



# **Berkeley Unified School District**

Executive Summary

Comprehensive Review  
July 2003

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the Berkeley Unified School District with the results of a systemic, comprehensive assessment in the following five areas of district operation:

1. Community Relations and Governance
2. Personnel Management
3. Pupil Achievement
4. Financial Management
5. Facilities Management

This report is the first of four six-month progress reports required through June 2005 by Assembly Bill 2859 (Aroner, 2002), reviewing 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 existing legal and professional standards applicable to all California school districts. 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 assessment and improvement report, 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. This report provides an assessment of the progress made on the 99 standards identified for the first six-month review period. 103 standards have been identified for focus for the second six-month review period and are identified at the end of this section and in the Chart of Standards at the end of each operational area in Section Two of this report. 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 recommendations 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 address certain areas of concern, making 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. Subsequent 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 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:***

Joel Montero  
Roberta Mayor  
Leonel Martinez

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

Michelle Plumbtree	William Gillaspie
Michele McClowry	Andrew Prestage
Philip Scrivano	

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

Paul Richman	Felita Walker
Elizabeth Wells	Davis Campbell
Martin Gonzales	Diane Greene
James Morante	Stephanie Farland
Samantha Dobbins	Ben Bartos
Kitty Simpson	

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

Donald W. Ingwerson  
Debbie Frick  
William Gillaspie

### ***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**

FCMAT's initial assessment of the district, reported in the Berkeley Unified School District Assessment and Improvement Plan, July 2003, indicated that the district was having some difficulty meeting basic legal and professional standards. This six-month progress report indicates that the district has made progress in each of the five operational areas of Community Relations and Governance, Pupil Achievement, Personnel Management, Financial Management and Facilities Management.

The district has also made efforts to address several broad issues, noted in the initial assessment report, which contributed to the ineffective functioning of the district in the past. These issues included 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 non-compliance of programs such as special education.

The district board, administration and staff have worked to implement many of the recommendations made in the assessment and improvement plan. Ratings on many of the individual standards assessed have greatly improved.

## **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 late October and November 2003.

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 made modest to good progress in nearly all the priority standards for community relations and governance. During the last six months, two major priorities for the district were: (1) weathering the district's fiscal crisis, and (2) achieving greater stability at the high school, especially by hiring a new principal. Highlights for the first six months in each of the six sub-areas of the community relations and governance standards are indicated below.

### **Communications**

The district has demonstrated steady progress in nearly all the priority standards under communications. The staff has made strong progress toward developing a comprehensive communications plan that can be submitted to the board for comment and adoption and implemented. Several steps also have been taken to strengthen two-way communications between the district and site-level staff. For example, the Superintendent regularly attends principals' meetings and schedules weekly visits to sites. The district also produces a summary of board meetings that is distributed to the staff the day after board meetings, and the district



is continuing to produce its “A+” newsletter. School programs and student and faculty accomplishments are being highlighted on a new show that airs before board meetings on the cable access channel. A major component not yet addressed by the draft communications plan is developing specific outreach strategies designed to improve communications with non-English-speaking, disenfranchised or less-involved parents and community members.

### **Parent/Community Relations**

Although many of the district’s schools continue to maintain a high level of parent/community involvement, this varies from site to site. The district should coordinate more effectively with all school sites to improve communication between the school and home. School accountability report cards for all schools are available to the public through the district’s Web site and in other locations; however, not all mandated information was included in the 2001-02 report cards. As the 2002-03 report cards are completed, the district should include the most recent requirements of state law and the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The district staff also indicates that there are plans to ensure and monitor that each school site appropriately posts visitor registration requirements.

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

The district staff plans to provide districtwide training for all school site council members. Certain committees and councils such as the 2003-04 District Advisory Committee, District English Learner Advisory Committee and the Berkeley Schools Excellence Project Committee, have received information and training on their roles and responsibilities. Site-level efforts to expand the diversity of representation on school advisory councils continue; but the district should make a more coordinated effort to encourage underrepresented groups to participate on site and district councils and committees.

### **Policy**

The district had taken a significant step in May 2003 by adopting the majority of state and federally mandated policies. Some additional policies were adopted in July 2003 and more were expected to be adopted in November 2003. Processes are being developed and implemented to ensure the timely review and adoption of other district policies to reflect current law and local needs. Plans are also being developed to ensure that the district’s policies are organized and maintained, and made easily accessible to the staff and the public.

