



# **Berkeley Unified School District**

Executive Summary

Comprehensive Review  
July 2004

**Administrative Agent  
Larry E. Reider  
Office of Kern County  
Superintendent of Schools**

Chief Executive Officer  
Thomas E. Henry

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report is the second of four six-month progress reports required by Assembly Bill 2859 (Aroner, 2002). The report reviews the efforts of the Berkeley Unified School District Governing Board, administrators and staff to address the recommendations for improvement made in the Berkeley Unified School District Assessment and Improvement Plan, first presented to the district by the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) in July 2003. The report provides data to the district, community and Legislature to assist in facilitating more effective collaboration and to build the necessary capacity within the district to promote effective teaching and learning.

This assessment has been based upon legal and professional standards applicable to all California school districts in five school district operational areas: Community Relations and Governance, Personnel Management, Pupil Achievement, Financial Management and Facilities Management. A standards-based process of systemic assessment, prioritization and intervention helps to increase the overall capacity and productivity of the district by establishing a baseline of data against which progress can be measured over time. The district's improvement efforts must also engage the parents, students and the community in the partnership of improving student learning.

In its July 2003 comprehensive Assessment and Improvement Plan, FCMAT utilized 456 standards in its review of district operations and provided an analysis of the issues in the Berkeley Unified School District and a priority listing of those needs that were most pressing to address in the first six-month review period. The first six-month progress report issued in January 2004 provided an assessment of the progress made on 99 standards identified for the first six-month review period. This second six-month progress report provides an assessment of 103 standards identified for focus during the second six-month review period. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The findings presented in this report represent a snapshot of the district, and the progress reviews are intended to assist in the improvement of student learning. In the time since the data-gathering portion of this six-month review, the district has continued to make progress that may not be reflected in this report.

FCMAT would like to acknowledge the cooperation of the district Governing Board, administration and staff during the review process.

## **Background**

On September 29, 2002, the Governor signed Assembly Bill 2859 (Aroner) into law. In part, the bill required the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team to conduct assessments of the Berkeley Unified School District in five major operational areas. The bill reallocated to FCMAT funds to conduct the assessments that were withheld from the district's principal apportionments in 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, and funds scheduled to be withheld from the 2003-2004 apportionment for disallowed average daily attendance (ADA) claims. The legislation further required FCMAT to file status reports every six months through June 2005 with various entities, including the Legislature, on the school district's progress in meeting the recommendations of the improvement plan.

On July 1, 2003, FCMAT presented a comprehensive Assessment and Improvement Plan to the Berkeley Unified School District. The first six-month progress report on the district's implementation of the recommendations in the Assessment and Improvement Plan was presented to the district on January 5, 2004. This second six-month progress report was presented to the district on July 1, 2004. Additional six-month reports will be presented to the district through June 2005.

## **Study Guidelines**

FCMAT's approach to implementing the statutory requirements of AB 2859 is based upon a commitment to a standards-based, independent and external review process. FCMAT performed the assessments and developed the improvement plan in collaboration with four other external providers selected through a competitive process. Professionals from throughout California contributed their knowledge and applied the identified legal and professional standards to the specific local conditions found in the Berkeley Unified School District.

Prior to beginning work in the district, FCMAT adopted five basic tenets to be incorporated in the assessment and improvement plans. These tenets were based on previous assessments conducted by FCMAT in school districts throughout California and a review of data from other states implementing external reviews of troubled school districts. The five basic tenets are:

### **1. Use of Professional and Legal Standards**

FCMAT's experience indicates that for schools and school districts to be successful in program improvement, the evaluation, design and implementation of improvement plans must be standards-driven. FCMAT has noted positive differences between an objective standards-based approach versus a nonstandards-based approach. When standards are clearly defined, reachable, and communicated, there is a greater likelihood they will be measured and met.

Every standard is measured on a consistent rating format, and each standard is given a scaled score from zero to 10 as to its relative status of completeness. The following represents a definition of terms and scaled scores. The single purpose of the scaled score is to establish a baseline of information by which the district's future gains and achievements in each of the standard areas can be measured.

