



**GENERAL CHAPPIE JAMES LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

SPECIAL AUDIT

FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2011 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2014



Dave Yost • Auditor of State

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Dr. Richard Ross, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

We conducted a special audit of the General Chappie James Leadership Academy (Academy) by performing the procedures enumerated in the attached Supplement to the Special Audit Report for the period, July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014 (the Period) solely to:

- Determine whether General Chappie James Leadership Academy maintained documentation supporting actual attendance for the students it reported to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for the Period and the potential impact of any exceptions on the Academy's state foundation funding for the Period.

This engagement was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation established by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (January 2012). The procedures and associated findings are detailed in the attached Supplement to the Special Audit Report. A summary of our procedures and significant results is as follows:

1. We examined student funding data from ODE and Academy records to determine whether the Academy maintained documentation supporting actual attendance for the students reported to ODE during the Period. We attempted to contact and interview 141 students to corroborate findings regarding lack of attendance.

Significant Results – In April 2014 the Auditor of State's Office and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at the Academy to obtain student attendance records. The search warrant yielded approximately 80 boxes of student attendance records which were examined by auditors and investigators. Additionally, the Auditor of State issued 11 subpoenas for various records. Based on the results of information from the seized records and the subpoenas, we then attempted to contact 141 students, parents and guardians regarding the students' attendance at the Academy. Our attempts through visits to last known addresses and telephone calls to last known contact numbers resulted in investigators conducting 30 interviews involving students, parents and/or guardians. We also interviewed three Academy staff.

The Academy reported 459 students in attendance during the Period for which they received state foundation funding totaling \$2,313,120. For 220 of those students, available documentation did not support the students actually attended the Academy during the period for which it received funding.

We issued a finding for recovery against Kecia Williams, Academy Director, totaling \$1,179,879, representing the overpayment of state funds.

The Academy closed on September 11, 2014 without receiving State funding for July-September 2014; therefore, a response to our report could not be obtained. Due to the nature of the items included in this report it is being referred to the Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for consideration of criminal charges.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Yost". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Dave Yost
Auditor of State

January 9, 2015

Supplement to the Special Audit Report

Background

On March 6, 2014, the Auditor of State's West Region audit staff (Region) learned the Academy may have been illegally receiving funding from ODE for students who did not attend the Academy. Subsequently the Region met with representatives of ODE regarding the student attendance allegations. The Region and ODE requested additional documentation from the Academy to support the monthly reported student counts. In many instances student files could not be located and those provided lacked records supporting student enrollment and documentation supporting actual attendance. A preliminary examination of the documentation did not support actual student attendance for a number of the students.

Due to the deceptive nature of the alleged conduct and concern that relevant records could be destroyed, on April 14, 2014, the Auditor of State's Office and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at the Academy for all attendance records.

This information was considered by the Auditor of State's Special Audit Task Force and on July 2, 2014, designated the Academy's financial audit for the year ended June 30, 2014 a Special Audit 2 to expand the audit to address these allegations. Subsequently on September 5, 2014, based on the extensive lack of documentation to support student attendance the Special Audit Task Force initiated a Special Audit 1 of this matter.

SPONSOR OVERSIGHT

We interviewed officials for the Academy's sponsor, Kids Count of Dayton, Inc. ("Sponsor"). Kids Count was the Academy's sponsor for the final two years of operation, 2012-13 and 2013-14. The purpose of the interview was to gain knowledge about the Sponsor's oversight of the Academy during the Period. We inquired whether the Sponsor provided any services in addition to sponsoring the Academy (e.g., providing a treasurer) and learned the Sponsor does not.

Initially, the Sponsor's oversight conformed to requirements of the Revised Code, but failed to uncover attendance irregularities. The initial oversight consisted of two main actions: first, the Sponsor would perform site reviews twice annually during times that classes were in session; second, the Sponsor would attend the monthly board meetings and receive the same reports that were being provided to the Academy's board. These financial reports were obtained by Auditor of State personnel. A general review of these reports noted that while some detail was provided, all information was either prepared by the Treasurer or pulled from the Quickbooks accounting system.

