FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services

Saugus Union School District

Organization and Staffing Review

May 8, 2013

Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer

May 8, 2013

Joan Lucid, Ed.D., Superintendent
Saugus Union School District
24930 Stanford Avenue
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Dear Superintendent Lucid,

In October 2012, the Saugus Union School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for an organization and staffing review. Specifically, the agreement stated that FCMAT would perform the following:

1. The Saugus Union School District requests FCMAT to conduct an organizational and staffing review of all certificated, classified and administrative positions in the district office. The district serves students in grades K-6, with 15 elementary schools and an enrollment of approximately 10,200 students. The following departments will be reviewed: superintendent's office, personnel, educational services including child care and special education, and business services including facilities, fiscal, maintenance and operations, risk management, and technology.

2. The team will provide comparative staffing data for three school districts of similar size and structure and provide recommendations to improve the efficiency that may reduce costs of the district. The district office and department level comparison will include at least three comparable school districts located in the geographical region or may include comparable districts utilized in the collective bargaining process.

3. The team will review job descriptions for all department positions, interview staff and make recommendations for staffing improvements or reductions, if any. All recommendations will include estimated and calculated values for any proposed position reductions or enhancements to the organizational structure.

4. The team will evaluate the current workflow and distribution of functions between the departments, and provide recommendations for improved efficiency, if any. This component will include reviewing documentation, including policies and procedures, and gathering data regarding current practices, procedures and separation of duties to ensure the proper internal controls. Additionally, the FCMAT team may interview other staff to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered.

FCMAT
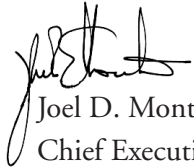Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer
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Administrative Agent: Christine L. Frazier - Office of Kern County Superintendent of Schools

This final report contains the study team's findings and recommendations in the above areas of review. FCMAT appreciates the opportunity to serve the Saugus Union School District and extends thanks to all the staff for their assistance during fieldwork.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Montero
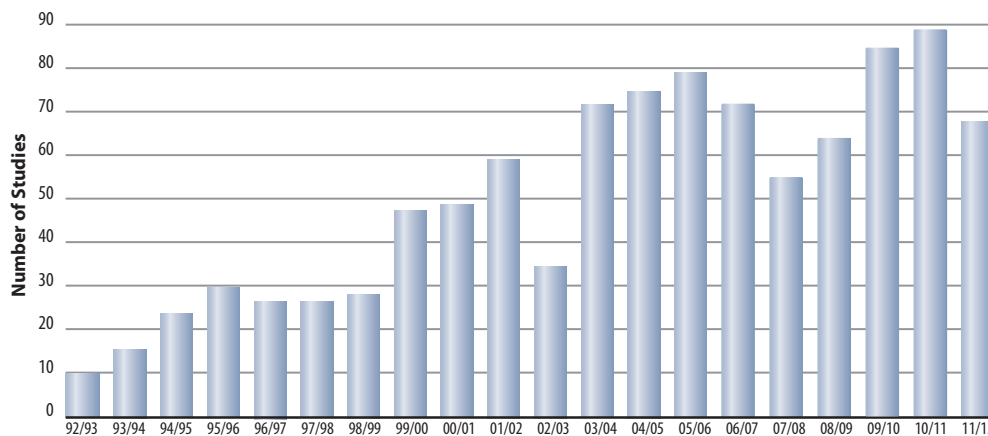Chief Executive Officer

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About FCMAT

FCMAT's primary mission is to assist California's local K-14 educational agencies to identify, prevent, and resolve financial and data management challenges. FCMAT provides fiscal and data management assistance, professional development training, product development and other related school business and data services. FCMAT's fiscal and management assistance services are used not just to help avert fiscal crisis, but to promote sound financial practices and efficient operations. FCMAT's data management services are used to help local educational agencies (LEAs) meet state reporting responsibilities, improve data quality, and share information.

FCMAT may be requested to provide fiscal crisis or management assistance by a school district, charter school, community college, county office of education, the state Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the Legislature.

When a request or assignment is received, FCMAT assembles a study team that works closely with the local education agency to define the scope of work, conduct on-site fieldwork and provide a written report with findings and recommendations to help resolve issues, overcome challenges and plan for the future.

Studies by Fiscal Year

FCMAT also develops and provides numerous publications, software tools, workshops and professional development opportunities to help local educational agencies operate more effectively and fulfill their fiscal oversight and data management responsibilities. The California School Information Services (CSIS) arm of FCMAT assists the California Department of Education with the implementation of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and also maintains DataGate, the FCMAT/CSIS software LEAs use for CSIS services. FCMAT was created by Assembly Bill 1200 in 1992 to assist LEAs to meet and sustain their financial obligations. Assembly Bill 107 in 1997 charged FCMAT with responsibility for CSIS and its statewide data management work. Assembly Bill 1115 in 1999 codified CSIS' mission.

AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county office of education and school districts to work together locally to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. Assembly Bill 2756 (2004) provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans.

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 more than 950 reviews for LEAs, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The team is led by 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.

Introduction

Background

Located in the Santa Clarita Valley in northern Los Angeles County, the Saugus Union School District has a five-member elected governing board and serves approximately 10,200 students in kindergarten through sixth grade at 16 elementary schools. Student enrollment reached a peak of 10,758 in 2005-06 and has declined gradually since then.

The district is approximately 99 square miles in size and encompasses the communities of Canyon Country, Saugus, Valencia and a portion of Santa Clarita.

In October 2012, the Saugus Union School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for a review of the district's organization and staffing. Specifically, the agreement states that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. Conduct an organizational and staffing review of all certificated, classified and administrative positions in the district office. The district serves students in grades K-6, with 15 elementary schools and an enrollment of approximately 10,200 students. The following departments will be reviewed: superintendent's office, personnel, educational services including childcare and special education, and business services including facilities, fiscal, maintenance and operations, risk management, and technology.

2. Provide comparative staffing data for three school districts of similar size and structure and provide recommendations to improve the efficiency that may reduce costs of the district. The district office and department level comparison will include at least three comparable school districts located in the geographical region or may include comparable districts utilized in the collective bargaining process.

3. Review job descriptions for all department positions, interview staff and make recommendations for staffing improvements or reductions, if any. All recommendations will include estimated and calculated values for any proposed position reductions or enhancements to the organizational structure.

4. Evaluate the current workflow and distribution of functions between the departments, and provide recommendations for improved efficiency, if any. This component will include reviewing documentation, including policies and procedures, and gathering data regarding current practices, procedures and separation of duties to ensure the proper internal controls. Additionally, the FCMAT team may interview other staff to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered.

Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district on December 5 and 6, 2012 to conduct interviews, collect data and review documents. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

I.   Executive Summary

II.   Organizational Structure

III.   Central Office Organization and Staffing

IV.   Staffing Comparison

VI.   Appendix

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

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*As a member of this study team, this consultant was not representing his employer but was working solely as an independent contractor for FCMAT.

Executive Summary

FCMAT conducted an organizational and staffing review of the district office and of management positions in maintenance, operations and transportation to identify areas of redundancy, improper segregation of duties between departments, and inappropriate staffing levels based on industry standards and comparisons to three districts of similar size and composition. Three comparative elementary school districts, San Mateo-Foster City, Merced City and Franklin-McKinley, which were selected using Ed-Data, a collection of statistical performance, demographic and financial data supplied by California school districts. A survey was also sent to each of the comparison districts, and the results are presented later in this report.

FCMAT prepared a staffing and organization structure questionnaire and forwarded it to the three districts electronically. All three districts responded, and the comparison includes full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing by department and division. FCMAT also received qualitative data from these districts regarding how they responded to revenue reductions over the last four years.

Funding for education has been severely reduced and cash deferrals have increased since 2008-09 because of the state and federal budget crisis. To address the state's ongoing budget deficit, state lawmakers have used numerous strategies to help balance the budget, including reducing expenditures, adding new taxes, borrowing money and using federal stimulus funds. Passage of Proposition 30 in November 2012 helped to stabilize education funding for the 2012-13 fiscal year by increasing state tax revenues, thereby avoiding mid-year budget reductions. During these unprecedented fiscal times districts have been forced to make drastic reductions to programs and staff; prior industry standards and best practices for staffing levels have often been decimated. Although staffing comparisons provide valuable information, they may be a somewhat less reliable tool than they were in the past in determining the number of staff needed to provide the desired level of customer service.

The district should be staffed according to basic theories of organizational structure and standards used in other school agencies of similar size and type. The generally accepted theories of organizational structure include span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority. Based on a review of comparison districts and interviews with the staff, the Saugus Union School District is overstaffed and should consider eliminating some positions in the areas of personnel and payroll.

Conversely, the district is understaffed in specific departments, and should consider adding positions in grounds and maintenance.

Findings and Recommendations

Organizational Structure

A school district's organizational structure should establish the framework for leadership and the delegation of specific duties and responsibilities for all staff members. This structure should be managed to maximize resources and reach identified goals and should adapt as the district's enrollment increases or declines. A district should be staffed according to generally accepted theories of organizational structure and the standards used in other school agencies of similar size and type. The most common theories of organizational structure are span of control, chain of command, and line and staff authority.*

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

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

Line authority is the relationship between supervisors and subordinates. It refers to the direct line in the chain of command. For example, the assistant superintendent of business services has direct line authority over the director of fiscal services, and the director of fiscal services has direct line authority over the fiscal services department staff. Conversely, staff authority is advisory in nature. Staff personnel do not have the authority to make and implement decisions, but act in support roles to line personnel.* The organizational structure of local educational agencies contains both line and staff authority. (*Principles of School Business Management*, Association of School Business Officials, Incorporated, by R. Craig Wood, David C. Thompson, Lawrence O. Picus, and Don I. Tharpe, Second Edition, 1995)

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

Central Office Organization and Staffing

Superintendent's Office

The superintendent serves as the district's chief executive officer (CEO), provides overall leadership in attaining district goals and objectives, implements the policies of the governing board, and serves as secretary to the board.

The superintendent's greatest challenges are ensuring that the district remains fiscally solvent, increasing its operational efficiency and changing the organizational environment from one in which various departments work in isolation to one in which they work together as an integrated whole. Two of the greatest barriers to achieving efficiency are communication and employee accountability.

Communication

Many district staff members indicated that there is a lack of communication within the district office. Effective communication is essential to stability, accuracy of information and effective leadership in any organization. The lack of communication between departments has fostered a lack of teamwork and clear sense of direction among staff. In some cases the lack of teamwork results from a lack of staff initiative; in other instances personnel are working at cross-purposes, with direction coming from multiple departments.

During fieldwork, FCMAT was informed that some district staff members refuse to perform tasks not specifically identified in their job description, balk at learning new procedures, and dismiss the notion of other duties as assigned, even though that language is contained in their job descriptions. Both staff and administrators expressed concern that some staff members are unwilling to work together; that if one employee is overloaded with work no other employees offer help, which increases the need for overtime; and that some are unwilling to help department or site personnel. Some staff members state that certain tasks are not their responsibility, and some indicated that even if a task was their job, they don't know how to perform the tasks and are not willing to learn.

During FCMAT's review, it was noted that staff meetings are not held consistently within or among many departments. Some departments have no meetings, and some departments do not participate in cross-department meetings or receive information about decisions that affect them. For example, the personnel services department tracks employee absences, but both the risk management and payroll functions are affected by leaves of absence. Some employees also expressed frustration with staff inefficiently pursuing documents from department to department. Staff also called for the district's senior administration to include more staff in discussions regarding the state of the district.

It would benefit the district if the superintendent were to initiate regular district office staff meetings, strive for an atmosphere that encourages participation by all, require monthly meetings in all district departments, and require cross-departmental meetings periodically. This would improve communication, provide a consistent means of sharing reliable information, and promote openness regarding decisions.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Provide professional development training on improving communication for all district office staff.

2. Work on team building at the district office to improve the internal capacity of the organization.

3. Initiate regular district office staff meetings and require monthly meetings in all district departments to improve communication and create a consistent venue for sharing information.

5. Create a plan to foster communication, collaboration and teamwork within and among divisions and departments. The plan should be based on the district's organization chart and job responsibilities.

Employee Accountability

Employees expressed concern about a lack of consistency and fairness of employee discipline. During FCMAT's fieldwork, several staff members expressed the need for the district's administration to hold employees accountable for their actions.

Supervisors indicated that the performance of some managers is in question but they had not documented concerns about performance through evaluations or other written means. Regular performance evaluations are essential to ensure that all employees are held accountable for performing their assigned duties to acceptable standards. These standards should be clearly communicated to employees, administrators and union leadership. When an employee does not meet the minimum performance standards or when other disciplinary action is warranted, the supervisory staff should take appropriate action.

The district's Board Policy 4118 and its accompanying administrative regulations govern certificated employee discipline; and Board Policy 4218 and its administrative regulations govern classified employee discipline. These regulations were last revised in November 2005. In addition, the collective bargaining agreements with the Saugus Teachers Association and the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Chapter 112 document the disciplinary processes for certificated and classified employees, respectively.