#### **Not Implemented** (Scaled Score of 0)

There is no significant evidence that the standard is implemented.

#### **Partially Implemented** (Scaled Score of 1 through 7)

A partially implemented standard lacks completeness, and it is met in a limited degree. The degree of completeness varies as defined:

1. Some design or research regarding the standard is in place that supports preliminary development. (Scaled Score of 1)
2. Implementation of the standard is well into the development stage. Appropriate staff is engaged and there is a plan for implementation. (Scaled Score of 2)
3. A plan to address the standard is fully developed, and the standard is in the beginning phase of implementation. (Scaled Score of 3)
4. Staff is engaged in the implementation of most elements of the standard. (Scaled Score of 4)

5. Staff is engaged in the implementation of the standard. All standard elements are developed and are in the implementation phase. (Scaled Score of 5)
6. Elements of the standard are implemented, monitored and becoming systematic. (Scaled Score of 6)
7. All elements of the standard are fully implemented, are being monitored, and appropriate adjustments are taking place. (Scaled Score of 7)

**Fully Implemented** (Scaled Score of 8-10)

A fully implemented standard is complete relative to the following criteria.

8. All elements of the standard are fully and substantially implemented and are sustainable. (Scaled Score of 8)
9. All elements of the standard are fully and substantially implemented and have been sustained for a full school year. (Scaled Score of 9)
10. All elements of the standard are fully implemented, are being sustained with high quality, are being refined, and have a process for ongoing evaluation. (Scaled Score of 10)

**2. Conduct an External and Independent Assessment**

FCMAT employs an external and independent assessment process in the development of school district assessment and improvement plans. FCMAT assessment reports present findings and improvement plans based on the external and independent assessment from professional experts and agencies recruited to assist FCMAT in the assessment process. Collectively, these professional experts and agencies constitute FCMAT's providers in the assessment process. Their external and independent assessments serve as the primary basis for the reliability, integrity and credibility of the review.

**3. Utilize Multiple Measures of Assessment**

For a finding to be considered legitimate, multiple sources need to be utilized to provide the same or consistent information. The assessment and improvement plans are based on multiple measures. Testing, personal interviews, group meetings, public hearings, observations, review and analysis of data all provide added value to the assessment process. The providers are required to utilize multiple measurements as they assess the standards. This process allows for a variety of ways of determining whether the standards are met. All school district operations with an impact on student achievement, including governance, fiscal, personnel, and facilities are reviewed and included in the improvement plan.

**4. Empower Staff and Community**

The development of a strong professional development plan for the board and staff is a critical component of an effective school district. The assessment reports include the importance of a comprehensive professional development plan. The success of the improvement plans and their implementation are dependent upon an effective professional and community development process. For this reason, the empowerment of the staff and community is one of the highest priorities, and emphasizing this priority with each of the providers is critical. As a result, a strong training component for board, staff and administration is called for consistently throughout FCMAT's assessment reports.

Of paramount importance is the community’s role in local governance. The absence of parental involvement in education is a growing concern nationally. A key to success in any school district is the re-engagement of parents, teachers, and support staff. Parents generally care deeply about their children’s future and most are willing to participate in improving their school district and enhancing student learning. The community relations section of FCMAT’s assessment reports provides necessary recommendations for the community to have a more active and meaningful role in the education of its children.

### **5. Engage Local, State and National Agencies**

It is critical to involve various local, state and national agencies in the recovery of a school district. This is emphasized by engaging state-recognized agencies as partners to assist with the assessment and improvement process. The California Department of Education, city and county interests, professional organizations, and community-based organizations all have expressed and shown a desire to assist and participate in the improvement of the Berkeley Unified School District.