Once site visits were completed, the Sponsor prepared review reports. The site visit review reports were used to compile annual reports that were submitted to the Ohio Department of Education ("ODE") and to the students' parents, though the Sponsor could not document it ever submitted these reports. We were able to review one such report and noted that the areas of focus were facilities, staff and administration, medical records, health training and prevention, and student attendance and welfare. During our interviews we were informed that the processes for attendance monitoring by the Sponsor were changed as a result of the issues eventually identified at General Chappie James Leadership Academy and are currently being used at the Sponsor's other schools.

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The initial site visit review process consisted mainly of verifying the Academy was complying with Ohio Revised Code requirements. The review process changed in October 2013 when former teachers began reporting various improprieties and inaccuracies that were occurring at the Academy. One of the Sponsor's representatives sat in a parked car and observed the Academy from down the street, inquired with a Regional Transit Authority bus driver and conducted multiple surprise counts. During the surprise counts, the Sponsor noted multiple closed or combined classrooms and only approximately twenty-six students per day. The Sponsor prepared a corrective action plan for the school in November, 2013. The Academy failed to abide by the terms of the corrective action plan and was suspended for one week. The Sponsor indicated the Academy continued its illicit attendance practices even after being suspended. The Sponsor did not report these practices to ODE or this Office.

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Objective No. 1 – Student Attendance

Procedures

We obtained data of students reported to ODE and through a search warrant for original records at the Academy site pertaining to student attendance during the Period. We examined documentation to determine whether the Academy maintained documentation supporting actual attendance for students reported to ODE during the Period. We then attempted to contact and interview 141 students or their parents and/or guardians to corroborate findings regarding lack of attendance.

Results

Ohio Revised Code section 3317.031 requires schools maintain membership records and provides in pertinent part:

A membership record shall be kept by grade level in each city, local, exempted village, joint vocational, and cooperative education school district ... Such membership record shall show the following information for each pupil enrolled: ..., days present, days absent, At the end of the school year this membership record shall show the total days present, the total days absent, and the total days due for all pupils in each grade.

During the Period, the Academy reported a cumulative total of 459 students in attendance to ODE and received \$2,313,120 in funding. We examined documentation obtained via search warrant to determine whether each student was in attendance. Attendance documentation examined included student report cards, classroom sign in attendance sheets, proof of work study participation, disciplinary forms, and/or completed registration and time logged into the Academy's virtual classroom software. The 459 students claimed were from a total of 263 different students (see Appendix A for a listing of these students) 128 (48.6%) of whom had at least one year of attendance claimed by the Academy with no supporting documentation.

We noted a cumulative total of 220 claimed students' attendance over the three years did not have any documentation whatsoever maintained by the Academy to support actual attendance. The 220 cumulative total resulted from 128 individual students claimed by the Academy as being in attendance; however, no documentation was maintained to support their actual attendance. Eighteen (14%) of 128 students reported as being in attendance in each of the three years had no documentation to support attendance in any year.

ODE was provided the list of students identified as not in attendance and calculated the amount of funding the Academy received for the students identified. The following is a breakdown of each school year results: (Please see Appendix A for a breakdown of individual students examined.)

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School Year	Student Attendance Reported to ODE	# Students not in Attendance	% Students not in Attendance	Amount of Overpayment
2011-2012	138	81	58.7%	\$492,778
2012-2013	171	90	52.6%	\$580,315
2013-2014	150	49 ¹	32.7%	\$106,786
Total	459	220	47.9%	\$1,179,879

It was initially unclear whether the Academy's lack of supporting documentation was the result of poor record keeping or the result of students actually not attending. In order to clarify, we sought to interview 26 students the Academy reported as attending during the 2013-14 school year. We visited last known addresses recorded in Academy records, but were only able to find and interview seven of the 26 students. Of those seven, five stated they did not attend school that year and two stated they attended at least a portion of the year. The results of these seven interviews corroborated audit findings and results.

We then attempted to locate an additional 115 students that our initial findings indicated did not attend the school during the Period. Due to the condition of the Academy's records, we contacted the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Intelligence Hub (OSHP) and requested assistance in locating last known addresses and telephone numbers for the students or parents/guardians. We received the addresses and phone numbers from the OSHP and we made over 174 phone calls resulting in 23 interviews. Of the 23 students or parents/guardians with whom we spoke, 21 stated the students did not attend during the year(s) in question. One parent, whose son was claimed for two years during the Period, stated her son had been incarcerated and could not have attended. Another parent stated that they had moved to Georgia and that her child could not have attended during that time. Two students claimed to have attended, but could not recall classes attended or provide any other corroborating information. Most of the remaining 23 students had opted to work rather than attend school and had work records to substantiate they were not in attendance during the times in question.

