

Oklahoma
School Performance Review



Duncan Public Schools

Office of Accountability

August 2009



Education Oversight Board / Office of Accountability

Susan Field, Chairman • Robert Buswell, Executive Director

August 2009

Fellow Oklahomans:

The Education Oversight Board and the Office of Accountability are pleased to present this school performance review for Duncan Public Schools (DPS).

This review is intended to help DPS contain costs, improve management strategies and operations, and increase student performance. To conduct this review the office contracted with *WCL ENTERPRISES*

Duncan Public Schools has a number of commendable programs and enjoys support from district residents; however, it is faced with several challenges. The review contains recommendations to help DPS meet those challenges and improve the efficiency of their operations. The review also highlights a number of “Commendable Practices” in programs, operations, and services provided by the administration, teachers, and staff.

We are grateful for the cooperation of DPS Board of Education, administration, staff, parents, and community members. They are to be commended for their dedication toward improving educational opportunities for their community.

We are pleased to announce that this review is available in hardcopy through the Office of Accountability and on the office’s web site at www.SchoolReportCard.org.

For the Education Oversight Board,

Susan Field

For the Office of Accountability,

Robert Buswell

Oklahoma School Performance Review

Duncan Public Schools August 2009



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Executive Summary

The Oklahoma School Performance Review (OSPR) Program was authorized by the Oklahoma Legislature during the 2001 session and amended during the 2005 session. The responsibility to conduct school performance reviews was assigned to the Office of Accountability, which is under the direction of the Oklahoma Education Oversight Board. The purpose of a performance review is to develop findings, commendations, and recommendations regarding (1) containing costs; (2) improving management strategies; and (3) promoting better education for Oklahoma children.

OSPR began the performance review of Duncan Public Schools (DPS) in February 2009. The Office of Accountability contracted with *WCL ENTERPRISES* to assist with the review.

The *WCL ENTERPRISES* project team conducted either individual or small group interviews with district personnel, board of education members, parents, and business and community leaders. The team conducted focus group sessions with parents, business leaders, community leaders, teachers, principals, and district support personnel. The team also reviewed operations by touring facilities, observing cafeteria operations, and riding school bus routes.

Teachers, support staff, central office administrators, and students also completed written surveys that were customized to the district. The completed surveys were tabulated and the results were used in this review. Survey results are contained in Appendices A through D.

Based on size, geography, and demographics, the Office of Accountability selected five Oklahoma school districts to serve as peer districts for comparative analyses: Bixby, Claremore, Coweta, Noble, and Sapulpa. These five districts are called peer districts throughout this report.

For further comparison, a community group average is also used throughout this report. DPS falls into community group D1, which includes districts with Average Daily Memberships (ADM) of 2,000 to 4,999 students. The “1” indicates that the percentage of DPS students eligible for free and reduced price meals was below the state average.

During this review, *WCL ENTERPRISES* developed 70 recommendations designed to improve operations. In some cases, these recommendations should result in a net savings to the district, in some cases a net cost, and in some cases should have no fiscal impact but should improve district effectiveness. A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Office of Accountability and *WCL ENTERPRISES* wish to express their appreciation to the Board of Education of Duncan Public Schools, its Superintendent, Dr. Sherry Labyer, and the many district employees, students, parents, business leaders, and community residents who helped during this review.

DUNCAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DPS serves an estimated population of 22,455 and is located in south central Oklahoma approximately 81 miles south of the Oklahoma City and 38 miles east of Lawton on U.S. Highway 81. The district serves the City of Duncan and the surrounding rural area and encompasses approximately 67 square miles in Stephens County.

Duncan, Oklahoma was established in 1891 and incorporated in 1908 under the laws of Arkansas and the federal government, while Oklahoma was still a U.S. Territory. Duncan is the founding home of Halliburton Industries, a worldwide oil well servicing and engineering company that has accounted for the city's considerable growth economically and demographically. The most recent census data indicated that Duncan had an average household income of almost \$42,000, which is slightly higher than the state average.

Serving students in grades EC-12, DPS is comprised of six elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. **Exhibit 1** provides the ADM, ethnicity, and eligibility for free or reduced price meals for DPS and each of its schools for 2006-07.

Exhibit 1
DPS Student Enrollment and Socioeconomic Characteristics
2006-07

Campus	Grade Span	Average Daily Membership	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Eligible For Free or Reduced Price Meals
Emerson Elementary	KG-5	407.1	67%	7%	2%	13%	10%	78.1%
Horace Mann Elementary	KG-5	377.7	80%	3%	2%	8%	8%	37.7%
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	EC-KG	232.5	61%	8%	0%	17%	14%	65.0%
Mark Twain Elementary	KG-5	223.7	61%	12%	2%	12%	12%	75.4%
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	KG-5	365.9	37%	13%	0%	25%	24%	92.2%
Plato Elementary	KG-5	276.7	88%	2%	1%	3%	6%	21.3%
Duncan Middle School	6-8	774.1	69%	8%	1%	13%	10%	53.6%
Duncan High School	9-12	1036.0	75%	7%	1%	10%	7%	37.7%
DPS Totals		3,693.7	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	54.7%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS's average property valuation per student of \$31,891 is the second highest among all peer districts and less than the state average. DPS has the second lowest percentage of Native American students among peers and is less than the state average by nine percent. **Exhibit 2** displays demographic information for DPS, the peer districts, and the state for 2006-07.

Exhibit 2
Demographics of DPS, Peer Districts, and State
2006-07

Entity	Average Daily Membership	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation Per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
Duncan	3,693.7	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	\$31,891	54.7%
Bixby	4,296.5	79%	2%	1%	5%	13%	\$58,757	22.4%
Claremore	4,126.3	63%	2%	1%	6%	28%	\$27,642	41.8%
Coweta	3,108.1	63%	4%	0%	3%	29%	\$21,745	38.1%
Noble	2,889.8	86%	1%	1%	4%	8%	\$17,788	49.4%
Sapulpa	4,265.4	66%	5%	1%	3%	25%	\$30,105	55.9%
State	1,172.2	59%	11%	2%	9%	19%	\$34,815	56.0%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS's ADM stayed relatively unchanged during the period from 2002-03 through 2006-07. This 0.2 percent decrease was less than all peer districts and the state average growth of 2.5 percent (**Exhibit 3**). However, DPS expects enrollment increases in 2007-08 and future years.

Exhibit 3
DPS, Peer Districts, and State Student ADM Trends

Entity	Average Daily Membership					Percentage Change
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
Duncan	3,699.3	3,662.5	3,655.7	3,644.5	3,693.7	(0.2%)
Bixby	3,784.6	3,798.0	4,030.4	4,144.6	4,296.5	13.5%
Claremore	3,986.3	4,032.9	4,035.9	4,075.7	4,126.3	3.5%
Coweta	2,626.5	2,705.9	2,890.0	2,998.9	3,108.1	18.3%
Noble	2,742.1	2,773.5	2,791.9	2,823.6	2,889.8	5.4%
Sapulpa	4,156.6	4,186.7	4,222.1	4,311.7	4,265.4	2.6%
State	1,143.1	1,144.6	1,153.5	1,162.2	1,172.2	2.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

COMMENDATIONS

OSPR identified "exemplary" or "best practices" in Duncan Public Schools that led to commendations. This report highlights the model programs, services, and operations of the district. The Office of Accountability recommends that other school districts throughout Oklahoma examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs of other communities. The commendations are listed below and in each chapter.

Chapter 1: MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

DPS adopted a Strategic Plan for Quality Improvement as well as the 20/20 Vision, a strategic plan for facility needs and improvements. These plans are used to guide both long-term decisions, such as planning for bond issues, as well as day-to-day operations both centrally and at each campus.

DPS has a process to review and maintain up-to-date job descriptions on file for all support positions that sets clear expectations, avoids duplication of effort, and strengthens accountability.

DPS has centralized systems in place to control and maintain employee records that ensure confidentiality and security.

By sharing the work experiences of employees throughout the district, the superintendent enhances morale, improves her understanding of working conditions, and increases two-way communication with employees.

By using a series of structured methods, the superintendent maintains communication not only from her office to schools and departments in DPS but also among those various entities. These methods provide opportunities for sharing concerns and ideas and creating strategies to address them.

By using a series of structured methods, the superintendent communicates to and receives information from parents and district residents regarding key issues affecting the district.

Through a partnership with the Duncan Public Schools Foundation, DPS is able to create new learning opportunities for students and broaden the professional development of its teachers.

Chapter 2: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

DPS provides a coordinated program of academic support for at-risk students providing a coherent plan of intervention and remediation services.

DPS has a professional development program that supports the improvement of elementary reading achievement and meets the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standard for quality. By implementing *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling* (LETRS) the district is improving student reading skills.

DPS uses professional development and content testing to provide existing teachers with the training necessary to meet NCLB “highly qualified” status. The district’s hiring practices ensure only new teachers who meet this standard will be employed.

Through the use of various curricula at all elementary grade levels, DPS has a clearly articulated guidance program.

DPS uses federal program funds to assist students in transition grades and support potential dropouts.

Chapter 3: BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The director of Business and Finance has developed a system to allocate campus budgets based upon anticipated enrollment and state funding formula weights.

The DPS treasurer has invested idle cash on hand and secured competitive quotations for investments thereby increasing DPS’s investment earnings.

Chapter 4: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

DPS developed a long-range facility plan effectively using citizen, staff, and consultant input via its 20/20 Vision committee to assist in generating strong community support of its long-range facility plan.

DPS initiated an annual building improvement program utilizing the available carryover amounts in the building fund to distribute an allocation to campuses allowing campus administrators to determine the best use of utilization of these allocated funds for campus improvements or needs to support their educational programs.

By using students and staff, DPS is able to conduct an annual painting program that addresses needs at each school creating a more positive image for the community, staff, and students.

DPS is being very efficient with cleaning operations at schools resulting in cost savings while still obtaining favorable approval ratings for cleanliness.

DPS initiated an energy management performance contract that has been effective in keeping energy costs below the national average for school energy usage.

By involving all district staff, establishing a series of regular procedures, and enforcing district policies, DPS provides a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

Chapter 5: SUPPORT SERVICES

By constantly updating information on its website, the Child Nutrition Department provides parents and students with helpful information.

Through the use of state-of-the-art equipment and the district's public information channel, DPS students learn how to prepare and broadcast programs that can be used to present district information, educational programming, and community events.

Through the use of different techniques, DPS's Transportation Department increases both the communication to and from its buses and the safety of its riders.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTED COSTS AND SAVINGS

A detailed list of recommendations with costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4** and in each chapter. Detailed implementation strategies and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Many of the recommendations have no costs or savings attached, but are designed to formalize, improve, and streamline operations.

It must be understood that not all of the recommendations can be started at one time. The review team did not want to place priorities by indicating which should be implemented immediately and which ones implemented later. It will be up to the district to decide which ones to implement and the timelines for beginning implementation.

The Office of Accountability recommends that the DPS Board of Education ask district administrators to review the recommendations, develop an implementation plan, and monitor its progress. Office of Accountability staff are available to help implement the recommendations.

Exhibit 4
Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendations

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Chapter 1	Management, Personnel, and Communications						
1	The superintendent should reorganize DPS's central organization to reduce the superintendent's span of control, make better use of key senior management positions, and better align compatible functional responsibilities in the district.	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$225,000
2	The DPS Board of Education should execute a three-year contract with the superintendent.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	DPS should hold board workshops focusing on operations and educational achievement planning for students at least every six months in two to four hours increments.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	DPS should develop and publish consistent employment procedures for all personnel positions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	DPS should establish formal staffing guidelines for determining staffing decisions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Subtotal	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$225,000
Chapter 2	Instructional Delivery						
1	DPS should develop district-aligned curriculum by using resources from the SDE to develop curriculum maps for all grades and subject areas to maximize student learning.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	DPS should implement vertical teaming in core content areas to increase student performance.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	Professional development should be provided in data analysis processes and interpretation of results for all DPS teachers and administrators.	(\$16,000)	(\$6,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$22,000)
4	DPS should develop a leadership development program to prepare administrators with the skills and tools necessary to design, facilitate, and assess school improvement initiatives that will increase student performance.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	DPS should develop a comprehensive professional development plan to provide long-term, quality support to address student performance needs.	(\$11,250)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$3,500)	(\$3,500)	(\$33,250)
6	DPS should develop a professional development program specifically designed to prepare a group of teachers as trainers, coaches, facilitators, or mentors to support district efforts to increase student achievement.	(\$38,000)	(\$51,500)	(\$51,500)	\$0	\$0	(\$141,000)

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
7	Honors courses that have an advanced, clearly articulated curriculum should be provided at the middle school.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	DPS should develop a consistent, on-going training program for special education teachers in working with students who have autism and other severe behavior, learning, and communication problems.	(\$5,350)	(\$5,350)	(\$5,350)	\$0	\$0	(\$16,050)
9	DPS should schedule meetings for special education teachers and regular education teachers at the end of the year to develop transition plans for students moving from grade to grade or school to school.	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$22,500)
10	The assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services should develop a plan for using the EPAS EXPLORE and PLAN data to support student career planning and to increase student achievement.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11	DPS should develop a clearly articulated English Language Learner (ELL) program.	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	(\$15,000)
12	DPS should revise the textbook selection process to ensure all curriculum needs are being addressed and that all teachers have input and access.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Subtotal	(\$80,100)	(\$79,850)	(\$73,850)	(\$8,000)	(\$8,000)	(\$249,800)
Chapter 3	Business Operations						
1	Develop and provide user friendly financial reports that include the net results of operations along with comparative totals to the previous school year.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	Document existing accounting and payroll processes and develop a process to ensure that employees regularly review one another's work.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	Implement electronic positive pay for all payroll, accounts payable, and student activity accounts of the district.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	Develop and communicate a payment schedule to all members of the organization which issues payments no more than one time per week for all funds of the district including activity funds.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	Implement an electronic procurement system which will allow vendors to file their information and respond to bid requests electronically.	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$37,500)
6	Require the payroll department to maintain and verify employee leave information.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
7	Review the nonexempt status of all employees placed on the support services salary schedule and reclassify employees whose duties meet the FLSA definitions to the exempt scale.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	Require the insurance clerk to assume responsibility for the workers' compensation program to include providing workplace safety and awareness training activities along with developing and implementing a return to work program.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Subtotal	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$37,500)
Chapter 4	Facilities Use and Management						
1	DPS should hire a full-time construction manager or architect staff member to oversee and coordinate all construction projects that are included in the bond programs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	The superintendent should present any critical facility issues (i.e. ACM abatement) to the 20/20 Vision committee and the architect for review and potential inclusion in the master plan for the bond election.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	The architect, district staff, and the 20/20 Vision committee should include the specific items and concerns noted by the review team and determine possible options to address these noted issues as part of its long-range facilities master plan currently under development.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	DPS should obtain sample contracts from the AIA, other districts in Oklahoma, or districts in surrounding states and modify them for its own use.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	As the district implements a proposed bond election for needed facility improvements and new facilities, DPS should consider implementing a computer integrated maintenance management system to track district maintenance work orders, equipment inventory, and preventive maintenance requirements.	(\$3,320)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)	(\$13,300)
6	The DPS Maintenance Department should develop a communication plan to keep campus administrators informed of the status of ongoing and completed maintenance repairs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	The DPS Maintenance Department should develop a long-range facilities maintenance plan, including the purchase of a computerized integrated preventive maintenance program for district facilities.	(\$1,298)	(\$998)	(\$998)	(\$998)	(\$998)	(\$5,290)

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
8	DPS should conduct regular in-house formal training for maintenance and custodial staff by bringing training materials and possibly trainers to the district.	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$6,000)
9	DPS should consider upgrading its current energy management control system to include installation of new DDC controlled programmable thermostats and occupancy sensors at existing campuses that are to be renovated as part of the long-range facilities plan.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10	DPS should purchase one of the available energy accounting software programs.	(\$2,950)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)	(\$12,250)
11	DPS should develop a formal energy management program to be adopted by its Board of Education.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12	The superintendent should appoint one central administrator to ensure that district safety and security objectives are being met.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	The superintendent should ensure that the playground equipment fall zone conditions comply with the Oklahoma Department of Labor's <i>Fall Surfacing Guidelines for Playgrounds</i> .	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14	Video surveillance warning signs should be installed around the perimeter of all district owned or operated facilities.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15	The superintendent should develop and implement a plan to move all combustible material at least three feet away from any ignition source.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	The campus principals should ensure that all storage spaces for hazardous materials are kept secure at all times.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	The superintendent should investigate the possibility of contracting with the City of Duncan Police Department to provide drug detection canine services.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	The superintendent and principal should develop a plan and implement procedures that will mitigate pedestrian safety problems at Duncan Middle School.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	The superintendent and campus principals should develop strategies and implement procedures that will mitigate the unsafe conditions at all DPS campuses.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	Develop and implement a comprehensive all-hazards emergency operations plan.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
21	The superintendent should prepare a resolution, adopting the National Incident Management System as the system used by Duncan Public Schools to manage emergencies.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
22	DPS should develop and implement procedures related to how students with special needs or disabilities shall be assisted during emergencies.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Subtotal	(\$8,768)	(\$7,018)	(\$7,018)	(\$7,018)	(\$7,018)	(\$36,840)
Chapter 5	Support Services						
1	The POS system should be used for handling all meal and a la carte transactions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	Collection and meal accountability procedures concerning payment, tracking, and bank deposits should be determined and implemented immediately.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	DPS should separate the child nutrition program operations and student activity fundraisers.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	Each school should use the point of sale to determine reimbursement counts for lunch meal accountability and tracking as required by USDA.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	DPS should follow its policy statement by practicing "offer" versus "serve" at all grade levels.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	While cashiering, the DPS Child Nutrition Department should use the POS system to increase speed, efficiency, and reduce duplicate work.	(\$2,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$2,000)
7	The Child Nutrition Department budget should be approved by campus with detail by budgetary object codes, rather than one line amount for the entire budgetary object code.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	The Child Nutrition Department should follow the Oklahoma State Department of Education <i>School Food Service Compliance Document</i> recommendation of meals per labor hour (MPLH).	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$846,390
9	The district should do a thorough study of the efficiency of the currently designed satellite method of service and establish consistent procedures for production.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10	DPS food menus should be evaluated in advance to determine cost.	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$578,555
11	The Child Nutrition Department campus staff should follow required meal productions records to meet program regulations.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
12	DPS should follow federal purchasing requirements.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	DPS should process governmental commodities in an efficient manner by using Net-Off-Invoice.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14	DPS needs to protect network servers and devices by securing them in a locked unit that offers environmental protection from harmful elements.	(\$4,000)	(\$16,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$20,000)
15	DPS's Technology Department staff should develop and test a comprehensive disaster recovery plan that outlines the steps to take to insure timely recovery of district critical data.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	DPS should develop a software adoption process to ensure that purchased software programs are compatible with hardware, aligned to district curriculum, and focused on academic needs of students.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	DPS should develop a curriculum for technology that implements Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) standards for instructional technology.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	DPS should develop a comprehensive professional program for technology that supports teachers in developing the necessary skills for integrating technology in classroom instruction.	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$25,000)
19	The superintendent should include facility improvements for the transportation facility in the next comprehensive bond issue election.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	The administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance should include the cost of automated fleet management software in the budget for 2009-10.	(\$6,525)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$9,525)
21	DPS should lease buses to spread the cost impact of replacing the district's aging fleet over a several years.	(\$28,000)	(\$56,000)	(\$84,000)	(\$84,000)	(\$84,000)	(\$336,000)
22	The administrative assistant, in concert with elementary principals, should implement a student bus rider training program for students pre-kindergarten through grade three.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23	The DPS School Board should adopt a policy that prohibits the use of vehicles that do not meet national safety standards when transporting students on regular education routes or activity trips.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal		\$239,464	\$207,239	\$195,239	\$195,239	\$195,239	\$1,032,420

Chapter and Rec. Number	Chapter Title and Recommendation	Estimated (Cost) or Savings per School Year					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
	Total savings	\$329,989	\$329,989	\$329,989	\$329,989	\$329,989	\$1,649,945
	Total costs	(\$141,893)	(\$172,118)	(\$178,118)	(\$112,268)	(\$112,268)	(\$716,665)
	Total net savings and costs	\$188,096	\$157,871	\$151,871	\$217,721	\$217,721	\$933,280

Chapter 1:

*Management, Personnel, and
Communications*

Chapter 1

Management, Personnel, and Communications

This chapter addresses the management, personnel, and communications of the Duncan Public Schools (DPS) in the following sections:

- A. Management and Planning
- B. Personnel Management
- C. Communications and Community Involvement

The organization and management of a school district involves cooperation between elected members of the board of education and staff of the district. The board's role is to set goals and objectives for the district in both instructional and operational areas, determine the policies by which the district will be governed, approve the plans to implement those policies, provide the funding sources necessary to carry out the plans, and evaluate the results of the plans.

Once the goals and objectives of the district are adopted by the board, it is the responsibility of the superintendent and staff to establish policies and procedures to achieve these end results. That achievement involves the hiring and retention of employees as well as ongoing communication with the community to ensure an understanding of those goals and the district's efforts to accomplish them.

Background

DPS serves an estimated population of 22,455 and is located in south central Oklahoma approximately 81 miles south of the Oklahoma City and 38 miles east of Lawton on U.S. Highway 81. The district serves the City of Duncan and the surrounding rural area and encompasses approximately 67 square miles in Stephens County.

Duncan, Oklahoma was established in 1891 and incorporated in 1908 under the laws of Arkansas and the federal government, while Oklahoma was still a U.S. Territory. Duncan is the founding home of Halliburton Industries, a worldwide oil well servicing and engineering company that has accounted for the city's considerable growth economically and demographically. The most recent census data indicated that Duncan had an average household income of almost \$42,000, which is slightly higher than the state average.

The first school in Duncan was started in 1893 in an old, abandoned beer hall on what is now North 7th Street. It had about 75 pupils and two teachers. The high school was organized three years later in a small frame structure. The building was destroyed by a tornado, and a new two-story, eight-room structure was built between 1902 and 1904 on North 8th Street and Ash Avenue. In 1960, the existing high school was built west of Fuqua Park.

Demographics

Serving students in grades EC-12, DPS is comprised of six elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. **Exhibit 1-1** provides average daily membership (ADM), ethnicity, and eligibility for free or reduced price meals for DPS and each of its schools for 2006-07.

Exhibit 1-1
Student Enrollment and Socioeconomic Characteristics
2006-07

Campus	Grade Span	Average Daily Membership	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Eligible For Free or Reduced Price Meals
Emerson Elementary	KG-5	407.1	67%	7%	2%	13%	10%	78.1%
Horace Mann Elementary	KG-5	377.7	80%	3%	2%	8%	8%	37.7%
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	EC-KG	232.5	61%	8%	0%	17%	14%	65.0%
Mark Twain Elementary	KG-5	223.7	61%	12%	2%	12%	12%	75.4%
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	KG-5	365.9	37%	13%	0%	25%	24%	92.2%
Plato Elementary	KG-5	276.7	88%	2%	1%	3%	6%	21.3%
Duncan Middle School	6-8	774.1	69%	8%	1%	13%	10%	53.6%
Duncan High School	9-12	1036.0	75%	7%	1%	10%	7%	37.7%
DPS Totals		3,693.7	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	54.7%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS's average property valuation per student of \$31,891 is the second highest among all peer districts and less than the state average. DPS has the second lowest percentage of Native American students among peers and is less than the state average by nine percent. **Exhibit 1-2** displays demographic information for DPS, the peer districts, and the state for 2006-07.

Exhibit 1-2
Demographics of DPS, Peer Districts, and State
2006-07

Entity	Average Daily Membership	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation Per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
Duncan	3,693.7	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	\$31,891	54.7%
Bixby	4,296.5	79%	2%	1%	5%	13%	\$58,757	22.4%
Claremore	4,126.3	63%	2%	1%	6%	28%	\$27,642	41.8%
Coweta	3,108.1	63%	4%	0%	3%	29%	\$21,745	38.1%
Noble	2,889.8	86%	1%	1%	4%	8%	\$17,788	49.4%
Sapulpa	4,265.4	66%	5%	1%	3%	25%	\$30,105	55.9%
State	1,172.2	59%	11%	2%	9%	19%	\$34,815	56.0%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS's ADM stayed relatively unchanged during the period from 2002-03 through 2006-07. This 0.2 percent decrease was less than all peer districts and the state average growth of 2.5 percent (**Exhibit 1-3**). However, DPS expects enrollment increases in 2007-08 and future years.

**Exhibit 1-3
DPS, Peer Districts, and State Student ADM Trends**

Entity	Average Daily Membership					Percentage Change
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
Duncan	3,699.3	3,662.5	3,655.7	3,644.5	3,693.7	(0.2%)
Bixby	3,784.6	3,798.0	4,030.4	4,144.6	4,296.5	13.5%
Claremore	3,986.3	4,032.9	4,035.9	4,075.7	4,126.3	3.5%
Coweta	2,626.5	2,705.9	2,890.0	2,998.9	3,108.1	18.3%
Noble	2,742.1	2,773.5	2,791.9	2,823.6	2,889.8	5.4%
Sapulpa	4,156.6	4,186.7	4,222.1	4,311.7	4,265.4	2.6%
State	1,143.1	1,144.6	1,153.5	1,162.2	1,172.2	2.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Among ethnic groups, DPS experienced the biggest change in the Caucasian and Native American categories, decreasing 5 percent and increasing 4 percent, respectively, for the period from 2002-03 through 2006-07 (**Exhibit 1-4**). During this same period, average assessed property valuation per student increased by 25.65 percent and students eligible for free or reduced meals increased by 5.1 percent.

**Exhibit 1-4
Change in Demographics of DPS**

School Year	Average Daily Membership	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation Per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
2006-07	3,693.7	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	\$31,891	54.7%
2005-06	3,644.5	71%	8%	1%	12%	9%	\$29,306	53.1%
2004-05	3,655.7	73%	7%	1%	11%	8%	\$27,259	48.9%
2003-04	3,662.5	75%	6%	1%	11%	7%	\$25,949	49.2%
2002-03	3,699.3	74%	8%	1%	11%	6%	\$25,381	49.6%
Change	(0.2%)	(5.0%)	(1.0%)	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	25.65%	5.1%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

School Board Governance

Oklahoma state education laws, as codified in the Oklahoma School Law Book (OSLB) and district policies, establish the powers and responsibilities of the district board of education and the superintendent. The OSLB contains 12 chapters subdivided by applicable topic into articles that are further subdivided by sections (**Exhibit 1-5**). Each section provides legal guidance for school district governance and operations.

**Exhibit 1-5
Oklahoma School Law Book Chapters, Articles, and Sections**

Chapter No. - Title	Articles	Sections
1 - Oklahoma School Code	I-XXIV	1-517
2 – Administration	I-VII	518-521
3 – Bonds	I-II	522-619
4 - Funds And Finance	I-V	620-707
5 - Elections And Ethics	I-II	708-727
6 – Personnel	I-V	728-802
7 – Students	I-III	803-841
8 – Instruction	I-IX	842-919
9 - Facilities And Equipment	I-VII	920-1005
10 - Career And Technology Education	I	1006-1016
11 – Transportation	I-III	1017-1027
12 - Safety And Security	I-VII	1028-1062
Appendix A	Appropriation Bills Relating to Education	
Appendix B	Senate Bill No. 1114	
Appendix C	Amendments, Repeals, and New Sections	
Appendix D	Table of Statutes	
Index		

Source: Oklahoma School Law Book

OSLB Ch. 1, Art. V, Section 54 states, “Every school district shall be a body corporate and shall possess the usual powers of a corporation...” OSLB Ch. 1, Art. V, Section 55 states, “The governing board of each school district in Oklahoma is hereby designated and shall hereafter be known as the board of education of such district.” Powers and duties of the board of education are contained in OSLB Ch. 1, Art. V, Section 68. These powers and duties cover all activities related to operating public school districts. Key powers and duties prescribed in OSLB include election of officers, establishing board policies, building and operating schools and related facilities, and contracting for an annual audit of all district funds and school activity funds.

OSLB Ch. 1, Art. V, Section 56 addresses the size and election of school boards in Oklahoma, and Section 77 provides a description of the required officers for school boards in Oklahoma. The DPS board consists of five members elected by the citizens of DPS, all serving five-year terms (**Exhibit 1-6**).

**Exhibit 1-6
DPS Board Members
February 2009**

Board Member	Board Position	Length of Service	Term Expires	Occupation
Chris Deal	President	2 years, 9 months	2011	Country club manager
Eric Davis	Vice-President	1 year, 10 months	2013	Financial advisor
Kevin Kinnaird	Member	4 years	2010	Athletic trainer
Lisa Thomas	Member	9 years	2012	Deputy Director, Information and Compliance - Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments
Lisa Presgrove	Member	10 years	2014	Principal Designer - Halliburton

Source: DPS assistant to the superintendent, February 2009

Elections are held each year in February on a date set by the state. At the first regular, special, or emergency meeting after the annual school board election and certification of election of new members, the DPS board organizes itself by electing officers. OS LB Ch. 1, Art. V, Sections 78, 79, and 80 list the duties of each officer of the board of education. The board must also elect a clerk, who may or may not be a member of the board. DPS has elected the superintendent's assistant as the board clerk.

OS LB Ch. 1, Art. I, Sections 57 and 58 provide the training requirements for Oklahoma school board members that DPS board members follow. New school board members are required to complete 12 hours of instruction on education issues, including school finance; Oklahoma education laws and ethics; and duties and responsibilities of district board of education members within 15 months following election. Every member of a school district board of education elected to a full term of office of five years or more shall also be required to attend a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education. Authorized training may be taken in State Department of Education's New School Board Member Workshops, State Board of Education approved workshops and seminars, or higher education institution workshops/seminars/classes.

Board of Education Meetings

The board meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. in the central office multipurpose room. The meeting place and time may be changed by agreement of the majority of the board. Special meetings are held as needed, and board members receive their agendas and supporting information in advance of the meeting. The superintendent's secretary handles board clerk duties and prepares the board minutes for final approval by the board.

Oklahoma statutes and DPS board policy require all board meetings to be held in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act (OOMA). The OOMA is included in Title 25 of Oklahoma Statutes Sections 301 through 314 (**Exhibit 1-7**). According to section 302 of OOMA, it is the public policy of the State of Oklahoma to encourage and facilitate an informed citizenry's understanding of governmental processes and problems.

Exhibit 1-7 Oklahoma Open Meeting Act Sections

Section	Section subject
301	Citation.
302	Public policy.
303	Times and places — Advance notice.
304	Definitions.
305	Recording of votes
306	Circumvention of act — Teleconferences accepted.
307	Executive sessions.
307.1	Teleconference Exceptions.
308	Meeting between Governor and majority of members of public body.
309	Legislature.
310	Legislative committee members attending executive sessions.
311	Public bodies — Notice.
312	Minutes of meetings — Recording of Proceedings.
313	Actions taken in willful violation of act.
314	Violations — Misdemeanor — Penalty.

Source: Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, as amended, Forty-Ninth Oklahoma Legislature, First Regular Session, 2003

All public boards of education are required to adhere to the OOMA. Section 307 of OOMA provides for requirements regarding executive sessions of school boards; violations of which could lead to members facing criminal prosecution. Accordingly, executive sessions of the DPS school board are convened only for specific purposes (**Exhibit 1-8**).

**Exhibit 1-8
Specific Purposes of School Board Executive
Sessions In Accordance with Section 307 of
The Oklahoma Open Meeting Act**

Item	Description
1	Discussing the employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining, or resignation of any individual salaried public officer or employee;
2	Discussing negotiations concerning employees and representatives of employee groups;
3	Discussing the purchase or appraisal of real property;
4	Confidential communications between a public body and its attorney concerning a pending investigation, claim, or action if the public body, with the advice of its attorney, determines that disclosure will seriously impair the ability of the public body to process the claim or conduct a pending investigation, litigation, or proceeding in the public interest;
5	Permitting district boards of education to hear evidence and discuss the expulsion or suspension of a student when requested by the student involved or the student's parent, attorney, or legal guardian;
6	Discussing matters involving a specific handicapped child;
7	Discussing any matter where disclosure of information would violate confidentiality requirements of state or federal law;
8	Engaging in deliberations or rendering a final or intermediate decision in an individual proceeding pursuant to Article II of the Administrative Procedures Act; or
9	Discussing the following: a. the investigation of a plan or scheme to commit an act of terrorism, b. assessments of the vulnerability of government facilities or public improvements to an act of terrorism, c. plans for deterrence or prevention of or protection from an act of terrorism, d. plans for response or remediation after an act of terrorism, e. information technology of the public body but only if the discussion specifically identifies: (1) design or functional schematics that demonstrate the relationship or connections between devices or systems, (2) system configuration information, (3) security monitoring and response equipment placement and configuration, (4) specific location or placement of systems, components, or devices, (5) system identification numbers, names, or connecting circuits, (6) business continuity and disaster planning, or response plans, or (7) investigation information directly related to security penetrations or denial of services f. the investigation of an act of terrorism that has already been committed.

Source: Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, as amended, Forty-Ninth Oklahoma Legislature, First Regular Session, 2003

An executive session for the purpose of discussing the purchase or appraisal of real property is limited to DPS board members, the DPS attorney, and immediate DPS staff. No landowner, real estate salesperson, broker, developer, or any other person who may profit directly or indirectly by a proposed transaction concerning real property under consideration may be present or participate in the executive session.

Executive sessions are noted on the DPS agenda, which contain sufficient information for the public to ascertain that an executive session will be held, identifying the items of business and purposes of the executive session, and stating specifically the appropriately authorized reason for the executive session.

All executive sessions are required to be authorized by a majority vote of a quorum of the members present, and the vote is recorded. Except for matters considered in executive session, which are required by state or federal law to be confidential, any vote or action on any item of business considered in an executive session is taken in the public portion of the board meeting with the vote of each member publicly cast and recorded.

A. MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Management

An effective central office organization structure is essential to the efficient and effective delivery of services throughout a school district. Efficient central office structures have the appropriate spans of control for district leadership with clearly defined lines of authority that are reflected in the district's organization charts. Effective central office structures encourage communication at all levels.

The superintendent of a school district serves as the chief executive officer and is the administrative leader responsible for policy implementation and the day-to-day operation of the school district. The DPS superintendent is Dr. Sherry Labyer. She has been the DPS superintendent since June 2005. In January 2009, the DPS board gave Dr. Labyer a new contract covering the 2009-10 school year.

FINDING 1-1

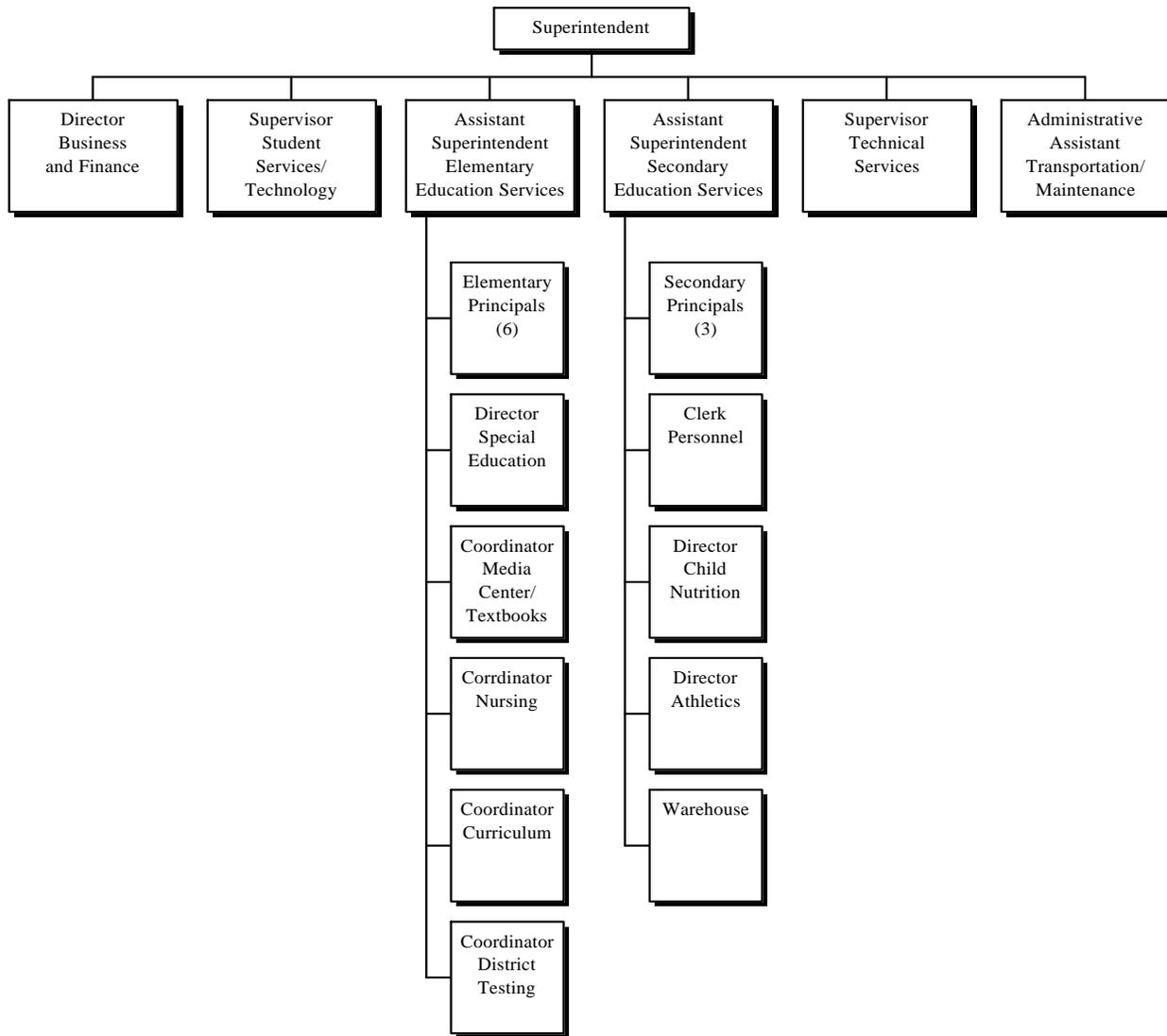
DPS is not organized to provide effective management of the district's functions. This situation reduces the accountability of senior managers and may lead to unnecessary personnel costs.

In reviewing an organization's structure and distribution of responsibilities, the review team employs a series of key benchmarks, including:

- Are functions logically grouped? Could the service be provided more effectively and efficiently if it were located elsewhere in the organization?
- Are line and staff relationships properly determined?
- Is accountability for performance defined so that managers know what is expected of their performance?
- Are key roles and responsibilities sufficiently defined? Do job descriptions reflect those responsibilities?
- Do positions at each level have sufficient time or focus on responsibilities that are key to their level in the organization? For example, are deputy/associate/assistant superintendents focusing sufficiently on planning and vision versus day-to-day activities?
- Are the spans of control at each level of management reasonable?
- Is decision-making delegated to the most effective level in the organization?

Exhibit 1-9 shows the current organizational structure of DPS.

**Exhibit 1-9
DPS Organization
February 2009**



Source: DPS superintendent, February 2009

The current structure has the following positions and functions reporting to the superintendent:

- Assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services;
- Assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services;
- Independent auditor;
- Attorney;
- Director, Business and Finance;
- Supervisor, Student Services/Technology;
- Supervisor, Technical Services; and
- Administrative assistant, Transportation/Maintenance.

In reviewing the district's central organization and staffing, the review team noted the following issues:

- The workload of the two key senior management positions, the assistant superintendents, is unequal. The functions grouped under the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services are largely interrelated, focusing on curriculum and instructional programs and delivery. For the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, there is no such similarity in the relationships among the functions the position supervises. This lack of functional relationship indicates that the functions are not logically grouped and do not meet one of the benchmarks employed by the review team in assessing the organization structure.
- Principals do not report directly to the superintendent. The current organization puts the principals two levels from the superintendent. Typically, principals in districts like DPS with only eight campuses plus an alternative education program report to the superintendent. DPS is in this relative position and is not in a rapid growth mode.
- Technology is divided between two positions, each reporting directly to the superintendent. While this arrangement works currently due to the personalities of the position incumbents, it is not organizationally an effective method of managing a complex function. Of DPS's peer districts, all but one district had technology under the management of one position.
- Other key related responsibilities are fragmented. For example, purchasing, which is a key financial function, does not report to the director of Business and Finance.

Compared to the peer districts, DPS's superintendent position has the most positions reporting directly to it (**Exhibit 1-10**).

Exhibit 1-10
Number of Positions Reporting to the Superintendent
DPS and Peer Districts
March 2009

District	Number of Positions Reporting to the Superintendent
Duncan	8
Bixby	5
Claremore	4
Coweta	Did not response to info requests
Noble	6
Sapulpa	6

Source: Telephone/email survey by WCL ENTERPRISES, March 2009

Effective spans of managerial responsibility for a chief executive officer (i.e., the superintendent) vary, but usually range from three to eight positions. As more functions report to the superintendent, accountability of senior managers is reduced or even eliminated. Decision-making is not "pushed down" to the lowest effective level but allowed to rise to the superintendent.

The workload of DPS's two assistant superintendents is unequal. **Exhibit 1-11** shows the functions that each position oversees. The number of senior management positions in any school district is limited due to resource constraints, and failure to use these positions effectively results in unnecessary costs to the district.

**Exhibit 1-11
DPS Assistant Superintendent Responsibility Areas
February 2009**

Assistant Superintendents	
Elementary Education Services	Secondary Education Services
Six elementary schools	Two secondary schools
Curriculum development and implementation	Alternative school
Special education	Athletics
Federal programs	Child nutrition
Professional development	Personnel
Media center	Purchasing and warehouse
Textbooks	Facilities use
Career and technology	
District testing program	
District nursing services	

Source: DPS organizational chart, February 2009

RECOMMENDATION

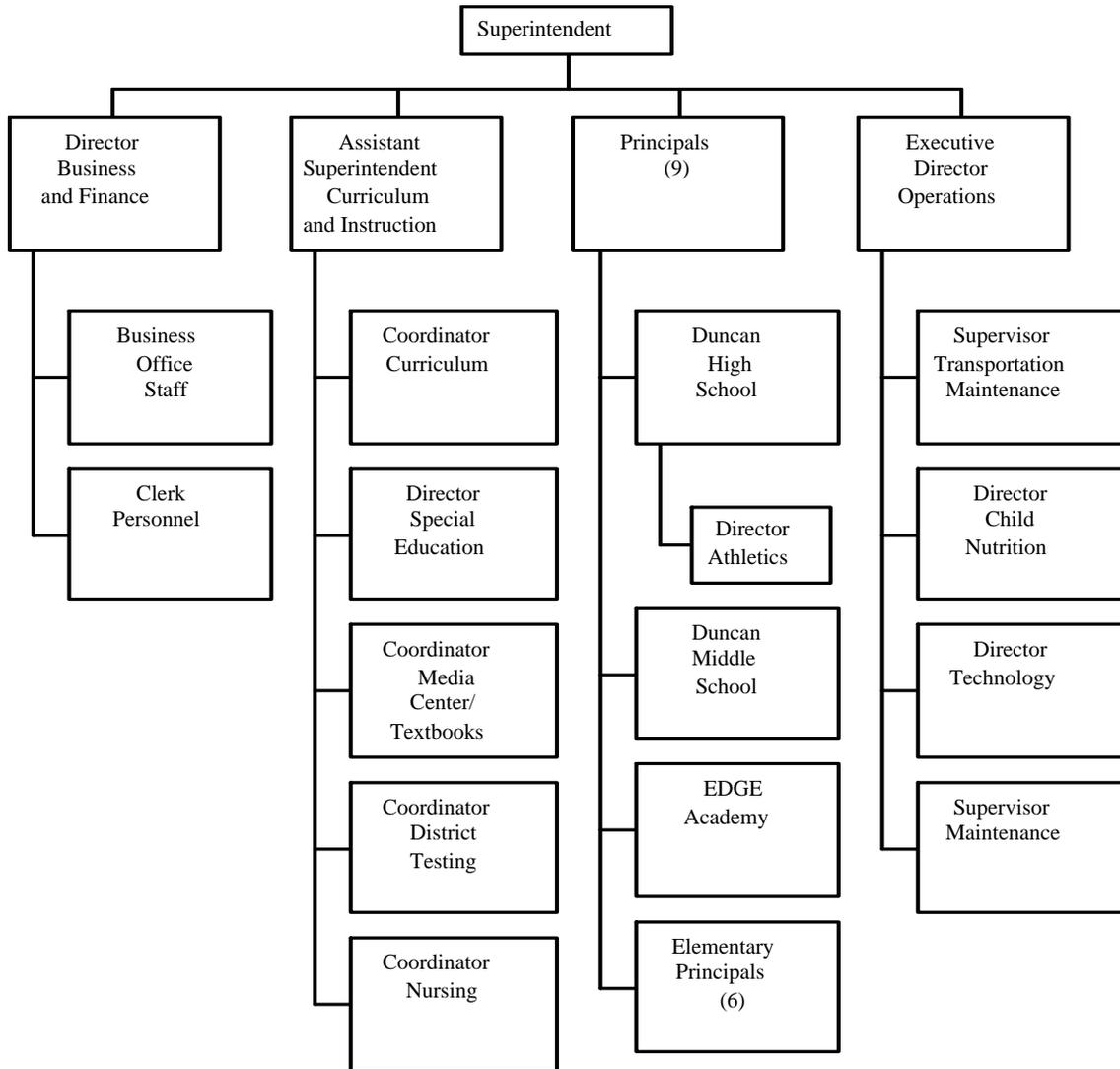
The superintendent should reorganize DPS’s central organization to reduce the superintendent’s span of control, make better use of key senior management positions, and better align compatible functional responsibilities in the district.

In order to implement this recommendation, the superintendent should consider the following alternative organizational structure and chart (**Exhibit 1-12**).

This alternative organizational structure would eliminate three positions (the two assistant superintendent positions and the administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance position); however, it would also create two positions (an executive director of Operations position and an assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction position). Furthermore, it would redistribute the workload of the current assistant superintendent positions and the administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance position to these newly created positions. It would also make the following changes to the current organizational structure:

- All principals would report directly to the superintendent.
- Purchasing functions and Personnel responsibilities would be transferred to the director of Business and Finance.
- All technology functions would be consolidated under one director of Technology.
- The newly created executive director of Operations position would supervise transportation, maintenance, technology, warehouse, and child nutrition. This position would also oversee any facility construction activities under the district’s proposed bond programs.
- The newly created assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction position would be responsible for all curriculum and instructional delivery functions as well as the Nursing coordinator.
- The director of Athletics would be placed under the high school principal.

**Exhibit 1-12
Recommended DPS Organization**



FISCAL IMPACT

Depending on the hiring process, the newly created positions could be filled by current staff (i.e. the current assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services could fill the newly created position of assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, etc.) or through the hiring of new employees.

Based on current salaries plus fringe benefits, the district could receive a positive fiscal impact of \$45,000 to \$85,000 annually depending on the salaries of the current positions eliminated and the salaries of the newly created positions.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
The superintendent should reorganize DPS’s central organization to reduce the superintendent’s span of control, make better use of key senior management positions, and better align compatible functional responsibilities in the district.	\$45,000 to \$85,000				

FINDING 1-2

The DPS superintendent has been working under a series of one-year renewable contracts since hired in June 2005. This practice provides little security for long-term decisions related to employee or board issues.

Teacher and professional staff survey data overwhelmingly approved of current management practices with the exception of salary levels, which are related to budget constraints.

All of the DPS peer districts have been executing a three-year superintendent contract routinely. Discussions with the executive director of Oklahoma School Administrators' Association indicated that all of Oklahoma's top schools, schools that seem to be the most successful in the state, provide extended contracts to their superintendents.

A longer term contract would allow the superintendent to make the harder, needed decisions on DPS operational issues without fear of immediate removal if decisions are initially unpopular among the school board and constituents.

RECOMMENDATION

The DPS Board of Education should execute a three-year contract with the superintendent.

The school board should consider this recommendation immediately. Generally, under a multi-year contract, a school board would decide to extend or not extend the contract at least a year in advance of contract expiration.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-3

There are limited opportunities on a local district level for new DPS board member orientation upon election to the school board as well as ongoing board member instruction related to DPS’s continuing operations and strategic focus. As a result, board members are not afforded the opportunity to receive an in-depth understanding of the district’s programs to provide an appropriate level of oversight and policy guidance, especially in the area of student achievement needs.

DPS board members do adhere to minimum state guidelines regarding training activities, most of which are general in nature concerning board member responsibilities and related activities.

Expansion of new board members' orientation process would assist the school board in effectiveness in operational areas, especially student performance goals, while ongoing board member instruction will enhance board oversight related to the main purposes of the district: student educational achievement.

Many school districts provide these opportunities to board members through in-depth workshops at least bi-annually through two to four hour workshops in a relaxed setting, either at the district's offices on a non-workday or even at an offsite location. This gives all board members, including newly elected ones, an opportunity to learn in-depth what the major programs of the district are designed to achieve.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should hold board workshops focusing on operations and educational achievement planning for students at least every six months in two to four hour increments.

The superintendent should coordinate this activity with the school board for timing and content purposes. This opportunity should give new board members a chance to gain a basic understanding of the district's operations and provide all board members an opportunity to be involved in planning for educational objectives for the district's students.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Planning

In Oklahoma, school district planning requirements are included in OSLB. Ch. 1, Art. III, Section 31 requires that each school district board of education prepare and adopt a six-year Comprehensive Local Education Plan (CLEP). At a minimum, the plan must contain:

- A school improvement plan;
- An alternative education plan (submitted annually);
- A reading sufficiency plan (submitted annually); and
- A quality time analysis (submitted annually).

Instead of submitting the CLEP and any updates to the state, the state's regional accreditation officers (RAO) check with districts during the annual accreditation process to ensure that the plans and updates are being done properly.

FINDING 1-4

The DPS board has adopted a Strategic Plan for Quality Improvement that includes an established vision that excellence is a moving target best achieved by continually monitoring educational needs, demographic trends, and the condition of facilities. The development of an accompanying facilities master plan, known locally as 20/20 Vision, is in process by DPS and includes projecting the community's bonding capacity for purposes of continuous facility improvement.

The strategic plan includes a motto of “An ongoing Tradition of Excellence” and includes the following Mission/Vision Statement and Framework for Quality:

Duncan Public Schools, inspired by an on-going tradition of excellence, will provide an opportunity for each student to develop to the maximum of his or her potential by mastering grade level skills. We will maintain an environment which fosters responsibility, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning.

DPS’s Strategic Plan for Quality Improvement includes the following components:

Communication and Customer Focus. The goal for customer focus is to increase customer satisfaction in the areas of effective communication and quality education. All employees of Duncan Public Schools are responsible for providing meaningful feedback to students, parents, and the community. DPS is committed to hiring highly qualified teachers, highly qualified teaching assistants, and skilled support personnel. The district’s mission is to demonstrate respectful behavior based upon the importance of valuing our customers while reinforcing a high quality of service.

Improved Student Academic Achievement. "No Child Left Behind" is a federal law mandating educators study, analyze, and act upon data collected through tests, observations, daily assignments, and state mandated assessments. DPS has and will continue to provide professional development that teaches educators the value of making decisions based on data. Effective data driven decisions have the potential to enhance learning processes. More important however, is the design and delivery of the curriculum.

Student Discipline/Expectations. DPS seeks to achieve self-discipline on the part of every student by communicating student conduct rules, reaching and reinforcing appropriate behavior, and holding students accountable for their actions. A school environment that is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption is essential to achieving the district's mission. Student discipline and expectations are a joint responsibility of student, staff, parents, and the community. Prevention will be emphasized and problems addressed immediately. A positive school climate is a necessary component of an effective disciplinary program.

Team Work. Developing a team oriented working environment is an important goal for the district. Staff members have been trained and will continue training in customer service and teamwork best practices. Research indicates that teamwork was ranked as the number one characteristic of successful organizations in Fortune 500 companies. Through quality leadership and teamwork, DPS strives to ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of all students. The district is committed to fostering an environment where a high degree of trust is enjoyed among colleagues, students, parents, and community members.

Facility Improvement. DPS presently maintains ten campuses across the district. Eight of these facilities are in excess of fifty years old. Duncan Middle School is the newest facility with Phase I completed for occupancy in 2001 and Phase II completed in 2003. The district has assembled a group of concerned community members, parents, and staff members who are carefully studying facility upgrades and needs that are to be incorporated into the 20/20 Vision plan. With the aid of this committee and support of the community, the DPS constituents passed an improvement of facilities bond issue in April 2006 with an 82 percent approval rate.

This bond issue will allow the district to expend \$1.6 million over the next two years for urgent maintenance and facility needs. It is the vision and commitment of the DPS Board of Education and administration that the district will continue bonding endeavors in order to keep the bonding capacity level and not raise taxes. In addition, DPS is developing a master plan to address the possibility of new buildings and/or facility upgrades in the district over the course of the next five to ten years.

During 2008-09, the district assessed not only its achievements toward fully implementing this strategic vision but also the challenges ahead. **Exhibit 1-13** provides examples in both areas:

Exhibit 1-13
DPS Self-Assessment of Strategic Plan Successes and Challenges
2008-09

Strategic Plan Area	Successes	Challenges
Customer Service/Communications	Improved parental involvement	Parent communication
	Chat line	Updated websites
	Parent and teacher advisory groups	Increase teacher web page usage
	Weekly newsletters from teachers	Front line office staff communication
	Parent newsletter	Positive attitude of teachers
Student Achievement/Discipline	Academic vocabulary	Maintain high quality staff and continue professional development
	Development of curriculum committee	Test scores
	10 academic state champions	Success with key student subgroups, such as ELL
	Improved test scores at most sites	Attendance
	All-day pre-Kindergarten	Bullying
Team Work	Negotiations very congenial	Scheduling and planning for teachers to work together
	New teacher conversations monthly	Continue to work hard to improve and look for new initiatives
	Curriculum cabinet	Implementation of differing instruction and vertical alignment
	Operational cabinet	Knowledge of day-to-day operations
	Cross training	New mentoring program
	Grade level meetings	Keep students on focus
Facilities	Improvements at various facilities	Many old, deteriorating facilities
	Flood damage repairs complete	Design safety
	Entered into 10-year master plan process	Lack of sufficient money to make needed changes
	QZAB bond	
	Site maintenance budgets	

Source: DPS superintendent, February 2009

COMMENDATION

DPS adopted a Strategic Plan for Quality Improvement as well as the 20/20 Vision, a strategic plan for facility needs and improvements. These plans are used to guide both long-term decisions, such as planning for bond issues, as well as day-to-day operations both centrally and at each campus.

B. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The human resources function of a school district substantially impacts its educational services as payroll and benefits usually comprise the largest expenditure of a school district’s budget. The human resource functions include the recruitment and retention of quality staff, development of compensation and benefit plans, creation of job descriptions and job evaluations, and the compliance to personnel policies and procedures at the local, state, and federal level. In order to ensure the mission of a school district, it is important that the human resources function be efficient and effective.

Like most employers, public school districts must comply with federal laws governing human resources management. These laws include the Fair Labor Standards Act that governs wages and hourly payments and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to any employee, or job applicant who has a disability. These laws also include the Equal Employment Opportunity Act that prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based on age, race, religion, gender, or other factors not related to performance. In addition, state laws govern school district human resource administration in areas such as grievances, due process, termination, and contract renewal.

Personnel management in DPS is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services. Only one position, the Personnel clerk, is dedicated to personnel on a full-time basis. The assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services plays a significant role in personnel management relating to elementary personnel decisions. **Exhibit 1-14** shows the district positions with personnel responsibilities.

**Exhibit 1-14
District Level Positions with Personnel Functions
2008-09**

Position	Personnel Function
Assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services	While this administrator is responsible for personnel, the functional focus of the position is on the general supervision of the personnel office, working with secondary principals, child nutrition on staffing requests, and staff discipline.
Personnel clerk	Support position responsible for the coordination and monitoring of all personnel functions.
Assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services	While this position does not have responsibility for personnel according to the organizational chart, functionally the position is responsible for working with elementary principals on staffing requests and discipline related issues for both elementary certified and support staff.
Superintendent	Interviews all prospective certified employees recommended by the principals and makes hiring recommendations to the board.

Source: Interviews with DPS assistant superintendents and personnel clerk, February 2009

FINDING 1-5

DPS has a process to review and maintain up-to-date job descriptions on file for all support positions. Having specific job descriptions helps the district to set clear expectations, avoid duplication of effort, and strengthen accountability.

The Personnel clerk maintains a notebook of job descriptions on all support positions. In examining the notebook, the review team found that the job descriptions are current with dates showing reviews in the past year. The Personnel clerk works with supervisors on a yearly basis to review the descriptions and revise as needed. The Personnel clerk keeps the descriptions up-to-date and ensures that descriptions are on file for newly created positions.

According to Section 3035 of district policy, job descriptions for support employees are to be distributed, and employees are to sign a receipt for the written job description. Reviewing and updating job descriptions on a regular basis ensures that the employee will receive clear information on the job to be performed and that the work matches the duties specified in the description. Job descriptions provide employees with a clear understanding of the district's expectations.

In addition, job descriptions help maintain documentation that allows the district to reassign responsibilities, adapt positions to meet district needs, and provide accommodation. Providing employees with copies of job description helps clarify roles, responsibilities, and supports accuracy in the evaluation of job performance.

COMMENDATION

DPS has a process to review and maintain up-to-date job descriptions on file for all support positions that sets clear expectations, avoids duplication of effort, and strengthens accountability.

FINDING 1-6

DPS has centralized systems in place to control and maintain employee records. Centralizing this process in one position and one location reduces the possibility of failure to maintain required paperwork and ensures the confidentiality of records.

The Personnel clerk, under the supervision of the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, is responsible for compliance with local, state, and federal personnel reporting and record keeping requirements. All personnel files are stored at the central office. Access to records is approved through the Personnel clerk and only provided in accordance with board policy. Policy states that access is given to employees and to district administrators only on a "need to know" basis. Anyone accessing a personnel file must sign a document indicating date and reason for review.

DPS board policy specifies documents to be maintained in support files and certified files. Each employee has two personnel files: one with the board required documents and one with the performance evaluation. The randomly selected records examined by the review team were specifically reviewed for contracts, education/certification documentation, I-9 forms, applications, and work reports. All files contained the required documents, were well organized, and up-to-date.

COMMENDATION

DPS has centralized systems in place to control and maintain employee records that ensure confidentiality and security.

FINDING 1-7

DPS does not have published employment procedures in place for staffing all personnel positions. DPS procedures for recruiting and selecting teachers, as described by the Personnel clerk, are sound practices, but these procedures are not in writing.

There is no structure in place to ensure these practices are being followed once the process moves to the school sites. Furthermore, there is not a similar process for hiring support staff. The lack of written procedures means supervisors are not consistent in hiring practices, which may result in unfair employment actions and employees leaving the district without necessary documentation to address employment concerns.

In interviews with principals, the practices described in **Exhibit 1-15**, while generally used in employing certified staff, are not always followed. There are variances in the screening criteria that principals use for reviewing teacher applications and also in the interview process. For example, some principals use a committee and others do not. Interview questions are not consistent and vary in use by individual principals. Principals are not required to submit interview questions and documentation of interviews to the Personnel office which leaves the district without documentation of employment practices.

From interviews with the Personnel clerk, it is evident that the employment procedures are not clearly defined for support positions. The applications come in to the Personnel clerk but are then sent directly to the administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance and the director of Child Nutrition. The Personnel clerk does not know how applications are maintained, what processes are used for screening and interviewing applicants, and the final criteria for selection for the support positions.

**Exhibit 1-15
Described Employment Procedures
2008-09**

Stage in the Employment Process	Procedures
Recruitment	<p>Open positions are posted for a minimum of 5 days (except mid July through August) at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administration building • school site • district website • Channel 10 • SDE web site <p>Posted as open until a suitable applicant is found.</p> <p>Certain high profile position postings are sent to universities, associations, or newspapers.</p> <p>Job fairs are seldom used in recruitment.</p>
Application	<p>Individuals may apply by completing an application obtained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from the district office, or • downloaded from DPS website, to be filled out and mailed. <p>Resumes may be included but are not requested.</p> <p>Resumes will not substitute for applications.</p> <p>Applicants are told by personnel they may take resumes to the school site.</p>
Screening of Applications	<p>After the required posting period the principal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may review applications • screen out those to be interviewed. <p>No screening criteria are required of the principal.</p>
Selection Process	<p>Principal will then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schedule interviews with applicants. • set up interview usually using a teacher committee, but not always. • prepare interview questions, get questions from interview committee, or generate with the committee. <p>During the interview the same questions were asked of all candidates but in some instances follow up questions are asked of some candidates.</p> <p>Some principals use the Interview Report Form designed in 1978 to analyze applicant.</p> <p>Principal contacts superintendent to make appointment for selected candidate to interview.</p> <p>Principal attends candidate's interview with superintendent and confers with superintendent in making employment recommendation.</p>
Notification of Employment	<p>Principal contacts person selected.</p> <p>Some principals contact all applicants that were interviewed and send a letter. Other principals just send letters.</p> <p>Letter of employment sent after board action.</p>

Source: Interviews with Personnel clerk and principals, February 2009

RECOMMENDATION**DPS should develop and publish consistent employment procedures for all personnel positions.**

The superintendent should meet with the assistant superintendents and the Personnel clerk to review existing employment practices and determine a process for developing written procedures. The principals and support employee supervisors should be involved in finalizing the written procedures. Procedures should include ways to document and monitor consistent implementation.

According to board policy, Section 4013, the superintendent may develop rules and regulations governing employment practices. Such rules and regulations must be approved by the board of education and shall become district policy. Once the procedures are written and approved, principals and supervisors must receive training and procedures should be monitored for compliance.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-8

DPS does not have formal guidelines for allocating staff to campuses. Without clear guidelines, the number of support and certified positions may vary from campus to campus resulting in inconsistencies and a misalignment of funds.

During interviews the assistant superintendents and principals reported that DPS has no formal guidelines for making staffing decisions. As a result when resignations occur, the positions are evaluated for replacement by the assistant superintendents for their respective schools. No formulas exist to determine the optimum number of positions.

Establishing staffing guidelines and related formulas is one way to control personnel costs. This also helps all staff understand how decisions are made and that objective processes are used to determine staffing needs.

Many associations provide guidelines and formulas for staffing specific positions. For example, the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA-CASI) provides staffing guidelines for school administrators, counselors, and media specialists. The Southern Association of Colleges and School Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS-CASI) provides similar information for these and other positions. The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF) and the Association of School business Officials International (ASBO) also provide staffing guidelines for custodial and maintenance positions.

RECOMMENDATION**DPS should establish formal staffing guidelines for determining staffing decisions.**

The superintendent should work with the assistant superintendents and the director of Business and Finance to research professional and industrial staffing standards. They should also review state laws governing class sizes and accreditation requirements. These standards and formulas should be used to develop the district's staffing guidelines.

The guidelines should be rigid enough to make complex personnel decisions but flexible enough to meet the goals and needs of the district. After school board approval, these guidelines should be used to make staffing allocations each year based on projected student enrollment as well as administrative, guidance, library/media, maintenance, clerical, and custodial needs.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

C. COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

School districts are a vital part of communities and are often associated with their identity, sense of pride, quality, and growth. In order to maintain this role, school districts develop methods to communicate their policies and programs and to involve parents and residents in the activities of the district and the individual schools.

Robert Marzano's book, *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*, ranks parental and community involvement as the third most critical factor affecting student achievement. It further states that "one of the defining features" of effective involvement is good communications.

The primary role of communications in a school district is to convey a message and image consistent with the policies put forth by the board of education and implemented through procedures established by the superintendent and district staff. Critical components of communications include strategies for externally communicating with the community and internally communicating within the school district.

Two-way communications are vital to the success of a district. Effective communications will lead to an informed staff and community, support for programs and bond issue elections, and an atmosphere of openness in the district. They also contribute to effective leadership with the board and superintendent serving as a leadership team. Ineffective communications result in confusion, lack of support, conflicting messages and decision-making, and a sense of detachment in the district.

Effective community involvement programs should address the unique characteristics of the school district and the community. These programs can significantly affect citizen perceptions of the school system. Effective programs will garner public support and involvement in the form of parent and community volunteers, public participation in decision-making processes affecting the schools (e.g. bond issue and board elections), and productive business and community alliances.

Exhibit 1-16 provides survey results from DPS teachers and professional staff regarding communications.

Exhibit 1-16 DPS Teacher and Professional Staff Survey Results

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
Teacher	My school regularly communicates with parents.	96%	1%	3%
Professional Staff	The district regularly communicates with parents.	97%	3%	0%

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES written survey

DPS schools employ the following means of keeping parents and residents informed of school activities:

- Duncan High School publishes a monthly newspaper that is created in the Journalism Department by students.
- Plato and Mark Twain Elementary Schools send home a newsletter once a month.
- Horace Mann Elementary School sends a newsletter home on an irregular basis.
- At Emerson Elementary School, Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, and Will Rogers pre-K school, teachers send home weekly information, but the school does not prepare a newsletter.
- Duncan Middle School does not send out any formal newsletter.

School districts’ web pages are often a source for communicating valuable information to the community that it serves. They also serve as a recruiting tool for prospective employees, homeowners, and businesses who are considering investing in the area. In this day and age, this tool may be the most efficient and economical method of conveying a district’s message to a broad audience.

School district websites should include the following:

- district information such as address, contact numbers, demographics, locations, etc;
- dates of board meetings and an archive of board meetings and minutes;
- list of all the teachers and aides and email addresses for each;
- breakfast and lunch menus for each day of the current month;
- departmental staff and telephone listings;
- campus web pages;
- policies, procedures, and other critical internal information; and
- a listing of current employment opportunities.

The content of DPS’s website contains comparable information with that of its peer districts (**Exhibit 1-17**).

Exhibit 1-17
Comparison of Peer District Web Page Content

District	District Announcements and Other Information	Board Meeting Dates	Staff Email Directory	Breakfast and Lunch Menus	Department and Staff and Telephone Campus Listing	School Web Pages	Policy and Procedures	Employment Opportunities
Duncan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bixby	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Claremore	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Coweta	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
Noble	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sapulpa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: DPS and peer district Internet websites

FINDING 1-9

Since becoming superintendent in 2005, Dr. Labyer has enhanced communication within the district by spending one day per month during the school year performing the functions of a district employee. According to Dr. Labyer, this effort serves a dual purpose:

- First, it keeps her connected with what is happening throughout the district. By serving in various roles, she is able to visit with employees at all levels in the organization and exchange comments, concerns, and ideas.
- Second, it keeps her grounded in what employees are doing and the environment in which they work. According to Dr. Labyer, this is especially important in relation to the classroom and the environment in which teachers work. She uses this information throughout the year in such forums as her Teacher Advisory Team and during contract negotiations with the teachers.

Dr. Labyer started this approach while she was a building principal. At weekly faculty meetings, she would reward a teacher for some achievement or activity by doing that teacher's lunch or bus duty. As a result, the teachers enjoyed having the extra time, and Dr. Labyer got to experience what teachers had to do in the classroom, such as discipline, class management, instruction, etc.

Given this positive experience, she carried the activity over to the district at large once she became superintendent. She spends a half-day each month working for a certified employee or a support staff employee.

At the beginning of each school year in August, she draws the names of employees for each month of the school year. It is then up to each employee to contact Dr. Labyer prior to their month and arrange a date convenient to both where Dr. Labyer can take that employee's place. Among the types of positions for which she has performed duties are the following:

- Teacher
- Bus monitor
- Cafeteria cook
- Custodian
- Maintenance worker
- Groundskeeper
- Counselor
- Principal
- Various paraprofessional positions

She uses the experiences gleaned from these job performances in stories at the beginning of each school year during the general convocation of all district employees. According to Dr. Labyer, for employees whose positions she takes, they "feel like they've won the lottery."

COMMENDATION

By sharing the work experiences of employees throughout the district, the superintendent enhances morale, improves her understanding of working conditions, and increases two-way communication with employees.

FINDING 1-10

The superintendent uses a variety of methods to improve internal communication within the district. These efforts improve the superintendent's understanding of employee concerns and provide opportunities to enhance two-way communications within the district.

According to the superintendent, she uses the following methods to exchange communications with district employees:

- Curriculum Cabinet meetings;
- Operational Cabinet meetings;
- Teacher Advisory Team meetings;
- *Sherry's Chat Line*; and
- Motivational messages throughout the year.

She also uses administrative team meetings (i.e., central office and campus administrators) and ad hoc communications, as necessary, to complement these other structured methods of internal communication.

The Curriculum Cabinet is composed of assistant superintendents, campus and central office administrators, librarians, technology staff, and teachers. With the exception of the assistant superintendents and certain central office administrators, composition of the cabinet changes each year.

The Curriculum Cabinet meets monthly and focuses only on curriculum issues. Recent topics for discussion included the instructional use of videos, state-mandated tests, professional development, and special education reading. The forum presents an opportunity for sharing ideas and strategies and discussing what is working and what needs improvement.

The Operational Cabinet also meets monthly and is comprised of the assistant superintendents, the director of Finance, the director of Maintenance and Transportation, the Athletic director, the lead nurse, the director of Child Nutrition, a counselor from EDGE Academy, several principals, and a representative of the Technology Department. The composition of site-based personnel changes every year.

The Operational Cabinet meetings focus on the day-to-day operations of the district. Recent topics included traffic issues at individual schools, police monitoring, site-based budgets, medication policy, and bus discipline.

The Teacher Advisory Team meets monthly for one hour at noon on the Friday following the Board of Education meeting the prior Tuesday. There is one teacher representative from every site, who either volunteers for the role or is selected by the principal at each school.

While the superintendent prepares the meeting agendas, the teacher representatives can submit topics or issues that they would like included. Each meeting starts with a listing or "airing" of concerns from the teachers. According to the superintendent, while this segment usually lasts for approximately 30 minutes, during some meetings it has taken the entire hour. According to the superintendent, she wants to make sure that the teacher representatives have full opportunity to express issues at their schools.

Among recent issues covered by the Teacher Advisory Team have been next year's calendar, textbook adoption and distribution, and upcoming bond issues. The superintendent finds that the information shared by these representatives is a reflection of the situation for teachers as a whole. As a result, this feedback provides her with knowledge of issues that might be raised during contract negotiations.

After every meeting of the Board of Education, the superintendent produces *Sherry's Chat Line*. It is sent to every supervisor in the district, and each supervisor reproduces it for each employee. The main focus of *Sherry's Chat Line* is information on what happened at the board meeting. Following the superintendent's discussion of those issues, a general question-and-answer section is included. Employees can provide questions either in writing or by email to the superintendent, who selects a number for response.

The superintendent also uses motivational messages to employees at the end of every nine-week grading period. At the time the review team was on site, the message focused on leadership. Other recent topics included paying compliments to others with whom they work, the "home stretch" at the end of the school year, and pride in their job as public educators.

COMMENDATION

By using a series of structured methods, the superintendent maintains communication not only from her office to schools and departments in DPS but also among those various entities. These methods provide opportunities for sharing concerns and ideas and creating strategies to address them.

FINDING 1-11

The superintendent uses a variety of techniques to increase communication to and from parents and community members. These techniques provide opportunities for parents and community members to understand what is happening in the district and to provide input on issues of concern.

Among the structured techniques used by the superintendent to enhance communication to parents and the community are the following:

- Parent newsletter;
- Parent Advisory Team; and
- Monthly column in the local newspaper.

The parent newsletter is produced the day after the monthly meeting of the Board of Education. The newsletter was started by the superintendent as a means of expanding communication to parents.

The superintendent and key administrators contribute columns on issues discussed at the board meetings or considered to be topical for that month. Once the newsletter has been published, it is posted on the district's web site and sent home via each student's "Monday Folder", a red folder that parents know contains important information.

The Parent Advisory Team was initiated by the prior superintendent and is continued by the current superintendent. It consists of one parent from each school. The parent either volunteers for the role or is appointed by the principal. The group meets monthly for one hour, usually following the meeting of the Teacher Advisory Team.

While the superintendent prepares the meeting agendas, the parent representatives can submit topics or issues that they would like included. Each meeting starts with a discussion of issues or concerns from the parents before proceeding to the remainder of the agenda.

The superintendent also writes a monthly column for the local newspaper. It is published in a Sunday edition of the newspaper. The superintendent initiated this communication method to keep residents, especially those without children in DPS schools, informed of key issues affecting the district. Among recent topics have been legislation affecting public education in Oklahoma, the recent bond issue election (April 2009), and state mandated testing.

COMMENDATION

By using a series of structured methods, the superintendent communicates to and receives information from parents and district residents regarding key issues affecting the district.

FINDING 1-12

The Duncan Public Schools Foundation (DPSF) supports teachers by providing grants for projects and professional development. This support enables teachers to expand their teaching and instruction to include projects that cannot be funded by the district.

DPSF was established in 1989. It is a broadly based, non-profit organization formed to develop supportive community and private sector relationships with DPS.

The mission statement of the foundation is the following:

The primary goal of the Duncan Public Schools Foundation is to be a private patron of the public education system in Duncan. The Foundation will secure resources from individuals, corporations and foundations to be distributed to the Duncan schools to support programs for which funds are not available from federal, state and local public sources. These programs will stimulate academic excellence and mobilize community support for enhancing the quality of education in the Duncan public school system.

The foundation board has 13 members who serve three-year terms. A board member cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. The board is self-perpetuating; it nominates its own members through a committee of board members. The superintendent and assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services serve as ex officio members of the board.

The foundation provides funds in the following ways:

- grants to teachers for the development and implementation of innovative teaching projects, called the Grants to Teachers program; and
- scholarships for teachers for professional development that the district cannot afford to pay, called the Quest for Excellence program.

Since Fall 2007, the foundation has provided the following awards in the Grants to Teachers program:

- In Fall 2007, 20 grants totaling \$9,450 were provided to DPS teachers at eight schools.
- In Spring 2008, 22 grants totaling \$9,209 were provided to teachers at six schools.
- In Fall 2008, grants totaling \$9,805 were awarded to 14 teachers.
- In Spring 2009, grants totaling \$9,025 were awarded to 17 teachers.

In the Quest for Excellence program, grants are not always awarded each year. In 2009, scholarships totaling \$3,400 were awarded to five teachers.

Also in 2008, DPS and the foundation entered into a partnership to raise \$8 million to improve district athletic facilities. The purpose of the partnership is to establish an endowed fund for the DPSF. The distributable income from the endowment is to be used support DPS educators for one of the following types of purposes:

- awarding any monetary or non-monetary gifts based upon pre-established criteria;
- providing funds to meet teacher development expenses; and
- providing seed money for any local or non-local workshops in order to enhance the professional development of educators of DPS.

COMMENDATION

Through a partnership with the Duncan Public Schools Foundation, DPS is able to create new learning opportunities for students and broaden the professional development of its teachers.

Chapter 2:

Instructional Delivery

Chapter 2

Instructional Delivery

This chapter examines the instructional delivery of Duncan Public Schools (DPS) in the following sections:

- A. Instructional Delivery and Student Performance
- B. Professional Development
- C. Gifted and Talented Education
- D. Special Education
- E. Career and Technology Education
- F. Guidance and Counseling
- G. Federal Programs
- H. Textbooks

The primary purpose of any school system is educating children. Effective instructional delivery is based upon the district's mission for educating students and requires policies and procedures to direct the instructional process, well-designed programs to meet the needs of all students, and resources to support program implementation. The monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness based on student performance data is also essential.

School districts offer educational services to students through a variety of programs including regular education programs and special programs. Special programs are designed to provide quality services for certain student populations, such as those in Gifted and Talented Education, Special Education, and Career and Technology Education.

Background

DPS is comprised of one early childhood center (EC - kindergarten), five elementary schools (all grades kindergarten - five), one middle school (grades six - eight), and one high school (grades nine - twelve).

Exhibit 2-1 provides fall enrollment, ethnicity, and eligibility for free or reduced price meals for DPS and each of its schools for 2006-07.

Exhibit 2-1
Student Enrollment and Socioeconomic Characteristics
2006-07

Site	Grade Span	Fall Enrollment	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Eligible For Free or Reduced Price Meals
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	EC-K	237	61%	8%	0%	17%	14%	65.0%
Emerson Elementary	K-5	415	67%	7%	2%	13%	10%	78.1%
Horace Mann Elementary	K-5	385	80%	3%	2%	8%	8%	37.7%
Mark Twain Elementary	K-5	228	61%	12%	2%	12%	12%	75.4%
Plato Elementary	K-5	282	88%	2%	1%	3%	6%	21.3%
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	K-5	373	37%	13%	0%	25%	24%	92.2%
Duncan Middle School	6-8	789	69%	8%	1%	13%	10%	53.6%
Duncan High School	9-12	1,056	75%	7%	1%	10%	7%	37.7%
DPS Totals		3,765	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	54.7%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-2 provides ethnicity and eligibility for free or reduced price meals for DPS and each of the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-2
Demographic Data
2006-07

Entity	Ethnic Groups					Percentage Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals
	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	
Duncan	69%	7%	1%	12%	10%	54.7%
Bixby	79%	2%	1%	5%	13%	22.4%
Claremore	63%	2%	1%	6%	28%	41.8%
Coweta	63%	4%	0%	3%	29%	38.1%
Noble	86%	1%	1%	4%	8%	49.4%
Sapulpa	66%	5%	1%	3%	25%	55.9%
Community Group	70%	3%	1%	5%	20%	39.8%
State	59%	11%	2%	9%	19%	56.0%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

From 2002-03 through 2006-07, DPS's average daily membership (ADM) fluctuated, beginning and ending with only a slight percentage difference over the five year period, in contrast with an increase in the student population experienced by the state and all five peer groups (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3
Student ADM Trends

Entity	Average Daily Membership					Percentage Change
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
Duncan	3,699.3	3,662.5	3,655.7	3,644.5	3,693.7	(0.1%)
Bixby	3,784.6	3,798.0	4,030.4	4,144.6	4,296.5	13.5%
Claremore	3,986.3	4,032.9	4,035.9	4,075.7	4,126.3	3.5%
Coweta	2,626.5	2,705.9	2,890.0	2,998.9	3,108.1	18.3%
Noble	2,742.1	2,773.5	2,791.9	2,823.6	2,889.8	5.3%
Sapulpa	4,156.6	4,186.7	4,222.1	4,311.7	4,265.4	2.6%
Community Group	2,958.2	2,924.6	2,879.4	2,999.7	2,964.2	0.2%
State	1,143.1	1,144.6	1,153.5	1,162.2	1,172.2	2.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

A. INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Managing the instructional process to ensure academic success for all students is the responsibility of the school district. A district's instructional program, along with its allocation of resources, determines the extent to which the district meets the educational needs of all students. A well-designed and managed process for developing curriculum and directing instruction, collecting assessment data to evaluate and monitor programs, and providing the resources needed to support educational efforts is essential if a district is to meet the needs of its students.

Curriculum development and instructional delivery are critical components of student learning. The presentation of materials, concepts, skills, and new ideas greatly affect acquisition of knowledge. Curriculum content and instructional strategies must be properly aligned and regularly evaluated in order to promote improvement of student performance.

Local school boards and superintendents must provide principals and teachers with the tools necessary to consistently deliver the state adopted curriculum, Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS), and to prepare students to be successful on state mandated assessments. Districts must provide curriculum documents that clearly define standards and learning objectives for each subject and each grade so that teachers know content expectations and instructional timelines for student mastery of objectives.

Starting in 1998, Tim Waters, Ed.D. Robert J. Marzano, Ph.D., and Brian McNulty, Ph.D. from Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) began synthesizing the body of research on the effects of leadership practices on student achievement. In *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*, McREL identified 21 leadership responsibilities that are significantly associated with student achievement. They have translated the results of this research into a balanced leadership framework that describes the knowledge, skills, strategies, and tools leaders need to positively impact student achievement. The framework moves beyond abstraction to concrete responsibilities, practices, knowledge, strategies, tools, and resources that principals and others need to be effective leaders.

McREL's leadership framework is based on the idea that effective leadership means more than simply knowing what to do. Effective leadership means knowing when, how, and why to take action. A combination of knowledge and skills is the essence of balanced leadership. McREL leadership characteristics and behaviors include:

-
- Affirmation
 - Change Agent
 - Communication
 - Contingent rewards
 - Culture
 - Curriculum, instruction, assessment
 - Discipline
 - Flexibility
 - Focus
 - Ideals and beliefs
 - Input
 - Intellectual stimulation
 - Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, assessment
 - Monitors and evaluates
 - Optimizer
 - Order
 - Outreach
 - Relationship
 - Resources
 - Situational awareness
 - Visibility

Principals form the core of educational leadership in school districts. Over the past two decades, the role of the principal has changed from that of a building manager who makes sure that schedules are met, the school is maintained, and that discipline is properly enforced, to an education leader responsible for consistency of curriculum implementation on the campus, the quality of the instruction in the classroom, and student performance.

Oklahoma School Testing Program

Student assessment is an integral part of measuring student performance. The Oklahoma State Testing Program (OSTP) details the various standards-based tests that students must take during the school year. The Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests (OCCT) consists of criterion-referenced tests designed to measure student attainment of skills established in core classes. These skills are guided by PASS. OCCT helps monitor student and school performance relative to state-mandated curriculum standards. The OSTP program used a phase-in process to increase tested grades and subjects.

In 2006-07 Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT's) were administered in mathematics and reading in grades three through eight, writing in grades five and eight, science, and social studies/U.S. history in grades five and eight, and geography in grade seven. End-of-Instruction (EOI) tests are administered in high school following completion of instruction for specified subject-area competencies: U.S. History, English II, Algebra I, and Biology I.

On the 2006-07 CRT's, DPS grade three students performed below the community group and equaled the state average in reading. Performance was below both the community group and the state in math. In reading, DPS student performance was also below all but one of the peer districts and was below all in math (**Exhibit 2-4**).

Exhibit 2-4
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Grade 3 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math
Duncan	91%	79%
Bixby	98%	88%
Claremore	98%	91%
Coweta	93%	86%
Noble	98%	86%
Sapulpa	91%	84%
Community Group	95%	85%
State	91%	80%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-5 shows 2006-07 test results of fourth grade students in DPS. Performance was below averages for the community group in both reading and math. Compared to the state, DPS performance was slightly lower than the state in reading and equaled the state average in math. Compared to peer districts, DPS reading performance was the lowest. Math performance for fourth grade students was the second lowest of all peer districts.

Exhibit 2-5
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Grade 4 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math
Duncan	93%	86%
Bixby	98%	91%
Claremore	99%	95%
Coweta	95%	91%
Noble	94%	81%
Sapulpa	96%	86%
Community Group	96%	90%
State	94%	86%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The 2006-07 OCCT grade five tests included five content areas: math, reading, social studies, science, and writing. **Exhibit 2-6** shows the results for grade five students in DPS. Student performance was below the community group and the state in reading, math, social studies, and science. In writing, DPS was below the community group and equal to the state performance. Compared to its peer districts, DPS student performance was the lowest in all subject areas.

Exhibit 2-6
Percentage DPS and Peer District Grade 5 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math	Social Studies	Science	Writing
Duncan	78%	83%	53%	80%	87%
Bixby	91%	87%	80%	93%	90%
Claremore	88%	92%	85%	93%	89%
Coweta	94%	95%	88%	97%	89%
Noble	82%	92%	69%	88%	89%
Sapulpa	88%	88%	74%	89%	93%
Community Group	89%	92%	79%	90%	89%
State	86%	88%	73%	87%	87%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-7 shows 2006-07 test results for sixth grade students in DPS. Performance was below averages for the community group and the state in reading and below the community group but above the state average in math. Compared to peer districts, DPS's performance for sixth grade was the lowest for reading and the second lowest for math.

Exhibit 2-7
Percentage DPS and Peer District Grade 6 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math
Duncan	79%	84%
Bixby	93%	88%
Claremore	88%	91%
Coweta	91%	79%
Noble	81%	86%
Sapulpa	84%	84%
Community Group	86%	85%
State	84%	82%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Performance for students in grade seven is shown in **Exhibit 2-8**. The results show that DPS students scored above the community group and the state in reading and math. In geography, DPS students were below the community group and the state. Comparison to the peer group shows that student performance was the second highest in reading, the highest in math, and the lowest in geography.

Exhibit 2-8
Percentage DPS and Peer District Grade 7 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math	Geography
Duncan	88%	90%	81%
Bixby	90%	85%	90%
Claremore	87%	74%	94%
Coweta	83%	84%	92%
Noble	85%	74%	97%
Sapulpa	83%	81%	91%
Community Group	87%	80%	90%
State	83%	79%	87%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The 2006-07 grade eight tests included five content areas: reading, math, history/constitution/government, science, and writing. **Exhibit 2-9** shows the results for grade eight students in DPS. In reading student performance was slightly below the community group but above the state average. Performance in math was above the community group and the state. Grade eight students scored below the community group, the state, and peer districts in history/constitution/government, science, and writing. DPS student performance was the third highest in reading and math compared to performance of peer districts.

Exhibit 2-9
Percentage DPS and Peer District Grade 8 Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above
2006-07

Entity	Reading	Math	History/ Constitution/ Government	Science	Writing
Duncan	88%	86%	59%	84%	90%
Bixby	93%	87%	80%	95%	96%
Claremore	93%	85%	85%	90%	99%
Coweta	81%	81%	79%	91%	96%
Noble	87%	77%	80%	85%	94%
Sapulpa	94%	85%	80%	97%	93%
Community Group	89%	84%	78%	91%	94%
State	85%	83%	74%	88%	92%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The EOI tests are administered to students taking the related high school level coursework. Eighth grade students taking the related coursework are included in the results of the testing program. DPS students were below the community group and state averages in all four tested content areas except English II, in which they equaled scores for the community group and the state. Compared to its peer districts, DPS students recorded the second lowest score in Algebra I and Biology I, third lowest in U.S. History, and third highest in English II (**Exhibit 2-10**).

Exhibit 2-10
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Regular Education,
Non-High Mobility Students Scoring Satisfactory or Above on EOI Tests
2006-07

Entity	Algebra I	English II	US History	Biology I
Duncan	76%	76%	66%	54%
Bixby	83%	71%	60%	56%
Claremore	93%	75%	81%	64%
Coweta	75%	77%	86%	53%
Noble	89%	69%	67%	56%
Sapulpa	86%	83%	64%	58%
Community Group	79%	76%	69%	58%
State	78%	76%	73%	57%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Under the accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the federal government evaluates all public schools sites, school districts, and states for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The NCLB annual report card for DPS in 2006-07 shows that the district failed to meet the AYP standard.

Exhibit 2-11 shows the percentage of students from DPS who completed the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) college-bound curriculum from 2002-03 through 2006-07. DPS was lower than the community group and state averages in three of the five years, but the percentage of completion was higher in 2006-07. A comparison of peer districts shows that the percentage of DPS students completing the college-bound curriculum was the third highest among peer districts in 2002-03, third lowest in 2003-04 and 2004-05. In 2005-06 and 2006-07, DPS had the second highest among peer districts in graduates completing OSRHE college-bound curriculum.

Exhibit 2-11
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Graduates Completing Regents' College-Bound Curriculum

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Duncan	73.8%	75.8%	77.0%	75.8%	96.4%
Bixby	98.1%	100.0%	100.0%	98.6%	100.4%
Claremore	100.0%	91.2%	91.6%	FTR	FTR
Coweta	53.5%	57.4%	68.9%	73.9%	72.9%
Noble	64.0%	80.0%	57.0%	72.7%	91.4%
Sapulpa	64.3%	26.5%	83.7%	FTR	92.3%
Community Group	73.9%	67.0%	80.7%	82.9%	89.5%
State	77.0%	76.1%	77.9%	79.1%	78.0%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

FTR – Failed to Respond

Oklahoma Educational Planning and Assessment System

The Oklahoma Educational and Planning Assessment System (EPAS) was created by the state of Oklahoma and ACT, Inc. The system uses an integrated series of assessments and reporting services to support educators as they help students set and reach goals for life after high school. The components of EPAS are the EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT assessments. EPAS assessments provide information about academic progress at crucial points in a student's educational career. Information provided by EPAS assessments is linked longitudinally to provide an academic information management system.

These linkage reports can be used to monitor student progress over time, detect trends, and evaluate instructional outcomes in support of school improvement efforts. The program is funded by the OSRHE, and content guides are available online to assist districts in curriculum alignment and improvement efforts at: <http://okhighered.org/epas/>.

EXPLORE, the eighth grade assessment, is the entry point to EPAS. The EXPLORE test includes objective assessments in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. It also includes activities that help young students begin the process of career and educational exploration. EXPLORE provides baseline data for monitoring student progress through the high school years.

Exhibit 2-12 shows how DPS students performed on the EXPLORE test as compared to their peers nationally. DPS scores were higher than peers in English and Reading but lower in mathematics. The scores for science and the composite scores equaled that of peers across the nation.

Exhibit 2-12
DPS 8th Grade EXPLORE Scores
Compared to the Nation
2007-08

Subject	DPS Score	National Score
English	14.3	14.2
Mathematics	14.7	15.1
Reading	14.2	13.8
Science	15.9	15.9
Composite	14.9	14.9

Source: EXPLORE, Profile Summary Report

PLAN, the tenth grade assessment, includes objective assessments in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. Its educational and career planning activities are tailored to the needs of students who are preparing to make decisions about life after high school. PLAN provides a midpoint review of tenth grade students' progress toward their educational and career goals.

Exhibit 2-13 shows how DPS students performed on the PLAN test as compared to their peers nationally. DPS scores were lower than the national scores in all areas except Reading where DPS equaled the score of national peers.

Exhibit 2-13
DPS 10th Grade PLAN Scores
Compared to the Nation
2007-08

Subject	DPS Score	National Score
English	16.5	16.9
Mathematics	16.4	17.4
Reading	16.9	16.9
Science	17.5	18.2
Composite	17.0	17.5

Source: PLAN, Profile Summary Report

The ACT assessment is designed to evaluate the general educational development of high school students and predict their ability to successfully complete college-level work. The ACT assessment includes over 200 multiple-choice questions covering English, math, reading, and science reasoning. It also includes an interest inventory that provides information for career and educational planning.

Exhibit 2-14 shows the percentage of students in DPS participating in the ACT program from 2001-02 through 2006-07. Student participation varied from year to year. Compared to the community group and state, DPS recorded percentages of participation above that of the community group and state in 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2005-06. Participation rates in 2004-05 were above that of the community group and equal to state percentages. Compared to peer districts, the percentage of students taking the ACT test was the highest in 2002-03, the second highest in 2003-04 and 2004-05, and third highest in 2005-06. Percentages for 2006-07 may not include online registrations.

Exhibit 2-14
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Students Taking the ACT Test

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Duncan	70.9%	76.6%	66.5%	73.2%	63.7%
Bixby	68.3%	72.2%	62.5%	76.3%	68.7%
Claremore	58.3%	83.2%	65.6%	78.8%	65.7%
Coweta	63.1%	66.5%	60.3%	70.3%	57.6%
Noble	66.5%	64.7%	55.1%	65.1%	54.0%
Sapulpa	67.0%	67.2%	63.3%	61.4%	64.5%
Community Group	66.4%	70.6%	63.7%	70.2%	63.4%
State	68.7%	68.1%	66.5%	70.8%	62.9%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS student performance on the ACT has varied from year to year. Overall student performance has decreased in the five comparison years of 2002-03 through 2006-07 (**Exhibit 2-15**). DPS student performance on the ACT was above the community group average and the state average in three of the five years reviewed. Compared to peer districts, DPS students recorded the highest score in the first year, second highest in 2004-05, and the third highest score in two years. In 2006-07, DPS students had the third lowest among peer groups. The overall change is higher than all but one of the peers.

Exhibit 2-15
DPS and Peer District Average ACT Composite Scores

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Point Change
Duncan	21.6	20.7	21.5	21.0	20.5	(1.1)
Bixby	21.2	21.6	21.5	21.4	20.9	(0.3)
Claremore	21.6	22.2	22.4	22.4	21.7	0.1
Coweta	19.3	20.0	20.5	20.0	19.9	0.6
Noble	20.7	20.3	20.5	20.5	20.6	(0.1)
Sapulpa	20.8	20.7	20.5	19.4	19.5	(1.3)
Community Group	20.8	21.0	21.1	20.9	20.9	0.1
State	20.7	20.7	20.6	20.6	20.8	0.1

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Dropout and Graduation Rates

Exhibit 2-16 shows the four-year dropout and senior graduation rates for DPS, peer districts, the community group, and the state for 2006-07. DPS's dropout rate was higher than the community group and state averages, and its senior graduation rate was lower. Compared to peer districts, DPS's dropout rate was the highest and the senior graduation rate was the second lowest.

Exhibit 2-16
DPS and Peer District Four-Year Dropout and Senior Graduation Rates
2006-07

Indicator	Duncan	Bixby	Claremore	Coweta	Noble	Sapulpa	Community Group	State
Dropout Rate	30.8%	5.0%	13.7%	20.9%	9.2%	9.4%	13.9%	14.2%
Graduation Rate	94.5%	97.8%	97.3%	92.6%	98.0%	95.8%	96.2%	97.0%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Classroom Teachers

The DPS student-teacher ratio has varied from year to year, resulting in a decrease of 2.7 percent over a five year period (**Exhibit 2-17**). The district's ratio in 2006-07 is below the community group and above the state averages. Compared to its peer districts, the ratio for students per teacher in DPS is the second lowest ratio.

Exhibit 2-17
DPS and Peer District Students per Regular Classroom Teacher

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Percentage Change
Duncan	18.4	19.1	17.9	18.0	17.9	(2.7%)
Bixby	21.3	22.2	21.7	21.2	21.0	(1.4%)
Claremore	19.3	18.7	17.5	17.6	17.3	(10.0%)
Coweta	17.2	18.7	20.1	19.9	20.0	16.2%
Noble	18.1	19.6	19.4	19.3	19.3	6.6%
Sapulpa	18.4	19.1	18.9	18.8	18.4	0.0%
Community Group	17.9	18.7	18.6	18.3	18.0	0.5%
State	17.0	17.7	17.2	16.8	16.7	(1.7%)

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The average experience of DPS teachers increased slightly from 2002-03 through 2006-07. The community group average decreased 4.4 percent, and the state average decreased 0.7 percent (**Exhibit 2-18**). DPS teachers average more years of experience than their community group and state counterparts in all comparison years. DPS teachers as a whole have more experience than their peer districts in all comparison years.

Exhibit 2-18
DPS and Peer District Average Years of Experience of Regular Classroom Teachers

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Percentage Change
Duncan	15.3	16.3	15.2	15.7	15.5	1.3%
Bixby	11.7	12.8	12.1	12.0	11.9	1.7%
Claremore	14.9	15.1	13.6	13.0	12.5	(16.1%)
Coweta	12.4	12.5	12.0	12.1	11.8	(4.8%)
Noble	12.1	13.0	13.2	12.9	12.6	4.1%
Sapulpa	13.4	13.8	13.6	13.4	12.5	(6.7%)
Community Group	13.4	13.6	13.1	13.2	12.8	(4.4%)
State	12.8	13.2	12.8	12.7	12.7	(0.7%)

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The percentage of teachers in DPS with advanced degrees was above the community group and below the state percentages from 2002-03 through 2006-07 (**Exhibit 2-19**). Compared to its peer districts, DPS had the highest percentage of teachers with advanced degrees in all comparison years except for in 2003-04 when percentages were the second highest.

Exhibit 2-19
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Regular Classroom Teachers with Advanced Degrees

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Duncan	26.2%	27.1%	26.0%	23.7%	24.8%
Bixby	19.5%	23.0%	21.1%	20.7%	19.2%
Claremore	25.6%	28.3%	25.7%	21.6%	18.6%
Coweta	20.7%	19.7%	21.1%	18.5%	20.1%
Noble	19.0%	19.0%	17.7%	19.8%	19.2%
Sapulpa	22.9%	25.2%	21.9%	21.2%	18.1%
Community Group	24.7%	25.7%	23.9%	23.4%	22.9%
State	29.0%	29.3%	27.8%	27.0%	26.7%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Course Offerings

Oklahoma high schools must offer a minimum of 34 courses per year including six core areas plus electives: four units of language arts, four units of science, four units of math, four units of social studies, two units of languages, two units in the arts, and 14 units of other electives. **Exhibit 2-20** shows the number of core units offered in DPS's high school curriculum by subject from 2002-03 through 2006-07. DPS increased the number of core curriculum units from 49.0 in 2002-03 to 55.5 in 2006-07.

Exhibit 2-20
DPS High School Core Curriculum Units by Subject

Subjects	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Language Arts	11.0	11.0	11.0	12.0	12.0
Science	6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0	9.0
Math	7.0	6.0	6.0	8.0	10.0
Social Studies	7.0	8.0	7.0	7.0	8.0
Fine Arts	10.0	8.5	8.5	9.5	8.5
Languages	8.0	9.0	7.0	9.0	8.0
Total	49.0	49.5	45.5	52.5	55.5

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-21 shows the number of units offered in DPS's high school core curriculum by subject in 2006-07 compared to the peer districts, community group, and state. DPS was below the average number of units offered by the community group, but offered a higher number of units than the state. Compared to peer districts, DPS was the second lowest in high school core curriculum units offered.

Exhibit 2-21
DPS Core Curriculum Units by Subject
2006-07

Subjects	Duncan	Bixby	Claremore	Coweta	Noble	Sapulpa	Community Group	State
Language Arts	12.0	14.5	25.0	14.0	18.5	6.5	14.2	9.5
Science	9.0	12.0	15.0	10.0	14.0	7.0	10.3	7.1
Math	10.0	13.5	31.0	12.0	13.0	9.5	10.9	7.6
Social Studies	8.0	12.0	20.0	12.0	10.5	7.5	9.8	6.4
Fine Arts	8.5	4.0	13.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	9.0	5.9
Languages	8.0	10.5	15.0	4.0	2.0	5.5	5.8	3.3
Total	55.5	66.5	119.0	60.0	66.0	44.5	60.0	39.8

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-1

DPS provides a coordinated program of academic support for at-risk students. Without a structure for coordinating support to at-risk students, intervention and remediation services are fragmented for individual students and impede success.

The district established a committee to plan, implement, and monitor a system wide program for Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) remediation. This structure provides coherence to intervention and remediation programs so that students receive consistent support as they move from one grade to the next. The committee is composed of administrators, counselors, sixth grade and ninth grade transition coaches, the district testing coordinator, the attendance facilitator, and key teachers.

In 2007, the state provided funding for remediation based on the number of beginning eighth graders who did not meet the satisfactory performance standard on the seventh grade CRTs. This funding continued in 2008 to include both eighth and ninth grade students. With the committee's coordination, these funds have been used in conjunction with other district resources to implement a comprehensive plan which provides multiple strands of support for at-risk students (**Exhibit 2-22**).

Exhibit 2-22
DPS Programs to Support At-Risk Students

Elementary Programs of Support	Secondary Programs of Support
• Title I supplemental teachers	• Transition Coach at sixth grade
• After school tutorials	• Transition Coach at seventh grade
• Technology software to support remediation	• Middle school remediation during electives
• Summer academies	• Required reading course at high school
• ELL after school tutorials	• Use of Encore time for remediation
	• Extended semester of Algebra
	• EDGE Alternative Program
District Level Support	
• Attendance Facilitator/ Parent Liaison	
• District Testing Coordinator	
• Curriculum Coordinator	

Source: DPS administrators, February 2009

COMMENDATION

DPS provides a coordinated program of academic support for at-risk students providing a coherent plan of intervention and remediation services.

FINDING 2-2

DPS does not have a district aligned curriculum, including updated or detailed curriculum maps to guide instruction in all grades and subject areas. Without such documents, the district cannot ensure that specific objectives will be taught during specified grading periods. As a result, students may experience fragmented or repetitive learning experiences.

Interviews by the review team with the assistant superintendents, the curriculum coordinator, and principals as well as comments received in teacher focus groups indicated that PASS objectives and textbooks serve as the basis for instruction in all grade levels. Teachers use PASS objectives and OCCT data to guide instruction. For some subjects and grades, only textbooks guide instructional content and the sequence of instructional objectives. According to the curriculum coordinator, the district has grade level/course pacing guides which are no longer up to date with respect to PASS and are not curriculum maps.

Interviews with teachers indicated that the district worked four years ago to develop and align curriculum; however, the documents created were not maintained and updated over time. Since the documents no longer align to PASS, they are not relevant for classroom use. Teachers and principals have prepared multiple documents, including course syllabus and outlines, curriculum calendars, nine weeks tests, and semester exams. In 2008 the curriculum coordinator initiated regularly scheduled discussions by grade level and department to explore data and discuss curriculum alignment. While several strategies are in place, instruction is not consistently aligned across all grade levels.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) is supporting districts in aligning instruction to ensure student mastery of core knowledge and skills. Through a technique called curriculum mapping, teachers collaborate to create an operational curriculum rather than a static document of learning objectives.

Curriculum maps are scope and sequence documents that contain instructional information designated by month. Each month includes dates for instruction, content, skills, assessments, and resources. They are designed to “map” or direct the instruction of the teacher and align instruction for all areas reducing gaps and redundancies and ensuring student success from one grade to the next.

Teachers work together to develop maps that include: learning objectives, what was actually taught rather than planned for instruction, assessment tools, instructional materials, student activities, questioning strategies, and instructional timelines. This ongoing process is based on teachers collaboratively studying instruction and making critical decisions about student learning.

The SDE’s Office of Standards and Curriculum will guide schools through the process of aligning, or "mapping," district curriculum documents to PASS and giving teachers a collective guide for student instruction. The curriculum coordinator in DPS has attended the SDE sponsored curriculum mapping training and expressed an interest in having a core of DPS teachers also attend the training.

Many school districts in Oklahoma who are implementing the curriculum mapping process use web-based tools as a means to simplify the process and ensure consistency in creating instructional maps. The software tools help teachers create documents, edit and revise, and monitor instruction of PASS objectives. Some programs allow teachers to reference maps from other teachers in the school and district and share best instructional practices. Administrators use the web-based resource as a means to monitor progress of teaching state standards. With most programs, training is provided to help teachers learn to use the software and develop basic curriculum maps for instruction.

As an example, Noble Public Schools has implemented curriculum mapping using a process for aligning curriculum across grade levels. The superintendent implemented a Curriculum Cabinet with representatives from various grade levels and content areas. The process was implemented in phases over a multi-year timeline. Using a software program called “Curriculum Mapper,” teachers in kindergarten through grade eight used professional development days over a two month period to design individual lesson maps for science. The next step was to review individual maps and develop a consensus map for each grade level. Curriculum maps were also created for elementary math. The third step was to create and use benchmark tests for assessment of student learning based on mapping lessons. The district continued the process with groups of teachers until they have curriculum consensus maps in all four content areas in grades K - 12. To support ongoing efforts, the district sends administrators and teachers to training in the use of the software program and in designing curriculum maps.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop district-aligned curriculum by using resources from the SDE to develop curriculum maps for all grades and subject areas to maximize student learning.

The SDE has resources available to assist districts in aligning curriculum through the development of curriculum maps. Information including curriculum mapping templates, reading materials, professional development opportunities, and potential consultants are provided on the state website. In addition, the SDE has several educators dedicated to assisting districts with this initiative. Curriculum directors for each core content area and a curriculum team leader will work directly with teachers and administrators to align curriculum and assessments through the development of curriculum maps. They engage teachers in the dialogue and alignment decisions that are essential to the development of documents that will guide the curriculum.

Exhibit 2-23 shows the technology assistive programs, estimated cost, and Oklahoma district implementation.

Exhibit 2-23
SDE Recommendations for
Curriculum Mapping Technology Programs

Technology Software Program	Estimated Cost	Oklahoma District Implementation	State and International Implementation
Curriculum Mapper	\$59.00 per teacher per year; Nationwide Search Fee; \$4,900 for two days professional development	Noble Public Schools Ada Public Schools Seminole Public Schools Putnam City Public Schools Choctaw Public Schools Lawton Public Schools Stillwater Public Schools	49 U.S. states and Canada
TechPaths	\$50.00 per user or \$3.00 per student (whichever is less); Minimum of \$1,500; \$1,720 per day for professional development; \$2,250 per day for advanced training	Metro Christian Academy	Information not provided
Rubicon Atlas	\$23,500 for districtwide annual license fee for year one; \$15,000 for districtwide annual license fee for year two	Norman North High School	All U.S. states except Maine

Source: SDE Planning Timeline, Spring, 2008

The assistant superintendents and curriculum coordinator should work with the professional development committee to provide professional development for teachers. SDE staff should work with DPS teachers and administrators to evaluate current alignment practices and create a multi-year plan for developing curriculum maps for all grades and subject areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The resources from the SDE are available to districts at no cost. If the district chooses to invest in web-based tools, additional costs will be necessary based on the program selected and the training necessary for successful implementation.

FINDING 2-3

DPS does not implement vertical teaming in core content areas to support increased student performance. As a result, instruction is not aligned across grade levels and teachers are not collaborating to ensure consistency in learning from one grade or subject area to the next.

During on-site visits teachers and administrators shared that vertical teaming is not formally implemented in DPS. Teachers meet quarterly by grade level teams and departments with the curriculum coordinator. Interviews indicated that vertical team discussions have only occurred on one professional day at the middle school and the high school where teachers met by departments. At school sites teachers work together by grade level to plan lessons, but little dialogue occurs with teachers in other grades.

Vertical teaming is a critical component of continuous improvement. Teachers need time to meet routinely to discuss the sequencing of skills in order to design instruction that improves student performance. It is necessary that teacher have the opportunity to share best practices and to identify strengths and weaknesses of student performance. Interviews with teachers and principals indicated that teachers recognized the need for such communication and wanted the district to provide time and direction for vertical teaming.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should implement vertical teaming in core content areas to increase student performance.

The assistant superintendents for Elementary and Secondary Education Services and the curriculum coordinator should establish expectations for vertical teaming and work with principals to provide structures for implementation. Time must be allocated during the work day and on professional development days for teachers to collaborate. Vertical teaming will support the development of curriculum maps and alignment of instruction and assessments. Regular meetings should be scheduled for teachers to work in vertical teams to discuss instructional issues, review student performance on state tests, and align instructional strategies and units of study as a means of increasing student performance.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 2-4

DPS teachers and administrators do not have in-depth understanding of data analysis processes and the interpretation of results to support continuous improvement in student performance. Without knowledge and understanding, teachers and administrators are unable to monitor instruction, district assessments, and scores on state mandated tests to ensure students are mastering PASS objectives.

While grade level/content teachers do review state test scores to determine strengths and weaknesses, the curriculum coordinator and principals indicated that there are no formal processes or training in place for in depth data analysis. OCCT results are reviewed at the campus level at the beginning of school and at quarterly grade level meetings.

In interviews with the review team, administrators indicated an understanding of the OCCT as an assessment of content standards but indicated no understanding of state performance standards. For example, while DPS high school administrators knew that the difference in scores on the 2006 and 2007 Algebra I tests were the result of changes in the test, they were not aware that the performance standard for satisfactory shifted from 75 percent (41/55) of the items correct in 2006 to 45 percent (25/55) in 2007. Principals and teachers are not provided this information in DPS.

As OCCT data becomes available, information is compiled in various formats and given to teachers in department meetings, staff meetings, and individually as needed. Some principals or counselors create manuals or folders with copies of OCCT results at the beginning of the school year and give them to teachers. The depth of data disaggregation is dependent upon each individual's knowledge and understanding of data analysis procedures.

Information may or may not be broken down by student expectation or objective and communicated to teachers. Administrators shared that all teachers are aware of campus and district performance on state mandated tests, but communication with other grade levels and sites is minimal. Teachers in one grade cannot support areas of weakness in other grade levels and build foundations for acquiring basic skills without dialogue centered on student performance results.

Each site conducts its own analysis of other student performance data at varying times. Dibbles and SuccessMaker performance results are used at elementary schools. Secondary schools review data at the end of each nine weeks testing period or after semester exams. Teachers also review eligibility reports, progress reports, grade reports, computer software assessment data, and informal teacher assessments throughout the year.