## **Study Team**

The study team was composed of the following members:

### ***For FCMAT:***

Roberta Mayor  
Leonel Martínez

### ***For FCMAT – Financial Management:***

Michelle Plumbtree

### ***For the California School Boards Association –Community Relations and Governance***

Paul Richman	Felita Walker
Holly Jacobson	Davis Campbell
Martin Gonzales	Diane Greene
James Morante	Ben Bartos
Kitty Simpson	Samantha Dobbins

### ***For the Community Training and Assistance Center – Pupil Achievement***

Donald W. Ingwerson  
Debbie Frick  
William Gillaspie  
Maribeth Smith  
Barbara Helms

### ***For Schromm Associates – Personnel Management***

Richard A. Schromm  
Jack M. Weinstein  
Charles Diggs

### ***For School Services of California – Facilities Management***

Ron Bennett  
Curt Pollock

# Executive Summary

The Berkeley Unified School District Governing Board and administration have made it a district priority to address the recommendations in the Assessment and Improvement Plan and therefore continue to make good progress in increasing the ratings in all of the five operational areas of Community Relations and Governance, Pupil Achievement, Personnel Management, Financial Management and Facilities Management.

The district also continues to address the broad issues noted in the initial assessment report concerning the extreme decentralization of the district schools; the need to increase communication and dialogue among district employees; the lack of clear, common goals and a communicated direction for the district; the need to update board policies and administrative regulations; and the noncompliance of programs such as special education. Significant effort has been made to remedy these issues.

## Summary of Principal Findings and Recommendations

The following is a summary of the general findings and recommendations that are presented in greater detail by study area later in the report. This assessment represents data collection and analysis at a specific point in time. The assessment team conducted this follow-up work in the district in April and May 2004.

A Fiscal Advisor was appointed in October 2001 by the Alameda County Office of Education to oversee the district's finances. FCMAT continues to serve as the Fiscal Advisor to the district. A financial recovery plan was developed by the district and approved by the board in February 2003. The plan required major cuts in expenditures to achieve fiscal solvency. The district continues to closely monitor its expenditures.

## Community Relations and Governance

The Berkeley Unified School District has demonstrated continued progress in nearly all of the priority standards identified for this second 6-month review. During this period of time, the Governing Board and district administration continued to focus on addressing the district's fiscal crisis. Other significant events that have occurred since the last visit include the opening of the new high school facilities and a new cafeteria, and development of a new student registration process. There also appears to be satisfaction with the new leadership at the high school. Additionally, the state Superior Court ruled in favor of the district's Voluntary Racial Desegregation Plan in a lawsuit brought forward by the Pacific Legal Foundation. The district and community also have been engaged in discussions and research geared toward placing a "bridge" measure to the Berkeley Schools Excellence Project (BSEP) parcel tax on the ballot.

## **Communications**

The district continues to effectively engage in a wide range of internal and external communications, and steady progress was demonstrated on the priority standards. Development of a comprehensive communications plan is moving forward, although the plan has not yet been discussed or adopted by the board.

New, positive steps were taken to strengthen the manner in which information gets communicated to staff at all levels. Most notably, the district launched a monthly newsletter that is distributed to all employees with their paychecks. District office responsiveness, especially in the Payroll Department, was cited as having improved. The district also continues to secure staff input into school and district operations in a number of ways, although these processes should become more formalized as part of the comprehensive communications plan.

The district effectively promotes programs and student and faculty accomplishments. The Web site is an outstanding resource for staff, parents and the public. A major highlight in the past six months was the successful publicity and community engagement surrounding the opening of the new high school facilities. While the district continues to be aware of the need to strengthen outreach to non-English-speaking and traditionally less-involved parents – and while some strategies have been implemented effectively for specific events – the district needs to be much more aggressive in this area.

### **Parent/Community Relations**

Many of the district's schools continue to maintain a high level of parent/community involvement. Significant progress in improved relations has been made at the high school during the past six months. The district needs to more effectively coordinate with school sites its efforts to improve communication between the school and home. School accountability report cards for all schools are now made available to the public through the district's Web site and in other locations, however, not all mandated information is included. The district has now established procedures for visitor registration at each site.