Investigators also attempted to interview nine staff members. These staff members were identified based on their having direct interaction with Keisha Williams and knowledge of the Academy's attendance practices. Of the nine, two staff members declined to comment, and four were unable to be located or did not respond to our inquiries. Three stated they had confronted Mrs. Williams about attendance discrepancies. Specifically, they questioned why attendance reported to the Ohio Department of Education greatly exceeded internal attendance lists. Ms. Williams replied "not to worry about it." All three agreed that on any given day they thought there were only approximately 30 students in attendance at the Academy.

Several students were claimed for multiple years, indicating fraud and not simple bookkeeping errors. The majority of the students had initially enrolled or attended General Chappie dating as far back as 2007 or 2008; however, these students had not attended in several years, and in some cases, enrolled but never attended.

¹ODE performed a preliminary investigation in March 2014 and identified 43 students not in attendance during the 2013-2014 school year. ODE immediately removed the students from the school's future foundation funding calculation. AOS identified an additional 6 students not in attendance during the 2013-2014 school year. The amount of overpayment for school year 2013-2014 is significantly lower than prior years because ODE adjusted funding in March 2014, subsequent to their preliminary investigation.

Supplement to the Special Audit Report

FINDING FOR RECOVERY

As academy director and superintendent of the General Chappie James Leadership Academy, Kecia Williams, was responsible for the management and oversight of the Academy and ensuring student data was accurately reported to ODE.

During the Period, the Academy reported 220 students for which available documentation did not support actual student attendance. As a result, the Academy should not have received state foundation funding for these students. ODE was provided the list of students identified as not in attendance and calculated the overpayment of state funds the Academy received.

In accordance with the foregoing facts and pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 117.28, a finding for recovery for public monies illegally expended is hereby issued in the amount of \$1,179,879 against Kecia Williams, in favor of the Ohio Department of Education.

Supplement to the Special Audit Report

APPENDIX A – Students Examined

Student ID	Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified		
	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
AF3243650	Yes	No	No
AS5957908	N/A ²	No	N/A
AS6056427	N/A	No	N/A
AS6144159	N/A	Yes	Yes
AS6465889	No	N/A	N/A
AS7254838	No	No	N/A
AS7466700	No	No	N/A
AS7838697	N/A	Yes	Yes
AS9665755	No	N/A	N/A
AS9883527	N/A	N/A	NC ³
AT1117504	N/A	N/A	Yes
AT1299172	N/A	N/A	Yes
AT1543147	No	N/A	N/A
AT1554705	No	N/A	N/A
AT2014791	No	N/A	N/A
AT2429736	No	No	N/A
AT2549113	No	No	N/A
AT3215416	Yes	No	No
AT3647533	N/A	Yes	Yes
AT3815832	N/A	Yes	N/A
AT3854536	N/A	N/A	Yes
AT3896348	No	No	N/A
AT5079933	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT5618536	No	No	N/A
AT5826967	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT6394115	No	N/A	N/A
AT6651588	No	N/A	N/A
AT6651588	N/A	Yes	N/A
AT8182854	No	No	No

²N/A - Student not claimed by the Academy during the identified school year

³NC - Student claimed by the Academy; however, the Academy could not provide a student name associated with the student ID. Therefore, AOS could not determine whether evidence was maintained to support student attendance and no conclusion was reached.

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
AT8249939	N/A	N/A	Yes
AT8873517	No	No	N/A
AU1731326	N/A	No	No
AU2248491	N/A	N/A	No
AU2318638	Yes	Yes	Yes
AU2326139	Yes	Yes	Yes
AU2719456	No	No	No
AU2721312	No	No	No
AU3107376	No	No	N/A
AU3175525	No	N/A	N/A
AU3735785	N/A	Yes	Yes
AU3813391	Yes	Yes	N/A
AU4156302	Yes	Yes	N/A
AU4603237	Yes	No	N/A
AU4609498	Yes	Yes	Yes
AU4879704	Yes	No	No
AU4958715	No	Yes	N/A
AU5105156	N/A	N/A	Yes
AU5460145	Yes	N/A	Yes
AU5471443	N/A	Yes	Yes
AU5502748	No	No	N/A
AU5503720	Yes	No	Yes
AU6169338	No	Yes	N/A
AU6220901	N/A	Yes	Yes
AU6795705	N/A	Yes	Yes
AU8220200	No	No	N/A
AU8340153	No	No	No
AU8526612	No	No	N/A
AU8840731	NC	N/A	N/A
AU9156865	No	No	N/A
AU9784653	NC	N/A	N/A
AV1146702	NC	N/A	N/A
AV1201800	No	No	N/A
AV2583430	No	Yes	N/A
AV2790691	NC	N/A	N/A
AV2905681	N/A	N/A	Yes