Interviews with secondary administrators, the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, and the curriculum coordinator, noted that DPS teachers and administrators do not review the EPAS data from the EXPLORE and PLAN test. According to the high school counselors, no data reports are ordered for teachers to use in improving instruction. The EPAS results are norm referenced and provide a consistent source of student performance data that is not being used by the district. EPAS linkage reports can be used to monitor student progress over time, detect trends, and evaluate instructional outcomes in support of school improvement efforts. The program is funded by the OSRHE, and its staff works with districts to cross walk EPAS results with the OCCT results.

As a focus for continuous improvement to meet specific student needs, analysis of data at the individual student level is necessary. The score for each student should be reviewed and analyzed to determine individual growth in learning required skills. Student performance data should be used to plan for specific, vertically aligned classroom strategies designed to engage students.

According to the National Staff Development Council (NSCD) there are many districts using data teams, a systematic structure for analyzing and using data. The data teams function at the district and site levels to: 1) analyze data, take action, and monitor results; 2) engage the entire faculty in using data; 3) prepare data analysis and displays for grade level, vertical clusters, and department meetings; and 4) identify and share best practices. Data dialogues may be facilitated by teacher leaders who have been trained to engage colleagues in data discussions and reviews of student work samples.

RECOMMENDATION

Professional development should be provided in data analysis processes and interpretation of results for all DPS teachers and administrators.

The superintendent, assistant superintendents, and curriculum coordinator should consider contracting with consultants from the Center for Effective Schools at the University of Oklahoma, Educational Excellence, and OSRHE to provide professional development. Training modules are available for teachers and administrators in analysis of school and classroom tests scores, to identify areas of critical need, and to make instructional decisions affecting student achievement.

Once training is provided, the superintendent, the assistant superintendents, and the curriculum coordinator should implement strategies to assist each site with analyzing and disaggregating test data. The curriculum coordinator should work with consultants to develop teams of data dialogue facilitators to work with principals and teachers in reviewing district and campus data. Teachers should review objectives ranking from weakest to strongest; analyze sub group data; study individual data profiles; and analyze performance standard changes before looking for growth patterns. Collaboratively, the superintendent, administrators, and teachers should use test data to formulate district and campus plans, communicate plans to parents and students, and make adjustments as necessary to remediate or enrich instruction to meet student needs.

FISCAL IMPACT

The resources from the SDE and OSHRE are available to districts at no cost. If the district decides to use the Center for Effective Schools or Educational Excellence, the costs will be \$2,000 per day for a five day workshop series distributed over time. The cost of developing data dialogue facilitators will involve three days of training at a maximum cost of \$2,000 per day over two years. The cost is estimated as follows:

Year 1: \$2,000 per day consultant fee x 5 days of data analysis/alignment training = \$10,000
 \$2,000 per day consultant fee x 3 days training for data dialogue facilitators = \$6,000

Year 2: \$2,000 per day consultant fee x 3 days training for data dialogue facilitators = \$6,000

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Professional development should be provided in data analysis processes and interpretation of results for all DPS teachers and administrators.	(\$16,000)	(\$6,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING 2-5

DPS does not have a leadership development program to prepare administrators with the skills and tools necessary to design, facilitate, and assess school improvement initiatives that will increase student performance. Without leadership development, principals do not have support in developing and maintaining skills essential for leading improvement initiatives.

In interviews with the review team, the superintendent and some principals indicated a need for an ongoing leadership development program for district administrators. One principal stated that principals needed to know how to facilitate professional learning communities. Other principals indicated a need for training to help implement district programs. For example, principals were not trained in *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling* (LETRS) until after all teachers had been trained and then principals only received one half-day of training. Principal shared that it is difficult to support implementation of LETRS with limited knowledge and understanding of the program.

The review team noted that the superintendent is engaging principals and aspiring administrators in discussions of best practices by sharing professional articles. The superintendent indicated the need for a systematic, differentiated leadership program to address the needs of current and prospective administrators. In 2008-09 the superintendent worked collaboratively with principals to provide a four day leadership program for teachers who are aspiring to become principals.

Administrators shared that not all administrators have been trained in a common classroom “walk through” model. SDE provides training in a research based “walk through” model called *Windows on Curriculum*. A program of this nature would provide all administrators with a common language for talking about curriculum and instruction and for observing for classroom instruction. A “walk through” program is enhanced when teachers also receive training. In teacher focus group discussion, some teachers mentioned the importance of “walk throughs” to assist them in improving instruction.

By addressing leadership characteristics developed by McREL, DPS can develop a program that supports principals in advancing leadership skills and behaviors, fostering innovative instructional practices, and becoming more directly involved in curriculum delivery and assessment.

In order to gauge the degree to which DPS teachers felt that their principals were instructional leaders, the review team administered a written survey based on leadership characteristics and responsibilities developed by McREL. The purpose of the assessment was to gain information from the teacher participants who represented primary, elementary, middle, and high school grade levels.

Teachers were asked to rate their principal from “1” to “5” on each item with a “5” indicating that they strongly agreed that the characteristic was present in their principal and a “1” indicating the exact opposite. **Exhibit 2-24** shows the percentage of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of the characteristics.

Respondents indicated that DPS principals as a group demonstrate instructional leadership characteristics as measured by the survey criteria. Teachers felt strongest that principals provide teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs. The second highest criteria was that teachers felt like principals are strongest at establishing a criteria for evaluating teachers that are clear and understood by all.

During on-site interviews, the assistant superintendents stated a strength of the district was that principals are professional educators who always put students first. The assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services stated that principals are being challenged to increase their skills in instructional leadership by selecting professional development experiences that target individual needs.

Research conducted by the National Institute for Education suggests that the very foundation of productive and effective schools begins with the leadership of the principal. The research also indicates that a positive school climate can neither be established nor maintained without strong and effective leadership by the principal.

Exhibit 2-24
McREL Leadership Responsibilities

The extent to which the principal...	Percentage of Respondents Answering Agree or Strongly Agree
Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation	70%
Creates a high level of trust among teachers and other school personnel.	62%
Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus	70%
Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs	80%
Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	64%
Establishes clear goals and keeps these goals in the forefront of the school's attention	72%
Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	70%
Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students	66%
Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments	77%
Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students	67%
Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders	70%
Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies	71%
Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures	75%
Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff	71%
Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo	71%
Establishes criteria for evaluating teachers that are clear and understood by all	82%
Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning	70%
Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems	69%
Ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture	62%
Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations	60%
Treats teachers and other school personnel with dignity and respect	75%
Is a good listener	71%
Is fair in dealing with all personnel and avoids any appearance of favoritism	62%

WCL ENTERPRISES, February 2009

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a leadership development program to prepare administrators with the skills and tools necessary to design, facilitate, and assess school improvement initiatives that will increase student performance.

The superintendent should have principals administer the leadership survey annually to teachers at each school to provide an assessment on the 21 leadership areas. Using that information, the principals should develop personal professional development plans for themselves that can be included in their campus plan. After a review of the individual campus plans, the superintendent should facilitate district professional development for all principals.

McREL emphasizes collaborative efforts by school districts with colleges and universities. The superintendent should consider consulting with the SDE and area colleges and universities to assist in designing leadership development experiences. Outside consultants should be used initially to develop a common set of skills for engaging in reflective practices as a team. With the expertise of the superintendent in developing learning communities, the administrative team has the capacity to develop as a learning team that will provide a model for teachers.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources if the superintendent relies on the SDE or area colleges as outside consultants.

B. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the SDE the purpose of professional development is to ensure that all teachers continue their education beyond initial licensing and certification. Local boards of education, by Oklahoma statute, must establish professional development programs for all certified, licensed teachers, and administrators of the district. Such programs must be based upon recommendations of a professional development committee of which the majority are teachers.

In 2003, the SDE developed guidelines for Oklahoma schools that are based on the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards for quality. These standards include the following: learning communities, leadership, resources, data-driven, evaluation, research-based, design, learning, collaboration, equity, quality teaching, and family involvement. The NCLB quality professional development guidelines specify that professional development should be ongoing, targeted to student achievement, and distributed over time. Single presentation and one-time-only activities are not considered quality professional development under NCLB guidelines and should not be funded with federal funds.

In 2005 and 2006, the SDE issued major revisions to the professional development regulations based on legislative action. These regulations require that:

- the professional development committee is selected by a designated administrator of the district from a list of names submitted by teachers, and then the members are selected from this list by the approval of a majority vote of the teachers in the district;
- the Professional Development Plan is no longer included in the Comprehensive Local Education Plan (CLEP) which is approved by the local board on a six year cycle;
- the professional development committee annually utilize a data-driven approach to analyze student data and determine district and school professional development needs;

- programs be directed toward development of competencies and instructional strategies in the core curriculum areas for the following goals: increasing academic performance index, closing achievement gaps, increasing student achievement on state mandated tests and ACT, increasing the graduation rate, and decreasing the college remediation rate; and
- the district annually submit a report to the state that outlines professional development needs, activities completed, expenditures, and results on specified goal areas.

In addition to the 2006 guidelines, the committee continues to have the responsibility to plan and coordinate programs that ensure all certified personnel have the required professional development points. Legislation in 2007 clarified guidelines by stating that the components once required within a five-year period are now to be considered only as options that may be incorporated in the local plans. The components in statute include: curriculum; classroom management/discipline strategies; outreach to parents; racial/ethnic education; and special education. The category *reporting child abuse* remains an annual requirement. New legislation requires that for 2009-2010, all resident teachers must have training in autism in their first year and every three years thereafter. All teachers in early childhood through third grade are required to have autism training every three years.

Professional development programs enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators in order to improve student learning. The base of knowledge in education is growing so rapidly in every academic discipline that educators must stay current and develop new expertise. Effective school districts provide on-going learning opportunities for all educators. The SDE requires districts to develop data-driven professional development plans that are based on state testing data, accountability data, and the state and national standards for quality professional development designed to improve student achievement.

FINDING 2-6

DPS has a professional development program that supports the improvement of elementary reading achievement and meets the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standard for quality. By implementing LETRS, a quality professional development program that responds to the need for high-quality literacy educators, the district is improving reading skills.

The LETRS professional development program is research based and addresses the NCLB guidelines for quality professional development, which specify that professional development should be ongoing, targeted to student achievement, and distributed over time. The program provides a foundation of a professional development strand for literacy that crosses all levels of the instructional program. The format of the workshops includes theory, modeling, and opportunities for practice with feedback to guide knowledge and understanding of concepts.

Over the past three years, DPS has used state and federal funds to train all elementary teachers in implementing literacy strategies outlined in the LETRS program. **Exhibit 2-25** shows how DPS implemented the program over a period of three years.

**Exhibit 2-25
DPS LETRS Program Implementation**

Year		
2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All primary teachers received nine days of training on LETRS modules. • The training is distributed across the school year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All intermediate level teachers received nine days of training on LETRS modules distributed across the year. • Elementary special education teachers are included. • All new primary teachers received the nine days of training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new elementary teachers received the nine days of training distributed across the year. • Elementary principals received two days of LETRS training.

Source: assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, February, 2009

COMMENDATION

DPS has a professional development program that supports the improvement of elementary reading achievement and meets the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standard for quality. By implementing *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)* the district is improving student reading skills.

FINDING 2-7

DPS does not have a comprehensive professional development plan that offers quality, focused professional development in all content areas. Without a professional development plan that provides for long term, content-based programs, teachers will not refine and improve instructional delivery and ultimately increase student performance.

DPS professional development programs are planned by the curriculum coordinator, the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, the Special Education director, the technology staff, the professional development committee, and the site administrators. The school calendar for DPS includes five professional development days. Four days are provided in August prior to the beginning of school, and one day is set aside in January. Decisions regarding the scheduling of the five professional days fall primarily to the professional development committee working with the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services.

In interviews with the review team, administrators and teachers also said that certified staff members could request district funding to attend conferences or training sessions outside the district and that the district was willing to support this method of professional development. Additionally, the Duncan Public School Foundation provides grants to DPS teachers for professional development that the district cannot afford.

Interviews with members of the professional development committee indicated that there is no comprehensive plan for the scheduled professional development days to support instructional improvement and student achievement. The professional development committee plans the August dates to include a guest speaker, sessions to meet state requirements for training, and time for site directed sessions. The January date is planned primarily by principals who may or may not consult with professional development committee members at that site.

Interviews with district administrators indicated that the majority of the professional development days in August of 2008 focused on districtwide meetings with limited time in curriculum related sessions. January activities included some time for teachers to discuss data, curriculum, and instructional strategies. Secondary principals reported teachers met by teams or departments to discuss curriculum alignment to PASS objectives. Administrators and one member of the professional development committee shared that several schools allotted a half day session to training staff in Pilates exercise techniques. The chair of the professional development committee said that the committee is currently exploring procedures for 2009-10 that would require professional development site plans to be reviewed prior to the scheduled day of training in order to ensure that allotted time addresses district needs and state required goals.

DPS has professional development programs planned by the central office administrators and some site administrators that meet NCLB standards for quality. Without all sites meeting this standard, continuity across the district is not possible. The quality programs stand as isolated initiatives to improve achievement in specified content at a given level or school. The instruction and assessment strategies targeted at the elementary level by LETRS program does not connect to a related focus at the middle school or high school.

Exhibit 2-26 shows the DPS programs that meet NCLB standards and target specific content achievement at isolated levels.

Exhibit 2-26
DPS Professional Development
Programs Meeting NCLB Standards

Professional Development Program	NCLB Standard "On going"	NCLB Standard "Distributed over time"	NCLB Standard "Targets Achievement"	Content/Grade
LETRS	X	X	X	Pre K-5 th grade Literacy
Math Professional Development Institute	X	X	X	5 th -8 th grade Math
Kagan Cooperative Instructional Strategies	X	X	X	K-5 th One site Cross Content

Source: assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, February 2009

McREL *Professional Development Analysis*, a research synthesis compiled in 2005, states that changes in instructional practice that impact student achievement depend on sustained and targeted professional development focused on particular content knowledge. Professional development that positively affects learning is of considerable duration, focused on specific content, characterized by collective participation, coherent, and infused with active learning. Professional development should be extensive with time allotted for practice, coaching, and follow-up.

As an example, Ark City, Kansas provides a comprehensive professional development program in the content area of literacy. The district's professional development program meets NSDC standards of quality and has been attributed to increases in student performance on state assessments. Ark City initially used Literacy First to provide elementary teachers with quality, long-term professional development. The district then used follow-up and professional development strands to expand the program to the secondary level with consultant support from Professional Development Institutes, Inc.

A professional development program, such as the one in Ark City Schools, targets improved instruction in content areas and is based on a plan that extends professional development across the district appropriately connecting the initiatives at one level with those of the next level. Quality professional development plans create a map for increasing learning in all content areas by engaging teachers and administrators in an extended program of professional learning.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a comprehensive professional development plan to provide long-term, quality support to address student performance needs.

As a first step to developing a comprehensive plan, the assistant superintendents and curriculum coordinator should meet the principals and the district level curriculum cabinet to analyze student performance data. Next, the assistant superintendents, working with the curriculum coordinator, should convene a strategic planning group for professional development. The group should include site administrators, the professional development committee, and the district curriculum cabinet. The planning group should develop a three to five year plan for professional development in the content areas using the analysis of student achievement data and identified deficiencies.

The planning process should also include a review of existing professional development initiatives, the use of professional development days, allotted time for professional development, and the development of teacher leadership to ensure sustainability. The focused professional development plan should not be limited to traditional workshop series and institutes but should include aligning and implementing curriculum, study groups, lesson study, examining student work, coaching, mentoring, and developing professional developers. Once a program framework is established in a given content area, it can be extended to other areas and to overall content integration.

As a part of the strategic planning, the district professional development committee, working with the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, should ensure that the configuration of professional development days in the school calendar is based on the needs for comprehensive content professional development. Determining the number of professional days used prior to the start of school program is a critical decision. Professional development days should be reconfigured to allow for distributed learning opportunities during the school year. The existing schedule of four days before school starts and one during the school year does not promote the scheduling of quality professional development distributed over time.

The DPS comprehensive professional development plan should include an exploration of partnerships with Cameron University and surrounding districts to help target the content areas of math and science. A Math Science Partnership grant could be developed in conjunction with Cameron and surrounding districts and submitted to SDE for the 2009-10 school year to support the focus on math and science. Lawton Public Schools and Cameron University received such a grant for the 2008-09 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

A number of resources are available to districts through the SDE, Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCPT), the OSRHE, and the Oklahoma Education Association (OEA). The table below summarizes available resources for professional development (**Exhibit 2-27**).

Exhibit 2-27
Professional Development Resources
Oklahoma Agencies and Entities

Content Areas	Content Areas Resource	Agency/Entity	Funding
Math 5 th -8 th *	Math PDI	OCTP/ OEA	No Cost; stipends
Math/ Science (K-12)	Math/Science Partnership	SDE (LEA Public School) OSRHE (University fiscal agent)	Grant for professional development/stipends
Math Middle School	OTIMMS	SDE/OEA	No cost; stipends
Science	Science PDI	OCTP/ OU	No Cost; stipends
Science	NASA School	NASA/OSU	Grant
Literacy	Literacy First PDI	OCTP/East Central	No Cost; stipends
Literacy	Reading First	SDE	No Cost; stipends; staff
Mentoring	Mentor PDI	OCTP/OSU/OU/OEA	No Cost; stipends
Technology Integration/ School Improvement	OKACTS	K-20 Center/ OU	Grant
School Improvement	Center for Effective Schools	Center for Effective Schools/OU	If not on improvement grant, the minimum cost is \$10,000-15,000
School Improvement	Gear Up	OSRHE	Grant
ELL Strategies	Cross Content	OEA	Cost of trainer
Leadership	NEA	Foundation/OEA	Grant

Source: OCTP; SDE; OEA Newsletters

**Wayland Bonds Elementary in Moore attributed the significant increase in math achievement to the OEA Math PDI. For example, 100 % of special education students at fifth grade performed at satisfactory or better on the state test, with 33% of those performing at advanced, after the district implemented the Connected Math curriculum used in the PDI. (Source: October 2007, OEA Newsletter)*

Additional costs may be incurred by the district for off-contract work by teachers. As noted, the strategic planning for professional development should extend over three years. Currently, teachers are released for grade level meetings one time per quarter for the last two of hours of the school day with class coverage provided by volunteers. If this method is used to provide the planning committee with time, there is no cost associated with the planning component. However, if volunteers are not used and teachers are paid, a cost figured at an hourly stipend rate would be incurred.

According to the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, the district pays a \$100 per day stipend for teachers to do curriculum work or professional development during off-contract hours. Based on this rate, which equates to a \$12.50 per hour, the planning cost for 30 teacher committee representatives is figured as follows:

- Year 1: (Analysis of data, reviews of current programs, develop the reading across the content secondary literacy strand, develop teacher leader strand, and develop the elementary level of the math strand) \$12.50 x 30 teachers x 30 hours = \$ 11,250

- Year 2: (Continue analysis of data, develop science strand, develop secondary social studies strand, refine technology integration, and expand coaching and leadership) \$12.50 x 30 teachers x 20 hours = \$ 7,500
- Year 3: (Continue data analysis, develop secondary leadership strand for math and science, and develop elementary strand for social studies) \$12.50 x 30 teachers x 20 hours = \$ 7,500
- Year 4: (Continue data analysis, refine and update plan, and expand technology strand) \$12.50 x 30 teachers x 10 hours = \$3,500
- Year 5: (Continue data analysis, refine and update plan, and expand technology strand) \$12.50 x 30 teachers x 10 hours = \$3,500

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should develop a comprehensive professional development plan to provide long term, quality support to address student performance needs.	(\$11,250)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$3,500)	(\$3,500)

FINDING 2-8

DPS does not have a group of teachers prepared as trainers, coaches, or mentors to support district efforts to increase student achievement. Failure to develop the capacity of teacher leaders forces the district to rely on outside consultants to provide training and coaching or follow up to support teachers as they use new strategies.

Interviews with the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, the curriculum coordinator, and principals indicated there are no teacher trainers or coaches in DPS. The LETRS training provided for new teachers each year must be presented by outside consultants. According to the curriculum coordinator, there is no plan in place for preparing teacher leaders or literacy coaches. The Personnel clerk and principals in interviews with the review team stated that there was no special preparation for mentor teachers assigned to entry level teachers.

In addition, DPS does not have a development program to support teachers in leadership roles as workshop trainers and mentors for entry-level teachers. Teachers have not been prepared with the skills necessary to facilitate the work of adult learners, develop group consensus, engage teachers in data analysis, and support teachers in making data driven curriculum decisions.

Research shows that teachers’ skill development is markedly increased when opportunities for practice, feedback, and coaching are included in the professional development (Joyce & Showers, 1990.) The LETRS professional development program, the Math PDI, and the Kagan program, a cooperative learning initiative for the core content areas, offered by DPS provide strong foundations of theory and understanding in the specified content. However, there are no structures in place to support the transfer of skills learned in the workshop setting to the classroom. The addition of coaching greatly enhances the level of implementation of skills in the classroom.

Exhibit 2-28 shows the results of research conducted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) on the effects of coaching on learning and teaching skills. Without coaching approximately only five percent of teachers will actually transfer what is learned in a workshop setting to the classroom.

Exhibit 2-28
Transfer of Skills to Classroom Implementation

Type of Training Provided	Degree of Skill Developed	Accurate Use in the Class
Theory	5%	0-5%
Theory and Modeling	50%	5%
Theory, Modeling, Practice and Feedback	90%	5%
Theory, Modeling, Practice, Feedback and Coaching	90%	75-90%

Source: Research by Joyce, B., and Wolf, J., and Calhoun, E (1993). The Self-Renewing School. ASCD

A leadership development program for teachers would provide DPS with opportunities to have:

- a cadre of teachers prepared to conduct the LETRS workshop for new teachers and provide follow up;
- teacher teams to work with principals in facilitating data dialogue discussions at the site level as follow-up to district level discussions facilitated by the curriculum coordinator;
- cadres of teachers at each site to facilitate study groups to discuss best practice literature in the content areas;
- mentor teachers with coaching and facilitation skills to support entry level teachers and experienced teachers new to the district; and
- technology leaders in each school to provide job embedded professional development and coaching to implement integration strategies.

By preparing teacher leaders, DPS can build a foundation for parallel leadership where teacher leaders and administrators work together to increase the district's capacity to improve teaching and learning. Parallel leadership, as noted in *Developing Teacher Leaders*, is a process whereby teacher leaders and principals engage in collective action to build the school and district capacity.

As an example, Stillwater Public Schools has demonstrated the capacity for parallel leadership by implementing a comprehensive professional development program in math, science, and mentoring. The district's professional development program meets NSDC standards of quality and has been attributed to increases in student performance on state assessments. This district initially used the state Professional Development Institutes to provide teachers with quality, long-term professional development and then expanded on this core program with district level follow-up and professional development strands.

After extensive preparation in the targeted content areas, Stillwater formed cadres of administrators and teachers to serve as district professional developers in order to maintain and expand the programs in the other content areas. These cadre members received preparation in facilitating study groups, grade level and department discussions, developing consensus decisions, using adult learning strategies effectively, and presentation skills.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a professional development program specifically designed to prepare a group of teachers as trainers, coaches, facilitators, or mentors to support district efforts to increase student achievement.

In the process of developing a comprehensive professional development program, a strategic planning committee, working with the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services and the curriculum coordinator, should develop a program for preparing teacher leaders. As a first step, the team should initiate a study group to read and discuss the book, *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics*. Using this book as a framework, the team should identify state resources to assist in establishing a professional development program for teacher leaders. The SDE, OSU, Ponca City Public Schools, Stillwater Public Schools, and Norman Public Schools would be likely sources of potential support.

The first teacher leader cohort should guide DPS in implementing and expanding the LETRS literacy program. The Sopris West representative that coordinates LETRS indicated that for teacher leaders to effectively present LETRS, they must attend both Level I and the Advanced Trainer of Trainer (TOT) training. The TOT training provides the opportunity for participants to look more in-depth at scientific reading research and how that applies to instruction in the classroom. Trainer preparation also addresses adult learning, strategies for effective training, and best practices to ensure teacher learning. Coaching/mentoring days include specific strategies for implementation of training, dealing with challenges, and transferring skills to implement LETRS to the classroom.

DPS teachers who become certified LETRS trainers could conduct new teacher workshops, provide coaching support, work with principals to facilitate follow-up study groups, and assist the district in expanding the literacy program to the secondary level. In addition to the LETRS leadership cadre, a second leadership cohort should be identified that will include grade level/department leaders, middle school math teachers, Kagan trained teachers, and special education teachers. In order to best serve the immediate needs of the district, the teacher leaders should receive professional development in understanding student achievement data, using the tools of alignment, and facilitating curriculum alignment.

The core content area curriculum directors at the SDE are possible resources for preparing teacher leaders in academic area. The Master Teacher training program for teacher leaders in specific content area offers summer institutes to prepare teacher leaders to facilitate discussion in targeted content area in district and regional study sessions during the school year. This preparation program is free to the accepted teachers, and the teachers receive a stipend for their time and work. This type of resource offers the district an opportunity to develop a teacher leader cadre over time at no expense to the district.

According to the conceptual framework cited by Mumme and Seago in *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics*, a program to develop the teacher leader as a professional developer should include content/subject matter knowledge, information on students' thinking and learning, and a repertoire of teaching strategies to engage adult learners. Possible resources to explore at the state level include the Math Science Partnership grant awardees from the past years. The Preparing Academic Leaders program, a component of the North Central Math/Science Consortium grant, provides a model for preparing teacher leaders. This preparation model focuses specifically on instructional and facilitative leadership skills.

FISCAL IMPACT

The district should budget for monthly study groups and program planning time for a three to five year period and offer a multifaceted program that includes summer leadership institute, study groups, and LETRS leadership development.

The first cohort leadership group should focus on the implementation and expansion of the LETRS by initially preparing 20 teacher trainer/coaches. The costs are outlined in **Exhibit 2-29** and **Exhibit 2-30**. This cost is for the LETRS TOT components which can be organized over three years.

Exhibit 2-29
Cost of Coaching Training and Materials
LETRS

Coach Training	Days	Cost
Teachers	2	\$6,000
Principal	1	\$3,000
Materials		\$17,000
Total	3	\$26,000

Source: Sopris West Sales Representative, March, 2009

Exhibit 2-30
Cost of Preparing Teacher Trainers
For Implementation and Expansion of LETRS

Elementary Advanced Components	Number of Days	Elementary	Secondary Component	Number of Days	Middle and High School
Modules 1, 2, 3	4	\$12,000	Module 10, 11, 12	3	\$9,000
Modules 4, 5, 6	5	\$15,000	TOT for 10, 11, 12	5	\$15,000
Modules 7, 8, 9	4	\$12,000			
Total	13	\$39,000		8	\$24,000

Source: Sopris West Sales Representative, March, 2009

The total cost for LETRS TOT is \$89,000, or \$29,667 per year over three years. This total is approximately the same amount that has been spent on LETRS each year for the past three years in DPS.

In addition to the LETRS cohort of teacher leaders, a second and third cohort should be established to include grade level and department leaders, professional development committee representatives, and potential mathematics coaches. The second and third cohort groups in the leadership development program could include as many as 25 teachers in the initial stages. The leadership component for these cohorts should include summer leadership institute, study groups, data dialogue groups, and facilitation training.

The institute costs include a consultant contract of approximately \$2,000 per day, if a consultant such as Educational Excellence is used rather than consultants from the SDE, plus stipends for teacher leader participants figured at \$12.50 per hour for 24 total hours. The cost over three years for implementing the LETRS TOT and two other leadership cohorts groups is configured as follows:

- Year 1: (Provide training in TOT leadership modules configured according to the district plan for 20 teachers for 9 days of training)
 - LETRS TOT: \$12.50 x 20 teachers x 9 subs days @ \$50 per day = \$9,000
 - Annual estimated cost of TOT LETRS consultant/materials = \$29,667
- Year 2: (Continue TOT leadership modules for 20 teachers for 9 days. Provide Cohort 2 leadership group with a three day summer leadership institute and monthly study groups)
 - LETRS TOT: \$12.50 x 20 teachers x 9 subs days @ \$50 per day = \$9,000
 - Annual estimated cost of TOT LETRS consultant/materials = \$29,667

- Cohort 2 Leadership Group/ Leadership Institute is $\$12.50 \times 25 \text{ teachers} \times 24 \text{ hours} = \$7,500$ plus \$6,000 consultant costs.
- Year 3: (Continue with LETRS TOT and develop secondary strand; provide Cohort 3 leadership group with a three day institute and monthly study groups)
 - LETRS TOT: $\$12.50 \times 20 \text{ teachers} \times 9 \text{ subs days @ } \$50 \text{ per day} = \$9,000$
 - Annual estimated cost of TOT LETRS consultant/materials = \$29,667
 - Cohort 3 Leadership Group/ Leadership Institute is $\$12.50 \times 25 \text{ teachers} \times 24 \text{ hours} = \$7,500$ plus \$6,000 consultant costs.

If the state Master Teacher Program is used as a component of the district leadership program, the cost will be reduced. This recommendation can be paid for with a reallocation of existing state professional development funds and the Title I and II funds for professional development. A Math/Science Partnership grant and the Mentor PDI would be other resources for funding leadership development for teachers at no cost to the district.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS needs to develop a professional development program specifically designed to prepare a group of teachers as trainers, coaches, facilitators, or mentors to support district efforts to increase student achievement.	(\$38,000)	(\$51,500)	(\$51,500)	\$0	\$0

C. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Article VII, Section 904 of the Oklahoma School Code defines gifted and talented children as those children identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capabilities and needing differentiated or accelerated educational services. The definition includes students who scored in the top three percent on any national standardized test of intellectual ability or who excel in the areas of creative thinking ability, leadership ability, visual performing arts ability, and specific academic ability.

Section 910 of the Oklahoma School Code requires each school district to provide gifted and talented educational programs and to serve those identified students who reside within the school district boundaries. The local school board of each district is required to submit a plan to the State Board of Education for gifted and talented programs and to provide annual program reports to the SDE. Required components for gifted child education programs include:

- a written policy statement which specifies a process for selection and assessment of children for placement in gifted and talented programs that is consistent for grades one through twelve;
- a description of curriculum for the gifted child educational program, demonstrating that the curriculum is differentiated from the normal curriculum in pace and/or depth and that it has scope and sequence;
- criteria for evaluation of the gifted child educational program;

- evidence of participation by the local advisory committee on education for gifted and talented children in planning, child identification, and program evaluation;
- required competencies and duties of gifted child educational program staff;
- number and percentage of students identified by the district as gifted children pursuant to *subparagraph g of paragraph 2 of subsection B of Section 18-201* of this title; and
- a budget for the district gifted child educational programs.

From 2002-03 through 2006-07, DPS had a lower percentage of gifted and talented education students than the community group and the state averages each year (**Exhibit 2-31**). DPS had the second lowest percentage of gifted and talented education students among its peer districts in 2002-03 through 2004-05 and the lowest percentage in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Exhibit 2-31
DPS, Peer Districts, Community Group, and State
Percentage of Gifted and Talented Education Students

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Duncan	10.4%	10.4%	9.9%	9.6%	9.4%
Bixby	15.3%	15.9%	15.1%	15.7%	15.7%
Claremore	13.0%	13.2%	13.1%	12.7%	11.0%
Coweta	12.5%	12.3%	12.8%	13.2%	12.9%
Noble	9.6%	9.4%	9.6%	10.3%	11.1%
Sapulpa	10.6%	11.0%	11.5%	12.0%	12.2%
Community Group	11.2%	11.4%	11.2%	11.5%	11.3%
State	12.7%	12.6%	12.5%	12.6%	12.8%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

DPS identifies students in grades three through twelve as gifted and talented. Students are identified by either a test measuring general intellectual ability or by the use of multi-criteria procedures. DPS uses the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to gather data regarding general intellectual ability to identify those students in Category One, which is students scoring in the top three percent on the nationally standardized test of intellectual ability. Multi-criteria data considered for identification includes teacher recommendation, state assessments, achievement tests, and academic grades. According to the gifted teacher for elementary and middle school, students who score at the advanced level on state assessments in grades three through eight are included in the program.

Exhibit 2-32 shows the number of students in the gifted and talented program by grade and ethnicity as reported to SDE for 2008-09. Of the total 851 students reported, 776 are identified by a multi-criteria and 75 identified by a nationally standardized test.

Exhibit 2-32
DPS Number of Students in Gifted and Talented Programs
2008-09

Grade	African American	Native American	Hispanic American	Asian American	Caucasian/ Other	Total
Kindergarten	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	10	10
4	2	5	3	0	45	55
5	2	12	7	2	54	77
6	5	9	3	4	86	107
7	1	7	12	3	80	103
8	3	8	8	2	106	127
9	4	5	7	3	79	98
10	1	6	6	1	72	86
11	2	7	2	1	85	97
12	4	6	1	1	79	91
Total	24	65	49	17	696	851

Source: SDE, Gifted and Talented Report, 2008-09

FINDING 2-9

DPS does not provide middle school gifted and talented students with an advanced, clearly articulated curriculum. Without having a written curriculum for honors courses, DPS does not prepare gifted and talented students for Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

In interviews with the review team, principals stated that the elementary and middle school programs have been redesigned a number of times over the past few years. The gifted teacher currently serving the elementary and middle school has been a constant throughout the years and has played a critical role in defining the gifted and talented program for the district. Middle school students who are identified as gifted are provided with enrichment classes in the sixth grade and can enroll in honors courses in grades seven and eight.

The *2008-09 Gifted/Talented/Enrichment Plan* for DPS states that the DPS middle school gifted program includes honor courses in the four content areas. According to the middle school principal and the gifted teacher, the honors program is new for 2008-09.

The principal and assistant principal said that they did not implement Pre-AP courses due to overloading students and creating undue stress. Instead, the curriculum for the honors classes is predominantly determined by individual teachers. In working with teachers, the gifted teacher recommends in depth study topics, projects, and discussions and encourages teachers to ask open ended questions eliciting higher levels of thinking.

Honors courses, even if not labeled Pre-AP, should provide a rigorous, challenging curriculum for gifted students that will prepare them for AP and concurrent enrollment courses offered in high school. The explicitly stated goals of Pre-AP are higher academic standards; greater inclusion; increased communication, coordination, enthusiasm, and empowerment; closer ties between AP courses and the courses preceding them; and wider dissemination of successful teaching strategies. These goals can serve as a guide for the development of an honors curriculum.

In addition, honors curriculum of this nature would support gifted middle school students in the transition to the high school course of study. According to the high school administrators, there are no formal structures to assist gifted students transitioning from middle school. A Pre-AP type honors curriculum will not only provides benefits to students while enrolled in the class, but also prepares them for the rigors of AP coursework to follow.

Some school districts offer an extensive Pre-AP/AP program. For example, Edmond Public Schools offers seventh and eighth grade students the opportunity to participate in Pre-AP courses. The teachers participate in professional development designed to engage students in higher levels of learning and attend the numerous workshop opportunities found on the College Board website.

RECOMMENDATION

Honors courses that have an advanced, clearly articulated curriculum should be provided at the middle school.

The assistant superintendents for Elementary and Secondary Education Services should work with the curriculum coordinator to establish a gifted and talented committee including principals, the gifted teacher for elementary and middle schools, the middle school honors teachers, and high school AP teachers to develop a plan for writing the honors curriculum. This plan should include the development of curriculum maps for each content area in the middle school program, which should be organized around Pre-AP standards and connect to AP courses by aligning to the state required program areas. Professional development days may be structured for teachers to work on curriculum maps for honors and AP courses.

Middle school honors teachers should attend the Pre-AP training offered through College Board and funded by the SDE. Teachers need training in Pre-AP tools and instructional strategies in order to engage students in the high level learning. With this foundational training, honors teachers should develop curriculum maps based on the conceptual premises of Pre-AP that include: 1) the expectation that all students can perform at rigorous academic levels; 2) the curriculum should reflect that expectation by challenging students to expand their knowledge and skill to the next level; and 3) the belief that programs must prepare every student for higher intellectual engagement by starting the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge as early as possible.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The SDE will pay for Oklahoma public school educators to attend Oklahoma sponsored College Board conferences which includes Pre-AP conferences. Training options are one or two day, and summer institutes are available. Additionally for educators attending a two-day conference and who live more than 50 miles from the conference location, the SDE will pay for one night's lodging. AP incentive money may also be used to cover related incidental expenses.

D. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B is the federal law that supports special education and related service programming for children and youth with disabilities ages three through 21. The major purposes of IDEA are:

- to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living;
- to ensure that the rights of children and youth with disabilities and their parents are protected; and
- to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

The SDE maintains the responsibility for the general supervision of compliance with federal and state requirements for providing services for students with disabilities under IDEA and its amendments. The focus for the SDE, in collaboration with the local education agencies, is on the improvement of the educational performance for all students in Oklahoma.

Section 264 of the Oklahoma School Code states that each school district shall provide special education and related services for all children with disabilities who reside in that district in accordance with IDEA. This duty may be satisfied by:

- directly providing special education for such children;
- joining in a cooperative program with another district or districts to provide special education for such children;
- joining in a written agreement with a private or public institution, licensed residential child care and treatment facility, or day treatment facility within such district to provide special education for children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, children who are blind or partially blind, or other eligible children with disabilities; or
- transferring eligible children and youth with disabilities to other school districts pursuant to the provisions of the Education Open Transfer Act.

Districts must develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each child receiving special education services under IDEA. The IEP must include input from the parent and regular education teachers and be aligned with education plans for children in regular education classrooms.

IDEA requires districts to provide educational services in the “least restrictive environment” and to include students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs. Instructional arrangements for students may include:

- all instruction and related services in a regular classroom in a mainstreamed setting;
- a resource room where the student is removed from the regular classroom less than 50 percent of the day;

-
- a self-contained classroom where the student is removed from the regular classroom more than 50 percent of the day; or
 - a separate “self-contained” classroom for those whose disability is so severe that a satisfactory education cannot take place for any part of the day in a regular classroom.

In addition, a school district must be prepared to provide a more restrictive setting such as a day treatment program or residential treatment placements if the student’s needs and educational program requires a more restrictive placement.

The reauthorization of IDEA in 2004, which went into effect in July 2005, includes provisions significantly changing the way learning disabled students are identified. One change in the law addresses early intervention services and creating opportunities for scientific-based interventions to determine a student’s response to intervention (RTI). This approach is being adopted by the SDE as the means of identifying special needs students. Districts are being encouraged to begin implementing RTI as a transition to the new process for referring students for special education before the required date for implementation.

IDEA now allows a school district to use up to 15 percent of its IDEA allocation to support services to students who have not been identified as needing special education services but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment. Funds may be used for professional development in scientifically based interventions, literacy instruction, and the use of adaptive or instructional technology. It also permits funds to be used for educational and behavioral assessments.

An effective special education program is defined by IDEA as having the following elements:

- pre-referral intervention in regular education;
- referral to special education for evaluation;
- comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation;
- initial placement through an IEP meeting;
- provision of educational services and supports according to a written IEP;
- annual program review;
- three-year re-evaluation; and
- dismissal from the special education program.

The special education program in DPS is multi-faceted and provides a spectrum of options within each program area in order to meet individual student needs. **Exhibit 2-33** shows the program options for each school in DSP.

Exhibit 2-33
DPS Special Education Program Design
2008-09

Site	Self Contained Classroom	Pull Out Classroom
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	NA	NA
Emerson Elementary	2 nd and 3 rd grade	Learning Disabled
Horace Mann Elementary	4 th and 5 th grade	Learning Disabled
Mark Twain Elementary		Learning Disabled
Plato Elementary	3 and 4 year olds K and 1 st grade	Learning Disabled
Woodrow Wilson Elementary		Learning Disabled
Duncan Middle School	6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grade	Learning Disabled
Duncan High School	9 th , 10 th , 11 th , and 12 th grade and Severely Profound students	Learning Disabled and Emotionally Disturbed

Source: DPS director of special education, February 2009

Exhibit 2-34 shows the staffing for special education programs in DPS. In addition, the district employs four speech therapists and contracts for occupational therapy, physical therapy, and visually impaired services.

Exhibit 2-34
DPS Special Education Staffing
2008-09

Site	Self Contained Classroom Teachers	Self Contained Classroom Aides	Pull Out Classroom Teachers	Pull Out Classroom Aides
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	0	0	0	0
Emerson Elementary	1	1	0.5	0
Horace Mann Elementary	1	1	1	0
Mark Twain Elementary	0	0	1	0
Plato Elementary	2	5	0.5	0
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	0	0	1	0
Duncan Middle School	3	2	3	0
Duncan High School	3	5	3	0

Source: DPS director of special education, February 2009

Exhibit 2-35 shows comparison data on the percentage of special education students and number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers in special education for 2006-07 in DPS, peer districts, the community group, and the state. DPS has the lowest percentage of special education students of all peer districts, the community group, and the state. When comparing the number of special education teachers, DPS has the second lowest number among peer districts. DPS is below the number of FTEs compared to the community group but higher than the state average.

Exhibit 2-35
DPS and Peer District Students and Teachers in Special Education Programs
2006-2007

Entity	Percentage of All Students	Teacher FTEs
Duncan	8.9%	18.1
Bixby	12.7%	23.0
Claremore	18.9%	50.2
Coweta	17.3%	23.5
Noble	14.1%	18.0
Sapulpa	14.0%	33.8
Community Group	13.9%	20.6
State	15.1%	8.0

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

From 2002-03 through 2006-07, DPS has the lowest percentage of special education students of all peer districts, the community group, and the state (**Exhibit 2-36**).

Exhibit 2-36
DPS and Peer District Percentage of Special Education Students

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Duncan	11.1%	10.2%	8.8%	8.8%	8.9%
Bixby	12.2%	12.9%	12.9%	12.6%	12.7%
Claremore	14.0%	15.3%	16.9%	16.7%	18.9%
Coweta	16.3%	17.8%	18.2%	17.5%	17.3%
Noble	13.6%	13.1%	14.3%	14.1%	14.1%
Sapulpa	13.6%	13.7%	14.0%	13.7%	14.0%
Community Group	13.2%	13.6%	14.1%	13.4%	13.9%
State	14.7%	15.0%	15.2%	15.1%	15.1%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-10

DPS has assisted all special education teachers to secure highly qualified status. With highly qualified teachers in all special education positions, the district is not restricted in service alternatives and is better able to meet student needs.

The “highly qualified” requirement is an integral part of the NCLB initiative and SDE regulations. This requirement is based on research correlating highly qualified teachers and high student achievement. By the end of the 2005-06 school year, all academic subject area teachers were required through the requirements of NCLB, to reach highly qualified status. The SDE is required to monitor local educational agencies and enforce accountability for statutory and regulatory requirements.

The highly qualified requirement is applicable only to teachers of core academic subjects as defined by NCLB. Special education teachers who provide direct instruction in core academic subjects and are the teachers of record for students with an IEP are also required to meet the “highly qualified” requirement. The district must notify parents if their child receives instruction from a teacher who is not highly qualified for four or more consecutive weeks.

DPS recognizes the importance of complying with the highly qualified requirement and has developed a plan to ensure that all special education teachers are highly qualified. Over the past two years the district used federal funds to provide professional development workshops and/or fund content tests for special education teachers who were not highly qualified in order to obtain the required status. According to district administrators, teachers were committed to meeting all requirements to reach highly qualified status. In addition, the district hiring practices ensured that all new special education staff also held the necessary qualifications to be highly qualified.

By making the commitment to prepare all special education teachers to meet the requirement, DPS created flexibility to design programs to address the specific needs of each child. Special education placement can be made without restrictions imposed due to the lack of highly qualified staff. Many districts are forced to assign special education students to co-teaching classrooms or inclusive settings even if that is not the best placement for the students.

COMMENDATION

DPS uses professional development and content testing to provide existing teachers with the training necessary to meet NCLB “highly qualified” status. The district’s hiring practices ensure only new teachers who meet this standard will be employed.

FINDING 2-11

DPS does not provide consistent and on-going training in behavioral management techniques to special education teachers. As a result discipline management for students is inconsistent across grades and program levels which negatively impacts student learning.

Interviews by the review team indicated that some teachers in DPS have attended training at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities to learn behavioral management techniques. The program, Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped (TEACCH) program, is an evidence-based service, training, and research program that works with individuals with autism spectrum disorders, their families, and educators who work with students. With current practices emphasizing least restrictive settings, many more children with autism and other severe behaviors, learning needs, and communication problems are being served in public schools, thus creating a need for more in-service training activities for teachers.

In interviews with the review team, special education teachers expressed a concern that since only three teachers have attended a TEACCH summer institute, students are not receiving a consistent program as they move from one grade to the next. According to the director of special education, students in the three and four year old program have made dramatic progress with the teacher who is implementing the TEACCH strategies and behavioral management techniques. The teacher who will teach these students next year expressed concern about not having the skills to necessary to continue the successful approaches. The principal of the pre-kindergarten program also expressed the need to have a consistent program to support children experiencing behavior and communication problems.

DPS staff also indicated that there is an increasing need for teachers to be equipped with strategies for working with students of various functioning levels and that TEACCH trained special education teachers could be a resource to early childhood and regular education teachers.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a consistent, on-going training program for special education teachers in working with students who have autism and other severe behavior, learning, and communication problems.

The director of special education should work with the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services to identify possible funding sources and develop a plan for sending special education teachers to TEACCH. The remaining six teachers in the self-contained classrooms should be the priority for training. If funds cannot support sending all teachers to training at the same time, those in early grades should attend first in order to maintain the foundation established in the current three and four year old program.

As a transition plan until all teachers are trained, the director of special education should work with teachers to study the principles of the TEACCH program and discuss possible ways to begin implementation of strategies. Teachers who have not been trained should be provided an opportunity to observe those who are implementing TEACCH. These observations should be followed by study group discussions.

FISCAL IMPACT

Three self-contained classroom teachers attended a five-day TEACCH summer institute. To provide training for the remaining six teachers, the registration cost is \$1,175 per teacher. Fees do not include travel, meals (except as noted), or accommodations. Fees include a continental breakfast, lunch, one dinner, materials, supplies, and continuing education units. Based on the previous travel cost, airfare, hotel, and meals are estimated at \$1,500. The total cost per teacher is \$2,675. To maximize training impact, DPS should send two teachers at a time. The cost is calculated as follows: \$2,675 x 2 teachers = \$5,350.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should develop a consistent, ongoing training program for special education teachers in working with students who have autism and other severe behavior, learning, and communication problems.	(\$5,350)	(\$5,350)	(\$5,350)	\$0	\$0

FINDING 2-12

DPS special education and regular education teachers do not develop yearly transition plans for students moving from grade to grade or school to school. As a result, special education students move from one level to another without a clear educational plan for successful transition to the next level.

In interviews with the review team, administrators stated that transition from one grade to the next or from one school to another is not a structured process. The process varies from school to school. Records are passed from one level to another but face to face discussion sessions do not occur on a routine scheduled basis. Special education teachers also indicated that they do not meet at the end of the year to discuss students' transition from one school level to another.

DPS state accountability data shows that students on IEPs have not met benchmark standards or have only shown safe harbor progress in reading and math over the past four years. With an identified need to improve the performance of special education students, it is critical that teachers know where students are academically and understand how to maintain academic progress as students move through the system. Student records, alone, do not provide sufficient information to develop meaningful transition plans that will improve student performance and support individual student success.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should schedule meetings for special education teachers and regular education teachers at the end of the year to develop transition plans for students moving from grade to grade or school to school.

The director of special education should meet with the principals to develop a plan for the end of year transition meetings. Special education teachers should develop the agenda for each transitional meeting to ensure the best use of time for the benefit of the student. Priority in scheduling transition meetings at the end of the year should be for those students moving from one school to another. A schedule should be set by April to ensure there is sufficient time to resolve schedule conflicts. Each meeting should result in a plan for supporting the students in making successful transitions.

FISCAL IMPACT

Transitional meetings should be scheduled during teacher planning times. Additional meetings may be needed after school hours based on the number of students and teacher schedules. With a rate of \$12.50 per hour, the maximum cost should be figured at \$250 per teacher involved in the transition process. The cost is calculated as follows: \$250.00 x 18 special education teachers = \$4,500 per year. Once DPS staff develops the transition process, a more defined yearly budget should be developed based on actual number of students needing transition plans.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should schedule meetings for special education teachers and regular education teachers at the end of the year to develop transition plans for students moving from grade to grade or school to school.	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)

E. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) provides leadership and resources and assures standards of excellence for a comprehensive statewide system of career and technology education. With the goal to provide the world’s best career and technology education system, ODCTE programs and services are offered in 29 technology center districts operating on 56 school campuses, 398 comprehensive school districts, 25 skill centers, and three juvenile facilities.

Most of Oklahoma's career and technology education students at the secondary level are enrolled in Career and Technology Education (CareerTech) programs in their local schools. In the 2007 fiscal year, a total of 1,355 CareerTech teachers in 398 comprehensive public school districts served a total enrollment of 142,804. These students were in grades six through twelve and were enrolled in CareerTech programs including family and consumer sciences, agricultural education, marketing education, business and information technology education, trade and industrial education, technology education, and health occupations education. In 2007, an additional, 16,747 secondary students enrolled at the CareerTech Centers for a variety of career and technology programs for high school and college credit.

The ODCTE programs and services as defined by the state board:

- produce CareerTech graduates with marketable job skills and nationally recognized industry certification;
- offer opportunities to nearly 75,000 students to gain leadership skills through program-related student organizations;
- collaborate with higher education for students to earn college credit; and
- use curriculum that meets the needs of and has been validated by business and industry.

CareerTech programs add value to students' high school careers. Not only do they meet the same academic standards required of all other students, they learn skills to manage the challenge of living and working in a diverse society. Their career and technology education classrooms provide a hands-on learning environment where they can increase technological proficiency, develop entrepreneurial skills, and gain practical experience. In addition, technology education programs, designed for grades six through ten, also provide students the opportunity to explore and experience potential careers.

These comprehensive school programs focus on producing well-rounded students. Students learn theory in the classroom, practice their skills in labs and shops, and gain vital leadership and teamwork skills through their participation in one of seven career and technology student organizations. These organizations afford students the opportunity to participate in leadership and skill contests at the local, state, and national levels.

Since 1987, Oklahoma has been actively engaged in High Schools That Work (HSTW), the nation's largest and oldest school improvement initiative for high school leaders and teachers. Both HSTW and CareerTech have a common goal to increase the number of students who meet the reading, math, and science performance goals. Most students are taught the essential content of a college-preparatory academic core and a career or academic concentration. The nation's 1,200 school HSTW Network in 32 states focuses on raising student achievement. HSTW sites use the *Making Middle Grades Work* framework of goals to raise student achievement and prepare them for further studies and careers. The CareerTech centers in the pilot will incorporate the HSTW framework as a means of increasing student achievement.

In a recent interview, Dr. Mel Levine, University of North Carolina Medical School and author of the book *Ready or Not, Here Life Comes*, said that our society is experiencing an epidemic of what he calls "work-life unreadiness." Levine states that some of the problem can be attributed to a gap between what students learn in school and what they need to know on the job, and he believes that more career education and counseling may help provide a solution.

According to ODCTE, students who come out of high school better focused on their future are more likely to succeed in college. In high school, CareerTech students begin assessing their strengths and thinking about what their competitive edge might be. They are much less naïve about the career they eventually select and can better think about long-term goals. While CareerTech helps students plan for the world of work, it also helps them prepare for further education and future success with “work-life readiness.” DPS students participating in career-related academic programs have an opportunity to become more independent and prepared for post secondary experiences.

The DPS CareerTech program offers students access to program options at the middle school, high school, and Red River Technology Center. The middle school offered two courses, Life Management and Teen Ecology, in 2008-09, and 22 Career Tech courses were offered at the high school. Courses are provided by four teachers in three out of the seven curriculum areas that are supported by the CareerTech program. According to district class lists, the enrollment in the comprehensive career education program for 2008-09 is 579 students at the high school (**Exhibit 2-37**) and 112 at the middle school (**Exhibit 2-38**).

Exhibit 2-37
Duncan High School CareerTech Enrollment by Program
2008-09

Career Tech Program	Number of Courses	Total Enrollment
Agricultural Education	9	88
Marketing	5	261
Family & Consumer Science	8	230
Total	22	579

Source: DPS Class Roster Documents, October 2008

Exhibit 2-38
Duncan Middle School CareerTech Enrollment by Course
2008-09

Career Tech Program	Number of Sections	Total Enrollment
Life Management	4	58
Teen Ecology	4	54
Total	8	112

Source: DPS Class Rosters Documents, October 2008

DPS partners with Red River Technology Center, which offers additional course options. The total DPS enrollment for both semesters at Red River is 68 students, which includes five students enrolled in the Biomedical Science Academy. According to the high school principal and counselors, the Academy provides an advanced program option for AP students. The partnership with Red River also provides for an on-line program for credit recovery in four content areas for high school students in the region. The courses are offered at the high school and are taught by high school faculty.

Exhibit 2-39 shows the percentage of students in the graduating classes of 2005-2007 who participated in CareerTech occupationally-specific programs in DPS, its peer districts, the community group, and the state. Among the peer districts, DPS had the third highest percentage of students. DPS has a lower percentage than either the community group or the state.

Exhibit 2-39
DPS, Peer District, Community Group, and State Career Tech Occupationally-Specific Program
Participation Rate
2004-05 through 2006-07

Entity	Percentage of Students
Duncan	45.6%
Bixby	29.6%
Claremore	16.0%
Coweta	31.4%
Noble	66.5%
Sapulpa	52.3%
Community Group	66.5%
State Average	80.2%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-13

DPS does not use the EPAS EXPLORE and PLAN data to support student career planning and to increase student achievement. As a result, the students and teachers do not receive the full benefit of this tool to improve learning, direct career and academic planning, and program improvement.

EPAS is a comprehensive guidance resource designed to assist students in measuring their current academic development, exploring career/training options, and making plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. EXPLORE and PLAN are important tools because they focus attention on both career preparation and improving academic achievement.

In interviews with review team, high school administrators indicated that there was limited use of the EPAS data for student career planning. High school counselors and the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services all indicated that EPAS data is not used to connect career and academic planning and that the data is not shared with teachers. School administrators and counselors were not familiar with the data reports that are available for teachers' use in program improvement and curriculum alignment.

