 2023 3. July 15, 2024 <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Kawana Findlay, OER Director</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
3	A complete and accurate log of all cases handled by OER during the testing period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 could not be provided.	<p>OER began using HR Acuity to track cases as of July 2023. Cases are manually entered into HR Acuity. HR Acuity should be used to track cases as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined for entering a case into HR Acuity after receipt of the Incident Report and maintaining case documentation or status throughout the investigation. The Incident Report write-up template within HR Acuity should be utilized for entering case information. 2. One individual should primarily be responsible for entering cases into HR Acuity after receipt. A backup for that individual should be identified. 	High
<p>Management Response #3: Recommendations have been implemented. HR Acuity was implemented in July 2023. Incident reports are uploaded into the system by the OER Business Analyst. The Administrative Assistant II serves as a backup when the OER Business Analyst is out of office. The HR Acuity system houses all templates used by the OER department.</p> <p>Implementation Date: September 1, 2023</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marina Dozier, OER Business Analyst (Primary) • Ranndi Reed, Administrative Assistant II (Backup) 			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
4	There were no written guidelines to promote consistency of recommended remediation or disciplinary actions.	OER established an Employee Policy Violation Decision Matrix Guidebook. This guidebook should encompass all types of allegations that are handled by OER, including recommended disciplinary or remedial actions based on the employee's history of disciplinary offenses.	High
Management Response #4: Recommendations have been implemented. Document has been submitted to the audit team. Implementation Date: September 1, 2023 Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Dr. Isis Manboard, OEE&P Executive Director			
5	Case documentation is not complete.	Once the case investigation is complete, an independent party should review the case documentation in HR Acuity to ensure all letters sent and all evidence referenced in the case investigation report are retained in HR Acuity. This may be performed by the Administrative Assistant or Analyst. This final review to confirm all case documentation in HR Acuity is complete should be documented in HR Acuity to ensure all cases are complete.	High
Management Response #5: The OER Business Analyst will utilize a case log checklist to ensure that all case documentation is loaded into HR Acuity prior to submission for approval and closure, which will be implemented by April 1, 2024. Implementation Date: April 1, 2024 Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Marina Dozier, OER Business Analyst			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
6	Aspects of the Employee Incident Investigation Procedures on the OER website do not align with OER's current practices.	The OER website should be updated to reflect the department's current practices to align with the revised SOP. Due to the public nature of the website, this should be updated as soon as the SOP has been updated to reflect current practices.	Moderate
<p>Management Response #6: The website has been updated to reflect current practices. The SOPs are being revised and will be finalized by July 15, 2024. The website will be updated with any changes to the SOP.</p> <p>Implementation Date: July 15, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Kawana Findlay, OER Director</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
7	The case record retention period stated in the Employee Incident Investigation Procedures on the OER website do not align with the district's record retention schedule.	The OER team should align with General Counsel on a consistent retention period for case investigations. Subsequently, the record retention period on the OER website or the district's record retention schedule should be updated.	Moderate

Management Response #7:

1. APS records retention schedule activities
 - A. Review to ensure legal compliance.
 - B. Confer with divisions to determine whether additional categories of records should be included on the retention schedule, in excess of legal requirements.
2. Compliance with current APS records retention schedule
 - A. Directive to all employees regarding records retention.
 - B. Targeted education to employees regarding relevant records retention categories.
 - i. Written information to various divisions.
 - ii. Targeted training for various divisions (remote or in person).
3. Development and implementation of District-wide data governance SOP.
4. OEE&P will update the website to include the new retention schedule for OEE&P records.

