



# **Berryessa Union School District**

## **Organizational Review**

June 12, 2009

Joel D. Montero  
Chief Executive Officer





**CSIS California School Information Services**

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June 12, 2009

Dr. Marc Liebman, Superintendent  
Berryessa Union School District  
1376 Piedmont Road  
San Jose, CA 95132

Dear Superintendent Liebman:

In December 2008, the Berryessa Union School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement to provide an organizational review of the district's personnel, education and business divisions. Specifically, the agreement states that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. Conduct a review of the district's Personnel, Educational Services, and Business Divisions and provide options to restructure administrative and management level roles in order for the district to become a more cost effective, efficient, and effective organization. Recommendations will include suggested modifications to the span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority for the following departments and/or services:

Personnel Services	Fiscal Services
Payroll	Purchasing and Distribution
Print shop	Warehouse
Child Nutrition Services	Educational Services
Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation	
Communication/Management Information Services	

The attached final report contains the study team's findings and recommendations.

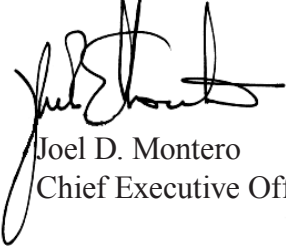
**FCMAT**

Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer

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

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and extend our thanks to all the staff of the Berryessa Union School District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel D. Montero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joel D. Montero  
Chief Executive Officer

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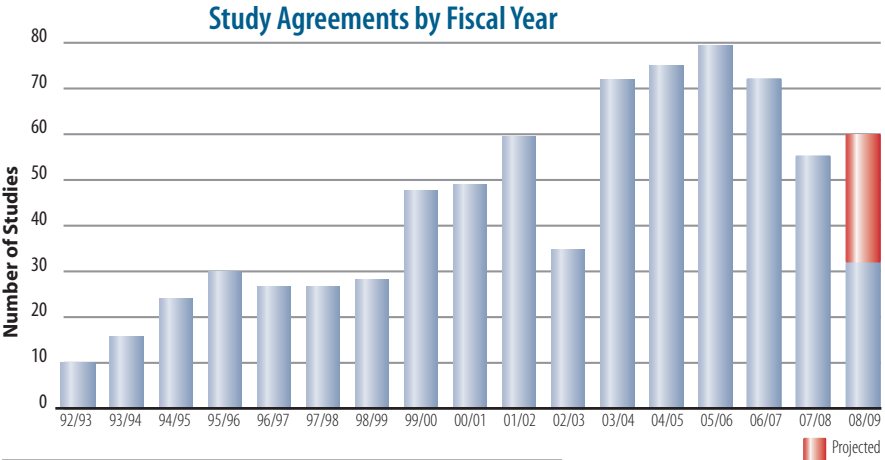
# Foreword - FCMAT Background

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) was created by legislation in accordance with Assembly Bill 1200 in 1992 as a service to assist local educational agencies (LEAs) in complying with fiscal accountability standards.

AB 1200 was established from a need to ensure that LEAs throughout California were adequately prepared to meet and sustain their financial obligations. AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county offices of education and school districts to work together on a local level to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. The legislation expanded the role of the county office in monitoring school districts under certain fiscal constraints to ensure these districts could meet their financial commitments on a multiyear basis. AB 2756 provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans. These include comprehensive assessments in five major operational areas and periodic reports that identify the district’s progress on the improvement plans.

In January 2006, SB 430 (charter schools) and AB 1366 (community colleges) became law and expanded FCMAT’s services to those types of LEAs.

Since 1992, FCMAT has been engaged to perform nearly 750 reviews for local educational agencies, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. Services range from fiscal crisis intervention to management review and assistance. FCMAT also provides professional development training. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The agency is guided under the leadership of Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer, with funding derived through appropriations in the state budget and a modest fee schedule for charges to requesting agencies.



<b>Total Number of Studies.....</b>	<b>743</b>
<b>Total Number of Districts in CA.....</b>	<b>982</b>
● Management Assistance.....	705 (94.886%)
● Fiscal Crisis/Emergency .....	38 (5.114%)
Note: Some districts had multiple studies.	
● Districts (7) that have received emergency loans from the state.	(Rev. 1/22/09)





# Introduction

## *Background*

Located in Santa Clara County, the Berryessa Union School District serves approximately 8,300 students in kindergarten through eighth grade at ten elementary and three middle schools. The district's student population is diverse, including 47.6% Asian, 24.4% Hispanic and 15.6% Filipino according to the 2007-08 California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) report. In November 2008, the community passed Measure W, a parcel tax that will be used to support the district in areas such as teacher recruitment and retention, library services, after-school programs, science programs, and technology. The district has a five-member elected governing board.

