



*Our core purpose is to educate
and inspire all students to reach
their full potential, equipped to
be positive, contributing
members of society.*





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Introduction

In August of 2015, the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts was contacted by Greater Albany Public Schools. The District mentioned that they would be interested in some type of review regarding their school district operations. They had recently hired a new superintendent and it was the optimum time to perform such a study.

The Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts recruited a strong team to do the work if the project came to pass. The team met with Jim Golden, the new superintendent, on September 8, 2015 to discuss the possible project. Following that meeting, the team agreed to design and submit a formal proposal, including deliverables, a timeline and a budget. That proposal was submitted to the Board of Directors on September 28, 2015. Subsequently, the Board approved the proposal and the beginning of the work.

The team met with the superintendent to present several questions and to discuss the district documents that would be needed going forward. Mr. Golden was enthusiastic about the project and he and his staff fully cooperated with every request of the team. Mr. Golden and the team scheduled a two-day visitation of the district to visit all schools and to perform a comprehensive information gathering regarding the district's operations within the thirteen identified areas of study. The visitation took place on November 9-10 with one additional day for several members of the team. All staff members were extremely cooperative and the team had an opportunity to interview two of the Board members. They provided a great perspective on the district from a board member's point of reference.

The team then went to work on writing up their findings and gathering, by phone and email, any additional data needed. All parts of the report were then delivered to the superintendent in January, 2016 followed by the full report on March 2, 2016.

Review Areas Included

- Administrative and Instructional Technology
- Business Management Systems
- Communications
- Facilities Use and Maintenance
- Framework of Schools
- Management Structure
- Nutrition Systems
- Performance Accountability Systems
- Personnel Systems
- Safety and Security Systems
- Staffing Pattern
- Transportation
- Transition to a Multi-Year Strategic Plan

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Administrative and Instructional Technology

Background

This chapter provides a review of administrative and instructional technology use and support in the Greater Albany School District. Instructional technology is a focus on the effective use of different technologies in the classroom to improve and enhance learning. Administrative technologies are the resources that support administrative applications in turn that support the overall operations of the school system. The district's Digital Learning plan addresses primarily instructional technology for staff and students. This plan is to be used to create a district technology plan that supports the Digital Learning plan. The Digital Learning Plan addresses staff development needs but lacks the specifics of how to meet these goals. The lack of specifics causes the school district to lag behind many other comparatively sized school districts when it comes to the use of technology in the schools. The objectives of the district technology plan should include administrative uses of technology, digital learning and long term district equipment needs. An optimal time to initiate this process would be prior to the adoption of a new budget cycle for the school district.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Technology Planning

The district has a digital learning plan that provides direction for instructional technology decision making. What is missing is a comprehensive district technology plan that includes administrative uses of technology. The district needs to have a discussion on what should be the true goals of the district when it comes to instructional and administrative technology. This discussion needs to include a timeframe for completing this work along with an appropriate budget.

The district needs to build on the work completed for the initial version of the Digital Learning plan. There needs to be a comprehensive discussion about a digital conversion in the district. Digital conversion refers to the transformation from a paper based world to a primarily digital world. In this type of scenario all students and every teacher have access to personal computing devices and the Internet anytime and anywhere. What would this mean to the Albany School District?

Digital conversion has the power to change the nature of teaching and learning. Digital conversion affects instruction, pedagogy, professional development, student and teacher motivation, student and teacher roles, learning experiences and relationships. Digital conversion allows educators to level the playing field and provide every student with anytime/anywhere access to resources and the opportunity to develop the skills they need in the workplaces of the future.

Creating a district technology plan that includes the work of your Digital Learning plan is paramount. Once this plan is created and vetted, it needs to be funded annually. Their needs to be a district vision on technology use and all staff and administrators need to be on the same page with the expectations of the implementation plan. Each school should not be doing their own thing in regards to the implementation of a technology plan. Their needs to be a coordinated effort to meet the goals of the technology plan. Timelines with specific goals must be included in the plan and a determination made as to who is responsible for meeting the timelines for the district. The district needs to consider appointing someone as the full-time technology director for the district so that adequate attention is given to all the many instructional technology needs of the district. This person would coordinate district wide efforts and would be the one who helps drive the implementation of the district technology plan. With this kind of coordinated effort, the GAPS could become a leader in the state of Oregon such as Bend LaPine and Canby when it comes to the use of technology in schools.



The key to the success of meeting your goals of your district technology plan is creating a long term professional development plan on the integration of technology in the classroom that is tied to performance indicators for all staff as part of their evaluation system.

The district should consider contacting and visiting some schools that have already implemented 1 to 1 or digital conversion programs for student and staff use of computers, tablets and smart phones. Suggested places to visit could be Astoria, Bend LaPine and Crook County to name just a few school districts where innovative things are being implemented for students and staff with technology. The information gained from these site visits will help guide the implementation of more tools for teacher and student usage. Reviewing ways other school districts have deployed technology, started digital conversions and how these activities are funded across Oregon and Washington should give the district ideas on how to best meet the goals of their technology plan

The district should consider a 5-year technology plan that is tied to a specific line item in the district budget for implementation of tools and infrastructure. This could mean leasing or the purchase of laptops, tablets, servers, printers, wireless access points and additional smart boards to upgrading the network and implementing a VOIP (Voice over IP) solution districtwide.

Commendations:

- The district has a comprehensive digital learning plan that provides direction for instructional technology decision making.
- The creation out of a robust Internet infrastructure in conjunction with the LBLESD.

Recommendations:

- Include the Digital Technology Plan as part of a wider district technology plan. Make the decision on what type of digital conversion you want for staff and students and then fund the plan annually with the goal of meeting the plans 3-5-year implementation schedule.
- Get all staff and administrators on the same page as to expectations of instructional use in the school district. Create a long term professional development plan on the move to a digital educational environment. The integration of performance indicators on digital education should be a part of the district evaluation system.
- Identify someone to oversee district instructional and informational technology with the primary driver being instructional technology. This person along with the two people overseeing Instructional and Informational technology must work together to achieve the timelines and goals of the district technology plan and have the authority to do what needs to be completed to be successful.

Cost-Effective Technology Acquisition

The district acquires technology in a cost-effective manner that will best meet its instructional and administrative needs.

It is difficult to determine if the district has achieved the goal of acquiring technology in a cost effective manner. There seems to be confusion about why some technologies were purchased and others were not and why the deployment of technology seems more site based and led by principals versus a district wide plan that meets the needs of all the student and staff. Schools making individual technology purchases that are not part of a district wide purchasing plan are not a cost effective way to spend limited dollars. Once the district technology plan is created, the process to explore the best purchasing options available can proceed. Implementation of the goals of the plan need to then move into full swing. Having one person who oversees Instructional and Informational technology should help in directing and acquiring appropriate technology in a cost effective way.

Commendations:

- Use of the district's very high E-rate percentage to leverage on-going IT infrastructure needs.
- There seems to be enough staff to meet the informational technology needs of the district going forward.

Recommendations:

- The district works to create recommendations on purchasing timelines for new and replacement technologies.
- Make instructional technology and informational technology separate line items in a district wide budget
- Centralize purchasing of all technology and only use site based purchases of technology for district pilot projects.
- Look at other schools to see how they have moved towards a digital education environment focusing on the deployment of technology and how it was funded. Learn from the mistakes and successes at Astoria High School, Crook County Middle School and the 1 to 1 effort in the Bend LaPine Schools.