### **Board Roles/Boardsmanship**

Working relations among board members and between the board and Superintendent appear to be strong. During the past six months, the board and Superintendent have engaged in several discussions to help clarify roles and responsibilities, and several positive steps have been taken to enhance two-way communications. Information and data flow from the staff to the board also have improved. Additionally, while the board faced the challenge of making significant cuts to balance the district’s budget, board members indicated that this was undertaken with a strong sense of unity of purpose and mutual respect. Individual board members have demonstrated a commitment to working together, and all individuals on the board dedicate considerable time to specific district efforts through their attendance at district and community events and their work on board subcommittees and other assignments. For example, the board has utilized the subcommittee structure to make progress in reviewing the district’s policies, to develop plans for addressing standards related to the board in the FCMAT comprehensive review, and to meet with community members regarding the recent adult school relocation.

Although a mission, vision and goals statement for the district has been approved and is being more widely circulated, the board was not as directly engaged in this process as its role dictates. The board is also nearing completion of the annual superintendent's evaluation, and greater engagement of the board in the vision and goal-setting process will facilitate greater alignment of evaluation criteria and district goals.

### **Board Meetings**

July 2003 ratings on standards pertaining to board meeting operations were generally positive. Only one standard in this section was identified as a priority for the past six months, and on that standard, the board showed significant progress by updating and adopting a new board bylaw about meeting conduct to formalize its procedures.

### **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Community Relations and Governance included the assessment of 17 standards. Of the 17 standards, one was 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 **6.03** 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.

### **Personnel Management**

At the time of FCMAT's initial review in July 2003, the Human Resources Department was administered by an Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Services. His support staff included 13 full-time positions. His leadership team consisted of one Director of Classified Personnel, one Manager of Certificated Personnel, and a Supervisor of Risk Management.

The Human Resources Department presently has nine full-time positions. The leadership of the department is provided by two directors, one for certificated personnel and one for classified personnel. The two people formerly in the risk management/workers' compensation/ benefits areas are now reporting to the Business Services Department.

The assessment and improvement plan provided to the district in July 2003 reported the district's status of implementation of 102 legal and professional standards in personnel management. By design, the assessment team and district identified 20 standards to be reassessed in the first six-month period of improvement plan implementation. The review team interviewed 13 people and reviewed numerous materials provided by the Human Resources Department staff.

Since the initial review, the Human Resources Department has had a change in leadership. Progress on the improvement plan standards has been noticeable. In addition to addressing the recommendations in the 20 standards identified for review, the Human Resources staff has demonstrated increased friendliness, responsiveness and a more positive attitude in providing services.

## **Principal Findings**

The Human Resources Department has developed a positional responsibility listing. This document lists in alphabetical order the area of responsibility, name, title and telephone number of each person providing services in the identified personnel areas. Distribution of this recently developed document has not yet been determined. Each support staff member within the human resources office has been provided a binder that includes pertinent information on the office organization and his/her own area of responsibilities.

The Human Resources Department has taken a number of positive steps to address the new mandates contained in the No Child Left Behind Act, including attendance at workshops, a subscription to a periodic newsletter geared to this topic, and participation in a local consortium. The classified personnel group has instituted the use of a new instructional aide test that meets the requirements. The Human Resources Department should continue to address the issues surrounding highly qualified teachers and how to deal with existing aides that may not meet the new requirements.

The certificated personnel group has not established comprehensive written procedures on its certificated selection process. The existing one-page overview contained in the Human Resources Guide needs to be expanded to include greater detail and forms that are to be used in the selection process. A process and written procedures should be developed that will ensure reference checks are conducted for all new certificated hires. The existing draft of a reference checking form needs to be finalized and incorporated into the new procedures. The classified personnel group has a process that provides selecting administrators with blank reference checking forms and requires that completed forms be submitted for the recommended candidate. This process can be further strengthened by establishing written procedures that describe what is required and provides in-service training on how to conduct effective reference checks.

Little change has occurred in the orientation programs provided to new certificated employees. New substitute employees were provided an orientation. Classified employee orientation is planned for quarterly implementing in 2004.

