



**NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE**  
**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**BRIDGETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025**

We found the financial transactions were related to Bridgeton's programs, were reasonable, and were properly recorded in the accounting systems. In making these determinations, we noted certain internal control weaknesses meriting management's attention regarding employee benefits, payroll, preschool eligibility, procurement, the Student Activities Fund, contingency planning, and requests for the use of school facilities.

Bridgeton is a Schools Development Authority district that received an average of 85 percent of its funding from the state during our audit period and is statutorily required to ensure an effective and efficient use of the funds.

**AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Our review of the district's insurance broker's health benefits cost analysis disclosed errors, omissions, and misleading information. The district used the flawed analysis to select its health benefits plan which cost the district \$7.5 million more than the plan offered by the state. Also, the district's failure to remove ineligible members from its health benefits cost the district more than \$411,000.
- The board of education granted 12-month employees excess paid time off during summer months resulting in an additional \$1 million in compensation.
- The district lacked adequate documentation to verify students enrolled in the universal preschool program were district residents, and it permitted an employee's child to attend preschool without paying the required \$15,000 tuition.
- The district approved \$31,326 in purchase orders via proxy approval without providing the required override report to the board. It also processed payments totaling more than \$62,000 without first receiving authorization, which are known as confirming orders.
- We found the district credited more than \$27,000 in uncashed checks back to the originating fund and did not submit these unclaimed payments to the NJ Unclaimed Property Administration, as required. Amounts credited back were for student merit awards and vendor payments.
- Purchases made through the athletic account totaling more than \$74,000 should have gone through the regular purchase order process instead of the less-stringent athletic purchasing process.
- Cash collected for student activities totaling \$1,397 was left in a cabinet during the summer months instead of being secured in the safe. A student trip refund for \$900 was issued to an administrator's personal account and was returned to the school upon our discovery.
- The district does not have a policy for dormant student activity funds, and it transferred \$36,500 to the principal's account.

**AUDITEE RESPONSE**

Although the district disagrees with certain matters regarding health benefits, it generally concurs with our findings and recommendations.

For the complete audit report or to print this Executive Summary, click on the attached files.