Technology Professional Development

District and school-based staff receive professional development training for all technologies used in the district.

As with many school districts, professional development for teachers in regards to new technologies and tools is an on-going challenge. The district has established what is needed to be done to create a device infused classroom and how students will use it. Unfortunately, professional development for staff to make this happen is not occurring at a pace that is needed for the students and staff in this school district.



In this digital world there needs to be greater utilization of online tools to deliver training to staff via products like Adobe Connect, BlueJeans and GoToMeeting. This training also has to be prioritized highly by the district and someone has to be held responsible to make sure the type of training that is needed is provided to all staff in a timely and cost efficient manner.

Commendations:

- Having two highly qualified Teachers On Special Assignment (TOSA) dedicated to staff training in regards to instructional technology.
- Having a plan in place to train staff tied to a new Digital Learning plan.
- Having the TOSA's report to the assistant superintendent of instruction to emphasize the importance of their respective work.

Recommendations:

- Make professional development in technology, a district wide focus and not a site by site initiative or emphasis.
- Use staff to revise the teacher evaluation tool to include the use of technology in a digital classroom which can help emphasize the integrated use of technology in the classroom.



Technical Support

The district provides timely and cost-effective technical support that enables educators and district staff to successfully implement technology in the workplace.

The CFO meets with Information Technology Director monthly to review technology support priorities and timelines. If the school district hired a cabinet level person to oversee Informational and Instructional Technology this person should report directly to the superintendent instead of the CFO. Currently the school district contracts via the LBL ESD for their student information system (SIS). The district also receives some staffing support in the amount of about 1.5 fte from the ESD to help with informational technology needs in the school district. Due to the fact that the current filtering solution and some less than optimal computers deployed with teachers, it seems that folks have turned away from trying to use some technologies in their classrooms.

Commendations:

- Using some of your ESD dollars to support your technology infrastructure.

Recommendations:

- Annually survey staff to see if they are getting the timely support they need to use technology appropriately in their workplaces.
- Implement not only a timeline for purchase of equipment for technical support but also appoint someone to make sure needed purchases and trainings are being completed in a timely fashion.
- Report annually to staff and administration about the amount of request turned in for technical support, how long each support ticket takes to get resolved and determine if the current support system in place is meeting the needs of staff and students.
- Explore options of staff utilizing student information system applications via iPads, tablets and smartphones for further utilization of the student information system
- Work with the ESD to complete an annual information technology assessment to meet the district's technology plan now and in the future.
- Consider implementing a review of student information systems with an eye towards either keeping or adopting a new SIS that meets the needs of the school district now and in the future.





Infrastructure and Network Communication

The district maintains a dependable, standards-based infrastructure employing strategies that cost-effectively maximize network and Internet access and performance.

The district has a very robust infrastructure in place for a school district of this size. Connectivity to most of the schools is at least 100mbps with only 5 small rural schools with connections of somewhere between 10-40mbps. The efforts of the school district in conjunction with the ESD have set up the district for the future as they make decisions on where to go with instructional and informational technology. A review of future Internet bandwidth needs will be required as the district considers additional use of wireless tools and technologies for instructional use to meet the Digital Learning Plan. The current infrastructure should also be able to handle the future implementation of an up to date VOIP solution for the entire school district. The infrastructure of the district seems poised to address the addition of more wireless access points and devices although work has to be done to address the security and access of current routers, switches and servers in the district.

Commendations:

- The fiber connections to the schools are outstanding and seem to be scalable for the future needs of the district.
- The standardization of equipment within the network infrastructure.
- The implementation of Active Directory.

Recommendations:

- Determine future bandwidth needs that are tied to future student use of different technologies such as tablets, laptops, smart phones and other wireless devices.
- Consider the deployment of a VOIP solution for all the schools to address communication and school safety needs. This can be a cost effective solution to intra-district communication and be an additional resource for emergency communications in the district.
- Determine whether current connectivity at each school would be adequate if within 5 years each student had their own digital device accessing the network.



The district uses technology to improve communication.

The district utilizes many different tools to communicate with staff and parents. The consistent use of the same template for most school home pages allows for clean communication as parents move between different schools. The LBLED SIS does allow parent access to information on attendance, grades and discipline on each child.

Commendations:

- School and District web pages are up to date and provide the parents and community relative easy access to needed information.
- Allowing parent access to certain student information via the student information system.

Recommendations:

- Prioritize implementation of technologies, such as Twitter, for emergency communication with district staff employees and parents/guardians.
- Require each school to use the same basic home page template for communication via the WWW



The district has written policies that apply safe, ethical, and appropriate usage practices that comply with legal and professional standards.

The district has standard policies tied to the safe and appropriate use of technology by staff and students. Most of these policies are up to date but several need to be reviewed that were last updated in 2001 and 2009. In an area where technology changes so quickly, an annual or bi-annual review of polices tied to technology would be a wise investment of the board members' time and energy. Monitoring of staff agreements to following district polices on use of technology should be an annual process completed via a web based tool.

Commendations:

- Board policies that are searchable and are easy to find via OSBA.
- Most policies related to technology and computers and the Internet are up to date.

Recommendations:

- Annually monitor staff agreement to follow written guidelines via a web based monitoring tool.



Information Management and Delivery

The district has established general controls in the areas of access, systems development and maintenance, documentation, operations, and physical security to promote the proper functioning of the information systems department.

The district utilizes internal staff and the LBL ESD for some of their information management and technical support. The staff seems very knowledgeable about the informational side of technology but at the same time instructional staff believe they are not getting enough support from this department whether it involves timely installations or access to blocked web sites. There seems to be a serious cultural rift between what the tech support department believes they are providing in a timely fashion versus what actual instructional staff believes is the case. This is partly due in part to instructional staff not knowing the roles, goals and expectations for the technology support staff. Better communication of expectations would go a long way in addressing this issue. This is very common in many school districts.



Commendations:

- For having a robust network and adequate staff to support a school district of this size.

Recommendations:

- There needs to be a better connection between the informational technology support staff and the students and staff they serve. The culture of the information technology staff must be one of fully supporting instructional staff to meet the needs of the students in a timely fashion.
- Introduction of a single log in for staff to district tools and applications.
- The information needs of administrative and instructional personnel are met by applying appropriate project management techniques to define schedule, track and evaluate purchasing, developing, and the timing of delivering IT products and services requested.

The information technology staff has the correct tools to project manage for the school district. Unfortunately, because there is no centralized buying or coordination of activities in the district for technology and schools do their own thing, it is very hard for a staff like this to meet the needs of all the schools and teachers in a timely fashion.

Commendations:

- Having appropriate tools to meet their job expectations from an IT staff point of view.
- A nice facility for IT staff to work in when they are not in schools.

Recommendations:

- The board and administration should look into the practice of 90 and 120-day project cycles. A report on the success of a project is made within this 90-120-day time frame within the information and instructional technology departments.
- Consider moving the Information and Instructional technology staff under a new Director of Technology who reports directly to the Superintendent.
- Require the district to use a centralized purchasing department of technology tied to the district technology plan and budget for capital expenditures on an annual basis.