Individual desk manuals have not been fully developed and incorporated into the Human Resources Guide. The development process has begun with the human resources binder that is brought to staff meetings by all department staff members. Principals have been provided a Human Resources Guide with district materials and forms that are included in the human resources staff binders. An Internal Operations Procedure Manual has not been fully developed for the Human Resources Department.

The human resources, payroll and position control groups have begun to meet monthly to address current and future issues. This process, coupled with the ongoing day-to-day interaction between the departments, has significantly improved the quality of their services.

The Human Resources Department has a process that ensures new hires receive a tuberculosis clearance. There is no process to notify and verify that current employees receive their subsequent four-year checkups. A process should be implemented as soon as possible to get current employees checked and develop a system for monitoring future tuberculosis needs.

The Human Resources Department provides group and one-on-one training to administrators on the evaluation of teachers and classified personnel. This process could be further strengthened

by including more in-depth training in such areas as conducting classroom observations, face-to-face performance reviews and completing performance evaluation documents. The Facts, Rules, Impacts, Suggestions and Knowledge (FRISK) training has continued annually. Classified supervisors should be included in the training. Additional training is needed in the due process area.

Changes have occurred in workers' compensation operations. Responsibility has been transferred to the Business Services Department. The district will become self-insured in December as a result of soliciting an actuarial review. Workers' compensation experience report information will be readily available.

### **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Personnel Management included the assessment of 20 standards of performance. Of the 20 standards two were fully implemented-substantially and 18 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 **4.71** 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.

### **Pupil Achievement**

This first six-month progress report on Pupil Achievement is based on a review of 22 of the 79 standards that formed the basis of the initial findings and recommendations found in the July 2003 pupil achievement report. The 22 standards were selected for the first six-month review to provide an integrated and meaningful starting point for Berkeley Unified School District's first improvement phase.

The district has made great strides in implementing the major recommendations cited in these 22 standards. The district is beginning to demonstrate a more purposeful, focused, systematic approach to organizational management and to the coordination of efforts needed to improve pupil achievement, particularly in the core curriculum. These improvement efforts are based on the presence of a clear, written and articulated vision by district leadership, stated high expectations, aligned site mission statements, and overarching policies and plans. The district is also beginning to use a collaborative, orchestrated, districtwide approach to curriculum and instructional leadership. Meaningful community involvement, student positive attendance and outreach programs have begun. These actions will help the district continue improving coordination of resources at all levels so that it can develop:

- Standards-aligned curriculum and programs
- Aligned staff development activities
- Periodic assessments to improve instructional strategies and guide instruction in language arts and mathematics

However, the district should provide additional staff training in using assessment results to improve the instructional program.

The entire district has worked to take full advantage of limited resources and coordinate efforts to develop its schools' instructional capacity. There are many more indications of a district balance between the "bottom up" and "top down" approaches. However, the high school program is lagging in these improvement efforts. There is insufficient documentation to track the instructional elements that are so visible in the elementary and middle schools. Additionally, information and data-driven reports are frequently made available to the Governing Board, but this data is rarely used to inform the instructional program.

Although the district has made much improvement, many critical improvements need continued work. For example, the district has made commendable progress in developing written, standards-based curriculum materials, but it still lacks consistent written materials for the total K-12 program, particularly at the high school level. Also commendable is the district's attention to improving student attendance and promoting broader involvement by all stakeholders from the faculty to the community agencies. However, special attention should be given to creating and implementing a plan that increases student participation in the state-mandated testing program and to improving communication and building positive relationships with hard-to-reach parents. Although much progress has been made in special education, the district needs additional work to balance a centralized program with a decentralized implementation plan. Further, special education continues to encroach on the general budget.

Overall, the district staff is to be applauded on the progress made to improve the instructional program, but this emphasis must become an integral part of the school culture. As improvement efforts broaden, the district must provide timely professional development. Finally, the entire staff's cooperative spirit will do much to help the district improve its efforts.

### **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, one was fully implemented-substantially and 21 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 **4.96** 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.

### **Financial Management**

In the area of financial management, the Berkeley Unified School District has made progress in all standards that were part of this first 6-month review except one. This marks a commendable level of improvement.

Areas included in this first six month review included: communication, staff professional development, budget development, budget adoption, budget monitoring, investments, attendance accounting, audits, accounting, purchasing, warehousing, long-term debt issuance, student body funds, and management information systems.