### **Community Collaboratives, District Advisory Committees, School Site Councils**

The district completed a review and update of its committee, council and task force system. This has brought about more clarity and understanding about the functions of these various bodies and how they fit into the overall district decision-making process. Certain committees and councils such as the 2003-04 District Advisory Committee, District English Learner Advisory Committee and the BSEP Committee received information and training on their roles and responsibilities. A districtwide training session also was held for all site council members. This training focused on the role of site councils, as well as on how to utilize data to make decisions.

School site plans are becoming recognized and utilized more consistently as a vital part of school operations, although this still varies depending on the particular site. To enhance accountability, a mid-term review of each site plan will now be conducted in conjunction with the board's annual review and approval process.

### **Policy**

The district has demonstrated excellent progress in the area of policy development during the past six months. It is apparent that the board and staff are more aware of the importance of maintaining current policies and about the board's role in adopting them. A series of new policies has been reviewed and adopted in the areas of instructional services and community relations, among others. Processes are now being followed to ensure the timely review and adoption of other district policies to reflect current law and local needs, and to ensure that the district's policies are organized and made easily accessible to the staff and the public. It is important that these processes

be formalized to ensure that they can be sustained over time. The district's policies are also now available online to all staff and the community through the district's Web site.

### **Board Roles/Boardsmanship**

Working relations among the members of the board and between the board and Superintendent appear to be strong, especially as the governing team has worked together to address the district's fiscal situation. In the past six months, the board implemented a plan that details when specific organizational and student performance indicators and data will be provided by the staff to the board and public. This "calendar" includes fiscal and facilities reports, student data, site plans and many other important indicators. All individuals on the board demonstrate a deep commitment and dedicate considerable time to specific district efforts through their attendance at district and community events and their work on board subcommittees and other assignments. The board also demonstrates respect and support for district and site-level staff.

Although a statement of the mission, vision and goals for the district was approved and is being more widely circulated, the board needs to be more directly involved in helping to set the overall direction of the district. In the next year, the Superintendent plans to engage the community in helping define a "first-class education" as part of a broad direction-setting process to ensure a sustainable, long-term focus on student achievement. The alignment of goals is also part of the superintendent's evaluation.

### **Board Meetings**

Board meetings have consistently been positive. There is a strong desire among all board members and the superintendent to focus more time and energy on matters related to student achievement, and several positive steps have been demonstrated. The board president is effectively engaged with the Superintendent in developing meeting agendas, and an emphasis is placed on ensuring that one or more achievement or instructional-specific items are included on each agenda.

### **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Community Relations and Governance included the assessment of 18 standards. Of the 18 standards, 2 were fully implemented-substantially, and 16 were partially implemented. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The average rating of all 60 assessment standards for the operational area of Community Relations and Governance is 6.55 on a scale of 10, with 10 the highest score possible. The average rating in this operational area was 5.67 in the initial FCMAT Assessment and Improvement Plan report in July 2003 and 6.03 in the first six-month progress report in January 2004.

### **Personnel Management**

The Human Resources Department staffing has remained fairly stable, with eight of the nine employees in full-time positions having been in the department for more than a year. The department is still headed by the two directors of personnel, one certificated and one classified.

During the past six months, the Human Resources Department has reached settlement with two of the five employee bargaining units. Both certificated and classified employees have faced lay-

offs. The district will have approximately 10 fewer teachers next year due to program reductions. More than 70 classified employees have been notified of layoffs, with the expectation that a large number will return to their positions, if funding continues.

Office improvements have been made with the addition of new computers for all staff members, a new telephone system, and a new, more capable copy machine. Since February 2004, the department also began providing all employees with a monthly human resources newsletter.

The Human Resources Department still needs to pay special attention to the lack of verification that existing employees have met mandated tuberculosis testing requirements for continued employment. This concern needs to be corrected immediately. The lack of written internal operational procedures, lack of updated merit system rules, and lack of documentation of certificated reference checking also need to be addressed.

The Human Resources Department has developed a revised mission statement with plans for its distribution throughout the district. An organizational chart for the Human Resources Department has been updated for the 2003-04 school year, showing all positions and their reporting relationships. The department also developed a list of the functions performed by each staff member. Both the certificated and classified directors now participate in the decision-making process of the Superintendent's Cabinet.