Prioritized Recommendations:

- Include the Digital Technology Plan as part of a wider district technology plan. Make the decision on what type of digital conversion you want for staff and students and then fund the plan annually with the goal of meeting the plans 3-5-year implementation schedule.
- Get all staff and administrators on the same page as to expectations of instructional technology use in the school district. Create a long term professional development plan on the move to a digital educational environment. The integration of performance indicators on digital education should be a part of the district evaluation system.
- There needs to be a better connection between the informational technology support staff and the students and staff they serve. The culture of the information technology staff must be one of fully supporting instructional staff to meet the needs of the students in a timely fashion.
- Someone needs to be responsible for district instructional technology and another person for informational technology. These two people must work together to achieve the timelines and goals of the district technology plan and have the authority to do what needs to be completed to be successful.
- Centralize purchasing of all technology and only use site based purchases of technology for district pilot projects.
- Make professional development a district wide focus in technology and not a site by site initiative or emphasis.
- Use staff to revise the teacher evaluation tool to include the use of technology in a digital classroom.
- Work with the ESD to complete annual information technology assessment to meet the district's technology plan now and in the future.
- Consider implementing a review of student information systems with an eye towards either keeping or adopting a new SIS that meets the needs of the school district now and in the future.
- Consider the deployment of a VOIP solution for all the schools to address communication and school safety needs
- Convene a district group of educators to discuss the appropriateness of a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) to school for teachers and students and how that might impact your educational efforts and your network infrastructure going forward.





Business Management Systems

Background

This chapter provides a review and overview of the Greater Albany School Districts Business Management Systems. Business management systems are those systems that help the school District with accounting functions, manage purchases, building a budget and its risk management profile.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Financial Management

Financial management covers the Greater Albany's financial services staff, written procedures covering financial policies, financial systems overview and discusses procedures with regards to expenditures.

The Greater Albany School District has made it a hallmark to ensure that they run as efficiently and effectively as possible with the fewest staff possible to accomplish that. The district should be very proud of that fact. However, while running a lean operation to get the day to day work done, it is difficult to make system and technical advancements to lessen administrative burdens throughout the district. For example there was mentioned a desire for the district to go paperless in certain accounting areas. This would be a great initiative to help relieve some administrative burden, help with document retention and retrieval and improve overall information flow across the district. However, with current staffing it would be incredibly difficult if not impossible to implement this project.



The District should consider increasing the business office staff by one FTE. Therefore the district could provide accounting relief for the controller, so that position could relieve some responsibilities for the Business Operations Director to lead different improvement initiatives. Another option would be to hire a short-term project management position and use some contract dollars to help deliver a couple of big projects (paperless accounts payable, pcard automation, centralized IT purchasing) to determine the long-term value of the projects.

Another area that should be focused on are building visits and training. There are currently no written business procedure manuals at the individual buildings. Procedure manuals help set expectations, ease administration and help with the District's closing process to improve information. Also, regular visits in the buildings help with visibility, transparency and can improve overall confidence and efficiencies. These procedures would cover all accounting, cash and purchasing type activities. We would recommend making this part of the Controller or Business Operations Manager work plan as part of the above staffing decision.

Commendations:

- Dedicated business office staff
- Longevity of staff

Recommendations:

- Look to increase current staffing resources to be able to implement process improvement projects.
- Regular visits to buildings for training, process review and input.



Internal Controls

Internal controls are a system designed to promote efficiency or assure the implementation of a policy or safeguard assets or avoid fraud and error, etc.

At the Greater- Albany School District despite the small size of the staff the internal control systems are generally good. Cash procedures are followed, triple matching of invoices is issued and payroll is completed timely and accurately.

As mentioned in the previous section, the District still has processes that could be improved through automation. Manual processes tend to lead to duplication of efforts, additional opportunity for error and difficulty in storing, retrieval and reporting of data. Automating processes where possible will lead to a stronger internal control system, better information delivery and minimizing duplication of efforts.

Also the increase in regular building visits, procedures manuals and training, mentioned above, will also help in continuing to strengthen the internal control system.



Commendations:

- Internal controls are generally good

Recommendations:

- Continue to look at areas to automate processes, to lower the potential for errors, improve reporting and reduce duplication of efforts

External Auditor

An external auditor is a licensed CPA firm that annually reviews the Districts Financial Statements to ensure that they are free from material misstatement. The District currently uses Pauly Rogers and Co., PC.

The District follows best practices and solicits for three years of auditing services with the option of a possible extension of two more years. This solicitation is completed every 5 years in hopes of getting the best value for these services.

Commendations:

- External auditor annually reviews statements
- Best practice of soliciting regularly for audit services

Recommendations:

- No additional recommendations at this time



Cash Management

Cash management covers the handling and tracking of cash transactions.

The district generally has good cash controls. The district has a person dedicated to bank reconciliations. One way to make cash controls even stronger is the regular visits and training mentioned above. This will keep business office staff out in the buildings and help in clarifying expectations if there was a question regarding opportunities for improvement.

Another area that the district should look at streamlining is building use fees. Currently policies are at the individual building level and not set at the district level. A review and implementation of a common fee system would add clarity and transparency to building rent fees.

Commendations:

- District has a current cash management process

Recommendations:

- District business office implement regular building visits and training
- Review building use fees and set a common fee system across the district.



Capital Asset Management

Capital asset management practices are the care and recording of the school Districts assets.

The District has also developed and funded a bus purchase plan to regularly replace its bus fleet over time. However, the district has no formal capital asset inventory program outside of some technology services. It is recommended to develop a District wide Capital Inventory to determine condition and existence if physical capital assets. This will not only give the district the confidence in the existence of the assets, but it will also double as a base line for asset condition and replacement timing.

Commendations:

- A bus purchase plan is in place
- Business systems in place to ensure assets are recorded

Recommendations:

- District should complete a regular inventory of all its capital assets





Debt Management

Debt management is the District's ability to review its debt load, make timely payments and report on the debt.

The District has chosen to report the debt in the notes of its financial statements.

The District manages its debt within normal limits and is detailed in the notes of the District's financial statements. We have no recommendations.

Commendations:

- District has a manageable debt load

Recommendations:

- No additional recommendations in this area



Risk Management

Risk management is the District's ability to forecast and evaluate financial risks together with the identification of procedures to avoid or minimize their impact.

The District currently participates in the PACE program for its insurance needs and self-insures the first 100 thousand dollars of any claim. The risk program responsibility is currently spread amongst the business operations manager and others across the district. While the claims history is relatively low currently, giving an individual or contracting for someone that Risk Management is a specific part of their work plan would be recommended to ensure that this trend continues. This could be achieved, either by hiring an individual to cover this specific task or to free additional time of an individual in the business office for this type of work. A more detailed assessment of the time requirement would be necessary to set a particular course of action, but the ultimate goal should be this task is the responsibility of one issue.

Commendations:

- District participates in the PACE program and local broker for insurance expertise

Recommendations:

- District should review centralizing risk management in one individual or contract to ensure the district's risk program is coordinated across the district for maximum benefit.



Purchasing

A district purchasing program is designed to procure goods and services at the best prices and in the most transparent way to ensure that spending the public's dollars are optimized.