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
AV3180710	N/A	No	N/A
AV3219556	N/A	N/A	Yes
AV3491693	N/A	No	No
AV4409435	No	No	No
AV4426566	NC	N/A	N/A
AV4715341	No	N/A	N/A
AV4715341	N/A	No	N/A
AV4722972	NC	N/A	N/A
AV4855156	Yes	Yes	No
AV5999155	N/A	Yes	Yes
AV7325305	N/A	N/A	Yes
AV7374372	NC	N/A	N/A
AV7458992	No	N/A	N/A
AV7459837	No	N/A	N/A
AV8263366	N/A	Yes	N/A
AV8279731	N/A	Yes	N/A
AV8439391	No	No	No
AV8568420	N/A	N/A	Yes
AV9090920	Yes	No	N/A
AV9125785	NC	N/A	N/A
AV9133441	No	N/A	N/A
AV9647934	N/A	Yes	N/A
AV9967992	No	No	N/A
AW1403650	N/A	No	N/A
AW1457583	No	No	N/A
AW3174568	No	No	N/A
AW3756665	No	N/A	N/A
AW3815290	No	No	No
AW3816973	No	No	N/A
AW3819638	No	No	N/A
AW4580925	No	No	No
AW4784696	No	N/A	N/A
AW5054450	N/A	Yes	N/A
AW5060436	N/A	Yes	N/A
AW5063292	No	No	N/A
AW5066147	No	No	N/A

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
AW5221832	Yes	Yes	N/A
AW5459397	Yes	N/A	N/A
AW5658741	N/A	Yes	Yes
AW5823413	No	No	No
AW6112355	Yes	No	N/A
AW6742758	N/A	Yes	No
AW6827576	NC	N/A	N/A
AW6938831	Yes	No	No
AW6979489	N/A	N/A	Yes
AW8448558	No	N/A	N/A
AW8452430	No	Yes	N/A
AW8586359	Yes	No	No
AW9023400	No	N/A	N/A
AW9068850	No	No	N/A
BN2010162	N/A	Yes	N/A
BO4023141	N/A	Yes	Yes
BT4314722	N/A	Yes	Yes
BU6770295	N/A	No	Yes
DE5381552	N/A	Yes	N/A
DE6381503	N/A	No	No
DE6557385	No	No	N/A
DF2200987	N/A	No	No
DF2201843	N/A	No	No
DF4124391	No	No	N/A
DF4969656	No	No	N/A
DF5964299	No	No	N/A
DF6972588	Yes	Yes	No
DF7335998	NC	N/A	N/A
DF8824814	Yes	No	N/A
DG2323723	N/A	No	No
DG2600117	N/A	No	No
DG4085694	Yes	Yes	Yes
DG4287648	N/A	Yes	Yes
DG5368355	NC	N/A	N/A
DG5370421	No	N/A	N/A
DG7248756	No	N/A	N/A

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
DH3806480	Yes	Yes	Yes
DH4469786	No	N/A	N/A
DH5239659	Yes	No	No
DH9827540	No	No	No
DH9864247	N/A	Yes	Yes
DI1536569	N/A	N/A	Yes
DI6921416	Yes	No	N/A
DI9340967	No	N/A	N/A
DJ1035464	N/A	Yes	N/A
DJ2344903	Yes	No	No
DN7212818	Yes	Yes	Yes
EF1063452	NC	N/A	N/A
EP2502167	Yes	Yes	N/A
GM7537358	No	No	No
GM8281974	No	No	N/A
GS5400786	N/A	Yes	No
HB5917364	No	N/A	N/A
HB6426866	N/A	No	No
HB6732295	N/A	Yes	N/A
HB7102767	N/A	No	No
HB7201773	No	No	No
HB7402736	No	No	N/A
HB7917717	N/A	N/A	Yes
HB8578563	N/A	Yes	Yes
HB8614751	No	N/A	N/A
HB8616821	Yes	Yes	N/A
HB8675869	No	No	No
HB8702638	No	No	No
HB9268842	N/A	Yes	N/A
HC2032633	Yes	Yes	Yes
HC2297794	N/A	N/A	Yes
HC2328941	No	No	N/A
HC3021557	N/A	N/A	Yes
HC3373582	N/A	No	N/A
IM3375892	No	N/A	N/A
IM3788692	NC	N/A	N/A

