

Department Spotlight: Internal Audit

Mary Tillman, Director

What is the Internal Audit Department's primary responsibility?

The main responsibility of the Internal Audit department is to complete audits of the internal accounts of the schools. The internal accounts are individual bank accounts held by the schools to account for collections such as: gate receipts from athletic events, concession stand sales, fund raising proceeds, school store sales, yearbook sales, collections and disbursements related to field trips and other expenditures related to school activities.

Who works in your department?

- Mary Tillman – Director: I am a CPA, CIA and ARM. I have worked for the district for more than 23 years, mainly in internal audit.
- Julia Bradley – Staff Auditor: Julia has worked for the district for just over 8 years. Her prior work experience is as an internal auditor for a bank.
- Marissa Diaz Walker – Staff Auditor: She is also a CPA. Marissa has worked for the district for almost 3 years. Her prior work experience is as an auditor for the Florida Department of Revenue.
- Michiko Strang – Staff Auditor: Michiko has worked for the district for almost a year. Her prior work experience is also as an auditor for the Florida Department of Revenue.
- Mary Collins – Administrative Assistant: Mary has worked for the district since July of 2013, but has only been part of the Internal Audit team since September of 2014. Mary has varied prior work experience that includes working as an auditor for hospitals.

What are some of Internal Audit's current projects?

- Julia and Michiko are completing the internal accounts audits (Part 1) for fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16
 - Part 1 audits are basic financial reporting audits where revenues and expenditures are tested as part of a random sample without targeting any particular type of revenue or expenditure.
- Marissa is working on Part 2 audits for selected schools for Fiscal Year 2015-16
 - Although internal controls and compliance are reviewed during the regular school audits (Part 1), the purpose of a Part 2 audit is to make a closer examination at certain schools of certain categories of transactions that have higher risk potential of error, fraud or noncompliance. Specifically, the Part 2 audit includes the examination of athletic activities, including concessions, gate receipts, and control of tickets, fundraisers and athletic participation

fees. The Part 2 audit also includes other fundraisers and control over payroll, fixed assets and support organizations. Schools are selected for Part 2 audits based on prior audit experience and dollar value and volume of certain transactions.

- Marissa is also working on tangible personal property audits of Student Support Programs and Services, Ridgewood High School, Chasco Middle School, Chasco Elementary School and Ladoochee Elementary School. As well as locating each item on the cost center's property inventory, we also analyze control procedures such as tags and secondary markings and proper check out procedures if applicable. We also identify items at the cost centers that should be on the inventory listing but are not.
- Julia is working on Accu-Claim audits at the charter schools. Accu-Claim is an audit required by the US Department of Agriculture for all food service programs. Since the District provides the meals for most of the charter schools, they are included in this audit process.
- Ongoing projects include:
 - Working closely with Finance, specifically the Bookkeeping Coordinators to assist in developing procedures to handle different situations with the appropriate level of accountability while making compliance as uncomplicated as possible.
 - Responding to allegations or suspicions of fraud or theft. Sometimes we become aware of these issues through our own audit processes, or through reporting from employees who are aware of the situation and sometimes through the ethics hotline from anonymous or self-named sources.

How does the Internal Audit Department help make Pasco County Schools more successful?

It is our intent that the audit process instructs school staff in the use of proper accounting procedures, verifies its use and if necessary, uncovers situations where school funds are not properly protected by these procedures. The procedures are developed to ensure to a reasonable extent that funds are collected, deposited and spent for the purposes intended. The school students and their parents are entitled to the assurance that their hard-earned money is being protected.

What does your department do to improve the lives of students?

We improve the student's lives by ensuring that money that is raised for specific projects is protected and available for those projects. It would be terrible if that money is mishandled and the students were not able to purchase the needed piece of equipment or to go on the field trip or complete other objectives of a fundraiser.