The District currently uses a mostly decentralized purchasing system. Large or District-Wide procurements are handled at the District level, while smaller procurements are handled by each individual school or department. While this seems to have worked well in the past, there are some areas where smaller purchases may be recommended for centralization, particularly in areas like technology. Similar purchases across multiple buildings (computers or other tech) can aid in driving down costs through bulk ordering, but also through consistency of products for help desk and network support.

Commendations:

- Procurement program has worked well

Recommendations:

- District should review areas (i.e. technology) where centralization can improve purchasing and reduce costs

Inventory Management

The District has no significant inventories to manage at this time, so there are no recommendations at this time.

Summarized Recommendations

- Look to increase current staffing resources to be able to implement process improvement projects.
- Regular visits to buildings for training, process review and input.
- Continue to look at areas to automate processes, to lower the potential for errors, improve reporting and reduce duplication of efforts.
- District business office implement regular building visits and training.
- Review building use fees and set a common fee system across the district.
- District should complete a regular inventory of all its capital assets.
- District should review centralizing risk management in one individual or contract to ensure the districts risk program is coordinated across the district for maximum benefit.
- District should review areas (such as technology) where centralization can improve purchasing and reduce costs.





Communications

Background

Currently, the District does not have a formal communications plan in place. However, the District recently contracted with a communications specialist to put a plan into place.

Effective communication is crucial to any organization, and schools are no different. With a comprehensive communications plan, the District will be able to promote its schools to parents and the community, connect with current students, attract future ones, establish strong communication modes with staff and even successfully engage community members without children in the schools. An up-to-date school communications plan is fundamental to steering the increasing array of tools available to today's school communicators. Given the variety of kinds of information and the modern channels for delivering school information, planning and allocating resources have never been more important. From crisis communications and urgent, time-sensitive matters to the lunch menu postings, a plan can make life a lot easier for all associated with the District's schools. How a district or school handles the website, social media, emergency notifications, simple school newsletters and other areas of communication should come into play in one comprehensive communications plan. Even such mundane communications such as posting scores to athletics events and keeping your school calendar current can be addressed in a comprehensive school communications plan.

Jerry Weast, a veteran school superintendent for the Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools, sums it up in his forward to the book, *Why School Communication Matters*:

“As a superintendent for thirty-two years, I have learned that there are many ingredients for success but one stands out above the rest - great communication skills. You can have the most innovative reform plan around, but if you are not effective in communicating about that plan, it will fail. I have seen good superintendents who do not put a priority on communications forced from their jobs while less deserving superintendents who are better at the art of communications keep theirs. The simple reality of public education today is that superintendents must be outstanding educators and they must also be outstanding communicators. . . . “The bottom line is that creating a healthy environment for positive communications and outstanding student achievement must be part of our daily work. As much as administrators plan and work to ensure that a school is operating smoothly, the busses running on time, the teachers and students have what they need in the classroom, they must also integrate the work of communications in their daily life. In public education today, we need all the support we can get from parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, and others. We build that support through strong communications, by involving everyone in the process and keeping our eyes on the mission at hand - preparing our students for the world ahead.”



Current Communication Strategies

From the Central Office:

Most communication that needs to get out from the Central Office to the buildings occurs:

- To principals at monthly ALT (All Leadership Team) or principal level meetings. Frequently, principals are given talking points or a presentation to take back to building staff.
- To teachers via email and the Education Update.
- Via teacher committees—a representative from each building (or level) serves on various committees and is expected to distribute the information back to their buildings.
- The district website was utilized more in the past, but over the last few years it has not been kept current because the software to modify the web page is out of date and difficult to use. The District is in the process of launching a new website.
- The District Leadership Team meets periodically. Those in attendance are two high school principals, one middle school principal, two elementary principals, local union leaders and District directors. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss District business that this team will distribute at principal meetings and other constituent meetings.



Communications to parents:

- Via the Education Update (news from the superintendent's office or School Board meetings)
- School Messenger or Flash Alert for emergencies
- On the district front webpage
- Occasionally in report cards (especially information about grading practices, overdue bills, etc.)
- Via Facebook and rarely on Twitter but these two have only occurred in the last nine months. These social media accounts were developed to help get the word out after the South Albany High School fire. The district has just hired a part time communication specialist to improve these communication conduits.
- In October, the District started Peachjar which is a service used to help get information to the community about school events and offerings to the parents.
- The Welcome Center staff translate District materials and messages to non-English speaking constituents. They also assist the District with ideas and insights for accessing more of the Hispanic parents. They hold parent coffees and utilize direct calling to improve outreach. Due to their excellent service, the Welcome Center frequently must offer waiting lists for their services – if budget allows, the district should look at some level of increased staffing.

From schools to parents:

- School webpages – primarily secondary schools
- School Messenger – primarily secondary schools
- Newsletters in backpacks – primarily elementary schools
- Site Councils – a few schools
- Parent-teacher organizations
- Parents who want to communicate with both buildings and/or to the central office typically call, show up in person, or send an email.
- The Superintendent along with his communication specialist has begun to publish a community wide district newsletter.

To the community:

- Community partners send out fliers via email list groups and/or posting to a webpage link on each school website.
- The District utilizes the local newspaper and reports that the local reporter assigned to the District has been fair and accurate.

To the School Board

- Via internal private communications to Board members written by the Superintendent and/or Directors.

Commendations:

- The District and schools have some systems in place, albeit informal, to communicate with their publics.
- There appears to be communication strands extending from and to most of the critical stakeholders.
- The District has recently contracted with a communications specialist to enhance their current communications and to eventually develop a District Comprehensive Communications Plan.
- The superintendent is a member of the Chamber Board, Early Learning Hub board, Albany Schools Foundation Board, The Mid Valley Mid Coast Partnership along with the Chamber's Pipeline Project and the Greater Albany Rotary Club.

Recommendations:

- The District, through an inclusive process, should develop a District Comprehensive Communications Plan.
- The Plan should: directly help achieve the District's strategic goals, foster strong relationships with District stakeholders, provide focus and direction for messages/methods in support of the District's goals and enable the District to present itself accurately to all audiences.
- The Plan will need to include communications goals such as: Develop and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with all school community members; Strengthen support for the School District; Use a variety of media to maximize awareness and support of the district's goals, objectives and programs; Establish an effective employee communication plan to improve internal communication and employee engagement; Establish strong, positive connections between individual schools and their communities; Achieve coordinated communications, both internally and externally, using Web systems to improve efficiencies and promote effective channels; Create key messages and talking points about the District to establish "one clear voice" throughout all communication channels; Establish a clear identity brand for the District and build on that image and reputation; Maintain a proactive media relations program to enhance the District's image on local, state and national levels; and Use effective operational practices to provide good customer service, increased efficiency and quality printed materials.
- Each communications goal selected will need to have objectives, strategies and action plans associated with them.
- The Plan should have a continuous improvement/evaluation component built into it and tied to the District's strategic plan.





Facilities Use and Maintenance

Background

This chapter provides a review of the maintenance and facilities in the Greater Albany School District. The district completed a facility assessment and site study in January of 2015. In addition to these studies, the District Facility Advisory Committee (DFAC) met eight times in 2015 to make recommendations to the board of directors in regard to a long range facility plan. The work of the DFAC may be addressed by the board of directors going out to the local tax payers for a facility bond to implement their recommendations.

