



**CSIS** California School Information Services

# Twin Rivers Unified School District

## Organizational & Staffing Review

February 7, 2013



**Joel D. Montero**  
Chief Executive Officer







February 7, 2013

Joseph Williams, Interim Superintendent  
Twin Rivers Unified School District  
5115 Dudley Blvd.  
McClellan, CA 95652

Dear Interim Superintendent Williams:

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

1. In November of 2007, the voters of Rio Linda Union, North Sacramento and Del Paso Heights elementary school districts and the Grant Union High School District voted to approve the unification of these districts into the Twin Rivers Unified School District. The Twin Rivers Unified School District is requesting that the FCMAT team conduct an organizational and staffing review of the district's central office for all certificated, classified and administrative positions. The review will consist of the following departments: Superintendent's Office, Business Services, Personnel, Educational Services and Facilities.
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.

This report contains FCMAT's findings and recommendations.

**FCMAT**

Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer

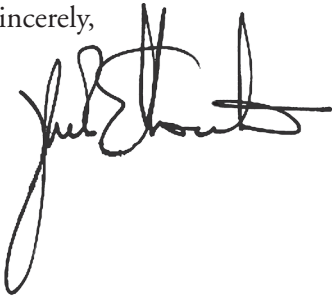
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Administrative Agent: Christine L. Frazier - Office of Kern County Superintendent of Schools

FCMAT appreciates the opportunity to serve the Twin Rivers Unified School District, and extends thanks to all the staff for their assistance during fieldwork.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joel D. Montero', with a large, stylized initial 'J' and a horizontal flourish at the end.

Joel D. Montero  
Chief Executive Officer

# Table of contents

About FCMAT .....	iii
Introduction .....	1
Executive Summary .....	3
Findings and Recommendations.....	7
Organizational Structure .....	7
Communications .....	11
Central Office Departmental Staffing and Comparisons .....	15
Long-Term Debt .....	55
Appendices.....	69



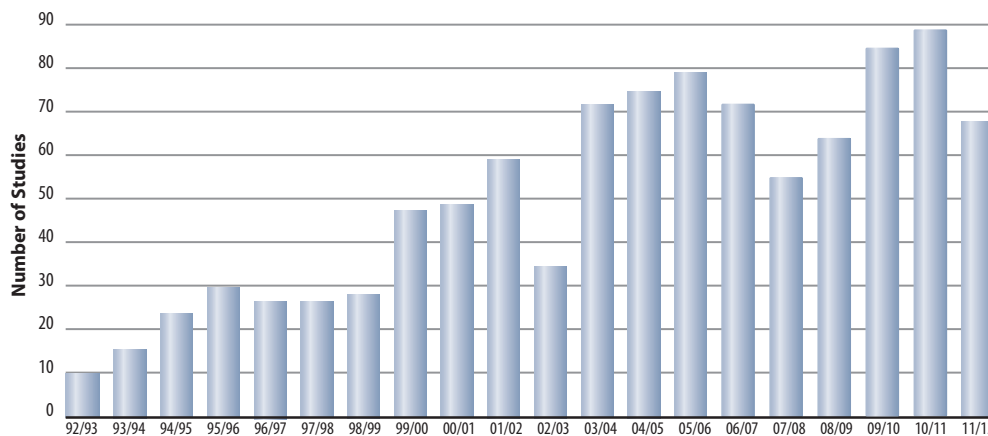
# About FCMAT

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 nearly 850 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

Twin Rivers Unified School District is located in northeastern Sacramento County and has an enrollment of approximately 26,620. Approximately four and a half years ago, four area school districts, Grant Joint Union High School District and the Rio Linda, North Sacramento and Del Paso Heights elementary school districts, unified to create the Twin Rivers Unified School District. Two local elementary school districts, Robla Elementary and Elverta Joint Elementary, did not participate in the unification.

At approximately 120 square miles in size, the district is generally divided in the center by Interstate 80. It encompasses the north and northeast portions of the city of Sacramento and unincorporated portions of Sacramento County. The district serves the communities of North Sacramento, Del Paso Heights, Rio Linda, North Highlands and Foothill Farms. The district has four high schools, two junior high schools, three charter junior high schools, one creative arts junior high school, one technology academy (middle school grades), 30 elementary schools, two alternative schools, two adult schools, and one special education preschool. The district closed two elementary schools this year, Rio Linda and Aero Haven.

The district is in an economically diverse region characterized by a mix of residential development and light industry. Although there is potential for growth, a moratorium has been placed on construction in the Natomas area. The district experienced declining enrollment in its first two years of existence, had a slight increase during fiscal year 2010-11, and had declining enrollment in fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13. Consequently, the district has closed five small elementary schools since it was formed in July 2008.

In November 2012, the district entered into a study agreement with the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) that requested FCMAT to perform the following:

1. In November of 2007, the voters of Rio Linda Union, North Sacramento and Del Paso Heights elementary school districts and the Grant Union High School District voted to approve the unification of these districts into the Twin Rivers Unified School District. The Twin Rivers Unified School District is requesting that the FCMAT team conduct an organizational and staffing review of the district's central office for all certificated, classified and administrative positions. The review will consist of the following departments: Superintendent's Office, Business Services, Personnel, Educational Services and Facilities.
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.

FCMAT evaluated the work flow and distribution of functions among the departments, and has provided recommendations for improved efficiency. This component included reviewing documentation, including policies and procedures, and gathering data regarding current practices, procedures and separation of duties. Additionally, FCMAT conducted phone interviews after the completion of fieldwork to gather more information on the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered.

## Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district on November 5-7 and November 19, 2012 to conduct interviews, collect data and review documents. Interview questions requested participants to discuss what functions they perform, and the reporting relationships and lines of authority in the organization. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Organizational Structure
- Communications
- Central Office Departmental Staffing and Comparisons
- Long-Term Debt
- Appendices

## Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

Eric D. Smith, MPA  
FCMAT Fiscal Intervention Specialist  
Templeton, CA

Anthony L. Bridges, CFE  
FCMAT Deputy Executive Officer  
Atascadero, CA

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RSB Consulting  
Chula Vista, CA

Laura Haywood  
FCMAT Technical Writer  
Bakersfield, CA

# Executive Summary

FCMAT reviewed the district's central office organizational structure to ascertain whether it is appropriately staffed with management, certificated and classified employees for a district of this type and size. Identifying the appropriate level of staff is critical because the district is operating with an interim Superintendent and is attempting to increase its efficiency to combat continued budget cuts from the state. In response to unprecedented cuts to school revenues that began with the 2008-09 fiscal year, districts throughout the state have been searching for ways to trim budgets. The Twin Rivers Unified School District is no exception. The 2012-13 adopted budget reflects \$41 million in expenditure reductions and the district has made in excess of \$190 million in budget reductions over the last five years.

The district had more than 100 administrative positions when it was initially created. A review of the district's current organizational chart shows 79 administrative positions, including certificated and classified management. However, a perception remains among classified employees and the governing board that the district's central office is overstaffed.

This report identifies changes needed to the organizational structure since the unification in 2008. The district continues to have a difficult time with communication, leadership, strategic planning and identifying key metrics for assessment. The most essential element the district needs to consider when implementing any change in management strategy is to effectively communicate organizational changes to all employees and other affected stakeholders. The lack of a collaborative communication plan continues to confront the district with the resistance of employees who have continually aligned with past practices from working in previous districts prior to the unification. Until the leadership of the district provides clear lines of communication, many district employees will continue to feel disconnected from the proposed changes to be implemented.

The district currently has an interim superintendent, and the board has retained a search firm to assist in finding a permanent replacement who can bring stability to the district. Despite these efforts, FCMAT's interviews revealed an overwhelming sentiment that the district struggles with issues of trust and internal communications. Several staff members still harbor resentment from the unification and feel an allegiance to their former district. Interviews with administrators and staff also revealed barriers to communication within and between departments. Some employees feel their efforts are not recognized and that district office personnel do not act as a team, with some staff members unwilling to work together or help department/site personnel.

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 other districts of similar size and composition. Three comparative districts, Chino, Lodi and San Jose Unified, were selected using Ed-Data, a collection of statistical performance, demographic and financial data supplied by California school districts. Ed-Data provides a unique information database through the cooperative efforts of the California Department of Education, EdSource and the Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team. Additionally, a survey was sent to each of the districts, and the results are presented later in this report. Other districts were closer in size to Twin Rivers Unified but were not selected because they operate classified personnel services under the merit system.

## Comparative Districts

The comparative organizational analysis and staffing information should be viewed as a guideline for appropriate staffing levels, keeping in mind that California school districts are complex systems that vary widely in demographics, resources, and organization. Interpreting staffing needs based on one or two criteria can be misleading if significant circumstances are not considered. Instead, the comparative data should be used with the formulas provided in this report to determine the staffing levels appropriate for the district's unique characteristics.

FCMAT prepared a staffing and organization structure questionnaire and forwarded it to the three districts electronically. All three districts responded, and the comparative group analysis includes a review of FTEs by department and division. The team also received qualitative data from these districts on how they responded to the effects of diminishing revenues over the last four years. The results from the surveys are presented under each department's heading. FCMAT requested Salary and Benefit Report (SABRE) and Comparative Analysis of District Income and Expenditures (CADIE) reports from School Services of California to provide additional metrics for this analysis. School Services of California, Inc. is a statewide consulting firm and provides for the annual data collection.

The SABRE report provides a comparative analysis of certificated salaries and benefits for the 2011-12 fiscal year. The report compares the three districts and includes data also that ranks the district against the statewide average and region 12, which includes El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties.

The CADIE report contains data from the 2010-11 fiscal year and provides a comprehensive analysis of school district revenues, expenditures and staffing data against the comparative districts. It also includes district rankings against the statewide average and region 12.

The three comparative districts were selected using the Ed-Data website, based on the most recent available data (2010-11). The districts selected possess similar enrollment, number of school sites, and revenue limit per average daily attendance. The three school districts used are:

- San Jose Unified School District (Santa Clara County)
- Lodi Unified School District (San Joaquin County)
- Chino Valley Unified School District (San Bernardino County)

The following table depicts the CBEDS data for 2011-12:

Rank	District	2011-12 CBEDS
1	San Jose USD	33,306
2	Twin Rivers USD	31,637
3	Chino USD	31,315
4	Lodi USD	30,319

The district had more than 100 administrative positions when it was initially created. The district's current organizational chart shows 79 administrative positions, including certificated and classified management.

Industry standard dictates that 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, Twin Rivers Unified is overstaffed in the following areas and should consider these recommendations:

1. Consider hiring in house legal counsel or joining a joint powers authority because of the high cost and number of legal issues confronting the district.
2. Clarify the organization's chain of command and require employees to follow departmental protocol and the authorized chain of command.
3. Assign the job responsibilities currently performed by the administrator of special projects to the assistant/associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction.
4. Discontinue the use of the Strategic School Funding for Results (SSFR) and Planning, Budgeting and Allocation of Resources (PBAR) programs. Although it may have ambitious outcomes, its continued use is time consuming and it is not yielding the intended results.
5. Combine the positions of deputy superintendent of educational services, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and assistant superintendent of school, community, and employee relations into a single position.
6. Reorganize the configuration of the network executive directors from three positions, each in charge of a group of K-12 schools, to two positions: one in charge of K-6 schools and the other in charge of 7-12 schools.
7. Review the management structure of the HR division and assign managers with administrative credentials to oversee the certificated personnel department.
8. Consolidate the duties and responsibilities of the director of business services with the positions of executive director and director of financial services, and eliminate the position or reduce through attrition.
9. Develop board policy and administrative regulations to address the issue of compensatory time and vacation time to limit the amount of carryover for each fiscal year.
10. Fully implement the QCC online purchasing module so that all sites and departments can input purchase requisitions, track their progress and avoid delays in processing purchasing transactions.
11. Consider eliminating the position of assistant superintendent for facilities.
12. Adopt a debt management policy substantially similar to the policy attached as Appendix A to this report to guide the governing board in making decisions regarding all forms of non-voter-approved debt.

With the retirement of the district's assistant superintendent for facilities, the district has an opportunity to restructure that department. Along with FCMAT's recommendation to eliminate the assistant superintendent position, the district should clearly delineate between the facilities planning and construction and maintenance functions and require the director for each department to report directly to the associate superintendent for business. The accounting functions performed in the facilities department should be relocated to the fiscal services department.

An examination of the district's organizational chart reflects that lines of authority are not shown to extend past the supervisory staff level in many departments. In the few departments that reflect positions past the management level, only one position is shown, and in other cases, services provided by a department are represented. A well-crafted organizational chart should reflect all positions. Excluding lower level staff sends a message that they are not part of the organization and makes it difficult for staff to understand the chain of command. While a separate chart can reflect the program/services in each department, it should not be combined with the organizational chart. This will be discussed in greater detail under each departmental heading.

# Findings and Recommendations

## Organizational Structure

The Twin Rivers Unified School District is organized similar to many K-12 school districts in California. The elected school board is responsible for hiring and evaluating the superintendent, who reports directly to the board. The superintendent has direct line authority and responsibility for one deputy superintendent (vacant), five assistant superintendents and one director-level position, one administrator for special projects, one coordinator for professional development, and three area executive directors that support 26 subordinate management level coordinator/director level positions. The management structure contains many positions with duties and responsibilities that overlap other similar positions. Often, when districts unify, all employees from the participating districts are absorbed into the newly formed district and positions are created to fit the employees' needs and not those of the organization. The organizational chart does not depict positions for legal counsel or an internal auditor. Many districts the size of Twin Rivers Unified have these positions because of the size and complexity of the organization, cost of outsourcing and the number of legal and compliance issues.

The total district-wide staffing for management, certificated and classified employees for the 2012-13 adopted budget is projected at 2,649.12 FTE, which is a decrease of 49.22 FTE compared to the close of the 2011-12 fiscal year. Staffing at non-school sites is based on the district's needs, and the student-teacher ratios shown below are used for school site staffing. The prior year staffing formula is used as the baseline for decision making to add or delete staff at school sites. Department allocations are based on maintaining the same allowance as the prior year unless significant reductions are required because of declining enrollment. The district follows a budget development calendar that contains specific guidelines and responsibilities for each site or department. District-authorized staffing is budgeted in site or department level budgets. In January of each fiscal year, adjustments are made to staffing projections based on the release of the governor's proposal for the next fiscal year.

Kindergarten	25:1
Grades 1-3	29:1
Grades 4-6	31:1
Grades 7-12	33:1

K-12 school districts traditionally have vertical hierarchical organizational structures where working groups are formed based on the functions performed. One avenue for addressing organizational comparisons is to draw on the experiences of comparable districts. For example, accounting and budgeting tasks are grouped together under the business department. This type of structure promotes functional efficiency, but can hinder communication and workflow between other departments.

Horizontal hierarchical structures, on the other hand, encourage more collaboration with a greater focus on process than specific functions. Smaller school districts may use a combination of both structures in which senior managers oversee multiple departments; however, this type of structure necessitates stronger procedures to prevent management from overriding internal controls.



The district's organizational structure should establish the framework for leadership and the delegation of specific duties and responsibilities for all staff members. Since the unification, the district has not had consistent leadership and has experienced continual turnover in key administrative positions. This structure should be managed to maximize resources and reach identified goals and should adapt as the district's enrollment increases or declines. The high turnover in administrative positions has made it difficult to measure the district's progress, both academically and organizationally. The district should be staffed according to basic, 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 (Principles of School Business Management, Association of School Business Officials, Inc.).

## Span of Control

Span of control refers to the number of subordinates reporting directly to a supervisor. While there is no agreed-upon ideal number of subordinates for span of control, it is generally agreed that the span can be larger at lower levels of an organization than at higher levels because subordinates at the lower levels typically perform more routine duties, and therefore can be more effectively supervised. In Twin Rivers, the reverse is often the case. For example, the district employs a high number of management positions in Educational Services compared to the number of subordinate employees in the department.

## Chain of Command

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. During the interview process, FCMAT identified issues with the chain of command and found that specific workflow processes are often circumvented because of a lack of teamwork, communication or clearly defined leadership.

## Line and Staff Authority

Line authority is the relationship between supervisors and subordinates. It refers to the direct line in the chain of command. For example, the 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.

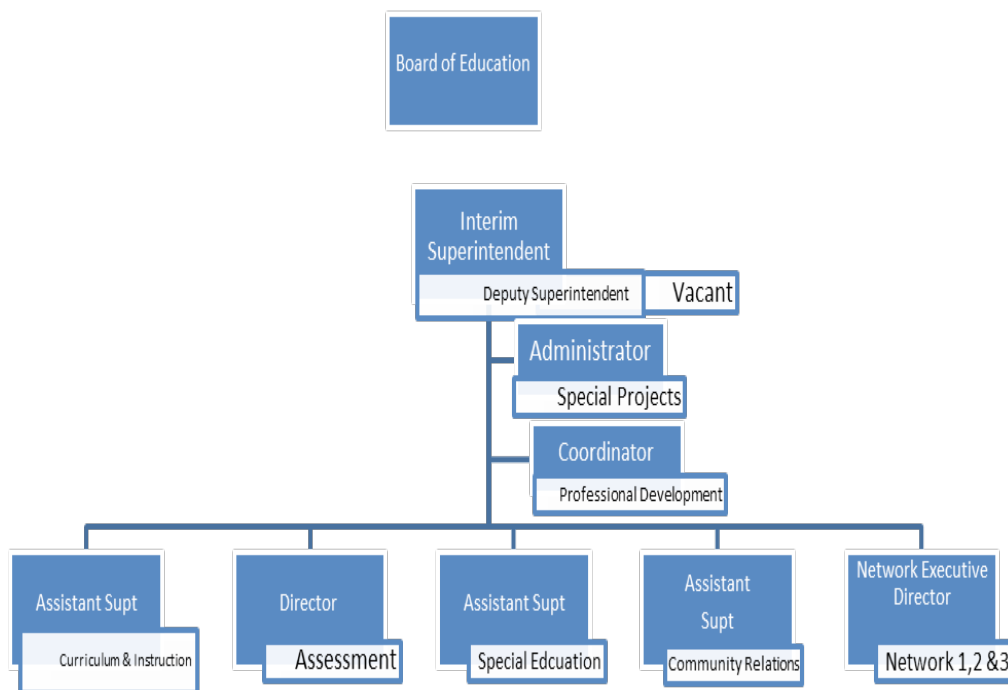
The purpose of the organizational structure is to help district management make key decisions to facilitate student learning while balancing financial resources. The organizational design at Twin Rivers does not outline the management process and specific links to the formal system of communication, authority, and responsibility necessary to achieve the district's goals and objectives.

The district has an interim superintendent, and the position of deputy superintendent is vacant. The organizational structure is continuously being reorganized when vacancies are created by resignations or reductions in force, or employees are placed on long-term paid administrative

leave. The district's organizational charts for each department, except for the business department, only show the management positions and do not depict the subordinate-level personnel. In the Educational Services Department, job titles and the department's organizational chart do not accurately reflect current assignments and alignments. This is a result of the many changes in cabinet-level leadership over the last few years and numerous restructuring attempts of departments and positions. Similarly, numerous changes in administrative configurations have occurred in short periods of time since the unification. It is difficult to measure departmental effectiveness because of the short tenure of administrative placements and the limited length of time instructional strategies and plans are kept in place.

