



CSIS California School Information Services

Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District

Special Education Review

October 5, 2010

Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer



October 5, 2010

Jacki Cottingim-Dias, Ph.D., Superintendent
Fairfield Suisun Unified School District
2490 Hilborn Road
Fairfield, CA 94534

Dear Superintendent Cottingim-Dias:

In April 2010, the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District entered into an agreement with the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) for a special education review. Specifically, the agreement states that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. Nonpublic schools
 - A. Review the process and procedures for placing students in nonpublic schools.
 - B. Compare percentage of students enrolled in nonpublic schools from Fairfield-Suisun to other districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations for alternative district programs. Consider the impact of licensed care institutions as well as board and care facilities.
 - C. Review and make recommendations regarding the cost efficiency of nonpublic school placements vs. district alternative programs.
2. Nonpublic agencies and contract services
 - A. Review the process and procedure for providing students with nonpublic agency services.
 - B. Provide cost comparison of contracting for speech therapist services or fully staffing district speech therapist position.
 - C. Compare the district's speech therapist salary schedule to regional and SELPA salary schedules. Make recommendations to address the ongoing decreases in direct-hired speech language programs and the increasing number of contracted therapists.
3. Review the special education transportation system for efficiency and effectiveness, and determine any cost savings.
4. Determine if it would be cost-effective for the district to operate additional special education programs for severely handicapped students rather than contracting with the COE. Review the facility, staffing, transportation, and other operational areas for transfer feasibility.

FCMAT

Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer

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5. Review the overall special education delivery system to determine if efficiencies can be implemented. Conduct a comparison of the district's special education local contribution on the general fund to other school districts within the SELPA.
 - A. Identify programmatic weaknesses and gaps in service and make recommendations to address these areas.
6. Conduct a review of special education staffing ratios including administrative, certificated, and classified in each program and compare to districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations if needed for improved operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.
 - A. Review multifunded positions budgeted within the special education department and make recommendations regarding criteria that should be used to determine which positions should be multifunded (if any).
7. Review due process, compliance complaints, corrective actions ordered and make recommendations to improve efficacy in managing these issues.
8. Evaluate the district's fee-for-service process to regional districts for services provided and determine if the process is capturing all expenditures and that billing to regional districts reflects actual cost.
9. Review the impact of licensed care institutions (LCI), such as foster homes, foster family agency homes, adult care facilities, group homes and their impact on the district.

This report contains the study team's findings and recommendations. It has been a pleasure to serve you, and please give our regards to all the employees of the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District.

Sincerely,



Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer

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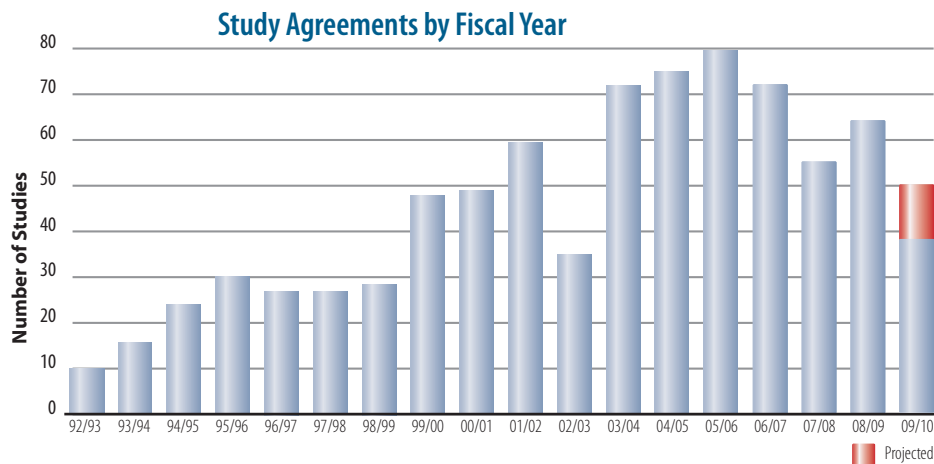
Foreword - FCMAT Background

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.



Total Number of Studies	743
Total Number of Districts in CA	1,050

Management Assistance	705	(94.886%)
Fiscal Crisis/Emergency	38	(5.114%)

Note: Some districts had multiple studies.
Eight districts have received emergency loans from the state.
(Rev. 12/8/09)

Introduction

Background

The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District is located in northern California between San Francisco and Sacramento. With an enrollment of 22,496 (K-12), the district is composed of 31 schools including five high schools, five middle schools 20 elementary schools.

The district serves 9.3% of its K-12 student population in special education, and the statewide average for K-12 special education population is 10%. The projected budget for special education is \$21,698,685 with a general fund contribution of \$1,799,598. The costs for special education have increased 14% over the past three years.

In April 2010, the district requested that FCMAT review the district's special education programs and services. The study agreement specifies that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. Nonpublic schools
 - A. Review the process and procedures for placing students in nonpublic schools.
 - B. Compare percentage of students enrolled in nonpublic schools from Fairfield-Suisun to other districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations for alternative district programs. Consider the impact of licensed care institutions as well as board and care facilities.
 - C. Review and make recommendations regarding the cost efficiency of nonpublic school placements vs. district alternative programs.
2. Nonpublic agencies and contract services
 - A. Review the process and procedure for providing students with nonpublic agency services.
 - B. Provide cost comparison of contracting for speech therapist services or fully staffing district speech therapist position.
 - C. Compare the district's speech therapist salary schedule to regional and SELPA salary schedules. Make recommendations to address the ongoing decreases in direct-hired speech language programs and the increasing number of contracted therapists.
3. Review the special education transportation system for efficiency and effectiveness, and determine any cost savings.
4. Determine if it would be cost-effective for the district to operate additional special education programs for severely handicapped students rather than contracting with the COE. Review the facility, staffing, transportation, and other operational areas for transfer feasibility.
5. Review the overall special education delivery system to determine if efficiencies can be implemented. Conduct a comparison of the district's special education local contribution on the general fund to other school districts within the SELPA.
 - A. Identify programmatic weaknesses and gaps in service and make recommendations to address these areas.

6. Conduct a review of special education staffing ratios including administrative, certificated, and classified in each program and compare to districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations if needed for improved operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.
 - A. Review multifunded positions budgeted within the special education department and make recommendations regarding criteria that should be used to determine which positions should be multifunded (if any).
7. Review due process, compliance complaints, corrective actions ordered and make recommendations to improve efficacy in managing these issues.
8. Evaluate the district's fee-for-service process to regional districts for services provided and determine if the process is capturing all expenditures and that billing to regional districts reflects actual cost.
9. Review the impact of licensed care institutions (LCI), such as foster homes, foster family agency homes, adult care facilities, group homes and their impact on the district.

Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district February 25-26, 2010 to conduct interviews of county office and district staff members and parents, collect data and review documents. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Nonpublic Schools
- III. Nonpublic Agencies and Contract Services
- IV. Transportation Efficiency and Effectiveness
- V. Cost Effectiveness of County & District Operated Programs
- VI. Efficiencies for Overall Delivery System
- VII. Program Development
- VIII. Comparison of Local Contribution with Other Districts
- IX. Staffing Ratios/ Administrative Structures
- X. Multifunded Positions
- XI. Due Process
- XII. Fee-For-Service Process
- XIII. Licensed Care Institutions
- XIV. Appendices

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

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

Executive Summary

The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District has a strong professional relationship with the Solano County Office of Education and the Solano County SELPA. The SELPA provides direct services to the district. The district is satisfied with the county office program delivery system and has no immediate plans to pursue a transfer of programs from the county office to the district.

Although the district's total expenditures projected for the 2010-11 fiscal year have decreased, the percentage of special education local contribution on the unrestricted general fund has increased. The percentage of local contribution for the 2009-10 fiscal year was 47.14%, and the percentage for the 2010-11 fiscal year is 54.38%.

District students comprise 46 percent of those served by the SELPA; however, they comprise 60 percent of the nonpublic school placements within the SELPA. Although the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) offsets the costs for nonpublic school placements with out-of-home-care funds, total costs exceed revenue; therefore, all districts are required to contribute to excess costs to fund the program. This is one of the factors causing increased local contribution on the district's general fund. The district is developing an alternative program (Successful Individuals Generating Maximum Achievement) that will create another level of student support before considering placements out of the district in a nonpublic school setting. The transportation cost for NPS students is generally lower than the district cost to transport these students; therefore, initiating this program will not necessarily reduce transportation costs.

Because of the significant shortage of speech therapists in California, districts are forced to hire contract staff to provide mandated services. The district contracts with five nonpublic agencies for more than 60% of its speech therapy services. In the 2010-11 fiscal year, the cost of hiring contract staff members instead of district personnel is projected to be \$274,836. The district has developed a proposal to reduce the number of contract speech therapists, and FCMAT has made additional recommendations to that plan that are contained in the report.

At first, the district's home-to-school and special-education transportation costs appear to be unusually low. The district reported 24 special education bus routes on its 2008-09 TRAN report and costs of only \$147,108. Most special education operations cost approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 per route. However, the district's seemingly low figure occurred because costs were not appropriately separated. The district's actual special education transportation costs are relatively reasonable compared to other districts that FCMAT has observed.

The Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) provides some transportation service for students that attend programs outside the district. The cost for this service is approximately double the district's cost, but the county office transports students who require the most intensive support and those who live the farthest from their academic programs.

Most district bell times are relatively close together. Separating these times could enhance special education bus route efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Wednesdays are an early dismissal day for all but a few schools in the district, which creates additional transportation costs. These costs would be eliminated if all schools dismissed students at approximately the same time.

All the objective and measurable criteria for a school transportation department indicate that the district complies with all laws and regulations relative to vehicle maintenance, federal drug and alcohol testing, and driver training requirements.

Bus driver recruitment should be a priority since several bus routes are left without drivers every day, resulting in students who are late to school or home. One mechanic position is vacant and should be filled as soon as possible. The district should hire one full-time clerical support person to perform clerical duties in the shop and Operations Department. At present, the mechanics and shop supervisor spend a great deal of time performing clerical work, and additional clerical support would allow them to devote more time to mechanical tasks.

Although the district has no intention of pursuing a transfer of special education programs from the county office, information on this option was requested for reference purposes. FCMAT found that such a transfer would not be feasible under current program conditions. Under the SELPA plan, the district is responsible for 46.54% of the final cost of county office programs. This percentage is based on the total percentage of district students, not the actual number or percentage of districts students attending county office programs. If the district assumed responsibility for 23 special education programs, it would still be required to provide the average daily attendance (ADA) percentage of the final program costs. Serving an additional 217 students would also require a staffing increase. The district and SELPA indicated that they are satisfied with the quality of programs offered by county office and indicated that costs are reasonable.

The district has a strong collaborative relationship with the Solano County SELPA to provide disabled students with a wide range of options in district and regional programs. Recommendations have been made to achieve greater efficiency in service delivery regarding the referral system for regional programs, staff training and behavioral supports in classrooms.

The district has a comprehensive range of program options and has identified the areas of expansion needed for autistic and emotionally disturbed students at the secondary level. FCMAT supports those recommendations based on its review and observations of the program.

FCMAT completed a comprehensive analysis of the staffing ratios of certificated and classified staff in special education programs. In addition, the administrative structure of the Special Education Department was compared to other districts of similar size. The district should increase support for students through the behavioral support team and increase program administration to align the district special education administration with districts of comparable size. The latter is necessary to allow for greater department emphasis on program development and participation in district program improvement efforts.

The clerical staffing of the Special Education Department was also reviewed and found to be aligned with comparable districts. However, greater efficiency can be achieved through workflow redistribution in the office and other departments.

The regional fee-for-service process was reviewed, and FCMAT found that the district has not billed the county office the full amount possible for specialized services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, vision, orientation and mobility or behavior in regional programs. The district has a computerized system that can generate reports to ensure accuracy of billing in the future. With greater accuracy, the district would realize increased revenue of \$157,766 annually.

The district has a high proportion of licensed care institutions within its boundaries (LCI) compared to other SELPA districts, and this creates factors and costs that are beyond the district's control. Frequent monitoring of LCI placements is necessary along with program planning on how to deal with excess costs.