The gLAs report identifies \$116 million dollars of improvements to district facilities including recommended maintenance, site and security upgrades and technology infrastructure improvements. In addition to this extensive report, the previous superintendent made recommendation via a school safety task force audit of the physical environment at each school in May of 2013. The recommendations in this report listed some work that needs to be addressed immediately due to safety concerns for students and staff at each school. Unfortunately most of the recommendations have not yet been implemented and some are not included in the most recent DFAC recommendations.

The district seems to have an outstanding, albeit understaffed maintenance department. They are housed in two facilities out of town. These include a new facility and an old elementary school. The old elementary school has been re-purposed to meet the needs of the facility department.

The district has the information it needs in regard to school safety issues and facility needs now and for the foreseeable future. These documents should become a spring board for a community discussion about the state of the facilities in the district. This partnership will allow the patrons and the board to determine their next steps. From an outsider's point of view, it does not seem like a wise use of funds to put millions of dollars into some of the existing older facilities. It would seem prudent to hold a community discussion regarding the status of the schools, what the costs of the repairs and upkeep will be and what other alternatives are available in the community. It may well be more cost effective to look at building three to four new schools and closing 4 or 5 schools versus repairing and upgrading some existing older structures. Whether this kind of step is feasible needs to be researched and discussed with direct leadership from the board of directors and the superintendent. The most recent recommendations submitted to the board of directors by the DFAC seem like a great place to start the community discussion on the current and future facility and safety needs of the school district. Above all, the safety recommendations should be addressed immediately via your district reserve fund even if a bond measure is proposed for the future.



The district seems to only have two policies on file in regards to direction in the area of facilities and maintenance as per the OSBA and the school district website. An effort should be made to make sure there are appropriate policies adopted by the board of directors that can direct the work of staff in regards to areas such as the following:

- Facilities Planning
- Capital Construction Program
- Capital Improvement - Educational Program
- Energy-Conserving Construction
- Facilities Renovation
- Retirement of Facilities



Albany is a community in transition in terms of its strong economic base of manufacturing, freight (both rail and I-5) and a more modern education based economy. It also serves in some ways as an affordable bedroom community for Salem and Corvallis but will only grow if the educational infrastructure is such that it allows it to become a modern education based economy that is attractive enough for people to move and stay in the area.

Great schools are drivers for community growth and vitality. You see it in small school districts like Sisters or large districts like Lake Oswego, Tigard/Tualatin, Bend LaPine, Beaverton and Hillsboro. This must be a part of community discussions about future facility needs in your school district.

Classroom teachers and staff, parents and students will have a great understanding of challenges they are facing in your aging facilities. Issues will be raised like not having an adequate auditorium in your school district at either of your two large high schools. This information could be generated by an online survey and the information would be collated with the facility assessment from last year and the recommendations of the DFAC to help administration and the school board continue needed discussions on the future of educational facilities in the school district.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Program Direction and Accountability

The district's maintenance department has a mission statement and goals and objectives that are established in writing.

The district has an experienced maintenance director that seems to be well respected by present administration. Currently this person has appropriate authority to staff as necessary but lacks the funding needed. The board policies for facilities and maintenance are inadequate and need to be reviewed and updated in light of the facilities assessment completed in 2015. Goals for this year have been talked about but not documented. The maintenance department will need clearly stated objectives that are measurable.



Commendations:

- For the board and district staff for having the foresight to hire a firm to do an extensive facility and safety assessments in the last four years.
- Re-purposing the old elementary school for the maintenance department use.
- For getting the most out of your current facilities despite their age.
- The work of the DFAC members.



Recommendations:

- Revise and adopt policies tied to maintenance and facilities.
- Prioritize and document facility assessment goals particularly in light of any immediate safety concerns registered and identified by the report facility report and the safe school assessment completed in 2013.
- Centralized purchasing of most if not all supplies for schools has not occurred as of yet and needs to for cost control and standardization of products used by staff and students in the schools.

The district has established and implemented accountability mechanisms to ensure the performance and efficiency of the maintenance and operations program.

The district has an accountability system in place in regards to custodial and maintenance staff. The maintenance director currently reports directly to the Director of Business and Operations.

Commendations:

- There seems to be a clear management control process with foreman, custodians and maintenance staff.

Recommendations:

- Take steps to address as soon as possible any safety issues in school facilities based on assessment with the use of the district financial reserve.
- Prioritize maintenance projects and cost them out based on facilities assessment of 2015.

The district obtains and uses staff and patron feedback to identify and implement program improvements.

The Greater Albany School uses a districtwide facility committee (DFAC) for patron and staff feedback on a possible facility bond project but does not have an on-going committee that advises the board on districtwide facility needs and maintenance projects. The decision to perform a facilities assessment in 2015 was a great step in addressing long and short term facility needs in the district. The district does use monthly staff meetings for communication on facility and maintenance issues with the principals and staff.

Commendations:

- For undertaking the needed facility assessment in 2015.
- For having a district facility committee to give direction on a possible facility bond issue.



Recommendations:

- Complete a survey of classroom teachers and staff, parents, students and community members about needed maintenance and facilities needs in each school.
- Use the district facility committee for annual prioritization of maintenance projects.

The district has established procedures and staff performance standards to ensure efficient operations.

There seems to be a lack of board or school based policies and procedures in this arena. The district does use a formula for determining the number of custodians needed for a school based on square footage, number of students in the schools and general usage.



Commendations:

- For the use of a formula to determine custodial needs in the school district.
- For completing a study several years ago to determine adequate level of maintenance staffing.

Recommendations:

- Consider implementing a long term hiring plan to address maintenance staff issues in the school district versus the use of outside contractors.
- Efforts should be made to review all staff performance measures with staff so they will know what he/she is accountable for on a daily basis.

The department maintains educational and district support facilities in a condition that enhances student learning and facilitates employee productivity.

The district is making a major effort in regards to effectively maintaining facilities and determining what needs to be done to address physical plant needs now and in the future. Safety issues need to be addressed immediately as outlined in the May 2013 superintendent report. This work can be started as the community decides on to re-invest in the current facilities and future facilities to meet the educational needs of the community in the coming future.

Commendations:

- The overall external condition and aesthetics of the existing facilities are pretty amazing.
- The interior of the schools are very clean and shows pride in the schools by staff and students despite the age and repair of the schools.
- For completing the safe school and facility assessments over the last three years.

Recommendations:

- The district facility committee needs to review the facility report and have a district communication specialist create an executive summary in user friendly terms that can be shared with the community.
- Focus on projects that provide a safer school environment to show the community the wise use of their tax dollars and your concern for the staff and students.
- Use facility committee to recommend where to spend maintenance dollars going forward in regards to buildings that are at the end of their educational life span. The DFAC study and recommendations recently completed are an outstanding start in badly needed work for the school district.



Organizational Structure and Staffing

The district regularly reviews the organizational structure of the maintenance and operations program to minimize administrative layers and assure adequate supervision and staffing levels.