Numerous legal issues since the unification have led the district to retain outside counsel, costing the district hundreds of thousands of dollars. The district may want to join a local joint powers authority or hire legal counsel on staff to deal with the lawsuits filed against it. A Sacramento Grand Jury report alleges that former district leaders actively destroyed the careers of individuals, violated the rights of employees, abused their fiduciary responsibilities and misled the public with erroneous information. The District Attorney's Office, Sacramento Police Department, FBI and other law enforcement agencies are investigating allegations contained in the Grand Jury report. Since the unification in 2008, the district has been engaged in numerous legal battles, many of them relating to actions taken by trustees prior to the unification.

For the district to operate efficiently and to stabilize operations, leadership positions need to be permanent. Because of the high turnover in leadership and management positions, district staffing is not articulated and aligned with the needs of the district's students. Staffing patterns do not reflect specific decisions and in some departments have an uneven layering of management, certificated and classified positions that reflect the after effects of the unification. While the unification required the district to retain all classified positions for the first two years, the district assumed the management structure of all four districts and has not made the necessary central office staff reductions. The top leadership positions are shown in the organizational chart below:



## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Create an organizational chart for each department showing both management and subordinate personnel.
2. Distribute the organizational chart to all management, certificated and classified employees after board approval.
3. Consider hiring in-house legal counsel or joining a joint powers authority to the contain costs and handle the numerous legal issues confronting the district.

# Communications

Communications issues were discussed in Total School Solutions' (TSS) 2009 study of the district, which noted both inter- and intradepartmental concerns. Similar concerns were raised during FCMAT's fieldwork. Effective communication is essential in providing a sense of stability and effective leadership in K-12 education. Without open and regular communication, inaccurate information may circulate. During interviews, many district staff members indicated that communication is lacking in the district office.

Staff cited the lack of communication between departments as a significant obstacle at the district. Except in the business office, there is a lack of teamwork among staff and no sense of a strategic plan or comprehensive direction. In some instances, this has resulted in a lack of staff initiative. In other instances, employees work at cross purposes, with direction coming from multiple departments.

Interviewees across departments commented that the lines of communication and decisions often depend on an employee's experience from their original district and reflect the lack of team building since the unification in 2008. Interviewees stated that employees tend to trust those with whom they worked prior to the unification and are less trusting of those from the other districts. Interviewees noted that some employees do not communicate with employees from a different original district. Some employees mentioned they have tried to be friendly to employees from other original districts but stopped when their efforts were met with tension and hostility.

FCMAT observed that this lack of trust pervades the district and emanates from several factors:

- The lack of a cohesive strategic plan and employees who do not work collaboratively due to hard feelings that still linger from the unification.
- The perception that classified employees have absorbed most of the personnel reductions and that management has not taken its fair share.
- Inequity in compensation among management personnel.
- The perception that the district office has too many administrative staff.

Some interviewees stated they prefer to work alone or in a small group with only those they trust. Both during and after the FCMAT visit, some employees communicated that they did not feel they could respond honestly to questions in front of colleagues. In one interview, colleagues commented in front of each other that they would not openly discuss certain topics in front of each other because of territorial district alliances.

This climate of mistrust has prevented the district from working efficiently and effectively. Counteracting this climate will need to be an administrative priority so that the district can optimally develop, direct and control its financial, human, physical and information resources.

This can be accomplished in multiple ways. First, the district's goals and objectives should be clearly defined, prioritized, agreed upon by those affected, and communicated to end users. Second, the district should place employees in positions where they will be the most effective. Under the current structure, some employees clearly do not possess the skills, aptitude or initiative necessary to build trust with others and meet organizational objectives.

During fieldwork, FCMAT was informed of staff members who refuse to carry out tasks not specifically listed in their job descriptions, who balk at learning new procedures and dismiss the notion of "other duties as assigned," even though that language is in their job descriptions. Both staff and administrators have concerns about the following:

- Staff members are unwilling to work together. If one employee is overloaded, no one else offers to help, which exacerbates the need for extra time or overtime.
- Staff members are unwilling to help department or site personnel in the following manners:
  - Some staff members state that certain tasks are not their responsibility. Some elaborated that even if it was their job, they don't know how to perform the tasks and are not willing to learn.
  - There is indifference about a fellow staff member's request to help the public. Instances were cited where a request for help was ignored and forced someone with limited expertise to try to provide assistance.

During FCMAT's review, it was documented that many departments do not consistently hold staff meetings. Some district office departments have no meetings; some departments do not participate in cross-department meetings or receive information about decisions that affect them. The superintendent should initiate regularly scheduled district office staff meetings, foster an atmosphere that encourages participation by all, and require monthly meetings in all district departments as well as cross-departmental meetings where applicable. This will improve verbal and written communication, provide a consistent avenue of reliable information, and promote openness regarding decisions.

Interviewees noted that when the prior superintendent was in place, there was a perception that the key positions were assigned to the employees from the superintendent's previous district. In addition, several interviewees stated that those who were not from the superintendent's previous district were treated poorly and blamed for issues created by the superintendent's "favored" employees. At least three employees discussed the perceived discriminatory treatment they believe they received.

Interviewees noted that this environment has encouraged people to circumvent the chain of command in that employees do not work with the person(s) responsible for resolving a particular issue; rather, they are accustomed to going directly to the superintendent, or another supervisor, who will allow them to do what they want. Further, the district environment has allowed employees who disagree with their supervisors to circumvent them and go directly to someone with more authority who will support their position.

Some employees stated that, in working with the interim superintendent, they see more opportunity for appropriate interaction and work within and between divisions. Others stated they feel unsettled because they do not know who to go to anymore and are not sure of the district's structure because of the high level of turnover in positions. Some interviewees stated that, after the recent board elections, classified employees and their representatives appear to be comfortable circumventing processes and going directly to board members with requests and demands.

Some employees stated that one consequence of following the chain of command is that their supervisor's supervisor is not adequately informed about their work. They worry that if the division supervisor does not know about their work, there will be negative consequences.

As employees described a lack of cohesiveness and communication within departments and among divisions, they often mentioned the need for more collaboration or teamwork. Some employees are hopeful that the new interim superintendent will create a more inclusive climate that allows all voices and opinions to be heard.

# Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Update job descriptions to reflect employees' job responsibilities.
2. Consider professional development training in communication for all district office staff.
3. Work on team-building at the district office to improve the effectiveness of the organization.
4. Initiate regular district office staff meetings and require monthly meetings in all departments to improve communication, convey information, and provide openness regarding decisions.
5. Clarify the organization's chain of command and require employees to follow departmental protocol and the authorized chain of command.
6. Provide clear administrative regulations that prohibit employees from circumventing the chain of command.
7. Recognize that all work has value; celebrate the accomplishments of classified, certificated and management employees.
8. Create a plan to foster communication, collaboration and teamwork within and across divisions. Base the plan on the established organizational chart and job responsibilities.





# Central Office Departmental Staffing and Comparisons

## Superintendent's Office

The interim superintendent began working for the district in 2011-12 as the principal of Foothill High School. He became the interim superintendent and on September 5, 2012, and provides overall leadership regarding district goals and objectives, implements the policies of the governing board, and serves as secretary to the board. The superintendent previously served as interim dean of students at American Canyon High School in Napa Valley Unified School District, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction with the Campbell Union High School District, and director of secondary education with San Rafael City Schools.

The interim superintendent has focused his efforts on determining “the status quo” with regard to the district office. Much of his time is spent dealing with more than 80 lawsuits that have been filed against the district. Among his concerns are: the lack of an adopted curriculum, the need for an enhanced professional development model, resolving the inequities in how employees have been treated, assessing top administrators’ skills and abilities, and determining the best way to reorganize the district office.

The assistant superintendent of school, community, and employee relations has worked with the district since its inception in 2007. He was originally from the Rio Linda School District where he served as the assistant superintendent of personnel just prior to the unification of the four school districts. During the unification, he was responsible for addressing labor relations issues, including the consolidation of four employee contracts for each of the three new bargaining units.

Approximately two years ago, having completed negotiations of the contracts for the police officers association and the teachers’ union, the assistant superintendent moved to the School, Community and Employee Relations Division. He described his job responsibilities as supervising and coordinating: public information communications, family engagement and communication, interdistrict transfers, charter schools, and complaints. The job description under which he is working is assistant superintendent, employer/employee relations. The essential functions outlined in this job description are focused on employee recruitment, labor relations with employee organizations, preparing collective bargaining agreements, and managing employee transfers, dismissals, layoffs, administrative leaves, and re-employment.

The district website states that the goal of the School, Community and Employee Relations Division is to promote positive relationships with the district’s employees and community members. The division’s responsibilities as listed on the website include: supervision of the district office reception area, conducting regular meetings with school secretaries and school office assistants/clerks, oversight of staff and consultants assigned to charter school programs, management of the daily student overflow process, investigation of Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP) and Williams Settlement complaints, coordinating response to Public Records Act requests, and processing of volunteer applications. In addition, mid-year kindergarten, transitional kindergarten, and redistricting are listed as part of the division’s responsibilities.

The assistant superintendent explained that during summer 2012, the director of communications and the director of family and community involvement left the district. In October 2012, the position of director of communications was filled; the position of director of family and

community relations is still on hold. As a result, the assistant superintendent has taken on some of that director's responsibilities; some of the responsibilities have been assigned to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

With the exception of the Communications Department, the current staff consists of: the assistant superintendent, an administrative assistant, an overflow/enrollment specialist, two receptionists (one designated as bilingual), a secretary II, and a bilingual liaison.

## Complaint Process

Two members of the community relations staff handle the complaint process. When complaints are received, the employees discuss them with the complainants and address the concerns. Complainants are frequently redirected to the school principal to resolve the complaint at the level closest to the problem. When complainants are dissatisfied with the resolution, their appeals are heard by the network directors or coordinators.

If a complaint is written, the assistant superintendent investigates it. The process is often lengthy because he must be thorough, ensure that all sides feel their concerns are addressed, and reach an appropriate resolution. Twice, when the complainants were dissatisfied with the assistant superintendent's investigation, the district has hired outside investigators to re-investigate. The assistant superintendent stated that complaints have gone to the Board of Trustees for review twice in his tenure, and both times the board declined to hear the appeals.

The Web page provides public access to the following: Administrative Regulation 1312.1 – Complaints Concerning District Employees; Board Policy 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures; Administrative Regulation 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures; and Administrative Regulation 1312.4 – Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures.

The administrative regulations regarding Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) designate the assistant superintendent of administrative services and community relations to “receive and investigate complaints and to ensure district compliance with the law.” The UCP complaint form and Williams Case Notice are available on the Web page in English, Spanish, and Hmong.

The chart below indicates the number of complaints received yearly since the 2008-09 school year:

School Year	UCP Complaints	Williams Complaints	Total
2008-09	22		22
2009-10	28		28
2010-11	18		18
2011-12	18	5	23
2012-13 (to 11/5/12)	7	1	8

## Student Transfers/Enrollment

The process for both interdistrict and intradistrict transfers are included in the division's Web pages. Transfers are processed from January to August for the coming school year. A secretary II processes transfers; a bilingual liaison also is listed as a contact on the Web page. The assistant superintendent noted that, when possible, his office tries to discourage parents from transferring their students out of the district but there is generally a net loss, particularly of secondary school students to other districts. The assistant superintendent provided the following information showing the net effect of transfers since the district's inception.

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Total Outgoing Transfers	-1758	-1263	-1208	-1171
Total Incoming Transfers	550	640	693	596
Net Annual Loss	-1208	-623	-515	-575

Effective January 2011, parents are no longer required to submit a transfer renewal if their students are staying at the same school and they had not moved resident districts. As a result, the 2011-12 numbers are not comparable to previous years when annual renewals were required.

The assistant superintendent is responsible for ensuring that enrollment at the elementary schools is balanced and that transportation is arranged promptly for students who need to be transferred because of over enrollment at particular schools or grade levels. He noted that this is of great concern to the teachers' union.

The district's contract with Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE), the teachers' union, includes language regarding class sizes and "overage payments" to teachers whose class sizes exceed the maximum. However, Article 7.2 also states, "The Parties agree, despite any other language in this Agreement to the contrary, that for the 2011-2012 through 2012-2013 school years, the class size limitations contained in this Article, including class size maximums, averages and all other numerical values regarding class size, will not be in force, and further agree that class size overage payments will not be made for Elementary and Secondary Schools during school years 2011-2012 through 2012-2013 in light of the anticipated further reduction in force of certificated staff. During this period, despite anticipated further reductions, the District will make all reasonable efforts to balance classes and to bring class sizes as close as possible to the class sizes set forth in this Article. The Parties agree that the class size limitations and overage payments provided for in this Article will take full effect on July 1, 2013."

## Charter Schools

The assistant superintendent serves as liaison to the district-approved charter schools. There are nine charter schools, six independent and three dependent. The assistant superintendent visits each campus at least annually and responds to the schools' needs as necessary. He assists the dependent charters with their renewal petitions and coordinates their programs as necessary. The assistant superintendent stated that two charter school petitions are under consideration and he is responsible for reviewing the petitions, visiting the proposed sites, and providing an analysis to the board of trustees.

## Customer Service

The assistant superintendent has been responsible for implementing a "service culture" at the district. He has helped put together an action plan and monitors the customer service action plans for the 22 district office departments.

## Public Records Requests

The assistant superintendent stated that the legal firm previously hired by the district requested all public records requests to be sent to the firm for handling. When the district hires a new legal firm, the process for handling public records requests likely will change. Best practice is to have district staff handle routine requests rather than referring all requests to legal counsel for review.

The chart below reflects information received from the assistant superintendent regarding the district public records requests received since the 2008-09 school year.

School Year	# of Requests Received
2008-09	8
2009-10	17
2010-2011	11
2011-12	58
2012-13 (as of 11/5/2012)	8

## Communications Department

The Communications Department mission statement, as listed on the Web page, is: “to facilitate effective and powerful communication practices that build trust and support for Twin Rivers schools.” According to the Web page, the department’s main areas of responsibility are: school site engagement and promotion; media relations; community relations and engagement; soliciting feedback; recognition activities; electronic messaging; print materials; district emergency planning and activities; automated call system management; and department support. The department personnel are: a director, a senior communications specialist, a digital video producer, and a communications assistant. Work samples provided during FCMAT’s fieldwork demonstrate products that are informative, attractive and professional in nature. Interviewees indicated that the department coordinates the translation of many documents into Spanish and Hmong.

During interviews, employees indicated that while the department reports to the assistant superintendent, the director provides the day-to-day department supervision. The previous director of this department left the district in August 2012. The current director had been the director of communications and community relations in the Grant Union High School District prior to the creation of the district. As part of the four-district unification, the current director was placed in the district’s communications department as a classified administrator and continued in that position for approximately two years until she was laid off. When the previous director left the district, the current director was re-employed from the 39-month re-employment list.

As the current director had only been in the position for approximately one month at the time of FCMAT’s fieldwork, staff assessments and workload assignments are still in process. The director has many ideas and plans to implement and has suggestions about the work being conducted. During this time of transition, some suggestions and questions have created tension and uncertainty in the department.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Consider reassigning the responsibilities of the School, Community, and Employee Relations Division as follows:
  - a. Assign the handling of routine public records act requests to the communications department. Consider having this department report directly to the superintendent.
  - b. Assign processing of volunteer applications to the Human Resources department.
  - c. Assign student transfers to student services.
  - d. Assign the district reception area to the HR department.
  - e. Assign school secretary, assistants, and clerk meetings to the business division.
  - f. Assign investigation of UCP/Williams to the curriculum, student services department.

- g. Assign charter school responsibilities to the curriculum and instruction division; assign credential monitoring for charter school employees to the HR department.
2. Align job descriptions, job responsibilities, and board policies.

## Administrator, Special Projects

The administrator of special projects reports to the superintendent and unavailable for interview during FCMAT's fieldwork. The job description lists the primary function of this position as providing: "support for special project funding including, but not limited to: Federal grant priorities, California Department of Education grant funding programs, and private foundation programs. The administrator is to provide technical direction, assistance, and leadership in the ways and means of obtaining supplementary categorical funding for the district. The essential job functions include: coordinating programs seeking supplementary project funding; serving as liaison between the district and outside public and private agencies; and researching out-of-district funding sources. During interviews, FCMAT was informed that this administrator is overseeing one project.

## Recommendation

*The district should:*

1. Assign the job responsibilities performed by the administrator of special projects to the assistant/associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

## Executive Assistants

Two executive assistants are assigned to the superintendent's office: one provides primary support to the superintendent; one provides primary support to the board of trustees. This is consistent with the staffing information provided by comparable districts. Before the formation of Twin Rivers USD, both employees were executive assistants to their respective superintendents: one in Grant Union High School District and one in Del Paso School District. When Twin Rivers was formed, the positions of executive assistant to the governing board and executive assistant to the superintendent were created.

The superintendent and both executive assistants stated the current configuration is working well and they have confidence in each other.

## Recommendation

*The district should:*

1. Evaluate the responsibilities/departments assigned to the superintendent and the secretarial support necessary to ensure efficient operations if the responsibilities of the School, Community, and Employee Relations Division are reallocated elsewhere.

## Educational Services Department

The Educational Services configuration includes three geographical networks of schools overseen by three executive directors, an assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and a portion of the department by the interim superintendent. The deputy assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction position has remained vacant for this school year. The networks span grades K-12, and each consists of approximately 14 schools.

The complex unification that took place in 2007 has significantly impacted educational services. The district has attempted not to show favoritism toward one original district over another or toward secondary or elementary structures. These efforts have not proven to be efficient and have encountered multiple obstacles and hindrances.

Numerous personnel changes have occurred since the unification, resulting in little consistency in the department. A common instructional focus or departmental priorities are not evident. Some positions remain unfilled, with the responsibilities parceled out to other positions. Clear chains of command, an established educational vision, and internal communication are lacking.

The district had been in Program Improvement status for several years and had a district-wide API score of 722 in 2010-11. Sufficient staff development opportunities are provided by the coordinators from the three networks and the coordinators assigned to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. Learning coaches at the school sites work with teaching staff and are monitored by the coordinators. The coordinators and learning coaches do not conduct performance evaluations on teachers.

Due to administrative turnover, the composition and alignment of instructional services shifts almost annually and a department-wide effort to focus on common outcomes and positive working relationships is needed.

The district uses an exploratory program called Strategic School Funding for Results (SSFR) and its site budgeting tool, Planning, Budgeting and Allocation of Resources (PBAR) to align educational priorities with budgets and expenses. The system has been in place for two school years. It requires initial input at the site level and is supposed to be monitored at the district level for results and accountability.

The department has many capable and experienced personnel, and data usage and research practices are in place. However, numerous geographical and political issues connected with the unification still need to be addressed.

Many improvement efforts are under way, but the district lacks a common instructional focus with prioritized objectives. The current organizational alignment of using network administrators is not the structure needed to lead and direct effective change and academic improvement. The district should consider a more traditional chain of command, with site administrators reporting directly to a central office administrator, such as a director for elementary or secondary education or an assistant or associate superintendent for educational services.

Trust is lacking within and among the various department subgroups, and this was commented on in several interviews and discussions with staff.

