

For immediate release

Contact: Diane.Shinn@dc.gov, **202-727-8991**

Multiple HVAC Failures Found in Roosevelt High's \$136M Modernization
HVAC outages in heating, cooling throughout the facility occurred each year and continue today

March 30, 2023 (WASHINGTON) The District accepted a non-functioning heating and cooling system at the modernized Roosevelt High School and then paid multiple 3rd party vendors to determine the causes of the continual issues, spending \$2 million to repair and maintain the system following installation, according to a new report by the Office of the D.C. Auditor (ODCA).

The audit, completed by a construction audit team from RSM US LLP, describes Department of General Services (DGS) efforts to determine the problems with the faulty HVAC system, including major equipment and component replacements, consultation with the system manufacturer, and other 3rd party experts, while problems with the system continue through the date of this report. Even though problems existed from Day One, a latent defect notice was not issued some 16 months after the one-year warranty period ended.

"We will be sharing these findings with the Office of the Attorney General to make a judgment on whether at this late date the district can recover some of the cost of the modernization," D.C. Auditor Kathy Patterson said. "And the District of Columbia must be a better steward of D.C. tax dollars and not let this kind of accountability lapse occur again."

Among the documented shortcomings in DGS's management of the HVAC issues at Roosevelt the audit team found was that there was "a general theme of untimely action by both 3rd party vendors and DGS" with "several months/years [elapsing] between the identification of issues and the actions performed to assess or remediate those issues."

Auditors found documentation not accessible or not available, including one key document—the Certificate of Substantial Completion—typically signed by the project manager, which in the case of Roosevelt would have been an employee of McKissack and McKissack, the national project management firm that has overseen multiple D.C. Public Schools modernizations.

Among the audit's recommendations are to assess whether legal action is warranted, and compiling, following, and reporting on an action plan with completion dates for steps already recommended by third party consultants.

For future modernizations, the audit recommends that DGS develop procedures for sharing potential warranty issues with agency leadership and general counsel before the end of the warranty period and confirm all systems are installed according to manufacturer requirements before building turnover and project completion.

#

The mission of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) is to support the Council of the District of Columbia by making sound recommendations that improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the District government. Learn more at www.dcauditor.org.