The district maintenance supervisor oversees district facilities that include maintenance staff and custodians. The maintenance supervisor reports to the Director of Business and Operations. Headquarters for the maintenance staff is a new building attached to an old elementary school in the country that was repurposed for facility and maintenance needs.

Commendations:

- There is a clear cut command structure in the maintenance and custodial department.

Recommendations:

- Review past maintenance staff recommendations and work within the budget to increase maintenance staff as needed for the future.
- Consider doing a cost benefit analysis of hiring own staff such as electricians, HVAC technicians, carpenters, painters and such versus contracting out for maintenance services.

Complete job descriptions and appropriate hiring and retention practices ensure to ensure that the maintenance department has qualified staff.

The district has job descriptions that are used as part of the employee's evaluation process. Current custodial positions are hired by building principals and foreman as the need occurs. Actual hiring processes are tied to the district standards as implemented by each building principal. Job descriptions are included in job opening postings.

There is centralized training for custodians. The head custodian who is housed at each middle school cross trains the custodial staff at the feeder elementary schools. Substitute custodians are trained by existing staff which provides consistency in work expectations and quality. Training of maintenance staff is hit and miss and could be more organized and planned.

Commendations:

- For having a centralized training program for custodial staff and substitutes.

Recommendations:

- Work with staff at the LBLED and other local districts to create a staff development plan for maintenance staff in needed areas. These trainings then can be tied to employee performance expectations and evaluations going forward.
- The creation of an electronic portfolio of maintenance and custodial job descriptions.
- The district provides a staff development program that includes appropriate training for maintenance and operations staff to enhance worker job satisfaction, efficiency, and safety.



Resource Allocation and Utilization

The administration has developed an annual budget with spending limits that comply with the lawful funding for each category of facilities maintenance and operations.

The district complies with normal internal controls for the purchasing of materials and equipment for operations. The current maintenance director does have control of this budget function. . Any purchase above \$1000 must be approved by the Director of Business and Operations. The custodial foreman have control of their budgets at their individual schools. The custodial foremen have control of their budgets at the individual schools.

Commendations:

- For the initial work being completed to address safe schools issues at different sites.

Recommendations:

- The 2015 report on facilities should be used as a starting point for creating accurate project costs in a prioritized manner. This report could be reviewed annually and an update given to the board of directors on the state of the district facilities.
- The projections in the report need to be vetted and prioritized by the district's facility committee.
- The maintenance director works with internal staff and the Director of Business and Operations to update a project list which includes cost estimates for all projects.



The board maintains a maintenance reserve fund to handle one-time expenditures necessary to support maintenance and operations.

Some contingency is built into the actual budget for the maintenance projects that are approved but these budgets can be impacted if un-planned maintenance issues come up that were not budgeted for during the school year. The district contingency fund could be accessed for an emergency in the district but the district might wish to create a facilities contingency fund to help in this area.

Commendations:

- None

Recommendations:

- The district needs to consider a communication plan that informs the community how they are implementing and allocating any possible reserve dollars to address school safety issues. This plan should also include information for reasons and rationale specific to which schools receive or don't receive maintenance work in the next few years if the school district goes out for a bond and it is successful in passing it to meet facility needs.
- Consider using the facility committee to prioritize annual maintenance projects based on the life and safety issues and projects that have a shortened return on investment to the district



The district minimizes equipment costs through purchasing practices.

This district follows internal district purchasing policies as implemented by the Director of Business and Operations.

Commendations:

- The district centralizes purchasing for cleaning supplies and chemicals needed by custodians and maintenance staff.

Recommendations:

- None



The district provides maintenance department staff the tools and equipment required to accomplish their assigned tasks.

The staff has appropriate and adequate tools. The district needs to address fleet replacement as a priority for maintenance staff to be able to do their work in a timely fashion. Trying to replace vehicles once a year via state surplus sales is probably not the most efficient way to meet the needs of fleet replacement as the ongoing maintenance costs may quickly outstrip the savings on the purchase of the vehicle.

Commendations:

- The staff feels positive about the opportunity to purchase needed equipment.

Recommendations:

- The district needs a master replacement list of existing custodian and maintenance equipment over a 5 year period. The current replacement list is based on problematic equipment versus end of life equipment analysis, etc.



The district uses proactive maintenance practices to reduce costs.

Any proactive maintenance is primarily driven by specific building custodians and available funds. There is currently no district wide proactive maintenance plan in place but one is being considered.

Commendations:

- None

Recommendations:

- Work with the LBLED staff and the board's facility committee to determine and prioritize proactive maintenance practices that will have the biggest return on investment.
- Consider the development of a district wide maintenance plan that is long term and tied to any possible bond efforts in the near future.



The maintenance department identifies and implements strategies to contain energy costs.

The maintenance department is working to implement strategies at current schools to contain or reduce energy costs. Some of this focus is based on recommendations from the facility assessment. The maintenance department monitors energy reduction projects that are initiated at individual schools. There is a district policy on personal use devices like refrigerators and heaters being used in school facilities. Staff is currently charged for their energy usage. However this policy is not strictly enforced.

Commendations:

- Utilizing outside experts to provide advice in regarding use of district funds in the most efficient manner.
- Allowing individual schools to try creative ways to reduce energy costs.
- The commitment of facility leadership and staff in doing their job and looking for ways to be efficient.

Recommendations:

- The district needs to prioritize which schools and projects need to be addressed to reduce energy costs.
- If you plan to keep a policy on the personal use of devices that use electricity such as refrigerators and heaters, then monitor and enforce or get rid of the policy as it is not being followed now and the cost for monitoring and enforcing may outweigh the dollars brought in. Being energy conscience and mindful about your use of energy is important but so is not spending too much time trying to monitor compliance.

Information Management

A computerized control and tracking system is used to accurately track work orders and inventory.

The district is using the School Dude software solution for managing maintenance and custodial repair and work throughout the school district.

Commendations:

- For looking for state of the art solutions to manage operations in a cost effective manner.

Recommendations:

- The district needs a consistent inventory tracking system that all appropriate personnel need to utilize as needed.
- Consider contracting out to do a complete inventory of school assets before moving to a new inventory tracking system.



The maintenance department has a system for prioritizing maintenance needs uniformly throughout the district.

The maintenance department has a process it uses to prioritize use of maintenance and facility funds via the capital budget funding process which is driven by the individual school requests and needs.

Prioritized Recommendations:

- There needs to be an immediate prioritization of safety issues brought up in the 2013 report that then can be addressed immediately by use of your current reserves.
- Using reserve dollars to address safety issues to show the community your prudent use of dollars as an example on how you will use funds with a new bond.
- Focus on safety projects that provide a return on investment in 24-48 months to show the community the wise use of their tax dollars.
- Prioritize maintenance projects and cost them out based on the facilities assessment of 2015
- To start a community discussion on the status of facilities in the school district. Determine costs of repairs versus other options such as new schools. Use the facility committee to also determine where not to spend maintenance dollars going forward.
- Centralize purchasing of items other than chemical and custodial supplies for schools
- Consider completing a cost benefit analysis of hiring own staff such as electricians, HVAC technicians, carpenters, painters, etc. versus contracting out for maintenance services.
- Survey of classroom teachers and staff about needed maintenance and facilities needs in each school. Classroom teachers and other staff will have a great understanding of challenges they are facing in your aging facilities. This information could be generated by an online survey and the information would be collated with the facility assessment from last year to help administration and the board continues the discussion on the future of the educational facilities in the school district.
- The board facility committee needs to review the facility report and have someone create an executive summary in user friendly terms that can be shared with the community.
- The district needs a master replacement list of existing custodial and maintenance equipment over a 5-year period.