Human Resources, Benefits, and Payroll personnel meet monthly to discuss resolution of mutual concerns. These meetings have significantly improved service and the workflow between departments. The Human Resources Department has identified staff members to be cross-trained and to serve as backup when coverage is needed for absent staff members. Further cross training for some positions should be addressed internally.

The Human Resources Department has not yet developed a written recruitment plan or procedures for certificated recruitment. Classified recruitment procedures are available and distributed as needed. It was reported that both certificated and classified plans will be included in the 2004-05 Principals' Human Resources Guide.

The Certificated Personnel Department has developed a draft of a written reference check form. However, it has not been implemented and procedures have not been developed for checking references of teacher candidates selected for hiring. Some reference checks have been conducted by site-level and Human Resources Department administrators. A form and procedures for conducting reference checks need to be developed and required as a part of the hiring process. Reference check forms should be retained in the interview files.

The Classified Personnel Department still needs to update the Personnel Commission's rules to ensure they are current and consistent with Education Code requirements. Also, the development of internal written procedures describing the classified recruitment, testing and selection process will add credibility and ensure consistency to the process. The Principals' Human Resources Guide is a valuable tool for the site administrators that can be enhanced by adding more information on personnel requisition procedures and by condensing the informative material on the merit system.

The Classified Personnel Department has effective procedures for developing applicant eligibility lists. The procedures implemented to monitor the use of provisional employees appear to be effective in controlling the use of such assignments.

The Human Resources Department must notify all current employees with expired tuberculosis test certificates that they need to immediately complete mandatory tuberculosis testing. Once all current employees have received the proper tuberculosis certificates, written procedures need to be developed to ensure that in the future, all employees complete tuberculosis testing prior to the expiration of their tuberculosis clearances. The district has procedures to ensure that all new employees receive their tuberculosis clearance prior to the start of work.

The Human Resources Department has procedures that ensure all new hires receive the appropriate notification for nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and child abuse reporting. Classified Maintenance and Operations Department employees receive blood-borne pathogen information from that department. There appears to be no clear process for providing teachers and non-instructional personnel with information on blood-borne pathogen requirements. This process needs to be a written procedure, clearly identifying the parties responsible for providing employees with the appropriate information.

The district has a position control system that meets the needs of the Business Department. The Business Department has control over the entry of all data that could affect the budget. The Human Resources Department uses the system to verify authorized positions and to check personnel requisitions for accuracy. As the Human Resources Department becomes better trained in the use of Quintessential School System (QSS) software, the district should revisit its procedures for processing information on separations and new hires to expedite the processes. With the exception of the credentials module, all of the other QSS software modules appear to be available for use. The Human Resources Department needs to identify a key staff member who will be responsible for data processing to secure the needed training in QSS and to resolve the problems associated with making the credential module fully operational.

The district has a process for notifying administrators of employees who need to be evaluated. The Classified Personnel Department has a process to track completion of classified evaluations. The evaluation monitoring and follow-up of certificated personnel need to be further developed to ensure that all evaluations are completed and submitted as required. There is no systematic system to ensure that all required evaluations are submitted.

### **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Personnel Management included the assessment of 25 standards of performance. Of the 25 standards three were fully implemented-substantially and 22 were partially implemented. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The average rating of all 102 assessment standards for the operational area of Personnel Management is 5.02 on a scale of 10, with 10 the highest score possible. The average rating in this operational area was 4.40 in the initial FCMAT Assessment and Improvement Plan report in July 2003 and 4.71 in the first six-month progress report in January 2004.

## **Pupil Achievement**

This second six-month progress report on pupil achievement focused on 22 of the 79 standards first reported in the July 2003 comprehensive Assessment and Improvement Plan. These 22 standards were selected for review because they were an integrated and natural extension of the first set of 22 standards reviewed during the first six-month period.