Implementation Date:

- 1A: Completed
- 1B: May 31, 2024
- 2A: Completed
- 2Bi: March 29, 2024
- 2Bii: May 31, 2024

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
3:	9-12 months (by March 21, 2025)		
4:	Upon update to the record retention schedule, anticipated May 31, 2024		
Responsible for Implementing Recommendation:			
1A:	Legal		
1B:	Legal, in conjunction with all APS divisions		
2A:	Superintendent		
2Bi:	Legal, in conjunction with the appropriate chief of the division		
2Bii:	Legal, in conjunction with the appropriate chief of the division		
3:	Chief Performance Officer; Executive Director of Technology, in consultation with all divisions		
4:	Dr. Isis Manboard, Executive Director, OEE&P		

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
8	Complaint investigations were not closed within the 45-day timeline established by OER.	Per inquiry with the Executive Director, OEE&P, monitoring procedures have been implemented to ensure timely completion of cases since HR Acuity was implemented. OER has established a 45-day timeline to complete an investigation to allow time for the review, approval, and signatory process. OER targets completion within 30 days to stay on track with the timeline. If a case is expected to exceed the established timelines, the Employee Relations Coordinator (“ERC”) should communicate this to the complainant and respondent and document evidence of this communication. Monitoring procedures should be documented within OER's standard operating procedures and include that the monitoring is performed by the OER Director through HR Acuity once per week to ensure that case investigations are completed and closed in a timely manner.	Moderate
<p>Management Response #8: The new HR Acuity platform allows for the tracking of cases to ensure that the 45-day window is adhered to. The OER Coordinator and OER Director will review case times to ensure timely closure. The OER department will implement status update notifications to the complainant and respondents when the cases exceed the 45-day timeline. This will be implemented by April 8, 2024. The OER SOP will include weekly case monitoring by the OER Director.</p> <p>Implementation Date: April 8, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Kawana Findlay, OER Director</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
9	A structured training plan for OER investigators is not established.	<p>OER is in process of identifying on-demand training options for investigators. ERCs were certified in mediation during the Summer of 2023 and will take the required courses to maintain their certification. The Executive Director, OEE&P, also indicated ERCs are provided with training on an as needed basis. OER should consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A formal annual training plan be established for all investigators and for any new investigators. Training programs should encompass any legal or regulatory requirements, planning and conducting an investigation, confidentiality and impartiality, interviewing techniques, and report writing. 2. Trend analysis should be performed over cases, such as the volume of incident reports, type of allegations occurring in each cluster, and case outcomes to identify any specific training needs. 	Moderate
<p>Management Response #9: OER is in the process of identifying on-demand training for leaders and staff based on remediation needs. Frontline and Elis will be the primary modes of support as these platforms allow the coordinator to monitor the completion of the coursework. Yearly mediation training is planned for ERCs to maintain their state mediation certification. A yearly retreat will occur each July to provide ERCs with training identified by the Executive Director, OEE&P based on HR Acuity trend analysis and updated employment laws and procedures. Additional coaching and support will be provided by OER Director based on the individual needs of the ERC.</p> <p>Implementation Date: July 1, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Isis Manboard, Executive Director OEE&P • Kawana Findlay, OER Director 			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
10	Remedial actions were not effectively monitored to ensure timely completion by the respondent.	<p>HR Acuity has allowed OER to have better oversight and reliable tracking mechanism for respondents who were required to complete remedial actions. ERCs are currently responsible for monitoring completion of remedial actions. OER is currently in process of identifying courses through the district's learning management system that may be assigned for certain types of remedial action, such as de-escalation training. OER should consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to provide oversight and ensure respondents are completing remedial actions assigned to them. Evidence of the completed remedial action should be obtained and retained within HR Acuity. 2. Consider whether tracking completion and obtaining evidence of completion of remedial actions is a task that the Analyst can assist with, allowing the ERCs to focus on current investigations. 3. Document the process for tracking completion of remedial actions and obtaining documentation of remedial actions in OER's standard operating procedures. 	Moderate
<p>Management Response #10: OER will implement a tracking process in which the OER Business Analyst will assign and track remedial actions, such as training courses, in Elis and Frontline platforms. This will be implemented by May 15, 2024. Once completion of remedial training occurs, the OER Business Analyst will load proof of completion into HR Acuity.</p> <p>Implementation Date: May 15, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Marina Dozier, OER Business Analyst</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
11	There were no written standard operating procedures documenting employee well-being processes.	<p>The Employee Wellness department is in process of writing standard operating procedures for employee well-being.</p> <p>The standard operating procedures should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tracking enrollment in well-being programs and offerings. 2. Ensuring the confidentiality of employee well-being data. 3. Monitoring employee satisfaction with well-being programs and offerings. 4. Procedures for preventing APS Flex program abuse. 	Moderate
<p>Management Response #11: The Employee Wellness department is in the process of completing the standard operating procedures (SOP) for the wellness department. The SOP will include all recommended components with the exception of creating procedures for preventing APS Flex Program. APS Flex is managed by Office of Employee Relations. The OER Director collaborates with the strategy department to provide training to both staff and managers on the policies and expectations of participating in APS Flex. The training is housed in Elis. Supervisors receive reports on their teams. These reports indicate who has completed the training and who has not. Team members must sign off that they will comply with the rules and expectations of participation in APS Flex. Supervisors may take away APS Flex opportunities for employees who abuse APS Flex. Those who are reported for time theft will be subject to OER investigation and potential discipline. During the 2023-2024 school year, opportunities for remote work have been limited by the Superintendent. Weekly remote work options are no longer available. APS Flex occurs during fall break, winter holidays for staff, and winter break. Once a week remote opportunities will occur during the summer. Remote work agreements are effective during these times. The SOP for OER will address expectations and potential consequences in the reviewed procedures.</p> <p>Implementation Date: July 15, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Phaedra Brown, Employee Wellbeing Program Director</p>			