Findings and Recommendations

Nonpublic Schools

Process and Procedures for Placement

Ninety Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District students are in nonpublic school (NPS) placements, a high number for a district of this size. The Solano County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) negotiates NPS rates with agencies, provides the master contract and invoices all districts in the SELPA. The SELPA expends approximately \$700,000 in out-of-home-care funds to offset the costs of NPS placements. Because total NPS costs exceed the amount of out-of-home-care funds, all member districts have a contribution for excess costs. These costs may increase for the 2010-11 fiscal year if the Level 14 Licensed Children's Institution (LCI) closes. LCIs are residential facilities licensed by the state to provide nonmedical care to children, including those with exceptional needs. Level 14 LCIs generate the highest per-pupil rate of out-of-home-care funds, which is based on bed count.

Staff members indicated that students who enter the district with NPS included on their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are usually placed in an NPS. The district has an influx of students from other areas of the state who have NPS placements. This includes some from the various parts of the Bay Area, which also have a high number of these students. The district should carefully review the information on each incoming (transferring) student with an NPS placement to determine whether the student can be served in a district or a county-office operated program prior to placement in an NPS. The decision to place the student in an NPS program is sometimes made because of a lack of similar program options.

Students are designated as requiring an NPS placement for various reasons. In some cases, another county made the determination to place the student in a particular program. When the student moves to another county, the accepting district should review the student's individual needs and determine where they can best be met. When students enter the district with NPS on their IEPs, the district is faced with factors beyond its control. Some of these students are homeless and have the protections of AB490, which allows the student to remain in a current placement until the end of the school year.

The Special Education Department's program specialists spend a significant amount of time managing NPS placements. Because these placements are in such a restrictive setting, student needs are usually more severe, which requires in-depth oversight and monitoring. Program specialists attend IEPs for NPS placements, sometimes three to five times per week.

The Special Education Department uses a District Level Intervention Committee to place students in nonpublic schools, which has helped reduce the number of students in this setting. This committee provides site IEP teams with support and recommendations for students struggling in their placements. Most of the students referred require more intensive behavioral and social/emotional interventions. Committee recommendations can include further interventions at the site, alternative placement options or agency referrals.

The district and SELPA are integrating the district's intervention committee and the SELPA referral process in 2010-11. Referrals from the district to county office SH classes as well as nonpublic schools are already a direct referral process that does not involve the Solano SELPA unless assistance is requested on a case-by-case basis.

The intervention committee meets once per month, and participants may include a site psychologist, special education administrator, behaviorist and site administrator or director. The committee usually reviews several referrals for NPS consideration on a designated day each month. The presenters include the site psychologist, site administrator and any other professional the site invites. A specific referral packet and process is used, and the meeting calendar is developed at the beginning of the school year. Fairfield-Suisun Unified is the only district in the SELPA that uses the intervention committee, and this process has been effective.

The intervention committee has tracked the number of referrals and placements in nonpublic schools. The following table shows data on these placements.

Referral and Nonpublic School Placements at Fairfield-Suisun Unified

Year	Number of Referrals	Number of NPS Placements
2007-08	20	5
2008-09	29	6
2009-10	52	17

The Special Education Department does not offer intensive training to prepare teachers and instructional aides for serving NPS students entering the district with that designation on their IEPs. If this training was provided, some of these students could be served in existing district programs. The district hired a few teachers who previously worked for an NPS, and these teachers can serve some students with an NPS designation in their classrooms because they have the necessary training. Expanded training for more general education teachers would need to focus on the behavioral, social and emotional needs of students and how to work with students with specific behaviors. Teachers who serve this population should also be trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) or a similar program.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Continue the process in which the SELPA provides the master contract and negotiates NPS rates.
2. Continue to use the intervention committee before consideration of an NPS placement.
3. Continue to collect from the intervention committee data that is useful to the department.
4. Determine whether the district can serve incoming students with an NPS designation before considering the most restrictive environment.
5. Provide teachers and instructional aides with extensive behavioral, emotional and social training so they are equipped to serve students with these types of issues.

Percentage of Students Enrolled in Nonpublic Schools

District students make up 46 percent of those served by the SELPA, but 60 percent of those in nonpublic school placements, according to district data dated January 10, 2010. The following table compares Fairfield-Suisun Unified to the other SELPA districts, including the percentage of NPS placements for each district and the percentage of ADA each district makes up of the

SELPA. The district is faced with circumstances that are beyond its control, especially the number of incoming students with an NPS designation on their IEP.

Percentage of Students Enrolled in Nonpublic Schools

District	% of NPS Placements	% of ADA in the SELPA
Benicia Unified	1.10	10.09
Dixon Unified	5.75	7.83
Fairfield-Suisun Unified	59.80	46.54
Travis Unified	7.14	10.65
Vacaville Unified	26.21	24.89

Alternate District Programs - The district developed an alternative program called Successful Individuals Generating Maximum Achievement (SIGMA), which will create another level of support before consideration of an NPS placement. The Special Education Department indicated that adding this alternative program will increase the number of least-restrictive environment (LRE) placements offered by the district. An NPS placement is one of the most restrictive options available.

Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 will be used for the program's start-up costs. The district has a detailed proposal for the first through third year of the program. The district anticipates that when ARRA IDEA funds are expended in September 2011, the reduction in the number of NPS placements will demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the program and sustain the program in the following years.

The district's proposal for the SIGMA program includes a description, background and outlook, staffing ratios/descriptions, transportation, entrance criteria, a referral process, parent involvement, exit criteria, expected outcomes and costs. The first high school SIGMA class will begin at full capacity with 10 to 12 students in approximately July 2010. If the program is successful and cost-efficient, the district plans to expand it.

The SELPA is developing a program called the Dynamic Education Linked to Achievement (DELTA), a nondiploma track program for students with moderate to severe cognitive disabilities and serious behavior challenges that interfere with learning. For students who meet the criteria, the district will have an additional program placement option that meets LRE, and will be available before considering an NPS placement.

Another option before NPS placement is the SELPA's Program for Effective Relationships and Learning (PERL) for students with social and emotional deficits. These programs provide structured, therapeutic and behavioral interventions to students in a self-contained classroom. The programs also provide students at several grade levels with services and supports that will enable them to succeed in the least-restrictive educational environment. The academic instruction is standards-based, but diversified and flexible.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Continue to pursue appropriate program options that are less restrictive than NPS placements such as the SIGMA program if it is proven to be cost efficient.
2. Closely monitor the SIGMA program to ensure cost effectiveness that leads to sustainability.

3. Monitor the percentage of students enrolled in nonpublic schools to determine whether the figure is declining after the inception of the SIGMA program.
4. Consider expanding the SIGMA program if goals are met and student needs are fulfilled.
5. Determine whether the reduction in the number of NPS placements will sustain the program in the years after the ARRA IDEA funds (September 2011) have been expended.
6. Examine the proposal for the first through third year of the program to ensure targets are met.
7. Consider the DELTA program as another option for students before an NPS placement.
8. Continue to use the PERL programs as an option before considering an NPS placement.

Cost Efficiency of NPS Placements vs. District Alternative Programs

Information provided by the Special Education Department indicates the district budgeted \$2.4 million for NPS placements in the 2010-11 fiscal year. The costs as of January 10, 2010 are provided in the following table. The table shows the district's expense for total NPS costs, the percentage of usage of the SELPA NPS pool, and the direct district contribution over the last three years. The direct contribution is charged back to the district based on actual usage of the pool.

NPS Costs for the Last Three Years

Fiscal Year	Total Amount Expended	% of Usage	Direct District Contribution
2008-09	\$2,659,353.40	56.93	\$1,486,582.11
2007-08	\$2,308,314.55	54.00	\$1,294,597.19
2006-07	\$2,205,534.03	50.00	\$1,259,397.56

The proposal developed for the SIGMA program indicates that it will cost the district the following:

- \$16,539.51 per student for the second half of the first year
- \$26,394.79 for the second year
- \$26,780.59 for the third year.

At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork, the class was scheduled to start with 10 to 12 students from current NPS placements or students that otherwise would have had only the option of NPS.

A review of the SIGMA three-year program proposal found that the district should be able to serve students more cost efficiently and provide services in a less-restrictive environment than NPS. This would depend on the district reducing the number of NPS placements and placing students in the program that otherwise would have required an NPS. However, there may be no savings in the first year of operation. The estimated per-student costs included in the proposal are lower than those for the average NPS placement. In the second part of the first year and the second year, program costs will be met through ARRA IDEA dollars. The department should

analyze the SIGMA program to determine cost efficiencies when the ARRA IDEA funds have been expended.

SIGMA Project Proposal Year 1				
Site Staff	Salary	Benefits	Total	Half Year
0.25 Admin/Intake Coordinator	24,216.00	24,216.00	24,216.00	12,108.00
0.2 Secretary (step 3)	7,183.20	7,183.20	7,183.20	3,591.60
1.0 SE Teachers (range 3, step 5, masters)	53,429.00	16,028.70	69,457.70	34,728.85
0.2 APE Teacher (range 3, step 5)	10,506.20	3,151.86	13,658.06	6,829.03
2.0 Paraeducators w/AA (step 3)	42,840.00	12,852.00	55,692.00	27,846.00
.5 Behavior Assistant (step 3)	11,745.00	3,523.50	15,268.50	7,634.25
0.2 Psychologist (step 4, masters)	13,962.00	4,188.60	18,150.60	9,075.30
1.0 Mental Health Therapists - <i>In Kind (County MH)</i>	-	-	-	-
0.5 Behavior Specialist (step 3)	34,674.00	10,402.20	45,076.20	22,538.10
0.1 Occupational Therapist (step 3)	6,934.80	2,080.44	9,015.24	4,507.62
0.1 Speech Therapist (range 6, step 14, masters)	7,143.60	2,143.08	9,286.68	4,643.34
0.1 Nurse (range 4, step 5, masters)	5,342.90	1,335.73	6,678.69	3,339.31
Subtotal:	217,976.70	87,105.31	273,682.81	136,841.40
Annual Teacher Budget			2,000.00	1,000.00
ESY Costs – 30 - 5 hour days				20,711.62
Indirect Cost at 5%			13,684.14	6,842.07
Liability Costs			0.00	
Transportation:				
3 Bus Routes (1:4 staff to student)			n/a	
1 Program van & aide(s)			n/a	
Start Up Costs:				
Environmental Modifications			7,500.00	
Technology/Equipment			5,557.92	
Curriculum				
Total Projected Program Cost:				165,395.09
Per Child Cost (total cost/10 students):				16,539.51
Per Class Cost @ 10 students/class:				165,395.09

SIGMA Project Proposal Year 2			
Site Staff	Salary	Benefits	Total
0.5 Admin/Intake Coordinator	48,432.00	14,529.60	62,961.60
0.4 Secretary (step 3)	14,366.00	4,309.92	18,676.32
2.0 SE Teachers (range 3, step 5, masters)	106,858.00	32,057.40	138,915.40
0.2 APE Teacher (range 3, step 5)	10,506.20	3,151.86	13,658.06
4.0 Paraeducators w/AA (step 3)	85,680.00	25,704.00	111,384.00
1.0 Behavior Assistant (step 3)	23,490.00	7,047.00	30,537.00
0.2 Psychologist (step 4, masters)	13,962.00	4,188.60	18,150.60
1.0 Mental Health Therapists - <i>In Kind (County MH)</i>	-	-	-
0.5 Behavior Specialist (step 3)	34,674.00	10,402.20	45,076.20
0.1 Occupational Therapist (step 3)	6,934.80	2,080.44	9,015.24
0.1 Speech Therapist (range 6, step 14, masters)	7,143.60	2,143.08	9,286.68
0.1 Nurse (range 4, step 5, masters)	5,342.90	1,335.73	6,678.63

Subtotal:	357,389.90	106,949.83	464,339.73
Annual Teacher Budget			2,000.00
Indirect Cost at 5%			25,042.65
ESY Costs – 30 – 5 hour days			36,513.35
Liability Costs			0.00
Transportation:			
3 Bus Routes (1:4 staff to student)			
1 Program van & aide(s)			
Total Projected Program Cost:			527,895.73
Per Child Cost (total cost/20 students):			26,394.79
Per Class Cost @ 10 students/class:			263,947.86