There is a lack of ongoing and vital communication between the assistant superintendent's office and the network executive directors. As a result, the staff who work in those areas feel disconnected from the district office. There is duplication of effort in many areas of the department, and difficulty with scheduling and calendaring items. As a result, many talented employees' skills and abilities are not used effectively.



Job titles and the department's organizational chart do not accurately reflect current assignments and alignments. This is a result of many changes in cabinet-level leadership over the last few years and numerous attempts to restructure departments and positions. There also have been many changes in administrative configurations. The short lived administrative placements and limited time that educational initiatives are kept in place make it difficult to measure results.

Communication between Educational Services and Human Resources is limited. For example, little discussion takes place between the two departments regarding instructional job openings, transfers, Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) lists, and other critical staffing decisions.

A driving force to unify the Grant Joint Union High School District with three of its feeder elementary school district was to improve articulation of curriculum between the elementary and secondary grade levels. Since the unification, however, the disconnect between secondary and elementary education has not narrowed. In fact, many of the geopolitical issues of the previous districts are still in place.

The 2012 organizational chart for instructional services shows a deputy superintendent, three assistant superintendents, three executive directors, six directors and 24 coordinators. However, the deputy superintendent position is vacant, with no plan to fill it. Human Resources and Business Support Services are both led by associate superintendents. The interim superintendent manages only a portion of the instructional services department.

Significant time and effort are utilized to input information into the SSFR PBAR program. It is highly unlikely that this results in improved educational opportunities for sites and students. Observations indicate that the system requires unnecessary levels of authorization for purchases and decisions, and slows progress at school sites.

A common focus on priorities, student achievement and established benchmarks to measure progress is not evident. The district has undertaken several educational initiatives accompanied by multiple layers of professional development. It is uncertain if the training meets the needs of teachers and site administrators and results in improved student learning.

A current budget for Educational Services was not available, and it is unclear who has ultimate authority and control over the department's fiscal decisions.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Create a common vision and focus for the department with measurable objectives, established timelines and clear lines of accountability. Prioritize learning outcomes, student achievement and professional development objectives.
2. Establish clear lines of communication in the department. Schedule regular meetings that include all key stakeholders.
3. Coordinate and maintain efforts between Educational Services, Human Resources and Business Services to ensure meaningful collaboration and effective communication take place in a timely manner.
4. Organize and coordinate departmental calendars, training sessions, meetings, and publications.



5. Refine the department's organizational chart and update job descriptions to accurately reflect defined tasks, lines of authority and accountability.
6. Hire a permanent superintendent with strengths and experience in organizational leadership, relationship and team building, and long term planning.
7. Establish regular meetings between key members of Educational Services and Human Resources to plan for the following school year. Focus on staffing needs and placements, credential requirements, mandatory trainings and service requirements, and timelines.
8. Discontinue the use of the SSFR PBAR program, and streamline the authorization system for decisions and expenditures.
9. Prioritize ongoing projects by their level of importance. Establish clear lines of accountability, responsibility and workable timelines. Identify measurable benchmarks for projects to determine their effectiveness.
10. Coordinate with the fiscal side of the district to have ongoing and current budgets.
11. Re-evaluate existing clerical and classified support services to better align with any restructuring that is implemented in the department. Ensure that clerical and classified support staff are provided with common training and in-service programs so that they may more effectively support the department's mission and expected outcomes.

## Comparative Organizational Data

FCMAT surveyed three school districts similar in size to Twin Rivers Unified School District. The districts were Chino Valley, Lodi, and San Jose unified school districts.

The following data was collected from the districts and from Ed Data:

	<b>CBEDS Enrollment</b>	<b>District Office Staff</b>	<b>District Office Curriculum and Instruction Staff</b>	<b>2011 BASE API</b>	<b>2010-11 Graduation Rate</b>	<b>2010-11 Dropout Rate</b>	<b>Pupils per Administrator</b>
Chino Valley USD	29,691	195	61	812	84.70%	7.30%	332
Lodi	30,528	179	61	751	76.60%	16.20%	347
San Jose	30,049	363	NA	797	83.70%	7.90%	316
Twin Rivers	26,620	622	221	722	68.30%	21.80%	254
Statewide Average					76.30%	14.40%	288

The comparative districts utilize the following instructional leadership structures:

### Chino Valley Unified School District

- Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction
  - Director, K-12 Curriculum
  - Director, Program Improvement

- Director, Assessment and Evaluation
- Director, Technology
- Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
  - Director, Alternative Education
  - Director, Health Services
  - Director, Special Education
  - Director, Student Support Services

#### Lodi Unified School District

- Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education (responsible for)
  - Special Education
  - Child Welfare and Attendance
  - 7-12 Principals
- Assistant Superintendent Elementary Education (responsible for)
  - School Readiness and Pre School
  - K-6 Principals
- Director Curriculum and Instruction
  - Coordinator Assessment, Research and Evaluation

#### San Jose Unified School District

##### Division of Instructional Services

- Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
  - Director, Student Assignment (data, enrollment)
  - Director, Educational Equity
  - Director, Curriculum and Instruction (EL, Alt Ed)
  - Instructional Coaches
  - Manager, Categorical Programs

Per the organizational chart, the leadership structure for Education Services at Twin Rivers Unified School District is:

- Deputy Superintendent
  - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
    - 11 Coordinators
    - Director
  - Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, Student Services, and Early Childhood Education
    - 9 Coordinators

- 3 Directors
  - 3 Network Executive Directors
    - 4 Coordinators
  - Assistant Superintendent School, Community, Employee Relations
    - 2 Directors

No one office or administrator is clearly in charge of Educational Services, so leadership is fragmented. If the district did not fill the deputy superintendent of educational services position and eliminated one of the assistant superintendent positions, the estimated savings would be \$385,599. A leadership position that combined these duties as suggested in the recommendations below would require an administrator with significant skills and proven abilities in K-12 education to develop a well-run and organized team that positively impacts the education of students and meets the district's instructional needs.

The district's three network directors each supervise a third of the district's site administrators. Although regional or area administrators are often used to supervise itinerant staff in county offices of education, network directors are not used in comparable districts and are seldom found in California districts. Moreover, the number of coordinators in the Twin Rivers Unified School District is large compared with similar districts. With the infusion of Common Core requirements pending throughout California, the coordinators need to be reorganized around content areas. Eliminating one of the network executive director positions would yield an estimated savings of \$169,522.

The estimated savings from any reduction of positions do not include the effects of "bumping" that may occur with a reduction in force.

The three comparative districts have fewer district staff, better test scores and better graduation rates than Twin Rivers Unified School District.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Combine the positions of deputy superintendent of educational services, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and assistant superintendent of school, community, and employee relations into a single position. Give this position ultimate leadership responsibility for the entire Educational Services department.
2. Reorganize the configuration of the network executive directors from three positions, each in charge of a group of K-12 schools, to two positions, one in charge of K-6 schools and the other in charge of 7-12 schools, to streamline administrative resources. Reevaluate the number of coordinators needed at the district level.
3. Realign clerical and classified support staff to coordinate with recommended departmental changes.

## Special Education/Student Services/Early Childhood Education Division

This division is led by an assistant superintendent who, prior to the unification, was the director of student services for the Rio Linda School District. During FCMAT's fieldwork the assistant superintendent advised that, when the unification occurred, she applied for and received the position of assistant superintendent, special education and student services. The early childhood department was added to her division after the 2009-10 school year. The assistant superintendent's job description was adopted by the Twin Rivers Board of Trustees in March 2008. The basic function of the job is listed as: "assume administrative responsibility for development and administration of Special Education and Student Services including guidance and counseling services, psychological services, health services, student discipline and expulsion, 504 compliance, safe schools, student records, substance abuse prevention."

The district's organizational chart indicates that the assistant superintendent reports to the superintendent and three directors report to her: the director of special education (currently vacant), the director of Pre-K, ECE, and Head Start, and the director of student services. The assistant superintendent is interested in filling the director of special education position, but the position is on hold. As a result, she has taken on some of the position's responsibilities and assigned others to a coordinator of special education.

A document provided by the assistant superintendent lists the division's focus areas for the 2012-13 school year as: compliance with special education/student services laws/regulations; implementation of a professional development plan to address critical areas such as autism and behavior strategies; monitoring student attendance to ensure sites are at the district goal of 96%; continuing special education program alignments; monitoring the district's performance on the California Department of Education's special education performance indicators; updating the district's Coordinated Student Health policy; utilizing data to support prevention/intervention programs/services; monitoring early childhood education/child development (ECE/CD) budgets and contracts; and implementing quality ECE/CD programs throughout the district.

The assistant superintendent meets regularly with the two directors and the coordinator handling some of the special education director's responsibilities. She stays in contact with all the coordinators through email and spends one-on-one time with them as needed.

The assistant superintendent maintains responsibility for the division's budget. She meets regularly with the budget analyst responsible for the division and with the county to ensure that county mental health monies are spent appropriately.

An administrative assistant and an account clerk III, both report directly to the assistant superintendent. Neither was able to be interviewed during FCMAT's fieldwork.

The division Web page contains a Family Resource Guide dated 2012-13. The guide is translated into several languages and contains resource information regarding: emergency and non-emergency phone numbers; food resources; clothing resources; affordable and emergency housing, health; medical and Medi-Cal clinics/providers; parenting classes; counseling; legal aid; public transportation; emergency utility assistance; tutoring/mentoring programs; and employment assistance and training.

## Student Services Department

The district's website indicates that this department coordinates programs that benefit district students including: truancy reduction; foster youth; homeless support; child welfare and attendance programs; behavior prevention and intervention programs; suspension and expulsion reduction; student health, wellness and prevention programs; strategies to ensure modifications and accommodations for students through comprehensive 504 plans.

The district website includes a description of a three-tiered approach to student interventions: Tier I, Universal Interventions, are designed for 80-90% of the student population; Tier II, Strategic Interventions, are designed for 5-15% of the population; Tier III, Intensive Interventions, are designed for 1-5% of the student population.

In May 2012, the district was one of 11 school districts in the state designated as models of attendance improvement and dropout prevention by the state School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

The department's location has been changed at least four times since the district was formed. There is general consensus in the department that its current location does not provide appropriate workspace for the student services coordinators, who must work in open cubicles that do not provide sufficient privacy. The coordinators' work is often highly confidential as it deals with sensitive personal issues involving students and their families. Interviewees noted that it is not unusual to find the coordinators outside the building or in their cars so they have the privacy necessary to conduct their work.

The Student Services department is led by the director, student services. The job description outlines the primary functions as: serving as the district custodian of student records, administering Student Services and alternative programs, and supervising child welfare and attendance programs, safe and drug-free community schools, tobacco use prevention education, SB65 and 504 plans, student health and wellness and behavior intervention programs. The director may also serve as a hearing officer for student suspensions and expulsions. Prior to the unification, the director worked for Grant Union High School District as a coordinator in the student services division.

The department also employs 3.5 FTE student services coordinators, three full-time student services intervention assistants, and one .4 FTE counselor. Two of the full-time coordinators are designated as coordinators for child welfare, attendance, and foster youth; the other full-time coordinator is the coordinator of student health, wellness, and prevention. The .5 coordinator is the coordinator of behavior intervention and prevention and works the remaining .5 FTE as a coordinator of special education. The .4 counselor is responsible for individual learning plans.

The intervention assistants are classified employees who assist teachers in providing behavioral support and instruction for short periods of time, and monitor and collect data on student behavior and progress.

The clerical support for this department is provided by a secretary II, who reports directly to the director, and two clerk III's. Clerical support staff were not able to be interviewed during FCMAT's fieldwork.

District	Department Reports to	Department Lead	Other Administrators	Other Certificated Support	Classified Support
Chino Valley	Assistant Superintendent	Director	1 Coordinator (Health Services has own director)	0	13
San Jose	Assistant Superintendent	Director	3 Managers; 1 Administrator	0	11
Lodi	Assistant Superintendent	Director, Student Services and SELPA	3 Coordinators	0	N/A

The director described his department as responsible for services for students with attendance, behavior, and/or medical issues. He noted that, because a large majority of district students are on free and reduced lunch, the schools are often the first contact for health issues, eye glasses, and other medical needs.

The director noted that the department has implemented programs such as BEST Behavior and School-Wide Information System (SWIS). The BEST program involves intervention strategies at the school and classroom levels, including: a review and refinement of school discipline policies; the use of positive reinforcement and recognition for prosocial behaviors; clarification and teaching of behavioral expectations for student behaviors; and systematic collection and review of patterns of discipline referrals which may be used to guide decision-making and planning.

SWIS is a web-based information system designed to help school personnel use office referral data to design schoolwide and individual student interventions. The system gives school personnel the capability to evaluate individual and group student behaviors, behaviors occurring in specific settings, and behaviors occurring during specific time periods of the school day. SWIS reports allow teachers and administrators to shape schoolwide environments to maximize students' academic and social achievements.

The director stated that these programs have helped to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions although "students of color" are still disproportionately represented in these disciplinary actions. He stated that, for example, African American males make up 17% of the population and 33-34% of the students who are suspended. The following chart displays the numbers of suspensions and expulsions over a three-year period.

Type of Action	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Suspensions	6800	6700	5700
Expulsions	58	25	19

The coordinators were interviewed as a group and expressed concerns about the interview process because other coordinators were interviewed individually during FCMAT's fieldwork. The coordinators stated that they work well together and largely without supervision or direction. They indicated that they know what students need and they would accomplish less if they waited for direction.

The student services coordinators perceive that they are treated differently than other coordinators in the Educational Services division. One example is that the student services coordinators work out of cubicles while the curriculum coordinators have offices. While all coordinators in the Educational Services division are listed at the same range on the salary schedule, the student services coordinators believe some of the curriculum coordinators are paid approximately

\$30,000 above the maximum listed on the salary schedule. A review of the management salary schedule indicates that all coordinators' salaries are placed at range 128, with stipends for master's and doctoral degrees and for longevity. The maximum stipend possible for a doctorate and 25 years of service is \$4,400.

To maximize services to students, the coordinators frequently search out and write grants to fund the services they believe are important. They have written grants for student support services, as well as health, drug and alcohol education. They write grants without assistance from other departments and on their own time as they are busy with other responsibilities during the work day. They currently manage approximately \$2.2 million in grants that provide direct services to students. This figure includes \$1.7 million managed by the coordinators of child welfare and attendance and \$500,000 managed by the coordinator of student health, wellness, and prevention. They indicated that the assistant superintendent has supported their grant writing efforts.

### **Coordinator of Child Welfare and Attendance**

The job description for the coordinator of child welfare and attendance outlines the primary function of the job as: providing technical, specialized, consultative, advisory, and planning services in the department of student services; planning, organizing, developing, recommending, and evaluating programs, processes, and procedures; serving as a resource to school sites in the areas of attendance, foster youth and homeless youth; and conducting special studies, meetings and in-services.

Of the two full-time child welfare and attendance coordinators, one was employed by the Rio Linda School District and one was employed by the North Sacramento School District prior to the creation of Twin Rivers USD. One coordinator's background was as a child welfare and attendance program specialist and the other was a school counselor who worked with child welfare and attendance as part of her counseling duties. When interviewed, the coordinators stated it was "a blessing" to work in a comprehensive K-12 system that could provide service to students and families throughout their school experience and education. They described their key job responsibilities as providing attendance support, including the SARB process, bullying prevention, K-6 behavior support, and monitoring/supporting foster youth. The two coordinators work collaboratively to ensure that students' rights are followed and that students are provided with a myriad of services designed to meet their needs. They stated that the assistant superintendent is supportive and accessible when they need to meet with her.

The third coordinator of child welfare and attendance works 50% in that capacity and 50% as a coordinator of special education. Prior to the unification, she worked in Grant Union High School District. During the fieldwork interviews, her position was described as coordinating behavior intervention and prevention. As such, she is responsible for all expulsions and behavior issues in the middle and high schools. She also manages referrals and placements to alternative schools, the district coordination of services team, involuntary transfer requests, monthly vice principal meetings, county schools, and Cal-SAFE, a program for expectant and parenting teens.

All three coordinators agreed that their ability to share information and resources has increased the services provided to students and their families. They agreed that their combined knowledge of the district's students and families allows them to coordinate service and support.



## Coordinator of Student Health, Wellness, and Prevention

The job description for the coordinator of student health, wellness, and prevention states that the primary function of the position is to provide “technical, specialized, consultative, advisory, and planning services in the department of student services.” The essential job functions include: conducting immunization programs, providing training for health technicians and school nurses, preventing and controlling outbreaks of infectious disease, writing grant proposals, and serving as a resource regarding health, wellness, and prevention of tobacco and drug use.

The requirements for holding this position are the equivalent of a master’s degree in health education or a closely related field, and the possession of a valid California administrative services credential, pupil personnel services credential and/or a school nurse credential. The current coordinator was the lead nurse in North Sacramento school district prior to the creation of Twin Rivers USD.

The coordinator described her duties as overseeing the district’s nurses and health assistants, and coordinating the health screenings required for individual education plans (IEPs) and home hospital instruction. Included in these general responsibilities are: the supervision and coordination of nurse and health assistant assignments, providing training, and serving as a consultant and support to nurses, health assistants, other staff and parents. The coordinator is also responsible for the health care plans developed for students with medical issues such as diabetes, allergies, and asthma. During the 2011-12 school year, her department developed approximately 550 medical plans.

The coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that all mandated vision, hearing and health screenings are conducted annually. The chart below indicates the number of screenings done during the 2011-12 school year.

Type of Screening	# of Students Screened
Vision	8387
Hearing	9959
EP Initial Screening	558
IEP Triennial Screening	353
Kindergarten	1194
Oral	318
Total	20,769

If this position is to supervise district nursing services, a school nurse credential should be required and the job description should reflect this as a primary function of the position. This is particularly important as there are legal requirements in California Education Code 44267.5, 49422, 49423.5 and 49426; and California Business & Professions Code 2859, that RNs, LVNs, and other health services staff must be supervised by a credentialed school nurse or school physician.

## Special Education Department

The special education department serves approximately 3,572 students, or about 10.8% of the total enrollment, including two charter schools (Gateway and Heritage Peak) that provide special education services to their students through the special education department.

The department provides a continuum of services, including resource specialist, designated instruction, and transition. The department’s goals for the 2012-13 school year include improving communication with teachers and site administrators; analyzing the disproportionality of minority students assigned to special education; focusing on providing students with the least restrictive environment; and building capacity for students 18 years and older in transition programs.

The department is designated to have a director; as noted previously, that position is vacant and has been placed on hold. The director's job description includes responsibility for providing technical expertise, developing long- and short-term plans, and developing a department budget. The department also has 3.5 coordinators, eight program specialists, a secretary II, and five clerk III's.

The following table shows the special education department staffing in comparable districts.

District	Department reports to	Department Lead	Other Administrators	Other Certificated Support	Classified Support	Other
Lodi	Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education	Administrative Director, Student Services/SELPA	2 Coordinators	n/a	15	
Chino Valley	Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services	Director, Special Education	1 Coordinator	5 Program Specialists	7	
San Jose	Assistant Superintendent	Director	3 Managers	6 Program Specialists; 2 Behaviorists, 1 Workability Coordinator	5	2 Prog. Analysts

The coordinators' job description outlines their responsibilities as participating in the selection and evaluation of special education teachers, chairing IEP meetings, participating in due process hearings, complaint and compliance investigations, and assisting with the implementation of special education programs. Two of the directors previously worked in the Grant Union School District, one is from the North Sacramento School District, and one is from the San Diego Unified School District.