Plans of study provide a structure for using EPAS to help students make decisions based on academic strengths and career interests. The high school counselors stated that student plans of study are not in place and that no student plans of study are coming forward from the middle school based on results of EXPLORE. The Red River Technology Center staff is routinely scheduled to interpret the PLAN data for students. According to the high school principal, there is no follow up in assisting students with their plans of study. The high school previously had a teacher-student advisement program, but the principal stated it was not successful due to lack of teacher support.

The Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) outlines ten key practices of HSTW. One of these key practices is an advisement system that incorporates a program of study with an academic and career/technical concentration. Eighth graders are encouraged to develop a six-year plan of study and review the plan each year. SREB, on its web site under HSTW, cited Putnam City High School in Oklahoma as having an advisement program organized around plans of study for all students and using EPAS data to organize these plans around career clusters.

RECOMMENDATION

The assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services should develop a plan for using the EPAS EXPLORE and PLAN data to support student career planning and to increase student achievement.

The assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services should provide direction to a team of middle and high school CareerTech teachers, department/grade level representatives, counselors, and administrators in reviewing the use of EPAS results. A plan should be developed that outlines strategies for using EXPLORE and PLAN as comprehensive guidance tools for career and academic planning. The plan should support the counselors and teachers in using EPAS assessments to assist each student with a plan of study. The team should consider ways to build teacher support for re-establishing a teacher-student advisement program at the high school.

Representatives from the OSRHE are available to provide customized professional development that presents the district's EPAS data and prepares teachers and counselors to fully utilize the tool for career and academic planning. A rubric is provided for districts to use in assessing where they are in the full implementation of the EPAS program. The rubric should be used by the district in developing a plan for utilizing EPAS to improve student learning and career planning.

SREB also provides assistance to districts implementing advisement systems for career and academic planning. Professional development is available for counselors on implementing advisement programs using plans of study. Support from SREB can be accessed through ODCTE.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The services of OSRHE and SREB are available at no cost to districts. The team can meet for planning or training on contract time or professional development days. Since CareerTech teachers are on extended contracts, they could be available to work in the summer without additional costs to the district.

F. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Oklahoma State Board of Education Accreditation Standards for guidance and counseling are as follows:

- *Accreditation Standard 6.02.* The counseling staff, parents, administrators, and others shall provide guidance and counseling program direction through involvement in assessment and identification of student needs.
- *Accreditation Standard 6.04.* The school shall develop a written description of a guidance and counseling program with special provisions for at-risk students. The program shall address assessed needs of all students, including those who are identified as at-risk and shall establish program goals, objectives, and evaluation.
- *Accreditation Standard 6.06.* Each school shall provide an organized program of guidance and counseling services that include: counseling services available to students; a planned sequential program of guidance activities that enhance students' development; appropriate referrals to other specialized persons, clinics, or agencies in the community; and coordinated services.

- *Accreditation Standard 6.08.* Each counselor shall follow a planned calendar of activities based on established program goals and provide direct and indirect services to students, teachers, and/or parents.

The SDE publishes *The School Counselor's Guide: Developing a Comprehensive School Counseling Program Using Accreditation Standard VI*. This publication is designed to assist school districts in strengthening existing programs or developing new ones. The major components of the defined guidance curriculum include: Guidance Curriculum Domains (Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development); Student Competencies; and Guidance Curriculum Delivery.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) states, "School counseling programs are collaborative efforts benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the overall community. School counseling programs should be an integral part of students' daily educational environment and school counselors should be partners in student achievement." ASCA recommends that school counselors divide time between four components:

- **Guidance Curriculum** – The guidance curriculum is structured developmental lessons designed to assist students. The guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and is presented systematically through K – 12 classrooms;
- **Individual Student Planning** – School counselors coordinate ongoing activities designed to assist students individually in planning;
- **Responsive Services** – Responsive services are activities meeting individual students' immediate needs that may require counseling; and
- **Systems Support** – School counseling programs require administration and management.

Time allocated for each program component should depend on the developmental and special needs of the students served. While each district determines time allotments, ASCA recommends that school counselors spend 80 percent of their time in direct contact with students.

Elementary Counselors in focus group discussions stated that they are overwhelmed with duties that are beyond their regular duties such as testing in the areas of special education, gifted and talented, and ELL. Many districts such as Norman are dealing with this same concern and have switched testing back to their original areas such as special education back to the school psychologists, gifted and talented testing back to the gifted and talented teachers, and ELL testing back to the ELL teachers.

DPS has a total of 10 counselors and one coordinator for testing. **Exhibit 2-40** shows the ratio of counselors to students at each site. As required, the alternative school's enrollment and student data is reported as part of the high school. There are only three counselors assigned to the high school, and one assigned full time to EDGE Academy, the alternative school. With three counselors at the high school the ratio is 1:322, and at EDGE the ratio is 1:88.

Exhibit 2-40
Distribution of DPS Counseling Staff
2006-07

Site	Number of Counselors	School Average Daily Membership (ADM)	Ratio of Counselors to Students
Emerson	1	415	1:415
Horace Mann	1	385	1:385
Mark Twain	1	228	1:228
Plato	.3	282	.3:282
Woodrow Wilson	1	373	1:373
Middle School	2	789	1:395
High School**	4	1,056	1:322
EDGE Academy*			1:88

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

** The enrollment at the high school is 968 since 88 alternative academy students are included in the 1,056.

With three counselors for 968 students the high school ratio is 1:323.

*One counselor is assigned full-time to the alternative school where the ratio is 1:88

State accreditation standards set a minimum ratio of counselor to students at the secondary level but not at the elementary level. High schools and middle schools are required to have one counselor for every 450 students. At the elementary level a counseling and guidance program is required but does not have to be delivered by a certified counselor.

FINDING 2-14

DPS has a clearly articulated guidance program at the elementary level. As a result of such a program, students across the district receive consistent guidance instruction in social skills, drug education, character education, and conflict resolution.

In interviews with the review team, elementary counselors and principals shared that the guidance program is consistent across elementary schools. The guidance program includes the Second Step Curriculum taught by the counselors in grades K-5, Project Alert taught in the fourth grade class, and the Keystone Curriculum taught by classroom teachers. As a result, student needs are addressed across grades and services are coordinated for at-risk students.

The *Duncan Public School, General Elementary Comprehensive Guidance* document provides an outline for the basic elementary counseling/guidance program and articulates the schedule to be implemented at each site. Each school uses this document as the core guidance plan. The coordination of the elementary program addresses Accreditation Standard VII, 210:35-3-106 that states, "... The program shall address the assessed needs of all students, including those who are identified as at-risk and shall establish program goals, objectives and an evaluation."

COMMENDATION

Through the use of various curricula at all elementary grade levels, DPS has a clearly articulated guidance program.

G. FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No Child Left Behind, a landmark education reform act designed to improve student learning and change the culture of schools, changed the structures of federal funding to public schools. In exchange for the higher accountability imposed by the law, states, and school districts have more flexibility in how they can use federal funds.

The act also created flexibility for state and local demonstration programs by allowing selected states and districts to consolidate federal funds to be used for any purpose authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by NCLB. This is to assist districts in meeting annual yearly progress (AYP) and narrowing the achievement gap.

The SDE requires all districts to submit a consolidated plan each year for the utilization of the federal funds that include Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, Title V, and Title VI depending on the eligibility of the district to access the funds. In addition to the consolidated plan funds, districts are also required to submit plans for other funds such as those allocated for Title VII (Indian Education), Gifted Education, and Reading Sufficiency.

In rural districts, where the funds allocated under the Improving Teacher Quality (Title II-A), Educational Technology (Title II-D), Safe and Drug-free Schools (Title IV), and Innovative Programs (Title V) are minimal, they are combined into the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) allocation to any one of these programs. The REAP allocation is then available to be used in conjunction with the Title I program. This allows school districts to use funds to address particular needs, such as hiring new teachers, increasing teacher pay, and improving teacher quality through professional development.

DPS's operating budget is comprised of local, state, and federal funds. Compared to peer districts, DPS has the third highest percentage of local funds, the second lowest in percentage of state funds, and the highest percentage of federal funds. Compared to the community group, the percentage of local funds for DPS is lower, but the percentage of state and federal funds is higher than percentages for the community group. The percentage of local and state funds for DPS is higher than the state percentages but lower than the percentage of federal funds (**Exhibit 2-41**).

Exhibit 2-41
DPS, Peer Districts, Community Group, and State
Percentage of Revenue from Funding Sources
2006-07

Entity	Percentage from Local Funds	Percentage from State Funds	Percentage from Federal Funds
Duncan	34.9%	54.5%	10.6%
Bixby	61.0%	33.8%	5.2%
Claremore	34.7%	55.9%	9.4%
Coweta	27.2%	63.4%	9.4%
Noble	25.6%	64.6%	9.7%
Sapulpa	35.7%	54.7%	9.6%
Community Group	38.7%	52.7%	8.6%
State	34.8%	52.7%	12.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-15

DPS uses federal program funds to assist students in transition grades and support potential dropouts. As a result of reallocating federal funds, the district is better able to address the needs of targeted students and minimize failure as students transition through the district.

The DPS consolidated plan for 2009 shows a transfer of funds from Title II A to Title V. In interviews with the review team, the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, who has administrative oversight of federal programs, explained that instead of using Title II A to hire classroom teachers, a total of \$75,000 was transferred to Title V. This transfer allowed the district to create a transition coach position for the ninth grade specifically to support students who are at-risk as they move to high school. A similar position was funded from Title I to support transitions for sixth grade students.

The high school and middle school principals indicated that the transition coach supports students by monitoring grades, providing tutorial support, serving as an advocate, and collaborating with the parent liaison as needed. At the high school level this person teaches a career exploration class, while the middle school transition coach provides targeted academic support on a pull out basis. This position, according to the principals, has increased the capacity of the intervention and retention program to better serve all students.

DPS also funds an attendance coach/parent liaison position for the district with Title VI B funds. This position targets students from across the district that are potential dropouts or at-risk of academic failure. As noted in the consolidated plan, the attendance coach/parent liaison works with families and schools to increase school attendance. The attendance coach also works with principals, counselors, and teachers to develop strategies for supporting and assisting identified students and parents.

COMMENDATION

DPS uses federal program funds to assist students in transition grades and support potential dropouts.

FINDING 2-16

DPS does not have a clearly articulated program to serve English Language Learners (ELL). Failure to have a defined program for ELL students means that students across the district do not receive equity in service or support, and teachers are not prepared to meet the needs of this increasing population of students.

In interviews with the review team, the assistant superintendents said that the district has experienced a growing population of Spanish-speaking students who are eligible for ELL services. According to the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, in 2008-09, the district had 220 ELL students who are served in various program designs. However, limited funds were creating challenges in meeting student needs. Title III funding to the district is approximately \$20,000 with Title I, II-D, and the Rural Low Income Schools (RLIS) providing some additional funds for technology based programs, instructional support staff, and extended day programs.

The majority of elementary ELL students are instructed at Woodrow Wilson Elementary by a paraprofessional. The students work in a lab setting using the *My Reading Coach* software with support from the paraprofessional. At other elementary schools, *Rosetta Stone* software is available for use by ELL students. The middle school uses the Spanish version of Academy software to support ELL students; however, the middle school principal shared concerns that the software was not sufficient for students who had some level of English proficiency. At the high school level, the Spanish teacher works with the ELL students, and students are assigned to attend the zero hour ENCORE class for additional assistance. The high school administrators shared concerns that ENCORE has not worked well because parents do not want students in the program.

In describing ELL program concerns, the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services indicated that the district needs to make a philosophical decision regarding ELL program design. In addition, interviews with administrators and staff indicated that decisions regarding alignment and consistency of the program were needed. District administrators suggested that an ELL coordinator was necessary for program improvements and alignment.

Classroom teachers who work with ELL students also need training in specific strategies to help students with language deficiencies achieve academic success. DPS teachers are not receiving professional development in effective strategies for these students. According to professional development committee representatives and principals, no ELL professional development programs were scheduled for 2008-09 and none are scheduled for 2009-10.

According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), the characteristic of all effective ELL programs is the provision of extensive professional development and follow-up technical assistance. Successful programs provide many days of professional development followed by technical assistance to give teachers detailed feedback on their program implementations. The training focuses on comprehensive strategies that replace, not just supplement teachers' current strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a clearly articulated English Language Learner (ELL) program.

The assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services, the curriculum coordinator, the district curriculum cabinet, and members of the professional development committee should collaborate to research, plan, and to define the ELL program for DPS. The program must address the major goal of Title III, which is to ensure that children attain English proficiency and a high level of academic competence. The planning process should include:

- study of best practice research;
- evaluation of the existing DPS services;
- review of other ELL programs in districts both in Oklahoma and in other states to get a broader picture in preparing for the future;
- discussion of possible program configurations, staffing patterns, and funding sources; and
- evaluation of professional development programs to prepare all teachers with the skills needed to teach ELL students.

The final plan should include a framework for service delivery that outlines optional classroom configurations based on student needs and changing demographics. Decision points in the plan may include: whether to retain the *My Reading Coach* software lab; how to best serve students not at Woodrow Wilson; programs that would better address middle school needs; and strategies for supporting high school students in the content areas. A key staffing decision to consider is whether to hire an ELL coordinator who could complete assessments, provide targeted instruction at selected schools, and bring coherence to the district program.

A professional development component for all teachers Pre-K through 12 is essential to the DPS plan for ELL services. Due to the lack of qualified ELL teachers and insufficient funding, ELL students must be immersed in the regular classroom where levels of support become the program variable. According to the Oklahoma State Superintendent, 49 percent more ELL teachers are needed to serve students. Therefore, preparing all classroom teachers is critical to addressing the needs of the ELL students both in DPS and the state.

A number of professional development programs are available to districts. The Oklahoma Education Association (OEA) provides a three to five day ELL workshop series at a cost of \$500 per day for separate sessions for elementary and secondary teachers. The Professional Development Institute INC. also has a three-five day program that can be customized for districts with a consultant cost of \$2,500 per day.

A professional development program that is being used in many states is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000) which provides a framework for a well articulated, practical model of sheltered instruction. The intent of the model is to facilitate high quality instruction for English Learners in content area teaching. The SIOP model is not another “add on” program, but rather it provides an umbrella that can bring together a school’s instructional program by organizing methods and techniques and ensuring that effective practices are implemented and evaluated. It brings coherence to instructional practices. Professional development for SIOP is offered in three day summer institutes or through in-district customized training.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to implement this recommendation will depend on the plan developed by the district. If figured at the minimum level by using the OEA for professional development services, the cost will be \$500 per day for consultant fees for five days of training for 25 elementary teachers and five days for 25 secondary teachers. Training can be scheduled over three years targeting essential teachers each year. The cost is calculated as follows: \$500 x 5 = \$2,500 for elementary plus \$500 x 5 = \$2,500 for secondary.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should develop a clearly articulated English Language Learner (ELL) program.	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0

H. TEXTBOOKS

The State Board of Education determines the textbook allocation to be distributed to school districts across the state, adopts rules for the issuance of textbooks to school children, and for the preservation of such textbooks. Based on yearly legislative appropriations, the textbook allocation is calculated and distributed in July and adjusted in December. The initial allocation is calculated based on the audited end-of-year average daily attendance of the preceding school year multiplied by \$55. The allocations are required to be expended for textbooks.

Exhibit 2-42 shows the state allocations and expenditures of textbook funds for DPS for the 2008-09, 2007-08, and 2006-07 school years.

Exhibit 2-42
DPS State Allocation for Textbooks

School Year	State Allocation	District Expenditures
2008-09	\$188,545	\$193,782
2007-08	\$189,647	\$225,083
2006-07	\$191,450	\$224,937
Total	\$569,642	\$643,802

Source: DPS State Allocation Notices

In DPS, the Media Center coordinator is responsible for coordinating textbook distribution and location tracking.

FINDING 2-17

DPS does not have a textbook selection process that ensures all curriculum needs are being addressed and that all teachers have input and access to materials for preview. The current process does not assess materials for alignment to curriculum and student achievement needs. Furthermore, special needs teachers are not part of the process.

In interviews with the review team, the assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services and the curriculum coordinator indicated that the textbook selection process does not include formal evaluation criteria for alignment to PASS content and process standards. Also, the curriculum coordinator is not actively involved in the textbook evaluation process and does not guide the discussion of the selection criteria.

Special education teachers and the principal at the EDGE Academy stated that special education and alternative education teachers are not involved in the textbook selection discussions. Decisions regarding textbook adoptions are made without involvement of these teachers in the evaluation of the supplemental, modified, or on-line textbook materials. In order for at-risk students to have access to textbooks that meet their needs, all materials need to be reviewed for modifications and alternative strategies that align to PASS and prepare students for the OCCT.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should revise the textbook selection process to ensure all curriculum needs are being addressed and that all teachers have input and access.

The assistant superintendent for Elementary Education Services should revise textbook procedures to include two phases: the textbook selection process and the textbook purchasing and managing procedures.

The selection process should be directed by the curriculum coordinator. The coordinator should work with the grade level groups and the curriculum cabinet to develop an evaluation criteria checklist for each adoption cycle. This evaluation checklist should guide the review for alignment to PASS, sequencing for OCCT, and appropriateness of supplemental materials for preparing at risk students. Special education and alternative education teachers should be actively involved in developing the selection criteria.

The curriculum-based evaluation criteria should be used by the textbook committee and teachers to review all textbooks and supplemental materials. Selection procedures should be written and distributed to all teachers and administrators. Once decisions are made regarding the textbook adoption, the Media Center coordinator should continue to manage the purchasing, distribution, and tracking of textbooks according to published district procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3:

Business Operations

Chapter 3

Business Operations

This chapter addresses the business operations of the Duncan Public Schools (DPS) and is divided into the following subsections:

- A. Financial Management
- B. Cash and Investment Management
- C. Purchasing
- D. Payroll and Benefits

Effective financial management in school districts requires thoughtful planning and decision making to obtain the best possible fiscal results. School districts must ensure that a district receives all available revenue from local, state, and federal sources and that the district expends those funds to accomplish the district’s priorities and goals in accordance with law, statute, rules, regulation, and policy.

Background

Oklahoma law provides the board of education with specific responsibilities including the oversight of investments and activity funds. The board is allowed to contract with the county treasurer for the management of its accounts or it may choose to appoint a treasurer. In addition to the treasurer function, the board of education must annually appoint an encumbrance clerk, activity fund custodian, purchasing clerk, and minute’s clerk. DPS has elected to appoint all required positions from within the organization and does not contract with the county for treasury services.

Financial Statements

Financial statements for DPS are prepared based upon the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) that require funds to be combined by fund type and for the financial statements to be prepared on the basis of these combined funds. The accounts of the district are organized on the basis of funds, each of which is considered to be a separate entity. The operations of each fund are accounted for by providing a separate set of self-balancing accounts that comprise its assets, liabilities, fund balances, revenues, and expenditures. DPS prepares financial statements that include the fund types illustrated in **Exhibit 3-1**.

**Exhibit 3-1
Funds Contained in the 2006 DPS Annual Financial Report**

Type	Purpose
General Fund	Account for all revenue and expenditures applicable to the general operations of the district.
Special Revenue Fund	Account for the results of the Building and Child Nutrition Fund.
Debt Service Fund	Account for the revenue received from ad valorem taxes dedicated to the repayment of bonds and the subsequent payment of debt service.
Bond or Capital Projects Fund	Account for monies received from the sale of bonds for specific capital projects that span several years.
Agency Fund	Account for the activities of various student groups.

Source: DPS Annual Financial Statements

The district's financial statements are prepared on a prescribed basis of accounting that demonstrates compliance with the cash basis and budget laws of the State of Oklahoma. Revenues are recorded as received in cash, except for revenues susceptible to accrual and material revenues that are not received at the standard time of receipt. Expenditures are recorded in the accounting period in which the fund liability is incurred and encumbered.

Oklahoma Cost Accounting System

Oklahoma Statutes, Title 70, Section 5-135.2 requires school districts to report financial transactions for all funds using the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS). Policies and procedures set forth in OCAS describe the basis of funding of Oklahoma public schools, the duties and procedures for the financial operations of the district, and the role of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) and the district in receiving, dispensing, reporting, and accounting for school funds.

School boards, superintendents, business managers, encumbrance clerks, treasurers, independent auditors, and other parties with responsibilities for school budgets and the administration of school district funds must be familiar with OCAS policies and procedures. A district's annual audited financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures as prescribed by OCAS.

Revenue Sources

General fund revenues from state sources for current operations are primarily governed by the State Aid Formula under the provisions of Article XVIII, Title 70 of the Oklahoma School Code. The purpose of the general fund is to pay for operations. School districts are not authorized to use these revenues for capital expenditures as defined in the statutes. The Oklahoma State Board of Education administers the allocation of state funding to school districts based on information accumulated from the district.

Intermediate revenue sources primarily represent a four mill levy assessed on a countywide basis and distributed to the county school districts based on average daily attendance for the preceding school year. Local sources of funding are derived from ad valorem (property) taxes assessed each year by the district pursuant to Article X, Section 9 of the Oklahoma Constitution. These taxes consist of the following components:

- No less than five mills of a total of 15 mills levied for county, municipal, and school district purposes;
- Fifteen mills levied specifically for school district purposes;
- An emergency levy of five mills; and
- Ten mills levied for local support.

A mill is the equivalent of one dollar per \$1,000 of net asset valuation. DPS has adopted permanent millage for the general fund and the building fund. Therefore, the emergency and local support mill levies are no longer subject to voter approval, and DPS annually receives 35 mills levied on the net assessed valuation of the property within the district boundaries for the general fund. The 2008-09 *Estimate of Needs* also indicated that DPS voters have approved an additional levy of five mills for the building fund of the district.

Assessment ratios for real and personal property are determined locally by each County Assessor within guidelines established by the State Board of Equalization and the Oklahoma Tax Commission. Real property assessment ratios may range from 11 percent to 14 percent of full market value, and personal property assessment ratios may range from 10 percent to 20 percent.

Currently, real and personal property in Stephens County is assessed at a ratio of 11 percent of full market value. Public service property assessments are determined by the Oklahoma State Tax Commission. Currently, the public service property assessment ratio is approximately 22.85 percent of estimated full market value.

The net assessed valuation of the district has increased 66.50 percent since 1999 even though the population of the district has generally been declining as is illustrated in **Exhibit 3-2**.

Exhibit 3-2
Change in DPS Net Assessed Valuation
As Compared to Enrollment Change

Fiscal Year Ending	Value	Percentage Change	Enrollment	Percentage Change
2008	\$117,798,203	10.3%		
2007	\$106,804,971	7.2%	3,694	1.3%
2006	\$99,652,165	4.9%	3,645	(.3%)
2005	\$95,039,964	1.0%	3,656	(.2%)
2004	\$94,057,127	4.5%	3,663	(1.0%)
2003	\$89,981,821	7.5%	3,699	(.2%)
2002	\$83,697,525	5.2%	3,706	(.5%)
2001	\$79,549,504	5.5%	3,726	(2.6%)
2000	\$75,384,350	6.6%	3,824	.7%
1999	\$70,751,205	n/a	3,796	n/a

Source: DPS Bond Official Statement dated July 1, 2008 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

The district's 2008 net assessed valuation of \$117,798,203 was comprised of real, personal, and public service property as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-3**.

Exhibit 3-3
DPS Fiscal Year 2008 Net Assessed Valuation

Type	Value	Percentage of Total
Real Property	\$77,220,886	65.55%
Personal Property	\$33,390,832	28.35%
Public Service	\$7,186,485	6.10%
Total	\$117,798,203	100.00%

Source: DPS Official Statement dated July 1, 2008 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

The district's largest taxpayers comprise 32.8 percent of the total net assessed valuation of the district. These industries are primarily engaged in the oil and gas industry as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-4** and are thus subject to the fluctuations of the oil market. DPS's largest taxpayer, Halliburton Industries, comprises 23.2 percent of the total net assessed valuation of the district. As such the district's net assessed valuation and the ability to generate funding for the general operations and bond programs would be detrimentally affected in the event that the company was to relocate or cease operations. Changes in the industry which could potentially affect other large taxpayers would have a limited effect on the district.

Exhibit 3-4
DPS Fiscal Year 2008 Largest Taxpayers

Type	Value
Halliburton Industries	\$27,316,427
Plains Pipeline Inc.	\$2,927,197
Southwestern Bell Telephone	\$2,102,638
Wal-Mart Stores	\$1,533,611
Hydra Rig Nitrogen Division	\$1,355,130
Public Service Company	\$993,642
Henderson Supply Company	\$794,115
Bronco Drilling Company	\$703,067
Atlas Pipeline Mid-Continent	\$472,091
Banc First	\$412,897
Total	\$38,610,816

Source: DPS Official Statement dated July 1, 2008

State funding is distributed via a weighted formula which attempts to recognize the cost of providing an education which varies both with the student and district. Students are weighted both upon grade level placement and type of services needed. Student weights are calculated at 1.0 for grades four to six and at a higher rate for grade levels above and below this level. Students needing special services such as visually impaired, economically disadvantaged, and bilingual students receive further weighted funding ranging from 3.8 to .25 per student.

Ad valorem taxes for bond issues are required to be collected by the County Treasurer by statute and remitted to the school district for deposit into the sinking fund. Ad valorem tax rates for sinking fund purposes are determined by ascertaining the actual dollars of revenues required for payment of principal and interest on indebtedness, fees to fiscal and paying agents, and judicial judgments. The total debt service requirements may be reduced by any surplus from the prior fiscal year or any direct contributions made into the sinking fund. A reserve for delinquent taxes, in an amount of not less than five percent and not more than 20 percent of the net required tax collections, is added to the required debt service collections. The final total requirements for both debt service and general fund are then divided by the total net assessed valuation of all real, personal, and public service property in order to determine the appropriate tax rate for each property owner.

The amounts contained in the *Estimate of Needs* are verified by the County Excise Board and upon verification, the levy is ordered to be certified to the County Assessor in order that the County Assessor may extend the levy upon the tax rolls for the year which the *Estimate of Needs* is submitted. While the County Excise Board may make recommendations with respect to the district's levy request, it only has authority to change the reserve for delinquent taxes.

The County Assessor is required to file a tax roll report on or before October 1 of each year with the County Treasurer indicating the net assessed valuation for each municipality with the County. The County Treasurer has 15 days after receipt of the tax roll report to start collecting taxes. Fifty percent of the levy is due and payable on November 1st with the remainder due and payable on or before April 1st. In the event that the taxpayer does not remit their November 1st tax payment, the entire amount outstanding is declared delinquent as of January 1st.

Interest accrues on delinquent taxes at the rate of 1.5 percent monthly or 18 percent annually to a maximum of 100 percent of the taxes due and outstanding until such time as the delinquent taxes are paid. In the event that taxes are not paid, the property is sold at tax sale on October 1st, and the purchaser is issued a certificate of tax lien. However, the original owner of the property has two years in which to redeem the property by paying the outstanding tax, interest, and penalty. If, at the end of two years the original owner has not redeemed the property, the purchaser may then apply for a deed to the property. If there is no purchaser, then the county acquires the same lien and the property is auctioned after approximately two and one-half years.

Assessed values in DPS have increased from \$70.8 million to \$117.8 million over a ten year period. Even though the 2008 tax levy was less than the prior year, the district's total tax rate in relation to other governmental entities has increased at a greater rate due to the district's bonded indebtedness and successful passage of bond elections as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-5**.

Exhibit 3-5
DPS and Other Governmental Entities
Total Tax Rate Trend per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Year	DPS	City of Duncan	Stephens County	Technology Center	Total
2008	\$61.90	\$0.00	\$16.87	\$12.26	\$91.03
2007	\$65.11	\$0.00	\$16.87	\$12.26	\$94.24
2006	\$62.25	\$0.00	\$16.87	\$12.26	\$91.38
2005	\$59.89	\$0.22	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$88.61
2004	\$63.24	\$0.23	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$91.97
2003	\$63.75	\$0.26	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$92.51
2002	\$64.04	\$0.00	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$92.54
2001	\$55.74	\$0.00	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$84.24
2000	\$57.68	\$0.00	\$16.50	\$12.00	\$86.18
1999	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$16.56	\$11.00	\$67.56

Source: DPS Official Statement dated July 1, 2008

District enrollment and property values directly influence the amount of local, state, and intermediate revenues. A comparison of the historical ADM trends in DPS indicates that enrollment has remained flat while their peer districts have increased in enrollment as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-6**.

Exhibit 3-6
Student ADM Trends

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Percentage Change
Duncan	3,699	3,663	3,656	3,645	3,694	(.1%)
Bixby	3,785	3,798	4,030	4,145	4,297	13.5%
Claremore	3,986	4,033	4,036	4,076	4,126	3.5%
Coweta	2,627	2,706	2,890	2,999	3,108	18.3%
Noble	2,742	2,774	2,792	2,824	2,890	5.3%
Sapulpa	4,157	4,187	4,222	4,312	4,265	2.6%
Community Group	2,958	2,925	2,879	3,000	2,964	(.2%)
State	1,143	1,145	1,154	1,162	1,172	2.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

The average assessed value of DPS has increased but not at the rate of the majority of its peers. The average assessed value of the district remains below the community group and state averages as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-7**.

Exhibit 3-7
Assessed Property Value per Student

Entity	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Percentage Change
Duncan	\$25,381	\$25,949	\$27,259	\$29,306	\$31,891	25.6%
Bixby	\$50,458	\$52,549	\$52,745	\$56,808	\$58,757	16.4%
Claremore	\$22,608	\$23,079	\$24,536	\$25,981	\$27,642	22.2%
Coweta	\$16,364	\$17,598	\$18,216	\$19,931	\$21,745	32.9%
Noble	\$13,991	\$15,206	\$16,381	\$17,295	\$17,788	27.1%
Sapulpa	\$23,763	\$27,096	\$28,260	\$27,932	\$30,105	26.7%
Community Group	\$23,484	\$25,891	\$29,792	\$31,997	\$34,356	46.3%
State	\$28,002	\$29,668	\$31,431	\$33,063	\$34,815	24.3%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

DPS has a lower percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch than the state average but also has a lower average assessed property value per student than the state average value. As a result, DPS receives a higher percentage of state revenues but a lower percentage of federal revenues as compared to the state average. In relation to its peer group, DPS receives a higher percentage of state and federal funds as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-8**.

Exhibit 3-8
Budgeted Sources of Revenue
as a Percentage of Total Budgeted Revenue, All Funds

Source of Revenue		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Local and County	Duncan	34.0%	34.3%	32.6%	32.6%	34.9%
	Community Group	33.2%	33.9%	36.5%	38.2%	38.7%
	State	33.8%	33.9%	34.1%	34.3%	34.8%
State	Duncan	55.5%	55.2%	57.7%	55.6%	54.5%
	Community Group	57.5%	56.5%	54.1%	52.8%	52.7%
	State	53.5%	53.4%	52.5%	52.2%	52.7%
Federal	Duncan	10.5%	10.6%	9.8%	11.9%	10.6%
	Community Group	9.4%	9.6%	9.4%	9.1%	8.6%
	State	12.7%	12.7%	13.8%	13.5%	12.5%

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

Expenditures

The district expended 55.2 percent of its funds on instruction, which is less than the amount expended within the community group and state averages. The district expenditure of \$6,746 per student is slightly higher than the community group but lower than the state averages as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-9**.

Exhibit 3-9
DPS, Community Group, and State Categorical Expenditures, All Funds
2006-07

Expenditure Category	DPS		Community Group Average		State Average	
	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Expenditure Per Student	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Expenditure Per Student	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Expenditure Per Student
Instruction	55.2%	\$3,723	58.6%	\$3,787	56.4%	\$4,120
Student Support	5.2%	\$353	6.7%	\$436	6.5%	\$475
Instructional Support	3.7%	\$248	2.8%	\$184	3.4%	\$251
District Administration	2.7%	\$180	2.4%	\$155	2.8%	\$207
School Administration	6.5%	\$438	5.9%	\$382	5.5%	\$399
District Support	19.3%	\$1,304	16.7%	\$1,077	16.9%	\$1,234
Other	7.4%	\$500	6.9%	\$447	8.5%	\$624
Total	100.0%	\$6,746	100.0%	\$6,468	100.0%	\$7,311
Debt Service in Addition to Above		\$689		\$581		\$542

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

When comparing the dollar amount of funds expended on a per student basis within the general fund, DPS expended more per student as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-10**.

Exhibit 3-10
DPS and Community Group
General Fund Expenditures by Student
2006-07

District	Salaries & Benefits	Contracted Services	Supplies	Other	Total
Duncan	\$4,941	\$374	\$580	\$113	\$6,008
Bixby	\$4,289	\$592	\$560	\$51	\$5,492
Claremore	\$4,997	\$313	\$409	\$152	\$5,870
Coweta	\$4,239	\$282	\$494	\$97	\$5,112
Noble	\$4,388	\$602	\$532	\$65	\$5,587
Sapulpa	\$5,078	\$291	\$508	\$135	\$102
Average	\$4,655	\$409	\$514	\$102	\$5,680

Source: Oklahoma Cost Accounting System and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

DPS expended more in general funds than the group average for salaries and benefits in all functions and had the highest overall salary and benefits of its peers in the areas of general administration, school administration, and business as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-11**.

Exhibit 3-11
DPS and Community Group
General Fund Salary and Benefits, by Student
2006-07

District	Instruction	Guidance & Health	Instructional Staff	General Adm.	School Adm.	Business	Auxiliary
Duncan	\$3,336	\$334	\$144	\$135	\$429	\$104	\$459
Bixby	\$2,853	\$370	\$136	\$106	\$332	\$47	\$446
Claremore	\$3,626	\$432	\$105	\$114	\$323	\$84	\$132
Coweta	\$3,168	\$176	\$129	\$117	\$259	\$76	\$314
Noble	\$3,113	\$178	\$101	\$133	\$364	\$31	\$467
Sapulpa	\$3,649	\$353	\$138	\$76	\$364	\$79	\$404
Average	\$3,291	\$307	\$126	\$113	\$345	\$70	\$400

Source: Oklahoma Cost Accounting System and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

Activity Funds

Activity funds are administered in accordance with Oklahoma State Statute, Title 70, Section 5.129 and can be defined as funds that consist of resources received and held by the school as trustee to be expended or invested in accordance with conditions of the trust. Specifically, they are funds accumulated from various district approved fund raising activities, membership dues or fees, commissions, interest income, and donations. These funds are to be used to promote the general welfare of the school and the educational development and morale of students.

The statute allows the district to sanction parent and booster organizations and account for their funds directly. DPS has elected to sanction a variety of booster organizations including the various athletic, fine arts, and spirit booster clubs, as well as, parent teacher organizations and scholarship funds.

Bonds

Article X, Section 26 of the Oklahoma Constitution prohibits school districts from issuing debt without approval by 60 percent of the district's voters. A district's outstanding debt is limited to 10 percent of its assessed valuation. The issued debt may be used for the purpose of acquiring or improving school sites, constructing, repairing, remodeling or equipping buildings, or acquiring school furniture, fixtures or equipment.

The July 1, 2008 official statement of the district indicated that the district had outstanding long-term debt of \$12,925,000 as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-12**.

Exhibit 3-12
DPS Schedule of Outstanding Long-Term Debt
As of July 1, 2008

Date of Issue	Date of Maturity	Amount Outstanding
07/01/2003	07/01/2008	\$1,150,000
07/01/2004	07/01/2009	\$1,820,000
06/01/2006	06/01/2009	\$850,000
07/01/2007	01/01/2012	\$6,305,000
07/01/2008	07/01/2013	\$2,800,000
Total		\$12,925,000

Source: DPS Official Statement Dated July 1, 2008

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

An organization's financial planning and monitoring, as well as its budget development and management, establish the foundation for all financial management operations. Financial planning expands an organization's awareness of options, potential problems, and opportunities and helps shape the decisions of an entity and permits necessary actions to be taken before problems become more severe. The planning process results in the preparation of a financial plan consisting of various components such as an analysis of financial trends; an assessment of problems or opportunities facing the entity and the actions needed to address those issues; and a long-term forecast of revenues and expenditures.

FINDING 3-1

The superintendent and director of Business and Finance prepare the annual budget in conjunction with the preparation of the *Estimate of Needs* by the district's external auditor. Since more than 80 percent of the district's general funds are allocated for salaries and benefits of employees, the district has limited options for providing additional budgetary allocations at the campus and department levels for supplies, materials, and other programmatic needs.

Departmental allocations are largely based upon prior year allocations and specific program needs for the upcoming year. The director of Business and Finance calculates the campus allocations based upon their estimated enrollment. The director also utilizes the state funding formula weights in calculation of the campus budgetary allocation so that additional funding can be provided for students with greater perceived educational needs.

COMMENDATION

The director of Business and Finance has developed a system to allocate campus budgets based upon anticipated enrollment and state funding formula weights.

FINDING 3-2

The monthly financial board reports provided to the board consist of detail by month of accounts payable, payroll, and revenues for a three-year period but do not provide a method for board members and other stakeholders, including district budget managers, to compare expenditures to the adopted budget. The monthly financial reports should provide the net results of the district's operations and be prepared in such a manner so that all stakeholders have the ability to easily make critical decisions.

The monthly financial reports prepared for the board of education consist of reports from both finance and child nutrition. The director of Business and Finance prepares a monthly report that lists accounts payable and payroll draws, along with the revenue received by month for each fund of the district. Bond funds are listed separately by authorization.

With respect to internal reporting to the various budgetary managers, seventeen percent of district staff responded in a survey that they did not receive regular financial reports from the business office. Many of these reports can be retrieved easily on-line, and staff could likely run these on an as needed basis throughout the year.

A summary of the month's electronic claims and reimbursement requests for child nutrition are included in the board packet. These reports are prepared on a monthly basis and do not provide a comparison to previous periods nor do they reflect the actual receipts and disbursements from the child nutrition fund. Determining the financial status of the food service program throughout the year is not possible with the current information contained in the board packet.

The treasurer prepares a report consisting of a detail of cash on hand, revenues by type and warrants paid, as well as investments. The director of Business and Finance maintains detailed reports of tax collection by month, comparisons to similar periods during the previous year, and percentage of total levy collected. However, these are not included in the monthly board reports.

The monthly financial reports should include budgeted data, actual data, and variances from the budget by program and fund with a clear explanation of budget variances, along with a comparison to the same period for the prior year. Reports presented to the board of education can be summarized at the functional level; however, budget managers should directly receive or have access to detailed information regarding their specific programs and budgets.

Board members should be able to clearly identify the net results of the district's operations (i.e. the difference between revenues and expenditures by analyzing one report). DPS has adopted a statement of budgetary philosophy which states that the district's goal is to utilize all available resources in a manner to best benefit the educational process which can best be accomplished through the implementation of a sound fiscal policy. The board of education has further identified a goal of a minimum fund balance of 14 percent of the annual budget. Given the importance attached to the budget and the desire to maintain fund balance at a specific level, it is essential that both the members of the board of education and other stakeholders be provided reasonable assurance that DPS has maintained budgetary compliance by providing reports which detail the effect of expenditure draws upon the budget.

In addition to the treasury information currently presented, financial reports should also contain other pertinent information such as tax levy and collection, interest earned, and collateral position. Effective financial reports make pertinent financial data understandable to broad audiences.

For example, Broken Arrow, Tulsa, and Jenks Public Schools prepare a variety of financial reports for their end users. Jenks Public Schools has prepared a three year comparison of the original and amended budget to actual expenditures and placed the information on its website. This presentation allows the board of education, management, and members of the public to monitor the district's financial status and trends in relation to prior year's activity.

Tulsa Public Schools also has monthly financial statements available on their website which provide a budget to actual comparison by object level for the current and previous year. Broken Arrow Public Schools has prepared a summary of the annual budget with narrative descriptions of the various components of the budget. This ensures that the public understands the various components of the annual budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and provide user friendly financial reports that include the net results of operations along with comparative totals to the previous school year.

DPS should provide regular financial statements to the board of education that include budget comparisons and detailed expenditure information. The district should also share this information with the public by posting the monthly statements on the district's website so that the public can better understand the district's finances and become more informed participants in the budgetary process.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-3

There are no written procedures that detail the daily, monthly, and annual financial processes of the district. Furthermore, district employees handling financial functions are not cross-trained and do not regularly review one another's work. The lack of documented procedures and failure to cross-train employees in key roles exposes the district to the risk of financial loss.

There are no documented processes for the duties of the encumbrance, payroll, insurance, personnel, and activity fund clerks or treasurer. The director of Business and Finance was surprised to learn that the payroll and human resource services staff were continuing to utilize an older version of the accounting software to post absences rather than navigating to the newer version of the package. In the same manner, insurance and human resource staff members were translating data contained in the software system to a spreadsheet rather than developing requested reports within the system as they were more familiar with the spreadsheet program.

Daily, monthly, and annual accounting procedures such as software navigation, local, state, and federal payroll processing rules and regulations, accounts payable and purchasing requirements, and required state and federal reporting should be clearly documented and communicated within the department. In the event that a report does not appear to be available from the system, the software vendor should be contacted to determine if the report can be made available rather than transferring the information manually to another database. Documenting accounting processes and procedures ensures that employees utilize the most up to date accounting tools and techniques available and also helps ensure that an individual unfamiliar with the position can perform the duties in an emergency.

Accounting staff should also be cross-trained to ensure that the activities of the district can continue in the absence of an employee. Currently, the director of Business and Finance serves as the back-up to the various positions in the event that an individual is absent or away from work. While her expertise is certainly needed and valued in the various areas of the department, DPS could be better served in the long-term if the current nonexempt employees were cross-trained in one another's work area.

Cross-training employees would also allow the director to periodically require employees to process items and review items in another area as a means to verify the accuracy of work and also prevent fraud in that the district is exposed to the risk of fraudulent transactions in the current work environment. Ghost vendors or fictitious employees could possibly be created and go undetected by the district as each individual currently performs their job functions in isolation of others in the department.

RECOMMENDATION

Document existing accounting and payroll processes and develop a process to ensure that employees regularly review one another's work.

The director of Business and Finance should develop a process whereby the encumbrance clerk and activity funds clerk regularly interact and review their daily check processes. In the same manner, the insurance and payroll clerk should be required to interact and regularly review and balance one another's processes. This will help to ensure that the payroll and payables processes can continue to occur in the event an employee is absent and will also help to minimize the risk of loss in the event of fraudulent activity.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

B. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Effective management of cash and investments requires seeking investments with maximum interest-earning potential while simultaneously safeguarding the district's cash and ensuring the district's liquidity to meet fluctuating cash flow demands. Developing an effective cash management program can provide a district with additional revenues to fund programs and operations.

The SDE states that a local board of education shall, each month, set aside funds to an investment account and requires the board of education to adopt a written investment policy. The DPS board of education has adopted an investment policy which is based upon a "prudent investor" standard and addresses the areas of liquidity, diversification, safety of principal, yield, maturity, and the quality of the instrument and investment management. The policy is developed to ensure the availability of operating and capital funds when needed, and to provide a competitive investment return.

The DPS investment policy authorizes the treasurer to invest the district's funds as follows:

- Direct obligations of the United States government to the payment of which the full faith and credit of the government of the United States is pledged; provided, a treasurer of a school district who has completed the appropriate training offered by the SDE may invest funds in the investment account in other obligations of the United States government, its agencies, or instrumentalities;
- Obligations to the payment of which the full faith and credit of this state is pledged;
- Certificates of deposit of banks when such certificates of deposit are secured by acceptable collateral as in the deposit of other public monies;
- Savings accounts or savings certificates of savings and loan associations to the extent that such accounts or certificates are fully insured by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation;
- Repurchase agreements that have underlying collateral consisting of those items specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this subsection including obligations of the United States, its agencies and instrumentalities, and where the collateral has been deposited with a trustee or custodian bank in an irrevocable trust or escrow account established for such purposes;
- County, municipal, or school district debt obligations for which an ad valorem tax may be levied or bond and revenue anticipation notes, money judgments against such county, municipality or school district ordered by a court of record or bond and revenue anticipation notes issued by a public trust for, which such county, municipality or school district is a beneficiary thereof;
- Money market mutual funds regulated by the securities and exchange commission and which investments consist of obligations of the United States, its agencies and instrumentalities, and investments of those items and those restrictions specified in items one through six;
- Warrants, bonds, or judgments of the school district;

- Qualified pooled investment programs, the investments of which consist of those items specified in paragraphs one through eight, as well as obligations of the United States agencies and instrumentalities, regardless of the size of the district's budget; or
- Any other investment that is authorized by law.

FINDING 3-4

The director of Business and Finance and treasurer monitor the district's financial status via the on-line banking site on a daily basis. As of February 28, 2009, DPS had \$4.4 million invested in certificates of deposit, which are maintained by several different institutions (**Exhibit 3-13**). Remaining excess funds of the district are invested in overnight interest bearing accounts through a nightly sweep process.

Exhibit 3-13
DPS Open Investment Ledger
As of February 28, 2009

Fund	Maturity Date	Investment Amount	Investment Percentage
Endowment Fund	05/15/2009	\$68,132	2.47
Building Funds	05/15/2009	\$62	2.47
Sinking Funds	05/15/2009	\$32,000	2.47
Bond Funds	01/28/2009	\$1,000,000	2.30
General Funds	01/21/2009	\$1,000,000	2.66
Building Funds	02/05/2009	\$1,032,555	2.65
Sinking Funds	02/05/2009	\$431,516	2.65
General Funds	02/05/2009	\$572,729	2.65
Child Nutrition Funds	07/23/2008	\$3,000	3.15
Building Funds	01/19/2009	\$7,056	2.19
General Funds	01/19/2009	\$100,000	2.36
Child Nutrition Funds	01/23/2009	\$97,000	3.30
Child Nutrition Funds	04/22/2009	\$102,590	2.75

Source: DPS records and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

COMMENDATION

The DPS treasurer has invested idle cash on hand and secured competitive quotations for investments thereby increasing DPS's investment earnings.

FINDING 3-5

The district does not transmit an electronic file of checks to be paid to the bank in advance of issuing checks. Failure to electronically match paid check items exposes the district to the risk of loss in the event that the district's banking information was compromised.

Advances in technology have reduced the effectiveness of traditional fraud prevention techniques and have enabled new forms of fraud. In the past, entities were able to rely upon physical security features embedded in check stock as a means to prevent check fraud. Advanced duplication technology and remote deposit capture have reduced the effectiveness of these physical measures to prevent fraud. It is no longer sufficient to simply control the type and security of check stock.

The ability of an entity to challenge a fraudulent item is often compromised if they have failed to implement fraud detection measures. One such method available to the district is the use of electronic positive pay and payee positive pay.

Under the positive pay method, a bank electronically matches checks that it receives for payment against the record of the checks issued by the entity. If the bank receives a check that does not match the information received such as date, check number, and amount, the payment is identified as a non-conforming item and is rejected for payment. Recently banking institutions have begun to utilize the payee positive pay system which also validates the vendor name electronically for further safety and security.

RECOMMENDATION

Implement electronic positive pay for all payroll, accounts payable, and student activity accounts of the district.

DPS should work with their banking institution to insure that they have implemented all appropriate fraud detection techniques to ensure the safety and security of their assets including electronic positive pay.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-6

Both the accounts payable and activity fund clerk issue checks on a daily basis to district vendors. Paying bills in this manner limits the ability of an entity to manage cash flow and predict fluctuations in the cash position of the district.

Purchase order information is available on-line and can be viewed by departmental and campus staff; however, DPS does not have the ability to receive items on-line in the current purchasing system. Invoices are frequently delivered to the campus or department site rather than to the business office which limits the ability of the accounting staff to know when an item has been received and should be paid for. Since the accounting staff does not have the ability to see if an item has been received within the system, they cannot determine if an item has been received without the actual paper receiving copy arriving from the purchaser. Staff indicated a frustration with the inability to receive invoices on a timely basis from the various departments and expressed concern that the district's credit and ability to purchase items on a timely basis would be compromised in the event that they did not issue payment promptly as local vendors have chosen to freeze the district's accounts and ability purchase items in the past.

Establishing and adhering to disbursement schedules allows a district to both optimize the amount of funds available for investment as well as to insure that it has sufficient liquidity on hand to meet their needs so that an entity does not have to borrow funds or liquidate investments prematurely to meet immediate needs of the organization.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and communicate a payment schedule to all members of the organization which issues payments no more than one time per week for all funds of the district including activity funds.

Absent an on-line receiving process, DPS should develop internal procedures to regularly review the outstanding purchase order listing on a regular basis. Purchasers should be contacted for all purchase orders outstanding greater than 45 days to determine if an item has been received so that payment can be made in a timely manner.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

C. PURCHASING

The purchasing function supports the financial accountability of the district. Effective purchasing management provides districts with quality materials, supplies, services, and equipment in a timely manner at the lowest price. Purchasing includes those activities associated with the acquisition of supplies, materials, services, and equipment.

DPS adopted a comprehensive purchasing regulation to establish uniform purchasing and bidding practices throughout the district for the general, building, bond, and sinking funds. These policies require that the superintendent approve all purchases \$1,000 and greater and that the board of education also approve all purchases of \$7,500 or greater. Administrators may secure purchases for all items up to \$1,000 without the superintendent or board approval.

Materials in excess of \$7,500 are required to be competed via sealed proposal but are not required to be published in a local newspaper. Construction projects in excess of \$25,000 are to be publically competed as well as architectural services for the design of projects in excess of \$40,000. The policy further requires that the district shall take sealed bids annually for the purchase of commonly used instructional, custodial, and operational supplies.

FINDING 3-7

The board of education has adopted an extensive policy requiring the approval of purchases in excess of \$1,000 and the requirement for competitively purchasing these items. The bidding and quotation process is not centralized and individuals do not follow similar processes and procedures. Failure to centralize the bidding process makes monitoring compliance with policy and adherence to bid prices difficult to manage.

A review of the DPS records indicated that the assistant superintendent, superintendent's secretary, central office clerk, athletic director, and maintenance supervisor all prepared bids and requests for quotations during the previous fiscal year. Food service bids, which are required under federal food service guidelines, did not appear to be completed in all instances.

Other than bond fund bids, the DPS general fund receives the highest dollar volume of sealed bids annually (**Exhibit 3-14**). DPS received a total of 68 sealed bids during the period from July 2006 through March 2009.

Exhibit 3-14
DPS Sealed Bid Volumes by Fund/Category
2006-07 through 2008-09

Fund/Category	Year			Total Bids for Three Year Period
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09*	
General	\$334,610	\$328,674	\$302,578	26
General - insurance	29,351	66,245	0	6
Building	44,607	80,446	41,981	4
Child nutrition	163,298	157,927	300,992	22
Bonds	2,281,303	0	1,725,083	10
Totals	\$2,853,169	\$633,292	\$2,370,634	68

Source: DPS assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, April 2009

** To date through March 2009*

A review of the bids by DPS during the previous year revealed that the different departments utilized different formats for the bid processes. In addition, the warehouse supply bid was difficult to track and compare to catalog pricing in that descriptions of items rather than item numbers present in catalog purchases were used and often differing quantities were currently available from the vendor than what was requested by DPS in the bid process.

There was no formalized method to ensure that those items required to be publically posted and advertised by policy were in fact posted appropriately nor was there a method available to ensure that all vendors interested in doing business with the district were contacted in the event of a potential purchase.

In the event that an item is required to be bid, the permanent record of the bid or formal quote is maintained in the office of the requester and is not maintained centrally. In addition, there is currently not a method to electronically track requested and/or awarded bids. A copy of the awarded bid or quotation is attached to the requisition for purchase of certain items, such as athletic supplies, which is forwarded to the central office for approval of the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, director of Business and Finance, and superintendent prior to purchase. Warehouse and maintenance supply records are maintained within their departments and are not forwarded to the accounting office.

Currently, DPS requires the approval of the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services and director of Business and Finance for all purchases and the approval of the superintendent for purchases of items over \$1,000. Items valued at less than \$1,000 and requested from the general fund are entered into the computer by the budget manager for approval. All other purchases, those greater than \$1,000 or purchased through other sources of funds, such as the building fund, are forwarded to the central office on a manual requisition form for the approval of the superintendent, assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, and director of Business and Finance. Once the request is approved, a central office employee converts the requisition into an electronic purchase order and the item is processed.

DPS issues an average of approximately 3,000 purchase orders per year. Of these the majority of purchases orders are for expenditures under \$1,000 (**Exhibit 3-15**), with less than 450 purchase orders issued annually for expenditures over \$1,000.

Exhibit 3-15
DPS Purchase Order
Volumes by Expenditure Level
2006-07 through 2008-09

Year	Under \$1,000	Over \$1,000	Total
2006-07	2,944	437	3,381
2007-08	2,563	420	2,983
2008-09*	2,011	342	2,353

Source: DPS director of Business and Finance, April 2009

** To date through March 2009*

DPS issues the majority of its annual purchase orders for general fund spending (**Exhibit 3-16**). The building and child nutrition fund rank second and third, respectively in the number of annual purchase orders issued.

Exhibit 3-16
DPS Purchase Order Volumes by Fund/Category and Expenditure Level

Fund/Category	Year								
	2006-07			2007-08			2008-09*		
	Under \$1,000	Over \$1,000	Total	Under \$1,000	Over \$1,000	Total	Under \$1,000	Over \$1,000	Total
General	2,803	314	3,117	2,422	306	2,728	1,828	212	2,040
Co-op	13	4	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Building	64	67	131	74	53	127	114	62	176
Child nutrition	59	35	94	59	34	93	57	34	91
Bonds	0	11	11	1	8	9	4	23	27
Debt service	0	5	5	0	6	6	0	4	4
Endowment	4	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	2
Insurance	1	1	2	7	13	20	6	7	13
Totals	2,944	437	3,381	2,563	420	2,983	2,011	342	2,353

Source: DPS director of Business and Finance, April 2009

** To date through March 2009*

Vendors are required to have a variety of documents on file prior to purchase. These include an Internal Revenue Service form W-9, sworn statements regarding hiring practices, workers' compensation insurance, and immigration information. The district has developed a methodology to capture some of the required information in the system electronically but has not developed a method to identify all the necessary information. This requires the district to maintain lists of vendors who have complied with the various components of the law. These lists are maintained separately and information is not consolidated in one place.

The assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services reviews purchase orders to ensure the legality of the purchase of the items. In reality, the assistant superintendent is reviewing the vendor and cross checking to the various listings to ensure that they have complied with all the requirements of doing business in the district. After his approval, requisitions valued at more than \$1,000 are forwarded to the superintendent for approval. The director of Business and Finance finally reviews the purchase to ensure that the budget manager is using the appropriate budget code and releases the purchase order for processing.