One of the barriers to holding classified employees accountable is the nine-month probationary period. A supervisor needs at least one year to adequately assess whether an employee possesses the skills, aptitude and initiative necessary to be successful in a position. It would benefit the district to negotiate with the classified bargaining unit to extend the probationary period from nine months to one year.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Implement its policies, regulations and the collective bargaining agreements' language regarding discipline. Ensure that the assistant superintendent of personnel is closely involved in all employee discipline issues and in guiding and assisting administrators in the area of employee discipline.

2. Hold employees accountable for the work they have been hired to perform.

3. Communicate to employees, administrators and union leaders the expectations and standards for all employees.

4. Provide administrators and other managerial staff with ongoing professional development in how to hold employees to professional standards of performance, employee evaluations, and progressive discipline.

5. Update policies and administrative regulations regarding employee discipline. Provide clear administrative regulations that prohibit employees from circumventing the chain of command.

6. Negotiate with the classified employee bargaining unit to extend the probationary period to one year for new employees.

Executive Secretary and Receptionist

The executive secretary supports the superintendent and works with the superintendent's cabinet, the school board, staff and members of the public. The office deals with day- to-day issues and develops strategies for long-term planning and implementation of the superintendent's initiatives.

The district office receptionist works in conjunction with the superintendent's office. In addition to typical receptionist duties, this position helps prepare and distribute board meeting agendas and assists the superintendent's office with various projects. A variety of approaches have been used to provide coverage of the reception area during lunch and other times the receptionist must be away from the front counter. However, requiring that this responsibility be rotated among departments may be the most equitable way to provide coverage.

Recommendation

The district should:

1. Establish a schedule that rotates receptionist duties among departments to provide coverage for the receptionist when she must be away from the front counter.

Business Services Department

Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

The assistant superintendent of business had been with the district for approximately $1^1/_2$ years at the time of FCMAT's fieldwork. This position is responsible for fiscal services, safety and risk management, maintenance and operations, facilities, and information services and technology.

The biggest challenges facing the assistant superintendent of business are the lack of integrated financial systems, staff members' resistance to change, their need for professional development, and the limited organizational capacity of staff. The lack of integrated systems is covered in greater detail later in this report; staff resistance to change and the need to increase organizational capacity are critical issues.

Although organizational capacity may be measured several ways, it is usually defined by the resources and conditions necessary to be effective. The publication *Capacity for Public Administration: Analysis of Meaning and Measurement,* by Robert K. Christiansen and Beth Gazley, explains that capacity is an organization's ability to perform work. In the public sector, the term means the government's ability to marshal, develop, direct and control its financial, human, physical and information resources.

It would benefit the district to increase the business services department's organizational capacity by clearly defining and prioritizing the department's goals and objectives and ensuring that they are agreed upon by those affected and made clear to end users; and by placing each employee in the position in which they will be the most effective.

The district lacks documented processes and procedures for processing personnel requisitions, approving overtime and extra time, and absence tracking of certificated employees. The district also has no procedures for advanced approval of overtime, extra time and compensatory time. It uses absence tracking software to monitor the absences of certificated employees and special education assistants only, and it lacks a sequential process for routing personnel requisitions through the business services and personnel services departments.

The business services department would greatly benefit from implementing the management principle known as planned abandonment, which involves systematically evaluating tasks to determine whether they are still relevant. This would allow the department to comprehensively assess its functions and determine whether any can be replaced by new initiatives that are priorities. There is always a limit to what any organization or a department can manage. Unless the department's resources increase, it should use planned abandonment to increase organizational capacity.

The executive secretary to the assistant superintendent of business has been with the district for 11 years and in the current position for three years. This employee provides clerical support to the assistant superintendent of business, the director of fiscal services, the director of maintenance and operations, and the director of facilities. She manages the calendar for the assistant superintendent of business, prepares correspondence and board agenda items, processes and distributes mail, files and takes messages, prepares travel and conference requests for the assistant superintendent and the directors, and prepares requests for proposals for the district's school facilities needs analysis and the special resolutions for collection of special taxes for the district's nine Mello Roos community facilities districts (CFDs).

The executive secretary is also responsible for managing the accounts with the district's three copier vendors, reviewing all flyers from nonprofit groups before they are posted at school sites, troubleshooting copy machines, and manually processing all requests for use of facilities.

The secretary's scope of work and workload is excessive and exceeds her formal authority. Although it would be better to reassign certain tasks to other departments, such as assigning review of school site flyers to the instructional services division, and to automate others, such as processing requests for use of facilities, there is still a demonstrable need to add clerical support staff for the department's five directors.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Clearly define the business services department's organizational objectives in order of priority.

2. Ensure that the duties in the business services department job descriptions reflect the tasks needed to implement the office's goals and objectives.

3. Provide ongoing professional development for business services staff.

4. Evaluate the department's internal operations and use planned abandonment where applicable to increase organizational capacity.

5. Institute a procedure by which overtime, extra time and compensatory time can be approved in advance, but only by the superintendent or one of the assistant superintendents.

6. Use a personnel requisition form that clearly defines the roles of the business and personnel services departments in creating a new position and in filling an open position.

7. Reassign the responsibility for reviewing school site flyers from the executive secretary to the assistant superintendent of business to a position in the instructional services division.

8. Implement the use of an online facilities use program, and reassign this function to the facilities department.

9. Evaluate the level of clerical support needed to enable reassigning some work from the executive secretary to the assistant superintendent of business to the other departments in the business division.

Fiscal Services

The director fiscal services reports directly to the assistant superintendent of business. The organizational chart for the department indicates that this position oversees the following positions: budget/program accountant, lead payroll accountant, three payroll technicians, two accounts payable technicians, fiscal services administrative clerk, childcare/preschool account technician, and two childcare accounts receivable technicians. The director of fiscal services also oversees the

positions of planning/enrollment/attendance technician, accounting/purchasing technician, and two warehouse positions, which were not included in this section of the study.

The director of fiscal services is not familiar with the fiscal services staff's assignments and procedures. During fieldwork, the director was determining the role of the position and was overwhelmed with the demands of day-to-day operations and with the director position's assignments. Although the director has only been in the district a short time, she has not demonstrated the leadership and motivation her employees need to move the district forward.

Budget Development and Position Control Systems

The district uses two financial software systems: 4D, an off-the-shelf product that was custom programmed by the district's information services and technology (IST) department; and Los Angeles County Office of Education's PeopleSoft software. In many instances the same information is entered manually into both systems and maintained on multiple Excel spreadsheets. For example, the budget and program accountant is responsible for budget development, which includes providing account codes and other information on positions. Because the district has no position control system, this information is provided by using the 4D software program in conjunction with Excel spreadsheets. This greatly increases the risk of error.

Staff indicated that in many instances the 4D software was used for auditing the information entered into the PeopleSoft system and to retrieve historical information. 4D is not able to interface with PeopleSoft, and there is no plan to addresses this issue in the near future.

A single position control system that is used by budget, payroll and personnel services staff would eliminate duplication of work and make budget development and monitoring more effective and accurate. Sufficient training and use of PeopleSoft would also eliminate the need for spreadsheets and make available more timely information for the district and its program managers.

Budgets are not static; they continue to change throughout the fiscal year. The projected revenues, expenditures and ending balances change during the year for various reasons, such as changes in state and federal funding, changes in staffing, and unanticipated operating expenses. Maintaining a budget that accurately reflects the district's current financial condition is essential because it enables a district to take appropriate actions to ensure program quality and fiscal stability throughout the fiscal year.

Because the district lacks an integrated financial system and thus timely financial information, site administrators and department managers need to review financial information frequently to determine any necessary adjustments to revenue and expenditures, and communicate these adjustments to the fiscal services department in a timely manner so that budget transfer and/or revisions can be approved and entered into the accounting system.

Financial systems developed in-house are difficult to sustain because of the ongoing support required to accommodate changing state and local financial reporting requirements. For example, the district's business office lacks a position control system, and the payroll module does not communicate with the Los Angeles County Office of Education's financial system or contain the components that it requires to run payroll warrants. This lack of interface between the position control and payroll systems makes it difficult to reconcile payroll data to position control for financial reporting.

Fiscal services staff need ongoing training and a thorough understanding of the PeopleSoft software to implement the various modules required to meet the district's financial needs.

A reliable position control system establishes positions and helps prevent both the over- and under-budgeting of staff by including all district-approved positions in the budget. It also prevents the omission of routine annual expenses tied to these positions in the budget such as substitutes, extra duty pay, vacation payouts, and step and column changes. An effective position control system consists of a single system that is integrated with other financial modules such as budget and payroll. Although initial implementation can take many hours, it is a powerful tool for the district that will result in better productivity and budget information.

Internal Controls

Staff development is needed not only to help staff understand software, but also how internal controls form the basis of a sound financial management system. Having such a system enables the district to fulfill its education mission while ensuring efficient operations, reliable financial information and legal compliance. Strong internal controls also help protect the district from material weaknesses, serious error and fraud.

Effective internal control procedures will do the following:

- Prevent controls from being overridden by management

- Ensure state and federal compliance

- Assure management that the internal control system is sound

- Identify and correct inefficient processes

Ensure that employees are aware of the proper internal control expectations

Interviews with district fiscal services staff and a review of job descriptions reveal deficiencies related to internal control procedures. The district needs to review job descriptions and assignments to ensure that there is a proper segregation of duties and the checks and balances needed to protect the district and its assets. No desk manuals were presented, and staff indicated that their job descriptions do not reflect their assignments. Desk manuals are essential to efficient business operations; however, fiscal services department staff do not have any, making it difficult for new and substitute staff to perform duties.

The district needs to apply the following basic concepts and procedures to its transaction and reporting process to establish a solid internal control structure:

- Segregation of duties

- System of checks and balances

- Use of pre-numbered documents

- Cross-training of staff

- Timely reconciliations

- Inventory controls

Budget development and monitoring is also important to a school district's financial success. Having instant access to account balances would result in better decision making, enable staff to encumber funds before a purchase is made, and allow staff to encumber funds by using open purchase orders for items such as utilities, goods and services that are needed routinely (e.g., for the maintenance department).

A functional position control module is an essential component of an effective financial software system and should be available to the business and personnel services departments. Position control functions must be separated to ensure proper internal controls. Adequate controls ensure that only board-authorized positions are entered into the system, that the personnel services department hires only employees authorized by the school board, and that the payroll department pays only employees hired for positions that are authorized. The proper separation of duties is essential to creating strong internal controls and a reliable position control system. PeopleSoft has a position control module, but neither the business office nor the personnel services department is using it. The district needs to use an effective position control system for budget development and monitoring, payroll, and hiring employees.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Direct all fiscal services department staff to develop a desk manual that identifies their position's duties, including daily procedures.

2. Fully implement the use of PeopleSoft by budget, payroll and personnel services staff, and discontinue using 4D software for position control. Implement the position control module of this software in both the business office and personnel services department. Work with the Los Angeles County Office of Education on training for all fiscal services department staff so that there is a thorough understanding of the software and its capabilities.

   Work with the county office to implement the system and train staff in use of the position control module. Contact other districts that have fully implemented the PeopleSoft payroll module for guidance.

   Consider temporarily assigning an experienced consultant familiar PeopleSoft to assist with its implementation.

3. Consider conducting a follow-up review of the specific duties of each member of the fiscal services staff to ensure that proper internal controls are in place.

4. Develop a timely and accurate budget administration system that can be used by departments and school sites in monitoring and administering their respective budgets.

5. Review with the director of fiscal services the district's goals and objectives.

6. Ensure that the director communicates with staff regarding expectations, goals and objectives for the department.

7. Ensure that the director meets with staff individually and discusses their perceptions of their role in the district and the challenges they have in achieving the goals of the department and district.

8. Consider having this position lead in coordinating the complete implementation of PeopleSoft software. This would include learning the capabilities of the software and making sure that everyone is committed to making the system work.

9. Provide professional development training to fiscal services staff in budget development, possibly through the California Association of School Business Officials' (CASBO's) Professional Development Workshops

10. Provide extensive training on PeopleSoft and its budget development, monitoring and reporting capabilities to fiscal services staff.

11. Develop a desk manual of all functions and procedures for which the budget and program accountant is responsible.

Payroll

Payroll staff are reluctant to change the way they process payroll, and they lack confidence in the current leadership and lack an understanding of basic accounting principles. Because of this, payroll staff are unwilling to learn new systems that could result in the more effective and efficient delivery of payroll.

The district's payroll process is completed using both the 4D and PeopleSoft systems. Information is entered manually into both systems for both classified and certificated employee payroll. The district has four payroll cycles per month, and all work time is reported manually using multiple Excel spreadsheets to record sick leave, vacation and other items. Staff indicated that most information for reports is from the district-developed 4D system because they do not have time to learn a new system and 4D contains all of the historical information whereas PeopleSoft stores only two years of historical information.