During FCMAT's fieldwork, the special education department interviewees noted they have worked to develop systems that are applicable from preschool to age 22. While they have made progress, they believe there is still much work to do. A perception was reported that when the district was formed, many of the special education processes and procedures came from an elementary perspective, particularly from the Rio Linda School District. Only recently has it been acknowledged that programs for secondary students need to be structured differently from those for elementary students. One example was the difference between developmental interventions and structuring a program that provides students access to the core curriculum needed for high school graduation.

Another issue brought forward was the ability of alternative programs to support students with special needs. Interviewees noted that the alternative schools used to support both resource specialist program (RSP) and special day class (SDC) configurations but recent cutbacks have reduced the option to RSP only. As a result, IEPs are being rewritten to allow students to access RSP in the alternative schools even though the students need more intensive service.

Department staff also feel that the Human Resources department lacks understanding of students with special needs. During the recent reductions in force, the Human Resources department did not place special considerations or credential requirements on teachers in alternative education. As a result, at least one teacher assigned to alternative education had an elementary teaching background and no interest in serving secondary students in an alternative setting.

The coordinators stated that the program specialists are very knowledgeable and their expertise has made the program work. Of the six program specialists interviewed, four were originally from Grant Union High School and two were from Rio Linda School District. They described their job as developing vertical curriculum collaboration between elementary, middle, and high special education programs. They described the importance of communication between teachers as the students "age up" through the educational system.

The specialists work to provide special education staff with the professional development they need. In particular, they have worked with teachers on the use of the new online IEP system and ensure that IEP teams develop legally defensible IEPs. The specialists are also integrally involved in monthly meetings for all staff involved with students with special needs and are particularly pleased with the improvement they have seen in the work and training of the paraprofessionals. The specialists pointed to the decrease in nonpublic school placements as evidence of the improvement of the district's special education programs.

The specialists are also responsible for the logistics of providing information, support, curriculum, and computers to sites. They are the first line of support to sites, students and parents and often serve as mediators of both parent and staff concerns. The specialists do not evaluate staff but they do make suggestions and recommendations to the evaluators.

Industry standard is to provide one program specialist per 650 special education students. Based on this ratio, it seems likely that the special education department could be reorganized and brought closer to the industry standard for staffing.

Because of time limitations, none of the clerical support for the special education department were able to be interviewed during the FCMAT fieldwork.

Given industry standards, the special education department appears overstaffed with 3.5 coordinators and eight program specialists. A reduction of one 1.0 FTE coordinator and 2.5 FTE program specialists would result in savings of \$91,692 and \$264,386 respectively. These estimates do not consider the effects of position bumping that may occur with a reduction in force.

## Early Childhood Education

The website lists the ECE department's purpose to "connect families with preschool, childcare, and other related services needed for the young child."

None of the staff from the ECE department were able to be interviewed during the FCMAT fieldwork. The department is staffed with a director, a principal, a coordinator, a program specialist, a community liaison, a budget analyst, an account clerk, a nurse, a health assistant, a secretary and two clerks.

The director's job description states that the primary functions of the position are to plan, organize, and supervise the instructional program for ECE programs. The position is listed as reporting to the assistant superintendent of elementary programs.

Comparable districts reported the following staffing for early childhood/child development programs.

District	Department Reports to	Department Lead	Other Administrators	Other Certificated Support	Classified Support
Chino Valley	Director, Health Services	Coordinator	0	0	1 Accountant 3 Technicians 1 Clerk
San Jose	Director, Curriculum, Instruction, EL Services	Manager	0	0	2 Registration Technicians
Lodi	Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Education	Director	n/a	n/a	n/a

Given these comparables, the ECE department appears to be overstaffed.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Audit payroll records to verify that all coordinators are paid correctly and that none receive stipends outside the salary schedule.
2. Review the minimum requirements/qualifications for the position of coordinator of student health, wellness and prevention.
3. Review the staffing allocations of the student services and special education departments. Consider reassigning the .5 FTE coordinator from special education to student services.
4. Write a job description for the program specialists assigned to special education.
5. Provide the student services coordinators with appropriate work spaces to conduct their job responsibilities.
6. Update and retile the assistant superintendent's job description to reflect the full scope of responsibilities, especially if responsibilities are added as a result of district reorganization.
7. Based on the review of staffing for the ECE department to comparable districts, consider assigning the budget analyst and account clerk to the business division. Industry standard is to centralize these positions in the business division in order to share resources, promote cross training and provide for better supervision over their accounting functions.

## Human Resources Division

The district's website states that the mission of the human resources division is as follows:

Twin Rivers Unified School District is proud to have exceptional teaching and support staff committed to our Districts mission of inspiring each student to extraordinary achievement every day. Twin Rivers' employees are focused on powerful and engaging learning experiences that prepare students for college, career, and life success.

The division's website includes links to the collective bargaining agreements, the employee relations council, employee work calendars, employment information, human resources forms, job descriptions, salary schedules, and substitute services.

The following table below lists the human resources division staff.

Manager	Support Staff	# in position	Dept. Total
Associate Superintendent	Administrative Assistant II*	1	4
	Personnel Specialist*	1	
	Clerk	1	
Director, Certificated Personnel	Administrative Secretary*	1	8
	Senior Human Resources Analyst*	1	
	Human Resources Analyst*	1	
	Human Resources Technician*	4	
Director, Classified Personnel	Administrative Secretary*	1	7
	Human Resources Analyst*	2	
	Human Resources Technician*	2	
	Workers Compensation Technician*	1	
Division Total			19

\*Confidential employees

The human resources division has three administrators, 15 confidential employees, and one classified employee. FCMAT was unable to interview seven of the division's staff members: the administrative secretary for the classified director, five technicians, and one analyst.

Comparable districts' human resources staffing information is included in the table below.

District	Lead Position	Other Management Positions	Classified Support Staff /(confidential)
San Jose	Director, Human Resources	Manager, Classified Personnel	23 (5)*
		Manager, Certificated Personnel	
		Manager, Induction and Recruitment	
Chino Valley	Assistant Superintendent	Director, Certificated HR & BTSA	13 (3)*
		Director, Classified	
		Director, Risk Management	
Lodi	Assistant Superintendent	Director, Personnel	13.5 (4)*

() Indicates number of confidential employees

In 2009, a study conducted by Total School Solutions (TSS) recommended that the position of associate superintendent, human resources be reconfigured as an assistant superintendent of human resources with a commensurate reduction in salary. The comparison conducted by FCMAT supports implementing this recommendation.

## Processes and Procedures

The human resources division is responsible for all personnel functions related to the district's employees, including hiring, labor negotiations, employee evaluations, discipline and separation, compensation studies, pre-employment screening, and credentials.

Human resources staff commented that the division has had difficulty creating and implementing processes because the previous superintendent did not support the associate superintendent. More than one person stated that the lack of support resulted in human resources decisions

constantly being overturned, and the division's ability to establish and maintain consistent processes was severely affected. There is a general consensus among the division staff that the division is full of talented employees.

Staff acknowledged that the uncertainty and inconsistency in processes and procedures have resulted in a perception that human resources personnel are unhelpful and incompetent. They feel that 2012-13 is the first in which they have been able to develop and implement processes with some assurance that they will be followed. They are hopeful that the associate superintendent, who was frequently described as a great leader, will have the opportunity to demonstrate her leadership skills.

The human resources staff noted that the new superintendent is not biased and treats all departments equitably. They perceive that the division is now part of the discussion and planning process rather than being required to implement decisions without input.

## **Hiring and Recruitment**

The associate superintendent noted that the 2009 study by TSS recommended that an outside consultant be brought in to recruit for positions because concerns had been raised that the district was being run by those who had worked with the previous superintendent in his previous district. Although some changes were made to hiring practices as a result of the report, the district has not yet standardized procedures due to a number of factors including political pressures and changes in the board. There is a perception among staff that some members of the board of trustees are attempting to micromanage the recruitment and hiring of staff. Examples given by several staff members included the recent board direction that no new employees may begin work prior to board approval; board members questioning why their friends did not qualify for positions and insisting on inserting them into the qualified list; and the board returning an employee to work who was not successful during his or her probationary period.

Requiring new employees to be approved by the board of trustees before beginning work is not standard industry practice. Staff noted that this practice has the potential to leave key positions vacant for long periods of time, and commented that prospective employees are leery of resigning from their current positions in advance of board approval, thus lengthening the time positions are vacant. It is also possible that prospective employees may find other positions after they are told the district would like to hire them but before the board approves their employment. Staff commented that waiting for board approval has left some employees waiting for weeks to earn more money and/or receive benefits after being promoted.

The human resources division's website states that all positions for which the district is recruiting are posted through EdJoin, an online application used by many California school districts. Applicants are directed to apply through EdJoin and the website specifically states that paper applications and documents are not accepted.

## **Certificated Employee Recruitment and Hiring**

The interview process for prospective certificated employees was recently changed to be more legally defensible and better align with the process used for classified employee interviews. The 2012-13 school year is the first year in which the following process has been implemented.

Certificated vacancies are created using a personnel action form and, if the position is new, a position control form. The approved position is posted on EdJoin for a minimum of five days. Once the position is closed, a personnel technician prescreens the candidates to ensure that they meet minimum qualifications and have the appropriate credential(s) for the position. The candi-



dates are then screened by the selecting administrator and two other administrators using a set of screening questions developed through EdJoin. The administrators each screen one-third of the candidates; candidates must receive a score of 75% or better to be invited to interview.

Principals who have vacancies at their sites then select the candidates to interview based on their site needs. They must pick at least three candidates to interview and add one additional candidate for each additional vacancy at their sites.

The following documents are used to conduct interviews for certificated positions: an interview outline; an interview schedule; and facilitator instructions. The facilitator for these interviews is usually a human resources analyst. After the interviews are completed, the panel selects their first and second choices. Reference checks are performed by one of the human resources technicians. If the references strongly support the candidate, the director offers the most qualified candidate the position. If there is a problem with the reference checks, the director either informs the administrator that the person will not be hired or shares the issues presented during the reference checks and allows the administrator to decide if he or she still wishes to hire the candidate.

### **Classified Employee Recruitment and Hiring**

The human resources analysts are responsible for recruitment and hiring. The process, which was described as very detailed, begins by posting a position on EdJoin, then screening candidates to ensure that they have the minimum qualifications including passing the basic skills test and required experience, and have submitted all documents.

Once candidates are deemed to have the minimum qualifications, they are given a job-specific test. The tests are developed using test items from the Cooperative Organization for the Development of Employee Selection Procedures (CODESP). The top five candidates are then interviewed for the position. If there are ties in ranking between or among the top five candidates, more candidates are interviewed. In accord with the district's contract with the California State Employees Association (CSEA), in-house candidates receive first consideration when applying for positions. CODESP interview questions are used as the basis for developing the district's interview questions; additional questions are developed in collaboration with a subject matter expert and then approved by the director of classified personnel.

Interview panels consist of either three or five members so that there cannot be a tie during the selection process. One of the panelists is a human resources analyst, who facilitates the interview, and ensures that it is conducted fairly and legally and that there is a healthy discussion of each candidate following the interview. After the discussion, an anonymous vote is taken and the panel's first and second choices are determined.

After an interview, the analyst is responsible for conducting reference checks and making an offer to the prospective employee. To make the offer, the analysts also determine the prospective employee's placement on the salary schedule. Throughout the process, the analysts are responsible for maintaining communication with the administrator for whom the employee will be working.

### **Labor Relations, Contract Administration, and Negotiations**

During FCMAT's interviews, the need to manage four contracts for the same employee group was discussed. When districts are merged, Education Code requires the new district to implement the original districts' contracts until new contracts are negotiated. As a result, employees with the same job classification were sometimes treated differently because they came from different districts. There was some agreement that the inconsistency in contracts gave the impression that the human resources division lacked competency.



The district's contract with the Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE) is current through June 30, 2014; the contract with Twin Rivers Police Officers Association (TRPOA) expired June 30, 2012; and the contract with CSEA Chapter 1717 is current through December 31, 2013. Negotiations with CSEA were not completed until March 2011, so the district was required to manage the four classified contracts until that time.

At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork, TRUE had filed 11 grievances for the 2012-13 school year, five of which had been closed. Five of these 11 grievances were filed in the 2011-12 school year; the remaining six were filed in October 2012, but five of these were withdrawn because the employees stated they had not filed grievances.

The relationship between the human resources division leadership and the CSEA was described as difficult and challenging. As previously mentioned, the contract with CSEA was settled in March 2011 only after the district and CSEA went into impasse. The lack of collaboration between human resources division leaders and the CSEA is perceived to affect the division's ability to conduct business in efficiently and effectively.

All human resources staff interviewed stated they were responsible for providing contract interpretation to administrators and staff. They noted that they provide information on where the language is located and the meaning and intent of the language. Some staff stated that contract language is discussed in division meetings to ensure consistency in the division's responses to questions.

## Collaboration

There was a consensus among human resources staff that when the unification occurred they were assigned to areas in which they had experience or interest. Staff agreed that the certificated and classified departments operate independently of one another because the nature of their work is so different. This perception and division has sometimes led to duplication of duties and inconsistencies in practice, and prevented cross-training of human resources staff. For example, a technician in the certificated department might have the same responsibility as an analyst in the classified department, creating the potential for inconsistent practices and possibly raising the issue of equal pay for equal work. Staff also sometimes feel that they do not have the information they need to respond effectively to employees' inquiries.

Teamwork has been a concern in the human resources division, and as a result the division has focused on teamwork and customer service during the past school year. In general, the staff feel they work well together in their individual departments, but there is little communication between the certificated and classified departments and at times a sense of division between the two. There is some curiosity among staff members in the two areas regarding how those in other area do things, but there is no regular, deliberate collaboration between the certificated and classified departments.

Staff stated that they provide good customer service, but indicated that administrators and employees do not like hearing that they cannot do what they want. Division staff have a perception that they have been unfairly targeted for criticism. The indicated that they often have to make difficult decisions based on contract language and legal constraints but are sometimes then blamed for following the law. Staff described human resources as a division that establishes policy and implements rules that people often perceive as unhelpful and impediments to action.

## Employee Discipline

There is a perception that some employees are treated differently than others and that the human resources division is responsible for this inequitable treatment. Human resources staff noted that they do not select who to discipline; issues are brought to them and they provide guidance, contract interpretation and recommendations. At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork there were nine disciplinary cases for certificated employees. Of these, four were recommended for dismissal, four for suspensions, and one was to be closed with no action taken. Of the six disciplinary cases in process for classified employees at the time of FCMAT's fieldwork, three were recommended for dismissal, one was scheduled for arbitration, and two had not responded to disciplinary letters from human resources.

## Certificated Personnel

FCMAT's interviews with human resources administrators and staff revealed that no one in the division has a teaching, counseling, or administrative credential. When the district was formed there was an assistant superintendent of employer/employee relations and human resources, who held an administrative credential. That person has since been transferred to a different division.

Section 80054.5(a) of Title 5 of the California Administrative Code states the following:

An individual must hold a Services Credential with Specialization in Administrative Services to provide the services described below in grades twelve and below, including preschool, and in classes organized primarily for adults:

1. Evaluating quality and effectiveness of instructional services at the school site level,
2. Evaluation of certificated personnel employed at the school site level, with the exception of the site administrator, and
3. Student and employee discipline services of certificated personnel at the school site level as found in subsections (b) (3) and (4) of this section.

Section 80054.5(b) of the California Administrative Code states the following:

The holder of a Services Credential with a Specialization in Administrative Services may provide the services described below in grades twelve and below, including preschool, and in classes organized primarily for adults.

1. Development, coordination, and assessment of instructional programs;
2. Evaluation of certificated and classified personnel;
3. Student discipline, including but not limited to suspension and expulsion, pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter 6 of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code commencing with Section 48900;
4. Certificated and classified employee discipline, including but not limited to suspension, dismissal, and reinstatement, pursuant to Chapters 4 and 5 of Part 25 of Division 3 of the Education Code commencing with Section 44800;
5. Supervision of certificated and classified personnel.

The legal restrictions cited above indicate that there should be at least one employee in the human resources division with an administrative credential so there is no question that the division's personnel can legally manage the evaluation and discipline of certificated employees.

## **Human Resources Positions**

### **Associate Superintendent, Human Resources**

The job description for this position states that its basic functions are planning, organizing, controlling, directing and administering the operations of the employee relations/human resources division. The current associate superintendent of human resources was hired in 2008 when the district came into being. She was previously employed in the North Sacramento School District as the interim superintendent, and before that was the associate superintendent of human resources. This position is supported by an administrative assistant II, a personnel specialist and a clerk.

The associate superintendent provided a list of the division's staff members and job responsibilities. Among the responsibilities listed for the associate superintendent are negotiations, contract management/administration, policy development, grievances, mediation, arbitration, legal issues, Title IX officer, and district representative for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) complaints. The position is responsible for overseeing recruitment, selection, discipline, evaluation and dismissal of employees. As a senior manager, the associate superintendent is also part of the superintendent's cabinet.

The associate superintendent described her first three years in this position as primarily focused on negotiations with the three collective bargaining associations. She is now focused on blending the practices in the division so that identical requirements are handled identically regardless of whether the employee is certificated or classified. For example, classified employees who have not updated their tuberculosis test must use three days of sick leave while they complete the test, after which time if the test is not completed the employee enters unpaid status until they are cleared to return to work. Certificated staff, on the other hand, receive constant reminders but no consequences if they do not comply.

To achieve consistent practices, the associate superintendent advised that human resources the directors discuss issues with their departments and determine the final decision regarding procedures in the human resources management meetings. The associate superintendent would like to lead the division away from a model in which staff are focused on ensuring compliance to a service model, in which staff will be focused on providing excellent service to their clients. For example, the service model would focus on resolving credential issues when the district's instructional model does not match the assigned teachers' credentials.

### **Administrative Assistant II**

The individual in this position formerly worked in the human resources department of the North Sacramento School District. This position supports the associate superintendent. The position's assigned responsibilities include updating collective bargaining agreements, serving as the district's secretary during negotiations with TRUE, and interpreting contracts when asked to do so.

This position also manages the job postings for management positions, assembles the division's board agendas, monitors the layoff process for certificated personnel, provides verification of employment, creates reports for state and federal agencies, and attends the division's managers' meetings.

The position is designated as confidential because it supports the associate superintendent, who is the district's lead negotiator with all employee associations. This is appropriate and in accord with the criteria for a confidential position defined in Government Code 3540 and Public Employee Relations Board Decision No. 736.

In addition to providing administrative support to the associate superintendent, the administrative assistant is also responsible for the division's website, updating board policies and administrative regulations pertaining to human resources, and monitoring the division's budget and expenditures. She serves as the district's liaison to TALX, a company used by many districts to their unemployment processes. The administrative assistant is also the custodian of record for the pre-employment/update reports the human resources division receives from the California Department of Justice and the FBI.