Larger districts typically centralize the purchasing process and formalize the approval of purchase orders. For instance, Tulsa Public Schools has adopted a board policy which endorses centralized purchasing and allows one department to centrally supervise the purchase of materials, supplies, equipment, and services for the district. Under this policy the department is specifically directed to aid and advise administrators in the proper selection of materials and services to ensure compliance with all aspects of law in the purchasing process. The policy further outlines the assignment of the responsibility for solicitations and awards to one individual in the organization.

A streamlined format for vendor registration and bidding could more easily be achieved with the utilization of an electronic procurement system. Districts which implement an electronic procurement system require vendors to register electronically on-line. As part of the registration process, the district could require that the vendor complete the necessary certifications for doing business along with indicating their area of business expertise. When it is necessary to procure an item, solicitations are sent to all registered vendors which ensures that the district is only seeking solicitations from those vendors able to do business with the district and also helps to expand the solicitation process by ensuring that all interested parties receive an invitation to respond.

For example, Round Rock ISD utilizes such a system, and it has allowed the district to expand their vendor database and provide a greater level of detail regarding purchases to the board of trustees (i.e. Texas equivalent to school board). Requests for proposals are electronically posted and vendors are required to respond on the prescribed form so that the bids can be electronically tabulated. Final results are then published on the district's website for review by the public which creates another layer of transparency with the district's stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

Implement an electronic procurement system which will allow vendors to file their information and respond to bid requests electronically.

The use of an electronic procurement system will allow the district to streamline their operations internally to increase the efficiency of their procurement processes. By requiring vendors to submit their required information electronically in conjunction with their vendor registration, the maintenance of multiple lists of documentation will no longer be necessary, and the district will be less likely to inadvertently do business with an unauthorized vendor.

The system should be maintained by the director of Business and Finance to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Bid tabulations are relatively easy to prepare in the system and typically involve the construction of an excel template to be uploaded into a secure environment for vendor response purposes. Budget managers should be charged with preparing a basic template for the bid request; however, the director can work to ensure that to the greatest extent possible the bids are similar in nature and requirements.

Upon full implementation of the system, the purchase order review process should be changed. Currently, the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services verifies purchase requisitions to ensure that budget managers are doing business with a qualified vendor. His review and approval will no longer be necessary as all vendors should be qualified in the system before being made available to budget managers for use. With the automated system, the director of Business and Finance should first review the purchase to ensure adequate funds are available and the item is being charged to the appropriate account. Approvals for items over \$1,000 could then continue to be made by the superintendent.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Implement an electronic procurement system which will allow vendors to file their information and respond to bid requests electronically.	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)

D. PAYROLL AND BENEFITS

DPS is responsible for the timely and accurate payment of district employees along with appropriately accounting for benefit premium and court-ordered deductions. DPS provides its employees health and dental insurance through the Oklahoma State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board (OSEEGIB). In addition, the district provides all employees with basic life and accidental death insurance with benefits of \$15,000 and \$30,000, respectively.

FINDING 3-8

The payroll and leave processes are managed by several different departments and are not coordinated. As a result, it is difficult to provide assurances that that all employees accurately record time worked.

Leave is maintained by the superintendent’s secretary and monitored by human resources. These departments are currently utilizing an older version of the software that does not automatically communicate with the payroll module. The payroll clerk reviews employee time sheets and verifies that leave has been entered for nonexempt employees who do not have a record of time or for professional employees when a substitute pay request is present. The insurance clerk is responsible for posting leave for employees on a long-term leave of absence.

The payroll clerk does not have access to the leave system and cannot verify leave information contained in the system to ensure that all absences are appropriately recorded and must rely on a manual verification process. There is little interaction between the payroll and insurance processes within the department as the two individuals do not interact or balance their information simultaneously. In the same manner, the superintendent’s secretary and human resources clerk do not have query access to the payroll system to ensure that all leave is posted.

RECOMMENDATION

Require the payroll department to maintain and verify employee leave information.

Requiring leave information to be maintained by the payroll staff will ensure that the leave information is appropriately integrated into the payroll process.

Copies of approved leave requests should be forwarded to payroll for entry into the system on a daily basis by the insurance clerk who is also charged with administering the Family Medical Leave Act. At the end of the month, the payroll clerk should balance the individual paper reports to the leave entries actually posted to ensure that leave is accurately reported.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-9

The district is not consistently adhering to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). For example, a supervisor is currently listed on the support services pay scale and is thus required to clock in and out; however, this individual is only reporting an eight hour work day and returns to work after clocking out. Failure to accurately compensate nonexempt employees can result in fines and penalties to the district and possibly place employers in a judgment situation, if such compensation is not paid during the fiscal year in which the service was rendered.

DPS records employee time worked electronically at each work site. Employees are responsible for clocking into the system each day when they arrive to work and clocking out of the system whenever they leave. Based upon interviews with employees and a review of the records, it appeared that the supervisor should have been recording after hours work required for planning and preparation, attending board meetings, etc.

A review of the support services salary schedule revealed several individuals who were titled supervisor but paid at an hourly rate and listed on the support staff salary schedule since they do not hold a degree. Section 13(a)(1) of the FLSA provides an exemption from both the minimum wage and overtime pay requirements of the FLSA for employees employed as bona fide executive, administrative, professional, and outside sales employees. These positions would typically follow the administrative employee exemption and must meet all of the following criteria:

- The employee must be compensated on a salary or fee basis at a rate not less than \$455 per week;
- The employee's primary duty must be the performance of office or non-manual work directly related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer's customers; and
- The employee's primary duty includes the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance.

Two of the employees noted are paid annual salaries slightly below the required minimum amount per week. However, it is likely that they are not appropriately reflecting all overtime worked for the supervisory duties associated with their job function such as, being on call in the event of an emergency, attending board meetings, etc.

RECOMMENDATION

Review the nonexempt status of all employees placed on the support services salary schedule and reclassify employees whose duties meet the FLSA definitions to the exempt scale.

DPS should review all employee job descriptions to ascertain that they are appropriately reflected as exempt or nonexempt. In the event that an employee should be paid on an hourly basis due to their job duties and assignment, they should be fully aware of the rules and regulations surrounding the accurate recording of time worked, including overtime.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-10

DPS is not actively monitoring workers' compensation claims data to ensure that employees who are placed on workers' compensation leave return to active duty as soon as they are able. Failure to regularly monitor claims places the district at risk of increased claims from employees.

DPS participates in a workers' compensation pool with other school districts in the state. As a participant in the pool, DPS receives work place preventative accident training and other services from the Oklahoma School Insurance Group.

The director of Business and Finance serves as the district's workers' compensation coordinator. When an employee is involved in an accident, it is reported to the director who arranges for medical treatment and files the claim with the coordinator. Claims have increased significantly in the last year as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-17**.

Exhibit 3-17
Workers' Compensation Claims
Three Year Period Ending December 31, 2008

Year	Occurrences	Medical Incurred	Indemnity Incurred	Total Reserves
2008	33	\$74,077	\$38,919	\$78,408
2007	38	\$10,174	\$135	\$7,538
2006	29	\$14,836	\$24,405	n/a

Source: DPS Records

A review of the large claims for 2008 revealed that they occurred when employees were improperly standing on desks, stepping up inappropriately, or injuring their back when lifting a heavy object. Training provided to employees through the districts provider occurs at the vocational center, away from the district. To heighten employee's awareness of appropriate workplace safety techniques, DPS should regularly provide training on-site for all employees.

Currently, the insurance clerk maintains records of employees who are away from work due to illness or injury. DPS should consider expanding her job responsibilities to include the oversight of the workers' compensation program. In this role, she would be responsible for monitoring claims, ensuring district compliance with rules and regulation, and providing ongoing training and awareness of appropriate workplace safety techniques to all employees. This position could also follow-up with employees who are away from work due to injury to ensure that they return to work in the most expedient manner possible.

RECOMMENDATION

Require the insurance clerk to assume responsibility for the workers' compensation program to include providing workplace safety and awareness training activities along with developing and implementing a return to work program.

Actively monitoring the workers' compensation process and providing best practice instruction in workplace safety techniques will allow DPS to minimize their losses due to employee accidents. A return-to-work program benefits the district not only by reducing workers' compensation costs but also by utilizing the knowledge, skills, and insight of the injured employee. The employee benefits by remaining connected to the workplace in a productive way, which also lessens their risk of extended lost time.

Successful return-to-work programs typically include: written and consistent procedures for all employees; job descriptions that incorporate potential modified duty assignments; supervisory training in appropriate monitoring techniques; guidelines for the length of modified duty assignments; and clearly communicated consequences to the employee for failure to accept the modified assignment.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4:

Facilities Use and Management

Chapter 4

Facilities Use and Management

This chapter addresses the facilities use and management of the Duncan Public Schools (DPS) in the following sections.

- A. Facilities Planning and Construction
- B. Maintenance and Custodial Operations
- C. Energy Management
- D. Safety and Security

Facilities use and management includes the planning, construction, and maintenance of buildings; the safety of students and staff using those buildings; and the security surrounding facilities both when they are in use and during after school hours. More specifically, this area includes:

- Planning and designing facilities to meet educational standards and to provide a physical framework that enhances learning conditions;
- Properly maintaining and cleaning facilities so that teaching and learning can take place in a clean environment;
- Ensuring that the facilities are safe during the time students and teachers are in the school;
- Creating proper safeguards to ensure the security of the facilities during after school hours; and
- Having safety plans in the event of a crisis or natural disaster so that students and staff are protected.

Background

DPS has fourteen facilities, which are located throughout the district on separate campuses. **Exhibit 4-1** shows the DPS facilities and their respective square footage.

**Exhibit 4-1
DPS Facilities
2008-09**

Building	Year Built	Year Renovated/ Additions	Gross Square Footage
Duncan High School (Grades 9-12)	1961	1966, 1971, 1972, 1983, and 2001	220,000
Duncan Middle School (grades 6-8)	2001	2004	127,540
EDGE Academy (Grades 9-12)	2007	1947 and 2007	25,400
Emerson Elementary School	1961	1982	21,422
Irving Pre K Center (Temporary Administration Offices)	1910	1982	21,934
Robert E. Lee Elementary School (Closed)	1909	1981, 1982, and 1993	39,228
Horace Mann Elementary School	1956	1982	30,096
Plato Elementary School	1955	1970 and 1982	24,500
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	1949	1984	27,430
Mark Twain Elementary School	1952	1982	30,037
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School	1953	1982	33,736
Administration Building	1970	2009 Addition and Renovations in construction	9,782 plus 3,483 SF addition
Maintenance/Transportation Building	Varies		1,752
Bus Barns	Varies		13,714
DPS Media Services	1982	1988	3,332
Halliburton Stadium	1941	1983	7,192
Sportsman Park	1960	1984	2,620
Total			643,198

Source: DPS assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services; DPS building records; Survey of Schools by PBK Architects Inc. revised January 2009; and Office of Accountability facility inventory

A. FACILITIES PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION

Well-planned facilities are based upon the educational program and on accurate student enrollment projections. The design process should have input from stakeholders, including administrators, principals, teachers, security specialists, parents, students, and the maintenance and operations staff. The selection of building materials, interior finishes, hardware, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and other major building components should be made according to life cycle cost analyses for an optimum total cost of construction, operations, and maintenance.

This, coupled with the functional need of providing the best physical learning space possible for the students, should lead a district to recognize the absolute necessity of developing, presenting, and implementing a long-range facilities master plan. Failure to do so will eventually lead to dissatisfaction and facility concerns.

A school district's long-range master plan is a compilation of district policies, information, and statistical data, which provides a basis for planning educational facilities to meet the changing needs of a community. The master plan becomes the district's policy statement for allocating resources and offers potential alternatives for facility expansion and improvements. The capital improvement portion of the long-range facilities plan should also be used to update the capital improvement section of the Comprehensive Local Education Plan (CLEP).

Effective school long-range facilities master planning incorporates the following elements:

- **Facility Capacity:** Districts establish the capacity of each school facility by setting standards that govern student/teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards deal with the minimum size of core facilities (e.g. classrooms, gyms, cafeterias, and libraries) so that schools do not overload these facilities or overuse portable classrooms.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) publishes *Planning for Education: Space Guidelines for Planning Educational Facilities*, most recently revised in October 2004. The guidelines were developed by the School Plant Services Section to assist local school boards, school administrators, architects, engineers, and planners in planning and designing educational facilities. The guidelines arrange space information by the major activities of instructional spaces, auxiliary spaces, and service and structure spaces for the various grade ranges. They also provide suggested methods of calculating preliminary net and gross square footage for school buildings by grade and major activity.

- **Facility Inventory:** An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool in managing the usage of school facilities. The inventory identifies the use and size of each room, which enables planners to set accurately the capacity of each school. Modifications to schools are noted in the inventory so it can be kept up to date.
- **Enrollment Projections:** Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections at least five years into the future (**Appendix F**). Accurate projections require planners to examine district demographics and track any new construction activity in the district. Many school planners work in coordination with county and city planners to track growth patterns.
- **Capital Improvement Master Plan:** Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balance these against expected resources. A capital improvement master plan charts future improvements to school facilities and identifies funding sources for them. An effective planning process involves the community at large, identifies district goals and objectives, and prioritizes projects based upon those goals and objectives.
- **Facilities Maintenance Plan:** School facilities planning necessitates identifying links between facilities maintenance and facilities construction and renovation. Capital outlay for school construction is generally a more palatable proposition for taxpayers and public officials when a school system demonstrates that existing facilities receive appropriate care and maintenance. Good plans include short and long-term objectives, budgets, and timelines, all of which demonstrate organizational commitment to facilities maintenance.

FINDING 4-1

DPS developed a long-range facility plan using input from citizens, staff, and PBK Architects, Inc. via its 20/20 Vision committee. Implementation of the plan will enable the district to address the aging building infrastructure and facility growth needs to support successful student achievement.

When the superintendent assumed her new role, she recommended the formation of a District Long Range Facility Committee called 20/20 Vision, which consists of 50 representative members of the community including realtors, doctors, parents, etc. The committee process started in April 2008 and is still ongoing. The superintendent requested each principal to provide at least three names of parents/patrons that could serve on the committee. Selected principals and administrators also served on the committee.

DPS retained the services of PBK Architects Inc. to assist the district in developing a long-range facility plan to address the current and future needs of DPS. The architect developed a facility questionnaire that was sent to each building principal to complete for their facility. This questionnaire in conjunction with the performance of a facilities condition assessment and survey by the architect determined the list of facility needs to be considered by the committee.

On average, a total of 40 members would attend each of the monthly meetings being held. The Committee participated in a brain storming session to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the existing facilities and developed general goals and defined various facility needs. In additional meetings, issues discussed included demographic and probable growth patterns and projections, student services, district operations, facility equity as well as school and class size. Committee discussions also included community values, safe learning, technology, maintenance, transportation, successful school districts, and a vision of what DPS could become. The identified list of needs was reviewed and evaluated by the Committee and prioritized. As part of the process, committee members conducted tours of all existing school facilities within the district. The committee continued to refine the list of needed improvements and discussed various possible project options that would help solve the challenges DPS faces for the next five to ten years. The committee presented the Phase One and Two options to the Board of Education.

Overall, the committee prioritized existing facility renovation needs of \$11.096 million from 2010 to 2015 as outlined in **Exhibit 4-2** below for consideration to be part of a proposed bond election:

Exhibit 4-2
Prioritized List of Existing Facility Needs Summary
January 2009

Campus	Cost Estimates	Comments
Duncan High School	\$2,802,748	
Old Middle School/EDGE Academy	\$1,132,000	East Building is to be retired as part of proposed master plan.
Duncan Middle School	\$91,500	
Emerson Elementary	\$588,000	
Irving Pre-K Center	\$1,340,000	
Robert E. Lee Elementary	\$0	Campus is scheduled for retirement as part of proposed master plan.
Horace Mann Elementary	\$844,500	
Plato Elementary	\$586,000	
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	\$120,400	
Mark Twain Elementary	\$489,600	
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	\$2,835,950	
Administration Building	\$0	Facility is currently undergoing a major renovation and addition project.
Sportsman Park	\$10,000	
Halliburton Stadium	\$255,000	
Total	\$11,095,698	

Source: DPS Survey of Schools as prepared by PBK Architects, Inc., January 2009

A final proposed Master Plan for DPS as developed by the 20/20 Vision committee with the assistance of PBK Architects, Inc. was selected as the preferred option. This proposed Master Plan was presented to the DPS Board of Education in April 2009. The recommended Proposed Master Plan that was presented for consideration is identified in **Exhibit 4-3**.

**Exhibit 4-3
Current Master Facility Plan
March 2009**

Plan Elements	Estimated Costs
Proposed Master Plan – Phase One	
Interim Bond Issue (April 2009)	
Upgrade Electrical Infrastructure District Wide	\$560,000
Addition to the Transportation Center	\$50,000
Purchase of Buses	\$925,000
Proposed Master Plan – Phase One Total:	\$1,535,000
Proposed Master Plan – Phase Two	
Will Rogers Elementary School six Classroom Addition, Restroom Renovations & New Cafeteria/Kitchen	\$2,635,000
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School – Major Renovations/Face Lift	\$2,835,950
Duncan High School – Major Renovations/Face Lift	\$14,700,000
New 4-5 Grade Campus for 650 Students	\$13,800,000
Land Purchase (76 acres) plus Site Infrastructure/Utilities	\$1,250,000
District Wide Athletic Improvements	\$3,000,000
Subtotal:	\$38,220,950
Soft Costs (15%)	\$5,733,143
Proposed Master Plan - Phase Two Total:	\$43,954,093
Proposed Master Plan – Phase Three	
New 2-3 Campus for 700 Students	\$14,560,000
Soft Costs (15%)	\$2,184,000
Subtotal:	\$16,744,502
4% Inflation for 6 Years	\$4,442,502
Proposed Master Plan – Phase Three Total:	\$21,186,502
Proposed Master Plan – Phase Four	
New K-1 Campus for 700 Students	\$14,560,000
Soft Costs (15%)	\$2,184,000
Subtotal:	\$16,744,502
4% Inflation for 6 Years	\$4,442,502
Proposed Master Plan – Phase Four Total:	\$21,186,502
Proposed Master Plan Grand Total:	\$87,862,097

Source: 20/20 Vision Committee Proposed Master Plan as prepared by PBK Architects March, 2009

On April 7, 2009, DPS passed two interim bond propositions for Phase One of their long-range facilities plan. The first proposition passed by 74.98 percent of the votes cast which included \$560,000 for electrical infrastructure upgrades and \$50,000 for the addition of bus storage to the transportation center. The second proposition passed by 71.96 percent of the votes cast which included the purchase of nine new school buses.

DPS uses community input to develop its comprehensive long-range facility plan. As a result, the district is developing community support for needed construction projects utilizing this process. Having a long-range facilities master plan will help ensure that building projects are prioritized according to a studied, developed, and logical process. As administrators, faculty, staff, and board members change, a long-range facilities master plan will add stability and cohesiveness to the district's future construction, use, and management of its facilities.

COMMENDATION

DPS developed a long-range facility plan effectively using citizen, staff, and consultant input via its 20/20 Vision committee to assist in generating strong community support of its long-range facility plan.

FINDING 4-2

DPS implemented an annual site maintenance budget. Funds are allocated directly to campuses and allow campus administrators to determine the best use of this fund for campus facility improvements or needs to support their educational programs.

In an effort to address needed improvements to existing facilities in 2005, the superintendent initiated a site maintenance budget utilizing available carry-over amounts in the building fund. Campuses are able to utilize such funds to improve playground equipment, computer purchases, etc., which normally would need to be funded from other sources of revenue. This program has been ongoing and utilizes the same funding formula every year. This annual building fund is included in the campus site maintenance budget and is based upon an allocation of \$2,000 per classroom at elementary school campuses and a fixed amount of \$30,000 for each secondary campus (**Exhibit 4-4**).

**Exhibit 4-4
Site Maintenance Budget
Building Fund
2008-09**

Facility	Number of Classrooms	Allocation Per Classroom	Total Budget Allocation
Elementary Schools			
Emerson Elementary	10	\$2,000	\$20,000
Horace Mann Elementary	21	\$2,000	\$42,000
Mark Twain Elementary	16	\$2,000	\$32,000
Plato Elementary	15	\$2,000	\$30,000
Will Rogers/Irving Pre-K Centers	11	\$2,000	\$22,000
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	22	\$2,000	\$44,000
Secondary Schools			
Duncan Middle	NA	Lump Sum	\$30,000
Duncan High	NA	Lump Sum	\$30,000
EDGE Academy	NA	Lump Sum	\$13,200
Total			\$257,200

Source: DPS Superintendent, February 2009

The superintendent publishes the expectations for utilizing the site maintenance budget allocation to each campus. Some of the designated expectations are as follows:

- Capital improvements must be outlined in yearly goals to superintendent.
- All capital improvements must be discussed with superintendent prior to purchase or contracted work.

-
- The building principal is responsible for overseeing construction projects and will be accountable for completed project including the approval of all invoices upon completion of the work.
 - Maintenance budget must be used on building improvements before new equipment is purchased such as desks, chairs, tables, and computers.
 - Invoices must be turned in and paid before end of the fiscal year.
 - Funds may not be carried over from one fiscal year to another. Each year, the principal will begin each year with a new site maintenance budget. The site maintenance budget will be based upon the building fund carryover amount. The amount of allocation per building will be determined by November of the new school year.
 - Expenditures may not exceed the approved site maintenance budget allocation.
 - Principal must have three quotes on all projects exceeding \$3,000.

The replacement of gutters and downspouts, painting of building exteriors, and the installation of playground equipment are examples of projects that have been funded at each school.

COMMENDATION

DPS initiated an annual building improvement program utilizing the available carryover amounts in the building fund to distribute an allocation to campuses allowing campus administrators to determine the best use of utilization of these allocated funds for campus improvements or needs to support their educational programs.

FINDING 4-3

DPS does not employ a full-time in-house construction manager or architect on its staff to oversee and monitor the district's construction projects. As a result, inconsistencies in dealing with contractors and quality control issues have occurred.

DPS has experienced a few problems with facility construction, which could have been easily resolved had the problems been discovered earlier in the construction process. The superintendent has stated that DPS has had concerns with construction quality and administration on projects. One example is the running track at the stadium which was recently resurfaced. The surface is delaminating from the base which is typically a result of improper installation during construction.

By employing a full-time construction manager, this position could provide on-site monitoring of projects for quality control and oversee the design and construction process for projects that are included in a successful bond election and program. The district could use bond funds to pay the salary and benefit costs for adding this position. Another option that is available to districts is to contract with an architectural firm to provide an on-site person who could report directly to the Superintendent or other designated DPS staff person overseeing the bond program.

For example, Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in Texas contracts with an architectural firm for the management of construction projects. As part of the board-approved contract, the architectural firm provides one on-site staff position, who reports directly to the RISD superintendent, and whose responsibilities include:

- Oversee site selection and site procurement;
- Serve as district liaison with various city municipalities that are in the district;
- Analyze facility needs resulting from educational program changes, projected and actual growth, changes in regulations, obsolescence, damage, and wear;
- Meet with district departments including curriculum and instruction, maintenance, etc. to determine program needs and requirements for projects;
- Develop criteria for facility improvements in consultation with other district staff;
- Determine the scope of services required for the design of district facility improvements;
- Direct the procurement of furniture and equipment that has to deal with facilities;
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with principals and other district staff;
- Solicit statements of interest and qualifications from consultants as required;
- Evaluate capabilities of consultants submitting credentials to perform design and engineering services;
- Direct activities of design consultants;
- Schedule design and construction projects including meeting dates and times and critical completion dates;
- Monitor performance by design consultants;
- Review plans and specifications prepared by consultants;
- Manage construction projects for the district;
- Assess contractor progress and performance;
- Evaluate success of projects in terms of design and construction quality;
- Maintain and design construction files;
- Coordinate efforts to improve facilities throughout the district;
- Report progress on design and construction projects to the administration and the board;
- Advise district staff and the board regarding facility planning, design, and construction; and
- Coordinate meetings of the Board of Trustees and the building committee if applicable.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should hire a full-time construction manager or architect staff member to oversee and coordinate all construction projects that are included in the bond programs.

These same listed responsibilities as noted above could be part of a job description assigned to a full-time staff person employed by DPS as a construction manager that would oversee the implementation of the bond program. This would be in the best interest of the district versus outsourcing this function to a private architectural or construction management firm.

FISCAL IMPACT

DPS could use bond funds to pay the salary and benefits of the construction manager while the bond program is in effect. Once the bond program has been completed, the position would no longer be needed. As a result, there would be no fiscal impact on the district's operating budget.

FINDING 4-4

The proposed DPS long-range facilities master plan being considered by the 20/20 Vision committee has some areas that may not be fully addressed or in conflict. As a result, the overall plan is not fully complete and may exclude a critical need of the district that should be considered as part of a bond program so that adequate funding can be obtained.

After a review of the proposed long-range facilities master plan and district facilities, several problems and conflicts were noted, including:

- The district does not have a deferred maintenance replacement schedule for all existing mechanical, plumbing, and electrical equipment as part of a long-range maintenance plan. These items could be evaluated and options developed to consider including for funding in the proposed bond election. Any items not able to be included in the bond proposal should remain in the long-range maintenance plan for possible funding through existing budgets or for consideration for any DPS future proposed bond elections.
- The current proposed long-range master plan does not completely address how designated facilities will be retired by DPS that are included in the various options being considered by the 20/20 Vision committee and district staff. The plan should include recommendations of how these facilities will be retired and all associated estimated costs such as demolition of the facility, sale of the building, or other designated conversion to an alternate use.
- One of the planning options for Duncan High School includes the demolition of the existing Vocational Building, which currently houses the repair shop for buses. No alternative option was noted in the long-range planning documents to relocate this function to another location nor was there an option shown to construct a new bus repair center to service the fleet of buses, maintenance trucks, district SUV vehicles, and cars. Options should be developed by DPS and the architect as part of the Long Range Facilities Plan for consideration by the committee.
- In reviewing the overall list of needed improvements, it does not appear that any asbestos containing materials (ACM) are being recommended for removal nor is there any evidence that any associated costs for such material abatement are included in the long-range plan. In discussions with the architect, some costs were included in the renovation improvement estimates based upon the DPS asbestos survey document, if impacting the proposed renovation item.

Due to the significant age of the facilities, the architect and committee should develop options of how to address any ACM abatement that may be required to facilitate any proposed needed improvements. One option to consider is to include an allowance within the overall proposed bond program to address asbestos abatement and replacement costs if encountered during the performance of the proposed renovations. The architect should address any asbestos issues that may be identified at each existing campus as part of the overall long-range facilities plan.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should present any critical facility issues (i.e. ACM abatement) to the 20/20 Vision committee and the architect for review and potential inclusion in the master plan for the bond election.

The superintendent should review the recommendations of the review team listed above and present them to the committee and the district's architect. After review, the superintendent, the committee, and the architect should determine how best to address each item.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources as the items will be addressed through bond funds.

FINDING 4-5

Some DPS facilities are old and in need of extensive maintenance. Failure to address these maintenance issues could result in more significant problems and potential danger to students.

The review team conducted walkthroughs of each facility and noted various deficiencies. As a result, a general list of maintenance and facility needs along with safety concerns observed was developed by the review team that should be addressed. This general list of maintenance and facility needs was prepared as noted in **Exhibit 4-5**. An "X" means that the facility had this particular problem or need.

Exhibit 4-5
List of Maintenance and Facility Needs
February 2009

School Name	Site	Security & Safety	ADA Compliance	HVAC	Plumbing	Electrical	Misc. Finishes/ Other	Water Infiltration
Duncan High	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Duncan Middle		X	X		X	X	X	X
EDGE Academy		X	X			X		
Emerson Elementary		X	X	X		X	X	X
Irving Pre-K Center	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Horace Mann Elementary		X	X	X		X	X	X
Plato Elementary	X	X	X			X	X	X
Will Rogers Elementary	X	X	X			X	X	X
Mark Twain Elementary		X	X			X	X	X
Woodrow Wilson Elementary		X	X	X		X	X	X

Source: Review Team Walk-through of existing facilities and sites, February 2009

Note: A specific list by facility is included in Appendix G.

RECOMMENDATION

The architect, district staff, and the 20/20 Vision committee should include the specific items and concerns noted by the review team and determine possible options to address these noted issues as part of its long-range facilities master plan currently under development.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendations to include the issues noted by the review team could be included in the current long-range facilities master plan and implemented with existing resources. The actual costs of implementing the various capital improvement and/or maintenance recommendations listed above can be determined and evaluated during the long-range facilities master planning process.

FINDING 4-6

DPS entered into construction contracts prepared by the district's external architectural firm that use industry standard documents prepared by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). These documents are not modified to address the specific needs of the district. As a result, the terms included in these documents do not always protect the district against cost overruns, errors, and omissions by the consultant and other specific expenses resulting in additional risk and cost to DPS in its construction program.

It is industry practice to utilize the AIA standard contracts for both architectural and construction contracts. These agreements were developed by the AIA to support its members in the performance of providing architectural services to their clients and do not always address the Owners best interest. These have been tested in courts around the country and most attorneys will recommend to their clients to utilize the industry standard AIA documents as a basis of entering into an agreement for architectural and construction services.

In reviewing existing project agreements in place for the additions and renovations project to the Administration Building, the review team noted there were no revisions made to the standard language included in these contracts, which could possibly result in additional costs to DPS. For example, there were no clauses added to the architect services agreement that address what happens if the cost of construction exceeds the agreed upon budget for the project and who is responsible for the costs to redesign, if required, to modify the scope of the project to be within the established project budget. If this is not addressed within the contract language, additional costs could be incurred by DPS for any redesign work. If DPS elects to proceed with the project even if the construction costs exceed the approved budget, the agreement does not address any limit to the amount of fees payable by DPS to the architect. Standard industry practice is to limit the fees payable based on the agreed upon fee percentage multiplied by the construction budget stated in the contract.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should obtain sample contracts from the AIA, other districts in Oklahoma, or districts in surrounding states and modify them for its own use.

Many school districts have developed modified versions of these AIA documents to better protect the Owner. DPS staff should contact other districts in Oklahoma or other surrounding states to obtain copies of their modified AIA documents that were developed for their building program. These sample modified documents should be reviewed by DPS staff for possible clauses that could be used to better protect DPS. Once selected clauses have been selected, DPS should contact legal counsel to have a review performed and create a final version for use by DPS on all future design and construction projects.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

B. MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

The objective in maintaining and cleaning school facilities is to provide safe and cost-effective buildings, a sound educational environment, increased longevity of buildings and equipment, and protection of school property. The maintenance and cleaning of the facilities must be accomplished in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide a safe and secure environment that supports the educational program and efficiently utilizes the school district's resources.

Efficiencies and economies of maintenance and cleaning are critical to ensuring that resources for direct instruction are maximized. On the other hand, extreme actions to reduce the cost of maintenance and cleaning can result in higher than acceptable costs of repair and replacement in the years to come. Consequently, a balance must be achieved between reasonable economies and unreasonable cost-cutting.

The DPS maintenance staff includes eight full-time maintenance positions and one paraprofessional position. There is one licensed HVAC technician, one licensed electrician, one position responsible for plumbing and gas repairs, but is not a licensed plumber, and the remainder are general maintenance workers. Custodial operations are entirely site-based with the acquisition of supplies and custodial hiring/evaluation all being undertaken at the campus level by the building principals.

Maintenance Operations

The proper maintenance of facilities is critical to ensuring support for an effective instructional program. Research has shown that appropriate heating and cooling levels, building and room appearances, the condition of restrooms and other facilities, as well as occupant safety, all impact how students and staff are able to carry out their respective responsibilities. Ineffective or inadequate maintenance provisions have shown to lead to increased costs of facility operations by shortening the useful life span of equipment and buildings. Many school districts have adopted rigorous preventive maintenance programs and maintain a record of the performance of equipment and the costs of regular maintenance by which they measure the effectiveness of these programs.

DPS had the second lowest per-student maintenance and operations expenditures for the 2006-07 school year compared to the peer districts while also being below the peer district average (**Exhibit 4-6**).

Exhibit 4-6
Maintenance and Operations Expenditures
All Funds
2006-07

District	Average Daily Membership	Annual Expenditures	Expenditures Per Student
Duncan	3,693.7	\$3,508,790	\$950
Bixby	4,296.5	\$4,751,929	\$1,106
Claremore	4,126.3	\$3,986,006	\$966
Coweta	3,108.1	\$2,927,830	\$942
Noble	2,889.8	\$3,398,405	\$1,176
Sapulpa	4,265.4	\$4,670,613	\$1,095
Peer District Average *	3,737.2	\$3,950,220	\$1,057

*Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports, 2006-07,
Office of Accountability, Profiles Database, and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations*
* Peer district average does not include DPS.

DPS's maintenance and operations expenditures from all funds increased 56.6 percent for the five-year period ending with the 2007-08 fiscal year (**Exhibit 4-7**). Supply costs increased 72.7 percent for this same period, while purchased services increased by 27.6 percent.

Exhibit 4-7
DPS Maintenance and Operations Expenditures, All Funds
2003-04 through 2007-08

Expenditure Category	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Percentage Change
Salaries	\$599,038	\$737,202	\$814,786	\$911,824	\$937,481	56.5%
Employee Benefits	\$191,452	\$230,957	\$222,122	\$292,010	\$295,611	54.4%
Purchased Services	\$1,026,472	\$735,129	\$891,514	\$999,755	\$1,310,209	27.6%
Supplies	\$604,318	\$852,888	\$1,345,483	\$1,207,361	\$1,043,866	72.7%
Property	\$48,957	\$44,682	\$56,510	\$35,098	\$269,576	450.6%
Other	\$24,742	\$23,665	\$92,294	\$62,742	\$49,643	100.6%
Total	\$2,494,981	\$2,624,524	\$3,422,707	\$3,508,790	\$3,906,386	56.6%

Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports, 2003-04 through 2007-08 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

DPS's maintenance and operations expenditures in the general fund decreased by 22.9 percent for the five-year period ending with the 2007-08 fiscal year, while building and bond funds expenditures increased by 111.5 percent and decreased by 100.0 percent (**Exhibit 4-8**). Overall, there was a decrease of 26.7 percent in DPS's maintenance and operations expenditures for this same five year period.

Exhibit 4-8
DPS Maintenance and Operations Expenditures by Funds

Fund	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Percentage Change
General Fund	\$2,102,044	\$2,116,883	\$2,649,234	\$3,057,645	\$1,621,421	(22.9%)
Building Fund	\$92,858	\$401,976	\$302,513	\$250,717	\$196,420	111.5%
Bond Funds	\$124,316	\$0	\$5,172	\$3,600	\$0	(100.0%)
Activity Fund	\$110,779	\$102,195	\$460,466	\$196,356	\$10,804	(90.3%)
Trust/Agency Funds	\$64,984	\$3,469	\$5,323	\$375	\$315,559	385.6%
All Funds	\$2,494,981	\$2,624,524	\$3,422,707	\$3,508,790	\$1,828,645	(26.7%)

Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports, 2003-04 through 2007-08 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

According to Oklahoma School Code, Chapter 1, Article I, Section 22, capital expenditures allowed from the building fund include:

- Purchase of land or existing buildings;
- Purchase of real property;
- Improvement of grounds for construction purposes;
- Construction of buildings;
- Additions to buildings;
- Remodeling of buildings, if remodeling involves changes to roof structures or load-bearing walls;
- Professional services;
- Salaries and expenses of architects and engineers hired for capital projects, unless services are in preparation for a bond issue;
- Initial installation and extension of service systems and built-in heat or air equipment to existing buildings;
- Replacement of a building that has been destroyed;
- Installments and lease payments on property, excluding interest, that have a terminal date and result in the acquisition of property; and
- Preliminary studies made prior to the time that authority to proceed with a construction project is given if authority is received within the same fiscal year that the expenditure was made.

Non-capital expenditures allowed in the building fund include:

- Maintenance, repair, and replacement of property and equipment;
- Initial or additional purchases of furniture and equipment;
- Direct expenses for maintenance of plant, including grounds;
- Salaries for maintenance of plant, including salaries for the upkeep of grounds; and
- Repair and replacement of building structures which do not add to existing facilities and which do not involve changes to roof structures or load-bearing walls.

Reviewing comments from community forums, focus group meetings, and results of a written survey administered and distributed by the review team to district employees, students, and parents (**Exhibit 4-9**), generally indicate that most students, teachers, and principals agree that school classrooms are clean. A total of 83 percent of support staff agree that the school facilities are well maintained compared to only 38 percent of students. Also, a total of 77 percent of the professional staff and 68 percent of the teachers agree that needed repairs are made in a timely fashion.

Exhibit 4-9
DPS Maintenance of School Facilities
Survey Results
March 2009

Survey Statements	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
School facilities are clean			
Support Staff	84%	8%	8%
Students	43%	27%	30%
Professional Staff	73%	20%	7%
Teacher	72%	7%	21%
School facilities are well maintained			
Support Staff	83%	11%	6%
Students	38%	30%	32%
Needed repairs are made in a timely fashion			
Professional Staff	77%	16%	7%
Teacher	68%	4%	28%
The district has an effective energy management program.			
Professional Staff	80%	17%	3%
Teacher	44%	45%	11%

Source: Written survey administered by WCL ENTERPRISES

FINDING 4-7

DPS developed an annual in-house painting program to provide an improved appearance to older facilities. As a result of this program, even though most of the district facilities are at least fifty years old, the interior of the facilities has a very good clean appearance and creates a good positive image for the community, staff, and students.

Every summer, the district assembles a team of staff and students to perform painting at district facilities. The program is managed by the school principal from Horace Mann Elementary and addresses painting needs that have been designated by each campus principal. This painting will typically include interior walls, doors, door frames, etc. and miscellaneous exterior building components.

COMMENDATION

By using students and staff, DPS is able to conduct an annual painting program that addresses needs at each school creating a more positive image for the community, staff, and students.

FINDING 4-8

DPS uses a simple customized Microsoft Access Database for tracking maintenance work orders which records very limited information. As a result, there is no cost information available to plan work, budget needs, or to anticipate maintenance needs that may arise periodically. Examples of data that are not being tracked include the following:

- Actual material and labor costs are not tracked on a per-work-order basis.
- There is no inventory data being tracked for the various pieces of equipment and building systems such as the serial number, original installation date, warranty information, preventive maintenance performance requirements, and the repair/warranty history.
- Purchase orders that are issued related to repairs being performed do not reference back to specific work orders or pieces of equipment.

The lack of information related to labor and material costs for performing needed repairs related to completed work orders could be detrimental in terms of decision-making related to performing repairs versus replacement needs of various types of equipment and systems. Without accurate records related to work order history and costs, DPS is not able to identify situations needing to be addressed before they become problems, which could impact the classroom learning environment.

Automated maintenance work order software such as *School Dude Maintenance Direct* offers a number of benefits, including:

- Providing detailed work order management and tracking capability;
- Managing and tracking inventory and labor transactions;
- Enabling schools and departments to submit work requests through a standard web browser and track the status of their work request;
- Allowing maintenance employees to view and complete work orders assigned to them through a web browser;
- Enabling authorized users to manage and track all costs and labor associated with work orders; and
- Providing standard and customizable reports to allow supervisors to analyze work orders and evaluate the effectiveness of maintenance employees.

Typical benefits of using such software, according to the manufacturer, include the following:

- Typical payback on a district's investment is less than two months with an average return on investment of more than 2,500 percent.
- The maintenance staff will save 30 minutes to one hour per student annually by streamlining the workflow process.
- Productivity increases by more than 20 percent, representing an average of \$18 to \$20 per student efficiency gain.

RECOMMENDATION

As the district implements a proposed bond election for needed facility improvements and new facilities, DPS should consider implementing a computer integrated maintenance management system to track district maintenance work orders, equipment inventory, and preventive maintenance requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to purchase *School Dude Maintenance Direct* software is a one-time cost of \$3,320, plus \$2,495 in annual renewal costs per year. The total cost in the first year is \$3,320 (\$2,495 + \$825 for setup/training = \$3,320). For reference see: <http://www.schooldude.com/products/maintenance-direct/>

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
As the district implements a proposed bond election for needed facility improvements and new facilities, DPS should consider implementing a computerized integrated maintenance management system to track district maintenance work orders, equipment inventory, and preventive maintenance requirements.	(\$3,320)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)	(\$2,495)

FINDING 4-9

The DPS Maintenance Department does not communicate with campuses regarding completion of work orders that are submitted to the department. As a result, campus administrators are not informed of the work completed on their campuses and this requires additional administrative time to follow-up to determine if a work order request has been completed.

During the review team’s on-site visits, the principals consistently reported that maintenance workers do not communicate back to inform the campus if the reported items were completed nor do they indicate what work was actually performed.

RECOMMENDATION

The DPS Maintenance Department should develop a communication plan to keep campus administrators informed of the status of ongoing and completed maintenance repairs.

It is very important for Maintenance Departments to establish clear communication methodologies with campus administrators to keep them informed as to the status of maintenance repairs such as utilizing sign-in/sign-out logs, emails, memos, work order status reports, etc.

The administrative assistant of Maintenance and Transportation should meet with each principal to obtain specific input of how best to address the lack of communications. Upon completion of these meetings, a plan could be developed based upon the direct input received from principals to resolve the issue. The approved communication plan should be distributed to all principals and the Maintenance Department.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-10

The Maintenance Department does not have any formal preventive maintenance program or long-range facilities maintenance plan to address equipment and/or system replacements. As a result, the district could experience premature failure of equipment, shortage of funding at times of unexpected or unplanned equipment failure or replacement, and lack of information on future equipment needs that could be included in a future bond program.

The long-range facilities master plan has included some needed replacements to existing equipment as identified by the architects in their visual survey of DPS. However, the long-range plan is not comprehensive due to the fact there is no formal long range maintenance plan in place at DPS that could have been included for consideration as part of the proposed bond programs. This could result in a shortage of funds needed for such capital replacements since they are not adequately addressed and are not included for consideration by the 20/20 Vision committee.

Effective maintenance involves:

- Timely attention to emergency and corrective maintenance conditions. Emergency and corrective maintenance occur when equipment fails, typically requiring more time and resources to correct preventive maintenance.
- A preventive maintenance program designed to avoid equipment breakdowns and prevent minor problems from escalating into major ones which keeps equipment running at peak efficiencies.
- A long-range plan to address HVAC mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and low voltage systems and/or component replacements required at the end of their useful life. The plan will typically indicate the current age of the components, what year to expect replacements to occur, and anticipated costs using a Consumer Price Index multiplier or estimated inflation rate.
- A computerized integrated preventative maintenance program such as *PMDirect* by School Dude (<http://www.schooldude.com/products/pm-direct/>) can help automate the issuance of work orders on various building systems and components to address manufacturers recommended maintenance schedules, which helps extend the useful life of the equipment.

As an example, Spring Independent School District (SISD) in Texas developed a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that includes the maintenance schedules shown in **Exhibit 4-10**.

RECOMMENDATION

The DPS Maintenance Department should develop a long-range facilities maintenance plan, including the purchase of a computerized integrated preventive maintenance program for district facilities.

In developing the long-range facilities maintenance plan, DPS should consider:

- Industry staffing guidelines but also variations that may reduce specific position needs. For example, while DPS has a large number of individual HVAC units, their proximity to each other may allow for fewer personnel to maintain them than the guidelines suggest.
- Extended warranty coverage to reduce internal staffing requirements.
- Hiring more lower-skilled, lower-salaried technicians specifically for preventive maintenance tasks;
- Hiring high school or college students to perform minor, routine preventive maintenance tasks, such as changing HVAC filters;
- Hiring outside contractors to provide some or all of the major maintenance tasks; and
- Assigning some minor corrective and preventive maintenance tasks to school custodians.

Exhibit 4-10
SISD Preventive Maintenance Program Schedule

Preventive Maintenance Activity	Activity Frequency
Clean A/C unit filters	Bi-monthly
Change A/C unit filters	3 to 12 week intervals
Clean chiller condenser coils	Bi-annually
Clean fan coil and air handler evaporator coils	Annually
Clean ice machine condenser coils	Every 4 months
Inspect and capacity test chillers	Annually
Change chiller compressor oil and cores	Every 2 years
Check chemical levels in closed loop chilled and Hot water piping	Monthly
Clean grease traps	Every 3 months
Inspect and test boilers	Annually
Check roofs, downspouts, and gutters	Monthly, repair as needed – 20 year roof warranty
Inspect exterior lighting	Semi-annually
Inspect elementary play gym lighting	Annually
Inspect and clean gym gas heaters	Annually
Inspect playground equipment	Monthly, repair as needed
Clean fire alarm system smoke detectors	Semi-annually
Inspect all interior and exterior bleachers	Annually, repair as needed
Clean, tighten, and lubricate roll out bleachers	Annually
Check exterior building and concrete caulking	Annually – 8 year replacement
Stripe exterior parking lots	Annually
Check condition of asphalt parking lots	Annually – 12 year replacement
Check carpet	15 year replacement
Check vinyl composition tile floors	20 year replacement
Spray wash exterior soffits and building	Every 2 years or as needed
Replace glass and Plexiglas	As needed
Paint interior of facilities	Every 5 years
Paint exterior of facilities	Every 8 years
Perform general facility inspections	Annually

Source: Spring ISD Facilities Department

By DPS purchasing and installing a computerized system such as School Dude *PMDirect*, the district will then have the capabilities to track specific equipment inventory data and develop a preventative maintenance program based upon manufacturer recommendations.

The Maintenance Department staff would need to obtain specific equipment and system data and input such information into the computer program. Once this data has been entered, the district will then have the ability to generate reports that could assist in making long-range facilities and maintenance decisions such as repair of equipment versus replacement. With the reported efficiencies of the preventative maintenance computerized program, staffing options can be reevaluated to determine if the department is properly staffed to implement the preventative maintenance program.

Existing staff can perform the gathering of building equipment and systems data needed for input into the new program and will result in no fiscal cost impact to the district. Once the program data is entered and history of equipment has been established, DPS can then begin to develop a long-range maintenance plan that could be included as part of the long-range facilities master plan for funding considerations for equipment and system replacements.

FISCAL IMPACT

An initial purchase price of \$1,298 would cover a one-year subscription service including one-time training for School Dude *PMDirect*. An annual renewal fee of \$998 would continue in the second year and beyond. The software manufacturer has stated in published documents that by utilizing *PMDirect* software, districts can extend the life of equipment as much as 25% which could thereby result in future capital budget savings. This software investment purchase may provide the district a net savings in its annual maintenance costs and cover the cost of the program.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS Maintenance Department should develop a long-range facilities maintenance plan, including the purchase of a computerized integrated preventive maintenance program for district facilities.	(\$1,298)	(\$998)	(\$998)	(\$998)	(\$998)

Custodial Operations

Safe, clean, and sanitary facilities are essential elements of the education environment. School systems across the United States use different means to address these elements. Typically, school boards either contract out (outsource) custodial services or organize a comprehensive in-house system of services. Personnel may be employed by either the outsource company or the school board.

Management responsibility, if the program is totally in-house, may reside either partially or wholly with the central office, or the individual school or department. Determining the desired structure is usually based on a number of criteria, including minimizing costs to the school district, improving services to schools, and reducing (or increasing) the span of control of district or school-based administrators.

Product vendors typically train the DPS maintenance/custodial staff. Custodial training programs are vitally important and available from a variety of private and public sources. For further information, forums, professional development opportunities, and conferences concerning professional school facility management, maintenance, and cleaning, refer to, and consider membership in, the National School Plant Management Association (NSPMA) at <http://www.nspma.com/> or the Oklahoma School Plant Management Association (OSPMA) at <http://www.ospma.org/>.

FINDING 4-11

DPS created a method for assigning custodians to each facility. This method requires fewer custodians than typical custodial staffing formulas and results in cost savings for DPS.

According to the superintendent, DPS uses a staffing formula for custodial services of one custodian for every 200 students. The principals supervise and work directly with the school custodians/head custodian by assessing the cleanliness of their school to ensure the expectations have been met.

The Association of School Business Officials, International (ASBO) bases custodial staffing on an expected average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff hour of work for an 8-hour cleaning period, which equals 20,000 square feet per custodian. For DPS, that would mean employing 30 custodians, or three more than the district currently employs as shown in **Exhibit 4-11**. DPS’s average per full-time custodial worker is 23,822 square feet, which is 19.1 percent higher than the ASBO recommendation.

**Exhibit 4-11
DPS Custodial Staffing Per Facility
2008-09**

Facility	Current Number of Custodians	Building Square Footage	Square Feet Per Custodian	Recommended Number of Custodians *	Number of Custodians Above/(Below) Standard
Duncan High School	8.5	220,000	25,882	11	(2.5)
Duncan Middle School	5.0	127,540	25,508	6	(1.0)
EDGE Academy	1.5	25,400	16,933	1	.5
Will Rogers Pre-K Center	1.5	27,430	18,287	1	.5
Irving Pre K Center	0.5	21,934	43,868	1	(0.5)
Emerson Elementary	2.0	21,422	10,711	1	1
Plato Elementary	2.0	24,500	12,250	1	1
Horace Mann Elementary	2.0	30,096	15,048	2	0
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	2.0	33,736	16,868	2	0
Mark Twain Elementary	1.0	30,037	30,037	2	(1)
Halliburton Stadium	0	7,192			
Sportsman Park	0	2,620			
Maintenance/Transportation Building/Bus Barn	1	15,466	15,466	1	0
DPS Media Services	0	3,332			
Administration Building	0	14,177		1	(1)
Total	27	643,198	23,822	30	(3)

Source: DPS administrative assistant of Maintenance/Transportation; principals, February 2009.

** If after calculating whole number of custodians required, there is more than one-half of required square footage per left over (i.e., more than 10,000 square feet), then one full custodian position is added. If less than 10,000 square feet left over, then no additional position. Robert E Lee Elementary School is excluded from the list in terms of overall district square footage since it is only being used as a storage facility.*

Results of the written survey administered by the review team show that 72 percent of teachers, 73 percent of principals, and 84 percent of support staff agree with the statement “school facilities are clean” as noted in **Exhibit 4-12**.

**Exhibit 4-12
DPS Cleaning of School Facilities
March 2009**

Survey Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
School facilities are clean			
Support Staff	84%	8%	8%
Professional Staff	73%	20%	7%
Teachers	72%	7%	21%

Source: Written survey administered by WCL ENTERPRISES

COMMENDATION

DPS is being very efficient with cleaning operations at schools resulting in cost savings while still obtaining favorable approval ratings for cleanliness.

FINDING 4-12

There are no formal training programs for the maintenance and custodial personnel of DPS. This could lead to improper use of tools, equipment, and cleaning chemicals and also compromise employee safety.

Maintenance and custodial personnel are eligible to attend certain annually scheduled professional development programs at the beginning of the school year. However, these programs are general in nature and are not focused specifically around these support positions.

Employees are hired, in part, on the basis of their existing skills or they learn from their fellow employees on the job. Tools, equipment, and cleaning chemicals used by these employees can be costly and dangerous. Proper training is essential to safety and cost savings.

An in-house training program can be used to train staff on such topics as certification for maintenance trades personnel, OSHA certification, safety, cleaning techniques, work efficiency, custodial cleaning standards, etc. By conducting training in-house, the costs of travel, meals, lodging, and program registration would be avoided, and the cost of the hours not worked due to training would be kept at a minimum. Purchase or rental of training films and slide presentations as well as fees for occasional outside trainers may reduce the cost savings, but the total savings will be significant enough within only a few years to pay for implementation of such a program.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should conduct regular in-house formal training for maintenance and custodial staff by bringing training materials and possibly trainers to the district.

Maintenance and custodial training programs are available from a variety of private and public sources. The following sample from the Internet illustrates the many different types of training materials available:

- <http://www.schoolfacilities.com/> - This site features articles, products, and training program listings, plus an eNewsletter that covers current trends in building maintenance, school construction, school design, indoor air quality issues, etc.
- <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/maintenance/chapter1.asp> - This site displays a complete *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities*. It is available free of charge.
- <http://www.trainingservicesassoc.com/coursedesc.htm> - Training Services Association provides in-house training courses including courses on facilities maintenance.
- http://www.edfacilities.org/rl/custodial_staffing.cfm - This website of the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF) contains a resource list of links, books, and journal articles on custodial staffing guidelines, needs assessment, training, and procedures for K-12 school buildings and colleges.
- <http://www.cleaningconsultants.com/> - This site contains an on-line store containing books, videos, reports, and software titles specifically for the cleaning industry. These products contain information on subjects such as basic cleaning, housekeeping, window washing, janitorial services, custodial maintenance, bidding, estimating, etc.

The above training program sources are listed as examples. The administrative assistant for Maintenance and Transportation should conduct his own search by asking for information from his peers and from the Internet. It is important to know that many maintenance and custodial training programs sponsored by product manufacturers or service providers may be biased in the direction of these products or services and do not provide a balanced, professional view of the role of these services in facilities operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs of this recommendation include the cost of renting or buying training materials, and for the occasional outside trainer or other specific training opportunities that may be applicable. While some materials and trainers are offered at no charge, such offers are often laced with heavy bias toward a particular product or service and should be used with caution. An average annual budget cost of \$1,200 is recommended per year for training. DPS should investigate options to coordinate the training with other nearby public school districts to potentially share in the cost to conduct such programs. Unbiased and non-proprietary training programs usually require a nominal fee, as they are not underwritten by an industry or corporation.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should conduct regular in-house formal training for maintenance and custodial staff by bringing training materials and possibly trainers to the district.	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)

C. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

School facilities consume significant amounts of energy that translate into an ever growing and sometimes unpredictable component of the overall annual budget. With increased costs for energy and fuels for HVAC systems, water heating, office equipment, and other related activities, school districts establish policies, procedures, and methods for increasing efficiency in energy consumption and reducing operating costs. Policies typically describe the board’s specific desire to ensure that maximum resources are available for instructional purposes and charge the administration with developing related procedures.

Procedures generally prescribe a range of measures and activities to be implemented and a specific means for computing the results. Some school boards develop incentive systems to reward employees for actions or recommendations that have resulted in substantial energy savings.