Payroll staff complete all salary calculations manually, including vacation, extra work pay, time off adjustments, income protection and other items. However, there are no desk manuals to document these procedures. The risk management and safety department prepares calculations for benefits as well as health and welfare benefit reconciliations. This arrangement is unusual; in most California school districts the payroll staff perform benefit calculations and reconciliations. The district's childcare and preschool account technician prepares childcare and preschool payroll. Although this position is listed under the payroll department on the organizational chart, it is more closely aligned with the accounting functions for childcare and preschool.

The district lacks a single, integrated position control system that can be used for payroll, budgeting and personnel services. Such a system is essential and would give both the business services department and program managers the ability to have timely access to financial information, better monitor their spending, and make better informed decisions. An integrated position control system would also allow the district to make adjustments to the budget in a more timely fashion. Because all work time is currently reported and paid by payroll, and there is no distinction between an individual's approved time in a position and the extra time worked, it is difficult for business office staff and/or program managers to monitor and adjust budgets as necessary.

Because so much of the payroll function is completed manually, with data entered and maintained on two separate systems that do not communicate with each other, it is difficult to ascertain whether this department is overstaffed. However, the payroll department has one to two more full-time equivalent positions than do payroll departments in districts of similar size and structure. It would benefit the district to consider eliminating one of the payroll technician positions for an estimated annual savings of $88,089.00, including salary, statutory benefits and health and welfare benefits. The estimate does not consider the effects of changes in other positions that may occur with a reduction in force.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Have payroll staff complete all payroll functions, with the exception of benefits.

2. Provide professional development training for payroll staff to ensure they understand internal control issues and the requirements of a sound payroll system. Training in basic accounting should also be considered.

3. Require payroll staff to prepare desk manuals to document the payroll process.

4. Improve communications between the director of fiscal services and payroll staff.

5. Discontinue the use of the 4D software, and use PeopleSoft for all payroll functions.

6. Consider eliminating one payroll technician position.

Accounts Payable Technicians

The director of fiscal services supervises the processing of accounts payable transactions. As with all positions, especially those that deal with finances, strong internal controls are essential because the potential for fraud exists.

Accounts payable staff have been using the PeopleSoft financial system's accounts payable module since October 2012, but the system has not been fully implemented. Accounts payable technicians use Excel spreadsheets to provide the director of fiscal services with a list of purchase orders ready for payment with due dates. The director of fiscal services then determines which invoices can be paid.

Accounts payable staff indicated that their current process can be completed in PeopleSoft, but because staff do not fully understand the capabilities of the PeopleSoft system, they convey information using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Whenever financial information is transferred multiple times by employees, the chance of human error is greatly increased. Staff are reluctant to use the payment scheduling feature in PeopleSoft because doing so results in payments being shown in the general ledger against the account. Staff do not understand that cash entries do not happen until the warrant is actually issued.

The accounts payable technicians indicated that they would like to be able to use PeopleSoft more but are hampered by a lack of understanding and knowledge of the system. Accounts payable technicians enter purchase orders in the PeopleSoft system, which is an internal control weakness. Technicians can also monitor the flow of purchase orders in the system. The district does not use open purchase orders for everyday items and small purchases that are needed quickly for departments such as maintenance and operations. Instead, the district has issued 60 credit cards for use by various staff members. This large number of credit cards leaves the district vulnerable to misuse and circumvention of internal controls. Utilities are not encumbered for the year; rather, they are paid on a pay-as-you-go basis. This lack of open purchase orders results in delays for repairs and for accomplishing daily tasks.

Some accounts payable duties are completed by the childcare and preschool account technician who is responsible for that program's accounting and budget. Accounts payable technicians also assist with the bank deposits.

When making payments the district has issued multiple warrants for a single vendor. For example, five separate warrants dated December 17, 2012 were issued to Home Depot. This raises the question of whether vendors are receiving duplicate payments, potentially costing the district thousands of dollars.

Planning/Enrollment/Attendance Technician

The planning/enrollment/attendance technician's main assignments are preparing the J-18, J-19 and annual attendance reports, the J-7 and J-7 CSR reports, preparing CBEDS reports, monitoring instructional minutes and reviewing class size maximums. This employee also collects and processes developer fees and maintains Decision Insite, the district's geographical information system (GIS). Although many of these duties are fiscal in nature, others, such as collecting developer fees and maintaining the district's GIS, are facilities-related.

Many of this individual's duties are not included in this position's job description, and most districts of comparable size do not have this position. It would benefit the district to ensure that the job description for this position details the work performed; this would also help the district make any future decisions about this position.

Accounting/Purchasing Technician

The accounting/purchasing technician's main responsibilities are listed under fiscal services (0.4 FTE). The responsibilities include account receivables monitoring, maintaining field trip and Magic Mountain coordination and purchasing office supplies. The district would benefit from reviewing the responsibilities of this position because of changes in field trip coordination.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Fully implement the accounts payable module of PeopleSoft.

2. Work with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to provide training on the PeopleSoft financial system.

3. Contact other districts that have fully implemented the accounts payable module for guidance.

4. Consider having accounts payable technicians complete all accounts payable processes and assigning responsibility for deposits to another position in fiscal services.

5. Prohibit the accounts payable technicians from having the ability to issue purchase orders.

6. Provide professional development training for staff in the areas of segregation of duties and internal controls.

7. Consolidate vendor payments so that only one warrant is issued per vendor on any given date.

8.   Significantly reduce the number of credit cards issued to staff, limiting them to senior administration and key directors.

9.   Review and revise the planning/enrollment/attendance technician position's job description to accurately detail job duties and to enable the district to make future decisions regarding this position.

10.   Review and revise the accounting/purchasing technician position's job description to accurately detail the job duties and enable the district to make future decisions regarding this position.

Childcare and Preschool

The accounting for childcare and preschool is located in the district's fiscal services department and is completed by one childcare/preschool account technician, one fiscal services administrative clerk and two childcare accounts receivable technicians. The district's organizational chart places the account technician under payroll and the other three positions under accounting and purchasing. These positions are responsible for all accounting functions for childcare and preschool including payroll, accounts payable, budget and accounts receivable.

These employees do not feel that they receive adequate guidance or support from the district office departments and that they should be under the direction of the child development/preschool department. Childcare staff also felt they are not kept up to date on policy or procedure changes in the fiscal services department, and that they do not receive any written policy or procedures from personnel services. Of particular concern was that they did not receive information from other departments, such as updates on negotiations that may affect payroll. Because childcare employees are not represented by the classified employee union, they are not subject to changes to the classified employee contract. For example the classified staff now has 12 days of personal necessity leave but childcare classroom staff still have 10. Childcare classroom staff also do not qualify for longevity pay as all other classified staff do. Moving fiscal responsibility for childcare to the district's fiscal services department would improve communication and help the childcare program staff feel they are more a part of the district.

The childcare and preschool accounting staff complete deposits separate from the district deposit. This includes making a separate trip to the same bank the district uses. The childcare staff have been using Easy Care software for about a year, and it is currently being used for parents to make payments online and to perform invoicing for the 1,700 families that the district serves. Future plans for its use include online registration. The childcare and preschool staff are working hard to learn and use the software's capabilities and understand how it can make them more effective and efficient. Childcare staff are also investigating the feasibility of implementing a time clock for childcare staff to track and report time worked for payroll.

In addition to the 1.0 FTE accountant, the 1.75 FTE tuition clerks, the 0.75 FTE fiscal administrative clerk, and the 0.5 FTE personnel administrative clerk, the childcare and preschool program also funds 15 custodians at 0.47 FTE per custodian for a total of 7.0 total FTE; 0.4 FTE warehouse person; and a 1.0 FTE maintenance person. The district charges the childcare and preschool program 7% of its total budgets for indirect costs.

There is a perception among some staff that because the childcare and preschool programs are paying for FTEs in the personnel services and fiscal departments, the employees' time should be exclusively devoted to these programs, especially because the service has been inconsistent. Staff

noted that there are times when the programs' work is not completed because other projects are given higher priority. For example, the responsibility for maintaining licensing files for preschool teachers was assigned to the personnel services department with the expectation that the licensing files would be routinely reviewed and maintained. Just prior to FCMAT's fieldwork, childcare staff discovered that the files had not been reviewed for at least six months and some licenses were not in compliance. This is a serious concern because if licensing is not kept current, programs risk being closed when the state auditor comes to review them.

There are similar concerns with regard to the amount the programs are paying for custodial services. For example, new carpeting was installed in classrooms two or three years ago and, because they have not been maintained properly, parents are asking when the classrooms will get new carpets.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider keeping the fiscal responsibility for childcare in the fiscal services area, moving the childcare and preschool payroll function to the payroll staff and the accounts payable functions to the accounts payable staff.

2. Modify its organizational chart to show the childcare and preschool account technician in accounting and purchasing.

3. Ensure open communication between fiscal services and childcare and preschool accounting staff. The director of fiscal services should meet regularly with staff and be sure they are included in all communications. Communications should be used to ensure that fiscal services staff see the childcare and preschool staff as part of the department and the district office.

4. Direct the directors of fiscal services, information technology, and childcare and preschool to jointly review software that the childcare and preschool program is considering to determine if it meets the district's goals and objectives.

5. Coordinate the bank deposits for the district and the childcare and preschool programs so that only one trip to the bank is being made for both deposits. Inquire whether the bank is able to accept electronic deposit of checks so that the total number of trips to the bank can be reduced.

Safety and Risk Management

The director of safety and risk management has been in this position for the past eight years. This position is responsible for managing the district's risk management functions including property and liability, workers' compensation, and the district's health and welfare benefit plans. The district belongs to the Self Insurance Risk Management Authority (SIRMA) II joint powers authority (JPA) for property and liability insurance, and with The Protected Insurance Program for Schools and Community Colleges (PIPS) JPA for workers' compensation insurance. Keenan and Associates is the third party administrator for both programs.

The safety and risk management department uses the SafeSchools online safety training program to increase awareness, target injury trends and help comply with California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) requirements. The department encourages employees to check the SafeSchools website regularly for assignments and other information pertaining to employee safety. The department also maintains an extensive online inventory of material safety data sheets (MSDS), arranged by school facility.

The department manages medical, dental, vision, life insurance and disability plans for eligible employees. It also administers new health plan enrollments, changes to current health plan enrollments, COBRA coverage, and payroll deductions for credit unions, tax sheltered annuity (TSA) plans, and workers' compensation. The department also provides optional life, cancer and accident insurance coverage for purchase.

Some of the safety and risk management department's functions would be better reassigned to the payroll department. These include processing voluntary deductions for tax shelter annuities and deferred compensation plans, and working with its contractor, Tax Deferred Solutions, on IRS compliance issues.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Change the name of the department from Safety and Risk Management Department to Safety, Benefits and Risk Management Department to more accurately reflect the activities of the department.

2. Reassign to payroll staff the responsibilities for voluntary deductions for tax shelter annuities and deferred compensation plans, and for working with Tax Deferred Solutions on IRS compliance issues.

Facilities

The director of facilities, construction and modernization (director of facilities) is currently overseeing a $6.8 million modernization of Emblem Elementary School and planning for a new Proposition 39 general obligation bond. The funding sources for the Emblem Elementary School modernization are the state's Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) and the Community Facilities District. Although the Saugus Union School District has no future eligibility in the State School Facilities Program at this time, the director is optimistic that as the economy improves the district's chances of passing a local general obligation bond for school facilities will increase.

The district has a draft of a comprehensive facilities master plan that will be finalized in May 2013. The plan validates the condition of each building and site as identified in facility surveys completed for each school site. It also is used to identify any facility problems or conditions at each school as a result of enrollment growth and/or changes caused by full-day kindergarten, class size reductions, special requirements of new programs, or other unforeseen impacts on the instructional program.

In addition to the director of facilities position, the district has a 0.6 FTE capital improvement project (CIP) cost accountant position with the responsibility for tracking construction activities. Because there is minimal construction activity, it would benefit the district to evaluate the need for this position. However, if the district passes a general obligation bond or acquires other means of

sustained capital facilities funding, this position may be justified or even increased to 1.0 FTE if construction-related coordination and clerical support are added to its responsibilities.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Evaluate the need for a 0.6 FTE CIP accountant position.

2. If it successfully passes a general obligation bond, consider whether an additional facilities department position is needed, including clerical support.

Maintenance, Grounds, Custodial and Transportation

Maintenance

The facilities maintenance manager has been with the district since February 2007 and held the title of maintenance and operations manager at that time. Prior to her tenure with the district, she worked for the United Parcel Service as a maintenance supervisor/environmental coordinator.

Adequate building and grounds maintenance is essential to preserve the community's investment in its capital facilities. Well-maintained facilities provide a positive teaching and learning environment for staff and students. Maintenance is not a single function; rather, it consists of a managed group of personnel divided into specific trades. Each tradesman possesses different skills and faces different challenges. Thus employees cannot be used interchangeably for any task. As of December 2012, this department was staffed with six general maintenance workers, one locksmith/electrician and three heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) maintenance personnel, as well as a secretary and a manager.