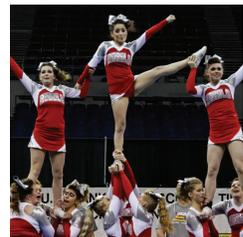
Framework of Schools

Background

Every school district must make periodic decisions regarding the number of schools the district will operate from year to year. These decisions normally are made after careful consideration of student enrollments now and in the future, distance between schools, age and condition of the schools, among other factors. The decision to add or to close a school is anguishing. It profoundly affects parents, neighborhoods, communities, district personnel, and, of course, students. It affects relationships, routines and cherished territorialities. In short, it alters not only district operations but also lives. A decision not to add or close a school, however, amidst circumstances of increasing/declining enrollment and/or economic necessity, can be imprudent. And while the immediate effects of adding or closing a school may be painful, the long-term effects can be beneficial to everyone.

Greater Albany Public Schools has the following school configuration and student enrollment:

Central Elementary (3-5).....	148
Clover Ridge (K-2)	310
Fir Grove (K-1).....	114
Lafayette (K-5).....	328
Liberty (K-5).....	357
North Albany (K-5).....	296
Oak (K-5)	347
Oak Grove (2-5).....	256
Periwinkle (K-5)	404
South Shore (K-5).....	434
Sunrise (K-5)	413
Takena (K-2).....	158
Tangent (K-5)	161
Timber Ridge (3-5).....	346
Waverly (K-5)	48
Calapooia (6-8)	588
Memorial (6-8).....	591
North Albany (6-8)	565
Timber Ridge (6-8).....	368
South Albany (9-12).....	1,321
West Albany (9-12)	1,350



Comparative School Districts

The Oregon Department of Education assigns comparable school districts to each school district in Oregon. These comparable districts are primarily designed to compare state standardized testing scores. However, the comparable school districts are selected based upon demographics and socio-economic status of the student populations in those school districts. For the work within this report regarding district operations, it is much more useful to select districts of similar size to compare district operations, number and size of schools, etc. For that purpose, the following Oregon school districts were selected:

Greater Albany School District.....	9,399
Centennial School District	6,242
Corvallis	6,643
David Douglas School District.....	10,988
Forest Grove School District	6,101
Klamath County School District.....	6,386
McMinnville School District.....	6,620
Oregon City School District.....	8,051
Redmond School District	7,329
Roseburg School District	6,059
Springfield	11,068



Comparative Data

The following table provides the number and type of schools in the Greater Albany School District as compared with the seven other school districts.

District	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools
GAPS	15	4	2
Centennial	7	1	1
Corvallis	8	3	2
David Douglas	9	3	1
Forest Grove	7	1	1
Klamath County	11	3	3
McMinnville	6	2	1
Oregon City	7	2	1
Redmond	7	2	2
Roseburg	8	2	1
Springfield	12	4	2



Data Analysis

When analyzing this type of data, there are usually numbers that stand out among all of the others. In this set of data, there are three of those: Klamath County's elementary school count, Greater Albany's elementary school count and Greater Albany's middle school count. Once identified, those numbers need to be scrutinized further to discover if there is some sort of rationale for the numbers. Klamath County has a large number of elementary schools due to the geography of that county. Greater Albany has more elementary schools than Springfield even though Springfield has approximately 2000 more students.

Facts and observations

- The District office facility is currently not large enough to centralize all of the District level programs and departments. Because of this, programs and departments that could nicely support each other are not together and this impacts communication, coordination and integration. For example, when School Improvement, Special Education and Assessment are all placed in one location, there are no silos; actually it is usually quite the opposite. Those departments work together to draw on the strengths of all and the students are the benefactors.
- TAG, AlbanyOnline!, and Juntos/Together (the pre-k outreach) are located at Central Elementary.
- District Special Education program offices and the behavior support programs are located at Fairmount.
- Some schools are sharing administrators which means that the schools, at times, do not have optimum facilitation and oversight.
- The South Albany High School facility is difficult to supervise because of its layout and this has resulted in several safety and security issues.
- The West Albany High School facility is old, out of date and it would be cost prohibitive to attempt to remodel the facility into a new 21st century high school. For example, there is a lack of common space at the school which makes it very difficult for students to eat together. This forces them to eat in hallways and other spots which creates safety and supervisory issues. In addition, neither high school has an auditorium – there is only one other Oregon high school in the 5A and 6A categories that does not have an auditorium. This severely inhibits what the students and community can do in a number of areas.
- The District operates a very small school at Fir Grove. Currently, the boundary area draws enough students for four classrooms of students: 1st Grade = 26, 27 and Kindergarten = 30, 31. The facility is old, small and inefficient for a District school.
- Of the 292 students that attend North Albany Elementary, 90 are attending on a transfer. Thirty-one of these 90 transfers come from the Fir/Oak Grove attendance boundary. The NAE campus is old and poorly configured. It is a difficult building to provide sound security and supervision. DLR consulting group states that the campus has about ten years left before major renovations are required or a phased-in replacement.



- DLR group has determined that the majority of the Oak Grove building has no useful life left. One pod of four classrooms and a gym are considered to be functional into the future.
- Clover Ridge is currently a K-2 school. The DLR group has determined that the facility at Clover Ridge has approximately ten years of useful life remaining. Teachers aren't currently connected to the vertical alignment needed and accountability measured at 3rd grade.
- Timber Ridge is the newest school in the District. Timber Ridge was not built with young students in mind. The configuration of the building, classrooms and playground do not lend themselves well to serve K-3 students. Timber Ridge, even though it has only been open 6 years, has reached capacity if the District keeps its specialized programs at this site.
- Central Elementary is a small school for grades three, four and five. It currently enrolls only 150 students. It is not an ideal size and certainly not an ideal facility. The building is not ADA compliant – it would be cost prohibitive to install an elevator in this facility.
- The quality of the facility at Takena is exceptional but it was never completed. The building was configured to add a second wing similar to both Oak and South Shore. However, since it was not added, the school has a capacity for only 180 students.
- Tangent is a K-5 school with only 160 students. The school is isolated from the rest of the District.
- Technically speaking, the District doesn't operate four full middle schools. Timber Ridge houses grades three through eight students. Typically, middle schools are made up of sixth through eighth grade students.

Conclusions

- The District is losing valuable educational resources by continuing to operate more elementary schools than are needed or desired. In the comparison group, that is the data that becomes very clear and even more so when a tour of the District's schools is experienced.
- With some changes in the District's current building and grade level alignment, valuable dollars would be saved to invest in other areas of the District and a stronger curriculum continuum would be accomplished.
- The District should close some schools and alter the configuration of others to enhance the student experience as well as provide consistency of a K-5 elementary school configuration.
- Many of the problems associated with building safety in the schools listed below are cited in the Safe School Audit and recommendations of 2013.