SIGMA Project Proposal Year 3			
Site Staff	Salary	Benefits	Total
0.5 Admin/Intake Coordinator	48,432.00	14,529.60	62,961.60
0.4 Secretary (step 3)	14,366.00	4,309.92	18,676.32
2.0 SE Teachers (range 3, step 5, masters)	106,858.00	32,057.40	138,915.40
0.2 APE Teacher (range 3, step 5)	10,454.40	3,136.32	13,590.72
4.0 Paraeducators w/AA (step 3)	85,680.00	25,704.00	111,384.00
1.0 Behavior Assistant (step 3)	29,200.00	8,760.00	37,960.00
0.2 Psychologist (step 4, masters)	13,962.00	4,188.60	18,150.60
1.0 Mental Health Therapists - In Kind (County MH)	-	-	-
0.5 Behavior Specialist (step 3)	34,674.00	10,402.20	45,076.20
0.1 Occupational Therapist (step 3)	6,934.80	2,080.44	9,015.24
0.1 Speech Therapist (range 6, step 14, masters)	7,143.60	2,143.08	9,286.68
0.1 Nurse (range 4, step 5, masters)	5,342.90	1,335.73	6,678.63
Subtotal:	363,048.10	108,647.29	471,695.39
Annual Teacher Budget			2,000.00
ESY Costs – 30 – 5 hour days			36,513.35
Indirect Cost at 5%			25,410.44
Liability Costs			0.00
Transportation:			
3 Bus Routes (1:4 staff to student)			
1 Program van & aide(s)			
Total Projected Program Cost:			535,619.17
Per Child Cost (total cost/20 students):			26,780.96
Per Class Cost @ 10 students/class:			267,809.59

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Continue to analyze the total amount expended for NPS placements and total usage to determine whether there is a decrease because the SIGMA program. This information is provided by the SELPA.
2. Continuously monitor the SIGMA program to ensure cost efficiency and to determine whether the needs of the students in the program are met in a less-restrictive environment than an NPS placement.

3. Continually monitor and determine whether SIGMA per-pupil costs are lower than an NPS placement.
4. Determine whether it will be cost efficient to expand the SIGMA program as outlined in the proposal.
5. Analyze the SIGMA program to determine costs efficiencies when the ARRA IDEA funds have been expended.

Nonpublic Agencies and Contract Services

Process and Procedures for Nonpublic Agency Services

California has a shortage of speech therapists, and some districts offer stipends, create a separate salary schedule, or provide year-for-year-credit to recruit these specialists.

Fairfield-Suisun Unified contracts with five nonpublic agencies (NPAs) for more than 60 percent of speech therapy services. The district has a caseload cap of 55 (40 for preschool) for each speech therapist. This requires the addition of therapists as these services are added to existing IEPs or students with these services on their IEPs are enrolled.

Cost Comparison of Contracted vs. District-Hired Speech Therapists

The district contracts for 13 speech therapists (12.4 FTEs) at an estimated cost of \$1,478,640 in 2009-2010 fiscal year. The following table provides a breakdown of speech therapy contracted services. The district directly employs 11 full- and part-time speech therapists (9.8 FTEs) at a cost of approximately \$907,482 in 2009-2010 fiscal year, including benefits. Speech therapists are on the same salary schedule as teachers.

Contracted Speech Therapists

Hourly Rate	Annual Rate	Number of Employees at This Rate	Total Annual Amount
\$70	\$102,480	1	\$102,480
\$75	\$109,800	5	\$549,000
\$80	\$117,120	6	\$702,720
\$85	\$124,440	1	\$124,440
Total		13	\$1,478,640

The Special Education Department provided FCMAT with a draft proposal that included two options for reducing the number of contracted speech therapy services with the goal of increasing the number of speech therapists employed by the district. The district believes employing more speech therapist will reduce the cost to deliver services and be more effective. The district expends \$1,478,649 for a contracted 12.4 full-time equivalents (FTEs) speech therapists that provide services and fulfill IEP requirements. The Special Education Department expends approximately \$907,482 for 9.8 FTE district-employed speech therapists. The district is concerned that it may not be able to hire additional therapists because the current pay is not competitive and there is no incentive.

The following table includes data on the two possible solutions developed by the Special Education Department. FCMAT analyzed the proposals for cost efficiency and found that option 1 would cost the district approximately \$73,588 more than it is expending for district-hired and contracted speech therapy services. Option 2 would save the district approximately \$3,323 for the first year for both district-hired and contracted services. In the second year, option 2 would cost the district more than it expends because of step-and -column increases.

District Proposals to Reduce Contracted Speech Therapy

In-House Staff			-A-	-B-	-C-	-D-
FTE	09/10 Salary	09/10 Benefits	09/10 Total	10/11 Total	Option 1	Option 2
1.00	72,564.12	17,333.11	89,897.23	91,887.00	105,370.00	102,007.00
1.00	83,211.00	12,071.51	95,282.51	95,282.00	111,874.00	108,273.00
1.00	79,572.12	18,318.62	97,890.74	99,848.00	111,874.00	108,273.00
1.00 66,500.00		17,813.37	84,313.37	84,313.00	114,038.00	110,359.00
1.00	83,064.12	17,925.62	100,989.74	100,989.00	114,038.00	110,359.00
1.00	83,802.96	12,144.42	95,947.38	95,947.00	114,038.00	110,359.00
1.00	48,775.68	15,275.34	64,051.02	64,051.00	65,821.00	63,709.20
0.60	46,784.40	5,819.61	52,604.01	52,604.00	63,222.00	61,204.20
0.60	43,961.34	5,471.92	49,433.26	50,620.00	63,222.00	61,204.20
1.00	58,672.08	16,616.59	75,288.67	75,288.00	103,200.00	99,916.00
1.00	82,164.00	19,620.16	101,784.16	101,784.00	114,038.00	110,359.00
10.20		Total:	907,482.09	912,613.00	1,080,735.00	1,046,022.60
		Cost per FTE:	88,968.83	89,471.86	105,954.41	102,551.24

Contracted Staff				Conversion to In-House Staff	
FTE	Rate	0910 Total	1011 Total	Option 1	Option 2
1.00	80/hr	117,120.00	117,120.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	80/hr	117,120.00	117,120.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	80/hr	117,120.00	117,120.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	80/hr	117,120.00	117,120.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
0.40	80/hr	46,848.00	46,848.00	42,381.76	41,020.49
1.00	80/hr	117,120.00	117,120.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	75/hr	109,800.00	109,800.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	75/hr	109,800.00	109,800.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	75/hr	109,800.00	109,800.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	75/hr	109,800.00	109,800.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	75/hr	109,800.00	109,800.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	70/hr	102,480.00	102,480.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
1.00	85/hr	124,440.00	124,440.00	105,954.41	102,551.24
12.40	Total:	1,408,368.00	1,408,368.00	1,313,834.71	1,271,635.32
	Cost per FTE:	113,578.06	113,578.06	105,954.41	102,551.24
	Grand Total:	2,315,850.09	2,320,981.00	2,394,569.71	2,317,657.92

Summary of Option 1 and 2

Year/Option	Total Cost	Savings from 2010-11
-A- 2009/10	2,315,850.09	n/a
-B- 2010/11	2,320,981.00	0.00
-C- Option 1	2,394,569.71	(73,588.71)
-D- Option 2	2,317,657.92	3,323.08

The district should consider three options for cost efficiency and programmatic effectiveness. These include providing a stipend of \$5,000, \$4,000, or \$3,000 per year as an incentive for each district-hired speech therapist. The next three tables show a cost breakdown of this annual stipend.

All three tables provide examples of high, mid (average), and low costs depending on the years of services of the speech therapists hired by the district. Districts can have a combination of experienced therapists. District-hired speech therapists are predominantly at the top of the certificated pay schedule. If the district decides to employ more speech therapists, the exact salary costs cannot be calculated until the staff members are hired and the newly hired staff members are placed on the salary schedule. However, districts generally provide up to five years of experience when hiring a new staff member. The therapists hired will likely have a low- and mid-range combination of experience.

The first table below includes the approximate costs of offering a \$5,000 annual stipend to each district-hired speech therapist. In this scenario, if all the speech therapists hired were at the top (high) end of the salary schedule, the savings to the district in the first year would be approximately \$32,534. If the therapist's salaries were a combination of high (top) to low, the district would save approximately \$579,459 in the first year.

Approximate Costs for \$5000 Annual Stipend for Speech Therapists.

In-House Staff			
	-E-	-F-	-G-
1.00	94,897.23	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	100,282.51	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	102,890.74	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	89,313.37	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	105,989.74	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	100,947.38	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	69,051.02	102,248.15	53,350.20
0.60	57,604.01	56,302.78	29,501.28
0.60	54,433.26	56,302.78	29,501.28
1.00	80,288.67	102,248.15	53,350.20
1.00	106,784.16	102,248.15	53,350.20
10.20	962,482.09	1,032,838.92	539,154.40
Cost/FTE:	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27

Contracted Staff			
FTE	5k Stipend ⁴	5k High ⁴	5k Low ⁴
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
0.40	37,744.40	40,503.49	21,143.31
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
1.00	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
12.40	1,170,076.27	1,255,608.10	655,442.60
Cost/FTE:	94,360.99	101,258.72	52,858.27
Grand Total:	2,132,558.36	2,288,447.02	1,194,597.00
¹ 2009-10 Salary and Benefits, plus \$5,000 stipend			
² 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column 6, Range 24 - plus \$5,000 stipend			
³ 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column 1, Range 1 - plus \$5,000 stipend			
⁴ In-House Staff Cost-per-FTE times Contracted Staff's FTE			

Summary of Table		
\$5,000 Stipend Option	Total Cost	Savings from 2010-11
-E- Cost/FTE	2,132,558.36	188,422.64
-F- High Salaries	2,288,447.02	32,533.98
-G- Low Salaries	1,194,597.00	1,126,384.00
High/Low Average	1,741,522.01	449,113.53

The following table includes the approximate costs of offering a proposed \$4,000 annual stipend to each district-hired speech therapist. In this scenario, if all the speech therapists hired were at the top (high) of the salary schedule, the savings to the district would be approximately \$55,134 in the first year. If the therapist's salaries were a combination of high (top) and low within the mid range the district would save approximately \$602,059 in the first year. If the therapists hired came in as first year therapists, the district would save approximately \$1,148,984 the first year.

Approximate Cost of \$4,000 Annual Stipend for Speech Therapists

In-House Staff			
	-H-	-I-	-J-
FTE	4k Stipend ¹	4k High ²	4k Low ³
1.00	93,897.23	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	99,282.51	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	101,890.74	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	88,313.37	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	104,989.74	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	99,947.38	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	68,051.02	101,248.15	52,350.20
0.60	56,604.01	55,702.78	28,901.28
0.60	53,433.26	55,702.78	28,901.28
1.00	79,288.67	101,248.15	52,350.20
1.00	105,784.16	101,248.15	52,350.20
10.20	951,482.09	1,022,638.92	528,954.40
Cost/FTE:	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27

Contracted Staff			
FTE	4k Stipend ⁴	4k High ⁴	4k Low ⁴
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
0.40	37,313.02	40,103.49	20,743.31
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
1.00	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
12.40	1,156,703.72	1,243,208.10	643,042.60
Cost/FTE:	93,282.56	100,258.72	51,858.27
Grand Total:	2,108,185.81	2,265,847.02	1,171,997.00
¹ 2009-10 Salary and Benefits, plus \$4,000 stipend			
² 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column 6, Range 24 - plus \$4,000 stipend			
³ 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column I, Range I - plus \$4,000 stipend			
⁴ In-House Staff Cost-per-FTE times Contracted Staff's FTE			

Summary of Table II		
\$4,000 Stipend Option	Total Cost	Savings from 2010-II
-H- Cost/FTE	2,108,185.81	212,795.19
-I- High Salaries	2,265,847.02	55,133.98
-J- Low Salaries	1,171,997.00	1,148,984.00
High/Low Average	1,718,922.01	602,058.99

The next table includes the approximate costs for offering a \$3,000 annual stipend annually to each district hired speech therapists. In this scenario, if all the speech therapists hired were at the top (high) of the salary schedule, the district would save approximately \$77,734 in the first year. If the therapist's salaries were a combination of high (top) and low within the mid range the district would save approximately \$624,659 in the first year. If the therapists hired came in as first-year therapists, the district would save approximately \$1,171,584 in the first year.