The district maintains 950,464 square feet of building space situated on a total of approximately 137 acres, including 16 school sites. Industry best practice, based on a survey of comparable school districts, is to have a minimum of one maintenance worker for each school site. Thus a district the size of the Saugus Union School District would need 16 FTE maintenance crew members rather than the 10 the district has. Even if this number is reduced proportional to the current revenue limit deficit of 22.272% (presuming that all operational areas share equally in any reduction in force), the department would need 12.43 FTE maintenance workers to be adequately staffed, which is 2.43 FTE more than it has currently. This would cost approximately $198,000.

The flexibility provided by the state to reduce the routine restricted maintenance account (RRMA) will expire in fiscal year 2014-15. It would benefit the district to add maintenance personnel when it is required to restore the RRMA to a full 3% of total general fund expenditures. Because the maintenance department already has a number of general maintenance personnel, the district would benefit from adding skilled trade maintenance workers in the future.

The maintenance department does not use open purchase orders to procure routine services and materials. Rather, an individual purchase order is issued every time the department needs a good or service. Industry best practice is to set up approximately a dozen open purchase orders for vendors that are used routinely, with not-to-exceed amounts, that the department can use repeatedly.

Grounds

As of December 2012, the district had four full time groundskeepers, which seems low for a district of this size. CASBO does not have a formula for grounds maintenance staffing; however, the Florida Department of Education has performed extensive research in this area and has established a formula for school district grounds maintenance personnel and included it in a publication titled, *Maintenance and Operations Administrative Guidelines for School Districts and Community Colleges.*

This formula is based on two types of grounds personnel: those who perform general grounds functions such as mowing, gardening, and trimming; and those who care for athletic fields or other special open space areas. In many school districts custodians maintain general grounds while district grounds crews maintain large open areas and athletic fields.

The Florida Department of Education formula for determining the number of specialized grounds-keepers and athletic field groundskeepers is the total acreage of the school facility divided by 40, plus 1 FTE groundskeeper, plus 1 FTE groundskeeper per 500,000 square feet of athletic fields.

The district has a total of 1,423,516 square feet of athletic fields for play and physical education activities, and thus according to the above formula should have 7.108 FTE specialized and athletic field groundskeepers. If this number is reduced by the current revenue limit deficit of 22.272% (presuming that all operational areas share equally in reduction in force), the department would need 5.524 FTE specialized and athletic groundskeeper positions to be adequately staffed. Increasing staffing to this level would cost approximately $106,500. The calculation is as follows:

Grounds Staffing Formula			
Type	**District Totals**	**Divisor**	**Grounds Staffing - FTE**
Total Acreage	130.75	40 (plus 1 FTE)	4.26
Total Square Footage of Athletic Fields	1,423,516	500,000	2.84
Other District Facilities	----	---	---
Total Staffing Requirements – in tenths			7.1
Reduced by 22.272% revenue limit deficit			5.5

Custodial

The custodial supervisor's focus over the last three years has been to standardize how custodial services are delivered throughout the district, including standardizing products and cleaning techniques. The custodial supervisor indicated the need for ongoing professional development and adequate staffing as the two greatest obstacles to success.

The custodians clean classrooms every other day and restrooms and kitchen areas every day. The district has reduced the number of custodians through attrition rather than layoffs.

The district employs a total of 54 FTE custodians, including 40 full-time daytime/nighttime custodians at an average annual cost of $76,568.00 per FTE, and 28 part-time custodians. Each site is staffed with at least one full-time daytime (or lead) custodian and one night custodian.

School site principals supervise and evaluate daytime custodians with input from the custodial supervisor. Night custodians are supervised and evaluated by the custodial supervisor with input from the principal. Some employees expressed dissatisfaction with this arrangement, indicating

that the night custodians have a greater share of the work because work is not completed by daytime custodians.

For this arrangement to be viable, school site and district administrators must have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities and communicate effectively with each other regarding their expectations of custodial staff. Custodial functions are essential to the physical plant's operation. Effective administration of these functions requires doing the following:

- Ensuring that facilities are safe, clean, orderly, and attractive.

- Creating educational environments that are well maintained, enhance learning, reflect the value of public education and preserve capital investments.

- Ensuring that general housekeeping and other support functions are performed as needed.

- Fostering a sense of professionalism and pride among custodial staff.

Determining the proper number of custodial positions is often difficult. In many cases, staffing levels are based on square footage or cleanable area. As custodial responsibilities and the total amount of cleanable space increase or decrease, an appropriate number of positions should be added or reduced. Although the district may ultimately use a single staffing method or a combination of staffing methods best suited to its needs, its custodial staffing method needs to include variables that help determine the workforce needed to provide an expected level of service.

CASBO has developed a staffing formula to calculate the number of custodians required to maintain school buildings. This formula allocates a person-to-hour ratio for custodial tasks. It is more commonly used in large school districts and is one of the most detailed and comprehensive staffing formula methods educational administrators use.

The formula requires an initial estimate of custodial staff requirements based on the amount of area in different building categories (e.g., permanent school buildings, portables, lockers and showers), and computing an area that is based on a one-hour time period. The total hourly requirements are then divided by eight, indicating the number of employees needed daily.

Effective analysis of the time needed for a daytime custodian takes into account the school site's needs and the available cleaning time. These time standards allot sufficient time to clean all areas at the school site and reflect the cleaning standards in CASBO's custodial handbook. Assigning the custodial staff to tasks not included in the CASBO formula will result in cleaning being postponed or neglected. The recommended custodial staffing is as follows:

- One custodian for every 13 teachers, plus

- One custodian for every 325 students, plus

- One custodian for every 13 rooms, plus

- One custodian for every 18,000 square feet, plus

- One .06 custodial FTE for community use, plus

- One .30 custodial FTE for schools with less than 400 students

The sum of the numbers in the above list is divided by four to indicate the base number of custodians needed.

The CASBO formula provides the suggested number of custodians to clean and maintain a building. FCMAT has used this formula, modified to reflect the current revenue limit deficit, to

calculate the necessary staffing for the district's elementary schools. For the Saugus Union School District, the data for these calculations is as follows:

Elementary Schools

	Building Square Footage	# Rooms	Acreage	Playing Fields	No. of Students	No. of Staff
Bridgeport	68,148	38	6.25	68,063	1067	39
Cedar Creek	47,621	32	8.5	92,565	518	18
Emblem	54,754	38	9.8	106,722	219	7
James Foster	83,853	29	7.7	83,853	657	24
Charles Helmers	62,896	35	4.3	46,287	788	34
Highlands	53,473	32	9.4	102,336	450	18
Mountain View	68,814	43	9.1	99,099	943	40
North Park	62,429	37	5.9	64,251	869	37
Plum Canyon	53,789	33	8.2	89,298	738	27
Rio Vista	53,089	46	9.1	99,099	762	31
Rosedell	56,929	34	9.7	105,851	821	33
Santa Clarita	38,926	31	8.1	88,209	493	28
Skyblue Mesa	48,101	35	9.8	106,722	510	23
Tesoro Del Valle	60,197	27	9.8	106,722	604	23
West Creek	68,230	31	10.9	118,701	710	25
Boquet Canyon	29,604	23	4.2	45,738		
	910,853	544	130.75	1,423,516	10,149	407

FCMAT calculates that the district should have 39.13 FTE custodian positions to be adequately staffed. Even without the reduction in accord with the current revenue limit deficit of 22.272%, the district still has a surplus of 14.87 FTE. These calculations do not include administrative or support facilities' custodial requirements, or those of childcare facilities and programs, which should be considered before any reductions are made.

Transportation

The supervisor of transportation, security, maintenance and operations is responsible for administering the district's contract with Student Transportation of America (STA), which the district has contracted with for fiscal year 2012-13 to provide student transportation. However, the district is developing a bid for a three-to-five-year contract.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider adopting the Florida Department of Education's grounds maintenance staffing formula, as a general guideline for adding or reducing grounds maintenance personnel.

2. When its budget improves, consider adding maintenance workers consistent with the formula above.

3. Adopt the CASBO custodial staffing formula as a general guideline for adding or reducing custodial personnel.

4. Provide professional development to custodial staff.

Information Services and Technology

This review analyzes how technology fits into the district's operations but is not a comprehensive technology review.

Technology Plan

The district's most recent comprehensive technology plan does not provide a clear picture of the district's technology direction. Although there are isolated instances of innovation and some outstanding implementations of technology, the district lacks a shared districtwide vision for the use of technology.

Changing Role for Technology Department

In the past the information services and technology (IST) department was given significant latitude in developing and implementing technology initiatives. Although the department made significant advances using the Student Writing Achievement Through Technology Enhanced Collaboration (SWATTEC) grant, such as placing netbooks into the hands of students and teachers to improve writing skills, it is time to reassess the role of these devices and their use as they relate to the district's overarching goals for academic achievement. It is imperative that the entire district leadership team play a significant role in the direction of instructional technology. With the onset of Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments, technology will play an increasingly significant role in instruction and assessment.

Organizational Structure

The IST department is part of the business services department. This structure may have served the district well in the past; however, because much of the district's focus is on Common Core standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments, it will be critical for the IST department to work closely with the curriculum and instruction department.

There is a lack of coordination between the IST department and other district departments. They often work at cross-purposes or in isolation from each other and therefore do not use resources most effectively.

An example of this lack of coordination is that the curriculum and instruction department executive secretary and the student database technician are responsible for all CALPADS extracts and submissions. This requires a great deal of coordination directly with Aeries' technical support to ensure the correct data is extracted. IST helps with some technical issues at times, but this is a role primarily for the technology department in most districts. While duties related to data demographics and program validation likely will need to be performed by curriculum and instruction staff, it is unusual for these tasks to be assigned to curriculum and instruction.

Technology procurement has no consistent practice for standardization, purchasing and approval. Sites sometimes work directly with IST staff to select hardware, and in some cases, site principals order equipment without approval or oversight, which ultimately makes ongoing support

difficult. The business department and IST do not work together to establish annual published standards for hardware.

Development and Sustainability of Systems

The IST department has also worked closely with other departments in the past to develop database tools to integrate and connect data systems. Some of these tools have facilitated the flow of data from one system to another. These systems have also provided web-based forms that parents and staff can fill out and have provided easy access to create and build lists and reporting tools, and to mail-merge letters. These tools were developed when it was believed that the vendor systems could not provide some of this access and functionality.

However, the district would benefit from reengaging with vendors of its student information and human resources and finance systems to determine what new functionality is available and to ensure that these systems are fully utilized. This is especially true as it relates to the finance and human resources system provided by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. It is essential that data from this system be up to date and to ensure that this system is used fully.

The district uses a 4D database developed in-house to store and manage critical personnel and payroll data. There is no clear indication that this system is synchronized with the county office system, and therefore there is a risk of inaccuracies and duplication of effort in attempts to synchronize the data in two systems. Although the district may benefit from the 4D system's functions and features, this system may not be sustainable. It was developed in-house by staff who know it well, but the district may find it challenging to update code or recreate the system if these staff leave. Another major risk lies in the fact that the 4D system serves as the authoritative source for human resources personnel, and the finance system requires district staff to enter data in both the county office PeopleSoft financial system as well as the 4D system. This can lead to inaccuracies and wasted staff time. Duplicate entry increases the risk of human error and inaccurate data. Determining which data to trust and which system is the most accurate system will be problematic.

Industry standard is for a district to have one comprehensive system that provides human resources, payroll and finance functions. Although the 4D system was developed because of the limitations to the data the county office system can store and report on, the district now runs the risk of inaccuracies in reporting, reconciling budgets, position control budgeting, and general checks and balances over finances.

Communication

There is a lack of clear communication between the IST department and other departments. Some schools call or email for IST recommendations, and others avoid the department and order equipment without oversight or approval. The IST department has operated without clear and consistent coordination with other departments such as curriculum and instruction and the business services department. Some of the department's initiatives have been carried out without thorough review or oversight of the entire organization.

There is no standing technology steering committee that meets regularly to provide district direction, and the district's technology goals and direction are not aligned with its instructional and business goals. With the recent changes in district office administration it is critical that this direction and alignment occur.

The district has undertaken a number of innovative technology initiatives, such as the SWATTEC grant, with positive results in the area of students' computer use. Students in some grades are comfortable using the technology, and a number of teachers and administrators are also supportive of technology's role in instruction. This grant funding has also provided some of the infrastructure to equip some rooms and sites with wireless access.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Under the co-direction of the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and the director of information services and technology, establish regular monthly meetings that include representatives from schools sites as well as administrators from the educational services division to review direct curriculum needs and how technology best meets these needs.

   Strive to make technology an integrated part of instructional delivery. The committee should adopt consistent goals and communication methods, and the district should adhere to them to ensure that all staff are aware of policies and procedures for software selection, installation and support.

2. After establishing clear and collaborative goals for the use of technology in instruction, provide a consistent and regular method for communicating these goals and timelines with district staff. This can be done by using email, newsletters, in-person training, and regular updates to information on the district's website.