Energy management methods range from sophisticated, centralized, computer controls over HVAC systems and other energy consuming devices to simple manual procedures for turning thermostats down and lights off during periods of minimal facility utilization.

Proper energy management is a vital tool for the efficient use of a district’s resources. Energy audits and other sources of data are essential to control energy costs. Districts use such data to monitor and evaluate the success of the energy management program. While the purpose of the energy management program is to minimize waste, the program should also ensure the comfort of the building occupants and encourage energy awareness across the district.

Many districts around the country use a number of techniques to keep energy costs down. Examples of these conservation efforts include:

- entering monthly energy bill data into a spreadsheet to maintain a history of expenditures and usage;
- performing building checks to see if lights are turned off, doors are closed, water faucets are not dripping, etc.;

-
- leaving an “OOPS” note reminding teachers or staff of the proper procedure, if problems are found during building checks;
 - establishing set points for thermostats at 76 degrees in the summer and 69 degrees in the winter;
 - purchasing set-back thermostats and programming them to turn down cooling or heating in advance of daily adjournment and over the weekends;
 - setting water heaters or boilers at a maximum temperature of 140 degrees, except in areas requiring higher temperatures for sanitation purposes, such as kitchens; and
 - replacing worn out and damaged equipment, windows, and lighting, as needed, with more energy-efficient units.

The cost of energy is a major item in any school budget. Thus, school planners generally embrace ideas that can lead to reduced energy costs. DPS has installed a computer-controlled Energy Management System (EMS) that operates zoned HVAC units. These systems can automatically turn on and off air conditioning and boilers according to pre-programmed instructions entered by staff.

An ASBO study suggests that costs associated with EMS are generally recouped within a few years of implementation. The study also suggests that the following guidelines will help a school system accomplish more efficient energy management:

- Establish an energy policy with specific goals and objectives;
- Assign someone to be responsible for the district’s energy management program and give this energy manager access to top-level administrators;
- Monitor each building’s energy use;
- Conduct energy audits in all buildings to identify energy-inefficient units;
- Reward schools that decrease their energy use;
- Install energy-efficient equipment, including power factor correction units, electronic ballast, high-efficiency lamps, night setbacks, and variable-speed drives for large motors and pumps; and
- Install motion detectors that turn lights on when a room is occupied and off when the room is unoccupied.

FINDING 4-13

DPS contracted with an energy performance contractor to control energy usage in its facilities by performing lighting retrofits at many of its facilities along with the implementation of scheduled on/off functions of its HVAC systems. This plan has resulted in reduction of electricity usage at district facilities and is saving the district money.

An August 2004 report prepared for the U.S. Department of Energy entitled *School Operations and Maintenance: Best Practices for Controlling Energy Costs, A Guidebook for K-12 School System Business Officials and Facility Managers*, stated that school districts pay an average of about \$1.00 per square foot annually for energy costs and as high as \$250/student annually. *The 37th Annual Maintenance & Operations Cost Study* prepared by the American School and University Magazine in April 2008 states that the median costs per square foot for energy costs nationally for K-12 schools is \$1.52 per square foot and \$299.43 per student.

DPS's annual energy costs for the 2007-08 fiscal year average \$0.45 per square foot and \$79.27 per student (**Exhibit 4-13**), which is well below these publications stated average.

**Exhibit 4-13
DPS Energy Costs**

Category	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Percentage Change
Electricity Costs	\$96,982	\$107,041	\$122,848	\$121,397	25.2%
Natural Gas Costs	\$121,291	\$112,839	\$157,220	\$169,273	39.6%
Total Energy Costs	\$218,273	\$219,880	\$280,068	\$290,670	33.2%
Total Square Feet of DPS Facilities	643,198	643,198	643,198	643,198	0%
Energy Cost per Square Foot	\$0.34	\$0.34	\$0.44	\$0.45	24.4%
DPS Student Enrollment	3,656	3,644	3,694	3,667	0.3%
Energy Cost per DPS Student	\$59.70	\$60.34	\$75.82	\$79.27	32.8%

Source: DPS Maintenance Department, February 2009 and Office of Accountability statistical database

Although DPS's energy costs have increased 24.4 percent since 2004-2005, the district has implemented a program and process to keep energy costs below the national average for school districts.

To keep energy costs low, DPS installed energy management hardware and software on HVAC equipment at all schools to provide zoned on/off control functions at each campus. These zones are typically programmed to be turned off at 4:00 PM unless written requests have been submitted for after-hour events.

In January 1999, DPS entered into an energy management performance contract with CSI Control Systems International, Inc. to have the following services performed:

- Provide an energy management program that will enable the district to monitor its energy consumption and energy costs in order to reduce both;
- The replacement of existing time clocks and the installation of direct digital controllers (DDC) to control all on/off scheduling of all heating and air conditioning units at DPS facilities;
- Increase the lighting levels in classrooms to meet a minimum of 40 foot-candles which include the installation of energy efficient T-8 lamps and electronic ballasts;
- The installation of new energy efficient LED exit lights; and
- The replacement of designated mechanical equipment at the High School, Horace Mann Elementary, Mark Twain Elementary, and Irving Elementary.

A report provided to DPS in May 2004 from the service provider stated that the total actual savings achieved for the reporting period of April 1999 through December 2003 was \$737,133 which exceeded the original guaranteed savings amount of \$574,284 through the fourth year of the program by \$162,849.

COMMENDATION

DPS initiated an energy management performance contract that has been effective in keeping energy costs below the national average for school energy usage.

FINDING 4-14

DPS energy management and building control system capabilities are limited to only residential type individual thermostat controls in each classroom. As a result, teachers have control of temperature settings in their classrooms throughout the day, which creates the potential of increased cost to the district.

When locally controlled thermostats are utilized in classrooms, districts will typically have higher electricity and gas costs compared to facilities that control the temperature settings from a central facility. In many instances in educational facilities, the placement of programmable thermostats and the use of occupancy sensors have proven to be relatively inexpensive and effective energy conservation measures.

Programmable thermostats allow for automatic temperature setbacks during heating and increased temperature settings during cooling when a building is not occupied, such as during the night and on weekends. These type thermostats can easily be overridden as necessary. By utilizing DDC thermostats controlled through a central energy management control system, additional cost savings could be achieved and allow a district to standardize temperature control settings based upon a board adopted energy management policy.

A recent study was performed for Caldwell Independent School District in Caldwell, Texas, after the installation of energy conservation improvements which included new building automated controls, high efficiency chillers, and lighting retrofits. In the energy modeling performed while designing the improvements, the model resulted in a total reduction in usage of 10 percent related to the change from pneumatic thermostat controls to DDC controlled programmable thermostats. In the first year after completion of the improvements, the district achieved a reduction in usage of 33 percent, which resulted in a total cost savings of \$169,347.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should consider upgrading its current energy management control system to include installation of new DDC controlled programmable thermostats and occupancy sensors at existing campuses that are to be renovated as part of the long-range facilities plan.

DPS should include, as part of its current long-range facilities planning process, upgrading the energy management control systems to include the installation of additional DDC temperature controls and occupancy sensors. This would allow DPS to standardize temperature control settings for the operation of the HVAC systems and space lighting during unoccupied times of the school day in classrooms and other support areas. These devices should be installed to limit their override capability to the administrative assistant of Maintenance and Transportation, principal, and superintendent to ensure that the devices are working as designed so energy savings are realized.

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs for implementation of this recommendation can be included in the long-range facilities plan to be funded as part of future bond elections.

FINDING 4-15

DPS does not have a computerized energy cost system to track utility usage and costs along with the performance of utility bill audits. As a result, the district may not be able to detect errors in billings from utility companies based upon adopted utility rate schedules.

The district is currently tracking its total district utility costs utilizing a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. DPS is not keeping track of its energy consumption or cost for water, gas, and electricity on a per campus basis. Tracking monthly utility usage and cost data at each meter at each building at each campus is very important as it can assist DPS in evaluating where problems may exist in terms of consumption, such as an indication of a water main break, a HVAC roof top unit set manually to run 24 hours a day, or a malfunctioning meter.

There are energy accounting software programs on the market such as School Dude *UtilityDirect* (<http://www.schooldude.com/products/utility-direct/>) that allow districts to track their utility costs by meter, by building, or by campus. In most cases, these programs perform a utility bill audit function that compares the data that has been entered into the program to the utility company rate schedule and can flag the bill if there is an error in the calculation. This function alone can help uncover billing errors that would normally not be detected which can easily cover the cost of the software program.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should purchase one of the available energy accounting software programs.

FISCAL IMPACT

An initial purchase price of \$2,950 would cover a one-year subscription service for School Dude *UtilityDirect*. The software manufacturer has published results from a typical cost/benefit analysis that results in reported savings of at least five percent of a district’s annual utility expenditures. For DPS, this could result in an annual savings of \$14,534 based upon the utility expenditures for the 2007-08 fiscal year, which will clearly have a payback period of less than three months.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should purchase one of the available energy accounting software programs	(\$2,950)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)	(\$2,325)

FINDING 4-16

DPS has not formally adopted an energy management program (EMP). Without such a program, DPS runs the risk of costly energy inefficiencies, taking unnecessary budget dollars from instructional activities.

The administrative assistant for Maintenance and Transportation is currently in charge of energy management. Per the review team’s interview with DPS staff, a recommended procedure for temperature settings has been developed and sent to campuses for implementation. The Maintenance Department staff has the ability of scheduling the HVAC system on and off based upon school start and dismissal times and any scheduled after hour usage of facilities reported by the principals. However, there is no central control to monitor or override these classroom temperature settings since the thermostats installed are not programmable.

The U.S. Department of Energy determined that at least 25 percent of all energy consumed in a school facility is due to energy inefficiency. This inefficiency can be caused by:

- Dry transformers;
- Location of light switches;
- Hallway lights;
- Plug loads and personal appliances; and
- Phantom loads.

EMPs are an effective method for reducing the inefficiencies associated with energy use. An EMP should contain the following elements:

- Based on the board policy, a goal for the program and establish objectives;
- A responsible individual and means of implementing the program and an energy management team;
- A checklist for administrators, instructional personnel, and operators;
- Energy education materials for use by instructional personnel;
- Energy awareness training for all school personnel; and
- An evaluation instrument and means of celebrating success.

As an example, Duncanville Independent School District in Texas successfully adopted an energy management plan in November 2007. The Duncanville EMP states at the outset:

“Awareness of conservation techniques is an important aspect of an energy conservation program. Establishing district guidelines is critical to the overall program because we will be able to judge the buildings based on near identical operating procedures. Only then will we be able to determine the efficiency of the various buildings and therefore, be able to formulate a true general comparison of energy consumption levels at all buildings.

Energy conservation is first a people concern, and then a technical concern. Administrators should take a serious look at how their building operates in terms of normal daily routines and activities. By designating thermostat settings and reducing equipment run time and lighting operations, all building administrators will be able to significantly contribute to the district program.

An energy conscious attitude among all district personnel should prove to generate substantial savings and will cost essentially nothing to implement. The guidelines and procedures set forth are approved by the School Board. These are general guidelines, meaning that some of them will not directly pertain to every building because of varying unique characteristics associated with each building. However, all Administrators should implement these guidelines to the maximum possible level.”

The district’s plan components are shown in **Exhibit 4-14** below.

**Exhibit 4-14
Duncanville Independent School District
Energy Management Plan Components
November 2007**

Plan Section/Subcomponents
Introduction
Letter, Superintendent, DISD announcing EC support
District Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requests for Building Modifications Pertaining to Energy-Related Matters. 2. Standardized Temperature Settings for Water Heaters. 3. Standardized Settings of all Thermostats 4. Authorized Adjustment of Thermostats 5. Startup Procedure for Air Conditioning and Heating Equipment 6. Shutdown Procedure for Air Conditioning and Heating Equipment. 7. Operation of Specific-Use Areas 8. Obstruction of Supply Air Vents 9. Elimination or Proper Use of Portable Electric Heaters 10. Operation of Equipment During Non-Instructional Periods 11. Schedule and Operation of After-Hour Events 12. Proper Operation of Exterior Doors and Windows 13. Proper use of Window Shading Devices 14. Proper Operation of Interior Doors 15. Operation of Interior Lights 16. Area Lighting Controlled by Multiple Switching 17. Lighting Procedures for Limited-Use Areas 18. Ornamentation Lighting 19. Exterior Lighting 20. Incandescent Light Bulbs 21. Lighting Used for Vending Machines
Energy Saving Tips for the Classroom
Recommended Illumination Levels
Standard Operation Procedures for Custodial Personnel <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cleaning and Continual Upkeep of all Mechanical Rooms 2. Light Fixture Inspection and Cleaning Program 3. Replacement Procedure of Fluorescent Lights 4. Supply and Return Air Vent Cleaning Program
Daily Guidelines and Recommendations for Custodians.
Standard Operating Procedures for Food Service Personnel
Energy Saving Tips for the Kitchen/Cafeteria

Source: Duncanville Independent School District Energy Management Plan adopted in November 2007

As an example, the *Energy Savings Tips for the Classroom* section of the Duncanville plan is listed below:

TURN OFF THE LIGHTS!! When your classroom or adjacent rooms (such as restrooms or storage rooms) are not occupied, make sure the lights are turned off. If you are the only one in the classroom, utilize the multiple light switches by only turning on the row of lights over your desk or use a desk lamp.

CLOSE DOORS AND WINDOWS!! If the air-conditioning or heating system is on, make sure all doors and windows are closed. This will help to provide a more comfortable environment within the classroom.

BENEFIT FROM WINDOW SHADING DEVICES!! If your classroom has some type of window shading device such as curtains, mini-blinds, shutters, etc., then take advantage of the sun on cold winter days by leaving them open to utilize the natural light and radiation heat to warm the room. Conversely, on hot days, leave them closed and allow the air-conditioning to work less.

MONITOR THERMOSTAT SETTINGS!! Make sure thermostats are set and maintained at the district-mandated settings. Settings are 72 degrees in the heating season and 74 degrees in the cooling season.

DON'T OBSTRUCT AIRFLOW!! All classrooms are provided with a return air vent. This allows for room air to circulate through the conditioning unit. If the vent is obstructed (such as a bookcase in front of it), the amount of conditioned air for the room will be decreased. The return air vent is the one that does not blow air into the room. Dirt and dust can build up around the return air vent. This will also restrict airflow and lead to an uncomfortable environment. Communicate with your head custodian and make sure all vents are dirt/dust free.

REPORT BURNED-OUT LIGHT BULBS!! Burned-out light bulbs create poor lighting as well as maintenance problems. If a bulb is burned out, have your administrator send a work-order to the Maintenance Department. Also, make sure the custodial staff wipe/clean the light cover. They get dirty and will restrict light output to your classroom.

REFRAIN FROM USING PORTABLE ELECTRIC HEATERS!! Portable heaters not only consume a lot of electricity, but also create a fire hazard within the classroom. If you do not feel that your room is adequately heated, contact the Maintenance Department - there may be a mechanical equipment problem.

KNOW THE OPERATING SCHEDULE!! All units providing heating and air-conditioning should be turned off no later than 15-30 minutes after the last scheduled period. Cafeteria and kitchen units can be turned off much earlier. If you notice them running, tell your principal or head custodian.

CHECK FOR RUNNING WATER!! The costs for a leaky faucet or running commode can add up. If you discover this problem, report it to your head custodian or principal to ensure that maintenance is notified to correct the problem.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a formal energy management program to be adopted by its Board of Education.

Goals should be specific, realistic, and achievable, such as:

- Reduce energy consumption in each school facility by at least a (specified percentage) at the end of the (specific) school year and maintain the achieved level of consumption for five years after attainment;
- Establish energy awareness training for all school employees; and
- Obtain and make available energy education materials for all teachers for incorporation into their subject matter.

In developing this program, DPS should adopt a set of energy guidelines for use in the design and construction of new and renovation of existing school facilities. Checklists should be developed for all segments of the school community for use on daily energy conservation actions and for special circumstances to control energy usage. DPS should also develop energy awareness training to support stated objectives. As the results of energy audits and facility/systems inspections, develop an "energy conservation project list" in conjunction with planned capital projects.

Other things to consider in developing the EMP include:

- Developing a means to evaluate the success of the overall program;
- Developing a means for recognition of success in the program both internally and externally;
- Informing the community that the EMP exists, what has been accomplished, and how they can reduce their own energy bills; and
- Regularly updating the program to reflect changing conditions, successes, and/or failures.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

DPS should pursue opportunities with vendors to investigate and implement measures, which could minimize utility consumption and shorten the pay-back schedule for the investment being made with capital expenditures. A good pay-back period for energy conservation upgrades will typically be from one to five years. Any upgrades that result in a longer pay-back period should be thoroughly analyzed to determine whether it's a feasible option or not based upon the current financial condition of the district.

D. SAFETY AND SECURITY

According to the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics latest report, *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2006*, overall school crime is down, and violent crimes are more likely to happen away from school. However, it is incidents of violence at schools that draw national attention. School systems must take proactive measures in safety and security even in incident free schools. Students, teachers, and other district employees deserve a safe school environment in which to work and learn. In whatever areas schools are not safe and disciplined, those environments work against academic achievement.

FINDING 4-17

DPS undertakes a series of efforts that enhance the safety and security of students, staff, and facilities. These enhancements provide the students and staff with a level of safety and security that is conducive to teaching and learning, ultimately increasing student achievement.

Those efforts begin with the superintendent who consistently provides vigilance through campus visitations, leadership by encouraging staff members to discuss safety and security issues during regularly scheduled meetings, appropriate funding through the federal Safe and Drug Free Schools grant, and equipment such as closed circuit video surveillance and intrusion protection.

Other aspects of this effort involve specific processes and procedures that are used, including the following:

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- DPS campus administrators perform routine safety inspections on every campus at least four times each fiscal year. Improved student safety and security through planned mitigation of hazards is a benefit enjoyed from regularly performed safety inspections.
 - By written contract, the City of Duncan Police Department dedicates a school resource officer (SRO) to DPS during the instructional day and extracurricular events. Having a trained law enforcement officer contracted and dedicated to being a constant positive adult role model, immediately available when needed to preserve the peace, and protect students from criminal activity without having to compete with all other duties required of regular City of Duncan police officers, is a great benefit to DPS.
 - DPS partners with the Sixth District Attorney’s Office and Youth Services of Stephens County to provide “The Graduated Sanctions” program that enhances student discipline. The program benefits include a better disciplined and focused student body. These benefits are achieved by rewarding the juvenile offender with deferred prosecution if the juvenile successfully completes: a social services program such as anger management and drug, alcohol, and tobacco education; an assigned community service; and a period of closely supervised probation where proper behavior at school is a high priority.
 - All DPS campuses use a Safe Schools Committee that meets quarterly and is made up of central office staff, campus staff, parents, and students where appropriate. The committee provides input and feedback to the principal in regard to campus safety and security, resulting in the development of an action plan to mitigate unsafe conditions that put students at risk of injuries or lost instructional time.
 - All campus visitors are required to check-in at the main office upon arrival. The practice and posted instructions are consistently applied throughout the district, reducing the risk of students being abducted or inappropriately interacting with unauthorized adults.
 - All fire extinguishers were found to have been inspected by a competent authority within one calendar year. This process ensures that fire extinguishers are in good working condition and have the ability to extinguish small fires before they become life threatening.
 - Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AEDs) are strategically located within every facility. AED use greatly increases the probability of an acceptable outcome in certain life threatening conditions.
 - All elementary schools require teachers to supervise students while on the playground. Adult supervision during recess substantially reduces the chances of child abduction and accidental injuries.
 - At most DPS campuses, the exterior doors, except at the main entrance, are secured during the instructional day. Secured exterior doors reduce the chance of an intruder gaining entrance and a child being abducted.

COMMENDATION

By involving all district staff, establishing a series of regular procedures, and enforcing district policies, DPS provides a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

FINDING 4-18

The management of safety and security is divided among DPS central office and campus personnel. As a result, there is not one position that coordinates all processes, ensuring that those processes are being followed effectively and efficiently without duplication of effort.

Exhibit 4-15 shows the position responsible for different aspects of safety and security in DPS.

Exhibit 4-15
Safety and Security Responsibility by Position
2008-09

Person/Position	Responsibility
Superintendent & Principals	Administration: District crisis plan Campus crisis plans Safe Schools Committee
High School Principal	Management: School Resource Officer Drug dogs if needed Extra-curricular event security
Principals & Technology/Maintenance Staff	Equipment: Cameras, surveillance, and intrusion detection equipment Fire extinguisher inspection Issuing of keys
Principals	Communications: Address parent concerns regarding safety and security
Principals	Documentation: Develop student handbook that includes discipline management Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
Principals & Teachers	Enforcement: Discipline management Enforcing Code of Conduct Monitoring drivers on campus and high school campus parking Monitoring bus loading and unloading
Principals	Training: Fire Drills, Bad Weather Drills, and lockdowns Safety and security training

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES interviews, February 2009

Because there is not a single source for safety and security management, inefficiencies and duplication of efforts exist, including the following:

- Each campus principal is solely responsible for the planning, mitigation, response, and recovery related to emergency management. This arrangement promotes duplication of effort and does not ensure program improvement or accountability for accomplishing the objectives required for safe and disciplined schools.
- DPS staff lacks the specific training needed to improve security awareness, threat assessment, and all hazards emergency planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. Without this specific training, the students, staff, and facilities are more vulnerable to the consequences of man-made and natural emergencies.

- DPS does not test the effectiveness of their emergency planning and response beyond fire and tornados. Through developing performance standards for all hazards emergency drills to include conducting after-action reviews, developing corrective action plans based on the lessons learned from the drills, and hosting joint exercises with city and county emergency management personnel, greatly enhances the district's ability to successfully manage real emergencies of varying type and scope.
- DPS does not have a comprehensive security technology review program to ensure that the systems used are standardized, consistent throughout the district, and provide the anticipated benefit. Without a comprehensive review program, the district cannot be sure that they are getting an acceptable return on their investment.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should appoint one central administrator to ensure that district safety and security objectives are being met.

It is more efficient and effective to have a single central administrator responsible for developing processes and procedures for providing a safe and disciplined school environment. The goal would be to eliminate duplication of effort and ensure accountability. The most logical positions for this assignment as indicated on the DPS 2008 Organizational Chart would be the administrative assistant for Maintenance/Transportation or the Supervisor of Technical Services.

The duties of this administrator should include, but not be limited to, ensuring that staff receives appropriate safety and security training, testing and evaluation of emergency planning and response, and development and implementation of a comprehensive security technology review process.

Other public schools in Oklahoma, such as Stillwater Public Schools, have assigned safety and security oversight duties to a single administrator. Duncan Public Schools could use Stillwater and other districts as a model.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-19

Throughout the district, the fall zone surfaces under playground equipment do not meet the state minimum specifications. The risk of student injuries is increased when the loose-fill of fall zone surfaces is not proportionate to the height of the equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should ensure that the playground equipment fall zone conditions comply with the Oklahoma Department of Labor's *Fall Surfacing Guidelines for Playgrounds*.

The playground equipment fall zones surface conditions are regulated by the Oklahoma Department of Labor. The Oklahoma Department of Labor's *Fall Surfacing Guidelines for Playgrounds* (www.ok.gov/odol/documents/SSDPlaygroundSafetyFallSurfacingGuidelines.pdf) states, "Loose-fill surfaces should be maintained to a depth proportionate to the height of the equipment. However, a 12-inch depth is a good guideline for equipment up to 8 feet in height."

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-20

There are no warnings posted of video surveillance equipment being used in and around the facilities. Signs warning of the use of video surveillance prevent unwanted activity in and around school facilities.

Based on a walk-through of each facility during the onsite visit in February 2009, the review team observed that no video monitoring warning signs were posted. Posted warning signs are an effective and cost efficient target hardening strategy.

Target hardening is a principal of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Using electronic surveillance helps to harden the target, and warning of its use prevents crime.

RECOMMENDATION

Video surveillance warning signs should be installed around the perimeter of all district owned or operated facilities.

Video surveillance warning signs may be purchased from a variety of vendors and attached to existing or newly installed standards throughout the facilities. The signs should be prominently displayed where visitors are likely to enter the facilities.

Possible vendors include My Security Signs (www.mysecuritysigns.com), Home Security Store (www.homesecuritystore.com), and USA Traffic Signs (www.usa-traffic-signs.com).

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-21

All campuses have combustible material stored in mechanical rooms where gas fired furnaces and water heaters are located. The risk of fire is greatly increased when combustible material is stored within three feet of an ignition source.

Based on a walk-through of each facility during the onsite visit in February 2009, the review team observed conditions where combustible material was stored within three feet of an ignition source. This condition increases the potential of fire and is contrary to the Fire Safety Code.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should develop and implement a plan to move all combustible material at least three feet away from any ignition source.

The steps taken to mitigate the exposure of combustible material to ignition sources could include the following:

- Implement a policy prohibiting combustible material from being stored within three feet of an ignition source;

- Identify and document all affected areas;
- Remove the combustible material from the ignition source;
- Install a physical barrier around ignition sources;
- Establish (paint or tape) fire hazard zones within three feet of equipment that contains a source of ignition such as an electronic glow plug or open flame; and
- Train employees about the dangers involved with placing combustible materials within the designated fire hazard zone.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-22

All DPS schools, except Duncan Middle School and Edge Academy, have hazardous materials that are accessible to students via custodial and science closets that are not kept locked or monitored. An increased risk of vandalism and personal injury exists when these materials are accessible to students.

During a walk-through of each facility during the onsite visit in February 2009, the review team observed conditions where cleaning supplies and chemicals were accessible to students. These materials, although safe when used appropriately, can cause serious personal injury and property damage when used inappropriately by students.

RECOMMENDATION

The campus principals should ensure that all storage spaces for hazardous materials are kept secure at all times.

To ensure that hazardous materials are not easily accessible to students, the campus principal or designee should do periodic inspection of custodial and science closets and discipline employees responsible for allowing those materials to be accessible to students.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-23

A private drug interdiction canine company is not providing the level of training or experience required for a successful drug interdiction program. A greater benefit comes from the use of law enforcement agencies because they are historically better trained and equipped for drug interdiction.

This condition is evident by the results of the review team administered survey of DPS students and professional staff. Sixty-eight percent of the student respondents and 93 percent of the professional staff respondents believe that drugs are a problem in DPS.

A quality drug interdiction program includes quality detection methods that are unique to canines because of their superior sense of smell. That superior sense of smell and the training that law enforcement canines receive makes them a valuable supplement to drug interdiction. However, utilization of canines require adherence to procedures that properly link their specialized capabilities with legally acceptable crime prevention and control activities that is admissible in a court of law.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should investigate the possibility of contracting with the City of Duncan Police Department to provide drug detection canine services.

The canine service contract might include topics such as scope of work, the number of campus inspections, number of random officer initiated inspections, and shared liability for damages caused by the canine.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-24

The vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns within the Duncan Middle School parking lots and driveways are unsafe, causing an increased potential for personal injury. The specific conditions include the following:

- Private vehicles are lined up three abreast across the front driveway while waiting to load students. As a result, students are forced to walk between waiting vehicles, creating an unsafe situation.
- When the athletic fields are being used, private vehicles drive along and park on the sides of the driveway behind the building. This increases the potential for students being hit by moving vehicles while walking to and from the building.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent and principal should develop a plan and implement procedures that will mitigate pedestrian safety problems at Duncan Middle School.

The superintendent should consider soliciting assistance from a qualified traffic safety engineer to design traffic patterns that include high volume of pedestrians and motor vehicles as well as, permanent or temporary safety barriers. The principal should designate key personnel to enforce the accepted traffic patterns.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-25

There are safety and security concerns at all DPS schools where the conditions have a potential to increase student, staff, and property vulnerability. **Exhibit 4-16** lists the unsafe conditions present at each school. An “X” indicates that the associated condition is present on that campus.

**Exhibit 4-16
Unsafe Conditions at Duncan Public Schools
February 2009**

Unsafe Conditions	High School	Middle School	Emerson Elem.	Mann Elem.	Twain Elem.	Wilson Elem.	Rogers Pre-K.	Plato Elem.	Irving Pre-K
Exterior doors are not kept secure.	X								
Fencing is in disrepair.	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Fence gates are not kept secure.				X	X				
Electrical breaker, fuse and switch boxes are not locked.	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Landscaping could conceal an intruder and contraband.	X			X	X			X	X
Obstacles in hallway inhibit emergency egress.	X						X		
A trash dumpster is assessable to students.				X					
Access ramp railing is damaged or partly missing.				X					
Unauthorized visitors are not challenged on campus.			X	X		X	X	X	
Building roof is easily accessible.	X			X	X	X		X	
Exposed wiring accessible to students.	X				X				
Conduit is not securely anchored and accessible.	X					X			
Fire doors are held open by unauthorized device.					X				
Standing water or trip hazard makes sidewalk unsafe.				X	X			X	X
Exterior light fixtures are broken or missing.	X					X			
Fire extinguisher locations are not adequately identified, making them difficult to locate.	X								
Electrical switch/receptacle box cover is missing or broken.	X								
Vehicles and pedestrians are within unsafe proximity to each other.	X	X							

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES on-site inspections

The unsafe conditions listed are based on a walk-through of DPS during the review team’s onsite visit in February 2009, interviews with campus personnel, and attending community forums. Specific examples of these conditions include the following exhibits:

- Obstructing emergency egress could cause serious problems during an emergency and violates the health safety code (**Exhibit 4-17**).

Exhibit 4-17
Obstructed Emergency Egress—Duncan High School Auditorium



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Broken or missing light fixtures and conduit within easy reach from the ground under walkway canopies increases the risk of accidental property damage and vandalism (**Exhibit 4-18**).

Exhibit 4-18
Canopy Conduit and Broken Light Box—Duncan High School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Storing fire extinguishers without adequate signage make them difficult to locate during an emergency, increases the risk of personal injury and property loss (**Exhibit 4-19**).

Exhibit 4-19
Fire Extinguisher Locker—Duncan High School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Electrical switches and receptacles that have missing and broken cover plates increase the risk of personal injury by electrocution (**Exhibit 4-20**).

Exhibit 4-20
Electrical Switch Cover Missing—Duncan High School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- The exposed sharp edge of fence posts and wire increases the potential for personal injuries (**Exhibits 4-21 through 4-24**).

Exhibit 4-21
Missing Fence Post Cap—Emerson Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-22
Missing Fence Post Cap—Emerson Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-23
Damaged Fence—Duncan High School Greenhouses



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-24
Restricted Area Gate Open and Fence Wire Edges Exposed—Mann Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Access to the building roof can be obtained from low overhanging tree limbs, sidewalk canopies, and natural terrain elevations, increasing the possibility of vandalism and burglary (**Exhibits 4-25 and 4-26**).

Exhibit 4-25
Roof Access from Low Hanging Limbs—Mark Twain Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-26
Roof Access from Natural Terrain Elevation—Plato Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Unlocked electrical box covers increase the potential for unauthorized access and personal injury by electrocution (**Exhibits 4-27** and **4-28**).

Exhibit 4-27
Unlocked Electrical Boxes—Mark Twain Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-28
Unlocked Electrical Box—Emerson Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

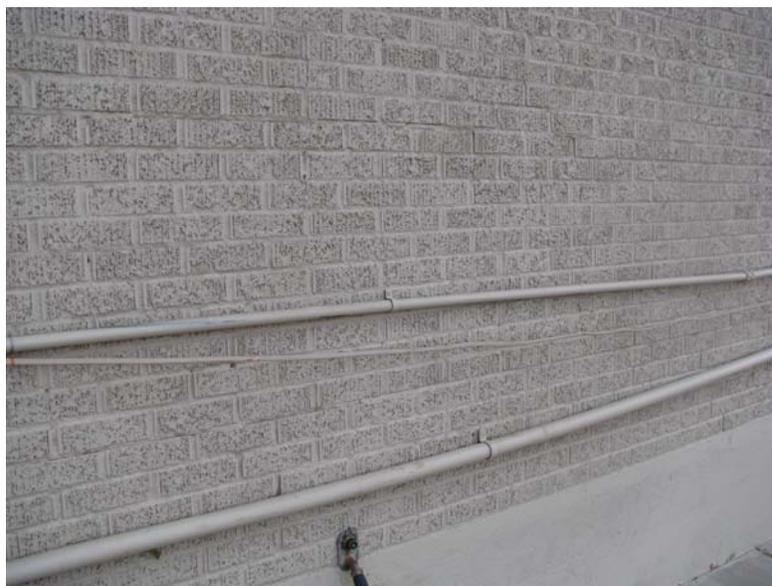
- Exposed wiring that is easily accessible increases the risk of personal injury and unintentional loss of power or communications (**Exhibits 4-29** and **4-30**).

Exhibit 4-29
Loose Exposed Wires —Duncan High School Greenhouse



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-30
Loose Exposed Wires —Mark Twain Elementary



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Standing water and trip-hazards on sidewalks increase the risk of personal injury caused by falling (Exhibits 4-31 through 4-33).

Exhibit 4-31
Standing Water on Sidewalk—Horace Mann Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-32
Pipe Cap above Finished Surface of Sidewalk—Irving Pre-K



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Exhibit 4-33
Water Hose on Sidewalk—Twain Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Personal injury and property damage potential is increased when inadequately pruned landscaping can be used to conceal contraband or intruders (**Exhibit 4-34**).

Exhibit 4-34
Landscaping Conducive to Concealment—Horace Mann Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Trash dumpsters that are easily accessible by students increase the risk of personal injury (**Exhibit 4-35**).

Exhibit 4-35
Dumpster—Horace Mann Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Damaged and missing ramp railing increases the risk of personal injury to students and staff (**Exhibit 4-36**).

Exhibit 4-36
Damaged Ramp Railing—Horace Mann Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- Circumventing a device that is designed to close a door during a fire increases the risk of personal injury, death, or property loss and violates the health safety code (**Exhibits 4-37**).

Exhibit 4-37
Fire Door Propped Open—Mark Twain Elementary School



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

- The risk of child abduction increases when unauthorized adults go unchallenged and have access to students.
- Unlocked exterior doors create an opportunity for intruders to gain entry to the building.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent and campus principals should develop strategies and implement procedures that will mitigate the unsafe conditions at all DPS campuses.

A multi-step process to mitigate the safety and security issues cited in this report is required because each issue has unique solutions. For example: Trash dumpsters should not be located within close proximity to elementary playgrounds. If relocation is not an option, fencing may be used to make access inconvenient to students, yet not inhibit authorized use by requiring keyed access.

The personnel responsible for mitigation should include the campus principal, teaching and support staff, and central maintenance personnel.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-26

DPS does not have a comprehensive all-hazards emergency operations plan. Without a comprehensive all-hazard emergency operation plan agreed upon and practiced prior to an emergency, the result is a lack of coordination and delayed response during an actual emergency.

Even though DPS has a basic emergency operations and response plan as required by the Oklahoma Department of Education and the Oklahoma Division of Emergency Management, further development and implementation of an all hazards emergency operations plan would be beneficial. A comprehensive all hazards emergency operations plan includes prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery to weather, violence, chemical, biological, and radiological events. Also included in the comprehensive plan should be the following topics:

- Communications
- Health & Medical
- Vehicle Accidents
- Vandalism
- Flooding
- Life Safety
- Evacuation

The U.S. Department of Education's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Center, <http://rems.ed.gov/>, provides resources for developing a comprehensive all-hazards emergency operations plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement a comprehensive all-hazards emergency operations plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation may have some fiscal impact; however, grant funds, up to \$500,000 without district matching funds, are available from the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center for emergency preparedness.

FINDING 4-27

DPS has not adopted nor do they use the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as required by Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5. Failure to adopt and use NIMS jeopardizes the federal assistance required to respond to and recover from certain disasters.

In 2003, Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5) initiated the development of a National Incident Management System (NIMS) and requires its use by public sector agencies, including school districts. The intent of this system is to provide a common template and language for responding organizations to work together in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural, man-made, and terrorist incidents.

As noted by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), "NIMS represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes that enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management". NIMS emphasizes that true preparedness requires a commitment to continuous review and improvement.

Most districts understand the continuous nature of emergency management, as well as the four phases that comprise the process circle: Mitigation & Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Oklahoma statute §63-681 also requires all political subdivisions to use NIMS as their system of managing emergencies.

A sample adoption resolution may be found at:

http://www.ok.gov/homeland/NIMS/Sample_NIMS_Adoption_Documents/index.html.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should prepare a resolution, adopting the National Incident Management System as the system used by Duncan Public Schools to manage emergencies.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation should have no fiscal impact.

FINDING 4-28

DPS has no written procedures related to how disabled students and students with special needs shall be assisted or evidence that the staff is trained to assist these individuals during emergencies. Without specific written procedures and trained staff, there is a greater risk of personal injury during emergency situations.

It is apparent that some consideration is given to the importance of assisting the disabled and special needs population because each campus has designated a staff member to assist disabled students during an emergency; however, there are no written policies or procedures.

The U.S. Department of Education's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center, <http://rems.ed.gov/>, provides great resources for developing procedures and training staff to assist disabled and special needs students during emergency operations.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop and implement procedures related to how students with special needs or disabilities shall be assisted during emergencies.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation may have some fiscal impact; however, grant funds, up to \$500,000 without district matching funds, are available from the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center for emergency preparedness.

Chapter 5:
Support Services

Chapter 5

Support Services

This chapter reviews several areas of support services in Duncan Public Schools (DPS). It is divided into these sections:

- A. Child Nutrition
- B. Computers and Technology
- C. Transportation

A. CHILD NUTRITION

Background

DPS takes part in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) is the administering agency for the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) in Oklahoma. Districts that participate in the NSLP and SBP serve student meals that meet federal guidelines for nutritional value and offer free or reduced price meals to eligible students. When districts participate in the NSLP and SBP, they receive cash subsidies for each eligible meal served.

Schools also receive donated commodities for lunch meals served that meet program guidelines. The funds for cash reimbursements and commodity allotments are issued from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Eligible meal categories are student free, student reduced price, and student paid. School districts do not receive federal reimbursement support for teacher or guest meals.

A review of the DPS Child Nutrition Department was conducted from February 9th through 11th, 2009. The scope of the review included, but was not limited to, department efficiency, operations, financial status, and staffing ratios. The review also looked at the food quality, inventory control, customer service, training, facilities layout and design, safety, and sanitation.

Information for the review was obtained from the following sources:

- interviews with: the superintendent, assistant superintendents, Child Nutrition director, Child Nutrition assistant director, Technology supervisor, Child Nutrition managers, principals, and business office staff;
- documents and data provided by the DPS;
- visitation of campus kitchens;
- observation of daily operations;
- review of certified audits, financial reports, invoices, and purchasing agreements; and
- additional information from evaluation team members.

Organization/Planning/Direction

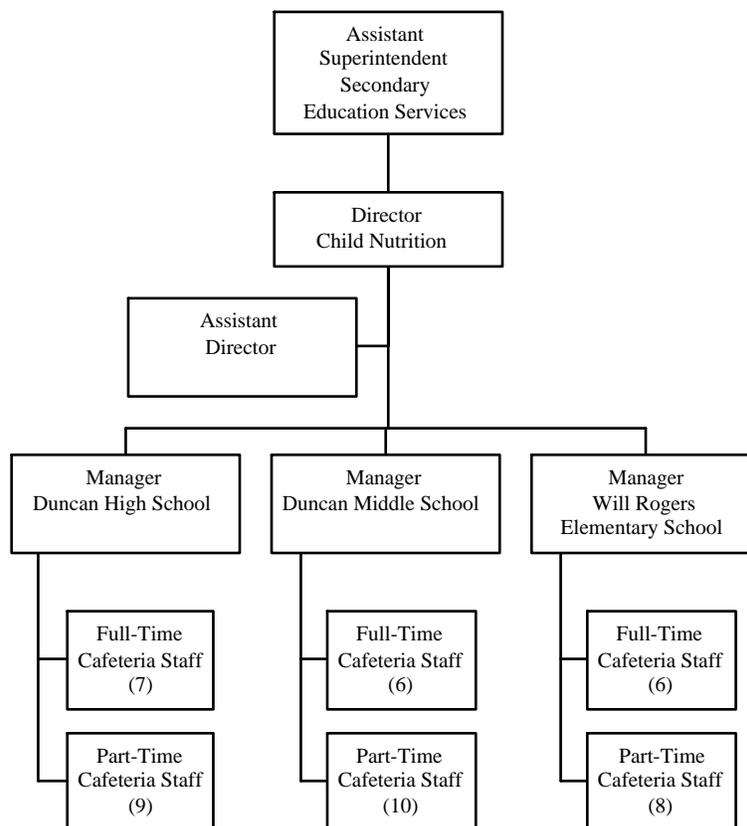
The Child Nutrition director is responsible for the organization, planning, direction, and control of the department. She has been with the district for 22 years and in the current position for two years. In addition she also worked as the assistant director, manager, and helper/server.

DPS has three full-service kitchens and seven satellite kitchens operating as follows: the Duncan High School kitchen satellites food to Emerson Elementary School and Mark Twain Elementary School; Duncan Middle School kitchen satellites food to Plato Elementary School and Horace Mann Elementary School; and Woodrow Wilson Elementary School kitchen satellites food to Irving PK and Will Rogers Elementary School. The DPS Child Nutrition Department served 98,822 breakfasts, 336,443 lunches, and 1,459 snacks during the 2007–08 school year.

DPS's Child Nutrition Department employs 51 employees, which includes 24 full-time employees and 27 part-time employees. In addition to the director, there is an assistant director, three managers, and 46 cafeteria workers. Three cafeteria workers also drive a food delivery trucks as part of their duties. These Child Nutrition Department employees work 182 days per year, with the exception of the director and assistant director who each work 242 days, and the managers who work 183 days. Of these days, 175 are for serving meals and seven are for cleaning and in-service training.

Exhibit 5-1 shows the Child Nutrition Department's organizational structure.

Exhibit 5-1
DPS Child Nutrition Department Organization
February 2009



Source: DPS Child Nutrition director, February 2009

FINDING 5-1

The Child Nutrition Department has an outstanding website filled with helpful information. The information is set on a page filled with fruits and vegetables, such as tomatoes, kiwi, bananas, carrots, and apples. The website entices you to want to eat meals at school.

The website was originally designed by a local patron for free. The Child Nutrition director was provided instruction on how to keep the information current. She updates the site as needed but at least monthly to post new menus. The website is full of clear information that is helpful to parent, students, and the community.

Website information includes:

- menus for the lunch and breakfast;
- cafeteria meal policy for 2008-09;
- Free and Reduced-price Meal application;
- Pre-Pay for Meals online – with letter of instruction;
- link to pre-payment site;
- meal prices;
- link to information for children with special dietary needs;
- healthy recipes; and
- Child Nutrition Department’s address and contact information.

NutriKids, the Child Nutrition Department’s point of sale supplier, is designing and plans to release in 2009-10 a menu webpage that incorporates their current menu planning software. After menus are created, the director will be able to add it into the website with one click.

COMMENDATION

By constantly updating information on its website, the Child Nutrition Department provides parents and students with helpful information.

Internal Controls/Point of Sale (POS)

FINDING 5-2

The DPS Child Nutrition Department does not handle cash transactions through the point of sale (POS) system. As a result, the district is not following proper accounting procedures to provide an appropriate financial audit trail and is potentially liable for missing, unaccounted, or questionable transactions.

The DPS Child Nutrition Department does not have acceptable cash handling procedures. For example, a cashier was taking cash and counting change in her head rather than allowing the transaction to process through the POS system. The POS system is designed to check for variances of overages/shortages of deposits against system reports. When all deposits are not tracked in the POS system, the program is not used as intended.

RECOMMENDATION

The POS system should be used for handling all meal and a la carte transactions.

A la carte sales along with “cash sales” must be addressed within the system to allow transparency of information to parents as well as to decrease deposit discrepancies. The Child Nutrition director should establish a maximum variance of overages/shortages for all cashiers. If a cashier exceeds the established amount, cafeteria staff should remain at the campus until the discrepancy is rectified.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-3

Different methods of payment collection procedures and meal accountability occur on DPS campuses. This results in a violation of the district’s policy statement with USDA. The lack of consistent methods of collection and meal accountability results in inconsistent methods of meal service operation at the schools, requires multiple methods of account reconciliation, and is inefficient program management.

During the on-site review of each cafeteria, the review team observed the following situations:

- one school was using swipe cards;
- another school was using a check-off sheet; and
- a third school had the students tell the cashier their number.

The policy statement for program implementation indicates what method the district chooses to use for meal accountability. The DPS child nutrition policy statement does not reflect the variety of collection methods that were observed during the review team’s site visit. If different collection procedures are used at different school campuses or if another collection procedure is used for breakfast or snack, the district must indicate which school uses which method and at what meal service. The district currently has not selected a method of accountability on its policy statement.

RECOMMENDATION

Collection and meal accountability procedures concerning payment, tracking, and bank deposits should be determined and implemented immediately.

The Child Nutrition director should identify by campus the meal counting methods that are being used and should report these methods to the state in the district’s policy statement, *Attachment F*.

Once collection and meal accountability procedures are established, training of all employees should occur. The district campuses should support and work with the Child Nutrition Department in following the accountability methods determined.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-4

The snack bar in Duncan Middle School is used for child nutrition program operations and student activity fundraisers. This results in co-mingled products, unsatisfactory fiscal accountability, and poor inventory control.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) were identified by the review team during the on-site visit in the Duncan Middle School snack bar during the school lunch hour. FMNV refers to the four categories of foods and beverages (soda water, water ices, chewing gum, and certain candies) that are restricted by the USDA under the child nutrition programs. While the Child Nutrition director indicated the soda and candy were for student activity fundraisers, it could be difficult to prove during a state coordinated review of the program.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should separate the child nutrition program operations and student activity fundraisers.

The Child Nutrition director and cafeteria manager at the middle school should meet with the campus student activity sponsors and explain program requirements and restrictions. The director and manager should work with the activity group sponsors to arrange appropriate times when such items can be offered to students.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-5

DPS is not using the POS system to determine reimbursement counts for lunch meals accountability and tracking as required by USDA. As a result, the district is in violation of NSLP meal counting and claiming policies.

During the site visit, the review team observed that at one campus soup for the student meals was carried to the table by teachers and placed on each student's tray to prevent spilling. USDA policy requires a reimbursable meal must be determined per student at the end of the serving line. While commendable, teachers carrying meals to students prevent correct implementation of the USDA policy, resulting in a policy violation.

USDA's AccuClaim regulations state that claims for reimbursement must be based on daily counts at the point of sale which identify the number of free, reduced-price, and full-price reimbursable meals served. The collection procedures used must reflect an accurate categorical count at the point of service of reimbursable meals served to students. Any collection procedure must have a built-in accounting system to record the number of free, reduced-price, and full-price meals served daily.

RECOMMENDATION

Each school should use the point of sale to determine reimbursement counts for lunch meal accountability and tracking as required by USDA.

Once procedures are established, training of all employees should occur. The Child Nutrition director should have complete authority over the CNP and its implementation. Communication of procedures should occur between campus administration and the Child Nutrition Department.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-6

DPS does not follow its policy statement agreement on “offer” versus “serve”. As a result, DPS is in violation of its policy statement with USDA.

“Offer” versus “serve” is a USDA recommended method of serving designed to reduce food waste and food costs in the school lunch and breakfast program without jeopardizing the nutritional integrity of the lunches or breakfasts served. It allows senior high school students and, when approved by the local school district, students in any other grade to choose fewer than all of the food items within the lunch or breakfast pattern.

DPS states in its policy statement with USDA that it participates in “offer” versus “serve” at all grade levels; however, this was not observed during the review team’s site visit. Not implementing “offer” versus “serve” as stated in the district’s policy statement is a program violation and increases the district’s food costs unnecessarily. The district also incurs excessive food waste as a result.

Schools that use this method of serving must continue to offer all five required food items of the lunch and four required items of the breakfast. A student may refuse one or two of the food items at lunch and one item at breakfast. When students do not take all five offered items, food production can be reduced; thus reducing plate waste and food costs. When students have meal choices, participation in the lunch and breakfast programs typically increases.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should follow its policy statement by practicing “offer” versus “serve” at all grade levels.

The Child Nutrition director should meet with cafeteria managers and review the district’s policy statement and determine what changes need to be made at each campus, if any. Once these changes have been identified, the director should establish a deadline to convert each campus to “offer” versus “serve”.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-7

The Child Nutrition Department’s current method of cashiering is slow, inefficient, and causes duplicate work for the staff. The current method of cashiering results in time consuming meal service and requires excessive labor.

The review team observed all campuses had cashiers stationed at desks (**Exhibit 5-2**) in the dining room, outside of the serving area. It was also observed that if a student needed help with the keypad (**Exhibit 5-3**), the cashier gets up from their chair, walks over to the keypad, helps the student, and returns to their chair. Serving-lines are typically designed to have the cash register(s) at the end of the serving-line.

**Exhibit 5-2
DPS Cashier Desk
Emerson Elementary School
February 2009**



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

**Exhibit 5-3
DPS Cashier Desk
Horace Mann Elementary School
February 2009**



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

DPS Child Nutrition Department uses NutriKids computer accountability system which is adequate to handle the tasks of keeping track of all student lunch, breakfast, a-la-carte sales, and processing the free and reduced-price meal applications. The system is designed to generate all necessary reports required by USDA to participate in the NSLP and SBP. The system also provides excellent data which should be utilized for all cash management, budgeting, and forecasting for the department.

Teachers are unnecessarily involved in the service and operation of the breakfast and lunch meal programs. Work that teachers are doing is a duplicate effort of the reports available in the POS system. For every cash or check transaction deposited into the POS system, the cashier is providing a written receipt. Sometimes the receipts are given to the student; however, most of the time, the receipt is taken to the teacher to hand back to the student. Teachers were also seen bringing attendance sheets to the child nutrition staff. This is also not necessary for program operation.

The practice of positioning of the cashier outside of the serving-line area is a carry-over from the days of paper tracking multiple required reports and data when districts did not have computerized systems to do the work. The child nutrition staff is not confident in moving away from paper reporting and tracking due to their concern for needing back-up information for the auditors. If needed, auditors accept a printed report of transactions out of the POS system. There is no need to continue providing receipts.

RECOMMENDATION

While cashiering, the DPS Child Nutrition Department should use the POS system to increase speed, efficiency, and reduce duplicate work.

Teachers should have minimal involvement, other than support, with the operation of the child nutrition program. The cashier should stand at the end of the line making the determination of appropriate meal selection and entering the transaction into the POS system. Customers can enter their own ID number in the POS system and the cashier can be available to help if needed. Receipts are not required because information is stored in the POS system and can be printed on demand.

The district should consider having a representative for NutriKids present the features and reports available from the POS system to decrease duplicate work. Additionally, training is required for staff to properly utilize the system and have confidence in discontinuing the duplicate paper reporting.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of hiring NutriKids to return to the district for a review of the program features, reports, and additional training for staff is estimated at a daily rate of \$1,000 per day. This rate includes travel expense. Two days of training should be more than ample amount of time to provide the needed training, making the total cost of training approximately \$2,000. This is a one-time expense.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
While cashiering, the DPS Child Nutrition Department should use the POS system to increase speed, efficiency, and reduce duplicate work.	(\$2,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Operations/Budget

FINDING 5-8

The Child Nutrition Department budget lacks detailed expenditure information by object code and is approved with a one line amount by fund for expenditures and revenues. While this makes the budgeting process simple, it gives no direction, goals, or restrictions for the program.

The Child Nutrition director is not involved in the budgeting process and does not give feedback about program needs or goals. The budget process is void of input from the Child Nutrition director. Once the budget is approved, expenditures are tracked by fund, project, function, object, and for payroll related expenditures by site. However, non-payroll expenditures are not detailed in the budget by campus. This makes it difficult to determine proper determination of efficient or inefficient campus operations. This summary format is not as informative as a detailed one would be to the reader or to the district's administration. This is easily visible as noted in examples of district's 2008-09 budget for Child Nutrition (**Exhibit 5-4**). One cannot determine budget/expenditures by campus except for payroll-related items.

RECOMMENDATION

The Child Nutrition Department budget should be approved by campus with detail by budgetary object codes, rather than one line amount for the entire budgetary object code.

This method of budgeting should be a simple process given that detailed tracking is done after the budget is approved. The Child Nutrition director should work on the initial draft and present the draft to the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education Services, the director of Business and Finance, and the superintendent for approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Exhibit 5-4
DPS 2008-09 Budget for Child Nutrition
February 2009

Account Codes	Budget Information					
<i>100 Salaries</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-322-3132-125-050	Flex Cash	0.00	0.00	-1,073.87	1,073.87	0.00
9-22-385-3120-120-050	Regular Salary	0.00	0.00	19,848.03	31,165.57	-51,013.60
<i>200 Benefits</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-322-3120-223-050	Flex Fringe	0.00	0.00	-5,189.12	5,189.12	0.00
9-22-322-3132-125-050	FICA	0.00	0.00	1,743.09	3,047.56	-4,790.65
<i>400 Repairs/Maintenance</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-385-3140-540-050	Cleaning Supplies	0.00	0.00	3,033.61	2,640.39	-5,674.00
9-22-385-3140-540-050	Repairs	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,575.00	-2,575.00
<i>500 Travel/Phones/Postage</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-385-3140-540-050	Advertising	0.00	0.00	24.22	225.78	-250.00
9-22-385-3140-580-050	Staff Travel	0.00	0.00	2,162.45	337.55	-2500.00
<i>600 Supplies/Utilities</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-000-2630-656-050	Instruments	1,408,689.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,408,689.88
9-22-385-3140-610-050	General Supplies	0.00	0.00	159,854.97	35,563.93	-195,418.90
9-22-385-3140-731-050	Software	0.00	0.00	615.00	0.00	-615.00
9-22-385-3140-731-050	Food & Milk	0.00	0.00	258,861.13	360,730.83	-619,591.96
<i>700 Equipment</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-385-3140-731-050	Appliances	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,913.97	-2,913.97
<i>800 Dues/Registration</i>	<i>Account Names</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Requisitions</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Spent</i>	<i>Balance</i>
9-22-385-3190-810-050	Dues & Fees	0.00	0.00	3,800.00	0.00	-3,800.00

Source: DPS operating budget, 2008-09

DPS Child Nutrition Staffing

FINDING 5-9

The Child Nutrition Department exceeds the Oklahoma State Department of Education's *School Food Service Compliance Document* recommendation of meals per labor hour (MPLH). Excess MPLH results in unnecessary expenditures in the CNP and prevents the department from assisting the district with indirect costs.