### **Personnel Specialist**

The job description for this position lists the following responsibilities: act as a support person for the associate superintendent, manage the district's equitable distribution plan, coordinate the district's certificated teaching recruitment and retention efforts, manage state reports, conduct research related to negotiations and policies, and respond to inquiries from bargaining units. The position is appropriately classified as confidential.

The equitable distribution plan in the district's Board Policy 4113 states the following:

In order to ensure that highly qualified and experienced teachers are equitably distributed among district schools, including those with higher than average levels of low-income, minority, and/or academically underperforming students, the Superintendent or designee shall: 1. Verify that all teachers of core academic subjects possess the qualifications of highly qualified teachers as required by NCLB or develop immediate and long-term solutions for ensuring that all core academic classes will be taught by highly qualified teachers; 2. To the extent possible, not assign teachers with provisional internship permits, short-term staffing permits, or credential waivers to schools that have 40 percent or higher poverty or are ranked in deciles 1-3 on the statewide Academic Performance Index; 3. To the extent possible, not place interns in high-poverty, low-performing schools in greater numbers than in schools with low poverty or higher academic achievement; 4. Compare teacher retention rates across district schools and develop strategies to recruit and retain experienced and effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

In addition to the responsibilities listed in the job description, the personnel specialist prepares handouts for all mandatory trainings, tracks mandatory sexual harassment training, processes and places student teachers, conducts customer service training, and handles beginning teacher support and assessment (BTSA) notifications and funding. She is also responsible for managing release time for employee union representatives.

The program specialist indicated that she performs many special projects assigned to her by the associate superintendent. These include investigating grievances; gathering information for EEOC complaints; investigating unfair labor practices complaints; and setting up meetings for arbitration and mediation, including doing the draw for arbitrators with the unions. She also collects information regarding classification studies, including data collection on comparable school districts.

When investigating grievances, the program specialist interviews principals, students and other employees as needed. She reported that she does not interview the grievant; that interview is conducted by the human resources managers.

### **Director, Certificated Personnel**

The job description for this position states that its main function are to plan, organize, control and direct certificated recruitment, staffing transfers and assignments; and manage evaluation activities. The major duties and responsibilities are focused on organizing and implementing recruitment, application, assignment and evaluation processes for certificated employees.

The director also indicated that she is responsible for working with administrators on discipline issues with certificated employees. She estimated that this work takes up about 75% of her time. She stated that she is responsible for working with administrators to prepare disciplinary letters and that she either writes a letter specific to the situation or sends sample letters for the administrator to use.

As the person responsible for discipline of certificated employees, the director often spends time counseling employees and working on investigations. Although most of the collective bargaining agreement with certificated staff was settled early in the district's formation, the discipline article was not settled until the 2-11-12 school year, so disciplinary action depended on an employee's previous district's collective bargaining agreement with certificated personnel.

Every August the director's department sends principals a list of certificated employees who must be evaluated in the coming school year. Principals can add employees to the evaluation cycle. The department also provides principals with a list of certificated employees who are eligible for the five-year evaluation cycle, and reminds principals of important dates in the evaluation cycle such as the deadlines for completing the first observation and for notifying the human resources division that they wish to non-re-elect a certificated employee.

If any certificated employees are likely to receive unsatisfactory evaluations, the director coaches the principals in writing an improvement plan, accessing support services and resources, and documenting interventions. If a certificated employee receives unsatisfactory evaluations two years in a row, the director works with the principal to move toward dismissal. In most cases, because of the interventions and documentation, employees resign or retire before they are dismissed.

The director is also responsible for certificated and classified substitute employees. Her primary responsibility is to work with substitute employees who have received negative evaluations. She meets with the employee, listens to their side of the issue, and communicates to them the outcome of the issue as well as consequences for any further negative evaluations.

### **Administrative Secretary II**

The job description for this position indicates it serves as secretary to one of the director III positions, each of which has responsibility over a major district function. The administrative secretary II assigned to the director of classified personnel is designated as confidential, but the main duties and responsibilities on the job description do not meet the criteria for a confidential position defined in Government Code 3540 and Public Employee Relations Board Decision No. 736.

The administrative secretary II assigned to the director of certificated personnel provides administrative support in the areas of grievances and disciplinary actions, which qualifies this position as confidential. She is also responsible for maintaining certificated seniority lists; the contract with TRUE; training new staff; and monitoring the certificated staff work flow including recruitment, credentials, and staffing allocations. The individual in this position formerly worked as a credentials analyst in the Grant Union High School District.

### **Senior Human Resources Analyst - Certificated**

The job description for this position describes its main responsibilities as leading the district's assignment monitoring and alternate credentialing program; providing expert advice in the alignment of master schedules and credentials; and leading the district's efforts in the equitable distribution of teachers. As noted previously, the personnel specialist is also responsible for the equitable distribution plan. In order to avoid confusion among staff, the district should identify one of these positions as the single point of contact for implementing and monitoring the equitable distribution plan. This position also provides technical expertise, advice and guidance to district managers regarding union and employee rights. Given this responsibility, the position is appropriately classified as confidential.

The person in this position was formerly an analyst in the North Sacramento School District, where she worked with both certificated and classified employees. She described her work with administrators and teachers as assisting with their issues and perceptions regarding credentials. She commented that administrators and teachers often do not understand the difference between No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements and being appropriately credentialed to teach a particular subject. She noted that teachers do not like to be told they are not qualified to do their jobs, and she has had to modify her approach to ensure compliance with NCLB regulations. She indicated that in some cases she has been unable to convince administrators and teachers of the importance of compliance, and as a result some credentialing issues remain unresolved.

The senior credential analyst stated that her understanding of master scheduling is important to her work and that the perspective of the curriculum and instruction division needs to be heard in human resources. She meets frequently with employees in curriculum and instruction who develop course descriptions so she can ensure that the courses they wish to implement can be staffed with appropriately credentialed teachers.

In addition to leading credential compliance work, this position facilitates employment interviews of certificated employees. She indicated that this provides an opportunity to experience the culture of various school sites.

### **Human Resources Analyst - Certificated**

The main functions of the human resources analyst as stated in the job description are to supervise and coordinate the activities of staff in administering personnel programs, including tasks related to collective bargaining. As do other human resources personnel, the individuals in this position interpret contract language for administrators and employees when asked. Because of this, the position is designated as confidential.

The major tasks performed by the analyst interviewed were process employees, including placing them on salary schedule; making salary changes based on updated information; developing plans to remedy credential issues; assisting employees with credential renewals; and reconciling site budgets and staffing with position control. This individual also monitors employee leaves, conducts reference checks, and facilitates site interviews of certificated personnel.

### **Human Resources Technician - Certificated**

The job description for this position lists its main functions as recruitment, selection, testing, credentialing and other human resources transactions. The technician interviewed during FCMAT's fieldwork focuses mainly on orientation, unemployment claims, employee badges, criminal background clearance, and maintenance of personnel files for employees whose last names begin with certain letters. The technician interviewed is also responsible for processing paperwork for the hiring of athletic coaches, including walk on coaches.



### **Director, Classified Personnel**

The job description for this position states that the director will plan, organize, control and direct the classified personnel program and coordinate the recruiting, interviewing, testing, selection and placement of classified personnel. The director is also responsible for contract interpretation, grievance processing, classified employee discipline, and workers' compensation.

A review of the director's log of 14 days of work indicates that this individual routinely authorizes personnel action forms; develops and reviews discipline letters to classified employees; responds via e-mails and telephone calls to a variety of matters including legal, grievance, and employee issues and requests; and meets with employees and administrators regarding layoffs, discipline, Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliance, and CSEA issues. The director formerly worked as the director of human resources for the Rio Linda School District, where her work was primarily with classified personnel.

### **Human Resources Analyst - Classified**

Two employees holding this position were interviewed. Both formerly worked in human resources, one as a technician at the North Sacramento School District and one as a technician II at the Rio Linda School District. In addition to working with recruitment and hiring, these two analysts are responsible for maintaining seniority lists, creating work calendars for classified employees, analyzing data for negotiations, interpreting contracts for managers and employees, and ensuring that employees on the re-employment lists are re-employed when appropriate.

### **Workers' Compensation Technician**

The job description for this position lists its main functions as performing responsible and technical functions pertaining to the district's workers' compensation program; providing assistance, counsel and information regarding claims to employees; and serving as the liaison between the district and insurance carriers. The technician is also responsible for ergonomic reports and the interactive process required by the ADA.

The employee in this position formerly worked in the Grant Union High School District, focusing on claims management. This individual's current position was originally assigned to the risk management department, but that department was dissolved in 2009 due to budget cuts and the risk management staff assigned to other departments.

The technician performs her assignments competently and independently. Her role is often to be an advocate for both injured employees and the district. She would like to take a more proactive role in injury prevention and claims management.

## **Recommendations**

*The district should:*

1. Review confidential position descriptions and assignments to determine whether position descriptions meet the criteria for a confidential position and to ensure that they are properly designated as such if needed.
2. Coordinate and standardize processes and practices across certificated and classified human resources departments.
3. Update the job descriptions of the directors of certificated and classified human resources functions to indicate that they report to the associate



superintendent, human resources rather than to the unfilled assistant superintendent of Employer/Employee Relations and Human Resources position. If the division's lead position is changed, update job descriptions accordingly.

4. Review the staffing assignments and configurations district configurations of human resources departments in the comparison districts, and consider assigning an assistant superintendent rather than associate superintendent to lead the department.
5. Review the management structure of the human resources division and assign at least one manager with an administrative credential to oversee the certified personnel department.
6. Assign an administrator to oversee and review collective bargaining agreements for administrators to ensure that there is consistent interpretation.
7. Develop a plan for cross-training and collaboration throughout the division.
8. Determine which employee or employees have what responsibility for the equitable distribution plan, and assign the work accordingly.
9. Develop an outreach plan for working with other departments so that the human resources division becomes a resource rather than being perceived as a hindrance to the district's work.

## Business and Support Services

### Budget and Accounting

An efficient and effective department is one in which the tasks or jobs match the unique experience and educational backgrounds of the employees. Because a perfect match is rare, there will always be some discrepancies between employee experience and the requirements to complete the job. Although cost is an important variable in examining a department for efficiency, it is not the most important factor when conducting an organizational review. The most critical variables pertain to a department's effectiveness in meeting objectives. FCMAT's review examined the following aspects of the department:

- The level(s) of congruent positions, duties and responsibilities with the district's goals and objectives.
- The lines of responsibility and whether they are delineated and understood by employees in the department
- The adequacy of staffing
- Determine if duplication exists in roles and or if gaps exist regarding critical tasks
- The type and adequacy of internal and external communications and whether they create an effective work environment.
- Evaluate the departmental comparisons from a cost perspective from similar districts of size and structure

The district's total staffing for management, certificated and classified employees for the 2012-13 adopted budget is projected to be 2,649.12 full-time equivalent positions (FTE), which is a decrease of 49.22 FTE from the close of fiscal year 2011-12. Staffing at non- school sites is based on the district's needs, and student-to-teacher ratios are used for school site staffing. The prior year staffing formula is used as the baseline for decisions to add or delete staff at school sites or departments.

After the board approves the district's budget, sites or departments can reallocate funds within their budgeted allocation. All sites and departments have online access to their budget information and can make budget transfers online if sufficient funds are not available. Staffing for each school site or department is based on enrollment projections prepared in November of the preceding budget year to help determine the basis for all expenditure and staffing decisions. The district uses the cohort survival method to project enrollment, but the multiyear financial projection in the adopted budget does not show any fluctuations in enrollment patterns for the current and two subsequent fiscal years.

The district's fiscal support services department is comprised of twelve management, 4 confidential and 52 classified employees with direct responsibility for the district's budget, financial accounting, state reporting, and payroll, accounts payable and purchasing functions. The Department is supervised by the Associate superintendent business support services. All other comparative districts include the facilities, maintenance, operations and transportation functions within the responsibilities of this position and are comparable with Twin Rivers for this position.

According to interviews with payroll department staff, since 2009-10 the department has been reorganized, staffing decreased by 3.0 FTE in 2009-10 and by an additional 2.0 FTE in 2010-11. The reductions in staffing were mainly due to declines in enrollment and continued state funding reductions. However, these reductions are not clearly documented on the district's synopsis of budget reductions over the last five years. Most reductions to positions are noted in the documentation as the closing of open positions for unrestricted and restricted funds. No other position changes were documented except the transfer of 1.0 FTE in accounts payable to the facilities department.

## **Fiscal Services Department Staffing and Structure**

### **Organizational Structure**

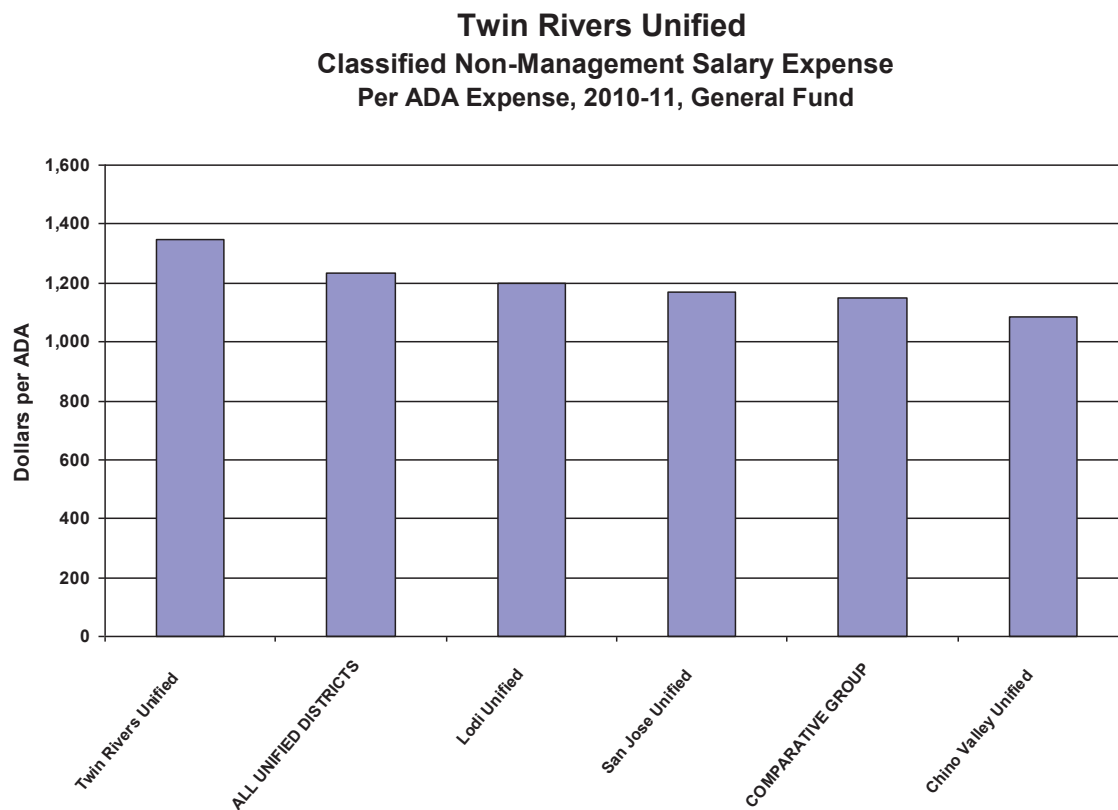
The district's organizational structure for the fiscal services department establishes the framework for leadership and the delegation of specific duties and responsibilities. The associate superintendent business support services position is responsible for budget, accounting, payroll, purchasing, facilities, maintenance, transportation, nutrition services, and related management tasks. As it does in most comparison districts, this position oversees all of the business functions.

The district's management positions are responsible for supervising employees and overseeing the work of the department for which they are responsible. They must ensure that staff members understand all district policies and procedures and perform their duties in a timely and accurate manner. Managers must also serve as a liaison between their department and other divisions to identify and resolve problems and design and modify processes and procedures as needed. Management positions should not be responsible for a department's routine daily functions; this responsibility should be assigned to department support staff.

A district's organizational structure must adapt to increases or decreases in enrollment. This has not occurred in the district: the fiscal services department has retained many positions

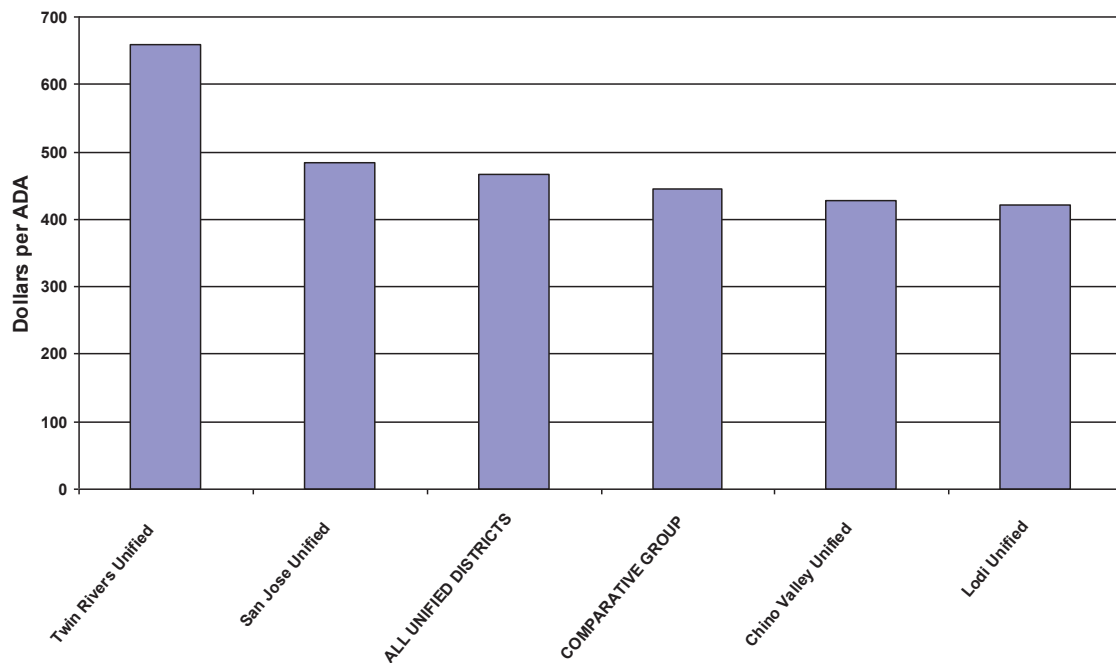
throughout the unification and thus has more than the comparison districts. The district was required to maintain all classified positions for two years following unification, pursuant to Education Code section 45121. According to district documentation, a savings of \$3,088,838 was derived from closing open positions and moving funding from unrestricted resources to restricted resources when the unification occurred in 2008. The district bases all expenditure and staffing decisions on its enrollment projections, but there is no change in the enrollment forecast for the current and two subsequent fiscal years.

The data from the comparison districts indicates that the district is overstaffed based on generally accepted theories of organizational structure and the standards used in other school agencies of similar size and type. The data in the comparative analysis of district income and expenditures (CADIE) reports shows that the district has the highest ratio of management and classified staff per average daily attendance (ADA).