The district is addressing the recommendations made for these standards with rigor and focus. Better communication and follow-through are occurring. The availability of materials, agendas and minutes of meetings make the district's work more transparent and easier to track. All the staff has more awareness of the FCMAT recommendations and the action plans needed to address those recommendations. The topics in the principals' agendas and the activities in the professional development program are well aligned with the recommendations cited by FCMAT. Communication has improved at all district levels, and the district is providing new emphasis on instruction. District efforts to improve instruction are effectively balancing the "bottom-up and top-down" implementation strategies. This approach can earn the staff's good will and speed the improvement process. Specifically, the district is taking the following actions:

- Displaying a more standards-aligned curriculum
- Integrating professional development with the needs of the staff
- Assessing practices and data compliance with No Child Left Behind legislation
- Addressing the student diversity needs in the school/classroom

These efforts are just beginning, and many more resources will need to be provided and greater efforts will need to be made in the area of classroom diversity. Efforts at the elementary level seem to be better coordinated than at the high school. Meetings between the middle and the elementary school principals have improved curriculum articulation and communication. Articulation between the middle school and the high school is proceeding slowly. Middle school and high school administrators understand the need for more articulation and have met and established a schedule to develop this area next year.

The assessment of all students has been formalized, but the results are not being effectively utilized. Special education is being reorganized and monitored. The results must be carefully evaluated, especially with reference to budget encroachment. The English language learners' Master Plan is impressive, but the number of students eligible for reclassification and the numbers actually reclassified need to be reviewed. Much attention is being paid to student learning difficulties. When these concerns can be translated into the implementation of best practices for teachers, especially at the upper grade levels, the achievement gains will be more representative of the requirements in No Child Left Behind. The Director of Curriculum's span of control and the limited number of curriculum support personnel will need to be addressed by the district in order to provide more direction and support for the site level.

## **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Pupil Achievement included the assessment of 22 standards of performance related to instruction and pupil achievement. Of the 22 standards reviewed, two were fully implemented-substantially and 20 were partially implemented. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The average rating of all 79 assessment standards for the operational area of Pupil Achievement is 5.51 on a scale of 10, with 10 the highest score possible. The average rating in this operational area was 4.30 in the initial FCMAT Assessment and Improvement Plan report in July 2003 and 4.96 in the first six-month progress report in January 2004.

## **Financial Management**

The Berkeley Unified School District has made considerable progress in the majority of standards that deal with financial management in this second six-month progress report.

Processes and procedures are being developed and documented so that there is a clearer understanding of staff roles and functions. This ensures that current staff follows district practices, builds confidence that proper controls are in place, and ensures that the current processes and procedures will be understood if the present staff and administration leave.

Internal controls have improved, but slowly. Once the district can maintain its required state reserve, more attention can be paid to the area of internal control compliance.

Based on current financial information and assumptions, the district's fiscal health has improved. The district approved the third phase of a recovery plan in February 2004, and made additional budget cuts in April 2004. These budget cuts will enable the district to avoid deficit spending in future years based on current information and trends. The recovery plan contains budget cuts of more than \$3 million and assumes that the district will re-establish the required 3 percent state reserve by the end of the 2004-05 fiscal year.

When the district's fiscal health is regained and confirmed by the county office, the fiscal advisor assigned by the county office will no longer be required. Because substantial fiscal issues have been addressed in the 2003-04 fiscal year, the district anticipates this will occur during the 2004-05 fiscal year.

A mandatory health benefit re-enrollment was provided for all employees, saving the district more than \$500,000. The district also changed its Worker's Compensation administrator, saving more than \$1 million. Additional changes were made regarding how retiree benefits were expended in the budget. The administration is analyzing the budget line by line to ensure that all expenditures are minimized, and revenues are maximized. The district is adhering to statutory time lines, reviewing budgets more often, and using multiyear projections to analyze fiscal decisions that might affect future years' budgets.

The district faces several uncertainties in the coming year that could have a major impact on the district's finances. The Deputy Superintendent position will be filled by a new administrator. The state budget has not been finalized. Student enrollment is declining. In the next six-month period, the ramifications of these uncertainties will be clearer and the review team will report on the district's progress in addressing these uncertainties.