3. Provide a means for users to provide feedback to the technology committee. This can be done through online surveys, email and other methods.

4. Move the IST department under the direct supervision of the curriculum and instruction department.

5. Hold regular meetings to ensure that the curriculum and instruction department works with the IST department to collaboratively develop goals and a consistent means of communication with the district's teachers and staff.

6. Assign the IST department to manage the technical aspects of the Aeries application.

7. Ensure that the IST department works directly with business staff to establish hardware standards that are posted on the district's website, and require the IST department to approve all technology purchases.

In-House Software

During the last 15 years the district has developed a number of custom software programs that have become critical to its day-to-day operations. This development used relatively standard tools, and these systems are currently maintained and in some cases directly integrated with other systems provided by vendors. Although custom-developed software systems have some benefits, they also have inherent risks. These systems can meet local needs such as reporting, list generation, performance and ease of use; however, they may not integrate fully with other systems, which can result in duplicate data entry, inaccuracy of data, and confusing workflows. Another risk is that maintenance, ongoing development and support of these systems depends entirely on local staff. If the documentation for these systems is not continually updated and available, or if staff are not available, the district would have considerable difficulty updating or re-engineering systems.

Inaccuracy is less of a concern with the district's iSchool Java database tool because it uses the Aeries student information system for demographic data. There are many new features and advancements in Aeries that will enable the district to unify and simplify systems. It is critical that the technology department play a greater role in working directly with vendors to support these systems and ensure that new features and functions are considered and fully implemented, and to coordinate professional development with other departments.

The Aeries student information system is the district authoritative source for student demographic, programmatic, attendance and grading system. IST has taken a less than active role in embracing this system, and concerns were voiced about the software design, interface and architecture.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Ensure that the IST department and representatives from the curriculum and instruction and/or business services departments work directly with Eagle Software to assess and review the Aeries student information system and conduct an updated analysis to determine where Aeries can provide functionality that exists in iSchool. Where possible, begin to implement some of these functionalities in Aeries. In cases in which this is not possible, determine exactly what iSchool offers and be sure that there are clear documents and procedures to maintain and update this tool both internally and externally in case district staff are unavailable.

2. Ensure that the IST department works directly with the business services department to re-evaluate the county office-provided PeopleSoft financial, human resources and payroll system. Invite staff from the county office to meet with district staff to review the system. Determine what functionalities the PeopleSoft system has and which functions the district can begin to migrate away from the 4D system.

   If it is determined that PeopleSoft is not capable of meeting the district's needs, begin to research and review systems that can provide true enterprise level functionality and performance.

Additional Technology Systems and Processes

Telephone System

The IST department designed, implemented and supports the district's 3Com Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system. This system requires consistently adequate bandwidth. Multiple staff reported experiencing static, poor quality and inconsistent service when using the telephone system. Staff indicated that the system had been recently upgraded but that this had not resolved the complaints about quality of service.

Given the size of the district's IST department staff and the amount of time available, it would be a best practice to move toward a hosted telephone solution. The district will qualify for a hosted VoIP as a priority one E-Rate service. This frees technology staff from telephone management and support, increases quality of service, allows for greater flexibility and reduces capital expenditures. Some of the existing handsets may be re-purposed, but the business services department will need to budget for the ongoing expense of a hosted VoIP solution.

Productivity Software

Numerous types and versions of productivity software are in use throughout the district including Google Docs; Microsoft Office 2003, 2007, 2010; and OpenOffice. There have been difficulties with document compatibility that could be resolved by standardization of software products.

The district has recently adopted Google as its email system and has begun providing training sessions, but not all employees have yet adhered to or supported this change.

Wireless Infrastructure

The district's wireless infrastructure is not adequate to support new instructional initiatives such as Common Core State Standards or Smarter Balanced Assessments. Numerous staff reported spotty coverage in different locations through the school campuses. Effective enterprise level wireless connectivity would resolve these issues and allow each user to connect three to four devices. During the last two years many districts have written effective RFPs for wireless coverage on their campuses, and a number of vendors are providing enterprise managed solutions that provide excellent coverage.

E-Rate Funding

The district has not maximized E-Rate funding for wide area network connectivity. The district has entered into a long-term contract with Time Warner for fiber connectivity between the schools and the district office. The network speeds and service between schools and the district office range from three to five MB per circuit. During the last four years the district has received $327,101 in funding from the E-rate program. However, further analysis is needed to determine how much of this funding was fully utilized. The district also needs to determine if California Teleconnect Funds (CTF) were applied for and received.

Servers

The district has an average of three servers at each school site, for a total of approximately 42 servers at 14 different sites. Although these servers run the Linux operating system and thus require fewer updates and less patching than some other operating systems, they are vulnerable to

hardware and other equipment failures, and because they must all be backed up office staff typically rotate backup tapes .

Having 42 physical servers that regularly need maintenance, repair and backup does not maximize efficiency. Centralizing these servers at the district's data center could greatly reduce the staff time needed to visit sites and maintain the servers. For this process to be successful it is imperative that bandwidth and infrastructure be reliable and that thorough testing be done to ensure that there is no significant loss in performance.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Contract with a qualified E-Rate consulting firm such as Infinity Communications or California School Management to ensure that it is fully using its E-Rate funding for all priority one services. Give first priority to working with an E-Rate consultant to review the fiber-optic connectivity contract with Time Warner. Make a concerted effort to increase bandwidth between the school sites and the district office from 5 megabits (Mb) per second per site to a minimum of 20 Mb from sites to the district office, with the goal of increasing to 100 Mb over the next few years.

2. Ensure that the IST department works with an E-Rate consultant to explore hosted telephone solutions, regardless of whether increased bandwidth or updated hardware would resolve current telephone issues.

3. Ensure that the IST department begins planning to consolidate and centralize servers once bandwidth has increased to 20Mb per second at each site and once it ensures that its bandwidth is reliable and has been tested to prevent loss of performance.

4. Invest in wireless infrastructure for classroom and school campus access. The district should develop an RFP for enterprise level wireless connectivity sufficient to accommodate three to four devices per user.

5. Standardize productivity software to resolve document compatibility issues.

Personnel Services Department

At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork the assistant superintendent of personnel services was leaving the district. Filling this assistant superintendent position will be the key to modifying and reorganizing the functions of the personnel services department and working efficiently with the superintendent's cabinet. Workloads and tasks within the department need to be analyzed and prioritized, and the new assistant superintendent of personnel services will need to make this a priority.

In addition to the assistant superintendent position, the personnel services department includes a full-time director, a full-time executive secretary, a six-hour-per-day certificated personnel technician, a full-time classified personnel technician and a full-time substitute employee coordinator. One classified personnel position is vacant because of budget constraints.

The personnel services department staff are experienced and have developed their own computer programs to collect data and maintain vital information. However, they are overloaded with repetitive tasks that could be performed more efficiently using an integrated computer software system.

In addition, because of districtwide budget reductions that have reduced teaching staff, the personnel services department spends a significant amount of time monitoring and arranging substitute teaching assignments. The demands and needs of special education have also increased the department's workload and responsibilities.

The personnel services department uses a variety of software programs and systems to maintain its employee database. Many of the programs were created by personnel services staff, and significant effort is required to maintain them and to share data with business staff. The workload of many of the department's classified employees is at or near capacity. The repetition of tasks and the lack of a properly functioning human resource computer software program makes tasks time-consuming and demanding. The lack of regular meetings with other departments adds to the repetitive, time-consuming environment. There is no evidence of ongoing communication among departments, mutual problem solving, or access to common data to help streamline workloads and improve efficiency.

The director position's tasks are primarily analytical, and personnel data is updated regularly on an independent software system. Most of the director's time is spent creating and maintaining Excel spreadsheets. The data in these spreadsheets is independent of other data used in the district office.

Director of personnel positions are not common in districts of the size and composition of Saugus Union School District, and it could benefit the district to reevaluate its need for this position. Analytical tasks could be redistributed to clerical staff, especially if the district implements an integrated computer application. The estimated annual savings from eliminating this position's salary and district-paid statutory and health and welfare benefits would be $151,811. This savings could be used to fund a part-time classified position to provide coverage for the receptionist and ensure that the department is sufficiently staffed to process requests for special education substitutes.

During fieldwork, FCMAT noted that a large amount of time was spent assigning, arranging, and keeping records of substitutes, including teachers who have been laid off and have a legal right to substitute, and coverage for classified special education employees. Districts statewide face similar issues but minimize the amount of labor required by using automated telephone systems and commercially available software that maintains records and arranges the needed coverage. Expanding the use of the current automated software to monitor, organize and track the use of substitute teachers and classified special education substitutes would enable the department's clerical staff to focus on other tasks.

There is a lack of cross-training between staff who perform tasks related to certificated personnel and those who perform tasks related to classified personnel. This creates problems in meeting deadlines. A systematic cross-training program is needed so that staff can assist each other when certain projects take priority and deadlines are approaching.

Many classified staff have the perception that the salary schedule is not equitable. People with the same job titles are paid different amounts depending on the department in which they work. Standardizing job descriptions and salary ranges across departments would reduce the potential for pay inequity.

The district lacks a procedure for retrieving keys, cell phones, ID badges and other district-issued items when an employee separates from the district. Board policy is also lacking in this area. Having these procedures and a board policy would help protect the district from fraud and abuse.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider eliminating the director of personnel position.

2. Expand its use of automated software commonly used by many districts to monitor, organize and track the use of substitute teachers and substitute classified special education staff to enable existing personnel services clerical staff to focus on other tasks.

3. Immediately fill the position of assistant superintendent of personnel services, with the goal of having this position modify and reorganize the department's functions.

4. Create a part-time classified position that works in conjunction with the receptionist so that adequate coverage is ensured and so that the personnel services department can process requests for special education substitutes in a timely manner.

5. Start a systematic process to cross-train department staff to assist each other when certain projects take priority and deadlines are approaching.

6. Establish regularly scheduled meetings between the personnel services staff and the business services department to share common information and data and to develop strategies and planning in the areas of payroll and position control.

7. Evaluate pay equity to ensure that positions with similar titles and responsibilities are paid the same regardless of the department in which they are working. Consider using funding from the restructuring of the director position to accomplish this.

8. Establish board policy and administrative regulation for retrieving keys, cellphones, ID badges and other district-issued items when an employee separates from the district.

Instructional Services Division

The instructional services division consists of the curriculum and instruction, categorical, childcare/preschool, and student support departments. Special education services are included in the student support services department. The district's 2012-13 goals for student learning and achievement are as follows:

1) Provide teacher training and monitor all classrooms for Brain Based Direct Instruction (BBDI)

2) Provide administrator training and coaching for Systematic English Language Development (SELD) implementation

3) Provide A Developmental English Proficiency Test (ADEPT) training for teachers with English Learner students

4) Introduce Common Core Standards

5) Implement School Innovations and Advocacy (SIA) committee goals

6) Present curriculum, instructional, and academic program updates to the board of trustees

The division's long-range plan for implementing the Common Core State Standards is for the 2012-13 through 2014-15 school years.

The instructional services division is led by an assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and three directors are responsible for the categorical, childcare/preschool, and student support services departments.

The district's website states that the district bases instruction on standards and benchmarks aligned with the California state standards. With those standards as the guidelines, the district states that it uses "research-based practices to implement a challenging, integrated core curriculum that meets the differentiated needs of all students." The standards for each grade level are included on the website in the *Parent Student Handbook*, which is provided in English and Spanish.

Instructional Initiatives

The assistant superintendent described the instructional services division as open to change, noting that some circumstances such as the district's program improvement status (although none of the individual schools are in program improvement status), the statewide fiscal crisis, the SIA report, and the state adoption of the California Common Core State Standards (CCCSS) have created the need for changes in curriculum and instruction.

The assistant superintendent explained that the district's culture has changed in response to these challenges. In the past, the district's instructional approach was to expose staff to new ideas and approaches; staff had the option of implementing ideas if they thought they were appropriate. During fieldwork, staff indicated that in the past the district did not involve itself directly in the classroom by mandating particular curricula or instructional approaches. In contrast, the current approach is to train principals, assistant principals, program coordinators and teachers in the direct instruction concepts and skills and expect that these instructional approaches will be implemented in all classrooms.

Staff indicated that the previous superintendent structured the district for site-based management, and as a result district personnel were not involved in the schools' curriculum and instruction. Similarly, principals, though not prevented from becoming instructional leaders, were not directed to become involved in classroom instruction or required to lead their schools' instructional efforts. As a result, principals were more focused on plant management, discipline and school ambassador functions.

In contrast, the current superintendent and assistant superintendent of instruction require the division's directors to help principals analyze data and determine how to best improve students' learning. Most principals have become adept at data analysis and know which classroom instruction and curriculum will be most effective for their students. Staff noted that some principals need assistance in guiding teachers to implement the district's initiatives.

To focus on BBDI, the district recently completed a series of two-day trainings for teachers and has created Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for principals, assistant principals and others assigned to coach and monitor the implementation of BBDI. At the time of fieldwork, the district had chosen to focus on implementing direct instruction in 2012-13 and had created a committee that was receiving in-depth training on CCCSS and developing plans to begin implementing it in fall 2013.