In October 2008, the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) received a request for management assistance from the district. The study agreement specifies that FCMAT will complete the following:

1. Conduct a review of the district's Personnel, Educational Services, and Business Divisions and provide options to restructure administrative and management level roles in order for the district to become a more cost effective, efficient, and effective organization. Recommendations will include suggested modifications to the span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority for the following departments and/or services:

- Personnel Services
- Fiscal Services
- Payroll
- Purchasing and Distribution
- Print shop
- Warehouse
- Child Nutrition Services
- Educational Services
- Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation
- Communication/Management Information Services

## Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district on February 3 and 4, 2009 to conduct interviews, collect data and review documentation. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Organizational Structure
- III. Personnel Services
- IV. Education Services
- V. Business Services
- VI. Staffing Comparisons
- VII. Appendices

## Study Team

The FCMAT study team was composed of the following members:

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\*As members of this study team, these consultants were not representing their respective employers but were working solely as independent contractors for FCMAT.

## Executive Summary

The district has reduced district office management and support staff significantly over the past several years. Approximately 40% of the district's upper-level management has been eliminated. These reductions have had a significant impact, particularly in the education services and information technology services departments. Because the assistant superintendent of education services will retire in June 2009 and the former assistant superintendent of business services left the district in the fall of 2008, the district wanted to conduct a review to provide options and determine if administrative and management roles should be restructured.

The district should be staffed according to standards used in other school agencies of like size and type, and in a manner that reflects the generally accepted theories of organizational structure. These include span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority. Interviews with staff members indicate that the chain of command is not always followed among district management staff. This can create a duplication of effort and unclear direction within the organization.

A review of comparison districts and interviews with staff indicate that the district is not overstaffed in cabinet-level and districtwide management level positions.

The personnel services department is directly overseen by the assistant superintendent of personnel services, who has served in the district for approximately 14 years, including 10 years as the assistant superintendent, and has extensive knowledge and experience in other areas of the organization. This individual has expressed a willingness to expand his role in the district. Areas that could be considered for inclusion in the personnel services department are risk management/workers' compensation, beginning teacher support and assessment, professional development, and some of the other education services functions.

Education services department staffing has been reduced significantly during the past several years, and there are currently only two administrative positions in the department. A staffing comparison completed by FCMAT indicates that the number of administrative positions is low in comparison with other elementary districts of like size.

To provide leadership and oversight of education services, more staffing is needed in this department. The district should consider reinstating one or more of the management positions that were previously reduced or eliminated in this department. If the district is unable to reinstate one or more of the management positions, it should consider reassigning some duties from education services to the personnel department. When the assistant superintendent of education services retires, the job title and position should be retained and filled.

The assistant superintendent of business services resigned in the fall of 2008, and the district hired a part-time interim assistant superintendent to fill the position temporarily. The district should fill this position with a permanent, full-time employee. Although some

comparably sized districts have a different title for the position, it should remain at the same administrative level and report directly to the superintendent.

The district's organizational chart indicates that the supervisors of the fiscal services, child nutrition, and maintenance, operations and transportation departments report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services. This reporting structure should continue. In addition, the district should consider having the purchasing agent report to the assistant superintendent of business services rather than to the director of fiscal services.

The information technology (IT) department has been without a leadership position for seven years. The department needs a leadership position to provide vision, communicate with sites and determine priorities for short- and long-term planning. The magnitude of the district's information technology projects will require daily oversight and guidance by a management level position. The district should consider having the director of information technology report to the assistant superintendent of business services; all other information technology department staff should report to the director and should be provided with a clear designation of duties and responsibilities.

## Findings and Recommendations

### *Organizational Structure*

A school district's organizational structure should establish a framework for leadership and the delegation of specific duties and responsibilities. The organizational structure should adapt as needed to changes as the district's enrollment increases or declines.

The district needs to be staffed according to generally accepted theories of organizational structure and standards used in other school agencies of like size and type. The most common theories of organizational structure are span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority.

#### **Span of Control**

Span of control refers to the number of subordinates reporting directly to a supervisor. While there is no agreed upon ideal number of subordinates for span of control, it is generally agreed that the span can be larger at lower levels of an organization than at higher levels, because subordinates at lower levels typically perform more routine duties and therefore can be more effectively supervised.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Chain of Command**

Chain of command refers to the flow of authority within an organization and is characterized by two significant principles: unity of command, where a subordinate is accountable to only one supervisor; and the scalar principle, which suggests that authority and responsibility should flow in a direct vertical line from top management to the lowest level. The result is a hierarchical division of labor.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Line and Staff Authority**

Line authority is the relationship between supervisors and subordinates; it refers to the direct line in the chain of command. For example, the district superintendent has direct line authority over the assistant superintendent of personnel services, and the assistant superintendent has direct line authority over the personnel office staff. Conversely, staff authority is advisory in nature. Staff personnel do not have the authority to make and implement decisions; rather, they support line personnel.<sup>3</sup> The organizational structure of local school agencies contains both line and staff authority.