No.	Observation	Recommendation	Priority
12	Required data around employee well-being enrollment and employee satisfaction was not tracked.	<p>The Employee Wellness department began tracking enrollment in January 2024 and surveying employees regarding satisfaction with expectations for well-being programs in October 2023.</p> <p>When possible, the Employee Wellness department should track enrollment electronically. Analysis should be performed over the survey data to identify opportunities to improve employee health, morale, productivity, or retention.</p>	Moderate
<p>Management Response #12: The Employee Wellbeing program is currently tracking enrollment and satisfaction of services and resources manually. Utilization reports from resources are collected. Data received will be entered into a dashboard to track employee responses. In SY 2024-2025, survey links will be connected to the Wellbeing dashboard to automatically collect data to analyze opportunities to improve employee health, morale, productivity, and retention. Information gathered will be used to create sessions initiatives and programs to meet the needs of the staff.</p> <p>Implementation Date: August 5, 2024</p> <p>Responsible for Implementing Recommendation: Phaedra Brown, Employee Wellbeing Program Director</p>			

Appendix



Appendix 1: Background Narrative

Atlanta Public Schools Office of Employee Experience & Performance Internal Audit Process Narrative

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Complaints

Initiation

Complaints may be submitted based on allegations of an employee's violation of a policy, regulation, civil law, ethical standard has occurred or that a person has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status or sexual orientation.

Atlanta Public School district employees, students, or parents may submit a complaint directly to the Office of Employee Relations ("OER") via:

1. Email
2. Phone
3. Letter
4. Hand-delivery
5. In-person

Regardless of the method of submission, employees must complete an OER Incident Intake Report, detailing the allegation.

Employees may also submit a report via the EthicsPoint Portal, monitored by the Office of Internal Compliance. The Office of Internal Compliance forwards reports to OER as appropriate.

During the 2022-2023 school year, OER primarily utilized an Excel spreadsheet to track cases. During the 2023-2024 school year, OER transitioned to HR Acuity, a case management system.

The OER Director reviews all OER Incident Intake Reports to determine whether the incident warrants a referral back to local-level administration, full investigation, or mediation.

Investigations

If the OER Director's disposition is to proceed with an investigation, an Employee Relations Coordinator ("ERC") is assigned to the case and forwarded the OER Incident Intake Report. The ERC identifies parties to interview, calls them to notify them of the interview, and also sends a Notice to Interview by email. The ERC schedules interviews with the respective parties and prepares interview questions in advance. In addition to interviews, the ERC obtains other evidence as appropriate such as written statements, audio or video surveillance, police reports, emails, or text messages.

An acknowledgment letter is sent to the complainant, acknowledging receipt of their complaint. If the complaint was submitted by an administrator on behalf of a student, the acknowledgment letter is sent to the student's parent or guardian.