Approximate Costs of \$3000 Annual Stipend for Speech Therapists

In-House Staff			
	-K-	-L-	-M-
FTE	3k Stipend ¹	3k High ²	3k Low ³
1.00	92,897.23	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	98,282.51	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	100,890.74	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	87,313.37	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	103,989.74	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	98,947.38	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	67,051.02	100,248.15	51,350.20
0.60	55,604.01	55,102.78	28,301.28
0.60	52,433.26	55,102.78	28,301.28
1.00	78,288.67	100,248.15	51,350.20
1.00	104,784.16	100,248.15	51,350.20
10.20	940,482.09	1,012,438.92	518,754.40
Cost/FTE:	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27

Contracted Staff			
FTE	3k Stipend ⁴	3k High ⁴	3k Low ⁴
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
0.40	36,881.65	39,703.49	20,343.31
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
1.00	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27

12.40	1,143,331.17	1,230,808.10	630,642.60
Cost/FTE:	92,204.13	99,258.72	50,858.27
Grand Total:	2,083,813.26	2,243,247.02	

¹ 2009-10 Salary and Benefits, plus \$3,000 stipend

² 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column 6, Range 24 - plus \$3,000 stipend

³ 2007-08 Salary Schedule, Column 1, Range 1 - plus \$3,000 stipend

⁴ In-House Staff Cost-per-FTE times Contracted Staff's FTE

Summary of Table

\$3,000 Stipend Option	Total Cost	Savings from 2010-11
-K- Cost/FTE	2,083,813.26	237,167.74
-L- High Salaries	2,243,247.02	77,733.98
-M- Low Salaries	1,149,397.00	1,171,584.00
High/Low Average	1,696,322.01	624,658.99

The figures in all three stipend scenarios are based on the health and welfare benefit compensation information that was provided to FCMAT. The data is based on current year 2009-10 information and should be analyzed by the Business Department to determine any unknown costs. It is unlikely that all the therapists hired by the district will be at the top of the salary schedule; however, the district should be aware of all possibilities to make an informed decision. The district may not be able to fill all the contracted therapist positions with district-employed therapists in the first year, and contracting for some services would change all the cost breakdowns provided in the above tables.

The Special Education Department wants to determine the programmatic and cost effectiveness of employing district speech therapists. If the district determines this is preferable to contracting for these services, it can consider alternative program delivery models to increase program effectiveness. Implementing these models can be more difficult than using contracted services and require extensive preparation, follow-through and monitoring for the special education director and his team of coordinators and program specialists. However, the resulting programmatic gains can lead to further cost savings and efficiency.

If the district decides to implement these alternative models for speech services, it should also determine whether it is possible to reduce the number of students receiving these services, especially at the middle- and high-school levels. An investigation of these delivery models should include consideration of the severity scales, the consultation model, and an examination of frequency and duration through the Special Education Information System (SEIS).

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider implementing other options to meet student needs instead of steadily increasing the number of contracted speech therapists.
2. Determine whether it would be cost-efficient for the district to hire speech therapists and reduce the number of contracted services based on the options detailed in the above tables.
3. Determine whether to pursue the option of offering a stipend to speech therapists.

4. Consider developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or making amendments to the existing MOU with the Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teachers Association that would provide a stipend to speech therapists.
5. Prepare for the potential of retaining some contractual speech therapist services if services unable to hire a sufficient number of speech therapist in the first year or two.
6. Consider the programmatic benefits of hiring speech therapists.
7. Consider developing alternative service delivery models that would decrease the number of students receiving speech therapy from a speech therapist.

District-Hired Speech Therapist Salary Schedule

District speech therapists are on the certificated salary schedule, and the other SELPA districts have comparable salary schedules for these positions. However, health packages may vary among the districts, making it difficult to compare data.

Staff members indicated that this contract language has prevented the district from hiring highly skilled speech therapists that would have had to start at the lowest end of the salary schedule.

The district has an eight-year cap on year-for-year credit. That means a speech therapist with 15 years of experience in public education would be offered a maximum year-for-year credit of eight years. Further, the district provides this credit only if the speech therapist has been employed in the public school system. Staff members indicated that this contract language has prevented the district from hiring highly skilled speech therapists that would have had to start at the lowest end of the salary schedule.

The district has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teachers Association that is dated February 23, 2009. The MOU recognizes current shortages and the difficulty in recruiting and hiring speech therapists, nurses and special education teachers. The document requires the district to pay a one-time hiring bonus of \$5,000 to speech therapists hired after February 23, 2009 if they hold the proper credentials. The hiring bonus is prorated based on full-time equivalents (FTE) and is paid in two equal payments, half at signing and half at the completion of one year of service. The MOU was in effect through June 30, 2010 and may be renewed if the parties mutually agree. This agreement does not benefit or offer an incentive to therapists who were with the district before February 23, 2009 when it went into effect.

Another MOU between the district and the association dated January 1, 2008 outlines the speech and language therapist maximum caseloads as provided by the Education Code. The document requires a yearly stipend of \$2,000 to be provided to all qualifying speech and language pathologists who hold the certificate of clinical competence in speech-language pathology. The MOU also requires the stipend to be retroactive to July 1, 2007. Staff members indicated that speech and language pathologists can complete a supplemental time sheet for additional pay when their caseloads exceed 55 or 40 for those serving preschool students. However few therapists complete this supplemental time sheet. The district also does not use the intern programs available in surrounding areas.

A proposal from the University of Pacific (UOP) and San Joaquin County Office of Education outlines a program that would require the district to employ an intern for one year. A three-year commitment is required if the district chose to hire the intern after that, and interns that choose to leave before fulfilling the commitment would be required to reimburse the district for their

compensation. The district can also terminate the agreement if necessary. The district should pursue this option to recruit additional speech therapists.

Additional speech therapists can also be recruited at job fairs throughout California, especially the local ones. Many online services are also available.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider changing the eight-year cap for year-for-year credit to recruit and employ more therapists.
2. Consider granting year-for-year credit to highly qualified speech therapists that have experience outside of public education.
3. Review the MOU for speech therapists to determine how the district could hire more therapists instead of contracting for these services.
4. Consider using an intern program to recruit more speech therapists to the area.
5. Consider attending job fairs throughout California to recruit speech therapists.
6. Consider utilizing online options when advertising speech therapists positions.
7. Examine effective service delivery options to prevent the steady rise in the number of contracted services.

Transportation Efficiency and Effectiveness

Transportation is provided for special education students as a related service required by the IEP. Approximately 2,600 district special education students are identified by their IEPs, and 23 are transported to programs outside the district by the Solano County Office of Education. The district transports 377 of those special education students to district programs and approximately 150 to programs operated by the county office on regular home-to-school and special education routes. Ninety district special education students attend nonpublic schools (NPS), six transported by the county office. The remaining NPS students are transported by families or by the NPS providers as a part of their contract. The district operates 14 home-to-school bus routes and 24 special education bus routes. Special Education students can be assigned to any bus route depending on their abilities and the timing and destination of the routes.

Finances

School transportation is severely underfunded in California. Until 1977, the state fully reimbursed school districts for their reported operational costs (never capital costs) in the subsequent school year. From 1977 to 1982, the state began reducing the percentage of the reimbursement, and in the 1982-83 school year, funding was capped at the amount received that year (80 percent of costs). Since then, the state has only occasionally granted a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). Consequently, the state now funds approximately 45 percent of reported school transportation costs. In the 2009-10 school year, the state further reduced the apportionment by 19.84%.

School transportation costs are captured on the Form TRAN or TRAN report, which is generated with the unaudited actual report in September of the following fiscal year. The report is automatically filled in by the electronic accounting system, but districts manually enter some data such as the number of buses, students and miles.

The 2007-08 TRAN reports that the district transported 79 severely disabled/orthopedically impaired (SD/OI) students on 11 buses at a total cost of \$130,194 and a cost of 44 cents per mile and \$1,648 per pupil with no general fund local contribution. That year, the district also reported that 364 students with transportation requirements in their IEPs were also transported on home-to-school regular education bus routes. The district's loading factor (the number of students divided by special education routes) was 7.2 students per route. These numbers do not take into account students attending county office programs. The revenue received for 2007-08 was \$131,752. Because this is more than total costs, the district would have permanently lost \$1,558 in funding in any other year. However because of a deferral of funds that year, the state did not reduce this funding.

The 2008-09 TRAN shows that 321 SD/OI students were transported on 24 buses at a total cost of \$147,108, and a cost of 45 cents per mile and \$458 per pupil with a general fund local contribution of \$15,356. The district also reported that 637 students with transportation requirements in their IEPs were also transported on home-to-school bus routes that year. The district's loading factor was 13.37 students per route, which is high compared to many districts that FCMAT has reviewed throughout the state. The 2009-10 loading factor is expected to be 14.04, which is also efficient. The revenue received for 2008-09 was also \$131,752 with a general fund contribution of \$15,356. This is a low contribution amount compared to the average school district in the state.

In the TRAN report, costs are reported in two columns, home to school and SD/OI. Revenue is also received separately according to those two categories. If a district's costs in either column are less than the revenue received, the state reduces the revenue to the level of costs. Although the approved apportionment has been reduced for the 2009-10 school year, districts must have costs that are greater than the approved apportionment established in the 2008-09 school year.

Only 377 transportation requests for special education students were received for the 2009-10 school year. Transportation Department staff members indicated that in prior years, a similar or lower number of transportation requests were received. If the data reported above was accurate, Fairfield Suisun Unified would have the lowest SD/OI costs that FCMAT has seen in the state; however, SD/OI costs have not been reported properly.

Transportation Department costs are improperly allocated according to statements from the transportation director and the district accountant who budgets for the department. They believe approximately 70% of department costs should be allocated to special education and 30% to home-to-school transportation. This is a reasonable assumption based on the ratio of routes and the fact that special education routes generally are more costly than home-to school bus routes. If costs were appropriately allocated according to this assumption, SD/OI costs for 2008-09 would be \$2,461,229 with a cost of \$7,667 per pupil and \$7.55 per mile and a significantly higher local contribution. This is more comparable to special education transportation costs at most districts that FCMAT has reviewed.

The county office's Transportation Department transports 23 district students. The county office formula allocates revenue based on total district ADA. The district will receive \$507,197 this year to support special education (SD/OI) transportation. The formula bases excess costs on a ratio of the students transported to the total. Expected costs are \$283,526 for 2009-10. The formula projects a credit of \$223,670 to the district, and based on these costs, the county office transports district SD/OI students at a cost of \$14,176 each. The credit can be used to support the district's special education transportation costs.

In the 2008-09 school year, the district took responsibility for transporting all SD/OI students that attend programs in the district. For years, the SELPA has worked toward a system in which districts transport their special education students to programs within their boundaries, and the county office transports students who attend programs outside the district. It is reasonable for county-office costs to be higher because it transports students with the most severe disabilities and those who live the farthest from their academic programs.

The district's general fund contribution for transportation is reasonable.

Nonpublic School Student Transportation

Ninety district students attend nonpublic schools (NPSs), and only six are transported by the county office. The rest are transported by other means. Some NPS programs include transportation as a part of their service contract, and costs for this service range from \$2,700 per year for a 180-day school year to \$6,300. Other than the six students transported by the county office, NPS transportation is less expensive than district transportation for SD/OI students. The district is exploring the possibility of developing an in-house program for some students served by NPS programs. Transportation to a district program may actually be more expensive, but this would have to be determined individually. Costs could be based on bell times, program location, and whether the Transportation Department could load the additional students on existing buses or require an additional bus and driver.