The purpose of any organizational structure is to help district management make key decisions to facilitate student learning while balancing financial resources. The organizational design should outline the management process and its specific links to the formal systems of communication, authority, and responsibility needed to achieve the district's goals and objectives.

Interviews with district staff members indicate that the chain of command is not always followed among the district's management staff. For example, rather than the information technology (IT) department reporting to the assistant superintendent of business services as shown on the district's organizational chart (see Appendix A), IT staff may go directly to the superintendent for direction. This can create a duplication of effort and unclear

direction within the organization. Ensuring that staff report to their immediate supervisor should provide the superintendent with more time to focus on items such as community outreach, long-term strategic planning, and board member training.

Some staff members reported that most of the information about what is happening in the district comes from the superintendent's weekly electronic news bulletin. There is a perception that the lines of responsibility within upper management are unclear. Staff members also perceive that there is a lack of communication between the district and the community, and that the district needs to develop a strategic plan.

The district has a five-member governing board. Three of the governing board members are new to their positions: one was elected in spring 2008, and two were elected in November 2008. Governance training needs to be provided to all board members to ensure that they understand the governing board's roles and responsibilities.

### ***Recommendations***

*The district should:*

1. Review and clarify the cabinet members' areas of responsibility.
2. Establish and follow a clear chain of command between supervisors and subordinates, including between the superintendent and assistant superintendents, and among the assistant superintendents.
3. Provide governance training for board members.

<sup>1</sup>Principles of School Business Management, Association of School Business Officials, International, Wood, R.Craig, Thompson, David C., Picus, Lawrence O., Tharpe, Don I., 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (1995)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

<sup>3</sup>Ibid

## *Personnel Services*

The personnel services department is directly supervised by the assistant superintendent of personnel services. The staffing structure under his leadership is relatively level: the administrative assistant, personnel services manager, and two personnel services assistants all have major areas of responsibility. A great deal of cross-training has occurred between the four staff members, and they have shared ownership of department objectives and workload.

The assistant superintendent has served in the district for approximately 14 years, including 10 years as assistant superintendent, and has extensive knowledge and experience in other areas of the organization. His leadership and ability to develop leadership traits in others is very evident in the personnel department. Individual staff members have been given a great deal of decision-making autonomy. The shortest district tenure among the personnel services full-time staff is seventeen years, thus the department possesses a significant amount of institutional memory.

The assistant superintendent of personnel services routinely helps solve problems in areas such as maintenance, allocation of labor/financial resources, and site administrator support. While this is a widely appreciated part of his role in the district, clear lines of institutional authority need to be established, especially in the chain of command between the superintendent and assistant superintendents, and among the assistant superintendents.

It is uncommon that all of the district's human resource department employees, except one part-time employee, are classified as management. Job descriptions for the personnel services manager and the personnel services assistant do not contain typical management responsibilities such as supervision and evaluation of staff, governing board and/or public presentation, and line authority over subordinate staff.

Human resource functions are handled efficiently; there is a timetable for regularly scheduled activities and a clear delineation of the individual or individuals responsible. Activities include governing board actions and reports, employee absence tracking, position control, credentialing and certifications, evaluation, recruitment, benefit calculations, collective bargaining and contract management, and annual employee notifications.

The personnel services department reports that it has forged good relationships with other district departments, specifically payroll and information technology services. The collegiality helps staff develop effective solutions for tasks and issues that involve more than one department, such as position control, absence tracking, and paperless transactions.

The district has three employee bargaining units: California Teachers Association of Berryessa (CTAB), California School Employees Association (CSEA), and Teamsters. The relationship between the district's management and the bargaining units appears stable. The number of grievance, meet and confer, and formal bargaining protocols are normal for a district of this size.

Various sources confirmed that the district's relationship with CTAB has been more difficult over the last three years than in the past. In times of fiscal uncertainty, it is especially

important to spend time building positive relationships. Although a 2008-09 successor collective bargaining agreement is not yet in place, negotiations with CTAB are not at formal impasse, and there is no evidence of a breakdown in communication or a lack of mutual respect.