An acknowledgment letter is also provided to the respondent, notifying them of the allegations against them. During the 2022-2023 school year, acknowledgment letters were sent prior to interviews. During the 2023-2024 school year, OER transitioned to providing the acknowledgment letter at the time of the interviews.

The ERC documents investigation findings in a case investigation summary report or in an abbreviated memorandum to file report. The decision to use a memorandum to file report is made at the OER Director's discretion. The report concludes whether the allegation is or is not substantiated by the evidence obtained. During the 2022-2023 school year, a DocuSign workflow was utilized to obtain approvals of the case files. The ERC, OER Director, and Chief Human Resources Officer were all required to sign the report.

Legal also reviews cases for certificated employees where the case outcome results in a recommendation for suspension or termination. If the Legal team agrees with the recommendation, a charge letter is sent to the respondent.

The ERC also prepares a letter of disposition or direction to document the case outcome, including any recommended remedial or disciplinary actions, on the Superintendent's letterhead. The Superintendent signs the letter of disposition or direction. The OER Administrative Assistant sends the letters with the case outcome to the respondent and to the complainant. During the 2022-2023 school year, the OER Director was not provided with every letter of disposition or direction to review prior to it being sent to the Superintendent. OER Director review of the letter of disposition or direction was implemented during the 2023-2024 school year.

OER has set an internal expectation to complete case investigations within 30 business days from the date the investigation begins by the ERC. Prior to the implementation of HR Acuity, the status or timely completion of case investigations could not be readily monitored. During the 2023-2024 school year, a monitoring process has been implemented to promote the timely completion of case investigations.

Mediation

Complaints between two employees may be handled via mediation depending on the nature of the complaint. OER employees received training and became certified in mediation during the summer of 2023.

Civil Service Adjudication Hearing

A disciplinary conference occurs for every Civil Service employee where the complaint case outcome results in the recommendation for disciplinary action. The purpose of the conference is to give the employee a reasonable notice of the charges and to provide an opportunity to respond before a decision is made regarding the recommendation for disciplinary action. The employee is notified in writing at least 48 hours before the disciplinary conference. The notice documents the date and time of the scheduled disciplinary conference, a summary of the charges, names of witnesses who may testify, the range of proposed disciplinary actions, and informs the employee may bring a legal representative. At the conclusion of the conference, employees are provided with a summary memorandum documenting the outcome of the conference.

Grievances

Employees submit grievances directly to their Supervisors in writing. If the employee disagrees with the resolution taken by the Supervisor, the employee may submit an appeal. If an employee submits an appeal, OER is contacted.

The OER Director reviews all grievance appeals received to validate the issue is a grievable offense per the district's grievance policy. If the issue does not meet the guidelines established per the district's grievance policy and can instead be investigated under the complaints procedure, the OER Director will recommend that the employee submit an OER Incident Intake Report.

If the issue does meet the guidelines per the district's grievance policy, the OER Director reviews the grievance documentation and hears the appeal. OER follows the grievance timelines established within the district's grievance policy.

OER is also available to address inquiries or concerns regarding the District's grievance policy.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Employee Wellbeing

Atlanta Public Schools has multiple financial, emotional, and physical wellbeing program offerings for employees. Employees have the opportunity to participate in wellbeing events hosted by the district or services offered by partnering organizations.

Participation in the employee wellbeing programs and employee satisfaction with the wellbeing programs offered was not monitored or tracked during the 2022-2023 school year. The Office of Employee Experience & Performance (“OEE&P”) is in progress of implementing mechanisms to gather data around participation and employee satisfaction.

Employee Work-life Balance

The primary work-life balance program offered by Atlanta Public Schools during the 2022-2023 school year was the APS Flex program. This program allowed central office staff the flexibility to work remotely for one day a week. Employees were required to take a training course focused on expectations while working from home. Employees arranged the remote working day with their Supervisor’s oversight. Supervisors also were responsible for ensuring employees remained productive during the days worked remotely. OEE&P served as a resource to Supervisors if employees were acting in accordance with established expectations for working from home.

During the 2023-2024 school year, this program has been adjusted to allow central office staff to work remotely only during certain weeks of the year when schools are on holiday break.

Thank you.



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Wealth Management.

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