At the time of the initial comprehensive review in July 2003, the district lacked documented processes and procedures in the area of financial management. In addition, the district's fiscal health was precarious. With the exception of the area of student body funds, the district has now partially implemented or fully implemented all the selected standards for this review period. Improvement also has occurred in many additional standards that were not part of this first review.

The district has addressed its goals seriously, and the outcome is clear and evident. Training and documentation are occurring. Processes and procedures are being developed to ensure that employees understand their duties and how to accomplish them. Governing Board members now ask more questions that coincide with the standards. The staff also ensures that submitted board reports relate to the standards.

In the beginning of 2003-04, the district held a business in-service for site administrators and site clerical employees and prepared a business services manual for distribution at the in-service. This manual will be continuously updated as time progresses and as new procedures are developed or old ones revised. Additional training has occurred since that initial in-service, and more is planned for later in the year.

The district's internal controls and financial condition are improving. In January, 2003, the district's independent auditor presented to the Governing Board the audit findings for 2001-02. Significant improvement in business office operations was noted in both these areas that reflect a change in board and management emphasis that focuses on proper procedures and good business practices. In addition, the district made difficult budget cuts to begin to regain its fiscal health.

For the 2002-03 year, the unaudited actuals had a variance of more than \$5 million when compared to the third interim report of the same year. This large a variance would normally be cause for concern, but in this case, the variance indicated only that fiscal records still needed improvement. In the current fiscal year, 2003-04, there is greater certainty that the fiscal records accurately represent the district's fiscal condition since it was developed by the current staff familiar with the budget and financial system. Increased accountability can be expected in the future, and such large variances should not occur.

More fiscal reports are being submitted at board meetings. The board appears to appreciate the additional information, and there is increased board member discussion of budget issues. Board members have reviewed the FCMAT July 2003 comprehensive report and established a two-member committee to discuss the report findings and develop implementation plans to address the recommendations.

## **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Financial Management included the assessment of 21 standards of performance related to finance. Of the 21 standards, one was fully implemented-sustained, five were fully implemented-substantially, 14 were partially implemented and one was not yet 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 **3.88** 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.

## **Facilities Management**

This summary provides some conclusions regarding the most significant conditions detailed in FCMAT's six-month follow-up assessment of the facilities in the Berkeley Unified School District.

The Director of Maintenance and Operations has made very good progress in creating a well-trained and accountable staff with the potential to perform all district cleaning and maintenance needs. The director is concentrating efforts on staff development and employee evaluations so that all staff members are given the best opportunity to provide the students with clean, well-maintained schools for their learning experience.

Project tracking and coordination has improved since FCMAT's initial review in July 2003. The Facilities Department has expanded the number of staff working on projects. The Facilities Master Plan includes all of the active projects and is being updated to include four pending projects that, when approved by the Governing Board, will complete the Master Plan. Monthly financial reports are provided by the Facilities Department for each individual project reflecting the budgeted amount, amounts spent to date, funding sources, and percent of completion.

The Governing Board has adopted a board policy regarding the proper handling of Civic Center revenues. The district has also developed and implemented regulations for the implementation of this policy. This is a major step in the fiscal oversight of this area, which had no guidance during the initial assessment six months ago.

## **Conclusion**

This six-month review of Facilities Management included the assessment of 19 standards of performance related to facilities. All 19 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 **6.08** 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.

## **STANDARDS SELECTED FOR THE JULY 2004 SIX-MONTH REVIEW**

### **Community Relations and Governance**

- 1.1** The district has developed a comprehensive plan for internal and external communications, including media relations.
- 1.2** Information is communicated to staff at all levels in an effective and timely manner.
- 1.3** Staff input into school and district operations is encouraged.
- 1.4** The district effectively implements strategies for communicating with parents, the community and the media.
- 2.2** A school accountability report card is issued annually for each school site (Education Code 35256).
- 2.6** Parents and community members are encouraged to be involved in school activities and in their children's education.
- 2.9** The district has established procedures for visitor registration and posts registration requirements at each school entrance (Penal Code 627.2 and 627.6).
- 3.3** Community collaboratives and district and school advisory councils all have identified specific outcome goals that are understood by all members.
- 3.5** The district encourages and provides the necessary training for collaborative and advisory council members to understand the basic administrative structure, program processes and goals of all district partners.
- 3.11** School plans are a vital part of school operations and accountability.
- 4.1** Policies are written, organized and readily available to all members of the staff and to the public.
- 4.2** Policies and administrative regulations are up to date and reflect current law and local needs.
- 4.6** The board supports and follows its own policies once they are adopted.
- 5.5** The board has established a district-wide vision/mission and uses that vision/mission as a framework for district action.
- 5.10** The board publicly demonstrates respect for and support for the district and school site staff.
- 5.16** The board acts for the community and in the interests of all students in the district.