Graph 8

**Twin Rivers Unified**  
**Administrator Salary Expense**  
**Per ADA Expense, 2010-11, General Fund**



Graph 9

### Staffing Comparisons

Data for a comparison of fiscal services department staffing was obtained from three unified school districts in California that have student enrollment and staffing levels similar to that of the Twin Rivers Unified School District. When comparing staffing of departments within the organization, the most widely used data is derived from districts of similar size (enrollment or ADA) and grade levels served. The comparison districts surveyed were Lodi, Chino and San Jose unified.

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

- Grade-level configuration
- Total student enrollment
- Total number of staff

### *Business Department Staffing Comparison*

District	Twin Rivers USD	Chino USD	Lodi USD	San Jose USD
Enrollment 2012-13	26,620	29,691	30,319	30,049
Total Department Employees	61 FTE	22 FTE	45 FTE	50 FTE
Staffing Ratio to ADA	436:1	1,349:1	673:1	601:1
Base Revenue Limit per ADA-2010-II Data	\$7,186.69	\$6,342.04	\$6,347.91	\$6,351.97
Chief Business Official	Associate Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent (1)	Chief Business Official (1)	Chief Business Official (1)
Budget	Executive Director (1)	Director (1)	Budget Director (1)	Directors (3)
	Director of Categorical (1)	Classified (6)	Classified (3)	Classified (10)
	Director Financial Services (1)			
	Manager A/P (1)			
	Director Business Services (1)			
Accounting		Manager (1)	Controller (1)	Administrator (1)
	Classified (22)	Classified (5)	Classified Supervisor (1)	Classified (19)
			Classified (12)	
Payroll	Payroll Supervisor (1)		Payroll Manager (1)	Administrator (1)
	Classified (13)	Classified (8)	Classified Supervisor (1)	Classified (7)
			Classified (9)	
Purchasing	Director of Purchasing (1)		Director of Purchasing (1)	Manager (1)
	Warehouse Supervisor (1)		Classified Supervisor (1)	Classified (7)
	Manager Contracts (1)		Classified (13)	
	Classified (16)			

**Notes:** *Only one of the three comparative districts has a risk management department.*

*Chino – The accounting manager oversees payroll staff and the director of business services supervises budget, attendance and all other accounting functions.*

*Lodi – The position of chief business official is currently vacant.*

*San Jose – The district includes one director level position as the internal auditor.*

*Twin Rivers - The classified positions for budget and accounting are combined under the accounting section.*

The comparative staffing survey indicates that the district has more FTE positions in its business services department than the three comparison districts in all four areas: budget, accounting, payroll and purchasing. The district's business services department has a staff-to-student ratio of 1-to-443, which is higher than that of any of the three comparison districts. The Chino Valley Unified School District had the lowest business department staffing ratio of 1-to-1,349.

When comparing staffing, it is critical to keep in mind that during the last five years state budget reductions have changed the way school districts operate and how they are staffed. Severe state budget reductions have forced many districts to reduce staff at the district office and sites, and often implement furlough days and salary reductions, to sustain financial solvency. As a result, districts may not be staffed at optimal levels compared to previous fiscal years.

The business and support services department is responsible for the budget, accounting, payroll and purchasing for all funds. The department uses the Quintessential School System (QSS) financial software with the new QCC interface for financial reporting requirements. The department consists of 10 management personnel (excluding facilities managers) including an associate superintendent business support services, executive director business services, director financial services, director categorical programs, director business services, manager accounts payable, payroll supervisor, purchasing director, contracts manager and warehouse supervisor.

The comparison data on staffing and functions indicates that the district is overstaffed in management and classified employees. The comparative data for districts of similar size and structure supports a top business management position and dividing the budget and accounting

duties between two director level positions with, management-level support staff in supervisor positions in payroll and purchasing.

FCMAT's interviews and review of the district's management-level job descriptions and work flow requirements support eliminating of the director of business services position, which has no direct line supervision of subordinate personnel; eliminating the accounts payable manager position or merging it with the supervisor accounting position in the facilities department; and eliminating the director categorical budgets position and restructuring its responsibilities under the executive director fiscal services position. The merger of the accounts payable and supervisor of accounting positions in facilities is suggested because of the lack of construction projects, the district's inability to issue general obligation bonds, the lack of developer fees due to a local building moratorium, and the lack of state facilities funding.

The district has eliminated categorical funding and shifted many funds from restricted to unrestricted resources using Tier I, II, and III flexibility authorized during the last five years. In fiscal year 2008-09, Section 15 of Senate Bill (SB) X3 4 authorized complete flexibility in the use of funds appropriated in 42 budget act items. For fiscal years 2008-09 through 2012-13, these 42 programs have been reclassified from restricted to unrestricted and are exempt from Education Code program or funding requirements. Senate Bill 70 extended the flexibility options for all districts through fiscal year 2014-15 fiscal year. The district indicated that it moved a total of \$26.8 million in Tier III state funds from restricted to unrestricted programs and that it continues to track all Tier III programs in case they are required to revert back to unrestricted sources. Because of this, the district could eliminate the director of categorical projects position, the functions of which are normally performed by one of the other manager positions.

The comparison also indicates that the district is overstaffed in classified support positions for business support services. Similar to the merging of the accounts payable management positions in the business office and facilities department, the district would benefit from merging the accounts payable technician position in the facilities department with the accounts payable position in the business office. Both the staffing comparison data and the district's lack of construction projects support this change, which would eliminate one FTE position for an annual savings of approximately \$106,477 in salary and benefits. The payroll department is also overstaffed and as a result the district would benefit from eliminating two full time positions from this department for an annual savings of approximately \$154,218.

Multiple employees indicated that there is a lack of proper training for newly hired employees and substitute employees in the business department. As the organization continues to change by either reducing or adding positions, it is essential that any changes in employees' roles and responsibilities are clarified. It is also critical that, as positions are merged or reduced, job descriptions are revised to include any changes in functions for each position.

Payroll and benefit technicians reported that the payroll deadlines are unrealistic and that additional system and technical training is needed. Communication is often unclear and often consists only of e-mail from the supervisor. Employees indicated that supervisors hold only two meetings per year with subordinate employees in the payroll department.

The human resources and payroll departments lack standard operating processes and procedures, and there is considerable strain between the two departments regarding communication and timelines. Many of these issues could be resolved if the two departments were communicating more effectively and had defined timelines for processing information from human resources to payroll.

Employees' time cards are submitted to the payroll department at various times of the month and often lack budget codes. As a result, the payroll technicians spend valuable processing time tracking down the appropriate budget codes. Creating an electronic time card would help alleviate this process and help the district produce an employee absence report.

The business services department also lacks effective communication with schools and other departments regarding payroll deadlines and due dates for time card processing through payroll. This often results in time cards being submitted late and missing the final payroll run. In addition, payroll staff often processes payroll and time cards on the final audit day, which should be reserved for verification and final audit processes. The practice results in additional errors.

The district lacks a board policy regarding proper management and use of compensatory and off duty absences. Compensated absences include vacation that employees had earned as of June 30, 2012. The district is required to pay an employee for accrued vacation, but most employees who separate from the district take their earned vacation days off in subsequent years rather than taking a cash payment. However, employees are paid at the end of the fiscal year for any unused compensatory time, which creates an unnecessary fiscal impact on the district. In addition, management employees under contract are allowed to accrue compensatory time in addition to annual vacation allowances, which is unusual. The district's June 30, 2011 audit indicates that it had an outstanding liability of \$1,923,338 for compensated absences. This liability could be reduced by scrutinizing the use and allowance of compensatory time and adopting a board policy that requires employees to use their allocated vacation time within a specified period.

FCMAT reviewed absence tracking reports for management and classified employees. Absence tracking needs to be monitored to ensure that employee leave is monitored. The district's policies and administrative regulations regarding employee leave and compensatory time need to be made clear to all employees, and business department supervisors need to be trained in the policies. An effective policy would limit the amount of compensatory or vacation time an employee could carry over from one fiscal year to the next to ten days and establish reminders to employees regarding this.

The district was unable to provide salary schedules for coaching or extra duty stipends. Any payments made to employees need to be aligned with board-approved salary schedules or specific reference to the collective bargaining agreement.

To meet monthly budget, accounting and reporting deadlines, the district must ensure sufficient cross-training of employees and provide for proper internal controls. The district should also consider reassigning and reorganizing some of the director- and management-level duties, including reclassifying, merging or eliminating several positions as indicated above. If the district implements the staffing recommendations below for the business services department, it will need to ensure that training is provided to the department's staff members for all their assigned areas of responsibility and that managers provide clear direction and oversight.

The business services department lacks desk manuals that include step-by-step procedures for each job duty. Desk manuals can help ensure proper internal controls, provide a better understanding of each position's responsibilities, and help employees complete payroll functions when the employee normally assigned to a particular duty is absent.



## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Combine the duties and responsibilities of the director of business services position with those of the positions of executive director and director of financial services position, and either eliminate the former position or reduce staffing through attrition.
2. Consolidate the duties and responsibilities of the accounts payable manager position with those of the supervisor of accounts payable position in the facilities department.
3. Provide payroll staff with professional development training that includes how each payroll screen operates, how to interpret daily payroll edit reports, how to create custom searches and how reports can be used before and after the final payroll is processed.
4. Encourage the staff to attend California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) workshops or purchase the workshop training guide, Payroll Concepts and Payroll Reporting & Compliance for California Schools.
5. Consider holding weekly meetings with key personnel from payroll, human resources, and fiscal services to discuss current issues that affect employee status or other important department projects or deadlines.
6. Review payroll deadlines and create two deadlines: one for when payroll documents from school or work sites are due to the payroll department (e.g., time cards or sheets and employee absence slips); and another for when documents are due from human resources to payroll (e.g., new-hire paperwork and electronic change of status). Set the due date for time cards or sheets and employee absence slips at least five days before the county office payroll deadline, and the deadline for documents from human resources at least three days before that deadline. This will allow payroll staff to meet all county office payroll deadlines and still allow for last-minute documents.
7. Assign the payroll, human resources and fiscal services departments to collaborate to develop updated desk manuals that include step-by-step procedures, sample documents, recovery and correction processes for immediate reference and training.
8. Consider creating and using a payroll list or e-mail group that includes school timekeepers, office managers and administrators so that important information and reminders can be sent to all affected individuals quickly. For example, deadline reminders can be sent for time cards and, employee absence slips when important fiscal and calendar year-end information is due.
9. Eliminate the position of director of categorical budgets position and distribute the duties of the position among the executive director of fiscal

services and director of financial services position. Additional savings may be generated by charging a portion of the position to categorical programs.

10. Work with the human resources department to develop salary schedules for coaching and extra duty stipends.
11. Develop board policy and administrative regulations to provide guidance for managing compensatory time and vacation time and to limit the amount carried over from one fiscal year to the next.

## Purchasing and Warehouse

The district operates its purchasing, warehouse and print shop services at the facility on Winona Way in North Highlands. Staffing for the department consists of the director of purchasing, one contracts manager whose duties include E-Rate purchases, one buyer, two purchasing technicians, one warehouse supervisor, one warehouse lead, two receivers, and ten warehouse delivery drivers. It is the responsibility of the purchasing department to establish standards to ensure that they obtain the best quality, delivery, timeliness, product(s), prices and suppliers. The purchasing department manages the district's copier lease program, site requisitions and contracts. All of the districts purchasing commitments are made using an approved purchase order and number assigned by the purchasing department.

The district's purchasing and warehouse departments are centralized, and all non-stock requisitions originate at sites and are transmitted manually to the purchasing department. Department staff verify the account number, and the system assigns a purchase order number. Accounting then mails orders directly to vendors, including any attachments needed due to bidding requirements.

Purchasing staff reported that the district's purchasing process is paper-driven, meaning sites and department forward requisitions for approval via the inter-office mail. Once the requisition reaches accounting, problems with insufficient funds or incorrect coding on the requisition are identified, then the requisition is either corrected by the technician or sent back to the initiator with a request for a coding correction or budget transfer. Verification of fund availability and account coding are both performed manually by purchasing department staff. Although the budget may be sufficient to cover the purchase when the school site sends the manual purchase requisition, it may not be adequate by the time the requisition is processed and entered into the purchasing module as a purchase order.

Implementing an online purchasing system would speed data input and eliminate unnecessary paperwork for both the sites and purchasing department. An integrated system such as QSS would provide automatic verification of the availability of funds and validate the account code when the site or department prepares the requisition for supplies or services. If funds are not available, the system will automatically notify the user that a budget transfer is required prior to processing. This type of automated system can also encumber funds immediately so that they are not depleted after a requisition is submitted but before it is approved.

An online purchasing system would also allow the purchasing department to access each online requisition input by sites or departments, thus eliminating the need for additional data entry. When a purchase order is completed, the online system liquidates the previously encumbered funds and encumbers the correct funds. Implementing this type of functionality will improve the efficiency and timeliness of purchasing supplies and services and better sustain the district's available resources.

Additional efficiencies could be gained by replacing manual signatures for all purchase orders with digital signatures. Sites and departments cannot currently access and enter requisitions into an online purchasing system, and thus cannot track requisitions in a timely manner. As a result, delays occur between the submission of requisitions and the encumbrance of the purchase order.

The QSS financial system with the QCC interface has an online purchasing module that would enable the district to establish route approvals based on the size of the purchase (e.g. purchases costing more than \$15,000 require approval from the associate superintendent of business) or sources of funds (e.g. categorical funds may require an additional approval for program compliance). The district needs to fully implement the QCC online purchasing module so that all sites and departments can enter purchase requisitions into the system, track their progress, and avoid delays in processing purchasing transactions. The director responsible for purchasing should oversee this implementation.

The district maintains an inventory of commonly used supply items at its warehouse. The list of warehouse items includes all supplies available, and daily stock adjustments are entered into the QCC system. Sites cannot currently enter or send requisitions to the Purchasing Department electronically for approval by their supervisor. Providing online access to the sites would streamline the process and allow the purchasing department to update the requisition to a purchase order in the financial software when it is approved. The district should consider implementing a pilot program of online requisitions process for stock items from the warehouse inventory.

As new warehouse items become available, updates are considered for the warehouse catalog. Schools or departments may recommend in writing additional items they would like the warehouse to stock. The warehouse department reviews these requests to determine if the item would have widespread use and if there is a significant benefit to adding the item. If turnover of a particular item is not sufficient to warrant warehousing, it is discontinued.

The warehouse also manages all fixed assets, surplus property, and e-waste for recycling. The department provides daily delivery of U.S. mail, warehouse items and documents to all district sites using 10 delivery drivers. Although this is efficient it is also costly. The number of deliveries per week could be reduced through the use of online systems, digital documents, and e-mail.

The warehouse has sufficient square footage and office space to accommodate additional functions or departments. For example, the information technology department and much of the remaining maintenance personnel could be moved to this site. This would give eliminate the cost of operating multiple sites and give these departments access to the materials and supplies in the warehouse, which would save time and money and increase efficiency.

The district spends a significant amount of staff time and money moving paper from desk to desk in an age of digital transmission. This is expensive, inefficient, and creates frustration for employees, especially when districts' systems can be set up to order on line, track the order in real time, and receive orders in an expedited manner. The district needs to implement a complete district-wide digital document management and archiving solution. Effective document management software would allow the district to ensure proper procedures by including approval and routing systems, audit trails, and the ability to securing documents with passwords.

The district's current manual document management and storage creates the need for a significant amount of storage space. A digital solution could reduce the amount of storage space needed, allow documents to be preserved longer, and reduce the amount of time it takes to access stored documents for employees and customers.

## Bidding

The purchasing department is responsible for ensuring that all district goods and services are obtained through a uniform standard and unbiased process in accordance with applicable laws and appropriate business practices. Currently, separate departments, such as the facilities department, issue their own contracts, increasing the likelihood that the appropriate documents with the correct Education Code and government code sections may not be used. Because these are legal documents, subject to potential litigation and judicial review, the potential risks of individualized contracts outweigh the benefits.

Public Contract Code sections 20111 and 22002 require school districts to put out to bid and award to the lowest responsible bidder any contract for \$15,000 or more for the construction, reconstruction, erection, renovation, alteration, improvement, demolition, or repair of publicly owned, leased or operated facilities. Public Contract Code section 20116 prohibits splitting or separating into smaller work orders or projects any work, project, service or purchase for the purpose of evading the law that requires competitive bidding.

FCMAT reviewed documentation indicating that contracts in the facilities department are frequently bid without any input from the purchasing department. No single person or department should be able to place orders or secure contracts for goods and services, prepare receiving or completion documents, and verify payments. These functions need to be separated to prevent an employee from creating a fictitious contract obligating the district and resulting in subsequent payments. The separation of these duties is considered essential for proper internal controls and is a primary deterrent to fraud and abuse. This issue was a primary concern in the Sacramento Grand Jury Report that focused on contracts in the facilities department.

The district's departments are not always notified in advance of scheduled bid dates and times. The purchasing department does not consistently have on file or receive from the facilities department documents regarding the development of specifications, vendor listings, date and time of any bids or submissions in response to requests for proposals. Regularly scheduled meetings of the facilities, fiscal services and purchasing departments are also lacking. Regular meetings would help ensure that proper bidding, budget and payment processes are set up and followed, that progress is evaluated, and that processes are improved if necessary. These meetings could help departments address specific issues such as upcoming bids or requests for proposals, contract questions, funding issues for specific projects, proper segregation of duties, internal controls, and fiscal oversight.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Fully implement the QSS financial system's QCC online purchasing module so that all sites and departments can enter purchase requisitions into the system, track their progress, and avoid delays in processing purchasing transactions. The online purchasing system should be implemented in one or more schools as a pilot program before district-wide implementation.
2. Consider holding monthly meetings of the purchasing and business services departments with the facilities department, and having the purchasing department assist in the preparation of bid documents, contract awards and purchase orders.

3. Implement a three-day per week delivery schedule and reduce the number of delivery drivers by 2.0 FTE positions.
4. Implement a complete districtwide digital document management and archiving system.
5. Implement the use of the QCC online requisition module with a multilevel approval process. Implement the system as a pilot program in one or more schools before districtwide implementation.

## Facilities Planning and Construction

FCMAT reviewed numerous documents and interviewed 19 facilities department employees including the assistant superintendent of facilities, senior manager, facilities projects, director of maintenance, routine restricted maintenance manager, supervisor of resource conservation, supervisor of accounting, facilities, accounting technicians and account clerks.

The district's facilities planning and construction department and maintenance and grounds department ultimately report to the assistant superintendent of facilities. School facilities construction has slowed in recent years, and the district has no active projects or sources of funding to carry out projects in the near future.

With the retirement of the district's assistant superintendent for facilities, the district has an opportunity to restructure this department. The district would be better served by having the director of maintenance and grounds, and the director of facilities planning and construction department positions report to the associate superintendent of business rather than to the assistant superintendent for facilities. The director of facilities planning and construction services position is currently vacant and needs to be filled.

If the district does not fill the assistant superintendent for facilities position after the current assistant superintendent retires, it will save an estimated \$175,452 annually. This estimate does not include the effects of promotions or increases in other positions' salaries and benefits that may occur with a reduction in force.

If the senior manager, facilities projects is promoted to the director of facilities planning and construction services position, the district could eliminate the senior manager, facilities projects position. This would result in an estimated annual savings of \$99,824. This estimate does not include the effects of other promotions or increases in salaries and benefits that may occur with a reduction in force.