The district has approximately 420 full time equivalent (FTE) certificated positions and an annual turnover rate no greater than 8%. Recruitment efforts begin in March. The assistant superintendent of personnel services supervises recruitment, and the personnel services manager takes the lead role. Site administrators report satisfaction with the service provided.

The assistant superintendent of personnel services has expressed a willingness to expand his role on the district. Some areas that could be considered for inclusion in the personnel services department are risk management/workers' compensation; beginning teacher support and assessment (BTSA); professional development; or some of the other education services functions.

The district lacks job descriptions for some management positions, and other management job descriptions need to be updated. For example, the director of school facilities and the purchasing agent job descriptions are dated 1976, and district staff were unable to locate a job description for the director of special education position. The personnel services department needs to review the district's job descriptions and create or update them as needed.



**Recommendations**

*The district should:*

1. Review the job descriptions for the personnel services manager and personnel services assistant positions and ensure that they are properly classified.
2. Consider transferring to the assistant superintendent of personnel services additional responsibilities such as risk management/workers' compensation, BTSA, professional development, and some education services functions.
3. Ensure that all job descriptions are up to date.
4. Continue cross-training personnel services staff, and delegating responsibilities to these very capable staff. These staff should also continue working collaboratively with other departments.



## *Education Services*

There are currently two administrative positions in the district's education services department: the assistant superintendent of education services and the director of special education. A comparison study conducted by the district last year indicates that the number of the district's administrative positions is low compared with other elementary districts in Santa Clara County.

During the past five years, several education services department positions have been eliminated or reduced, including the following:

- Director of Curriculum and Instruction (eliminated)
- Director of English Language Development (eliminated)
- Coordinator of Student Services (full-time reduced to half-time position with a teacher on special assignment)
- Principal on special assignment for supplemental after school and summer school programs (eliminated)
- Two clerical positions (One was to support the principal on special assignment for after-school and summer school programs; the other was a receptionist who also handled paperwork for suspensions, expulsions and inter- and intra-district transfers. Both were eliminated.)

Seven teachers are on special assignment from year to year. Two are in the English Language Learner (ELL) program and five support the district's staff development programs and beginning teacher support and assessment (BTSA) services. These positions provide direct support to classroom teachers. This arrangement is a productive way to lend support to the ELL and staff development programs without having to provide additional management staff in those areas.

The administrative assistant position has acquired several of the duties formerly assigned to positions which have been lost. Duties of this position include administrative support for assessment data, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), summer school and after-school programs, school accountability reports cards and student transfers.

The district has one registered nurse serving 13 schools and 8,300 students, approximately 1,800 of whom have health issues. The nurse is also responsible for all required health tests and screenings. A part-time (0.5 FTE) health clerk assists with maintaining health records.

The district does not have a certificated librarian. Each of the 13 schools has a library staffed by media technicians, who are supervised by the site principals. The district reported that it has an outside services contract with a certificated librarian to provide services a few days per year.

The district has a large English language development (ELD) program that includes approximately 3,700 students. The major native languages other than English are Vietnamese, Chinese and Spanish.

The district's free and reduced-price lunch count is low compared to that of many California school districts. This negatively affects funding for categorical programs such as Title I, which is used to help students who have low test scores in reading and mathematics.

At four of the district's elementary schools, more than 40% of the students are eligible for Title I services. At one elementary and two middle schools this figure is close to 40%, and at the remaining schools it is well below 40%. This results in relatively low categorical funding and limits the ability to apply for grants, many of which are tied to family income levels and student performance.

The special education program reportedly operates efficiently and effectively. However, as is the case in most California school districts, state and federal funding is not sufficient to support the program, so it requires a contribution from the general fund.

The assistant superintendent of education services will retire in June 2009. The district will need to retain this job title and fill this position. The district is too large and the department's staffing is already too low to reduce the job title or the position. In addition, reducing the job title or eliminating the position may give schools and the community the impression that education services are a lower priority. Because of the need to maintain or improve test scores, improve teaching through a solid staff development program, and continue all the other responsibilities of the department, this position is essential.

The education services department is minimally staffed, and the workload in this department is overwhelming for two administrative positions. To provide leadership and oversight of education services, more staffing is needed.

The district should consider reassigning some duties from the education services department to the personnel department. Duties that could be considered for transfer include areas such as BTSA, peer assistance and review, grant writing and various education services functions.

If the district does not reassign some responsibilities to another department, then it would need to consider reinstating one or more of the management positions previously reduced or eliminated. If this option is chosen, reinstating the director of curriculum and instruction position would need to be a high priority.