Exhibit 5-5 shows the State's guidelines for MPLH. The guidelines are based on total meal equivalents and a recommendation for total hours needed to achieve the recommended MPLH.

Exhibit 5-5
Oklahoma Sample Staffing Guidelines for On-site Production
February 2009

Number of Meal Equivalents**	Recommended	
	Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)	Total Hours
10 - 100	12	8
101 - 150	12	8 - 12
151 - 200	12	12 - 16
201 - 250	14	14 - 17
251 - 300	14	17 - 21
301 - 400	15	20 - 26
401 - 500	16	25 - 31
501 - 600	17	29 - 35
601 - 700	18	33 - 37
701 - 800*	19	39 - 41
801 - 900*	20	43 - 47

Source: SDE School Food Service Compliance Document, July 2008

**MPLH and total hours for this level determined by WCL ENTERPRISES.*

***Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)*

Total Lunches Served = Meal Equivalent

Total Breakfast Served / 2 = Meal Equivalent

Total Snacks Served / 4 = Meal Equivalent

Total A La Carte Sales Dollars / \$2.59 = Meal Equivalent

Total Meal Equivalent / Total Labor Hours Worked = MPLH

Exhibit 5-6 compares DPS staffing at the three sites with full kitchen facilities with the state's guidelines. Based on the staffing in each of these facilities at the time of the site visit, Duncan High School has an excess of 51.5 labor hours per day, Duncan Middle School has an excess of 40 labor hours per day, and Woodrow Wilson Elementary School has an excess of 50.5 labor hours per day. Observations of staff responsibilities and duties reinforce the data that campuses are overstaffed.

Exhibit 5-6
DPS MPLH for January 2009

Campus	Total Meal Equivalents	DPS Hours	Target Hours	Overstaffed (Hours)
Duncan High School (Emerson and Mark Twain)	838	98.5	47	+51.5
Duncan Middle School (Horace Mann and Plato)	569	75.0	35	+40.0
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School (Irving, Lee, and Will Rogers)	791	91.5	41	+50.5
Totals	2,198	265	123	+142.0

Source: January 2009 CNP Reimbursement Claim, District provided documents, and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

The Child Nutrition staff is not currently monitoring employee MPLH. The DPS Child Nutrition Department has kept up with current production and operation methods of pre-prepared items and POS systems; however, they have not reduced staff.

Using POS systems and pre-prepared items offers opportunities for the department to reduce staff. The fact that DPS utilizes mostly processed foods requires minimal labor. With campus overstaffing, it is important to not create an expectation that supports minimal workload in kitchens.

RECOMMENDATION

The Child Nutrition Department should follow the Oklahoma State Department of Education *School Food Service Compliance Document* recommendation of meals per labor hour (MPLH).

The Child Nutrition director should reduce MPLH to the state recommended amount of MPLH based on the district’s current meal equivalents served. The director should correct staffing patterns through attrition and consider downsizing. The director should also evaluate the need to eliminate substitute workers.

FISCAL IMPACT

Current over-staffing of 142 work hours daily costs the CNP \$169,278 annually. This number is determined by multiplying excess hours of 142 by the current minimum wage for the CNP of \$6.55 and then multiplying by the number of works days for a helper/server of 182 (142 hours x \$6.55 rate of pay x 182 days worked = \$169,278).

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS Child Nutrition Department should follow the Oklahoma State Department of Education <i>School Food Service Compliance Document</i> recommendation of meals per labor hour (MPLH).	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278	\$169,278

FINDING 5-10

As it is currently designed, the satellite method of meal preparation and distribution is not an efficient method of meal preparation and service. This contributes to over-staffing within the Child Nutrition Department.

The satellite feeding method of production and service is a method of meal service when there are multiple schools in one school district. The cost of on-site meal preparation is high unless there is a large volume of meals being produced. The kitchen in one school prepares part or all of the meals for one or more schools. The satellite kitchens finish preparation and serve the meals. While costs are lower, a limited number of employees are still needed to serve meals.

During site visits of the DPS, the review team witnessed the following inconsistencies in the satellite method of service:

- There were no procedures for what would be prepared and where it would be prepared.
- Some satellite operations preferred to make the food on site while other satellite operations received food from their main kitchen. Food preparation is subject to change on a weekly basis.
- The review team observed some satellite kitchens were operating as full-service kitchens.
- All satellite kitchens were staffed as though they were full-service kitchens.
- The review team also observed three employees serving 14 meals for breakfast at Irving Elementary School. The cashier checked the students off a list and then entered the same information into the POS system.

The review team did not see a need for three main kitchens with only ten campuses of meal service. They observed inconsistency of method of service, lack of procedures for prep on-site or off-site, over-staffing, and limited meal service to some campuses.

RECOMMENDATION

The district should do a thorough study of the efficiency of the currently designed satellite method of service and establish consistent procedures for production.

The director should evaluate the current operations using the findings noted above. During the study, the director should consider how many sites should be used as a main kitchen.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and also supports the fiscal impact of recommendation on reduction of MPLH.

Meal Planning and Menu Analysis

FINDING 5-11

DPS food menus are not evaluated in advance to determine cost; therefore, the cost of serving a meal is unknown. Without knowing the cost to prepare a meal, the district does not know if it is charging enough to cover the cost of the meal served.

In child nutrition, menus are the most important aspect of the operation. Menus play several critical roles; from enticing students to participate in the program, to providing adequate nutrition for learning, controlling food, and finally for labor cost. In DPS, menus are planned on a monthly basis. At the secondary schools, menus are an expanded version of the elementary menu with an additional choice and an additional a la carte menu.

Menu planning begins by understanding the resources the program has available to provide their meal service. **Exhibit 5-7** analyzes the available revenue for menu planning by using benchmark standards (**Exhibit 5-8**). Available food cost for lunch is \$1.20. Breakfast is \$0.74. DPS's distributed revenue per plate is \$2.67 at lunch and \$1.65 for breakfast. Therefore, the plate cost targets for food, with 45% food costs are \$1.20 for lunch and \$0.74 for breakfast. The menu should be planned utilizing these standards to operate the most cost effective program possible.

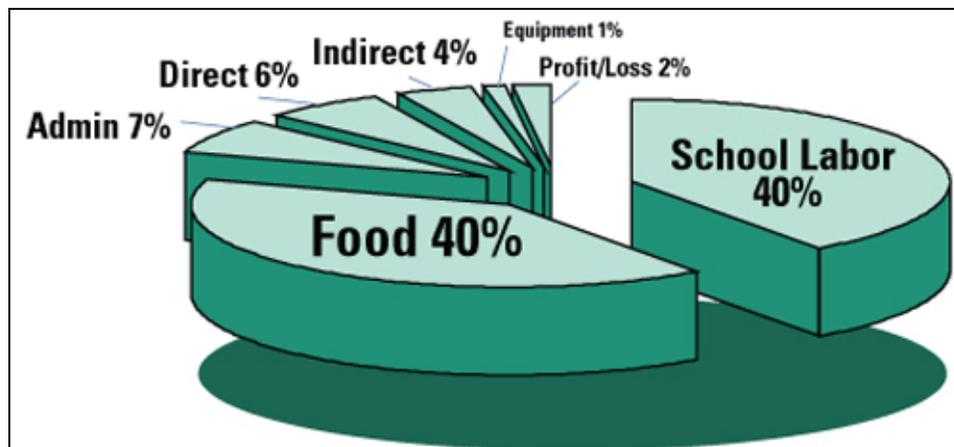
**Exhibit 5-7
DPS Revenue Distribution for School Meals
2008-09**

Lunch	Meals in January 2009	Distribution	Federal Reimbursement	Price	Commodity Revenue	Total Revenue	Distributed Revenue	Food Cost Per Meal
Paid	9,304	28%	\$0.26	\$1.88	\$0.21	\$2.35	\$0.66	
Reduced	2,712	8%	\$2.19	\$0.40	\$0.21	\$2.80	\$0.22	
Free	20,780	64%	\$2.59	\$0.00	\$0.21	\$2.80	\$1.79	
Total	32,796						\$2.67	\$1.20
Breakfast	Meals in January 2009	Distribution	Federal Reimbursement	Price	Commodity Revenue	Total Revenue	Distributed Revenue	Food Cost Per Meal
Paid	2,006	12%	\$0.25	\$1.25		\$1.50	\$0.18	
Reduced	1,306	8%	\$1.38	\$0.30		\$1.68	\$0.13	
Free	13,413	80%	\$1.68	\$0.00		\$1.68	\$1.34	
Total	16,725						\$1.65	\$0.74

*Source: DPS reimbursement claim for January 2009 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations
Note: There were 16 days of child nutrition operations in January 2009*

Please note that the 45% used for these calculations is higher than the national standards and increased to accommodate the cost of large amount of pre-processed food items and market increases in food costs (Exhibit 5-8).

**Exhibit 5-8
NFSMI Recommended Distribution of Food Service Expenditures**



*Source: National Food Service Management Institute's Financial Management Information System
The National Food Service Management Institutes (NFSMI) Financial Management Information System recommends food/nonfood cost not exceed 40 percent and labor/benefits not exceed 40 percent. The remaining 20 percent of the budget is spent on administration, direct and indirect costs, and equipment. A small profit is made to provide a fund balance for emergencies.*

To provide benchmarks, five current menu selections from the month of February 2009 were evaluated. The selections are meant to serve as an illustration of trends in the district (**Exhibit 5-9**). The week of menus shown below have an average meal cost for breakfast of \$1.00 which is \$0.26 above the benchmark of \$0.74 for food costs. Lunch averages \$1.39 which is \$0.19 above the benchmark of \$1.20 for food costs.

Exhibit 5-9
DPS Menu Selection Costing
February 2009

Breakfast Menu Costs										
Monday	Cost	Tuesday	Cost	Wednesday	Cost	Thursday	Cost	Friday	Cost	Average
Pancake/Sausage Stick	\$0.36			Biscuit & Sausage Gravy & Jelly	\$0.38			Scrambled Eggs & Sausage	\$0.30	
Kellogg's Variety Cereal Cups	\$0.21	Kellogg's Variety Cereal Cups	\$0.21	Kellogg's Variety Cereal Cups	\$0.21	Kellogg's Variety Cereal Cups	\$0.21	Kellogg's Variety Cereal Cups	\$0.21	
Whole Wheat Toast & Jelly	\$0.10	Whole Wheat Toast & Jelly	\$0.10			Whole Wheat Toast & Jelly	\$0.10	Whole Wheat Toast & Jelly	\$0.10	
Fresh Fruit Bananas	\$0.08	Peaches	\$0.21			Fresh Fruit Bananas	\$0.08	Fresh Fruit Bananas	\$0.08	
Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	
Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	
Total	\$1.16		\$0.93		\$1.00		\$0.80		\$1.11	\$1.00
Lunch Menu Costs										
Monday	Cost	Tuesday	Cost	Wednesday	Cost	Thursday	Cost	Friday	Cost	Average
Chicken Nuggets	\$0.31	Hot Dog on a Bun	\$0.25	Pizza, Smart 4x6	\$0.46	Pork Sloppy Joes	\$0.29	Fish Sticks	\$0.52	
Whipped Potatoes & Gravy	\$0.10	Cheetos, Baked	\$0.30	Salad Tossed	\$0.13	Potato Rounds	\$0.10	Oven Fries	\$0.20	
Green Beans	\$0.16			Corn	\$0.15	Pickle Spear & Mustard	\$0.07	Pinto Beans	\$0.12	
Peaches	\$0.21	Orange Halves	\$0.22	Pears, Fresh	\$0.21	Orange Halves	\$0.22	Gelatin with Strawberries	\$0.19	
Rolls	\$0.08	Relish and Mustard	\$0.04	Carrots Coins	\$0.11					
Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	Juice Variety	\$0.16	
Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	Milk Variety	\$0.25	
Chemical & Paper	\$0.09	Chemical & Paper	\$0.09	Chemical & Paper	\$0.09	Chemical & Paper	\$0.09	Chemical & Paper	\$0.09	
Total	\$1.36		\$1.31		\$1.56		\$1.18		\$1.53	\$1.39

Source: DPS Child Nutrition director, February 2009; WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

A district following menu cost analysis offers only the required component for breakfast and lunch for the set meal price. It provides extra items for an a la carte price. A district that initiates an annual cycle menu, realizes food cost control. Providing a clear method to demonstrate correct options for the selection of items helps students make good choices. It is typical for district cafeterias to outline choice categories for students so that selection process is easily identified along with additional a la carte item pricing. An appropriate example for a breakfast guideline is below in **Exhibit 5-10**.

Exhibit 5-10
Example of a Menu Selection Chart

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast Bagel	Breakfast Burrito	Sausage Biscuit	Pig n Blanket	Hashbrowns & Toast
Or	Or	Or	Or	Or
Cereal with Toast	Cereal with Toast	Cereal with Toast	Cereal with Toast	Eggs & Toast
And/Or	And/Or	And/Or	And/Or	Or
Choice of Fruit or Fruit Juice	Cereal & Toast			
And/Or	And/Or	And/Or	And/Or	And/Or
Choice of Milk	Choice of Milk	Choice of Milk	Choice of Milk	Choice of Fruit or Fruit Juice
				And/Or
				Choice of Milk

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES, February 2009

All other items selected would need to be sold as a la carte with an appropriately priced margin in order to make a small profit. The posting of a chart as presented above makes the process clear and understandable for students, faculty, and kitchen employees.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS food menus should be evaluated in advance to determine cost.

FISCAL IMPACT

The week of menu costs that is represented above in **Exhibit 5-9** shows an average plate cost for breakfast of \$1.00, which is \$0.26 above the benchmark of \$0.74 for food costs shown in **Exhibit 5-7**. Lunch plate cost averages \$1.39 which is \$0.19 (**Exhibit 5-9**) above the benchmark of \$1.20 (**Exhibit 5-7**) for food costs.

Based on January 2009 reimbursement (**Exhibit 5-7**), average daily participation is approximately 1,045 breakfasts and 2,050 lunches. Annual over spending on breakfast and lunch meals cost the district \$47,548 (1,045 x \$0.26 x 175 = \$47,548) and \$68,163 (2,050 x \$0.19 x 175 = \$68,163), respectively. This equates to over spending of \$0.45 daily and an approximate additional food cost of \$115,711 annually (\$47,548 breakfasts + \$68,163 lunches = \$115,711).

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS food menus should be evaluated in advance to determine cost.	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711	\$115,711

FINDING 5-12

The Child Nutrition Department campus staff is not following the meal production records. Not following the meal production records results in a violation of regulations for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program which requires accurate production records to claim meal reimbursement.

Production records were available on the day of observation by the review team; however, the cafeteria staff was not serving the proper serving size of the sandwich or the soup. For example, Emerson Elementary School was observed serving a whole grilled cheese sandwich, 1/2 cup of vegetable soup, 1/2 cup of cherry crisp, 4 oz. of juice and 8 oz. of milk; however, the production record indicated the following serving sizes: 1/2 grilled cheese sandwich, 2/3 cup of vegetable soup, 1/2 cup of cherry crisp, 4 oz. of juice and 8 oz. of milk. Lack of accurate production records can also result in under or over meal preparation.

Accurate and complete food production records are a required part of all CNPs. They provide documentation of menus served, number of meals served, and the quantities of foods prepared and left over. This information must be sufficient to determine that meals claimed for reimbursement are in compliance with the meal requirements for the chosen menu-planning system. Besides meeting federal record requirements, the following valuable management tools are available from the proper use of these forms:

- determining trends in student acceptability for the menu items;
- projecting student participation levels;
- forecasting quantities of food to purchase; and
- effectively managing menu planning and the scheduling of labor and work assignments.

RECOMMENDATION

The Child Nutrition Department campus staff should follow required meal production records to meet program regulations.

The Child Nutrition director should train all child nutrition staff on the benefits of production records, how to use them properly, why they are required, and the results of not following production records. Training on production records would also produce consistent menus, reduce waste, reduce the need for calls on clarifications on how and what to serve, and give the director a tool for student acceptability and forecasting.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and may result in additional departmental savings.

Procurement**FINDING 5-13**

DPS's Child Nutrition Department does not follow federal purchasing requirements. As a result, it is not in compliance with program policies and may not be getting the most competitive price for food products purchased.

The Child Nutrition Department is not seeking sealed bids for the procurement of the food and non-food products. They currently use multiple vendors and weekly calls to get a price. Invoice charges from the same vendor noted as much as a \$7.00 a case difference in price for the same product. Receiving weekly price quotes from multiple vendors is inefficient and time consuming. Annual bids allow for a one-time fixed price. There are also purchasing cooperatives that will do the procurement work for the district.

Federal procurement regulations state, "Sealed Bids (Formal Advertising) will be used to purchase goods, equipment, and services where the aggregate cost is \$100,000 or more." The primary purpose of procurement is to assure that open and free competition exists to the maximum extent possible. The procurement procedures practiced by a school food agency must not restrict or eliminate competition.

RECOMMENDATION**DPS should follow federal purchasing requirements.**

The superintendent should work with the Child Nutrition Department to ensure that federal purchasing requirements are followed.

The Child Nutrition Department should also consider participating in a purchasing cooperative for the purchase of most departmental food and non-food supplies. As an example, Mid-Del Public Schools participates in the Barlow Management Services purchasing group and is considered a best practice in child nutrition program management. Participating in a purchasing cooperative will also bring the district in compliance with federal purchasing requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The cost of participation in a food cooperative varies depending on the services that are provided. It should also be noted that the district may realize a cost savings as well by implementing this recommendation.

Commodities**FINDING 5-14**

DPS does not process governmental commodities in an efficient manner. Commodities are American produced agricultural products. The USDA purchases food from producers and processors to strengthen American agriculture and improve the nutritional health of citizens participating in food programs. USDA offers to each state a dollar limit (entitlement) that can be used to order certain commodities. The State orders the commodities that are preferred by the schools.

Misappropriation of planned assistance level (PAL) allocations results in overstock amounts of certain items. For example, the review team observed overstocking of commodity items, such as chicken and pizza (**Exhibit 5-11**). PAL is the dollar value of commodities to which the district is entitled. PAL is calculated by multiplying the district's October Average Daily Participation (ADP) for lunch from the previous year, times the per meal commodity value (currently \$0.205) times 180 days.

Exhibit 5-11
DPS Child Nutrition Department Freezer
February 2009



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

The amount of funds allotted in PAL dollars would better be utilized through processing with Net-Off-Invoice delivery into student friendly entrees to save on storage fees. In the course of evaluating the substitution demonstration projects and business process re-engineering projects, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approved an alternate value pass through (VPT) system referred to as Net-Off-Invoice.

Under the Net-Off-Invoice VPT system, a processor sells identical commodity and commercial product to its distributors at a gross commercial price of \$30.00 per case, for example. The value of donated commodity food contained in one case of finished end product in this example is \$10.00. The distributor can then sell that product to any of its customers. However, if the distributor sells the product to an eligible recipient agency (i.e. a school district) that has raw commodity book inventory with the processor, then the distributor would sell the product at a discounted price based on the value of the donated food contained in the finished case. In this instance, it would be \$20.00 plus the distributor's delivery fee.

The distributor then deducts the value of the donated food (\$10.00) from the gross commercial price (\$30.00) shown on the processor's invoice to the distributor and remits the balance due to the processor. The customer would owe \$20.00 for the case.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should process governmental commodities in an efficient manner by using Net-Off-Invoice.

DPS should consider commodity processing 80 percent of its PAL allocation, which would reduce the need to store excess commodities to 20 percent. Using a distributor that implements Net-Off-Invoice would allow for credits to be applied to purchases instead of storing products. The district should focus on one category of products for discounts. Based on menus and yield amounts, beef or cheese would be most beneficial to the district at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and may result in additional savings. It also contributes to the previous recommendation to reduce staff because food products are not longer being moved around.

B. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

The No Child Left Behind legislation requires that teachers effectively integrate technology into the classroom. Meeting this mandate depends heavily on a state's technology implementation. Oklahoma is striving to further implement technology in its many classrooms. For example, the first goal of the 2004 Oklahoma Plan for Instructional Technology/Telecommunications was that all Oklahoma students would achieve technological literacy by the eighth grade.

Education Week's annual *Technology Counts* survey for 2008 gave Oklahoma a "B-" on its state technology report card based on these component grades:

- a grade of "C" in access to technology;
- a grade of "A-" in use of technology; and
- a grade of "B" in capacity to use technology.

Oklahoma with 3.4 students per high-speed Internet-connected computer was ahead of the national average of 3.7. The state is one of just 27 that offers computer-based assessments but is not one of the five states that now tests student on technology.

Background

DPS's Technology Department is comprised of a supervisor of student services, supervisor of technical services, technology coordinator, assistant technology coordinator, and a distance learning coordinator. This team is responsible for supporting approximately 3,800 students and 265 employees at 10 district facilities. The district facilities include six elementary schools, one high school, middle school, transportation/stadium complex, and a building that serves as the temporary administration building.

Desktop operating systems at DPS include Microsoft Windows versions 98, 2000, and XP. Network servers run either Microsoft Server or Linux Server. Hardware includes 23 servers, 800 workstations (16 are Apple Macintosh computers), six Smartboards, laser and deskjet printers, wireless mobile carts, digital scanners, and Digital Light Processing (DLP) projectors. DPS has a computer training lab housed at EDGE Academy for staff development (**Exhibit 5-12**).

Exhibit 5-12
Computer Training Lab at EDGE Academy



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

A fiber optic backbone provides a 100 mbps Local Area Network (LAN). The Wide Area Network (WAN) operates at six mbps. Four T1 lines are owned by ATT and provide DPS with access to the Internet. Network filtering is managed by NewNet66 and network boxes by Juniper Netscreen Firewall and Tipping Point Intrusion Prevention. DPS requires all users to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement prior to granting Intranet and Internet access. Although the Technology Department has a work order process in place to address computer issues, in an effort to promote the superintendent's district vision of good customer service, they often respond to impromptu computer issues without a work order on file.

DPS has a technology committee that meets quarterly to discuss and assess the district's technology needs. DPS also hosts a "Tech Tuesday" which is a meeting of the Technology Department staff and a representative from each campus in an effort to maintain open communication lines about technology throughout the district.

According to the district's 2008-2011 Technology Plan, DPS has budgeted expenditures of \$2,870,191 over the next three years. E-rate funds and grants are projected to account for approximately 64 percent of the budget. Areas to be addressed are:

- convert all unmanaged switching to Layer 3 managed switching;
- install a new email system;
- install new Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) compliant state reporting software;
- complete construction of the district training lab;
- replace all end-of-life computer systems;
- create a centralized data center;
- provide technology training for staff; and
- collaborate with adult literacy providers to maximize its use of technology.

Administrative Technology**FINDING 5-15**

DPS broadcasts student-based information to its education community. By using a cable-based television channel through a public access system, DPS is able to provide live and pre-recorded programming and pertinent district information to its community that they otherwise may miss due to schedule conflicts, limited mobility, and/or limited resources.

Video programs are broadcast over this public access channel, DTV10. Content includes staff development and general school/community information. The technology staff produces videos with the assistance of DPS students and has the ability to re-broadcast them at any time.

This unique utilization of technology allows students the opportunity to gain experience with state-of-the-art equipment and production software, including:

- Broadcast CCD Cameras (Studio and Digital Video Cameras);
- Final Cut Pro High Definition Editing Software;
- Digital Effects Switching and Keying Generators;
- Character Generators for on-screen text and animation;
- Audio Mixers for mastering and natural sounds;
- PC-based programs for insertion into edited video productions; and
- Edit controllers for program mastering to DVCAM, DVD, or Hard Disk.

Programming emphasizes educational lessons allowing visual stimulation to enhance subject matter. Program content includes school activities such as fine arts, athletic events, informational programs, school closings, higher education information, vocational information, and State Department of Education programs (RESULTS), and community events. DTV10 also partners with non-profit organizations such as United Way, American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association of Stephens County, and the Duncan Jaycees to broadcast community events.

COMMENDATION

Through the use of state-of-the-art equipment and the district's public information channel, DPS students learn how to prepare and broadcast programs that can be used to present district information, educational programming, and community events.

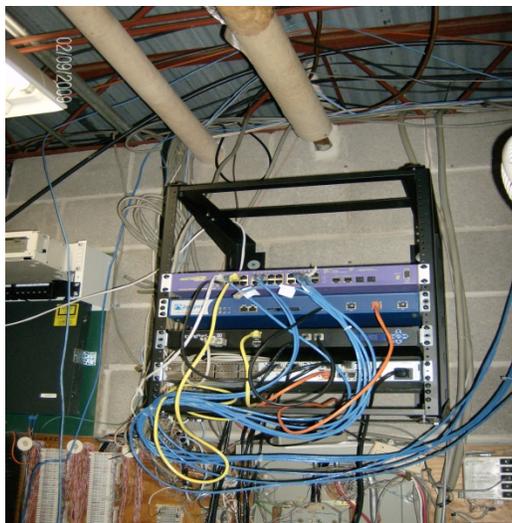
FINDING 5-16

DPS does not protect its network servers from physical and environmental elements. By not protecting its servers from physical and environmental damage as well as the possibility of being tampered with by unauthorized individuals, DPS is susceptible to losing thousands of dollars of network equipment vital to the backbone of its network.

The network demarcation point, the actual location that DPS is physically connected to the Internet and the outside world, is the district's most vulnerable for environmental damage. A water pipe traverses above the three servers that control server traffic in and out of the district, essentially the heart of the network. Condensation or a water leak can displace water directly on one of these servers, which can create an electrical short and/or cause irreplaceable damage to one or more of these electrical devices.

Exhibit 5-13 shows the water pipe above the network demarcation point.

Exhibit 5-13
Network Servers at the Administration Building



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Other servers are located in areas that are easily accessible by all staff members and the general public. The possibility of theft and tampering exist since servers are often located in high traffic areas such as a teacher's lounge as depicted in **Exhibit 5-14**.

Exhibit 5-14
Network Servers in the Teacher's Lounge at Mark Twain Elementary



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

Industry standards recommend that network servers, monitors, universal back-up power supplies, and mass storage devices should be housed in enclosed racks that protect expensive and network critical electronics. These network racks are scalable and offer locking systems that add security to functionality. Enclosed racks are especially crucial in network areas that are not secured by a locked door or some form of security-negotiated pathway.

A number of network hardware and software manufacturers test and provide guidelines for the optimum environment for network servers. Microsoft states, “Businesses must make sure that their servers are not vulnerable to physical calamities. Locate these machines in a secure, well-ventilated room, not in a hallway or under a desk where someone might inadvertently kick or spill coffee on them or mischievously tinker with them. Your server room should have no windows and a single door you can lock. Server cases should also be locked to prevent tampering with internal components. Know which employees have keys to the server room. You should also keep a record of the serial numbers of your servers and mark them with your company information so they can be identified and recovered if stolen.”

Sun Microsystems recommends that servers be stored in a secure location as well. They also recommend air condition and humidity controls be in place to offer a stable environment and prolong the life of all data electronics. They state, “An ambient temperature range of 21 to 23 °C (70 to 74 °F) is optimal for server reliability and operator comfort. While most computer equipment can operate within a rather broad range, a temperature level near 22 °C (72 °F) is desirable because it is easier to maintain a safe associated relative humidity level at this temperature. Furthermore, this recommended temperature provides an operational buffer in case the environmental support systems are down.”

RECOMMENDATION

DPS needs to protect network servers and devices by securing them in a locked unit that offers environmental protection from harmful elements.

The Technology Department should purchase racks to shelter and protect critical network servers. Network electronics should be sheltered from the environment using network racks or enclosed cases that can limit access and offer ventilation and protection from the environment. Also servers should be moved from locations that create a safety and electrical hazards. So much time and money is invested in these devices that it behooves businesses to protect them as best as possible.

FISCAL IMPACT

DPS has ten servers that need to be protected in racks. This cost estimate is for securing two servers the first year starting with the demarcation servers located at the administration building and the servers at Mark Twain Elementary, and then completing the project the following year with e-rate or bond funds.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS needs to protect network servers and devices by securing them in a locked unit that offers environmental protection from harmful elements.	(\$4,000)	(\$16,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING 5-17

DPS does not have a disaster recovery plan that can sustain a medium to catastrophic data loss. As a result of not having a disaster recovery plan in place, DPS could not continue basic student and finance operations within a twenty-four hour period if its data became corrupt or lost.

The district backs up its data daily but each back up overrides the previous data. This method of backing up data only validates the data for the last twenty-four hour period. In the event that the school district needs to recover its critical files and corruption exists in its current back up, there is not a data backup that has valid data integrity in place to allow the district to return to its most basic level of operation. This process of backing up and restoring data leaves the district vulnerable to a number of events that could paralyze the district's technology systems.

In the event of a tornado, flood, or any other catastrophic occurrence, there are no clear procedures to bring the district's systems and software programs back on line. Although back up discs exist, there is not a plan to execute the process of system restoration. **Exhibit 5-15** lists the key elements of a disaster recovery plan.

Exhibit 5-15
Example of Key Elements of a Computer Disaster Recovery Plan

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors, and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the system.
	Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.
	Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident.
	Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies.
	Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the system to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster.
	Make plans to procure hardware, software, and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible.
	Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.
	Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking, and cleaning companies.
	Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.
	Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.
	Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event.
	Define actions to be taken at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss, and compromised data integrity.
	Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions.
	Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	Test the plan frequently and completely.
	Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage.
	Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated.
	Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed.
	Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology", April 2003

Realizing that these potential events can devastate the district's daily operation, DPS should have protocols and procedures in place to define the steps to take to recover critical data. That is the primary purpose of a disaster recovery plan.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS's Technology Department staff should develop and test a comprehensive disaster recovery plan that outlines the steps to take to insure timely recovery of district critical data.

The Technology Department staff should contact SDE and several larger districts in Oklahoma to obtain copies of their disaster recovery plans. Then the staff should make modifications to reflect DPS conditions. Once the plan has been prepared, the superintendent should present the plan to the school board for approval. Information can also be found at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/safetech/>

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Instructional Technology

The impact of technology on student achievement revolves around how well technology is integrated to support student instructional objectives. This requires placing computers into schools and classrooms and providing the resources that are needed to incorporate technology into lesson plans and other educational activities. Substantial professional development emphasizing both technology applications and its integration into curriculum and classroom instruction is necessary to further technology integration. Teachers and administrators must have a clear vision of effective technology integration best practices and a clear path to achieve true integration of technology into instructional programs.

The process of integrating technology into the instructional programs of a school district involves providing the infrastructure and technology hardware, establishing curriculum for technology, training the staff on technology systems and curriculum standards, and monitoring implementation of this curriculum. Implementation strategies should focus on helping teachers acquire necessary knowledge and skills for using technology as a tool to enhance teaching and learning and as a means of accomplishing educational goals.

To support the instructional program, teachers and students in DPS have access to technology and software applications. Primarily the teacher uses these classroom computers. K-2 classrooms in Title I schools have additional computers for student use with Waterford software.

All DPS campuses have access to a computer lab for student use in research projects, remediation of skills, and independent work. At the primary and elementary levels, the computer lab is used mainly for reading and math remediation. The school libraries also have computers for student use and some classes have Smartboards and graphing calculators.

FINDING 5-18

DPS does not have a software adoption process to ensure that purchased software programs are compatible with hardware, aligned to district curriculum, and focused on academic needs of students. As a result of not having software procedures in place, money is often wasted because the software purchased is not compatible with district hardware or is not aligned to curriculum objectives.

Following the 2001 bond election, the technology department set up a software selection process that involved input from both teachers and administrators. The process started with a technology vendor fair which allowed all interested teachers to use and review various software products. Based on teacher feedback from the fair, the department identified the top three vendors to make a presentation to the Technology Committee. This committee, composed of administrators and teacher representatives from each school, selected SuccessMaker Enterprise (SME); Knowledge Box; and A+ (for secondary and EDGE).

Interviews by the review team indicated that in addition to the software selected in 2001, DPS has continued to purchase additional software with remaining bond funds and federal funds to address needs that were identified after the initial 2001 purchases. Some software is used only at Title I Elementary Schools: Woodrow Wilson, Mark Twain, and Emerson. Other software is used at all elementary schools include the Non-Title I schools, Plato and Horace Mann. **Exhibit 5-16** shows current district instructional software by site.

Exhibit 5-16
DPS Software by Designated Programs

Program	Purpose	Content	Grade Levels	Sites
SuccessMaker (SME)	Skills and Assessment of learning	Math and Reading	3-5 K-5 6-8	Title I elementary schools Non-Title I elementary schools Middle school
Knowledge Box	Teacher Resource Internet lessons for Students	All content	K-5	All Elementary
Waterford	Skills and Assessment for Learning	Math, Reading and Science	K-2	Title I elementary schools
Rosetta Stone	Elementary for ELL	Reading	K-5	Elementary schools
My Reading Coach	ELL lab	Reading Language	K-5	Woodrow Wilson Elementary School
Star Assessment	Assessment of Learning	Reading	K-6	All elementary schools and Duncan Middle School
Academy of Reading and Math	Skill Development Intervention/Remediation/ Spanish Language ELL	Reading and Math	3-5 6-8 9-12	Title I (use with SME as needed). Middle school High school Learning Lab
SuccessMaker	Pilot of new version	Reading Math	3-5	Non -Title I elementary schools
Renaissance Learning	Reading	Reading	3-5 6-8	All elementary schools Middle school

Source: DPS supervisor of Student Services/Technology, February 2009

In addition to the district software listed above, individual school sites have also purchased instructional software with funds from federal title programs, Parent Teacher Organization, or grants. Interviews with technology staff and administrators indicate that there are no procedures in place to ensure that site purchased software products are compatible with district hardware and are appropriate for instruction in each grade in DPS. In some instances, the site has purchased software and some titles are not compatible with the district hardware configurations.

There is also no procedure for evaluating software to ensure that site purchased products align with the curriculum and target the achievement needs of the students. Instructional software availability differs by school. Teachers in focus group discussions stated that in some instances they are overwhelmed with amount of software at a school. Teachers expressed that there are too many programs and they are expected to use them all.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a software adoption process to ensure that purchased software programs are compatible with hardware, aligned to district curriculum, and focused on academic needs of students.

The supervisor of Student Services/Technology should work with principals and the Teacher Advisory Team to develop a procedure for reviewing and adopting software. This procedure should include a review procedure and a process for approving purchases of software regardless of funding sources. Any site-based purchases of software should have prior approval from the technology department. The procedures should include a means by which all software will be reviewed using evaluation criteria to determine its alignment to the curriculum and how it would enhance existing software to promote student learning.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-19

DPS does not have a curriculum for technology that implements Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) standards for instructional technology. Teachers and administrators indicated that there is no curriculum map for teaching technology across grades.

In interviews with the review team, the supervisor of Student Services/Technology and the Curriculum coordinator indicated there is no curriculum document that maps the teaching of the technology PASS. Principals also stated there is no articulated curriculum for technology, and they hoped that students acquired the necessary skills by using the labs and the existing software. The superintendent indicated that the supervisor of Student Services/Technology had been asked to start working on a curriculum document.

DPS plans to test eighth grade students in 2008-09 on technology skills using the InfoSource system. The test being developed will not be based on clearly defined curriculum objectives. This means that students may be asked to demonstrate skills that they have never been taught.

PASS standards are divided into three levels: Introductory Level (prior to completion of grade 5), Intermediate Level (prior to the completion of grade 8), and Advanced Level (prior to completion of grade 12). While standards are the same at each level, the standards are further defined within each level to delineate what students should know and be able to do using technology at the completion of each level. The standards for all three levels include:

- Standard 1: The student will demonstrate knowledge of basic operations and concepts.
- Standard 2: The student will demonstrate knowledge of social, ethical, and human issues; discuss basic issues related to responsible use of technology and information; and describe personal consequences of inappropriate use.
- Standard 3: The student will demonstrate knowledge of technology productivity tools.
- Standard 4: The student will demonstrate knowledge of technology communications tools.
- Standard 5: The student will demonstrate knowledge of technology research tools.
- Standard 6: The student will demonstrate knowledge of technology problem-solving and decision-making tools.

While state and national standards are designed to be broad in defining basic technology skills, many districts work with teachers and administrators to identify more specific objectives to be mastered at each grade level. This helps teachers better understand PASS standards at each level and ensures that students acquire necessary skills before moving to the next grade. If teachers are not implementing PASS standards across all grade levels, students will not acquire the same set of technology skills creating potential gaps and redundancies in learning.

Students will not be able to effectively use the tools available through technology to research subjects in science, social studies, and language arts nor will students be equipped to use tools of technology to support higher level thinking projects in math and science. The use of presentation software tools as a means to demonstrate learning through research in all content areas is critical for learners of the 21st century.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a curriculum for technology that implements Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) standards for instructional technology.

The curriculum coordinator and the supervisor for Student Services/Technology should work with teachers and administrators to develop a curriculum that aligns to PASS and maps the implementation at each grade level. The curriculum development process should begin with two planning committees, one elementary and the other secondary, with representatives from each grade level or technology related department. This configuration will ensure that the initial focus targets the student skills needed at each level.

Committee representatives should be asked to complete a diary map for their grade level/course to show what skills are currently being taught. These maps will provide a starting point for aligning and developing a written curriculum map. Draft consensus maps should be developed by each planning group with feedback from teachers at the respective sites.

Once drafts are developed for elementary and secondary, the planning groups should collaborate to align the maps creating the district map that will guide instruction K-12. This draft should then be reviewed by teachers for feedback. A map for a business technology strand may be needed that is separate from the general mapping of skill development for all students.

The curriculum coordinator and supervisor of Student Services/Technology should work with principals and the committee to develop a rubric for evaluating the implementation of curriculum at each level. With the district map and implementation rubric in place, the administrators should introduce the district curriculum and the plan for accountability. By narrowing the focus of instructional technology objectives and defining instruction for each grade, teachers will be able to develop lessons and activities for students that ensure mastery of technology skills and maintain consistency of learning across all grades and content areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-20

DPS' s teachers do not use the online training program for technology integration that is offered by the district. As a result, teachers are not developing the necessary skills for integrating technology in classroom instruction.

The district requires that teachers have 30 hours of technology professional development in a five-year period. Interviews with the technology staff, principals, and professional development committee representatives indicated that teachers have access to at least six hours of technology training each year through InfoSource, an on line professional development resource. InfoSource offers multiple training options that range from basic skills to strategies for integrating technology to instruction.

The supervisor for Student Services/Technology says the use of the online resource is limited. According to the Technology Department, only about four percent of the staff is using the InfoSource professional development for skill development and even less are using the modules on integrating technology in classroom instruction.

The National Education Technology Standards (NETS), an ongoing initiative of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has described standards for students, teachers, and administrators. The NETS for teacher and administrators have accompanying performance indicators. While Oklahoma has not adopted standards for teachers and administrators, many states and districts have already incorporated NETS into training programs and defined technology proficiency levels for teachers and administrators.

Ongoing opportunities for professional development should be available to teachers, administrators, and support personnel at all levels. It should focus on the specific needs of individual staff and be sustained through coaching and periodic updates. A technology training-plan should outline the opportunities afforded to district staff for learning job-specific technology skills.

Because educators' technology skill levels vary, they learn at different rates and have individual needs when mastering new skills; therefore, technology training must be flexible, yet comprehensive. Before a district designs its training program, each educator's current level of technology skills should be determined.

Then teachers, administrators, and technology trainers can brainstorm to determine what support and resources educators need to advance to the next stage. Teachers need time and a variety in training styles to acquire technology skills. They need large blocks of time to gain initial familiarity with new hardware and software while learning and practicing for sustained periods. Grade level coaches can also provide support to teachers as they acquire new skills.

Embedding training into the school day and school year maximizes its impact. Strategies for training time include one-on-one sessions, group sessions for teams of teachers or for teachers with the same planning period, sessions for entire faculties during times set aside for professional development training (e.g. after school, early release days, and scheduled staff development days on the district calendar).

Many school districts across the nation use the Levels of Technology Implementation (LoTi) scale, which measures a teacher's proficiency to integrate technology on six levels: (0) non-use, (1) awareness, (2) exploration, (3) infusion, (4a) integration – mechanical, (4b) integration – routine, (5) expansion, and (6) refinement. The LoTi process assumes that true integration of technology into the learning process does not occur until the teacher reaches level 4 and has training geared to move through each level.

This six-level development process focuses on the use of technology as an interactive learning medium. The focus of the training is not merely to have a teacher use technology to achieve isolated tasks, such as word processing a research paper, creating a multimedia slide show, or browsing the Internet but rather, to integrate technology in an exemplary manner that supports purposeful problem-solving, performance-based assessment practices, and experiential learning.

While DPS invested in InfoSource to provide a flexible comprehensive professional development, it does not address the six-level development process. This professional development program does not have a coaching component and follow up activities to sustain and support teachers in implementing new strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should develop a comprehensive professional program for technology that supports teachers in developing the necessary skills for integrating technology in classroom instruction.

The supervisor for Student Services/ Technology should work with the technology committee and the professional development committee to develop a district wide program for teacher training and technology integration. A first step should be for each staff member to complete a needs assessment to identify areas for development such as basic technical skills and the use of multi-media tools that supports purposeful problem solving, performance-based assessment practices, and experiential learning for students. The survey should also include a section on the use of InfoSource and teachers' perception of the online resource in meeting their professional development needs or how it can be adapted to meet their needs.

The committees might consider *Taking a Good Look at Instructional Technology*, which is a suite of assessment tools designed to help principals and other school leaders gather, analyze, and report information about how technology is used for teaching and learning in their schools. If administered more than once, it provides measurements of progress over time.

A second step should be to discuss and define technology integration for DPS classrooms. Based on this definition and the survey results, the program should seek to increase teacher competencies and levels of technology integration. The program should also identify software and hardware needs necessary for successful integration. The program should be submitted to the superintendent and board of education for approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

The district should consider outside resources to develop a train-the-trainer model of professional development where identified teachers participate in extensive training programs and then provide training to teachers in the district. The Intel Teach Program is one such training model of free professional development focused on enhancing education with technology integration through a train-the-trainer model. Training in various areas of technology is also available to Oklahoma school districts through the SDE and the OK ACTS program at the University of Oklahoma.

The review team recommends that the district budget \$5,000 per year beginning in 2009-10 for training in areas that cannot be provided free of charge through outside resources.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should develop a comprehensive professional program for technology that supports teachers in developing the necessary skills for integrating technology in classroom instruction.	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)

C. TRANSPORTATION

The primary objective of a school transportation function is to provide safe, timely, and efficient transportation services to the students. Oklahoma’s 7,600 school buses travel more than 67 million miles a year and carry nearly 369,000 children every day. School districts collectively operate the safest form of transportation in the country. School buses are stated to be safer than any other form of public or private mode of transportation.

The Oklahoma School Code (OSC) authorizes school districts to provide student transportation services between school and home, from school to career and technology locations, and for approved extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires districts to provide transportation services to students who must travel to receive special education services, if the schools provide school transportation services.

The SDE provides funding for regular transportation for students who live more than 1.5 miles from the assigned school. Oklahoma school districts receive a transportation supplement that is calculated based on a per capita allowance, the district’s student density, and the number of students who live more than 1.5 miles from school (considered the average daily haul, or ADH). These factors are multiplied by a state funding figure of \$1.39 (transportation factor). This figure has not been updated since 1983.

This level of funding does not begin to support all transportation expenses in a given Oklahoma school district. In general, the state transportation supplement provides just 16 percent of the funding needed to operate a district transportation program. Thus, every dollar saved in a school district's transportation program can instead be spent for other district programs including classroom activities.

Background

DPS covers 67 square miles and has 55 average daily memberships (ADM) per square mile (**Exhibit 5-17**). Compared with its peer districts, DPS has the third highest square miles and fourth highest ADM per square mile.

Exhibit 5-17
DPS and Peer Group ADM per Square Mile
2006-07

District	ADM	District Square Miles	ADM Per Square Mile
Duncan	3,693.7	67	55.1
Bixby	4,296.5	61	70.4
Claremore	4,126.3	34	121.4
Coweta	3,108.1	117	26.6
Noble	2,889.8	118	24.5
Sapulpa	4,265.4	38	112.2

Source: Office of Accountability, Profiles Database

The administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance has overall responsibility for the transportation function. The administrative assistant supervises the supervisor of Transportation, the vehicle mechanic, the mechanic's helper, and a paraprofessional who provides administrative support and serves as the bus dispatcher.

Along with the positions mentioned above, the district employs the following 28 part-time employees in the Transportation Department:

- sixteen regular route and five special needs drivers are paid approximately \$10.50 to \$16 per hour depending upon credentials and experience for driving one route in the morning and one in the afternoon;
- three monitors/aides on special needs buses are paid \$6.55 to \$12.30 per hour based on experience; and
- four substitute drivers who are used on other tasks within the department if they are not driving a bus.

Coaches drive all the athletic activity trips; the regular bus drivers handle other activity trips.

The vehicle mechanic performs most light repairs and regular maintenance on district buses and vehicles. For all other work, the district uses outside contractors. **Exhibit 5-18** shows outside vehicle repair expenses by vendor from 2006-07 through the time of the site visit by the review team in February 2009.

Exhibit 5-18
Cost for Bus Maintenance Provided By 3rd Party Vendors
2006-07 through 2008-09

Date	Vendor	Service	Cost
10/12/06	Steve Auto Service	Diagnostic Test #43	\$50.00
12/14/06	Har-West Sound & Video	(2) Bus VCR Repairs	\$270.00
8/3/06-12/26/06	Montgomery Tire & Alignment	Flat repairs	\$264.39
3/16/07	McNair Tire & Alignment	Tire Repair #57	\$100.00
4/19/07	Mid-Continent ReBuild	Alternator Repair #51	\$70.00
6/5/07	Warren Cat	Diagnostic Test #64	\$200.00
6/22/07	Montgomery Tire & Alignment	Mount (20) bus tires	\$510.00
7/10/07	Maloy Vinyl	Bus Seat Repairs	\$952.00
9/19/07	Har-West Sound & Video	(1) Bus VCR Repair	\$135.00
10/5/07	Ross Transportation	Repairs #55	\$549.08
10/30/07	Har-West Sound & Video	(1) Bus VCR Repair	\$135.00
11/7/07	Montgomery Tire & Alignment	Tire Balance #49	\$40.00
11/27/07	Har-West Sound & Video	(1) Bus VCR Repair	\$135.00
1/4/08	Ross Transportation	Handicap bus repairs #53	\$1,025.58
1/8/08	Mid-Continent ReBuild	Repair Alternator #26	\$75.00
1/11/08	Har-West Sound & Video	(2) Bus VCR Repairs	\$270.00
10/8/07-6/3/08	Montgomery Tire & Alignment	Flat repairs	\$135.78
6/4/08	Steves Auto Service	Diagnostic Test #43	\$55.00
7/2/08	Maloy Vinyl	Bus Seat Repairs	\$744.00
7/21/08	Steves Auto Service	Reprogram Computer	\$82.50
7/28/08	Maloy Vinyl	Activity Bus Seat Repairs	\$608.00
10/29/08	Troys Upholstery	#65 Seat Repair	\$65.00
10/30/08	Troys Upholstery	#70 Seat Repair	\$68.00
10/31/08	Troys Upholstery	#54 Seat Repair	\$45.00
Total			\$6,584.33

Source: DPS Transportation Department

Exhibit 5-19 shows the district's general fund expenditures for transportation from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Overall during the five-year period, transportation expenditures increased 102.6 percent. The largest dollar increases were in salaries, supplies, and benefits.

Exhibit 5-19
DPS Student Transportation Expenditures

Category	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Percentage Change
Salaries	\$270,837	\$264,385	\$299,712	\$396,967	\$398,845	47.3%
Benefits	\$40,267	\$43,247	\$63,941	\$95,994	\$95,751	137.8%
Purchased services	\$8,216	\$8,443	\$6,669	\$5,728	\$83,477	916.0%
Supplies	\$58,181	\$84,144	\$124,990	\$193,185	\$173,867	198.8%
Property	\$0	\$269,685	\$285	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Other	\$463	\$2,076	\$744	\$1,439	\$13,766	2,873.2%
Total	\$377,964	\$671,980	\$496,341	\$693,313	\$765,706	102.6%

Source: OCAS, 2003-04 through 2007-08, All Funds

According to the superintendent, the district could not attract or retain bus drivers and other transportation personnel, such as bus monitors. As a result, in 2007 DPS increased bus driver pay by \$1.50/hour and that of other personnel by \$0.50/hour. The large increase in salaries in this area is attributable to this hourly increase.

For 2007-08, DPS's transportation cost per rider per day was \$1.89, which was the second lowest cost per rider per day among DPS and its peer districts (**Exhibit 5-20**). This was also much lower than the peer district average of \$2.31 per rider per day.

Exhibit 5-20
DPS and Peer Group Transportation Expenditures,
Average Daily Haul, and Cost per Rider
2007-08

District	Expenditures	ADH	Cost Per Rider
Duncan	\$765,706	2,309	\$1.89
Bixby	\$1,419,200	3,386	\$2.40
Claremore	\$646,740	3,368	\$1.10
Coweta	\$1,062,330	2,419	\$2.51
Noble	\$1,215,234	1,901	\$3.65
Sapulpa	\$1,062,426	2,317	\$2.62
Peer district average, excluding DPS			\$2.31

Source: OCAS, School District Expenditures, All Funds, 2007-08, SDE State Aid Section, and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

Also in 2007-08, DPS's cost per mile to operate its buses was \$2.70. This was the lowest of the peer group and \$1.55 below the peer district average of \$4.25 (**Exhibit 5-21**).

Exhibit 5-21
DPS and Peer District Transportation Annual Cost per Mile
2007-08

District	Expenditures	Total Miles	Cost Per Mile
Duncan	\$765,706	283,807	\$2.70
Bixby	\$1,419,200	283,807	\$5.00
Claremore	\$646,740	134,998	\$4.79
Coweta	\$1,062,330	228,536	\$4.65
Noble	\$1,215,234	340,089	\$3.57
Sapulpa	\$1,062,426	284,360	\$3.74
Peer district average, excluding DPS			\$4.25

Source: OCAS, School District Expenditures, All Funds, 2007-08, SDE State Aid Section, and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations

DPS operates all its bus routes on a two-bell schedule for both morning and afternoon routes. One bell is for elementary and high school students who ride the same bus and the other bell is for middle school students. **Exhibit 5-22** shows the bus schedule for 2008-09.

**Exhibit 5-22
DPS Bell Schedule
2008-09**

Site	Start Bell	End Bell
Woodrow Wilson Elementary	8:30 am	3:20 pm
Emerson Elementary	8:30 am	3:30 pm
Horace Mann Elementary	8:30 am	3:30 pm
Mark Twain Elementary	8:30 am	3:30 pm
Plato Elementary	8:30 am	3:30 pm
Duncan Middle School	8:00 am	3:00 pm
Duncan High School	8:00 am	3:30 pm

Source: DPS Transportation Department

Overall, the Transportation Department is responsible for maintaining 72 district vehicles (**Exhibit 5-23**).

**Exhibit 5-23
DPS Fleet and Fleet Operations
2008-09**

Vehicles	Number of Vehicles
School Buses	35
Trucks	23
Automobiles	5
Suburbans	9
Total	72

Source: DPS Transportation Department

DPS has 35 buses: 16 for regular transportation routes, 16 that are used primarily as activity buses or spares (in case the other buses break down or if they are needed for an activity trip), and three buses used to transport students with special needs. **Exhibit 5-24** details DPS's fleet.

**Exhibit 5-24
DPS Vehicle Fleet
2008-09**

ID#	Assignment	Make/Model	Body/Size	Mileage
61	Activity bus	2006 Bluebird	Bluebird/65 passengers	52,408
62	Activity bus	2006 Bluebird	Bluebird/65 passengers	50,935
64	Activity bus	2006 Bluebird	Bluebird/65 passengers	51,603
33	Activity bus	1993 International	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	122,189
35	Activity bus	1994 International	Thomas/ 65 passengers	98,126
36	Activity bus	1994 International	Thomas/ 65 passengers	98,878
37	Activity bus	1994 International	Thomas/ 26 passengers	72,248
38	Activity bus	1995 International	Carpenter/ 65 passengers	94,592
39	Activity bus	1995 International	Carpenter/ 65 passengers	88,048
40	Activity bus	1995 International	Carpenter/ 65 passengers	106,908
21	Activity bus	1990 Chevrolet	Thomas/ 65 passengers	104,691
23	Activity bus	1990 Chevrolet	Thomas/ 65 passengers	104,930
26	Activity bus	1991 International	Ward/ 18 passengers	80,527
27	Activity bus	1991 International	Ward/ 65 passengers	106,386
28	Activity bus	1991 International	Ward/ 65 passengers	97,819
29	Activity bus	1991 International	Ward/ 65 passengers	154,057
70	Regular Route Bus	2008 Bluebird	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	7,393
69	Regular Route Bus	2007 Bluebird	Bluebird/Caterpillar/ 65 passengers	22,943
63	Regular Route Bus	2006 Bluebird	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	41,321
65	Regular Route Bus	2006 Bluebird	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	45,101
43	Route Special Needs	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 29 passengers	75,462
44	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	61,511
45	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	61,268
46	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	51,139
47	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	43,726
48	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	63,853
49	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	58,062
50	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	53,834
51	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	61,454
52	Route Special Needs	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 42 passengers	61,229
53	Route Special Needs	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 42 passengers	51,208
54	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	49,057
55	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	58,274
56	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	46,150
57	Regular Route Bus	2002 Chevrolet	Bluebird/ 65 passengers	64,775
AD-88	EDGE Academy	1988 GMC	Suburban	75,964
68	Activity	2007 Chevrolet	Suburban	37,610
58	Activity	2002 Chevrolet	Suburban	64,845
80	Activity	2008 Chevrolet	Suburban	17,161
82	Activity	2008 Chevrolet	Suburban	17,019
83	Activity	2008 Chevrolet	Suburban	15,400
81	Route Special Needs	2008 Chevrolet	Suburban	15,326
84	Route Special Needs	2008 Chevrolet	Suburban	17,250

Source: DPS Transportation Department

Exhibit 5-25 provides details on the routes the district runs each day.