The facilities planning and construction department is also staffed with one secretary II, one project analyst, one facilities accounting supervisor, one accounting technician and one account clerk II position. Eliminating the assistant superintendent of facilities position as discussed above may enable the district to eliminate the administrative assistant position that supports it. Both the director of maintenance and grounds and the director of facilities planning and construction services already have clerical support from the secretary I and/or secretary II positions. Eliminating the administrative assistant position would result in a net annual savings of \$75,305. This estimate does not consider the effects of promotions or increases in other positions' salaries and benefits that may occur with a reduction in force.

## Facilities Internal Controls

Under its current operational procedures, the facilities department has complete independence in its to its operations, programs, activities and systems under review; this arrangement excludes critical aspects of the business department, and in many instances the facilities department operates as if it is not subject to restriction in the scope of its work. Although the superintendent provides guidance regarding the scope of work the facilities department performs, the current reporting structure includes internal control and organizational weaknesses in the facilities and business departments that will affect the district's fiscal condition if not corrected.

Internal controls consist of policies and procedures designed to provide management with reasonable assurance that a department achieves its objectives and goals. Internal controls include hard controls such as segregation of duties and ensuring that the appropriate laws and regulations are followed, and soft controls such as management tone, performance evaluations, training programs, and maintaining established policies, procedures and standards of conduct.

The internal control environment also includes the integrity, ethical values and competence of personnel; the philosophy and operating style of management; the way management assigns authority and responsibility and organizes and develops personnel; and the attention and direction provided by the governing board and executive management.

The business department has overall responsibility for all financial functions, and to evaluate the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information, including the building funds. The business department is ultimately responsible for the security of and accountability for assets and for the oversight of all the district's financial functions. It is important to understand the internal control relationship between various sources and uses of construction funds and how they interact with and affect the needs and requirements of the facilities, business and purchasing departments. In the case of new construction or modernization and rehabilitation of existing facilities, the facilities department is responsible for ascertaining proper compliance with established policies, regulations and laws, which could have a significant effect on the district's operations.

The identifiable facility indicators, such as proper segregation of duties, compliance with competitive bid requirements with the Public Contract Code, proper contract administration and project close out, show that the facilities department's operations present an acceptable level of risk to district operations. However, the district would benefit from strengthening internal controls, particularly in the areas of communication, bidding practices and state Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) reporting requirements.

The amount of interdepartmental functions and interactions between the facilities, business and purchasing departments is based on a variety of factors such as the governing board's goals and objectives, the potential impact of current and future financial risk, the adequacy of internal control procedures, prior audit findings, complaints or concerns, and the availability of district resources. For example, the district's facilities master plan will require the proper funding and joint planning by all three departments, but the current arrangement of functions does not provide for this.

The final outcome and approved plan needs to be developed jointly by both departments, and reviewed and approved by the governing board. The facilities master plan will need to be updated regularly because the focus and timing of strategic planning can evolve with new issues that result in moving or changing the district's resources.



On many occasions, the accounts payable and purchasing departments return invoices to the facilities department because of a lack of budgeted funds, or because purchase orders or the required supporting documents are not provided. There is no systematic process to account for all invoices received in either the accounts payable or facilities department. The facilities department staff should make sure the supporting documents for contracts meet the district's board policy prior to approval by the governing board and that supporting documentation related to the financial aspects of facilities operations are reviewed jointly with the assistant superintendent of business services. The business and facilities departments need to establish cooperation and communication.

Because of the reduction in the number of facilities projects, the district may also wish to consider moving the accounting functions in the facilities planning and construction department into the fiscal services department. Many of the duties that the facilities accounting supervisor, accounting technician and account clerk II perform are accounting functions and should be located in the fiscal services department. This would also enable staff to perform other duties until the district can issue its remaining GO bonds or receive funding from the state through the School Facilities Program.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Consider eliminating the position of the assistant superintendent for facilities.
2. Consider eliminating the position of administrative assistant to the assistant superintendent for facilities.
3. Develop an action plan for implementing and strengthening internal controls, basing priorities on the risk identified by FCMAT.
4. Fill the vacant director of facilities planning and construction services position.
5. If the senior manager, facilities projects is promoted to the director of facilities planning and construction services position, consider eliminating the senior manager, facilities projects position.
6. Relocate accounting personnel in the facilities department to the Fiscal Services Department with the exception of the Account Clerk III, who should remain in the Facilities Department to process use of facilities request, developer fees and maintain the department's geographic information system (GIS).

## Maintenance

Adequate building and grounds maintenance is essential to preserve the community's investment in the district's capital facilities and to provide a positive teaching and learning environment for staff and students. The flexibility provisions recently passed by state lawmakers allow school districts to reduce their routine restricted maintenance account to less than 3% of their total general fund expenditures, which has helped school districts remain fiscally solvent. However, building maintenance has suffered.



Deferred maintenance funds are now considered Tier III program funding under the State Budget Act and can be used for any educational purpose through fiscal year 2014-15. The district is moving an estimated \$775,000 in funds received for deferred maintenance from the general fund to the deferred maintenance fund to carry out maintenance projects. However, the matching deferred maintenance funding from the state has been suspended in accord with Tier III flexibility guidelines. The district will need to include its contribution to the deferred maintenance fund in its multiyear financial projections effective with the 2014-15 fiscal year.

The district budgets 2.16% of total general fund expenditures in its routine restricted maintenance account (RRMA). Although the RRMA budget is under the director's control, responsibility for the deferred maintenance budget currently resides with the assistant superintendent of facilities. The director of maintenance does not have access to both budgets. Having such access is necessary to plan for ongoing and preventive maintenance of the district's facilities.

The maintenance department does not have an equipment or vehicle replacement schedule, and many pieces of equipment are not working or in disrepair. In addition, 18 vehicles in the department's fleet are inoperable.

The director of maintenance has been in this position since the inception of the district and was formerly the director of maintenance for the Grant Joint Union High School District. The director estimates that the district's maintenance staffing has been reduced from 81 FTE maintenance and grounds staff at the district's inception to 56 FTE staff at present.

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 in carrying out their trade, and thus cannot be used interchangeably for any task. As of November 2012, the district was staffed with 34 maintenance personnel as well as one clerk, one secretary, one manager and one maintenance buyer. The 34 maintenance staff are composed of the following:

- Carpenters (5)
- Electrical (4)
- Low voltage (3)
- Glazing and locksmith (5)
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) (3)
- Painting (5)
- Plumbing (5)
- Roofing (2)
- Welding (2)

The district maintains 3,255,080 square feet of building space, including 50 school sites, on approximately 788.32 acres. The industry standard calls for a minimum of one maintenance worker for each school site based on a survey of comparable California school districts. Thus for a district the size of Twin Rivers Unified, the maintenance department should be staffed with 50 full time maintenance staff. Even if this number is reduced by the current revenue limit deficit of .77728 (presuming that all operation areas shared equally in reduction in force), the maintenance department would need 38.864 FTE employees to be adequately staffed.

The flexibility to reduce the RRMA will expire at the end of fiscal year 2014-15. It would benefit the district to add maintenance personnel when it is required to restore the RRMA to 3% of its total general fund expenditures. Because the maintenance department already has a number of personnel dedicated to specific trades, the district would benefit from adding general maintenance employees.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Develop an equipment replacement schedule for the maintenance department.
2. Designate as surplus and dispose of inoperable vehicles in its maintenance fleet.
3. Assign responsibility for both the routine restricted maintenance account and the deferred maintenance fund budgets to the director of maintenance.
4. Show its contribution to the deferred maintenance fund and restore the routine restricted maintenance account to 3% of general fund expenditures in its multiyear projections.
5. Add general maintenance personnel when it is required to increase its routine restricted maintenance account to 3% of general fund expenditures.

## Custodial and Grounds

### Grounds

Success in grounds management depends largely on unpredictable circumstances such as weather and the vulnerability of plants and pests. It also depends on well-trained personnel with skills in a variety of areas who can maintain educational facility grounds in a visually appealing and environmentally sensitive manner.

Like other maintenance and operations functions, staffing for grounds-related services tends to vary among California school districts. The most common factors affecting staffing levels for grounds crews at individual schools include the following:

- The acreage of the school site
- The number and types of outdoor spaces to be maintained
- The type and extent of natural and hardscape features
- The extent to which grounds crews perform unrelated tasks

As of November 2012, the district was staffed with 10 groundskeepers, including one lead; five irrigation repair specialist; and one grounds supervisor, for a total of 16. The California Association of State Business Officials (CASBO) does not have a formula for grounds maintenance staffing; however, the Florida Department of Education has performed extensive research in this area and included its findings in a document titled *Maintenance and Operations Administrative Guidelines for School Districts and Community Colleges*, which includes a staffing formula for school district grounds maintenance personnel.

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, general grounds functions are performed by school custodians while large open areas and athletic fields are maintained by district grounds crews.

The recommended formula for the number of specialized and athletic field groundskeepers is the total acreage of the school facility divided by 40, plus 1.0 FTE groundskeeper, and an additional 1.0 FTE groundskeeper for every 500,000 square feet of athletic fields used for competition.

The district maintains a total of 19,094,667 square feet of playing fields for athletic competition. Based on this measurement, FCMAT calculates that the district should have 53.57 FTE grounds staff. If this number is reduced by the current revenue limit deficit of .77728 (presuming that all operation areas shared equally in reduction in force), the department would need 41.63 FTE staff. The grounds staffing is detailed in the following table:

### ***Grounds Staffing Formula***

Type			
District Acreage	736	40	19.40
Total Square Feet - Athletic Fields	19,094,667	500,000	34.17
Other District Facilities	----	---	---
Total Staffing Requirements			53.57
Total Staffing Requirements, Reduced by Deficit Factor of 0.77728			41.63

### **Custodial**

The district employs 46 FTE day or head custodians and 37 night custodians. Each site is staffed with a full-time day (or lead) custodian and full-time night custodian. Each site also has a part-time night custodian who works from two to eight hours per day depending on the enrollment at the school site.

Custodians report directly to the custodial manager and the director of operations. The principals indirectly supervise the custodial staff at their sites. All lead custodians are evaluated by the director of operations with input from the site principal. Similarly, all night custodians are evaluated by the custodial manager with input from the site administrator.

For this model to be viable, school site and district administrators must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and communicate effectively with each other regarding their expectations for custodial staff. Because custodial functions are essential to the physical plant's operation, administrators need to do the following:

- Ensure that facilities are safe, clean, orderly and attractive.
- Create educational environments that are well maintained, enhance learning, reflect the value of public education and preserve capital investments.
- Ensure that general housekeeping and other support functions are performed as needed.
- Foster a sense of professionalism and pride among the custodial staff.

The district staffs custodians at its school sites as follows:

- a. Each elementary school and junior high school site has a head custodian assigned to work during the day and a four-hour custodian assigned at night.
- b. The high school sites are staffed as follows:
  - i. Grant High School has one lead custodian, one day custodian and 3.5 FTE night custodians, for a total of 5.5 FTE.

- ii. Highlands High School has one lead custodian and two night custodians for a total of 3.0 FTE.
- iii. Foothill High School has one lead custodian and three night custodians for a total of 4.0 FTE.
- iv. Rio Linda High School has one lead custodian and three night custodians for a total of 4.0 FTE.

Due to staffing reductions, custodial operations have been curtailed significantly. Restrooms, cafeterias and locker rooms are cleaned daily at the elementary, junior high and high schools, as are elementary school daycare facilities. However, regular classrooms at the elementary and junior high schools are cleaned every third or fourth day, and high school gyms and classrooms are cleaned every other day.

Over the last four years, many school districts have made significant reductions to custodial services because of the state budget crisis. Some school districts have changed to mobile teams of custodians or to cleaning classrooms every other day. However, FCMAT has not previously encountered a situation in which custodial services are provided only every third or fourth day, and this level of service does not meet any industry standard.

Much of the district's reduced custodial service can be attributed to a substantial reduction in the number of custodians. In 2010, when each department was asked to reduce their budget by 20%, the operations department lost 28 custodial positions. Following that, the department lost 44 more custodial positions through the collective bargaining process. Four of the lost positions were ultimately restored. Although the district been forced to reduce expenditures over the last four years to keep pace with declining state revenues, the reductions to custodial staff have been disproportionately large.

Determining the number of custodial staff positions is often difficult. In many cases, staffing is based on square footage or cleanable area. As custodial responsibilities and the total amount of cleanable space increase or decrease, 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, the method selected should include variables that determine the workforce necessary to provide an expected level of service.

The CASBO custodial staffing formula was developed to calculate the custodial staffing required to maintain school buildings. It is commonly used in larger school districts and is probably the most detailed and comprehensive measure of its kind. The formula takes into account the square footage of sites and the number of students, staff, classrooms, offices and general purpose areas.

To assess the time needed for a daytime custodian, one must consider the school site's needs and the available cleaning time. The CASBO standards are contained in the CASBO Custodial Handbook and allot sufficient time to clean all areas at the school site and. Assigning the custodial staff to tasks other than those in the CASBO formula will result in cleaning being postponed or neglected. CASBO's 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
- One .06 of a custodian for community use.

One .03 of a custodian for schools of less than 400 students.

The resulting number should be divided by four to indicate the number of custodians needed to maintain a building. In addition to this number, districts should add 0.06 FTE for each elementary school, 0.25 FTE for each middle school, and 0.50 FTE for each high school site. In addition, schools with fewer than 400 students should add 0.30 FTE to the final calculation.

FCMAT used the CASBO formula, modified to include the impact of the current revenue limit deficit, to calculate the custodial staffing needed for the district's elementary, middle and high schools, as well charter and alternative schools. These calculations are provided in the tables below.

### *Elementary Schools Calculated Custodial Staffing Requirements*

	Building Square Footage	No. of Rooms	Acreage	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Total Custodians Needed
Aerohaven	38,245	24	9.1	0	0	1.05
Allison	26,456	25	9.3	490	23	1.70
Babcock	32,500	47	9.22	350	21	1.94
Castori	35,414	34	9	626	33	2.12
Del Paso	34,313	35	10.5	514	32	2.00
Dry Creek	24,905	26	9.1	446	17	1.53
Fairbanks	30,406	30	10	404	28	1.79
Foothill Oaks	33,769	33	9	544	25	1.88
Frontier	35,018	28	10.9	510	27	1.91
Garden Valley	21,008	25	10.55	388	29	1.96
Hagginwood	30,970	33	7.4	433	22	1.70
Hillsdale	35,892	29	12.4	428	28	1.88
Johnson	42,616	74	8.4	601	36	2.26
Joyce	26,352	40	15.4	574	27	1.84
Kohler	24,960	29	12.3	496	24	1.71
Larchmont	35,423	12	13.4	0	0	1.01
Madison	40,002	36	10	626	32	2.17
Morey Ave	24,748	15	1.6	98	15	1.52
Noralto	53,864	63	7	532	30	2.25
North Ave	36,848	31	9.5	0	0	1.03
Northwood	48,511	44	8.8	491	28	2.11
Oakdale	47,297	32	14.2	558	31	2.20
Orchard	50,872	35	8.7	568	29	2.22
Pioneer	40,276	41	8.4	692	28	2.15
Regency Park	62,279	42	12	912	38	2.81
Ridgepoint	45,848	30	10.9	740	30	2.30
Rio Linda	40,034	25	10.6	0	0	1.07
Sierra View	32,841	26	8.2	499	22	1.78
Strauch	41,805	39	11.6	605	27	2.08
Village	35,579	30	8.2	617	29	2.04
Vineland	47,394	25	10	7	7	1.31
Westside	36,213	29	10	417	27	1.86
Woodlake	36,148	29	11.5	485	23	1.83
Woodridge	32,970	35	11.5	485	29	1.91
Grand Totals	1,261,776	1,131	338.67	15136	797	63.12

Grand Total  
Staffing Adjusted  
for Revenue Limit  
Deficit

49.06

*Junior High Schools Calculated Custodial Staffing Requirements*

	Building Square Footage	No. of Rooms	Acreage	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Total Custodians Needed
Foothill Farms Ranch	88,475	47	25.78	658	42	3.25
Highlands West Don Julio	83,476	36	22.5	0		
CCAA - 6-12	83,476	35	22.5	355	33	3.07
Martin Luther King	114,119	65	29.04	348	25	3.34
Norwood	83,137	43	24.02	750	38	3.17
Rio Linda Prep	67,649	70	26.62	450	24	2.45
Rio Tierra	74,845	65	24.5	571	32	2.80
Grand Totals	595,177	361	174.96	3132	194	18.11
Grand Total Staffing Adjusted for Revenue Limit Deficit						14.08

*High Schools Calculated Custodial Staffing Requirements*

	Building Square Footage	No. of Rooms	Acreage	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Total Custodians Needed
Foothill	199,510	102	45.13	1142	63	5.82
Grant - Main	227,205	53	56.29	2012	108	7.74
Grant - West	99,294	65				2.34
Highlands	179,430	86	37.62	897	58	5.25
Rio Linda	230,768	82	54	1716	88	7.17
	936,207	388	193.04	5767	317	28.34
Grand Total Staffing Adjusted for Revenue Limit Deficit						22.03

*Charter Schools Calculated Custodial Staffing Requirements*

	Building Square Footage	No. of Rooms	Acreage	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Total Custodians Needed
CCAA - Holmes	28,889		11.08			0.92
CCAA - Don Julio	83,476	36	22.5	355		2.25
Smythe (K-6)	44,845	42	10.6	652	31	2.24
Smythe - Dos Rios (7-8)	40,497	43	9.5	447	23	1.87
						7.29
Grand Total Staffing Adjusted for Revenue Limit Deficit						5.67

### *Alternative Schools Calculated Custodial Staffing Requirements*

	<b>Building Square Footage</b>	<b>No. of Rooms</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>No. of Students</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>Total Custodians Needed</b>
Miles P Richmond	16,438	10	4.57	50		
Pacific	81,308	18	13.4	154	11	2.420816239
Vista Nueva	28,367	8	10	169	13	1.735524573
Kemma - GMTI				721	9	1.689230769
	126,113	36	27.97	373	24	5.845571581
Grand Total Staffing Adjusted for Revenue Limit Deficit						4.543645879

FCMAT did not perform calculations for the adult education center or the district's administrative offices.

FCMAT's calculations indicate that the district should have 123 FTE custodial staff to ensure be adequately staffing. If this number is reduced by the current revenue limit deficit of .77728 (assuming that all operational areas share equally in any reduction in force), the department would need 95.39 FTE staff. Current staffing is 12.39 FTE lower than this.

## Recommendations

*The district should:*

1. Use the Florida Department of Education's grounds maintenance staffing formula or other suitable formulas as a guideline for adding or reducing grounds maintenance personnel.
2. When the district's budget improves, consider adding groundskeepers consistent with the formula chosen.
3. Adopt the CASBO custodial staffing formula, as modified above, as a guideline for adding or reducing custodial personnel.
4. When the district's budget improves, consider adding custodial staff consistent with the formula above. Increase the frequency of classroom cleaning once more custodians are added.





## Long-Term Debt

When the district was formed through unification, it inherited both assets and liabilities from the districts that formed it. In addition to the general obligation (GO) bonds, certificates of participation (COPS) and qualified zone academy bonds (QZABs) that the district inherited from its former districts, the district has entered into an \$11,000,000 capital lease obligation to renovate facilities and purchase computers and print shop copiers.