## **Recommendations**

*The district should:*

1. Retain and fill the assistant superintendent of education services position when the current employee retires.
2. Move some duties from the education services department to the personnel services department, or reinstate one or more of the management positions previously reduced or eliminated from the education services department. If the latter option is chosen, make reinstating the director of curriculum and instruction position a high priority.
3. Continue the teacher on special assignment positions.
4. Review the nurse's workload and responsibilities in light of the student-to-nurse ratio, legal compliance, and potential litigation, and ensure that health records are consistently maintained.
5. Consider hiring a certificated librarian as funds become available. Because of the technology involved in a modern school library, this need could be built into the long-range strategic plan for technology.



## *Business Services*

The assistant superintendent of business services resigned in the fall of 2008, and the district hired a part-time interim assistant superintendent to fill the position temporarily. The district's organizational chart indicates that the following department heads report directly to the assistant superintendent: fiscal services; maintenance, operations and transportation; and child nutrition. The organizational chart also indicates that the two network engineers from information technology report to this assistant superintendent.

The previous assistant superintendent of business services was with the district for approximately two years. During that time several of the department's management functions were given to the superintendent, the assistant superintendent of personnel services, and business services department staff. Administrative oversight has been lacking in some areas of the department, including workers' compensation, facility use applications, and the E-Rate program.

An administrative assistant provides clerical support to the assistant superintendent of business services and the director of fiscal services. This position's duties also include workers' compensation claims, property and liability insurance claims, use of district facilities, collection of developer fees, contracted services agreements, and parent driver authorization forms.

The district needs to fill the assistant superintendent of business services position with a permanent, full-time employee. As indicated in the staffing comparison data later in this report, some districts have opted for a different title for the position, such as chief business official, business manager, or deputy superintendent. However, even if the district chooses to change the title, the position needs to remain at the same administrative level and continue to report directly to the superintendent.

## *Fiscal Services*

The director of fiscal services reports directly to the assistant superintendent of business services and supervises the fiscal services staff, which is comprised of two account clerks, two payroll technicians, one accountant, and one categorical technician. This reporting arrangement is effective. The department is responsible for budget functions, state financial reporting, payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, student attendance accounting, and associated student body accounting.

The director of fiscal services also supervises the purchasing agent. A better reporting structure would be to have the purchasing agent report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services.

The district uses the Quintessential School Systems (QSS) financial system through the Santa Clara County Office of Education. The system is being upgraded, with a projected implementation date of January 2010. There is some concern that the district's computer equipment may not meet the required specifications for the new system and that processing time may increase.

The fiscal services department has been reduced by two staff positions during the last five years. Staff members indicated that they are extremely busy at times but are able to complete most of their duties on time. However, staff from other departments reported that a few of the fiscal services staff work a significant amount of extra time. All of the staff members had a positive attitude and were pleasant and open in sharing information with the review team.

### *Purchasing, Warehouse and Print Shop*

Based on interviews with staff members and on the reported volume of purchase orders, quotes and bids processed, there is adequate staffing in the purchasing, warehouse and print shop departments. However, the purchasing agent reports working beyond the scheduled work day regularly. The purchasing agent is also responsible for the district's E-Rate filing. When the district is able to hire a department head for the information technology department, it will need to consider moving the E-Rate duties to that department.

The district stores 60-70 custodial products in the warehouse. Based on industry standards for a district of Berryessa's size, the district cannot purchase and store these items in quantities sufficient to produce a cost savings over purchasing them as needed.

The purchasing department works closely with the maintenance department on construction bids. Having both departments report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services gives them opportunities to meet and resolve construction project budget issues as well as information about contracts, bid schedules and bid awards. Moving the maintenance department to another division has been discussed within the district and would involve an additional layer of management in these issues. Industry standards place the purchasing department (bid processing) and maintenance department (project scheduling and specifications) under the same cabinet position.

### *Child Nutrition Services*

The district's ten elementary and three intermediate schools have a total student enrollment of approximately 8,300. According to staff, 34% of the students are eligible to receive free and reduced-price meals. The child nutrition department provides 3,800 lunches every school day. Breakfast or brunch is offered at the three intermediate schools and is served to 320 students daily.

The child nutrition services department operates as a separate enterprise within the district. The department processes all of its accounts receivable and payable, verifies department payroll reports, prepares bids, orders and receives food and supplies, participates in two purchasing cooperatives, controls its inventory and food storage, delivers meals and products to sites, and prepares the department budget.

The director of child nutrition has worked in the district for a little more than one year, and the staff are pleased with her open door policy and efforts to keep them informed. Because she is relatively new to the position, the director will need continued mentoring. The director finds it important to work directly with the assistant superintendent of busi-



ness services on to budget and financial issues, and she expressed a desire to maintain this direct contact and access.