Staff are aware of the district's focus on BBDI, and schools are making steady progress toward full implementation of this initiative. Staff noted that site administrators seem to recognize the need for a more focused, centralized instructional approach and are performing regular classroom observation walk-throughs; approximately 60% of the principals are conducting walk-throughs at least once every week. As with all initiatives, staff commented there have been both some early adopters and some resistance to change.

Instructional Technology

The instructional services division uses a variety of software programs to support its work and initiatives, including Pearson, DataDirector, Aeries, Follett Destiny Library Manager, PeopleSoft, Trados, EZ-Care2, CenterTrack, and special education information system (SEIS). Excel spreadsheets are also used, as are some district-developed programs and state-required systems such as the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS).

During FCMAT's fieldwork, staff expressed concerns about the level of cooperation and support they receive from the IST department. Although some staff members praised a particular individual in the IST department, they also indicated that IST department staff frequently decline requests for assistance. This lack of support for systems designed to support and improve student learning affects instructional services personnel, school staff, and ultimately students' learning.

The Pearson language arts software has a large online component for teachers' use. The technology department has not been helpful when teachers have difficulties accessing the online resources. This lack of collaboration has impeded full implementation of the program.

DataDirector is a web-based data and assessment management system that allows districts to view, disaggregate and analyze student assessment data. Most districts that use DataDirector have linked it to their student database system so that student information can be updated easily and accurately. The district's IST department has not been willing to do the work necessary to link the student database system to DataDirector, so the secretary to the assistant superintendent manually extracts data from the student database and imports it into DataDirector so the system can be used effectively.

CALPADS is a state system that maintains data for state and federal reporting. The state requires that districts transmit updated data to CALPADS annually. The district uses the Aeries student information system, which is designed to work with the CALPADS system. However, the IST department has not regularly updated Aeries. To compensate for this, additional staff have been hired in the instructional division so the district can comply with the state's mandatory reporting requirements.

Trados is translation software that has translation memory and terminology management capabilities.

EZ-Care2 is a childcare center management system that the childcare/preschool department uses to manage its billing, accounting and employee work schedules. As the sites collect and generate receipts for money, the fiscal department posts entries and follows up on accounts that are in arrears. The childcare/preschool department also uses CenterTrack software to manage state-mandated reports and ensure families' and children's eligibility for programs.

The special education department uses the SEIS to manage information on students with disabilities, including Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), reports and assessment results.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

The job description for the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction position states that this position is responsible for all aspects of the office's operations and procedures and those subordinate to it. Responsibilities include providing leadership in developing and improving educational programs, assisting principals in the supervision of instruction, and implementing quality instruction in all classrooms. The job description is dated February 1990. The assistant superintendent has worked in the district for 17 years and has been in this position for approximately one and one-half years

The assistant superintendent is responsible for leading the implementation of districtwide direct instruction, CCCSS, transitional kindergarten, and for directing the work of the categorical programs, childcare/preschool, and student support services departments.

Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

The position of secretary to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction is classified as confidential. The job description defines the position as performing confidential and clerical work, including complex instruction and curriculum functions that require independent judgment and discretion. Responsibilities in direct support of the assistant superintendent include keeping the assistant superintendent's calendar, preparing correspondence, and submitting receipts and accounting for the district credit card expenditures this employee and the assistant superintendent make.

The secretary indicated that previous experience working at the schools gave her a good understanding of the workflow and unique demands at school sites. It also enabled her to develop an understanding of the district's systems and to build a network of resources among school site personnel.

The secretary's work has become more computer- and web-based, and this individual often helps others in the department perform their assignments on computers; creates flyers, business cards and posters and assists others with doing the same; and copies CDs and DVDs.

As the coordinator for all district testing, including California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR), the secretary orders materials, works with the California Department of Education (CDE), and organizes training meetings for the district's testing coordinators. This position also serves as the district's liaison with Aeries, the student information system, and helps ensure that student data is accurate when it is uploaded to the state system and that it complies with all state requirements.

The secretary is also responsible for all issues with machines in the instructional department, dealing with upset parents, coordinating student and staff recognition events, maintaining the division's website, and creating online surveys for the assistant superintendent and the superintendent.

The job description for this position does not include work with negotiations or labor relations, nor did the secretary indicate that these are part of her responsibilities. Government Code 3540 defines a confidential employee as follows:

> … an employee who is required to develop or present management positions with respect to employer-employee relations or whose duties normally require access to confidential information that is used to contribute significantly to the development of management positions.

The Public Employee Relations Board's (PERB) Decision No. 736 states:

> Confidential status is limited to (1) those employees who assist and act in a confidential capacity to persons who formulate, determine and effectuate management policies in the field of labor relations.

Because this position lacks assignments in the area of negotiations or labor relations, it does not appear that it is appropriately classified as confidential. However, it seems likely that during times of negotiations the secretary would handle confidential employer-employee relations. It would be appropriate to update the job description to reflect job responsibilities that involve negotiations and labor relations duties if these exist.

Student Database Technician

The job description for this position states that the technician will evaluate, design, implement, maintain and modify advanced technological systems used to manage and maintain student information. The board approved this position in June 2012, and the technician had been in this position for three months at the time of FCMAT's fieldwork but had worked in the district for 13 years in a variety of school site positions.

The technician indicated that this position has three main responsibilities. The first is to act as liaison between the district and the California Department of Education for CALPADS, ensuring that the data provided for CALPADS is error-free. The employee indicated that this project needs constant attention and that she downloads data from Aeries, reviews and corrects the data, and then uploads the data to CALPADS.

The position's second major responsibility is coordinating the distribution and scoring of the quarterly benchmark tests.

The technician's third major responsibility includes other duties as requested by the assistant superintendent. These often include data analysis such as determining how many kindergarten students who were pre-enrolled actually entered kindergarten, how many classes did not take the fall benchmarks, and extracting information from CALPADS.

The technician indicated that she works closely with several people in a variety of departments including one of the technicians in the IST department, the secretary to the assistant superintendent, the school site office managers, and the secretaries in the student support services department. As the person responsible for working with DataDirector, this individual provides technical support to teachers and principals when they have difficulty working with the system or running reports.

Reprographics Technician

The reprographics technician is responsible for operating and maintaining networked high-speed electronic duplicating equipment, producing copies from scanned input, and selecting print options consistent with job requirements. This position was reduced from full-time to 32 hours per week at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year; the technician works Tuesday through Friday.

The technician does all the printing for the school sites and departments. One of the biggest tasks is printing the benchmark tests quarterly. This employee indicated that the workload varies and when it is heavy he often works through lunch or stays late to complete jobs.

The technician is also responsible for reproducing approximately 100 forms as needed and keeping the district's math journals, dictionaries and decodable books in stock. The duplicating equipment performs many jobs automatically, but several jobs, such as cutting business cards and gluing NCR tablets, must be performed manually.

Once a job is complete, the technician sends the billing documents to the secretary to the assistant superintendent, who does the billing by hand because the district has no technology for this task.

The district eliminated its graphic artist position for the 2012-13 school year. The instructional department has accommodated this change by having secretaries use software to create forms, flyers and business cards, and reproduce CDs, DVDs and other digital materials. The reproduction of CDs, DVDs and other digital materials could be included in the technician's responsibilities. In addition, if the district's business cards are standardized, the printing and finishing of the cards could be added to the technician's responsibilities.

Categorical Programs

Director of Categorical Programs

The job description indicates that the director of categorical programs' main responsibilities are to assist schools in planning and implementing categorical programs and grants, monitor project budgets for compliance and fiscal integrity, and monitor all programs for effectiveness. Key duties include coordinating professional development opportunities for personnel and providing leadership for districtwide committees.

The director indicated that she oversees all state and federal programs, including Title I, Title II, and Title III funds, and works with safe and drug-free school programs, and coordinates the Economic Impact Aid-Limited English Proficient (EIA-LEP) and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs.

The director is also responsible for the Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) compliance process, which occurs every two years and requires an online submission, after which monitoring agencies may visit the district to verify the information. The director works regularly with principals to

ensure that schools are in compliance with state and federal regulations; conducts trainings upon request for school site councils (SSCs); and ensures that the SSCs are developed legally and hold regular meetings.

The director is also responsible for the district's English learner (EL) program, which serves approximately 1300 students, and works with the district English language advisory committee (ELAC) and helps school sites form their ELACs. Two of the sites do not have legally formed ELACs because they struggle with recruiting the required number of parents.

The director coordinates professional development in the areas of safe and drug-free schools, GATE, and English language development (ELD). To coordinate these efforts, she meets with district committees focused on these areas and determines what professional development is needed either districtwide or at individual sites. The director attends all the CCCSS committee meetings and indicated that the committee includes EL coordinators.

One districtwide initiative is the training for all teachers on systematic ELD. An outside consultant conducted several three-day training sessions over five years. This initiative was completed last year. The director attended all but two days of the sessions and stated that she regularly attends professional development to ensure that the district's message about instructional work is clear.

As a follow-up to this initiative, six teachers were identified to be EL content experts, received in-depth training during the summer of 2012, and can now train other teachers in systematic ELD. The district has implemented this initiative on a small scale to ensure fidelity.

The EL students' California English Language Development Test (CELDT) proficiencies are entered into DataDirector, and the director analyzes the data to see which students have increased their English proficiency and which have not changed their proficiency level in two years. She uses this data to plan instructional programs and develop summer programs for EL students.

Administrative Clerk

The job description for this position states that it is the "highest class of the general clerical classification" and that its duties require a degree of independent judgment and responsibility.

This employee and her director noted that this position requires a significant amount of learning and she has not yet assumed all of the position's responsibilities. Among other duties, the administrative clerk is responsible for processing purchase orders and the charges she and the director make on their district credit cards. The director anticipates training the clerk to use DataDirector so that she can be more involved in data analysis and processing.

Bilingual Interpreter/Translator and Administrative Clerk

This position is 70% interpreter/translator and 30% administrative clerk. The job description defines translators as persons who deal with written text, and interpreters as those who work with live speech. The majority of the work is translating documents. The administrative clerk portion of the position focuses on supporting EL students' learning.

Because some documents, such as legal documents for a Williams complaint, take longer than others, the translator reviews each translation request and informs the requestor when the translation will be ready.

The translator uses Trados translation and terminology software to create a rough translation, then uses a variety of resources to ensure that the document is translated accurately and that the vocabulary is consistent with that used by the CDE and large school districts such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The translator indicated that because there are many variations of Spanish she wants to ensure that she has all available translation options.

In addition to the translator, which is a district position, many schools have an employee on site who has been certified to translate documents and who receives a monthly stipend to do so. The translator has developed a glossary of terms for all of the district's translators to use, and often reviews the site documents, makes corrections, and alerts sites when documents have been mistranslated.

This employee also performs a variety of interpretation services including interpretation in district ELAC meetings, parent meetings hosted by the district, and meetings with staff, and is the preferred contact when employees or community members need Spanish interpretation services.

Childcare and Preschool Department

Childcare and preschool programs are available at all 15 school sites, and a full day preschool program is located on its own campus. These programs are overseen by a director who is supported by a program facilitator and a secretary. The programs serve 1,935 students and have an annual budget of $5.1 million.

These programs are considered enterprise-funded because they generate income from registration fees and tuition, and receive funds from a variety of outside sources such as the CDE's Child Development Division. The district has two state-funded preschools.

Each site's childcare program is staffed by a site supervisor, an assistant site supervisor, and activity leaders. The childcare programs have a total of 132 employees, including 15 site supervisors, 14 assistant site supervisors, and 103 activity leaders.

The supervisor at each school site is responsible for overseeing the preschool program as well as childcare for school-age students. The assistant supervisors work with groups of students part of the time and support the site supervisors part of the time. Both the site supervisors and assistant supervisors are on the director's leadership team, resolve disciplinary issues, and work with parents if they have concerns. The department has a detailed, up to date, policies and procedures manual for site supervisors.

Preschool Instruction

The district's 24 preschool instructors are licensed to provide early childhood education, and this program's 25 instructional assistants have associate teacher permits. The director works with the director of student support services to provide a preschool inclusion program for students with disabilities. The site supervisors evaluate the preschool teachers.

The director has implemented a preschool program that is developmentally appropriate and aligned with the district's BBDI initiative. For example, the director selected Opening the World of Learning (OWL) as the preschool language arts program because it is the companion to the district-adopted Pearson language arts program. The director works with the director of categorical programs to develop programs that serve EL preschool students, and looks for programs that parallel district-adopted initiatives.

To ensure a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten, the director has worked with and conducted inservices for kindergarten teachers to help them understand the preschool program and what to expect from its students. She has also implemented matriculation meetings between preschool and kindergarten teachers so they can share expectations and accomplishments.