**5.17** The board receives and reviews reports from the superintendent regarding district performance.

**6.9** Board meetings focus on matters related to student achievement.

## **Personnel Management**

**1.1** An updated and detailed policy and procedures manual exists that delineates the responsibilities and operational aspects of the personnel office.

**1.2** The district has clearly defined and clarified roles for board and administration relative to recruitment, hiring, evaluation and dismissal of employees.

**1.3** The Personnel Division has developed a mission statement that sets clear direction for personnel staff.

**1.4** The Personnel Division has an organizational chart and a functions chart that include the names, positions and job functions of all staff in the Personnel Division.

**1.5** The Personnel Division has established goals and objectives directly related to the district's goals that are reviewed and updated annually.

**1.7** The Personnel Division has a monthly activities calendar and accompanying lists of ongoing personnel activities to be reviewed by staff at planning meetings.

**1.8** The Personnel Division head is a member of the Superintendent's cabinet and participates in decision making early in the process.

**2.4** The Personnel Division staff is cross-trained to respond to client need without delay.

**2.5** The Personnel Division holds regularly scheduled staff meetings.

**3.4** The Personnel Division recruitment plan that contains recruitment goals, including the targeting of hard-to-fill positions such as those in the areas of math, science, special education and bilingual education.

**3.12** The district systematically initiates and follows up on reference checking on all applicants being considered for employment.

**4.2** Employment procedures and practices are conducted in a manner that ensures equal employment opportunities. Written hiring procedures are provided under merit system rules.

**4.7** The Personnel Commission prepares an eligibility list of qualified candidates for each classified position that is open, indicating the top three candidates (EC 45272-45278).

**4.8** Classified recruitment results are provided in an annual report to the Personnel Commission Board.

- 5.4** The Personnel Division has developed an employment checklist to be used for all new employees that includes district forms and state and federal mandated information. The checklist is signed by the employee and kept on file.
- 6.3** The Personnel Division has an operation procedures manual for internal department use in order to establish consistent application of personnel actions.
- 6.9** Personnel staff members attend training sessions/workshops to keep abreast of the most current acceptable practices and requirements facing personnel administrators.
- 7.2** The Governing Board requires every employee to present evidence of freedom from tuberculosis as required by state law (EC 44839, 49406).
- 7.8** The district has established a process by which all required notices and in-service training sessions have been performed and documented such as those for child abuse reporting, blood-borne pathogens, sexual harassment and nondiscrimination (EC 44691, GC 8355).
- 8.1** An online position control system is utilized and is integrated with payroll/financial systems.
- 8.4** The Personnel Division has a program of providing funds and time for staff training and skills development in the use of computers.
- 8.6** The Personnel Division has computerized its employee database system including, but not limited to: credentials, seniority lists evaluations, personnel by funding source, program, location, and Workers' Compensation benefits.
- 9.3** Teachers and other professional school services personnel are provided with diversity training (EC 44560).
- 10.4** The Personnel Division provides a process for the monitoring of employee evaluations and the accountability reporting of their completion.
- 12.3** The Personnel Division provides all managers and supervisors (certificated and classified) training in contract management with emphasis on the grievance process and administration.