To continue running the department as a successful enterprise, the director will need to continue working directly with the assistant superintendent of business services on budget, direct and indirect costs, income, expenditures, district enrollment projections, and other areas that affect child nutrition services.

The child nutrition services department uses a specialized computer application for meals, as well as point of sale programs and hardware. The district's information services department assists when necessary; however, with only three technology staff members for the entire district, immediate service is not always possible. The technology support for the child nutrition department is acceptable, but additional technology personnel would help eliminate delays in service. According to the director, the child nutrition services department was not included in the district's technology plan.

The child nutrition services staff members interviewed all stated that the department works well; they enjoy their jobs, think of the district as family, and appreciate reading the weekly newsletters from the superintendent. Although staff members feel welcome in the director's office, it was suggested that the director visit sites more frequently.

Child nutrition department records indicate that the general fund borrowed \$131,006 from Fund 13, the cafeteria fund, in June 2003, and an additional \$100,000 in June 2004. As of March 2009, the general fund owed the cafeteria fund \$57,253. If the district is using in-kind services to offset part of the balance due, the director is unaware of this practice. Temporary loans between funds are subject to the provisions of Education Code section 42603 and must follow the guidelines for repayment within the current or subsequent fiscal year, depending on the date the loan was made.

### ***Maintenance, Operations and Transportation***

The maintenance, operations and transportation (MOT) department's staffing level is low compared to school districts of similar size and type. Recent reductions in the department's staff will eventually have adverse effects on the quality of services at the schools. Although current staffing is minimal, reports indicate that the staff are efficient and effective. The department has also taken measures to obtain the technology, tools and equipment needed to function effectively.

There have been some disruptions and loss of continuity within the department as a result of management changes. The line of reporting from the director of maintenance to the assistant superintendent of business services needs to be re-established to ensure that the department has clear communication with upper management. Information specifically related to the relationship of the MOT department within the district is included in the purchasing section of this report.

### *Communication and Management Information Services*

The last information technology (IT) department head left the district approximately seven years ago, and the position of IT director has remained unfilled since that time.

The IT department is responsible for all infrastructure, desktop technology, telephone systems, student information systems, and technology support for all schools and district facilities. IT staff members have contact with district and site staff at all levels.

According to interviews with IT department staff, the district owns approximately 1300 computers. Most classrooms have at least one computer, but often the teacher uses that computer. Classroom technology equipment is typically outdated, and machines that fail are often replaced with old equipment that was displaced by a donation or occasionally by a new purchase. The district and some school sites have installed multimedia technology in numerous classrooms; however, problems arise because it is often attached to aging equipment.

The district uses the Schools Administrative Student Information (SASIXp) system for student attendance and tracking. One IT department staff position is dedicated to student data issues and serves as the contact for any site or district staff who have questions about student information or data. Although the education services department is responsible for student information, and the business services department for student attendance data, some decisions are made with little administrative guidance. This practice carries considerable risk and has serious ramifications for attendance audits and average daily attendance, on which the state's revenue funding model is based.

Because the SASI product is being discontinued, the district will need a new student information system (SIS). District representatives have been evaluating new software for several months. Current plans are to purchase and implement a new SIS for the 2009-10 school year. Implementing a new SIS is a very complex process that affects every aspect of a school district and requires a great deal of planning, project management, and involvement at all levels.

The district is set to embark on a \$7 million technology project intended to accomplish several tasks, including the following:

- Purchase and installation of Customized Switched Metro Ethernet (CSME) fiber services from a local provider to connect all school sites at a speed of 100 Mb or faster.
- Replace outdated 3Com switching and routing gear.
- Replace outdated 3Com Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephone system.
- Replace most or all file servers. This would include a switch from the Novell network operating system to Microsoft Windows servers running Active Directory services.
- Install a terminal services solution to allow new desktop computing devices for all site-level staff at a reduced price.

Two network engineers and one computer technician currently provide desktop and network support. While the total number of support staff appears to be correct, two technician positions would serve site needs more effectively. The district's size indicates a need for one network support position rather than two. Reassigning duties could allow more desktop support to be offered and still provide adequate resources to maintain infrastructure. The department head would normally develop lists of duties for each employee. The lack of department leadership has resulted in haphazard project planning and priorities.

The district's five-year technology plan is well constructed and provides a sound basis for technology implementation. It was developed with input from multiple departments and numerous stakeholders. Unfortunately, it contains no structured funding mechanism or options for a phased-in approach during lean budget years. A well-formed technology plan is only useful when it provides a viable funding mechanism.