The preschool program uses the Desired Result Developmental Profile (DRDP), an assessment instrument available through the CDE, to assess students' progress. Preschool students have recently been included in DataDirector so that the DRDP results can be included in the district's database. The director would like to teach the preschool teachers how to use data to drive instruction and believes DataDirector will facilitate this.

Although the childcare and preschool department is part of the district, there is some distinction between the department and the rest of the district's curriculum and instruction initiatives because of the different funding sources. The director's initiative and attention to coordinating the department's programs with those of the district mitigates this distinction. However, the district would benefit from determining how best to support the department's programs and ensure that they are aligned with the district regardless of the individual who leads the department.

Director of Childcare and Preschool Programs

Duties in this position's job description include establishing an effective childcare and preschool organization with clear lines of responsibility; supervising all instructional and recreational components; adhering to program goals and philosophy; and ensuring compliance with health, safety and licensing regulations. The director hires and evaluates all department staff; oversees the program budgets; approves all expenditures; plans and leads professional development for all staff; works with district nurses to develop health care plans for students in the childcare and preschool programs; oversees and maintains licensing files; and ensures compliance for programs provided under contract, such as State Preschool, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), and After School Education and Safety (ASES) program. The district's website lists the director's title as Director, Child Development Programs, which is a different title than is listed on the job description.

Program Facilitator, Childcare and Preschool Programs

The program facilitator's job description indicates that this position's primary purpose is to assist the director in managing the district's childcare and preschool programs. The program facilitator described the primary responsibility as ensuring the quality of the childcare and preschool programs, and estimated that 70% of her time is spent at school sites observing classes and programs to ensure that staff are implementing the curriculum faithfully and that the programs are developmentally appropriate

The facilitator also assists with student enrollment and eligibility for state programs. The department has not yet found a software program that includes the features of both the CenterTrack and EZ-Care programs now in use; however, in January 2013 the department plans to evaluate the NoHo software program as a possible replacement for CenterTrack.

District Office Administrative Secretary

The secretary assigned to the childcare and preschool programs coordinates student trips for summer, fall, winter, and spring breaks; produces mandated reports for a variety of contract programs; schedules and coordinates training for staff, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation

(CPR) and first aid training; coordinates site snack orders; and monitors and reconciles purchases made using district credit cards.

The secretary indicated that coordinating field trips takes a great deal of time. For eight to nine consecutive weeks during the summer she is responsible for ensuring that hundreds of students are transported on field trips.

Reporting responsibilities require the secretary to use a variety of software programs to meet different reporting requirements, including EZ-Care, Aeries, ETO (for reporting to LAUP), and CenterTrack.

To coordinate the site snack orders, the secretary receives a monthly menu from the food services vendor and sends it to the school sites. The sites make their selections and return the forms to the secretary, who compiles the requests and sends them to the vendor. The secretary indicated that it would be possible for the vendor to send the menus directly to the school sites but was not certain whether the vendor would be willing to receive orders directly from the school sites.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Review staff duties performed by more than one employee and ensure that there is only one lead employee for each activity.

2. Establish the work of the information technology department to support the district's instructional initiatives. Consider moving the technology department under the direction of the assistant superintendent of instruction to better accomplish this.

3. Develop a plan for reviewing its many technology programs. Determine which software programs should be retained, and ensure that data can be transferred electronically from one program to another. Develop clear criteria and procedures for adding, deleting, or changing programs.

4. Review and revise the division's job titles and job descriptions to accurately reflect the work required, and ensure that titles are used consistently throughout the organization.

5. Determine whether the secretary to the assistant superintendent of instruction's job duties include those related to labor relations and negotiations. If so, revise this position's job description to include these duties; if not, reclassify the position into the Classified School Employees Association (CSEA) bargaining unit.

6. Reassess the reprographic technician's work and responsibilities, and assign all paper and digital reproduction to this position. Streamline procedures by maximizing technology use.

7. Ensure that the administrative clerk receives training from the finance department and curriculum staff to enable her to learn new duties sooner.

8. Develop systems to ensure that the preschool programs are coordinated with the grades K-6 programs.

9. Encourage the childcare and preschool director to pursue the goal of teaching the preschool teachers how to use data to drive instruction and to use DataDirector to facilitate this.

10. Ensure that the childcare and preschool department coordinates with IST to evaluate the NoHo software program as a possible replacement for CenterTrack.

11. Investigate the availability of technology to streamline both requests for documents and reprographic services and the billing for this work.

12. Consider having the vendor receive snack orders directly from the school sites.

Student Support Services

The district's website indicates that the student support services department is responsible for Early Start (intervention services for infants and toddlers), health issues, IEPs, School Attendance Review Board (SARB), Section 504 issues (named for the federal law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability), special education, and suspensions and expulsions. The department's staff includes a director, a coordinator, two program specialists, 12 psychologists whose combined hours total 10.1 FTE, three adaptive physical education specialists, four occupational therapists, one counselor, four district nurses, a department secretary, an administrative clerk, a clerical assistant, and a district translator and interpreter.

The following table lists the responsibilities of the director, the coordinator and the two program specialists.

Student Support Services Director, Coordinator and Program Specialists' Responsibilities

Director	Coordinator	Program Specialist	Program Specialist - On leave
• Legal issues - due process • *NPS placements and IEPs* • Regional programs - IEPs and placements • *SARB and transfers* • Health and nurses • SELPA directors • Expulsions and suspensions • Child and family interagency	• Regional autism - referral and program management • Preschool program at SC • *Placements at Old Orchard and IEP coverage* • *Low-incidence meetings for SELPA* • Administrative coverage for Mountain View, Santa Clarita and Charles Helmers elementary schools • SELPA directors and community advisory committee (CAC)	• Testing CST/CMA/CAPA • Matriculation/Pre-K transitions • Special education and ELD coordination • Summer school administration/planning • Placements for incoming/new students • Coverage for SDC sites • CAC representative • Bargaining team representative	When the specialist returns, she will assume all duties listed in italics under other positions.

Employees indicated some concern that this department's responses to questions frequently vary from manager to manager. This inconsistency has eroded staff members' trust and caused staff to wonder about the accuracy, appropriateness and consistency of responses. Some staff stated that answers may change depending on how insistent someone is or for the sake of expediency, without consideration of consequences. For example, decisions made at the district need to

adhere to Santa Clarita Valley Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) guidelines and take into account possible effects on its member districts.

District staff sometimes attempt to obtain the answer they desire by calling a number of department staff members rather than accepting the first response they receive. This occurs even though the department administrators indicated that they try to keep one another informed of decisions and rely on the director to make final decisions.

The program specialist has begun developing a special education processes and procedures manual, which should help the department provide consistent responses to questions and concerns. When the manual is in place, procedures and processes should not be changed without deliberation and consultation with key stakeholders. If changes are made, it will be imperative to inform everyone in the department to ensure consistency and accuracy, and to earn and maintain the trust of those who contact the department.

Director of Student Support Services

The director of student support services estimated that she spends 70% of her time on special education issues and 30% on student discipline and attendance.

The job description for this position lists both special education and student services responsibilities. Special education responsibilities include supervising, coordinating, and allocating special education staff, programs, resources and budgets; coordinating implementation of the district's core curriculum with the alternative special education curriculum for students with disabilities; and designing and directing professional development designed to fulfill special education legal requirements and program needs for a variety of audiences. Student services responsibilities include supervising, coordinating and allocating staff, resources and budgets in health services, child welfare and attendance and SARB; implementing student transfers; serving as the liaison for homeless and foster youth; and serving as the 504 coordinator and the Title IX officer for student issues.

The director indicated that she spends most of her time dealing with potential litigation and parent concerns about the services provided for students with disabilities. She has overseen approximately 15 mediations during her tenure as director, and no cases have progressed to due process hearings.

The director indicated that the state's fiscal crisis caused an increase in divorce and homelessness, and the increased stress on families has increased her work in attendance, truancy and managing conflicting court orders regarding student rights.

As students' needs have increased, the director has had less time to plan and implement standard practices. The department does not provide systematic professional development because its professional development budget has been reduced. Instead, the department focuses on reacting to issues, keeping special education costs as low as possible, avoiding litigation, and assisting staff in the field.

Coordinator of Student Support Services

The coordinator has been in this position for four years but has a background in special education so has had to learn a significant amount about student services. The coordinator is assigned to the district's regional autism programs 50% of the time, so special education services take up most of this employee's time; the coordinator handles student services as needed. The coordinator indicated that she mainly provides support and technical assistance to staff, students, and parents;

assists the director in the areas of nursing and attendance; and has worked on legal cases as needed. In addition the coordinator is often the liaison to the SELPA, particularly for services for deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students, orthopedically impaired (OI) students, students with multiple handicaps (MH), and those who are emotionally disturbed (ED). The coordinator also attends IEP meetings when a student advocate is part of the team and when staff believe that they may need her expertise to bring the meeting to a successful conclusion.

Special Education Program Specialist

The district has two program specialists, one of whom is on leave. The job description for this position divides its responsibilities into four major categories: pupil and staff support; consultation; staff development; and other. Main responsibilities include participating in the development of individual family services plans and IEPs; acting as a resource, liaison and/or support for students, teachers, and parents; consulting with staff on the selection and use of assessment instruments, innovative instructional strategies and legal requirements; implementing professional development activities based on staff needs; and serving as a liaison to agencies such as the California Children's Services.

The specialist supports eight schools, four of which have special day classes (SDCs). The specialist attends IEP meetings; collaborates with administrators and teaching staff on student issues including curriculum, student behavior, and legal issues; communicates with advocates, outside agencies and parents about IEP issues and concerns; and mediates IEP resolution meetings.

The specialist is also responsible for the matriculation meetings for students leaving preschool to enter kindergarten, for students leaving the district to enter William S. Hart Union High School District, and for all SDC placements.

The specialist also serves as the special education testing coordinator for STAR testing; collaborates with the director of categorical programs when a student needs an ELD component in his or her IEP; and is responsible for the extended school year program (ESY), which is a mandatory component of special education.

The industry standard is to provide one program specialist for every 650 students with disabilities. The district has 1,258 students who receive special education services and 124 with pending evaluations. Thus the program is adequately staffed, but the responsibilities to be assigned to the second program specialist when that individual returns to work do not appear sufficient to require a full-time assignment.

Secretary to Director of Student Support Services

The secretary has been in this position for 19 years. With the economic downturn, the department's support positions have been reduced from four to three: the secretary, a translator and interpreter who assists with clerical assignments as time allows, and an administrative clerk.

The secretary is responsible for many reports and assignments, including maintaining child abuse records, Medi-Cal reports, civil rights data collection, health reports, and SELPA personnel data reports. She is also responsible for adding students and staff to the SEIS and helping staff use the system.

As with other directors' secretaries, this position is responsible for communicating with staff, parents and the public, maintaining administrators' and clerical staff members' calendars, budget maintenance, leave accounts, and department purchases, including those made using district

credit cards. The secretary also coordinates and monitors training and professional development for the department and special education staff.

District Office Administrative Clerk

The clerk has been in this position for approximately one year, having previously worked at one of the school sites. This position's main responsibilities include student transfers, including inter and intradistrict transfers; transportation of students with disabilities; ensuring the accuracy of the SEIS by entering information, reports, and changes and monitoring the system; entry and reconciling of California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) data and uploading the information to Aeries; monitoring desired results development profiles (DRDPs) to ensure they are complete and entered into SEIS; and working with the program specialist on ESY.

Bilingual Interpreter and Translator

The job description for this position was discussed previously. This position's duties related to student support services include translating IEPs; acting as an interpreter for IEP, student study team (SST) and SARB meetings; and working with speech pathologists when they need to rule out a speech impediment in language learners. She telephones parents frequently to explain IEP services, disciplinary processes and counseling services. Her work requires her to be at the school sites several times a week.

The translator is also responsible for compiling annual reports on all student issues, including attendance. The translator also assists office staff with clerical duties as time allows.

Special Education

The special education program offers a continuum of services including resource specialist and special classes for students with learning disabilities, students with moderate to severe disabilities, and those with autism. Students whom the district cannot serve are referred to one of the regional programs offered by the SELPA, which is located at the district's main office so parents can easily access both regional programs and the district's services.

The 124 evaluations pending for special education services may identify students with disabilities in addition to the district's current 1,258 special education students. The district's total enrollment is approximately 10,200, thus 11.9% of its students currently receive special education services.

In May 2011, the district contracted with School Innovations and Advocacy (SIA) to review its special education program. The SIA report indicated that in 2010, a total of 1,088 of the district's students, or 11.5%, were receiving special services. During FCMAT's fieldwork, district staff indicated that parents like to bring their children with disabilities to the district because it has more options for students and resources for parents.

The SIA report's most significant recommendations were as follows:

- Address community relations and/or perceptions of the program.

- Assume direct administration for regional programs.

- Ensure that all teacher generated referrals to special education, including preschool and speech only, are processed through Student Study Teams (SSTs). Emphasize consistent maximum use of the SST process.

- Review and revise as necessary the criteria for the designation of one-to-one support for students.

- Consider a process for reducing the number of instructional assistant positions.