## **Pupil Achievement**

- 1.2** The administrative structure of the district promotes student achievement.
- 1.5** Categorical and compensatory program funds supplement and do not supplant services and materials to be provided by the district.
- 2.10** Teachers in K-8 are provided with professional development in reading and mathematics by a state-approved provider; teachers in 9-12 are provided with defined professional development in implementing content standards.
- 2.11** The district has adopted a plan for integrating technology into curriculum and instruction at all grade levels.
- 2.12** The district optimizes state and federal funding to install technology in its schools.
- 3.10** Principals make formal and informal classroom visits. Based on these visits, principals provide constructive feedback and assistance to teachers.
- 3.11** District and school site administrators are provided standards-focused leadership skills and knowledge as well as ongoing professional development and support on general school leadership.
- 3.15** Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that address their students' diverse needs.
- 3.16** Teachers modify and adjust instructional plans according to student need and success.
- 3.17** All teachers are provided with professional development on special needs, language acquisition, timely interventions for under-performers, and culturally responsive teaching.
- 3.19** Curriculum and instruction for English learners prepares students to transition to regular class setting and achieve at a high level in all subject areas.
- 3.20** Programs for English-language learners comply with state and federal regulations and meet the quality criteria set forth by the California Department of Education.
- 4.2** Student achievement is measured and assessed through a variety of measurement tools (e.g., standardized tests, portfolios, projects, oral reports, etc.).
- 4.3** The assessment tools are clear measures of what is being taught and provide direction for improvement.
- 4.4** The administration and staff utilize assessment information to improve learning opportunities for all students.
- 4.9** A process to identify struggling students and intervene with additional support necessary to pass the exit examination is well-developed and communicated to teachers, students and parents.

- 4.12 II/USP grant recipients are collecting required data to measure progress.
- 4.13 II/USP grant recipients are meeting or exceeding goals as identified in action plans.
- 4.14 Principals and teachers in under-performing schools and/or in schools under mandated improvement programs are provided special training and support by the district; improvement plans are monitored.
- 5.5 Collaboration exists among higher education, district, professional associations, and community in providing professional development.
- 5.6 The district has formed partnerships with state colleges and universities to provide appropriate courses accessible to all teachers.
- 5.7 Administrative support and coaching are provided to all teachers.

## **Financial Management**

- 1.7 All employees should be evaluated on performance at least annually by a management-level employee knowledgeable about their work product. The evaluation criteria should be clearly communicated and, to the extent possible, measurable. The evaluation should include a follow-up on prior performance issues and establish goals to improve future performance.
- 2.4 The district should have formal policies and procedures that provide a mechanism for individuals to report illegal acts, establish to whom illegal acts should be reported, and provide a formal investigative process.
- 5.7 The district must have an ability to accurately reflect its net ending balance throughout the budget monitoring process. The first and second interim reports should provide valid updates of the district's net ending balance. The district should have tools and processes that ensure that there is an early warning of any discrepancies between the budget projections and actual revenues or expenditures.
- 6.1 The budget office should have a technical process to build the preliminary budget amounts that includes: the forecast of revenues, the verification and projection of expenditures, the identification of known carryovers and accruals and the inclusion of concluded expenditure plans. The process should clearly identify one-time sources and uses of funds. Reasonable ADA and COLA estimates should be used when planning and budgeting. This process should be applied to all funds.
- 7.1 The district should adopt its annual budget within the statutory time lines established by Education Code Section 42103, which requires that on or before July 1, the governing board shall hold a public hearing on the budget to be adopted for the subsequent fiscal year. Not later than five days after that adoption or by July 1, whichever occurs first, the governing board shall file that budget with the county superintendent of schools. [EC 42127(a)]

- 7.2** Revisions to expenditures based on the State Budget should be considered and adopted by the governing board. Not later than 45 days after the governor signs the annual Budget Act, the district shall make available for public review any revisions in revenues and expenditures that it has made to its budget to reflect funding available by that Budget Act. [EC 42127(2) and 42127(i)(4)]
- 7.5** The district must comply with Governmental Accounting Standard No. 34 (GASB 34) for the period ending June 30, 2003. GASB 34 requires the district to develop policies and procedures and report in the annual financial reports on the modified accrual basis of accounting and the accrual basis of accounting.
- 7.6** The first and second interim reports should show an accurate projection of the ending fund balance. Material differences should be presented to the board of education with detailed explanations.
- 7.8** Standard management practice dictates the use of an audit committee.
- 8.1** All purchase orders are properly encumbered against the budget until payment.
- 8.4** Budget revisions are made on a regular basis and occur per established procedures and are approved by the board of education.
- 8.5** The district uses an effective position control system, which tracks personnel allocations and expenditures. The position control system effectively establishes checks and balances between personnel decisions and budgeted appropriations.
- 9.2** The district should clearly identify one-time source and use of funds.
- 12.3** The district should forecast its revenue and expenditures and verify those projections on a monthly basis in order to adequately manage its cash. In addition, the district should reconcile its cash to bank statements and reports from the county treasurer reports on a monthly basis. Standard accounting practice dictates that, in order to ensure that all cash receipts are deposited timely and recorded properly, cash be reconciled to bank statements on a monthly basis.
- 12.8** The district should comply with the bidding requirements of Public Contract Code Section 20111. Standard accounting practice dictates that the district have adequate purchasing and warehousing procedures to ensure that only properly authorized purchases are made, that authorized purchases are made consistent with district policies and management direction, that inventories are safeguarded, and that purchases and inventories are timely and accurately recorded.
- 12.9** The district has documented procedures for the receipt, expenditure and monitoring of all construction-related activities. Included in the procedures are specific requirements for the approval and payment of all construction-related expenditures.