### General Obligation Bonds

General obligation bonds are voter-approved long-term debt instruments secured by the legal obligation to collect sufficient value-based property taxes. Because GO bonds are secured by the taxing power of the school district, they are considered the lowest risk to the investor (see *The X, Y, Zs of California School District Debt Financing*, by Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP). As a result, they are the lowest cost financing option for school districts.

The California Education Code limits unified school districts' GO bond debt to 2.5% of a property's assessed value. The district's total debt principal as of June 30, 2012 was \$265,687,272. The district's outstanding GO debt comes from the outstanding bonded indebtedness of its former districts. These include Measure X and C from the North Sacramento Elementary School District, Measure P from the Rio Linda Elementary School District, and Measure G from the Grant Joint Union High School District. However, because of sluggish growth in assessed values, the district is unable to issue bonds against the remaining \$133 million authorized by Measure G.

### Certificates of Participation

Certificates of participation are a type of lease financing in which a school district, leases the property from a third-party, usually a nonprofit corporation created by or on behalf of the school district. The district's payments are made to the third party and assigned to a commercial bank trustee, who executes the COPS, which are sold to investors. Each investor who owns a COP is entitled to a proportionate share of the lease payments made by the districts. Under this arrangement a portion of each lease payment is designated as interest, and as a result the investors may receive tax-exempt interest payments.

COPs are similar to GO bonds in that the proceeds of a COPs sale are used to acquire real property and construct capital facilities. However, unlike GO bonds, COPS have no independent legal standing with taxpayers and are ultimately an obligation of the district's unrestricted general fund.

The district has two outstanding COPs acquired from one of the previous districts, which issued them to accelerate GO bond projects until additional voter-approved bonds could be issued, much like a bond anticipation note (BAN). The district has \$41,169,267 in outstanding COPs debt and annual debt service payments of \$4,158,875, the first five of which it anticipates making from the remaining proceeds of the COPs. After that time, the district hopes to make payment from future GO bond proceeds. However, if assessed property values do not increase significantly and the district is unable to issue more bonds, the debt service payments will ultimately become an obligation of the unrestricted general fund.

## Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs)

In 1997, the federal government authorized a new type of debt instrument known as a qualified zone academy bond (QZAB). For a school district to use a QZAB, 95% of the proceeds must be used for a qualified purpose in a qualified zone academy. Qualified purposes include rehabilitating or repairing a public school facility where the qualified zone academy is housed, providing equipment for the qualified zone academy, developing course materials for the qualified zone academy, and training teachers and other personnel located at the qualified zone academy. None of the proceeds may be used for new construction.

QZABs differ from other debt instruments in that they are a tax credit program. Rather than receiving interest income, banks, insurance agencies and other qualified lending institutions may receive a tax credit that can be used to reduce their income tax liability in the year in which they receive the credit. Although a school district must pay back the original principal borrowed, it does not have to pay back the interest on the principal amount. The district has three QZABs that were acquired during the unification. The total outstanding indebtedness for all three QZABs is \$11,000,000. Debt service payments of \$1,000,000, \$5,000,000 and \$5,000,000 are scheduled to be made in 2017, 2018 and 2020, respectively.

## Capital Leases

Lease financing is a mechanism by which a school district leases property and makes lease payment for its use of the property over the term of the lease. Lease financing enables school districts to fund capital facilities projects and equipment purchases over a specified number of years without requiring voter approval. Under a direct lease, a school district leases property from a lender, which may be a vendor, leasing company or financial institution. When the lease expires, the title to the property is transferred to the school district. A portion of each lease payment is designated as interest and may qualify as tax-exempt income to the vendor, leasing company or financial institution.

The district has seven outstanding capital leases that it incurred to modernize lighting, purchase police vehicles and copiers, and replace and renovate facilities. The total outstanding obligation for these leases is \$4,080,142. Annual debt service payments range from \$441,887 to as high as \$1,577,942, depending on when various leases expire. The debt service payments are budgeted in the unrestricted general fund with a small contribution from the deferred maintenance fund.

## Non-Voter-Approved Debt and Compensated Absences

Issuing long-term debt allows school districts to obtain funds to acquire or construct buildings and equipment and to spread the repayment over a number of years. It also allows districts to obtain buildings or equipment that might be impossible to purchase with existing resources. Complications can develop if a school district issues too much debt without a dedicated revenue source such as tax levies to repay it. In such cases, annual debt service payments must be made from the district's unrestricted general fund at the expense of current operations.

Any long-term debt that the district must repay from the unrestricted general fund is considered unfunded because it requires the use of resources typically dedicated to the current costs of education, such as employees' salaries, administration, and supplies. Although most districts are able to fund some long-term debt (e.g., accrued vacation) from their general fund, districts should exercise caution in dedicating general fund revenues for debt service payments because this depletes funds available for current operations. Moreover, debt service payments represent expenditures that are not easily eliminated from the general fund budget and therefore place an additional burden on the unrestricted general fund.

## Debt Management Policy

It is standard practice in many state and local governments for the governing board to adopt a comprehensive debt management policy that creates guidelines for issuing and managing debt. The Government Finance Officers Association also recommends that all forms of government adopt a comprehensive debt policy. This helps ensure that underwriters and financial advisers will provide the district with adequate information to analyze future debt, enabling the district to make sound business decisions.

The district lacks a debt management policy to provide guidelines for all forms of indebtedness. Although issuing debt is an appropriate method for financing capital projects and improvements, careful evaluation is required to preserve the district's credit strength and financial flexibility. FCMAT has developed a list of conditions most commonly experienced by districts needing intervention, one of which is substantial long-term debt commitments – certificates of participation. A sample debt management policy is provided in Appendix A of this report.

Although there is no officially established acceptable level of non-voter-approved debt for a school district, it is a best practice to have a debt management policy that provides guidelines for debt burden ratios and factors as well as debt affordability criteria. FCMAT has found that a debt burden that does not exceed 1% to 2% of the district's unrestricted general fund revenues is manageable.

## Debt Affordability

To determine whether a school district has too much unfunded long-term debt, the amount of the annual long-term unfunded debt payments is compared to the district's total unrestricted general fund revenues. The following table shows the district's unfunded long-term debt payments budgeted for fiscal year 2012-13 compared with the unrestricted general fund revenues in its 2012-13 adopted budget.

### *Annual Debt Service Payments from the Unrestricted General Fund*

#### Debt Burden Ratio

#### Adopted Budget - Unrestricted Revenues to Budget Debt Obligation For the Fiscal Year 2012-2013

Unrestricted General Fund Revenue Sources	
Revenue Limit Sources	\$143,779,352
Federal Revenue	\$31,968
Other State Revenue	\$32,266,077
Other Local Revenue	\$3,176,915
Total	\$179,654,312
Type of Debt	
COPs	\$4,158,875
QZABs	*
Capital Lease Obligations	\$830,331
Total	\$4,989,206
Debt Burden	2.77%

\*1<sup>st</sup> QZAB principal payment of \$5,000,000 due in 2018

As indicated in the table above, the district's current annual debt service payments equal 2.77% of its annual unrestricted general fund revenues, which is greater than the recommended level of 1% to 2%. The districts unrestricted general fund may have difficulty sustaining this amount of debt over time.

Issuing COPs or other long-term obligations to be repaid from the district's general fund requires balancing the debt issued against unrestricted resources and the ability to support the debt over a long period of time. Any time debt to be repaid from the general fund is issued, the district runs a risk of encountering unknown variables that can affect the ability to support the debt obligation and maintain budget flexibility, especially in times of fiscal uncertainty.

Based on the board-adopted budget, as of June 30, 2012 the district had a total of \$93,936,209 in long-term unfunded debt, as shown in the following table.

### ***Debt Potentially Funded from the Unrestricted General Fund***

Type of Debt	Debt Amount
Other Post-Employment Benefits	\$37,000,000
Capital Lease Obligations	\$ 4,766,942
QZABs	\$11,000,000
COPs	\$41,169,267
Total Unrestricted General Fund Debt	\$93,936,209

The district may have access to other funding sources that can be used to make some or all of the debt payments, such as remaining COPs proceeds, future GO bond proceeds, or developer fees in the capital facilities fund. However, most of these revenue streams are not consistent from year to year and so may not be sufficient to meet the debt service obligations occurring over several years.

## **Recommendation**

*The district should:*

1. Adopt a debt management policy substantially similar to the policy provided in Appendix A of this report to guide the governing board in making decisions regarding all forms of indebtedness.

# Appendices

**A. Sample Debt Management Policy**

**B. Study Agreement**





## Appendix A: Sample Debt Management Policy

BP 3461 Business and Noninstructional Operations

### Debt Management Policy

#### Purpose

The district recognizes that the foundation of a well-managed debt program is a comprehensive debt policy.

This debt policy sets forth a set of comprehensive guidelines for the financing of capital expenditures, as well as addressing short term cash flow needs. It is the objective of this policy that:

1. The district obtain financing only when necessary.
2. The district will use a process for identifying the timing and amount of debt or other financing that is efficient.
3. The district will obtain the most favorable interest and other costs in issuing the debt.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board at least annually and updated as necessary.

#### Responsibilities

1. Assistant Superintendent for Business

The Assistant Superintendent for Business Services will have the primary responsibility for developing financing recommendations and ensuring the implementation of the debt policy. In developing the recommendations, the Assistant Superintendent will be assisted by the Director of Fiscal Services and an impartial member from the local banking community. These individuals will comprise the Debt Management Committee. The responsibilities of the committee will be to:

- a. Meet at least quarterly to review the district's capital improvement program and consider the need for financing to maintain the progress on the capital improvement program.
- b. Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP), that will be used in the selection of bond counsel, financial advisor and/or underwriter.
- c. Recommend the financing participants for each debt issue, ensure the debt issue is integrated with the district's overall financing program, approve the structure of each debt issue, and review and approve all documentation for each issue.
- d. Assist in the preparation of the information for the official statement for debt issues.
- e. Meet as necessary in preparation for a financing or to review changes in state or federal laws or regulations.

- f. Disclose all information for the bond rating agencies and make presentations as necessary.
- g. Meet annually to review the district's compliance with the existing debt agreements.
- h. Provide quarterly statements to the Board of Trustees following meetings of the debt-management committee.
- i. Meet annually to review the services provided by the financial advisor, bond counsel, paying agents and other service providers to evaluate the extent and the effectiveness of the services provided.
- j. Administer the investment and expenditure of the debt proceeds and ensure that the debt payments are made on time.
- k. Ensure that the arbitrage requirements are monitored and that the appropriate reports are filed with the federal government.

## 2. Bond Counsel

The bond counsel will issue an opinion as to the legality and tax exempt status of any obligations. The district will also seek the advice of the bond counsel on questions involving the state or federal law or arbitrage. The bond counsel is also responsible for the preparation of the bond documents (including the authorizing resolutions that the Governing Board will adopt and official statement) and most of the closing documents. The bond counsel will ensure that all legal requirements for the debt issue are met. The bond counsel will perform other services as defined by the contract approved by the district.

## 3. Financial Advisor/Underwriter

The district staff will seek the advice of the financial advisor and/or underwriter. The financial advisor will advise on the structuring of the debt obligations that will be issued, inform the district of the options available for each issue, advise the district as to how choices will impact the marketability of the district's obligations, and will provide other services as defined by the contract approved by the district. In the event the district considers refunding a prior year debt the underwriter or financial advisor will prepare a computation of the economic gain or loss on the issue.

## 4. District Auditors

The district will include a review of any official statements issued in connection with a debt issue in its contract for services with the district's auditors. In the event the district has refunded a prior debt issuance the auditor will include the amount of the economic gain or loss in the footnote on the new debt in the audit report.

## Short-Term Operating Debt Policy

The expenditures associated with the day-to-day operations of the district will be covered by current revenues. However, because the district does not receive its revenues in equal

installments each month and the largest expenditures occur in equal amounts, the district may experience temporary cash shortfalls. To finance these temporary cash shortfalls, the district may incur short-term operating debt, typically, tax and revenue anticipation notes (TRANS). The district will base the amount of the short-term operating debt on cash flow projections for the fiscal year and will comply with applicable federal and state regulations. The district will pledge operating revenues to repay the debt, which will be repaid in one year or less. The district will minimize the cost of the short-term borrowings to the greatest extent possible.

### Long-Term Capital Debt Policy

The following will apply to the issuance of long-term debt:

1. The district will not use long-term obligations for operating purposes.
2. The life of the long-term obligations will not exceed the useful life of the projects financed.
3. The district will strive to maintain level debt service payments.
4. The district will not issue unfunded long-term debt in any fiscal year in excess of 2% of annual general fund revenues and in any subsequent fiscal year the long term debt shall not cumulatively be in excess of 2% of annual general fund revenues, unless there is an authorized tax levy or redevelopment revenue stream committed to service debt.

### Bonds

1. The district may issue general obligation bonds to finance significant capital improvements for the purposes set forth by the voters in the bond election. The district may also issue revenue bonds to finance significant capital improvements without voter authorization, through Certificates of Participation (COP's) or through Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB's).
2. The district staff will prepare a resolution authorizing the issuance of Certificates Participation or Qualified Zone Academy Bonds for presentation to the Governing Board at least 30 days prior to the issuance.

### Negotiated Versus Competitive Sale Versus Private Placement

When feasible and economical, the district may issue bonds either by competitive or negotiated sale. The district will issue by negotiated sale when the issue is predominantly a refunding issue or in situations that require more flexibility than a competitive sale allows. Whenever the option exists to offer an issue either for competition or negotiation, the Debt Management Committee will prepare an analysis of the options to aid in the decision making process.

### Refunding

The district will consider refunding debt whenever an analysis indicates the potential for present value savings of approximately 5% of the principal being refunded or at least

\$200,000. The financial advisor will compute the economic gain or loss on the refunding and the members of the Debt Management Committee will verify the computation. The district will not refund less than 5% of its outstanding debt at one time except in unusual circumstances such as when it intends to change bond covenants.

### Capital Leases

Capital leasing is an option for the acquisition of equipment or other assets with a cost of less than \$500,000. The district will not consider leasing when there are available funds on hand for the acquisition unless the interest expense associated with the lease is less than the interest that can be earned by investing the funds on hand or when other factors such as budget constraints override the economic consideration.

When a lease is arranged with a private sector entity, the district will seek a tax-exempt rate. When a lease is arranged with a government or other tax-exempt entity, the district will try to obtain an explicitly defined taxable rate so that the lease will not be counted in the district's total annual borrowings subject to arbitrage rebate.

The lease agreement will permit the district to refinance the lease at no more than reasonable cost. A lease that can be called at will is preferable to one that can merely be accelerated.

The district staff will obtain at least three competitive proposals for any major lease financing. In evaluating the proposals, the net present value of the competitive bids will be compared, taking into account how and when the payments are made. If required by statute, the purchase price of equipment will be competitively bid.

### Bond Rating

The district's goal is to maintain or improve its bond ratings. The district staff will make a full disclosure to the bond rating agencies when necessary.

### Arbitrage Liability Management

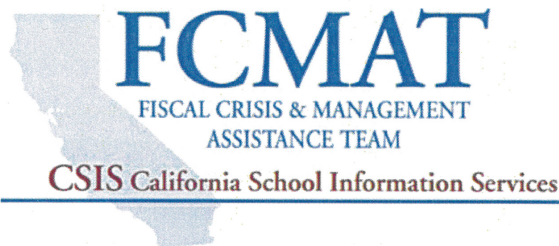
The district will make every effort to minimize the cost of the arbitrage rebate and yield restriction while strictly complying with the law. The federal arbitrage law is intended to discourage entities from issuing tax exempt obligations unnecessarily. In the complying with the spirit of the law, the district will not issue obligations except for identifiable projects with very good prospects of timely initiation. Obligations will be issued as closely in time as feasible to the time contracts are awarded so as to minimize the time the debt proceeds are unspent.

The district's bond counsel and financial advisor will review, in advance, all arbitrage rebate payments and forms sent to the IRS.

### Internal Interim Financing

In order to defer the issuance of debt obligations, when sufficient non-restricted funds are on hand, consideration will be given to appropriating them to provide interim financing for large construction projects. When the debt obligation is subsequently issued, the non-restricted funds will be repaid.

## Appendix B: Study Agreement



### FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM STUDY AGREEMENT October 1, 2012

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Twin Rivers Unified 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 Twin Rivers Unified 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. In November of 2007, the voters of Rio Linda Union, North Sacramento and Del Paso Heights elementary school districts and the Grant Union High School District were unified into the Twin Rivers Unified School District. The Twin Rivers Unified School District is requesting that the FCMAT Team conduct an organizational and staffing review of the district's central office for all certificated, classified and administrative positions. The review will consist of the following departments: Superintendent's Office, Business Services, Personnel, Educational Services and Facilities.



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. Additionally, the FCMAT team may interview other staff to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered.

B. Services and Products to be Provided

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 Report - The Team will hold an exit meeting at the conclusion of the on-site review to inform the District of significant findings and recommendations to that point.
4. Exit Letter - The Team will issue an exit letter approximately 10 days after the exit meeting detailing significant findings and recommendations to date and memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.
5. Draft Reports - Electronic copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District administration for review and comment.

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:

- |           |                         |   |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| <i>A.</i> | <i>Eric D. Smith</i>    | <i>FCMAT Fiscal Intervention Specialist, Project Lead</i> |
| <i>B.</i> | <i>To Be Determined</i> | <i>FCMAT Consultant</i>                                   |
| <i>C.</i> | <i>To Be Determined</i> | <i>FCMAT Consultant</i>                                   |

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

### 4. **PROJECT COSTS**

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

- A. \$500.00 per day for each Team Member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, preparing and presenting reports, or participating in meetings. 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 \$14,000.**

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

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



## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

- A. The District will provide office and conference room space while on-site reviews are in progress.
- B. The District will provide the following (if requested):
  - 1. A map of the local area
  - 2. Existing policies, regulations and prior reports addressing the study request
  - 3. Current 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).

## 6. PROJECT SCHEDULE

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

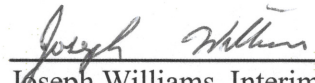
<b><i>Orientation:</i></b>	<b><i>October/November, 2012</i></b>
<b><i>Staff Interviews:</i></b>	<b><i>to be determined</i></b>
<b><i>Exit Meeting:</i></b>	<b><i>to be determined</i></b>
<b><i>Preliminary Report Submitted:</i></b>	<b><i>to be determined</i></b>
<b><i>Final Report Submitted:</i></b>	<b><i>to be determined</i></b>
<b><i>Board Presentation:</i></b>	<b><i>to be determined, if requested</i></b>
<b><i>Follow-Up Support:</i></b>	<b><i>if requested</i></b>

**CONTACT PERSON**

Name of contact person: Joseph Williams, Interim Superintendent


Telephone: (916) 566-1600 FAX: (916) 566-1784

E-Mail: [joseph.williams@twinriversusd.org](mailto:joseph.williams@twinriversusd.org)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Williams, Interim Superintendent  
Twin Rivers Unified School District

10/3/2012

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony L. Bridges, CFE  
Deputy Executive Officer  
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

October 1, 2012

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date