Bell Times and Calendar

Separating bell times for approximately half the programs by 45 minutes to an hour would allow for two runs per route, reducing the total number of bus routes and overall costs. In addition, some schools dismiss early on Wednesdays, and some do not, creating a need for additional time and miles on that day. If all schools dismissed early on the same day and approximately at the same time, there would be no additional cost for in-district transportation.

Special Education Transportation Service

Some special education transportation users characterized the service as effective and the department as responsive. Others indicated that service is poor, buses are regularly late, and the department is unresponsive. Some Special Education Department staff members complained that it takes too long to schedule students on buses; however, students are usually scheduled in five days. Because of the logistical challenges and frequent changes inherent to special education transportation, scheduling new students or making changes to a student's placement or home address normally take five to 10 days. Bus driver shortages are the primary cause of late bus routes.

One primary clerk in the Special Education Department routes transportation requests to the Transportation Department. In the past, these requests were made with informal telephone calls, facsimile transmissions and e-mail communications. The clerk recently began using a paper transportation request form to document these requests; however, the form is inadequate. The form should include the student's name, home address, pick-up and drop-off information, school of attendance and bell times, emergency telephone numbers and information regarding the student's medical or special conditions, and whether the student has an aide or nurse provided by the district or if the Transportation Department needs to provide one. The Transportation Department staff should help develop this form.

Two years ago, the district took responsibility for transporting all special education students who attend programs in the district.

The district has no board policy or administrative regulation that addresses maximum bus ride times for special education students. The transportation staff makes informal efforts to limit ride times to an hour for locations in town and 90 minutes for those out of town, primarily for students that live in Cordelia. These are reasonable ride times for special education students.

The district has no board policy or administrative regulation that addresses maximum bus ride times for special education students.

Other Transportation Elements

FCMAT's scope does not include a comprehensive evaluation of the Transportation Department. However, the areas of legal compliance and department operations were evaluated, the latter to determine whether any operational economies can be achieved.

Vehicle Maintenance

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) motor carrier inspector annually provides a terminal-grade report on compliance with requirements related to vehicle maintenance, maintenance documentation, drug and alcohol testing and driver training. The district has consistently received a grade of "satisfactory," which is the highest grade. A review of a sample of vehicle maintenance records found them to comply with laws and regulations. The district shop facility is generally serviceable with the typical amount of tools and equipment to ensure safety and productivity. Drivers generally indicated that vehicles are well maintained and that the Maintenance Department is responsive to their needs and concerns. Some staff members stated

they have an inadequate number of spare buses equipped for wheelchairs. Buses are generally clean in appearance.

In addition to approximately 50 school buses, the Vehicle Maintenance Department also maintains 30 trucks, vans and automobiles for the district as well as 22 buses for the Solano County Office of Education for a fee that is designed to generate revenue.

Driver Training

School bus drivers are required to receive the greatest amount of training time of any commercial driver in the state. New drivers have to receive a minimum of 20 hours of training in the classroom and another 20 hours behind the wheel. The training is required to comply with the California Department of Education's school bus driver training program. Teaching the curriculum properly generally takes at least 35 hours in the classroom and a similar or greater amount of time in actual driving. Drivers are also required to receive at least 10 hours of in-service training a year, and all training has to be provided by a state-certified school bus driver instructor. The district has only one of these driver instructors on staff, the operations supervisor.

FCMAT reviewed a sample of driver training records and found them to comply with laws and regulations. A retired district director of transportation who is also a state-certified school bus driver instructor occasionally helps with driver training.

The state requires certain bus drivers to participate in evacuation drills annually. At the time of fieldwork, the routes at three district schools had not participated in evacuation drills for the current school year. Documentation of these evacuation drills is required to be maintained and can be inspected by the CHP at any time.

Department Staffing

The Transportation Department is staffed by a transportation director, one operations supervisor, one department secretary, two dispatchers, one shop supervisor and two mechanics. The district intends to have one school bus driver for each route, but two or more bus routes each day lack a driver. The department also has one bus aide, with other aides provided by the Special Education Department. The drivers of other routes fill in to cover the routes without drivers, so they do not run on time.

The department is recruiting for one mechanic and a second operations supervisor. It is critical for a mechanic to be recruited and hired as soon as possible. Based on the number of vehicles maintained by the department, the current shop staff would be unable to continue compensating for the mechanic shortage without experiencing burnout or a decrease in work quality in the long run. The shop supervisor indicated that the requirement for applicants to possess a Class B driver license (to test drive or shuttle buses) often disqualifies candidates. The Human Resources Department should revise the criteria to accept otherwise qualified applicants with a requirement that a probationary mechanic attain the license within three months of hiring.

The Transportation Department needs additional clerical support. The supervisor and mechanics should focus on direct vehicle maintenance while the clerical support maintains the required electronic and paper records. A new support clerk could also help organize and inventory the department's bus parts supply, and assist with clerical needs in the operations and dispatch office.

The department has a driver shortage that has left two or more routes without a regular driver throughout the 2009-10 school year. Some bus routes are regularly late because of this shortage. The department should prioritize bus driver recruiting and use common methods of advertising. Recruiting efforts can be enhanced through local newspapers, school newsletters, and buses with banners announcing the need for drivers. These vehicles can be parked at local shopping centers for maximum exposure. Staff members indicated that the transportation director is not certified to drive a school bus.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Assign costs appropriately to better reflect the actual cost of special education transportation.
2. Evaluate the potential cost benefits of bell time separations and dismissing all programs at approximately the same early time on Wednesdays.
3. Improve and enhance the special education transportation request form.
4. Ensure all school bus evacuation drills are annually completed for all bus riders.
5. Collaborate on specific special education bus driver training.
6. Determine whether to purchase one or more additional buses equipped for wheel-chairs.
7. Hire a driver as soon as possible.
8. Hire a full-time clerical support person to assume shop and transportation operations responsibilities. This position can also assist with other department clerical needs.

Cost Effectiveness of County & District-Operated Programs

In determining whether it would be cost-effective for the district to operate additional special education programs, FCMAT considered the following factors:

- How county office programs are funded
- How the funding model would need to change if programs were operated by the district
- The effect on the district's facilities

The Solano County SELPA's local plan details how county office programs are funded. Section 24 I of the plan states the following:

State AB 602 and Federal Local Assistance Grant funds are distributed on an ADA basis, after regionalized services are funded first. Regionalized services include funding for county operated programs...

A sample of the distribution model is included in the same section. According to the local plan, each SELPA district receives IDEA and 602 allocations based on the percentage of the district's total ADA. The same percentage represents the district's responsibility for county office programs.

Local plan Section 25 K provides more specific information regarding county office funding. This section clarifies the responsibility of the districts, regionalized programs and county office for providing the full range of options required in the SELPA.

In the 2010-2011 school year, the district is responsible for 46.54% of the final cost of county office programs. This figure is based on the total percentage of district students, not the actual number or percentage of districts students attending county office programs.

The district and SELPA indicated they are satisfied with the quality of the programs offered by county office, but they believe the county office overcharges for programs. The county office includes in its yearly budget a 3% reserve for unforeseen costs. At the end of the year, the SELPA has a mechanism to determine how any unexpended county office funds will be disbursed. Last year, these funds were distributed to the districts based on their percentages, and Fairfield-Suisun Unified received \$672,396.71 for 2008-09.

Twenty-three county office classes and two countywide itinerant teachers for the deaf/hard of hearing are housed in the district. According to the county office, 217 district students attend a county office program in the district, and two attend a county office program in another district. Because this count was prepared by hand, the actual numbers may be slightly different. County office lists indicate that 294 students are served by county office programs housed at Fairfield-Suisun Unified; therefore, many classes include students from other districts.

If the district assumed responsibility for some or all the county office classes housed in the district, it would still be responsible for its ADA percentage of final county office costs according to the current funding model for county office programs. Transferring 23 classes would significantly reduce total county office expenditures, but the district would still be responsible for its cost to operate classes as well as county office costs. The SELPA local plan does not provide for a change in the funding model after a transfer of programs.

A specific breakdown of the district's cost to operate classes was not completed; however, the following is provided as a general comparison of costs for county office programs and the same programs operated by the district. For 2009-10 the amount projected as Fairfield-Suisun

Unified's percentage of final county office costs is \$5,295,959. Any portion of credit for 2009-10 has not been computed and will be returned to the district in the fall of 2010. The county office's cost does not reflect the actual cost to support the 23 classes the district would transfer.

Using range three, step five of the certificated salary schedule, teacher salaries for 23 classes would cost \$1,597,527. Assuming two instructional aides per class at step three of the classified salary schedule, aide salaries for those classes would cost \$1,280,916. Therefore, the total cost to staff the 23 classes at the most basic level would be \$2,878,443.

Under the current funding model, the district would not receive any additional 602 or IDEA revenue to operate these classes since the revenue is being distributed by the district's total ADA. Additional revenue would be generated if out-of-district students in these programs remained and the district billed for these services. If 60 students in these classes were from outside the district, the cost per child would be \$10,665, excluding any DIS services, at the SELPA's current regional program rate for the PERL program. The total income from these students would be \$639,900. The actual rate for these classes would not necessarily be that of the PERL class; however all rates are determined through the SELPA.

Base cost of staffing 23 classes

	Positions	Total Cost
Teacher - \$69,457.	23	\$1,597,527
Instructional Aide- \$27,846	46	\$1,280,916
Total base cost		\$2,878,443
Out-of-District students	60	\$ 639,900
Adjusted base costs		\$2,238,543
Fairfield's percentage of Total SCOE costs 09-10		\$5,988,099.

Although savings to the district appear significant, there are two unknown factors. Under the current funding model, the district's continued fiscal responsibility for county office programs is unclear. Further, the district infrastructure would be affected if it assumed responsibility for the 23 county office classes. This transfer would have an impact on every department. Some of the additional responsibilities for the various departments would include the following:

- The Business Department would have additional payroll for processing the newly hired staff members, billing to other districts for regional programs, billing for supplies and curriculum, and monitoring budgets
- The Human Resources Department would have additional responsibilities to recruit and hire additional certificated, classified, and substitute positions; perform more evaluations; and monitor additional credentials.
- The Educational Services Department would perform additional testing and monitoring as well as provide appropriate curriculum and training.
- The Facilities Department would have to determine which county office facilities belong to the county office and which to the district, which were traded between the entities, and which classrooms require rental or purchase agreements. This may result in additional financial costs to the district.
- The Maintenance Department would continue the daily maintenance of classrooms, and handle the more involved projects such as painting and repairs.
-

- The Transportation Department would probably be affected the least since the district provides transportation to district students attending county office classes in the district. The county office would continue transporting students from outside the district to classes and transporting districts students to a regional or county office programs outside the district.
- Site administrators would have additional time constraints in attending IEP meetings, disciplinary hearings, budgeting sessions for the classes, and evaluations.

The Special Education Department would be affected the most since an additional 200 to 300 students would require IEPs and program monitoring. Additional staff members may also be required to provide additional related services, including occupational therapists and behaviorists. Since the district provides speech therapy to many of these students, additional speech therapists may not be needed except as part of the county office attrition plan, which is discussed in a later section of this report.

Some or all of the above departments would require additional staff members to complete the required tasks.

The district is also required to review and follow the regulations in Ed Code 56207(a), which state that a request for a program transfer must be requested a year and a day before it occurs. The code also stipulates the requirements of the two entities, including the rights of personnel.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Retain the current arrangement to provide service to special education students with no transfer of programs from the county office.
2. Complete the following if and when it decides to transfer programs:
 - a. Determine the exact cost of classroom operation including teacher, aides, related services providers, materials and supplies.
 - b. Determine the exact cost of additional district office staff to provide the appropriate level of support for the transferred classes.
 - c. Begin discussions at the SELPA to determine how county office programs could be funded so that the district is not responsible for the district program operation and a percentage of county office costs based on its ADA. These discussions should include consideration of the transfer's impact on the SELPA member districts.
 - d. Begin discussion at the SELPA to determine how students from other districts who are in county office programs could be served by the county office or district when a transfer occurs.
 - e. Determine the negotiated amount to be billed for each out-of-district student based on the type of program.