- 14.1 A reliable computer program that provides reliable multiyear financial projections is used.
- 14.2 The district annually provides a multiyear revenue and expenditure projection for all funds of the district. Projected fund balance reserves should be disclosed. The assumptions for revenues and expenditures should be reasonable and supportable. [EC 42131]
- 15.1 The district should comply with public disclosure laws of fiscal obligations related to health and welfare benefits for retirees, self-insured Workers Compensation, and collective bargaining agreements. [GC 3540.2, 3547.5, EC 42142]
- 18.3 The district should control the use of facilities and charge fees for usage in accordance with district policy.

## **Facilities Management**

- 1.4 The district should ensure that the custodial and maintenance staffs are regularly informed of restrictions pertaining to the storage and disposal of flammable or toxic materials. [EC 49341, 49401.5, 49411, F&AC 12981, H&SC 25163, 25500-25520, LC 6360-6363, CCR Title 8 §5194]
- 1.5 The district has a documented process for issuing of master and sub-master keys. A districtwide standardized process for the issuance of keys to employees must be followed by all district administrators.
- 1.7 Outside lighting is properly placed and monitored on a regular basis to ensure the operability/adequacy of such lighting and to ensure safety while activities are in progress in the evening hours. Outside lighting should provide sufficient illumination to allow for the safe passage of students and the public during after-hours activities. Lighting should also provide security personnel with sufficient illumination to observe any illegal activities on campus.
- 1.11 Maintenance/custodial personnel have knowledge of chemical compounds used in school programs that include the potential hazards and shelf life. [EC 49341, 49401.5, 49411, F&AC 12981, H&SC 25163, 25500-25520, LC 6360-6363, CCR Title 8 §5194]
- 1.14 Sanitary, neat and clean conditions of the school premises exist and the premises are free from conditions that would create a fire hazard. [CCR Title 5 §633]
- 1.15 The Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) requires periodic inspections of facilities to identify conditions. [CCR Title 8 §3203]
- 1.24 Materials Safety Data Sheets are maintained. [EC 49341, 49401.5, 49411, F&AC 12981, LC 6360-6363, CCR Title 8 §5194]
- 2.1 The district should have a long-range school facilities master plan.
- 8.1 An energy conservation policy should be approved by the board of education and implemented throughout the district.

- 8.2** The district should create and maintain a system to track utility costs and consumption and to report on the success of the district's energy program.
- 8.7** Major areas of custodial and maintenance responsibilities and specific jobs to be performed have been identified. Custodial and maintenance personnel should have written job descriptions that delineate the major areas of responsibilities that they will be expected to perform and will be evaluated on.
- 8.8** Necessary staff, supplies, tools and equipment for the proper care and cleaning of the school(s) are available. In order to meet expectations, schools must be adequately staffed and staff must be provided with the necessary supplies, tools and equipment as well as the training associated with the proper use of such.
- 8.10** Toilet facilities are adequate and maintained. All buildings and grounds are maintained. [CCR Title 5 § 631]
- 9.1** The district has developed a plan for attractively landscaped facilities.
- 9.2** The goals and objectives of the technology plan should be clearly defined. The plan should include both the administrative and instructional technology systems. There should be a summary of the costs of each objective and a financing plan should be in place.
- 10.1** The district should have a plan to promote community involvement in schools.
- 10.2** Education Code section 38130 establishes terms and conditions of school facility use by community organizations, in the process requiring establishment of both "direct cost" and "fair market" rental rates, specifying what groups have which priorities and fee schedules. "
- 10.3** Districts should maintain comprehensive records and controls on civic center implementation and cash management.