The current technology plan emphasizes the use of technology to enhance student learning, and includes the following goals:

**Goal 1:** Students and teachers will integrate technology into instruction and learning to achieve high academic achievement.

**Goal 2:** Students and teachers will have opportunities that accelerate learning for students at academic risk.

**Goal 3:** Students and teachers will improve student learning and performance through the effective use of information literacy skills.

**Goal 4:** Students will utilize regular access to technology resources in the classrooms, computer labs, mobile labs and media centers.

**Goal 5:** Our district will support district and site use of technology to improve student achievement data collection, analysis, reporting, and research/data driven decision making.

**Goal 6:** Our district and schools will use technology to improve two-way communication between home and school.

These goals indicate a high level of commitment to technology and its use in the classroom. However, without a consistent funding model or leadership within the IT department, the district lacks the resources to implement the plan and use it as a guiding document for integrating technology into the district's curricula.

The IT department's technical support services have been operating with few resources for some time and have no functioning help desk software system. The work order system that was in place more than a year ago stopped functioning because of hard disk problems and has not been reinstated. A system for documentation and work order tracking is essential for the consistent and efficient delivery of technical support services in a district the size of Berryessa.

Guidance of the IT department has been disjointed because of management changes in recent years. Because there is not a department manager, the district's organizational

chart reflects that IT staff members are to report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services; however, they have received little guidance from that position in the past. The interim assistant superintendent of business services has a clear understanding of the need for guidance but is only with the district on a part-time, short-term basis. Numerous IT department issues have been taken to the superintendent because an assistant superintendent was either unavailable or not required to provide direction to the IT department. A clear reporting structure needs to be documented and communicated to all IT staff members and upper level management. It is imperative that leadership of this department occur through the proper chain of command. This will provide consistency and eliminate confusion among IT staff members.

The IT department needs a leadership position to provide vision, communicate with sites and determine priorities. The magnitude of the district's current and planned IT projects will require daily oversight and guidance. Having information technology expertise in a management role will significantly increase the district's chances for success in this area.

Without daily guidance and direction, the IT department staff members act more like independent consultants than a functioning department within the district. A department leader would help provide clear priorities, long-term planning, and a well-defined budget structure to stay current with infrastructure and hardware needs. Based on the history and culture of the district, it would be appropriate for a director of information technology to report to the assistant superintendent of business services.

A plan such as the district has to replace all network hardware, install fiber connections to all sites and implement a new SIS can be daunting. Each project has some effect on the others and should not be approached in isolation. Although the district plans to use a consultant as the project manager, current staff will be affected. An internal leader, such as the director of technology, who maintains regular communication with school site personnel would help provide project management and accomplish orderly implementation.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Fill the assistant superintendent of business services position with a permanent, full-time employee.
2. Continue to have the director of fiscal services report to the assistant superintendent of business services.
3. Consider having the purchasing agent report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services.
4. Ensure that computer equipment meets specifications required for the countywide financial system upgrade.
5. Consider transferring the E-Rate duties to the information technology department when a department leader is hired.
6. Compare the cost of warehousing custodial and other currently warehoused products to the cost of purchasing products as needed.
7. Continue to have the director of child nutrition report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services.
8. Provide detailed information to the director of child nutrition indicating the amount borrowed, the amount repaid, and the amount due to Fund 13, cafeteria fund.
9. Continue to have the director of maintenance report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services.
10. As funding permits, consider filling the director of information technology position because it is critical to the organization. Consider having this position report directly to the assistant superintendent of business services.
11. Reinstate the information technology work order system.
12. Restructure the information technology department and include a clear designation of role-based duties.
13. Ensure direct interaction between the information technology administrator, education services and business services departments so that appropriate decisions can be made regarding student information and attendance data.
14. As funding allows, provide additional up-to-date computer equipment for classrooms, including the planned centralized computing system.



## *Staffing Comparison*

To provide a comparison of administrative and management staffing levels, FCMAT obtained data from six elementary school districts with enrollments similar to that of Berryessa. For the comparison districts, FCMAT chose the two elementary districts in Santa Clara County that were closest in size to Berryessa, and four other elementary school districts throughout the state. The districts surveyed were Brentwood Union, Campbell Union, Franklin-McKinley, Greenfield Union, South Bay Union and Sylvan Union.

Comparative information can be useful but should not be the only measure of appropriate staffing levels. Because California school districts are complex organizations that vary widely in demographics and resources, generalizations can be misleading if significant circumstances are not taken into account. A careful evaluation is needed when comparing school districts. FCMAT's comparison took into account the following factors:

- Grade level configuration (K-8)
- Size of district
- Revenue limit districts (rather than basic aid)

Table 1 lists the comparison districts' 2007-08 California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS) student enrollment, as well as data obtained from each district about its administrative and management staff positions.