3. If a transfer is planned, inform the SELPA and county office in writing of its intent to transfer programs at least one year and a day before it occurs. The district should also complete the following.
 - a. Develop a plan based on the requirements in Ed. Code 56207(a).
 - b. Begin holding meetings with the families that would be affected by the transfer to ensure they understand the process and their role.

Efficiencies for Overall Delivery System

Interviews with teachers and support staff members from special education programs in the district, county office and SELPA indicate these entities have a strong collaborative relationship to provide district and regional programs for students with disabilities. These programs represent a wide range of options for students.

However, the district can achieve greater efficiency in service delivery. Until recently, the district has been reactive rather than proactive regarding program development. It lacks a program planning process that includes analysis of trends and needs for students with disabilities over the next few years. Programs are developed in response to a crisis in student needs or as a result of a legal challenge.

The districts indicated that the SELPA controls enrollment in regional programs, and the lengthy placement process results in delays of necessary services. The district does not have appropriate interim placement options that it can use until regional programs and services are provided. Greater efficiency in service delivery can be achieved by evaluating the referral and placement process for regional programs and creating interim district options to meet student needs if a delay occurs.

The district staff reported that instructional aides lack adequate training before assignment to special education classrooms. Staff development is imperative in special education because it saves money in the long run. Staff members could be provided with a predetermined and limited amount of release time for training. If this is impossible, the district could explore using courses such as those offered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education Online Paraeducator Academy Courses. A list of courses is attached as Appendix A to this report.

The district has created a strong program component with four behavior specialists serving 75 students throughout the district. These specialists provide training to general education teachers and develop positive behavior plans for students and classrooms. This cutting-edge program design will expand the program options for students and increase efficiency of program resources by reducing the need for costly out-of-district placements.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Develop long-range program planning by using data from the state and SELPA that outlines trends and changing needs in special education.
2. Continue the strong collaborative efforts with the county and SELPA to allow for future program options.
3. Consider working with the other SELPA member districts to develop a detailed and common method of charging staff, programs, revenue limit, etc.
4. Work closely with the SELPA to ensure that the referral and placement process facilitates the efficient delivery of programs and services.
5. Create interim program options/alternatives that appropriately meet student needs if delays occur.

6. Explore options for providing training for instructional aides before initial assignment in special education classrooms including the use of online or video training.
7. Continue to expand options for behavior specialists to support student retention in general education classrooms with appropriate behavioral training and supports.

Program Development

Through a mix of regional and district programs the district has comprehensive options for students with autism. Those program options serve students ages three and four and range from limited to the significant support levels outlined in the following table. The district staff has identified a need to add a class serving students in grades one through eight. This should not be perceived as a program weakness but a proactive effort to expand program options as students transition to the next level.

Special Education Preschool Options

Staff to Student Ratio	Program Option	District or Regional Program
One to One or Small Group	Speech Therapy 30-60 minutes/week	District
10 students, 2 staff	Phonological Group 3 hours/week 2 days, 90 min/day 6 week cycles	District
9 students, 2 staff Severe speech/articulation disorder	SCIPP* 3 hours/week 2 days, 90 min/day	District
9 students, 2 staff Moderate needs in 1 or more developmental area	Less Intensive/Noncategorical 8 hours/week 4 days, 2 hours/day	District
6-9 students, 3 staff Global Developmental needs	Intensive Needs Class 9-12 hours/week 3-4 days, 3 hours/day	Regional Program
6-7 students, 3 staff Autism Diagnosis	Structured Class for Intensive Learning (SCIL)	Regional Program

Source: District provided data

* Solano County Intervention for Preschoolers and Parents (SCIPP)

The district staff also indicated there is a need for programming for students with intensive behavioral needs. This will be addressed in the new alternative program (SIGMA), which was discussed in a previous section of this report. Other needs identified in interviews included secondary program options such as a program for young mothers at the high school to maintain enrollment in school and the opportunity to earn a diploma, expansion of options for students that are deficit credits for graduation and options for students who will get certificates of completion and need opportunities to transition to adult services.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Create a class for students with autism and intensive needs in grades one through eight.
2. Continue efforts to address programming for students with intensive behavioral needs through the new SIGMA program and the behavior specialists.
3. Explore the ways to expand alternatives for students at the secondary level, young mothers who want to stay enrolled and earn a diploma, students who have an insufficient number of the credits required for graduation, and students who will need to transition to adult services.

Comparison of Local Contribution with Other Districts

The district has completed the maintenance of effort (MOE) and maintained the necessary local plan contribution as required by the state. Although the information in MOE is specified, not every district computes each area in the same way. FCMAT did not perform an analysis of the MOE because there were no indications that it was not completed accurately. The following information is limited to how a district calculates its local contribution.

Districts take different approaches when considering special education local contribution. When any of the following occurs, it may appear that one district has a larger local contribution than another, but the two districts may actually be quite similar. A similar discussion of the local contribution is taking place throughout the state.

- One district may charge all the related services, such as the psychologists, speech therapists, and nurses to special education while another district divides the costs between general education and special education.
- One district may include special education transportation as a special education cost, while another district may not.
- One district may include the revenue limit while another district may not.
- One district may include the nonpublic school revenue limit while another may not.
- Other factors could also cause differences in MOE between districts.

The district requested information from several other SELPA districts regarding their local contribution and how they calculated their percentages, but information was received from only one district. The county office Business Department provided the additional district information. The data supported the discrepancy issues discussed earlier and is not limited to this SELPA. As a result, it would not be appropriate to use this information to develop a comparison with Fairfield-Suisun Unified.

It may be more important to determine whether a district's local contribution changes from one year to another, whether the local contribution significantly decreased, and whether the district continued to meet the required MOE.

FCMAT found that the district's special education budget has continued to affect the general fund. Staff members indicated the data is determined in the same way from year to year.

District Local Contribution Over Three Years

Year	Expenditures	Local Contribution	Percentage Local Contribution
08-09	\$20,044,612	\$ 8,134,449	40.58%
09-10	\$21,872,297	\$ 9,840,197	47.14%
10-11	\$21,698,685	\$11,799,598	54.38%

The staff indicated that one major reason for the increase in local contribution from 2008-09 to 2009-10 was a significant change in benefit calculations. Costs related to staff salaries, nonpublic schools and agency costs have also significantly increased special education expenditures as is discussed in another section of this report.

Although the total expenditures projected for 2010-11 decreased because of a drop in projected revenue, the percentage of local contribution has increased. If projected revenue increases and expenditures are maintained at the budgeted level or decreased, the percentage of local contribution will also decrease.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider developing a detailed and common method of charging staff, programs and revenue limit in conjunction with the SELPA.

Staffing Ratios/Administrative Structure

Staffing Ratios

The Education Code does not indicate the maximum caseloads for special day classes (SDC); however, the educational consulting firm School Services of California Inc. (SSC) has established guidelines for recommended caseloads. SSC developed these guidelines using data it collected throughout the state.

A comparison of classified and certificated staffing was completed by FCMAT. Caseloads for all classes were consistent with SSC guidelines and operate at the low end of enrollment. This will allow the district to manage growth in those classrooms efficiently and effectively.

Classified and Certificated Staffing Case Loads (Average)

Classified and Certificated Staffing Case Loads					
Program	Grade Level	FTEs	Aides Per Class (FTE)	Caseload Averages	*SSC Recommended Caseloads
Severely Disabled (DHH, ASD, ED)* Regional Classes	Elementary School	3	2	8	8-10
	Middle School	2	2	10	8-10
	High School	4	2	8	8-10
(PERL)	K-12	9	1.3	7	8-10
Functional Academics	K-12	10.0***	Avg 2	10	8-10
Noncategorical	Elem	12.0	1	12	12-15
K-12 Resource Learning Center	Elem	19.3	.5	26	28
	Middle	17.0	.5	18****	28
	High School	19.5	.5	24	28
Vocational	High School	5.0	1.0	17	12-15
Adult	RSP	2	.5	28	14

*School Services of California

Note: This table does not include one-to-one paraprofessionals

**Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH)

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Emotional disturbance (ED)

*** 1.0 new functional academics class is scheduled but not open at this time

**** The RSP numbers are lower at middle school due to a combination RSP/SDC programs at Range, Green Valley and Sullivan

Information published by the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS 2007-08) indicates that the ratio of psychologists to students in California school districts is one to 1,328. The district maintains a ratio of school psychologists to students of one to 1,100. Through a realignment of school psychologist duties, the district could establish a staffing ratio consistent with the CBEDS standard and redistribute three FTE resources to increasing support for the behavior specialists' services and other areas where additional help is needed. However, 4 FTE psychologists are assigned to DIS psychology positions to support the PERL program. This is consistent with the Solano SELPA recommended staffing formula for PERL classes. When this staffing formula is considered, the district is adequately staffed at a ratio of approximately 1,300:1 (students to psychologists) and 4 FTE to support the PERL program.

The state ratio of FTE nurses to students for 2008-09 is one to 2,219. The district maintains a ratio of nurses to students of one to 2,812.

Designated Instruction Services Caseloads

FCMAT used School Services Inc. guidelines to review the caseloads of speech therapists, occupational therapists and adapted physical education specialists. The following table provides the comparative data. FCMAT found that the district's caseloads are within the SSC guidelines. The preschool is operating at a lower caseload level; however, this may be because of the intensive level of services for students with autism.

Comparison of District caseloads vs. SSC Guidelines

Caseloads	District	Schools Services, Inc
Adapted Physical Education	41.5	55
Occupational Therapy	34.0	35-45
Speech Therapy	K-12 (51) Prek (28)	K-12 (55) Prek (30)

Administrative Structure

To complete a comparative analysis of the administrative supports in the Special Education Department for the certificated and classified staff, FCMAT focused on four school districts with a comparable enrollment, ethnicity index, Academic Performance Index (API) scores, largest ethnic group, and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The following table lists the school districts and comparable data.

Comparable Districts used for review of administrative structures

District	Enrollment	Pupil Count	Ethnicity Index	API scores	Largest Ethnic Group	% Free and Reduced Lunch
Fairfield-Suisun Unified	22,496	2332	66%	735	Hispanic	49.3%
Hayward Unified	22,098	2276	50%	689	Hispanic	60%
Manteca Unified	23,077	2133	55%	735	Hispanic	47%
Redlands Unified	21,427	2393	53%	791	Hispanic	50.2%
Lake Elsinore Unified	21,756	2386	48.5%	788	Hispanic	48.5%

Source: California Department of Education Dataquest 2008-09

Key:

Enrollment: K-12 enrollment in general education

Pupil Count: Students with disabilities ages 0-22

Ethnicity Index: Intended to measure how much "diversity" or "variety" a district has among ethnic group in its student population

API: Academic performance Index measures the academic performance and growth of schools based on a variety of tests and establishes a statewide ranking of schools according to those scores

Largest Ethnic Group: The ethnicity with the highest representation in the district

Free and Reduced Lunch: A program to provide food for students from low income families

The team gathered data from the four districts through the chief business officials. When no response was received, the information was gathered from district websites. The following table provides an overview of the number of administrative positions, and other areas of responsibility were included in some cases. Program specialists, managers, coordinators, lead speech therapists and school psychologists, compliance officers, and teachers on special assignment were placed in

one administrative support category. The classified staff was included although a breakdown of individual duties was not available.

Comparison of Certificated and Classified Administrative Support Structures in the Special Education Departments

District	Certificated Administration	Program Specialist, Managers or Coordinators	Classified Support
Fairfield Suisun Unified	1.0 Director, Special Education	3 Program Coordinators 1 TOSA Workability	4.0 4.0
Hayward Unified	1.0 Director, Special Education	1.0 Compliance Officer 4.5 Program Specialists	5.5
Lake Elsinore Unified	1.0 Executive Director, Special Education	1.0 Assistant Director 1.0 Program Specialist 1.0 Sr Asst Sp Ed	4.3
Manteca Unified	1.0 Director, Student Services/ Special Education	2.0 Department Supervisors Special Education 3.0 Program Specialists 1.0 Lead Psychologist 1.0 Lead Speech	2.0
Redlands Unified	1.0 Director Special Education/Health Services	3 Coordinators	6.0
Average	1.0 Director	5.0 Program Specialists, Managers, Coordinators	5.0

Each district has one director of special education, and two of five districts have additional departmental responsibilities. The average number of administrative support positions such as program specialists and managers is five. Based on this comparative analysis, Fairfield Suisun Unified is below the average level of administrative support positions at the program specialist/manager level.