Exhibit 5-25
DPS Bus Routes, Route Distance, Schools Served, Route Time, and Number of Riders
2008-09

Route #	Distance in Miles for am and pm Routes	Schools Served	Time	Number of Riders
43 sp. ed.	am- 23	Horace Mann, Emerson, Plato, Duncan M, Duncan H	2 hr. 15 min.	15
	pm -23		2 hr. 15 min.	15
43 sp. ed.	noon-10	Horace Mann, Emerson, Plato, Duncan M, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	6
44	am-25	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-M Twain, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-25	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-M Twain, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 128
45	am-17.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Horace Mann, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-17.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Duncan M	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 148
46	am-18	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-18	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 119
47	am-14	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-14	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 82
48	am-17.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-17.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 143
49	am-20.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-20.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 100
50	am-20.4	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-20.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 119
51	am-34.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	
	pm-34.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	Combined 42
52 sp. ed.	am-26	Run 1-Duncan M, H Mann, Emerson, Duncan H	2 hr. 15 min.	15
	pm-26	Run 2-Duncan M, H Mann, Emerson, Duncan H	2 hr. 15 min.	15
53 sp. ed.	am-21	Run 1-Duncan M, H Mann, Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	11
	pm-21	Run 2-Duncan M, H Mann, Emerson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	11
54	am-16	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-16	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 110
55	am-16.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-M Twain, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-16.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-M Twain, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 90
56	am-18.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-18.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 95
57	am-32.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	
	pm-32.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	Combined 61
63	am-30	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-H Mann, Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 45 min.	
	pm-30	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-H Mann, Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 45 min.	Combined 104
65	am-27.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	
	pm-27.5	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-Plato, Duncan H	1 hr. 40 min.	Combined 93
69	am-19	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	
	pm-19	Run 3-Duncan M, Run 4-W Wilson, Duncan H	1 hr. 30 min.	Combined 158
70	am-53.5	Run 1-Duncan M, Run 2-PE, Duncan H	1 hr. 45 min.	
	pm-53.5	Run 3-, Run 4-PE, Duncan H	1 hr. 45 min.	Combined 56
81 sp. ed.	am	Run 1-Plato, H Mann, Duncan H		7
	pm-combined 83	Run 2-Plato, H Mann, Duncan H	8 hr. combined	2
84 sp. ed.	am-73	Run 1-OK School for the Deaf	1 hr. 45 min.	5
	pm-73	Run 2-OK School for the Deaf	1 hr. 45 min.	5

Source: DPS Transportation Department

The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety (ODPS) requires bus drivers to obtain a specialized bus driver's license, the Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The enabling law requires annually: driving history review, training, and driver physical. New employees are screened by the ODPS which evaluates motor vehicle records. New drivers must pass an alcohol and drug test. Random drug testing is administered yearly.

Overall, parents and district staff rated the transportation function very positively. Among the comments from the focus groups and community open house were the following:

- Transportation is very friendly and helpful. The Transportation director does a great job of scheduling transportation for the various activities.
- My children ride the bus home every day and I am very pleased with the service. The driver operates the bus safely, is always courteous, and reliably on time.
- The department rearranged a route to accommodate more students and had more pickup/drop-off points. Also, they addressed a bullying situation on the bus.
- Love it; prompt, safe.
- Transportation system is commended; but, evidently too expensive because students are not separated by age on buses; a problem.

On the written survey administered by the review team, 75 percent of the teachers and 77 percent of the professional staff responding to the survey agreed with the survey statement "buses run on a timely basis."

FINDING 5-21

DPS employs several techniques including two-way radios, cell phones, and cameras on its buses, to increase communication and the safety of its riders. The DPS has two-way radios installed in all buses and service trucks. The radios are monitored during route times from a central dispatch at the Transportation Center. On weekend and night activity trips, bus drivers are provided with cell phones. The buses also have interior television cameras that record the behavior of the riders. The cameras provide evidence of these behaviors. To modify the behavior of a given student school, administration, students, and parents can use this video record.

COMMENDATION

Through the use of different techniques, DPS's Transportation Department increases both the communication to and from its buses and the safety of its riders.

FINDING 5-22

The district does not have an adequate transportation facility. This causes deficiencies that impose operational and security risks to employees using the facility, equipment, and vehicles stored at the facility. The district's transportation facility consists of a small house that serves as the district's Transportation Center and houses the administrative staff and two bus bays. The vehicle repair facility is located at the high school.

Of the two bus bays, one is new and has garage doors for each bay that can be closed and locked at night. The other bay is extremely old and consists of metal poles, wire, and a wooden roof. There are an insufficient number of bays to store all the buses, so some buses are parked outside overnight and others are parked at both the high school and middle school.

During the on-site visit to the facility, the review team noted a series of problems summarized in **Exhibit 5-26**.

Exhibit 5-26
Transportation Facility Problems

Type of Issue	Description
Security	No perimeter fence, which allows easy access from adjacent fields to the bus storage area.
	No alarms in the bus bays.
	No security on duty at night.
	Insufficient lighting: only two light poles, each with only one light.
Drainage	Standing water outside the bus bays.
Parking surface/driveway	Asphalt overlay that is coming apart.
	Buses are stored on surface consisting of loose gravel and dirt.
Bus bays	Wooden roof is decaying.
	Metal poles that support the roof are decaying.
Bus storage	Numerous buses are stored outside each night due to lack of bus bay facility.

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES

In its April 2009 bond issue election, \$50,000 was approved to add an additional canopy adjacent to the new bus bay. However, this canopy will still not cover all the district's buses.

RECOMMENDATION

The superintendent should include facility improvements for the transportation facility in the next comprehensive bond issue election.

The district has prepared an assessment of all district facilities and plans to hold a bond issue election in 2010 to get public approval of funding to address those needs. The following improvements to the transportation facility should be included:

- building a fence to enclose the bus storage area;
- building a canopy to cover all buses;
- improving the surface, preferably by using concrete;
- installing sufficient lighting to lend to security of the facility; and
- replacing the old bus bay with at least a canopy.

FISCAL IMPACT

The nature of these improvements would have to be included in a bond issue. As such, there is not fiscal impact on the operating budget of DPS.

FINDING 5-23

The DPS Transportation Department keeps manual fleet maintenance records instead of automated records. This limits its ability to schedule and track preventive maintenance on its buses, such as changing oil, checking brakes, and inspecting tires. Currently, the mechanic waits until summer to perform all repairs that are not required to keep a bus in operation. On all repairs, the mechanic only keeps limited, hand-written notes.

The Frisco, TX, Independent School District Transportation Department uses Ron Turley Association (RTA) Fleet Management System, for example. RTA has modules available to track fuel usage, preventive maintenance, tire usage, parts inventory control, and work order creation.

Software updates are received via e-mail on a regular basis, either bi-monthly or quarterly. Major updates containing ideas received from individual users for a more user friendly or faster methods of storing and retrieving information about the fleet are implemented once a year via CD-ROM.

In addition to tracking and scheduling preventive maintenance, an effective automated fleet maintenance program can be used to:

- track and schedule preventive maintenance;
- maintain records of work orders;
- track parts inventories and vendor history;
- track warranties;
- track fuel usage and fuel inventory;
- track cost-per-mile;
- maintain personnel records; and
- generate management reports, which allow districts to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if changes are needed in department operations.

RECOMMENDATION

The administrative assistant for Transportation/Maintenance should include the cost of automated fleet management software in the budget for 2009-10.

The administrative assistant and the Transportation supervisor should identify potential software for fleet management and contact districts using this software. Once they have evaluated the software options, the administrative assistant should recommend one to the superintendent for purchase.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the fleet maintenance software is based on the Turley software noted above. A single user license is \$2,500 plus \$25 shipping and handling, then \$750 per year for maintenance and support after the first year. The cost of the computer and printer is \$4,000.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
One-time cost to purchase hardware	(\$4,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
One-time cost to purchase software	(\$2,525)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual maintenance cost	\$0	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)
Total annual cost	(\$6,525)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)	(\$750)

FINDING 5-24

The district does not have a fleet replacement program. As a result, it must replace its buses in large numbers at irregular time intervals, which affects budgetary planning.

Over one-third, or 13 of 35, of the buses used by DPS for regular bus routes are over 10 years old. According to the administrative assistant, DPS has not purchased buses on a regular basis over the last 10 years but, rather, as follows:

- one in 2008;
- one in 2007;
- five in 2006; and
- fifteen in 2002.

As part of the April 2009 bond issue election, funds were approved to purchase seven new buses for use beginning in 2009-10.

Irregular replacement of buses or replacement of buses in large quantities leads to several potential problems, such as:

- Large numbers of buses reach their useful life at the same time and replacement becomes difficult due to the high cost incurred in one year.
- The district becomes reliant on bond issues to fund purchases.
- Use of buses beyond their useful life creates additional potential issues including increased maintenance costs and reduced safety for riders.
- A lack of parts since vehicle manufacturers are not required to stock parts after 10 years.

Compounding these issues is the impending retirement of the district's vehicle mechanic and lack of a trained replacement. As a result, local options for service will be much more expensive. For example, the review team contacted Hines Garage in Duncan where a certified mechanic makes \$22.50 per hour, or 50 percent more than that of the DPS mechanic. Surrounding districts, such as Lawton, that might have a suitable replacement also pay as much or more than DPS.

Leasing buses is an option for DPS. For example, Sasakwa Public Schools leases its buses, which means the buses are no older than three years, have low mileage when they are returned, and are maintained by the leasing company. Ross Transportation, Inc. in Oklahoma City sells and leases buses to Oklahoma school districts. According to the company, approximately 25-30 districts lease buses from them. Leases are typically for three years, though a district may choose to extend the lease if the bus is still in good condition and has not accumulated excessive miles.

A district makes an annual payment based on the lease cost. If a district eventually decides to purchase the bus at the end of the lease period, one-half of each yearly payment is applied to the original cost of the bus in order to reduce the purchase price to the district.

During the lease period, Ross Transportation, Inc. provides all maintenance to the bus except for body damage, cut passenger seats, and broken glass. For major repairs, the company will send a tow truck to bring the bus to its Oklahoma City facility for maintenance work. For minor repairs and preventive maintenance, a district can bring the bus to Oklahoma City, or the company will send filters, oil, etc., to the district for their use.

During the summer break, a district brings all its buses to the central facility for maintenance. During this period, the company typically replaces worn brakes and tires, filters, and other similar items. As a result, a district only pays the drivers salaries, fuel costs, and insurance and does not have to employ a certified maintenance person.

Sasakwa Public Schools gains specific advantages from its leasing arrangement, such as:

- The three-year rotation means that the buses are new with low mileage. New buses are typically safer because they are less likely to break down and have less wear-and-tear;
- The district can manage its costs, not only the capital cost of purchasing the bus, but also the ongoing cost of maintenance;
- The district does not have to have a certified maintenance person on staff, which in a rural area like that surrounding SPS, is a difficult to do; and
- The leasing company takes care of all maintenance, including retrieving a broken down bus, and will provide a loaner bus to the district until their bus is repaired. With such a small fleet and an inability to maintain spare buses, this also reduces the cost to the district.

RECOMMENDATION

DPS should lease buses to spread the cost impact of replacing the district's aging fleet over a several years. This approach should be used until the district can develop a regular bus purchase replacement schedule that is funded through the availability of operating funds.

The administrative assistant should contact other districts that lease buses and develop an understanding of the program and district experiences. The administrative assistant and the Transportation supervisor should develop a plan to replace older buses and determine the cost to the district's operating budget for both leasing and purchasing buses.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact is based on the assumption that the district will purchase seven new buses for 2009-10 from the bond funds approved in the April 2009 election. It also assumes the district should replace two buses in each of the next three years. This replacement schedule would result in replacing all current buses that are over 10 years old and an additional three that will reach that age within the three-year period. After that, the district should maintain the leasing schedule at the level reached in the third year.

The fiscal impact also assumes a lease price of \$14,000 per year (based on an estimated price of \$70,000 for a 71-passenger bus) for each bus for three years. For 2009-10, DPS would lease two buses for a total cost of \$28,000. In 2010-11, it would lease an additional two buses, or four total, for a total cost of \$56,000. In 2011-12, it would lease an additional two buses, or six total for a total cost of \$84,000. Beginning with the fourth year, 2012-13, the district would maintain six leased buses in its fleet, replacing two each year with new leased buses.

At the end of three years, the district could purchase the buses instead of turning them back to the company. In that case, the leasing company would apply one-half of the prior three years of lease payments, or \$21,000 (\$14,000 per year x 3 years = \$42,000; one-half would be \$21,000) toward the purchase of that bus, resulting in a cost of \$49,000 for a three-year old bus.

Recommendation	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
DPS should lease buses to spread the cost impact of replacing the district's aging fleet over a several years.	(\$28,000)	(\$56,000)	(\$84,000)	(\$84,000)	(\$84,000)

FINDING 5-25

DPS has no formalized training program that provides information and instruction to student bus riders in early elementary grades. DPS cannot assume that young elementary students have an understanding of the potential hazards associated with the loading, riding, and unloading of school buses.

DPS does distribute information at the beginning of the school year to all students regarding safety and behavior requirements for students riding a school bus. However, there is no training of students in implementing these requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

The administrative assistant, in concert with elementary principals, should implement a student bus rider training program for students pre-kindergarten through grade three. The training program should be based on the current safety and behavior requirements of the district.

The administrative assistant and Transportation supervisor should work with the bus drivers and school principals to provide a program aimed at improving bus safety. This program should be informative, entertaining, and target pre-kindergarten through grade three. The program should include actual practice of the desired behaviors.

There are several resources available to draw information in developing and implementing such a program. The following are some examples:

- National Association of State Directors - www.nasdpts.org
- National Association for Pupil Transportation - www.napt
- Resource for all school bus safety related needs - www.ptsi.org
- Resource for safety posters - www.glenngraphics.com

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-26

To transport some students, DPS operates non-school buses (i.e. vans and suburbans) that do not meet safety standards established by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Any vehicle rated to carry 10 or more passengers must meet the Federal Motor Safety Standards for a school bus if the vehicle transports school students to school or a school activity.

As noted in **Exhibit 5-24**, DPS operates eight suburbans. These suburbans are used in the following ways:

- The principal of EDGE Academy uses one of these vehicles.
- Five of the vehicles are designated for use on activity trips where only a small number of students are being transported.
- The remaining two are assigned to special needs routes and used on a daily basis.

In addition to not meeting national safety standards, unlike regular school bus drivers, there is no requirement for drivers of these vehicles to have a commercial driver's license.

RECOMMENDATION

The DPS School Board should adopt a policy that prohibits the use of vehicles that do not meet national safety standards when transporting students on regular education routes or activity trips.

The administrative assistant and Transportation supervisor should develop a plan to eliminate the use of non-standard vehicles for student transportation. The superintendent should review the plan and take it to the school board for adoption.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A:

Teacher Survey Results

TEACHER SURVEY

(n = 165)

STATISTICAL DATA

How long have you been employed by the school district?	5 years or less	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
	40%	8%	14%	6%	16%	16%

Circle the school at which you teach.	Emerson	Horace Mann	Mark Twain	Plato	Woodrow Wilson	EDGE	Will Rogers	DMS	DHS	No Response
	14%	10%	7%	6%	13%	3%	2%	16%	22%	7%

SURVEY STATEMENTS

District Management, Personnel, and Communications

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
1.	School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the district.	61%	27%	12%
2.	Central administrative staff is efficient.	78%	12%	10%
3.	Principals and assistant principals are accessible to teachers.	90%	5%	5%
4.	My school has a plan to increase student performance.	91%	6%	3%
5.	My school plan properly reflects the needs of students in my classroom.	82%	7%	11%
6.	Teacher turnover is low.	63%	25%	12%
7.	District teacher salaries are competitive.	39%	12%	49%
8.	Salaries are a key factor in retaining teachers.	49%	21%	30%
9.	Professional development for teachers in my school is targeted to the needs of students.	75%	13%	12%
10.	Teachers in my school help determine professional development needs.	82%	11%	7%
11.	Teachers in my school receive annual personnel evaluations.	99%	1%	0%
12.	My school regularly communicates with parents.	96%	1%	3%
13.	My school has sufficient volunteers to help student and school programs.	55%	8%	37%
14.	The district works with business and community organizations to improve education.	77%	15%	8%

Instructional Delivery

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
15.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	85%	4%	11%
16.	My principal is an effective instructional leader.	75%	11%	14%
17.	The district has effective programs to help all students learn.	59%	23%	18%
18.	My principal solicits input from teachers in making decisions for our school.	53%	22%	25%
19.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	70%	6%	24%
20.	I use the curriculum guide on a regular basis.	74%	16%	10%
21.	The district has scope and sequence documents to ensure students achieve grade level objectives and are prepared for the next grade.	67%	16%	16%
22.	My school uses vertical teaming to ensure that students learn the necessary material to be prepared for the next grade.	52%	20%	28%
23.	The district uses a pacing calendar to determine when objectives are taught.	45%	29%	26%
24.	The district uses periodic assessments/tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps.	90%	5%	5%
25.	My principal observes teachers in my school on a regular basis to ensure that the curriculum is being taught consistently.	78%	9%	13%
26.	The school library meets students' needs for books and other resources.	74%	6%	20%
27.	I have the resources necessary to be an effective teacher.	75%	5%	20%
28.	The alternative education program, EDGE, is effective.	39%	51%	10%
29.	The student discipline process is fair for all students.	45%	12%	43%

Business Operations

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
30.	Teachers in my school participate in the budget process.	26%	32%	42%
31.	All my school's instructional needs are addressed through the budget.	28%	37%	35%
32.	Teachers in my school receive the supplies and materials that they need in a timely manner.	55%	13%	32%
33.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	25%	11%	64%
34.	Textbooks are in good condition.	75%	10%	15%
35.	The purchase order/requisition process is efficient.	73%	12%	15%

Facilities Use and Management

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
36.	The district has an effective energy management program.	44%	45%	11%
37.	My school is always kept clean.	72%	7%	21%
38.	Needed repairs at my school are made in a timely manner.	68%	4%	28%
39.	I feel safe and secure at my school.	80%	5%	15%
40.	Access to my school during school hours is well controlled.	76%	7%	17%
41.	Security procedures for visitors, such as reporting first to the office, are strictly enforced at my school.	63%	7%	30%
42.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	19%	21%	60%
43.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11%	14%	75%
44.	Bullying is not a problem in this district.	17%	15%	68%
45.	Safety hazards do not exist on my school's grounds.	56%	12%	32%
46.	My school has a crisis plan with which I am familiar.	84%	11%	5%
47.	Practice drills are conducted regularly to ensure students and staff are prepared in case of a crisis.	94%	1%	5%

Support Services

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
48.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	49%	19%	32%
49.	Students have enough time to eat.	54%	8%	38%
50.	Students eat lunch at an appropriate time of the day.	90%	5%	5%
51.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	64%	14%	22%
52.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	57%	20%	23%
53.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	89%	6%	5%
54.	Vending machines are not available for use when the cafeteria is open.	68%	25%	7%
55.	Food sales by booster clubs or other outside organizations are not allowed when the cafeteria is in operation.	68%	29%	3%
56.	Teachers in my school know how to use computers to enhance instruction.	83%	10%	7%
57.	Teachers in my school have adequate staff development opportunities to support technology integration.	80%	12%	8%
58.	Support for integrating technology into instruction is adequate at my school.	70%	12%	18%
59.	Teachers in my school teach PASS standards for instructional technology.	75%	10%	15%
60.	Students in my class have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	76%	6%	18%
61.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	56%	4%	40%
62.	Teachers and students have safe and appropriate access to the Internet.	91%	4%	5%

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
63.	Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	76%	12%	12%
64.	Buses run on a timely basis.	75%	18%	7%
65.	Buses are readily available for activity and field trips.	63%	25%	12%
66.	The district has an effective discipline process for students riding buses.	54%	34%	12%

Principal as an Instructional Leader (Please rate your principal on a 1-5 basis, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest.)

My principal:

Number	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
67.	Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders.	48%	22%	18%	8%	4%
68.	Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs.	55%	25%	13%	5%	3%
69.	Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.	55%	20%	15%	6%	4%
70.	Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus.	37%	33%	15%	6%	9%
71.	Creates a high level of trust among teachers and other school personnel.	44%	18%	19%	8%	11%
72.	Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	54%	16%	18%	5%	7%
73.	Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.	50%	21%	15%	4%	10%
74.	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	50%	20%	15%	11%	4%
75.	Establishes criteria for evaluating teachers that are clear and understood by all.	62%	20%	10%	4%	4%
76.	Establishes clear goals and keeps these goals in the forefront of the school's attention.	49%	23%	14%	8%	6%
77.	Is organized and an effective manager of day-to-day operations of the school.	43%	27%	12%	13%	5%
78.	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.	55%	16%	16%	7%	6%
79.	Is a good listener.	56%	16%	12%	7%	9%
80.	Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.	46%	23%	15%	9%	7%
81.	Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.	48%	18%	18%	9%	7%
82.	Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments.	53%	24%	12%	5%	6%
83.	Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo.	42%	28%	10%	11%	9%
84.	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	40%	24%	21%	8%	7%

Number	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
85.	Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.	44%	26%	14%	8%	8%
86.	Ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture.	36%	26%	20%	10%	8%
87.	Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students.	42%	25%	15%	7%	11%
88.	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.	36%	24%	20%	11%	9%
89.	Treats teachers and other school personnel with dignity and respect.	57%	18%	13%	4%	8%
90.	Is fair in dealing with all personnel and avoids any appearance of favoritism.	47%	15%	14%	9%	15%

Appendix B:
Professional Staff Survey Results

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SURVEY

(n = 40)

STATISTICAL DATA

Work on a campus.	79%
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Work in central administration.	21%
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SURVEY STATEMENTS

District Management, Personnel, and Communications

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
1.	The district has a plan that reflects the goals and needs of the district.	100%	0%	0%
2.	School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the district.	84%	13%	3%
3.	Central administration is efficient.	93%	0%	7%
4.	My job responsibilities are well defined.	97%	3%	0%
5.	My job description is current.	93%	4%	3%
6.	District salaries are competitive.	60%	17%	23%
7.	Professional development is targeted to the needs of students.	80%	13%	7%
8.	I receive an annual performance evaluation.			
9.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	97%	3%	0%
10.	The district works with business and community organizations to improve education.	97%	3%	0%

Instructional Delivery

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
11.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	100%	0%	0%
12.	The district has a plan to increase student performance.	93%	7%	0%

Business Operations

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
13.	Professional staff contribute to the development of the annual budget.	56%	37%	7%
14.	The district's budget reflects the goals of the district.	70%	27%	3%
15.	Central administrative staff are effective in managing district funds.	93%	7%	0%
16.	Campus administrative staff are effective in managing district funds.	93%	7%	0%
17.	Financial reports are distributed to professional staff on a regular basis.	57%	26%	17%
18.	The purchase order/requisition process is efficient.	93%	7%	0%

Facilities Use and Management

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
19.	The district has an effective energy management program.	80%	17%	3%
20.	School facilities are always kept clean.	73%	20%	7%
21.	Needed repairs are made in a timely manner.	77%	16%	7%
22.	Teachers and staff feel safe and secure.	90%	10%	0%
23.	Access to school buildings during school hours is well controlled.	77%	10%	13%
24.	Security procedures for visitors, such as reporting first to the office, are strictly enforced at my school.	73%	20%	7%
25.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	13%	14%	73%
26.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7%	0%	93%
27.	Bullying is not a problem in this district.	3%	17%	80%
28.	Safety hazards do not exist on school's grounds.	47%	20%	33%
29.	The district has a crisis plan with which I am familiar.	83%	10%	7%
30.	Practice drills are conducted regularly to ensure students and staff are prepared in case of a crisis.	93%	3%	4%

Support Services

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
31.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	70%	30%	0%
32.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	67%	30%	3%
33.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	83%	17%	0%
34.	Computers are new enough to be useful for administrative purposes.	80%	7%	13%
35.	I receive sufficient training to know how to use my computer and the software needed for my job.	90%	7%	3%
36.	Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	97%	0%	3%
37.	Buses run on a timely basis.	77%	17%	6%
38.	Buses are readily available for activity and field trips.	77%	23%	0%
39.	The district has an effective discipline process for students riding buses.	73%	24%	3%

Appendix C:

Support Staff Survey Results

SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

(n = 156)

What type of job do you perform in the district?

Paraprofessional	Classroom aide	Cafeteria worker	Custodian	Maintenance worker	Bus driver or mechanic	Other	No Response
25%	11%	19%	17%	0%	3%	20%	4%

SURVEY STATEMENTS

District Management, Personnel, and Communications

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
1.	My job responsibilities are well defined.	82%	11%	7%
2.	My job description is current.	81%	14%	5%
3.	District salaries are competitive.	27%	39%	34%
4.	I receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for all hours worked beyond my normal work week.	82%	12%	6%
5.	The district provides ongoing training for me in my job.	64%	20%	16%
6.	I receive an annual personnel evaluation.	89%	11%	0%
7.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	60%	40%	0%

Facilities Use and Management

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
8.	School facilities are clean.	84%	8%	8%
9.	School facilities are well maintained.	83%	11%	6%
10.	School facilities are safe.	85%	12%	3%
11.	Safety hazards do not exist in my work area.	74%	16%	10%

Appendix D:
Student Survey Results

STUDENT SURVEY

(n = 56)

What year are you in school?	Junior	Senior	No Response
	41%	48%	11%

SURVEY STATEMENTS

Instructional Delivery

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
1.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	38%	34%	28%
2.	Students respect the administrators in our school.	20%	42%	38%
3.	Teachers are motivated and interested in teaching.	45%	32%	23%
4.	Class sizes are reasonable.	80%	11%	9%
5.	Textbooks are issued in a timely manner.	54%	32%	14%
6.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	34%	14%	52%
7.	The school library is a good resource.	34%	43%	23%

FOR ONLY THOSE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS in which you are currently taking, or have previously taken, please rate whether you thought that program was effective or not.

Number	Program	Effective	Ineffective	No Opinion
8.	Gifted and talented	25%	61%	14%
9.	Advanced placement	45%	7%	48%
10.	Career/technical	25%	12%	63%
11.	EDGE	11%	16%	73%
12.	Career counseling	18%	14%	68%
13.	College counseling	23%	13%	64%
14.	Fine arts	78%	13%	9%
15.	Languages, other than English	61%	21%	18%
16.	Language arts/English	77%	11%	12%
17.	Math	75%	20%	5%
18.	Science	83%	13%	4%
19.	History/Government/Social Studies	75%	21%	4%

Facilities Use and Management

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
20.	My school is clean.	43%	27%	30%
21.	The school is well maintained, both inside and out.	38%	30%	32%
22.	I feel safe and secure at my school.	61%	20%	20%
23.	Access to my school during school hours is well controlled.	46%	21%	32%
24.	School disturbances are infrequent.	43%	36%	21%
25.	Gangs are not a problem in my school.	46%	30%	23%
26.	Drugs are not a problem in my school.	9%	23%	68%
27.	Bullying is not a problem in my school.	12%	43%	45%
28.	Vandalism is not a problem at my school.	20%	34%	46%

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
29.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct at my school.	20%	34%	46%
30.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	32%	39%	29%

Support Services

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
31.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	13%	32%	55%
32.	Students have enough time to eat.	43%	11%	46%
33.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	34%	45%	21%
34.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	25%	50%	25%
35.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	32%	48%	20%
36.	Vending machines are not available for use when the cafeteria is open.	5%	30%	65%
37.	Food sales by booster clubs or other outside organizations are not allowed when the cafeteria is in operation.	12%	38%	50%
38.	Teachers in my school know how to use computers to enhance instruction.	33%	38%	29%
39.	Teachers in my school have adequate staff development opportunities to support technology integration.	23%	45%	32%
40.	Students in my class have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	45%	14%	41%
41.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	38%	23%	39%
42.	Teachers and students have safe and appropriate access to the Internet.	64%	23%	13%
43.	Teachers and aides monitor student access to Internet websites.	43%	32%	25%

If you ride a school bus, please answer the following:

Number	Statement	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
44.	Buses run on a timely basis.	16%	75%	9%
45.	The driver maintains discipline on the bus.	16%	77%	7%
46.	Buses are clean.	13%	78%	9%

Appendix E:

*Focus Group and Public
Forum Comments*

Focus Group and Public Forum Comments

MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

- The district seems to have great top-end leaders at this time. Previously, that was not the case. Principals at some sites seem to be having leadership challenges, some of which are due to teachers who do things their own way. They don't always work together as a team with their grade-level counterparts. This can give the perception of tension and poor leadership within the schools.
- Dr. Labyer is doing a fantastic job! I love the parent advisory team. It's a great way to learn more about the school system and be able to share thoughts and concerns.
- I think the community stays involved with the schools basically just to support athletics. Students in the high school do not have some of the same parental support as they do in the elementary grades.
- Community involvement is limited in some respects to how involved an individual/group chooses to be. My experience has been that most of the time, teachers, administrators and students truly benefit from the community's willingness to be involved and supportive. I have also found that the involvement is appreciated and welcomed. There have actually been times in the past where I felt much less welcome than I do now. I believe that DPS wants to be a part of the community and wants the community to be a part of DPS.
- I think community involvement varies from school to school. Woodrow Wilson has somewhat of a small amount of PTO involvement but has had a great deal of support for fundraising in the community.
- With Dr. Labyer as superintendent, education is being stressed more. Previously, the emphasis was on financial matters.
- Superintendent is doing a phenomenal job. Lots of improvements.
- Superintendent is great listener. Has educated community on the issues.
- Schools don't consistency welcome parent volunteers. It's left up to the teacher to decide if you get to volunteer.
- Don't know if the district communicates to the community as a whole, but it's getting better with Dr. Labyer.
- If asked about the Vision 20/20, I am not sure people in the community know across the board.
- School has access to Channel 10... uses it to communicate; could use it more.
- I've got a grandchild...I get my information for their mother.
- Don't have children so I did not know where this school was located.
- Lived here 15 years and I didn't know where this school was located.

- Like to see the district use the website more. I called the superintendent's office and gave suggestions when we had the snow day. The next day information was on there.
- Is it available for parents to log in and see student records?
- Plato has a newsletter.
- Have child at middle school. We know nothing.
- Age of kid makes a difference. Elementary gets out information every week. Middle school has to depend on the student getting home with information.
- Teachers are using email.
- Improving with current superintendent, but need to improve further
- The superintendent deserves accolades.
- Long-range goals need to be broadcast.
- School's Public School Access TV Channel should be used to communicate.
- District it trying harder to communicate.
- With children, communication is better.
- Web site should be better utilized.
- Middle school communication to parents is lacking.
- Teachers are using Internet to correspond with parents.
- Communication is improving; but needs to increase.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

- I sometimes have concerns over the discipline at the middle school. Students, in my opinion, do not see lunch detention as much of a threat. There needs to be some other way of getting the students' attention that this type of behavior is not acceptable. If this means bringing back in-school detention or even after-school detention, so be it. Maybe after parents are required to pick up their child after school, the point would get across. Bottom line – something else needs to be done! What they are doing now is not working.
- Dr. Labyer is raising the bar on expected student performance.
- The 'district is improving' is more kid-centered with the current superintendent.
- Teachers, especially elementary, seem interested in children.

- DPS is staffed with excellent teachers and understaffed with aides.
- The district must improve test scores.
- Outstanding when compared to surrounding districts.
- My child's performance has declined since we moved here. DPS is behind my children's former district in level of subject being taught.
- A friend of mine moved out of town and took her children to a private school to increase performance.
- We've hosted several foreign exchange students. They all say that DPS is too easy.
- I have a special needs student at the middle school. His needs have been met.
- DPS students do not have study skills. Student refused to read a book, so the teacher allowed him to watch the movie of the book instead.
- Student performance is not remarkable. NCLB forces teachers to teach to the lowest achievers and ignore higher achieving students.
- It's difficult to recruit doctors because of the district's performance.
- Students are coming less and less prepared into the work world in Duncan.
- Students graduating from DPS are having a tough time in college. Not well prepared.
- Too many state mandates.
- I perceive a lack of options for students across all grade levels. For example, there are limited advanced placement courses at the high school, and the middle school just began honors courses this year.
- On the snow day, the teachers were called before 6:00 a.m., but I was watching the TV, and it did not appear until 7:20 a.m. It could have been on earlier if you knew and notified the teachers.
- Block scheduling – I have heard time and time again about how great block scheduling is – but very rarely do we hear about how difficult it is for the counselors to schedule the students in the classes they wish to take. When 4th hour is always athletics – and the coaches that teach these other classes are not free that last hour – we limit the scheduling process even more.
- At the middle school, why can't the students all get two electives? Is it possible to lessen each class by five minutes and add an additional hour for an elective? Do away with Advisory. What purpose does this "class" serve? None!

-
- The gifted and talented program in DPS has been a good experience for our family. The elementary/middle school program is a huge success in my opinion. The elementary students are placed in the program and allowed one pull-out day per week – without having to do homework for that day. The diverse students are 4th to 6th graders and learn to interact and challenge one another in ways they don't experience in the traditional classroom. Our students have been broadened in their educational experience in a positive way.
 - Middle school provides a program that is open to anyone who wishes to participate. It allows for enriching opportunities as a student has the time and interest.
 - High school offers some additional enriching programs that can benefit the students as they strive to reach post-high school goals. However, I do not see block scheduling as a benefit. If a teacher truly uses the entire class time for teaching, it can be beneficial; but most students can't sit and learn for one and one-half hours back-to-back, day after day. Also, the premise that an entire year of learning takes place in a semester or "block" is misleading. Either the material is too rushed through or it isn't covered at all.
 - Block scheduling at the high school needs to be phased out. You cannot take band and athletics every semester and get all of your necessary credits in. Kids need core classes, i.e., math, English, science every semester. They forget over the summer.
 - Block scheduling is not preparing kids well for college.
 - It's more economical to go to a seven-period day by the district's own admittance.
 - The "sampler" class at the middle school is hurting the band program. A town the size of Duncan should have a much larger 6th grade beginner band. The middle school also needs to go to a seven-period day with athletics as the 7th period and an additional elective for students.
 - DPS faculty and staff work very hard just to bring student achievement up to average. Only one key measure is above average, the rest are below.
 - EDGE Academy exceeded all expectations. Teachers love the challenge.
 - Student performance is improving. Better than 10 years ago.
 - 4.0 grade point averages are bogus.
 - DPS is not paying attention to top students especially at the high school.
 - Block schedule is ridiculous; just trying to get kids through school.
 - Test scores don't reflect performance. They may relax standards, may change standards and students improve their scores.
 - Don't understand block schedule ...but don't see it working.
 - We went where they changed from a seven-period day to the block schedule. My children with the block scheduled were more prepared for college.

- Know some students who say the block can be a challenge; students can't get some courses.
- Block schedule can't be good if it limits what you can take; have yet to talk to a teacher or parent that supports the system.
- Block scheduling is too easy; would like to see return to traditional scheduling.
- Block scheduling does not cover a year's worth of material in a semester.
- No Child Left Behind has limited funding on campuses for programs.
- Standard test scores can be manipulated.
- Watered down gifted program was a problem – but is changing now.
- Teaching kids to take tests takes away from educational experience.
- Emerson – advanced reader program is good – students compete against self not others.
- High performers are held back and not enough opportunities for them.
- Emerson – 4th grade students are grouped by ability – good – this should be done more in all campuses to challenge students.
- Principals/teachers need to take initiative for student performance at all levels
- Expectations are still too low academically.
- Why doesn't DPS try departmentalization?
- Why doesn't DPS try ability grouping; even if on a small scale?
- District is improving academically; but, still has a long way to go.
- DPS schools are behind other states' schools and especially private schools.
- DPS students are not taught study skills.
- The block schedule concept works against good study skills.
- The block schedule should be replaced.
- The block schedule is popular because it is easy for teachers.
- The block schedule eliminates learning from homework.
- The current superintendent knows instruction.
- Athletics cause problems in scheduling.

- NCLB has caused us to dumb-down our expectations.
- The high achiever is overlooked in Duncan.
- DPS teaches too much towards the middle.
- Classrooms are overcrowded.
- Duncan's old buildings are holding them back.
- The district pales in comparison to quality districts because of their facilities.
- Elementary schools are only as good as the principal; some are good; some are not.
- Block scheduling is a problem.
- Gifted program is a joke.
- Teachers teach to test; not how to learn.
- DPS was state academic champs last year.
- Grade inflation it out of control.
- Students are not performing well; just testing better.
- Schools are not properly preparing students for college.
- Block scheduling prevents taking classes one can take.
- In block scheduling, extracurricular takes up one-half of time.
- Why does DPS exempt from final exams?

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

- DPS has been doing a good job financially lately. However, the amount of money it costs to support the block schedule needs to be considered if we are in a position of big budget cuts. Before the system does away with programs in the elementary and middle schools, restructuring the high plan should be the first consideration.
- Overall financial management of the district is good. People complain but don't understand.
- District is hamstrung financially by what it gets from the state.
- Financial resources are limited.
- Some of the district's money-managers came through teaching ranks; thus, not trained.

- District is improving in the management of its money.

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- The high school buildings are showing their age. The auditorium and music, band and drama rooms need to be updated. Some structural damage to the auditorium walls is very apparent.
- The district did an extensive assessment of facilities needs – Vision 20/20. Developed to enhance the community’s understanding of why a new bond issue is needed.
- In need of facilities upgrade.
- Crowded.
- Upkeep is suffering; band-aid is paint
- Moved here five years ago. Didn’t like what I saw. Want updated schools.
- Lack of communication on need for improvements in facilities. If superintendent has spoken to them, then people are likely to be supportive.
- Support staff does a nice job of keeping buildings clean.
- At Woodrow Wilson School classrooms are outside, which makes it necessary for children to go out into the weather to get from classrooms to the main building. This is hard on them during cold or rainy weather.
- Buildings are kept clean but looking dated.
- At Woodrow Wilson, children are outside without supervision. Classroom doors open outside.
- Electrical wiring is old and outdated. Fire hazard.
- As a parent, I have seen things I don’t agree with. Adults (teachers, assistants…) being harsh with children. Screaming! At the children! In their faces! I believe school should provide a loving health environment, not one that makes children nervous or scared. Learning is difficult when you are scared.
- Cameras at the various schools have added a lot to the security of those schools. Hopefully, this will continue to deter fights or criminal activity.
- When people come into the district from other places, the initial impression is that the facilities are dated.
- People can walk into schools and not be stopped. Elementary schools more protective, high school very lax – you can go into the buildings from the back.
- I like the fact that they do drills at the middle school.

- This district seems to be reactive instead of proactive where safety is concerned, especially at the elementary level. Concerned parents over the past years have gotten certain issues improved, but it is usually initially met with resistance.
- The cameras this year are an improvement.
- Visitors to any campus should check in with the office, no exceptions – should be enforced.
- The recess ratio of faculty to students at the elementary schools should not be greater than 50:1.
- Morning drop off at the elementary schools should be supervised.
- Public doesn't believe there are gangs in the schools, but there are.
- Old except for the middle school.
- Think they have tried to make buildings as fresh as possible with new paint.
- Spent a lot of money to update the high school with the new science building.
- Anyone can walk in. Sign says to sign in but not everyone does.
- Not very secure.
- School lets fifth grade students be crossing guard...that's a concern.
- See some parents in cars just go around the student guards.
- No adults present when students are dropped off early in the morning. No one outside.
- Took us forever to get them to put up a fence
- Two entrances at Plato; confusing.
- When I go to central high I go in and sign in...don't know if they would stop you...always signed in.
- Parking lot at Plato used by younger drivers.
- Mark Twain has a task force to check the playground equipment for safety. Met one time last year.
- Need more bond funding.
- Need bond funding for the stadium.
- Facility upgrades are inequitable by campus.
- There is gang activity.
- Schools are generally safe.

- DMS has 32 security cameras.
- Facility conditions have bearing on safety/security.
- The high school's multiple building: there are places for students and non-students to "hide".
- Facilities have improved somewhat; but are still very old and lacking.
- Facilities must be improved. Pride issues persist because of poor facilities.
- Bond funds seem to be used for things not approved in bond issues.
- Better communication on facility needs, bond issues and related items would help.
- Security at schools is pretty good.
- Middle school design benefits discipline and safety.
- Procedures for lockdowns and emergencies are in place.
- Duncan's schools are good; but not modern in design or practice.
- There is room for improvement in safety.
- Kids feel secure in schools.
- Middle school construction provides great atmosphere and safety.
- Security cameras are great.
- Schools seem a little lax on security; however, nothing bad is happening.
- Crossing guard duties by students are risky.
- Elementary outside supervision seems lax.
- Procedures for ingress-egress to schools are not enforced.
- Campus administrators do not enforce student code of conduct.
- High school administrators lack courage in dealing with discipline.
- Access to schools should be limited to one area.
- Lighting seems limited for campus activities; safety for patrons.
- School safety zones seem to be too short.
- Some students don't feel safe at high school for lack of oversight.

- Physical arrangement at high school causes safety concern.
- Drugs are readily available on the high school campus.
- Open campus concept is detrimental to student safety.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Child Nutrition

- At the elementary level, the cafeteria seems to offer a good selection of nutritious foods.
- Doing a great job of offering foods that the elementary children like to eat.
- My son loves the choices at lunch at the middle school.
- There is no choice at lunch at the elementary schools. As a result, my child may not eat.
- Don't like the open campus at the high school at lunch.
- What's in the vending machines? Has that changed?
- Is there a lunch option at the middle school?
- My son doesn't like eating at the middle school. Brings a lunch.
- My youngest eats at the elementary school every day. The selection of food is getting better: apples, oranges, etc.
- Was it better when contracted? Don't know if it was.
- Ala carte line ...question the nutritional standards.
- If I were a parent, I wouldn't appreciate my child eating pizza everyday
- Gave my child cash...found he could not use his regular account for ala carte line.
- Breakfast program good – improves student performance.
- Carb heavy meals.
- Not enough greens – but kids won't eat.
- Lunch lines too long.
- Not enough time for lunch – 25 minutes for six classes to get through lunch.
- Dealing with student socio-economic differences at lunch is important.

- Some parents bring fast food for their kids to school every day.
- Food service is necessity; but below standard.
- Selection of food is now greater; thus, cafeteria program is improving.
- Pizza line may be too enticing and thus, takes away from the regular program.

Transportation

- Transportation is very friendly and helpful. The Transportation director does a great job of scheduling transportation for the various activities.
- My children ride the bus home everyday, and I am very pleased with the service. The driver operates the bus safely, is always courteous, and reliably on time.
- The department rearranged a route to accommodate more students and had more pickup/drop-off points. Also, they addressed a bullying situation on the bus.
- Why can't we ask parents to park appropriately so students can be dropped off safely?
- Love it; prompt, safe.
- Transportation system is commended; but, evidently too expensive because students are not separated by age on buses; a problem.
- I work at elementary school. We have some elementary students riding the bus with high school age students. Have had a few threatened.
- Need modern activity bus for athletics.

Computers and Technology

- Directors of computers and technology do a great job of keeping up with new equipment and technology. They are very knowledgeable and friendly. The district seems to recognize the importance of this area and supports it well.
- The Technology Department is doing a fabulous job! Thank you so much for having such knowledgeable and friendly individuals.
- The district does a good job of keeping up-to-date computers in the schools.
- Too much use of TV! At drop off in the morning, at lunch, at rest (kindergarten), at snack and my daughter says at times when they can't go out to play.
- I visited Mark Twain Elementary School with Leadership Duncan and observed that the facility could not accommodate technology needs.
- More technology is available at the middle school than at the elementary schools. On-line communications, calendar, etc.

- At the high school, teachers refuse to use technology.
- Mark Twain has engaged teachers to use technology. Several teachers are “over the top” and are used as models.
- Insufficient access to student info by parents.
- Need more upgrades district wide.
- Computers are old.
- Not enough computers in labs.
- Some computers not working on daily basis.
- Wireless applications at Emerson.
- Parent access not yet available or limited to certain things.
- Access to technology is improving; electrical wiring needs upgrading.
- More computers are needed.
- Many teachers have not moved into the 21st century in their use of technology.
- Some teachers help students access technology; many are not into technology.
- More and better technology is needed. More computers are needed.
- Parents would be better served if the district used on-line procedures.
- High school teachers respond well to email inquiries.
- Technology has been upgraded by previous bond issue.
- Elementary students are being properly exposed to technology.

Appendix F:
Enrollment Projections

Duncan Public Schools - Cohort Fall Enrollment Projection Model

SY	PK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Class of	PK to 8	9 to 12	TOTAL
96-97	1	286	399	301	296	307	303	294	290	298	326	296	253	235	1997	2,775	1,110	3,885
97-98	66	281	351	312	280	298	285	299	268	275	332	310	245	259	1998	2,715	1,146	3,861
98-99	78	275	353	270	312	286	300	284	320	251	304	316	270	223	1999	2,729	1,113	3,842
99-00	160	256	358	259	264	314	275	284	277	290	301	305	258	258	2000	2,737	1,122	3,859
00-01	153	280	319	270	254	258	290	266	284	271	298	301	263	251	2001	2,645	1,113	3,758
01-02	199	263	343	240	257	243	263	281	273	290	275	289	255	253	2002	2,652	1,072	3,724
02-03	195	291	296	262	241	251	254	274	272	269	324	273	245	232	2003	2,605	1,074	3,679
03-04	184	316	306	257	261	256	260	248	262	267	303	287	228	251	2004	2,617	1,069	3,686
04-05	204	309	315	249	256	266	267	248	250	257	305	282	245	218	2005	2,621	1,050	3,671
05-06	186	317	321	284	250	251	264	264	260	259	283	297	231	227	2006	2,656	1,038	3,694
06-07	223	304	289	306	266	263	252	274	270	244	280	286	262	226	2007	2,691	1,054	3,745
07-08	204	316	279	281	311	261	260	248	267	257	276	264	234	208	2008	2,684	982	3,666
08-09	223	320	324	240	277	317	267	260	248	263	286	265	224	224	2009	2,739	999	3,738
09-10	222	335	328	279	237	282	324	267	260	244	293	274	224	215	2010	2,779	1,006	3,785
10-11	216	334	344	282	275	241	289	324	267	256	272	281	233	215	2011	2,829	1,000	3,829
11-12	230	325	342	296	279	280	247	289	324	263	285	261	238	223	2012	2,875	1,007	3,882
12-13		346	333	295	292	284	287	247	289	319	293	273	221	228	2013		1,016	
13-14			355	286	291	297	290	287	247	285	356	281	232	212	2014		1,080	
14-15				305	283	296	304	290	287	243	317	341	238	222	2015		1,119	
15-16					302	288	303	304	291	282	271	304	289	228	2016		1,093	
16-17						307	295	303	305	286	315	260	258	277	2017		1,109	
17-18							314	294	303	300	319	302	220	247	2018		1,088	
18-19								314	295	299	334	305	256	211	2019		1,106	
19-20									315	290	333	320	259	245	2020		1,157	
20-21										310	323	319	271	248	2021		1,161	
21-22											345	310	270	260	2022		1,185	
22-23												331	263	259	2023			
23-24													280	252	2024			
24-25														269	2025			

Enrollment projections based on five year retention rate.
Does not include non-graded or out-of-home placement.

5 Year Retention	K to 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 6	6 to 7	7 to 8	8 to 9	9 to 10	10 to 11	11 to 12
	1.02	0.86	0.99	1.02	1.02	1.00	1.00	0.98	1.11	0.96	0.85	0.96

Appendix G:
Facilities Walk-through

Facilities Walk-through: Maintenance, Safety, and Security Needs

Duncan High School

- The review team noted that the restroom sinks at the main building have hot water supplied to them creating a potential safety issue for students. It should be verified whether the water temperature is metered to prevent scalding. The hot water service to these restrooms should be eliminated for safety purposes.
- Numerous stained ceiling tiles were noted in most of the buildings indicating either roof leaks or condensation problems with the HVAC equipment and piping that need to be addressed.
- Numerous ceiling tiles were noted missing during our site visit.

Duncan Middle School

- In the main entry, the review team noted large joints in the vinyl floor tile. This should be reported to the architect of record and general contractor as this could be the result of faulty installation.
- The carpet installation in the 8th grade wing is bubbling in numerous locations. The architect and general contractor should be notified of this condition so that it may be corrected as a warranty item.
- The principal reported there are not enough water fountains installed in the facility.
- Mezzanine areas in the band and choir rooms are being used for storage via a ladder. Proper and safe access to this area should be considered to avoid injury to students or staff.
- Evidence of moisture in the brick veneer was present at the western building exterior corner outside of Room 251. This condition should be investigated further to ensure no moisture is present inside the wall that could potentially cause indoor air quality problems.

EDGE Academy

- The main electrical panel located in the basement is in close proximity to a water source. This condition increases the risk of electrocution and damage to the electrical equipment. This electrical service should be relocated to the first floor to eliminate this safety concern.
- Exterior door locks are in need of replacement according to the principal.
- The exterior doors at the gymnasium building are being secured by use of a locking bar and chain which is in violation of fire codes.
- The weight room located on the second floor of the gymnasium building probably has asbestos-containing ceiling tile installed and can easily be damaged by students.
- The science laboratory at the second floor of the main building did not have an eye wash station installed.

Emerson Elementary School

- There is a solid brick wall that shrouds the main entrance. This wall inhibits visibility and increases the possibility of an intruder or contraband being concealed at the entrance to the building.
- Bubbles in the carpet and separated carpet seams are in need of repair in the addition. According to the custodian, this has been reported to the general contractor for scheduling of the repairs.
- A copier and paper storage is located within an electrical room which is against fire codes. The copier should be relocated and stored paper removed from the electrical room.
- Additional electrical is needed in the special education classroom and office area.
- The router closet door was found open during our visit. In addition, no air conditioning is provided to the network hub closet and ceiling tiles were removed to help provide some ventilation in the space.
- The Scrap Master located in the kitchen is not working.
- At the building addition exterior, the paint on the downspouts was peeling, indicating that the surface was not properly prepared and/or the wrong type paint was used. The district should address this issue with the architect of record and the general contractor to have this condition corrected.

Irving Pre-K Center

- Ponding water was noted in the playground area located at the south end of the building, indicating site drainage modifications are needed at this site.
- No air conditioning was provided to storage room where network equipment is located.
- Ramp to Cafeteria area is not ADA compliant and has no handrail installed on either side of corridor.
- A crack was noted in the CMU wall located in the southwest corner of the gymnasium.
- Signage should be added at main electrical service disconnects for fire department per code requirements.
- Some existing building plans were being stored off the stage area. These plans should be relocated to the plan file storage location offsite at Lee Elementary School.
- Fire evacuation diagrams were noted in the gymnasium and classroom areas, but no fire evacuation diagrams were noted in the temporary office areas being utilized by the district administration.
- An exit sign was missing in the cafeteria and should be added to meet current fire codes. It was noted that there was not a pull station by the exterior cafeteria doors which is typically required to meet fire codes.
- The lockable thermostat cover in the library was left open.
- Miscellaneous combustible school materials were being stored in an electrical closet located off the cafeteria service corridor which is a violation of the fire code.

- A custodial closet adjacent to restrooms appears to have asbestos containing ceiling tiles.

Horace Mann Elementary School

- Library materials are currently being stored in electrical switchgear room which is a violation of fire codes.
- An exit light is needed at the new pair of double doors at the gymnasium.
- Stained ceiling tiles were noted in the cafeteria area. It appears to be condensation leaks from the HVAC equipment, which maintenance should investigate and correct accordingly.
- Power strips are being used in the computer lab indicating additional electrical service is needed in this space.

Plato Elementary School

- The public entrance to Plato Elementary School is not within view of the main office staff.
- Several classroom and support spaces in the building did not have fire evacuation diagrams posted near the exit for the space.
- Handrails were not installed at the interior ramps. Ramps were not ADA compliant.
- The playground fall area material needs to be redistributed so as to be located under the equipment.

Will Rogers Elementary School

- Additional parking is needed at this campus and there is congestion at the student drop-off that needs to be addressed per discussions with the principal.
- Roof leaks were indicated by stained ceiling tiles in the library area.
- Custodial closets were not locked at the time of our visit. These closets should be locked at all times since cleaning chemicals are typically stored in these spaces. If doors are not lockable, replacement of existing locksets should be addressed.

Mark Twain Elementary School

- The principal was concerned that the playground had unrestricted access to an adjacent creek. Security fencing of the playground for student safety should be addressed.
- There is a concern that students are exposed to the elements once they leave the classrooms.

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School

- Because of the facility's age, most classrooms open directly to the outdoors, causing students to be exposed to the elements while walking to and from restrooms, cafeteria, and other areas.

- The entry to the administration area is very small and congested creating problems for the campus administration.
- Staff restrooms are not ADA compliant.
- Several classroom doors do not have vision panels creating a possible security problem for teachers.
- There is an overall lack of storage at this campus. It was noted that teachers are storing classroom materials in front of the AC closet doors and blocking the return air vent.

General Comments

- Consideration should be given to replace the existing chalkboards with marker boards to provide greater flexibility for classroom instruction.
- Most schools are in need of substantial electrical service upgrades to support technology upgrades needed for student instruction.
- Additional cooling is required at network hub locations in district facilities. Without additional cooling provisions, the network is at significant risk from overheating. Most hubs were not located in secure areas creating security risks for the district.
- There were multiple electrical services at many facilities due to building additions over the years. These electrical service locations and disconnects need to be properly identified and labeled for fire department shut off as per code requirements.
- In general, 2 x 4 ceiling tiles are installed in most facilities and numerous tiles are stained. The maintenance department in conjunction with on-site custodians should develop a plan to replace these stained tiles and investigate if these conditions have been caused by condensation problems related to the HVAC systems or whether they are roof leaks. It is extremely important that any moisture infiltration into building spaces should be reported to the maintenance department by campus personnel so that these conditions can be investigated and corrected.
- Space heaters were noted being utilized in various offices and classroom spaces. Usage of space heaters should be discouraged.
- Numerous Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance issues were observed at most campuses. The long range facilities plan should evaluate and include options to install proper ADA access to building entries and access to restrooms. The district should consider adding signage at all building entries to indicate contacting the main office if someone is in need of assistance due to a disability. Each campus should have a plan in place to address access assistance.
- MSDS were not consistently located in custodial closets where cleaning chemicals are being stored. However, current MSDS were located in a binder in the principal's office.

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