*Table 1: Comparison of administrative and management staffing in selected California elementary school districts*

District	Berryessa	Brentwood	Campbell	Franklin-McKinley	Greenfield	South Bay	Sylvan
<b>Enrollment*</b>	8,297	8,105	7,338	9,957	8,521	8,147	8,217
<b>Personnel Services</b>	Assistant Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent Director Human Resources Director Special Ed Director Student Services	Deputy Superintendent Director Human Resources Supervisor Human Resources	Assistant Superintendent Director of Special Ed	Assistant Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent Director Student Services
<b>Educational Services</b>	Assistant Superintendent Director Special Ed	Assistant Superintendent BTSA Coordinator Director Interventions/ Spec Ed (reports to Supt) Director Student Services (reports to Supt)	Associate Superintendent Director C & I Programs Coordinator EL Programs Director I Extension Programs (reports to Supt) Director Preschool/Child Dev	Assistant Superintendent Director Special Services Director Curriculum/Language Development Director State/Fed Programs	Assistant Superintendent Director Extended Day Coordinator Family Resource Center	Assistant Superintendent Director Ed Services Director II High Priority Director Pupil Personnel	Assistant Superintendent Director Special Ed Director Categorical Prog Director Info Technology
<b>Business Services</b>	Assistant Superintendent Director Fiscal Services Purchasing Agent (reports to Director Fiscal Svcs) Director Maintenance Director Child Nutrition	Chief Business Official Coordinator Fiscal Svcs Coordinator Food Svcs Purchasing Agent Coordinator Technology Manager Construction Coordinator Maintenance/ Operations	Deputy Superintendent Director Business Svcs Supervisor Food Services Supervisor Maint & Grounds Supervisor Student Info Svcs Supervisor Trans/ Operations/ Facilities	Deputy Superintendent Director Fiscal Services Director Info Technology Director Maint/ Auxiliary Svcs Purchasing Manager Outside Services Contract for Child Nutrition	Assistant Superintendent Director Fiscal Services Director Technology Director Nutrition Svcs Director Facilities/ Trans/ Purchasing/ Warehouse Director Custodians/ Grounds/ Maint/ Safety	Assistant Superintendent Director Fiscal Services Director Transportation Director Facilities/ Maint Director Child Nutrition/ Warehouse Director Info Services	Business Manager Supervisor Fiscal Services Director Facilities Director Food Service Supervisor Transportation

\* 2007-08 CBEDS



The number of the district's management level staff who report directly to either the superintendent or one of the three assistant superintendents is lower than that of comparison districts, particularly in the education services department. Each of the comparison districts also has a leadership position for technology services

Although some of the comparison districts use a different title for the assistant superintendent of business services position, in all comparison districts this position reports directly to the superintendent and is at a level equivalent to an assistant superintendent.

As shown in the staffing comparison, two of the districts have designated one or more of their district-level administrators as either an associate superintendent or deputy superintendent. This may provide a clearer chain of command when the superintendent is absent from the district.

## ***Recommendations***

*The district should:*

1. Determine if any of the assistant superintendent positions should be designated a deputy or associate superintendent.
2. Conduct a survey of administrative and management level positions' compensation in like districts.



# Appendices







*Appendix B*  
*Study Agreement*











6. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following schedule outlines the planned completion dates for key study milestones:

<b>Orientation:</b>	<i>(Estimated January, 2009)</i>
<b>Staff Interviews:</b>	<i>to be determined</i>
<b>Exit Interviews:</b>	<i>to be determined</i>
<b>Preliminary Report Submitted:</b>	<i>to be determined</i>
<b>Final Report Submitted:</b>	<i>to be determined</i>
<b>Board Presentation:</b>	<i>to be determined</i>
<b>Follow-Up Support:</b>	<i>If requested</i>

7. CONTACT PERSON

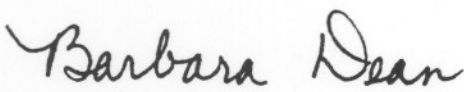
Please print name of contact person: Marc Liebman, Superintendent

Telephone 408 923-1811 FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Internet Address marc.liebman@busd.net

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marc B. Liebman, PhD, Superintendent  
Berryessa Union School District

11/19/08  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Dean, Deputy Administrative Officer  
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

November 14, 2008  
Date

In keeping with the provisions of AB1200, the County Superintendent will be notified of this agreement between the District and FCMAT and will receive a copy of the final report.