District and school site staff members indicated in interviews that the Special Education Department is reactive rather than proactive in programming. Staff members stated that most of the director of special education's time and resources are spent in due process, which limits the opportunity for program development and participation in district program improvement efforts.

The district should consider establishing a compliance officer position with duties that focus on due process and compliance. If resources from the reduction in school psychologist positions are used, no additional costs would be incurred in creating this position. While the director of special education should provide direction and support for mediated agreements and settlements, this additional position will provide the opportunity for the director to focus on program development.

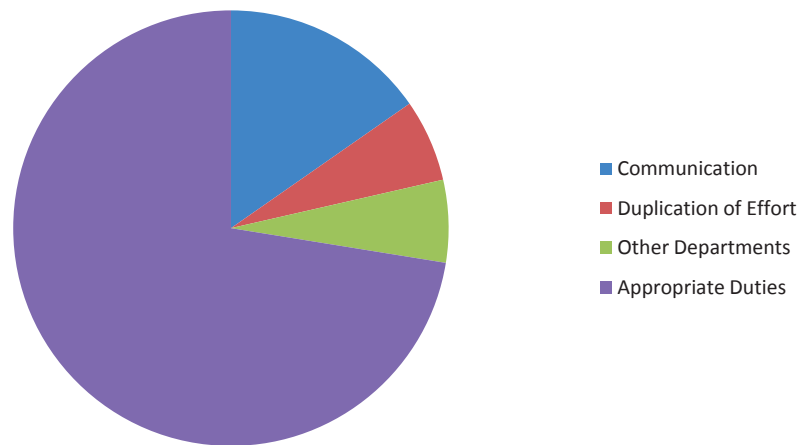
Other concerns included the impact of 90 to 100 IEP meetings per year for students in nonpublic schools on the time and resources of the program specialists who serve as administrative designees. The redirection of one FTE school psychologist could assist with this function and allow program specialists to provide release time for more training and program support.

Clerical Duties

The average number of clerical support positions in comparable districts is five FTEs, and the district's current level of clerical support is four FTEs. In 2008-09, district staffing in this area was reduced from five FTEs to four, and based on the comparative data from other districts, Fairfield-Suisun Unified is appropriately staffed. To help the district achieve greater efficiency, FCMAT completed an in-depth analysis of the clerical duties in the special education office. Each classified staff member was asked to list the duties of his or her assignment and the

percentage of time dedicated to each task. The results are shown in the following. The clerical staff was also interviewed by FCMAT.

Clerical Duties Task Analysis in the Special Education Department



Data Summary of Findings for Pie Chart:

- Seventy percent of the duties performed are appropriate for the Special Education Department.
- Seven percent are duplicated, reducing efficiency.
- Eight percent would be performed by other departments in most districts.

Communication

The Special Education Department lacks a systematic method for managing phone calls from the district and general public. No general phone line is assigned to the department. The phone number posted with the SELPA and the district website is for the administrative secretary who supports the director of special education. As a result 15% of her day is spent receiving calls that could be redirected in the department. The staff indicated that most calls come from district staff members needing support.

Greater efficiency could be achieved if a general outside line was established for the department. The staff reported that a line is available, but has not been used for that purpose. Once the general line is established, the clerical staff should establish a system for phone coverage, defining the order in which phone calls are handled and shared responsibility for this duty.

Duplication of Effort

Large special education departments have three areas of workflow that require organization and prioritization to maximize efficiency. These are communication, the budget and personnel. The duties related to all three areas are assigned to two clerical staff positions, and there is frequent overlap and duplication of effort. The remaining clerical positions focus on managing student information and records.

The staff reported that some areas such as Medi-Cal and ARRA budgets could be better organized and operate more efficiently; however, time limitations prevent this from occurring. Next year, the director plans to create a self-sustaining clerical position to manage Medi-Cal and ARRA budgets and invoicing.

Greater efficiency could be achieved if the workflow for the budget and personnel was streamlined, with the administrative secretary responsible for all items related to budget, invoices, coding etc., while the other administrative secretary focuses on personnel and staffing issues. A third area involves student information and programming, which should include the extended school year.

Tasks from Other Departments

The Special Education Department is responsible for monitoring the status of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first-aid training for 140 instructional aides. The department is required to track when renewals are due and notify employees of the pending status. In other districts, this is a function of the Human Resources Department. The district should determine whether this is an appropriate function for the clerical staff in the Special Education Department.

The staff indicated that 10% of each work day is spent arranging transportation for all special education students, including the extended school year. During the first few weeks of school, as much as 30% of clerical time is spent in this function. In addition, a significant amount of time is spent each day making follow up phone calls to parents who have unresolved issues related to student transportation. In a previous section, a recommendation was made for a staffing increase in transportation. This may help resolve many of the issues absorbed by the special education staff.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Maintain staffing formulas for SDC classes and resource learning centers as currently defined.
2. Monitor classroom enrollment and maintain classes at staffing ratios that are close to maximum. The district should make necessary program adjustment in mid-year if the enrollment in these classes is not consistent with the staffing formula.
3. Develop a systematic plan for managing general information phone calls from the district staff and the general public. An existing unused line should be used as the general information number, and the phone number listed in the SELPA and website directory should be changed to that of the general line rather than the administrative secretary's line.
4. Divide the duties of the clerical staff into budget and personnel categories to avoid overlap and increase productivity.
5. Determine whether the Special Education Department should maintain responsibility for monitoring the CPR and first aid certifications for instructional aides in the department.
6. Reinstate the one FTE in clerical support reduced in 2008-09 to align with districts of comparable size.

Multifunded Positions

FCMAT reviewed Special Education Department's multifunded positions and interviewed staff members regarding the criteria and process used to determine the percentage of positions charged to special education and general education. District psychologists and the nurses are multifunded with 80% charged to the general education and 20% charged to special education. The criteria used were based on the approximate amount of time services were provided in each department. This is an appropriate criterion to designate percentages for multifunded positions.

The criteria used are sometimes unclear according to district staff members. Questions remain about the two additional multifunded positions, the coordinator of student services (90% general education and 10% special education) and the statistical technician (90% general education 10% and special education). Greater openness regarding the criteria used in decisions regarding multifunded positions will assist in efficiency. This can be facilitated through an annual review of multifunded position with department heads and the business office.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Continue the process for determining the percentage of multifunded positions for the general and special education departments.
2. Ensure that the rationale for multifunded positions is clearly communicated with department heads.
3. Facilitate an annual discussion between the business office and appropriate department heads regarding multifunded positions before the start of the school year.

Due Process

Throughout interviews, many staff members voiced concerns that the Special Education Department is reactive rather than proactive. Staff also members indicated because of his involvement with due process and compliance complaints, the director of special education is difficult to access for program development and program improvement efforts. A review of due process filings, compliance complaints, and corrective actions ordered confirmed that an inordinate amount of administrative time is required, which diverts energy and resources from proactive efforts.

In 2008-09, six compliance complaints were filed by an advocate on behalf of students and one by the California Department of Education. The district was found out of compliance half the time, which led to corrective actions. In 2009-10, six more compliance complaints were filed in which the district was found out of compliance and required to complete corrective actions. The compliance filings centered on the following two primary issues:

- The failure to provide the services outlined in the IEP
- Procedural problems related to the components of the IEP and independent evaluations

No comparative data is available from the California Department of Education on the number of complaints and/or corrective actions in districts across the state. The district should examine its internal procedures for monitoring the implementation of the programs and services in the IEP. This should help avoid the need for future filings.

During the 2008-09 school year, seven due process cases were filed, all of them regarding the alleged denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). An additional six due process cases were filed during the 2009-10 school year, five cases over assessment and one case over the denial of FAPE.

The fundamental enforcement tool of the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) is the right of parents or local school districts to file a complaint on any issue related to identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of FAPE. The system was originally designed to protect the substantive rights of students with disabilities; however, IDEA has become the most frequently litigated educational statute, with FAPE being the primary issue.

No comparative data was available on the relationship between the number of due process filings and a district the size of Fairfield-Suisun; however, FCMAT believes that the number of requests is reasonable based on the collective experience of team members. As the district moves towards a redistribution of some of the resources outlined in the staffing section, greater emphasis can be placed on resolution of issues and concerns at the lowest level to avoid costly use of time and resources in formal complaint procedures. The department could benefit from an additional staff position assigned as a compliance officer to handle the due process and compliance issues. This will provide the director of special education with the opportunity to focus on programmatic improvement and development.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Establish firm procedures to ensure that the provision of services consistent with the IEP is monitored closely and corrected immediately in delays in service occur.
2. Use this opportunity to redistribute resources (outlined in the staffing section) and redistribute the duties for complaints and due process management. This should be accomplished to facilitate administrative focus on program development and district program improvement efforts.

Fee-for-Service Process

Billing Regional Programs

Through the SELPA finance committee and governance body, the SELPA has developed guidelines on what a district can bill for and the amount the district can bill. The amounts are reviewed yearly and consider the staff's average salary and benefits, direct costs, and indirect costs of 5%, which is the same rate the county office charges districts. The total amount is divided by typical enrollment for a cost per student. The revenue limit is deducted if appropriate, and the rate for a full year is calculated. Students are not billed on actual attendance but on days of enrollment and are billed at mid-year (December) with the balance at year-end (June).

Rates have been developed for preschool and elementary SCIL classes, PERL classes, adaptive physical education, vision, orientation and mobility, speech therapy, occupational therapy and behaviorist services.

The district bills other districts and the county office when district staff members provide speech therapy in a county office class for the deaf/hard of hearing, vision and orientation/mobility services, adaptive physical education in county office classes, and the base rate for out-of-district students in the PERL regional classes. These services have been billed at the full SELPA rate.

The district has not billed the full amount possible for speech therapy, occupational therapy, vision, orientation and mobility, or behavior in the regional programs. Further, the district has not billed at all for speech therapy provided in other county office classes. In 2007, the secretary responsible for billing received instructions indicating billing was based on enrollment and frequency/duration of services and not the full allowable SELPA rates. Therefore a detailed and laborious process was developed in which class lists were generated by the staff, IEPs were reviewed for enrollment date as well as frequency and duration of services, and a calculation was made using a percentage of the SELPA rate.

The district has a computerized IEP system that can generate reports to facilitate this process. In addition, if the full SELPA rates were used for billing rather than the frequency and duration of services, this time-consuming task will be much more manageable and profitable.

For example, an out-of-district student receiving speech therapy from a district speech therapist in a regional program could have been billed for \$1,357 for a half-year program, but was billed for \$75.35.

A recalculation of the billing for August to December 2009 resulted in a \$28,120.41 increase in district revenue or \$56,240.82 for a full year of services assuming that each of the students was enrolled for the entire half-year. The data is as follows:

Total possible amount billed for related services	\$31,690.00
Actual amount billed for related services	\$3,569.59
Increased revenue to district for ½ year of services	\$28,120.41
Increased revenue to district for a full year of services	\$56,240.82

The district has not billed the full amount possible for speech therapy, occupational therapy, vision, orientation and mobility, or behavior in the regional programs.

