



## Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

For Immediate Release  
September 30, 2013

Media Contact: Anovia Daniels  
202-727-8991

### **Office of the District of Columbia Auditor Releases Audit of Non-District Resident Students Enrolled in Public Schools**

Today, the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) released an audit of Non-District Resident Students Enrolled in Public Schools. This review was conducted by request of Councilmember Wells. The objectives of this review were to examine the schools' compliance with certain requirements of the District of Columbia Public Schools and Public Charter School Student Residency Fraud Prevention Amendment Act of 2012 (Act) and its effects on student enrollment for School Year (SY) 2012-13 and to evaluate the process for enrolling students in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools (PCS).

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is charged with implementing portions of the requirements, set forth in the D.C. Code, pertaining to residency requirements and non-resident tuition. The Code establishes processes for annually verifying District residency of students, assessing tuition for non-District resident students, and reporting and investigating residency fraud allegations.

Overall, we found that OSSE complied with several requirements of the law; however, compliance can be strengthened. Specifically, we found in a random sampling that schools did not enroll all eligible resident students before non-residents were admitted. Further, non-resident tuition was incorrectly calculated and deposited.

D.C. law requires that OSSE establish a hotline for reporting allegations of residency fraud. We found that multiple fraud hotlines existed and that OSSE's hotline was not promoted at the schools we tested. Additionally, all investigations performed and retroactive tuition resulting from investigations collected were not appropriately deposited into and disbursed from the OSSE Residency Fund, as required by law. While we determined that the some components of the student residency program were operating effectively, others could be strengthened by establishing additional internal controls. Specifically, we found that OSSE did not have program-related policies and procedures and had minimal program monitoring.

We formulated recommendations to address these weaknesses and strengthen the program, bearing in mind that some provisions of the law, including the requirement of a hotline and the establishment of the Residency Fund, went into effect in May 2012, giving OSSE less than a year to fully implement the law during our audit scope. However, given the relatively young age of the Act, now is a good time to streamline processes and integrate internal controls and best practices to better ensure compliance. To that end, we believe that our recommendations will assist in building a stronger program. Additionally, OSSE may benefit from obtaining and incorporating stakeholder feedback, including valuable feedback we obtained from stakeholders during our fieldwork.

[Click here](#) to view the report in its entirety. Visit [dcauditor.org](http://dcauditor.org) or call 202-727-3600 for more information about this report or the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor.

###