- Review and update the board policy for transporting SWD.

- Use an updated Inventory of Services and Supports (ISS) to place students in the Least Restrictive Environments (LREs). Establish procedures that encourage increased collaboration between general education and special education teachers and inclusion of SWD.

- Analyze high incidence disability categories to determine factors influencing ethnic disparity.

- Update the board policy for Response to Intervention (RtI) and implement RtI consistently across all district schools.

Instructional Program

The coordinator of student support services and program specialist serve as instructional resources and support teachers, including helping teachers access the core curriculum and deconstruct the learning standards. To ensure that the curriculum students with disabilities receive aligns with the district's core curriculum and instructional initiatives, the coordinator and specialist have attended the district's CCCSS trainings. They work to ensure that teachers of students with disabilities understand that CCCSS is applicable to individual accommodations and must be accessible to these students, and they help teachers analyze student data and use the information to inform instruction.

Special Education Instructional Assistants

The district has 130 special education instructional assistants, at a cost of approximately $33,690 annually for each six-hour-per-day employee. Approximately 30% of instructional assistants work as 1-to-1 assistants; the remaining 70% work as either health care assistants or assistants in the district's three classrooms for students with moderate to severe disabilities. There is some antici-pation in the special education department that as the district receives more students with severe disabilities, the need for additional instructional assistants will increase.

In the past, the student support services department hired instructional assistants quickly in response to services written into IEPs. At the beginning of the 2012-13 school year, hiring was moved to the human resources (HR) department in part because student support services depart-ment staffing was reduced by one secretary position. Staff expressed concern that this change has resulted in some hiring not being done quickly enough to provide the services identified on students' IEPs, that the HR staff do not know the students' needs yet are assigning staff to indi-vidual students, and that the hiring process still takes a significant amount of the student support services staff's time. However, the process has improved position control because personnel requisitions must be approved in advance by the fiscal department. At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork, the assistant superintendent of instruction had asked student support services staff to track the number of requisitions they process each week and the time spent on this task.

In the past, students were assigned 1-to-1 assistants who sometimes were with the students throughout their educational experience in the district. To better support students' indepen-dence, the district has tried assigning instructional assistants as classrooms assistants so they can provide individual assistance as needed while supporting instruction. In some cases this has

created the perception that the assistants are extra help for teachers, so the district is now piloting a program at three schools that assigns instructional assistants to the resource specialist program (RSP) teachers, who then assign them to the students as needed. When students do not need individual assistance, the instructional assistants are assigned to provide instructional assistance in classrooms.

Response to Intervention

Several of the SIA's report's recommendations mention developing a systemic approach to meet students' needs without designating them as students with disabilities. Staff indicated that although it would be good to have response to intervention (RtI) in every school, this has not been a priority. Efforts to include students with disabilities in general education classrooms have been resisted by some teachers who question the students' placements in their classrooms. To effectively implement RtI, the district will need to continue to provide a systematic districtwide focus on training administrators and teachers in the process and its benefits for students, and continue to implement the plan. Having these elements in place would ultimately provide more opportunities for students with disabilities to receive educational services in the appropriate LRE, and reduce special education costs.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Ensure that the director of student support services plans and implements standard practices, including systematic professional development.

2. Set a target date for completing the special education processes and procedures manual. After the manual is completed, ensure that all district employees use it consistently.

3. Analyze the process for hiring instructional assistants to determine ways to increase efficiency while maintaining position control. Use data from the task review requested by the assistant superintendent to assist in this analysis.

4. Continue to implement the districtwide plan for RtI, and provide the necessary support and training to ensure implementation at all school sites.

5. Review the responsibilities assigned to the second program specialist and determine whether additional duties can be assigned.

Staffing Comparison

FCMAT obtained central office staffing data from San Mateo-Foster City, Franklin-McKinley, and Merced City elementary school districts, which have similar enrollment to Saugus Union School District. The districts were selected using a list of similar districts used in the district's collective bargaining process as well as information from Ed-Data.

Although comparative information is useful, it should not be considered the only measure of appropriate staffing levels. School districts are complex and vary widely in demographics and resources. Careful evaluation is recommended because generalizations can be misleading if significant local circumstances are not considered. FCMAT's review took into account the following issues:

- The grade-level configuration (K-8) and the size of the district (student enrollment)
- The fact that all districts compared are revenue limit districts rather than basic aid districts
- The percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals
- Largest ethnic group represented

The table below shows the student enrollment and staffing levels of the comparison districts as reflected in the 2011-12 California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) online reporting application and the data obtained from the comparison districts.

District Office Staffing Comparison Data

District	Superintendent's Office	Educational Services	Business Services*	Personnel Services	Totals
Saugus Union	3	18	49	6	76
Merced City	2	8	68	5	83
San Mateo-Foster City	2	59	33	9	103
Franklin-McKinley	2	29	41	7	79

*Includes maintenance, operations and facilities personnel.

The districts surveyed, including Saugus Union School District, have 76 to 103 FTE district office staff, with an average of 85 FTE. This includes maintenance, operations and transportation department staff regardless of their location. All districts have similarly and appropriately staffed superintendent's offices with 1.0 FTE of clerical assistance; the superintendent's office for Saugus also includes the district receptionist position.

All comparison districts and Saugus Union have an assistant superintendent of instruction or director position as their educational services department head as well as 0.50-1.0 FTE of clerical assistance. Saugus Union had the second smallest human resources staff in the comparison, thus there is no need to eliminate positions from this department other than that of the director.

The comparison districts each employ an assistant superintendent or similar position to lead their educational services department; however, some districts split student services from educational services and employ an assistant superintendent for each function. Those with one assistant superintendent for all student and educational services have directors to support the assistant superintendent.

Business services departments in the comparison districts have an assistant superintendent as their department head as well as administrative assistant and/or secretarial, and director positions. One district has an associate superintendent who is responsible for both business and personnel and is supported by directors in business and operations. Saugus Union's fiscal department has more staff than two of the three comparison districts. Two of the comparison districts each have 7.0 FTE classified staff positions and one has 9.0, while Saugus Union has 9.15 FTE. Each of the comparable districts has 2.0 to 3.0 FTE payroll positions, whereas Saugus Union has four such positions. In all districts except Merced City Elementary the payroll department is responsible for employee benefits. None of the three comparison districts have a district attendance technician position comparable to that in Saugus Union.

Fiscal Services Staffing Comparison Data

District	Director of Fiscal Services/ Supervisor of Accounting	Accounts Payable	Accounts Receivable*	Budget/ Accountant	Payroll	Attendance	Totals
Saugus Union	1.0	1.75	0.4	1.0	4.0**	1.0	9.15
Merced City	2.0	2.0	1.0		2.0*		7.0
San Mateo-Foster City	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	3.0		9.0
Franklin-McKinley	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0		7.0

*In Saugus USD the title of the position that performs this function is accounting/purchasing technician
**Payroll staff in these districts do not perform benefit calculations and reconciliations.

Technology Staffing

The number of technology staff members at the Saugus Union School District is comparable to that of the three comparison districts, which ranges from five to six. A couple of districts have administrative or clerical support that also works the help desk. One district has an additional 1.0 FTE, but that staff member performs tasks related to graphics and other publications. Titles and job responsibilities were also similar to those at the other three districts. Although the position titles may vary from district to district, the roles and responsibilities are fairly close. At three of the four districts, the director is supervised by the assistant superintendent of educational services or curriculum and instruction, and two districts previously had their technology departments under the business department.

While the general structure and positions of the Saugus Union School District information services and technology department are appropriate, the following general recommendations to the existing positions may make the department more cohesive and effective in serving district needs.

- The director should work directly with the vendors of systems already in production in the district. Efforts should be coordinated with vendors to ensure the district takes full advantage of the software's existing features. This position should focus less on software coding and support of VoIP and assume more of a leadership role, with team collaboration with curriculum and instruction. The director should also work with the

administrative cabinet to support more instructional technology and prepare the district's infrastructure to support Common Core Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessments.

- The senior systems engineer should also focus less on coding and more on facilitating systems integration, overseeing data systems, e.g. Aeries and LACOE PeopleSoft, and how they interconnect with other systems. This position should coordinate the content management system for Web services and the district Web site. This is a huge district need, and the administration should work closely with IST to clearly communicate the expectations and responsibilities of the Web page and who will be responsible for updating content.

- The information services systems technician works primarily on servers and networking.

- The recently added desktop technician positions were well received by school site staff. Their physical presence at the sites ensures improved communication and coordination with the IST department.

Technology Staffing Comparison

District	Director of Information Technology	Network Specialist/ Administrator	Systems Administrator/ Engineer	Web or Data Specialist	PC/ Phone Repair	Site Technicians	Totals
Saugus Union	1.0	1.0	1.0			2.0	5.0
Merced City	1.0	1.0		1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
San Mateo-Foster City	1.0	1.0	1.0			2.0	5.0
Franklin-McKinley	1.0	1.0			1.0	3.0	6.0

Appendix

Appendix A

Study Agreement

FCMAT
FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT
October 9, 2012

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Saugus Union 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 Saugus Union 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.

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. The final report will be published on the FCMAT website.

2.   **SCOPE OF THE WORK**

A.   Scope and Objectives of the Study

The scope and objectives of this study are to:

1.   The Saugus Union School District requests FCMAT to conduct an organizational and staffing review of all certificated, classified and administrative positions in the district office. The district serves students in grades K-6, with 15 elementary schools and an enrollment of approximately 10,200 students. The following departments will be reviewed: superintendent's office, personnel, educational services including child care and special education, and business services including facilities, fiscal, maintenance and operations, risk management, and technology.

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2.   The Team will provide comparative staffing data for three school districts of similar size and structure and provide recommendations to improve the efficiency that may reduce costs of the district. The district office and department level comparison will include at least three comparable school districts located in the geographical region or may include comparable districts utilized in the collective bargaining process.

3.   The Team will review job descriptions for all department positions, interview staff and make recommendations for staffing improvements or reductions, if any. All recommendations will include estimated and calculated values for any proposed position reductions or enhancements to the organizational structure.

4.   The Team will evaluate the current work flow and distribution of functions between the departments, and provide recommendations for improved efficiency, if any. This component will include reviewing documentation, including policies and procedures, and gathering data regarding current practices, procedures and separation of duties to ensure the proper internal controls. Additionally, the FCMAT team may interview other staff to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered.

B.   <u>Services and Products to be Provided</u>

1.   Orientation Meeting - The Team will conduct an orientation session at the District to brief 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 Meeting - 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 - Electronic copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District administration for review and comment.

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6. Final Report - Electronic copies of the final study report will be delivered to the District administration following completion of the review. Written copies are available by contacting the FCMAT office.

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, CFE, Deputy Executive Officer, Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The study team may also include:

A. Eric D. Smith   FCMAT Fiscal Intervention Specialist, Job Leader
B. Andrea Alvarado   FCMAT Management Analyst
C. Mary Simms   FCMAT Consultant
D. Rita Sierra Beyers   FCMAT Consultant
E. To Be Determined   FCMAT Consultant

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. The cost of independent consultants will be billed at the actual daily rate based on the provisions of Education Code section 84041.

B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals, lodging, etc. 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 $18,000.

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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.   **<u>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT</u>**

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 or proposed organizational charts
4.   Current and two (2) prior years' audit reports
5.   Any documents requested on a supplemental listing. Documents requested on the supplemental listing should be provided to FCMAT in electronic format.
6.   Documents that are only available in hard copy should be scanned by the district and sent to FCMAT in electronic format.
7.   All documents should be provided in advance of field work and any delay in the receipt of the requested documentation may affect the start date of the project. Upon approval of the signed study agreement, access will be provided to FCMAT's SharePoint document repository and all requested documents shall be uploaded by the district.

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 pupils. The District shall take appropriate steps to comply with EC 45125.1(c).

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6. **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

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

Orientation: *to be determined*
Staff Interviews: *to be determined*
Exit Meeting: *to be determined*
Preliminary Report Submitted: *to be determined*
Final Report Submitted: *to be determined*
Board Presentation: *to be determined, if requested*
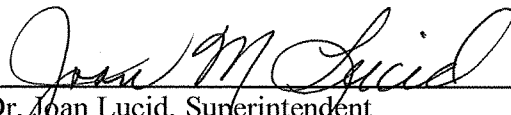*Follow-Up Support:*   *if requested*

7. **CONTACT PERSON**

Name of contact person: Cynthia Shieh, Assistant Superintendent of Business

Telephone: (661) 294-5300   FAX: 661-294-7525

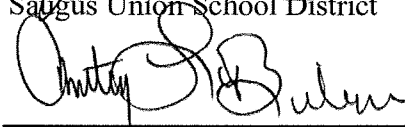E-Mail: Cshieh@saugus.k12.ca.us

APPROVED BY BOARD

OCT 1 6 2012

BY: DM

Dr. Joan Lucid, Superintendent   10-17-12
Saugus Union School District   Date

Anthony L. Bridges, CFE   October 9, 2012
Deputy Executive Officer   Date
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

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