A query through the district's computerized IEP provided a list of 80 students receiving speech therapy from a district therapist in a county office class. This number may include approximately eight students that are billed because they attend a county office program for the hard-of-hearing/deaf. The SELPA billing plan allows for speech therapy billing at the rate of \$2,713 per year per child. Assuming that 70, not 80, students receive speech therapy from a district therapist, the district could bill the county office for \$189,910. This amount would be added to the overall cost of operating county office programs. The district is responsible for 46.54% of final county office costs or in this case, \$88,384.11 leaving \$101,526 in additional revenue. The above described increases in speech therapist services revenue, along with the changes in other billing practices described earlier in this report could increase district revenue by \$157,766.82. The data is as follows:

70 students receiving district speech therapy at \$2713/student	\$189,910
46.54% district responsibility	\$88,384
Additional revenue for district	\$101,526
Additional revenue for corrected billing	\$56,240.82
Total yearly additional revenue	\$157,766.82

The county office is reducing its number of therapists through attrition. When a speech therapist retires or resigns, the position is not filled, and the responsibility of providing those services falls on the districts. Because additional speech therapy positions are costly, it is even more important for the district to bill whenever possible to help offset costs.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Use the computerized IEP system to develop billing information for all out-of-district students in regional programs and include in this report all of these student-related services.
2. Bill at the full SELPA rate allowed for all out-of-district students in regional programs that related services instead of basing the rate on frequency and duration.
3. Use the computerized IEP system to develop billing information for all county office students receiving speech therapy from district speech therapists and any other district providers.
4. Bill for these services at the SELPA allowable rates.

Licensed Care Institutions

Licensed Care Institutions (Group Homes), Foster Family Homes and Adult Care Facilities

Four licensed care institutions (LCIs) are within district boundaries, and eight district students are placed in these group homes. In comparison to other districts in the SELPA, Fairfield-Suisun Unified reportedly has a higher proportional number of LCIs. This has a financial impact on the district since students who require this level of support usually have more severe behavior, social and emotional needs that call for more intensive services. Having LCIs in the district creates factors and costs that are beyond the district's control.

One adult facility is located in the district and serves one adult student. Information on this facility, such as the number of placements in foster family homes, is difficult to obtain because this information is usually not provided to educational institutions. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the University of California at Berkeley Collaboration maintain a website that includes a Child Welfare Dynamic Report System. The website shows the total number of Children in the Child Welfare Supervised Foster Care System as of July 1, 2009. For Solano County, the total number of in-county and out-of-county placements is 402. Of these, 321 live in Solano County for a total of 79.9%. The number of placements in Solano County from other counties in California is 81. The following table shows additional details of in-county and out-of-county placements.

In-County and Out-of-County Placements	
Solano County total number of students in Foster Care (In-County & Out-of-County Placements)	402
Number of In-County Solano Students	321
In-County Solano Percentage	79.9
Number of Students Placed in Solano From Other Counties	81
County	Number of Students
Alameda	5
Butte	1
Calaveras	1
Contra Costa	10
Fresno	1
Madera	2
Napa	15
Nevada	1
Sacramento	12
San Joaquin	10
San Mateo	1
Shasta	3
Sonoma	3
Stanislaus	1
Tehama	2
Yolo	7
Out of State	6
Total	81

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Frequently monitor the impact of LCIs on the district and plan for dealing with the associated costs.
2. Keep in mind that the factors and costs associated with LCIs are sometimes beyond the district's control.

Appendices

- A. Los Angeles County Office of Education Online Paraeducator Academy Courses
- B. Study Agreement

ADVANTAGES

- ✓ Uses Adobe Connect
- ✓ Assessment questions for review at the end of each module
- ✓ Reports available for participant completion-tracking mechanism
- ✓ Password can be set to expire after set time frame
- ✓ LACOE is using as a condition of hire
- ✓ CSEA local chapter approval
- ✓ Notes page includes all audio
- ✓ Visual and audio modalities
- ✓ Password protected

INDEX OF COURSES

Course 1	Introduction: Getting Started
Course 2	Division Expectation
Course 3	Say What-Acronyms
Course 4	Student Populations
Module 1	Division of Special Education Facts
Module 2	Division of Juvenile Court School Facts
Module 3	Division of Alternative Education Facts
Course 5	Division of Special Education
Module 1	Division of Special Education Overview
Module 2	Beliefs and Principals
Module 3	Understanding Students with disabilities
Module 4	People First
Module 5	Mobility Opportunities Via Education
Course 6	Juvenile Court Schools
Module 1	Closing the Gate
Module 2	Safety and security
Course 7	Division of Alternative Education
Module 1	Program Characteristics
Course 8	Facilitating student learning
Module 1	Facilitating student learning
Module 2	Academic (Diploma Bound) Students
Module 3	Instructional strategies for academic
Module 4	Academic Readiness (Non Diploma Bound) Students

Course 9	Working in a Team
Module 1	So you want to be a Para Educator-Introduction
Module 2	Top 10 Things
Module 3	Working Together: Teacher-Para Educator Teams
Module 4	Academic Para Duties
Module 5	Academic Readiness Duties
Course 10	Communication
Module 1	Communication Skills
Module 2	Communication Barriers
Module 3	Reading Nonverbal Communication Cues
Module 4	Creating a Foundation for effective communication
Module 5	Dealing With Others
Course 11	Dealing with Behavioral Challenges
Module 1	Classic Behavior Techniques that Backfire
Module 2	Guidelines for handling challenging behaviors
Module 3	Positive Reinforcement systems
Module 4	Behavioral Prevention Strategies
Module 5	Communicative Functions of Behavior
Module 6	Behavior Intervention CAUTIONS
Course 12	Ethics in the Workplace
Module 1	10 Tips to keep Ethical compass
Module 2	Basic Ethical issues
Module 3	Areas of Ethical consideration
Module 4	Confidentiality
Course 13	Child Abuse: An Educator's Responsibilities
Module 1	What is child abuse?
Module 2	Physical Abuse
Module 3	Physical Neglect
Module 4	Sexual Abuse Part I
Module 5	Sexual Abuse Part II
Module 6	Emotional Maltreatment
Module 7	What is not child abuse
Module 8	FAQ

For Purchasing information please contact:

Tana Donaghy, Donaghy_Tana@lacoe.edu, 562=803-8209

FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM STUDY AGREEMENT April 26, 2010

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Fairfield Suisun School District, hereinafter referred to as the District, mutually agree as follows:

1. BASIS OF AGREEMENT

The Team provides a variety of services to school districts and county offices of education upon request. The District has requested that the Team provide for the assignment of professionals to study specific aspects of the Fairfield Suisun School District operations. These professionals may include staff of the Team, County Offices of Education, the California State Department of Education, school districts, or private contractors. All work shall be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

A. Scope and Objectives of the Study

The scope and objectives of this study are to:

1. Non public schools
 - A. Review the process and procedures for placing students in non public schools.
 - B. Compare percentage of students enrolled in non public schools from Fairfield Suisun to other districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations for alternative district programs. Consider the impact of Licensed Care Institutions as well as Board and Care facilities.
 - C. Review and make recommendations regarding the cost efficiency of non public school placements vs. district alternative programs.

2. Non public agencies and contract services
 - A. Review the process and procedure for providing students with non public agency services.
 - B. Provide cost comparison of contracting for speech therapist services or fully staffing district speech therapist position.
 - C. Compare the District's speech therapist salary schedule to regional and SELPA salary schedules. Make recommendations to address the ongoing decreases in direct hired Speech Language Programs and the increasing number of contracted therapists.
3. Review the special education transportation system for efficiency and effectiveness, and determine any cost savings.
4. Determine if it would be cost-effective for the district to operate additional special education programs for severely handicapped students rather than contracting with the COE. Review the facility, staffing, transportation, and other operational areas for transfer feasibility.
5. Review the overall special education delivery system to determine if efficiencies can be implemented. Conduct a comparison of the District's special education encroachment on the general fund to other school districts within the SELPA.
 - A. Identify programmatic weaknesses and gaps in service and make recommendations to address these areas.
6. Conduct a review of special education staffing ratios including administrative, certificated, and classified in each program and compare to districts within the SELPA and region and make recommendations if needed for improved operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.
 - A. Review multi-funded positions budgeted within the special education department and make recommendations regarding criteria that should be used to determine which positions should be multi-funded (if any).
7. Review due process, compliance complaints, corrective actions ordered and make recommendations to improve efficacy in managing these issues.

8. Evaluate the District's bill back process to regional districts for services provided and determine if the process is capturing all expenditures and that billing to regional districts reflects actual cost.
9. Review the impact of Licensed Care Institutions (LCI), such as Foster homes, Foster Family Agency homes, Adult Care Facilities, Group Homes and their impact on the district.

B. Services and Products to be Provided

- 1) Orientation Meeting - The Team will conduct an orientation session at the School District to brief District management and supervisory personnel on the procedures of the Team and on the purpose and schedule of the study.
- 2) On-site Review - The Team will conduct an on-site review at the District office and at school sites if necessary.
- 3) Exit Report - The Team will hold an exit meeting at the conclusion of the on-site review to inform the District of significant findings and recommendations to that point.
- 4) Exit Letter - The Team will issue an exit letter approximately 10 days after the exit meeting detailing significant findings and recommendations to date and memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.
- 5) Draft Reports - Sufficient copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District administration for review and comment.
- 6) Final Report - Sufficient copies of the final study report will be delivered to the District administration following completion of the review. Reports will be issued in electronic format with printed copies available upon request. Final reports will be published on the FCMAT website.
- 7) Follow-Up Support – Six months after the completion of the study, FCMAT will return to the District, if requested, to confirm the District's progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report, at no cost. Status of the recommendations will be documented to the District in a FCMAT Management Letter.

3. **PROJECT PERSONNEL**

The study team will be supervised by Anthony L. Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer, Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The study team may also include:

<i>A. Bill Gillaspie</i>	<i>FCMAT Chief Management Analyst</i>
<i>B. JoAnn Murphy</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>C. Ann Stone</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>D. Trina Frazier</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>E. Mike Ræ</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>
<i>F. Tim Purvis</i>	<i>FCMAT Consultant</i>

Other equally qualified consultants will be substituted in the event one of the above noted individuals is unable to participate in the study.

4. **PROJECT COSTS**

The cost for studies requested pursuant to E.C. 42127.8(d)(1) shall be:

- A. \$500.00 per day for each Team Member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, preparing and presenting reports, or participating in meetings.
- B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals, lodging, etc. The District will be billed for the daily rate and expenses of the independent consultant, only. The District will be invoiced at actual costs, with 50% of the estimated cost due following the completion of the on-site review and the remaining amount due upon acceptance of the final report by the District.

Based on the elements noted in section 2 A, the total cost of the study is estimated at \$26,000.

- C. Any change to the scope will affect the estimate of total cost.

Payments for FCMAT services are payable to Kern County Superintendent of Schools - Administrative Agent.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

- A. The District will provide office and conference room space while on-site reviews are in progress.
- B. The District will provide the following (if requested):
 - 1) A map of the local area
 - 2) Existing policies, regulations and prior reports addressing the study request
 - 3) Current organizational charts
 - 4) Current and four (4) prior year's audit reports
 - 5) Any documents requested on a supplemental listing
- C. The District Administration will review a preliminary draft copy of the study. Any comments regarding the accuracy of the data presented in the report or the practicability of the recommendations will be reviewed with the Team prior to completion of the final report.

Pursuant to EC 45125.1(c), representatives of FCMAT will have limited contact with District pupils. The District shall take appropriate steps to comply with EC 45125.1(c).

6. PROJECT SCHEDULE

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

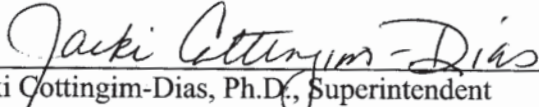
<i>Orientation:</i>	<i>May 17, 2010</i>
<i>Staff Interviews:</i>	<i>May 17 – 20, 2010</i>
<i>Exit Interviews:</i>	<i>May 21, 2010</i>
<i>Preliminary Report Submitted:</i>	<i>to be determined</i>
<i>Final Report Submitted:</i>	<i>to be determined</i>
<i>Board Presentation:</i>	<i>to be determined</i>
<i>Follow-Up Support:</i>	<i>If requested</i>

7. CONTACT PERSON

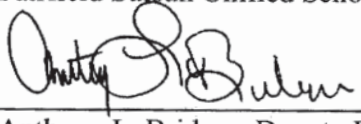
Name of contact person: Andrew Green-Ownby

Telephone: (707) 399-5072 FAX: (707) 399-5153

E-Mail andrewgo@fsusd.k12.ca.us



Jacki Cottingim-Dias, Ph.D., Superintendent Date 4/26/2010
Fairfield Suisun Unified School District



Anthony L. Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer April 26, 2010
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team 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.