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
IM4268530	Yes	Yes	Yes
IN3006519	No	No	N/A
IN3054451	N/A	N/A	Yes
IN3077945	No	No	No
IQ9856218	Yes	Yes	Yes
IQ9858319	No	No	N/A
IQ9957929	No	Yes	N/A
IR5460246	N/A	Yes	No
IS6348135	No	No	N/A
IS6435470	N/A	N/A	Yes
IS6600320	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX3159949	No	No	No
IX3312737	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX3340882	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX3398657	Yes	Yes	Yes
IX3423867	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX3523477	No	No	No
IX3613649	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX3750149	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX3911450	NC	N/A	N/A
IX3943254	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX4013701	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX4031169	N/A	Yes	N/A
IX4405733	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5149543	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5542715	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX5591824	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5686421	Yes	Yes	Yes
IX5704624	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5712201	N/A	N/A	Yes
IX5768167	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5854707	N/A	No	No
IX5916285	No	No	No
IX5928674	N/A	Yes	Yes
IX5954178	N/A	Yes	No
JB3304808	Yes	Yes	Yes

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
JG2913164	N/A	N/A	Yes
JK1216152	N/A	N/A	Yes
JK9487320	N/A	No	N/A
JU7933212	N/A	Yes	Yes
JU8055639	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8068305	N/A	Yes	Yes
JU8071949	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8127914	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8144626	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8262241	N/A	Yes	Yes
JU8548203	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8722713	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU8807262	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU9189145	N/A	N/A	Yes
JU9350473	N/A	N/A	Yes
JW6121386	N/A	N/A	Yes
JY7133237	Yes	Yes	Yes
JZ1018588	N/A	N/A	Yes
KA4556679	No	No	N/A
KC1285304	N/A	Yes	N/A
KC4712616	Yes	No	No
KC9969580	N/A	No	No
KL8032573	N/A	No	N/A
KO3376654	N/A	N/A	NC
KQ3417775	N/A	Yes	Yes
KQ3801597	N/A	N/A	Yes
KW2609632	N/A	N/A	Yes
KW6429602	N/A	N/A	Yes
KZ8175302	N/A	N/A	Yes
KZ8235758	N/A	N/A	No
LF3434649	N/A	N/A	Yes
LF3557240	N/A	N/A	Yes
LF4726681	N/A	N/A	Yes
LJ2512809	N/A	N/A	Yes
LS5450604	N/A	Yes	No
OI1779980	N/A	Yes	Yes

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Evidence Student Attended General Chappie James Leadership Academy in School Year Identified			
Student ID	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
OI5856886	N/A	No	No
PU5410606	No	Yes	N/A
SI5803180	N/A	No	No
SR9142125	N/A	Yes	Yes
SW3333592	N/A	Yes	Yes
TD7387596	N/A	Yes	Yes
TE5408152	No	No	N/A
TZ8689958	N/A	Yes	Yes
UD5213369	No	No	N/A
UD5223273	Yes	N/A	N/A
UF1434834	N/A	N/A	Yes
VD3100776	Yes	Yes	Yes
VE6596567	Yes	Yes	Yes
VF5489785	N/A	N/A	Yes
VG4593609	NC	N/A	N/A
VG6470695	N/A	N/A	NC
VK3008903	Yes	No	N/A
VO9864915	N/A	No	No

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Dave Yost • Auditor of State

GENERAL CHAPPIE JAMES ACADEMY

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report which is required to be filed in the Office of the Auditor of State pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in Columbus, Ohio.

Susan Babbitt

CLERK OF THE BUREAU

**CERTIFIED
JUNE 15, 2015**