## **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Financial Management included the assessment of 20 standards of performance related to finance. Of the 20 standards, one was fully implemented-sustained, two were fully implemented-substantially, and 17 were partially implemented. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The average rating of all 104 assessment standards for the operational area of Financial Management is 4.35 on a scale of 10, with 10 the highest score possible. The average rating in this operational area was 3.08 in the initial FCMAT Assessment and Improvement Plan report in July 2003 and 3.88 in the first six-month progress report in January 2004.

### **Facilities Management**

Since the review team's previous six-month visit, the Berkeley Unified School District has made some progress in the area of maintenance and operations, and facilities at the high school were recently renovated and are now being used by students. However, the district has made the least improvement in this operational area in the last six months. During the site visits conducted on May 11 and 12, 2004, there were two major areas of concern: student safety and school cleanliness.

Without exception, a review team member was able to enter the school grounds and in most cases, the school buildings, with little effort and no resistance or challenge from school staff. In one instance, the team member was approached by a small child in the school hallway and asked how to spell a word. No adults were visible at that time.

The majority of the restrooms visited during the site inspections were acceptable. However, there was notable vandalism and major destruction to the junior high restrooms in some of the pods. In one case, the partitions were completely gone from all six stalls. All that remained were the toilets.

The condition of the blacktop at one of the elementary school sites posed a safety hazard. The playground area had numerous potholes, with tree roots lifting and splitting the blacktop, creating tripping hazards for the students.

The district staff did not provide the visiting team with any written responses or documentation to support efforts to address the recommendations of the standards identified for review during this second six-month progress period. The ratings assigned to the standards are based solely on observations and discussions with the staff.

No board policies or associated regulations have been adopted by the Governing Board regarding the distribution of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) sheets. As a result, schools have no MSDS binders to instruct them on how to properly use chemicals and what to do in an emergency if a chemical should make a contact on someone.

No board policies or associated regulations have been adopted by the Governing Board regarding the purchasing, storing, and handling of hazardous materials.

Campus conditions range from outstanding at lower-grade schools to needing improvement at the middle grade schools to adequate at the high school. The safety and cleanliness of the campuses are not based on a standard level of safety or cleanliness. During the review team's inspections in May, a few hazards were noted and brought to the attention of either the Principal or Vice Principal. The hazards ranged from an electrical switch with no cover plate in the boys' restroom, which exposed bare wires to the students, to a broken or missing electrical conduit, which allows the electrical or communication line to hang down, exposed to the students.

The use of facilities request and supporting documentation should be sent to a designated district office, where permits are approved and issued. The district should consider requiring payment in advance for facility use permits in cases where costs are more predictable. This would eliminate the need for invoicing, receiving and handling checks, and following up on late payments. The district should recognize the opportunities this program presents for fraud and abuse and provide additional oversight, staffing, and safeguards accordingly.

**Conclusion**

This six-month review of Facilities Management included the assessment of 18 standards of performance related to facilities. All 18 standards were partially implemented. Identifying a smaller number of standards for the district to address during each six-month review period allows the district to focus its improvement efforts.

The average rating of all 111 assessment standards for the operational area of Facilities Management is 6.12 on a scale of 10, with 10 the highest score possible. The average rating in this operational area was 5.75 in the initial FCMAT Assessment and Improvement Plan report in July 2003 and 6.08 in the first six-month progress report in January 2004.

TABLE OF BUSD'S PROGRESS OVER TIME

<b>OPERATIONAL AREA</b>	<b>JULY 2003 RATING</b>	<b>JANUARY 2004 RATING</b>	<b>JULY 2004 RATING</b>
<b>Community Relations/Governance</b>	5.67	6.03	6.55
<b>Personnel Management</b>	4.40	4.71	5.02
<b>Pupil Achievement</b>	4.30	4.96	5.51
<b>Financial Management</b>	3.08	3.88	4.35
<b>Facilities Management</b>	5.75	6.08	6.12