Commendations

- The District has made good decisions over the years in managing buildings in a changing educational/ financial environment with a large variance across the District in the socio-economic status of the population.
- All of the District's properties look well cared for and it is obvious that the staff, students and the community care about the District's facilities.

Recommendations

- The configurations of the two high schools and the middle schools housing grades six through eight should remain unchanged.
- Close Central Elementary. The Central students would now attend Takena, making it a K-5 school with enough capacity to operate efficiently both academically and financially. Takena should be improved to a capacity of 400 students.
- House all District wide programs currently housed in other schools and non-profit partnership programs in the Central building. Launch a study to determine if the District Office could also be located at this location.
- Close Fir Grove school. It is inefficient because of its size and the students would be better served attending a school with a larger capacity. This facility could house an early childhood learning center or a school for students with difficult behavioral challenges.
- Close Clover Ridge school. Build a new elementary school (grades K-3) adjacent to Timber Ridge. Timber Ridge, which is currently at capacity, would become a grades 4-8 school with a new capacity for growth.
- Close Tangent Elementary. The Tangent students would attend Oak, Liberty and/or Lafayette. The Tangent building could be utilized as a Pre-Kindergarten site or some partnership program with Oregon State University.
- Remodel Oak Grove Elementary and increase its capacity to hold 450 K-5 students.

Possible Criteria To Consider When Choosing a School For Closure

Of course, there are many factors to weigh when selecting schools for possible closure. The most obvious criterion, a school with declining enrollment, is not necessarily the best. Consider these other factors as well (from Closing A School Best Practices Guide):

- **The condition of a school facility** - a modernized school, one in good repair, and/or one that has technological capacity or other educationally innovative features may be the best school facility in the district, in spite of its declining enrollment. It may be better to close an at-capacity but physically mediocre school;
- **The operating cost of a school** - operating costs may vary from school to school. Some schools use energy more efficiently, some schools need less maintenance, and some schools have minimal transportation costs. Factor these operating costs into decisions about which school to close;
- **The capacity of a school to accommodate excess students** - displaced students must be housed elsewhere in the district, so choosing a school site that has unused classrooms or the capacity to add portables, without encroaching on playground/playfield space, is critical. Another important consideration is the ability of the school's essential, core facilities --- library, multipurpose room, cafeteria, gymnasium, toilets --- to accommodate additional students. While there may be room on a school site to add portable classrooms, there may be no room for all those students to use, say, the lunchroom at the same time.
- **Special program facilities** - special programs, such as providing services for special education students, require special facilities. Closing a school that may have a large capital investment in these special facilities may not be cost effective if those specialized facilities need to be rebuilt elsewhere;

- **Environmental factors** - a school's surroundings may have changed since it was first opened. Zoning may have been relaxed to allow nearby, undesirable businesses to move in (i.e., liquor stores, adult bookstores, air-polluting manufacturers, industries that produce or store toxic chemicals), or there might be new environmental hazards (i. e., pipelines, high voltage power lines, fuel storage tanks, airport runway extensions, etc.) that now compromise the safety of the students at a school;
- **Ethnic balance** - closing a school and redistributing its students should change as little as possible the ethnic balance in schools throughout the district. Closing some schools will more adversely affect ethnic distribution than others;
- **Transportation** - part of the decision to close a school should be based upon what transportation costs will be saved, and what new transportation costs will be incurred, once a school is closed and its students redistributed. Insuring that there can be safe walking routes for the displaced students to the new school reduces transportation costs and provides a healthy addition to the school day. It is also important to consider the adequacy of existing drop-off/pick-up and bus loading areas at the schools designated to receive additional students;
- **Neighborhoods** - having a neighborhood school is a part of every parent's sense of wellbeing (not to mention the savings associated with transportation costs). The availability of nearby schools to the ones chosen for closure can lessen the impact of displacement and loss of connection to the new school;
- **Education program** - educational programs are generally mobile; programs and staff can move from site to site. But there can be site-related high achieving schools based upon innovative facility design, a particularly fortuitous dynamic among staff, and just the right mixture of students. Often these high achievement schools are unique and perhaps may be hard to reconstruct elsewhere. On the other hand, there can be historically low-performing schools. Such sites may be good candidates for closure providing an opportunity for re-distributing the students and staff;
- **Aesthetics** - often the presence of an attractive, well-designed, well-kept school can be a source of student and neighborhood pride, an asset to the community, as well as an educational asset. Of course, decisions about school closure are much more complex than just considerations of "appearance," but the physical aspect is important and should not be overlooked in the process of consideration; and
- **Value** - if maximizing revenue from the sale or lease of surplus schools is integral to decisions regarding which school to close, then, of course, a property appraisal and assessment of the interests in and proposed uses for the property are vital. The expected value realized from a closed school should be measured not just in revenue but also in community enhancement.





Management Structure

Background

The Management Structures portion of this report examines the effectiveness of board meetings, use of legal counsel and board and superintendent roles and responsibilities. It includes the District's organizational structure, operating efficiency, effective oversight of the District's financial resources and the balance between school site autonomy and adherence to District policies and procedures. It also looks at the District's planning and budgeting processes associated with annual goals, enrollment projections, the linking of finances to board priorities and the ability to obtain resources outside of its state allocations. The final area of investigation is the involvement of parents, business partners and community organizations in the District's decision-making and overall activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Board and Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities

In order for a school district to run effectively, the roles and responsibilities of Board members and the Superintendent must be clearly defined and comprehensive working agreements need to be in place to ensure that the agreements are honored. GAPS has an excellent set of agreements in place. They are reviewed and modified as necessary each year. The Board Chair and Superintendent report that the agreements are working to their satisfaction.

Governance is a key issue in all school districts. The board is in charge of policy-making for districts and the superintendent and staff are responsible to carry out board policies. The superintendent should not make policy and board members should not try to run the daily activities of a district. This is clearly stated in the Working Agreements document. Evidence of problems in District governance was not found. To help board members be successful in their varied and complex duties, ongoing professional development is necessary. The Board is active with the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) and takes part in many of its conferences, workshops and regional meetings.

All existing and new state statutes and administrative regulations that apply are a part of the District policy manual. They are updated regularly. This allows the District to comply with federal and state laws and helps the District treat staff and students fairly and consistently. District policy and administrative regulation information is available on the GAPS website. The Executive Assistant to the Superintendent makes use of OSBA services for this purpose and most school board meetings have action items for policy updates.

Districts need cost effective legal resources that can be utilized for advice on policy matters and reduce the risk of lawsuits. GAPS contracts out for its legal services and has a reasonable line item in the budget for the estimated yearly costs. The District uses a local attorney for the vast majority of its legal services. Legal counsel is contacted through the Superintendent and when necessary the School Board Chair. District employees who need to consult with legal counsel must get authorization from the superintendent.





Commendations

- The District has developed written policies that delineate the responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent. The policies are up to date and clearly written.
- The Board makes good use of the OSBA for their ongoing professional development and uses outside consultants for specialized training.
- A clear and comprehensive Board and Superintendent Working Agreements document is in place. It is reviewed and modified as necessary each year.

Recommendations

- The Board evaluation process for the superintendent could be improved by the addition of the 360-degree method of gathering performance data. The Oregon School Boards Association can facilitate this process for school districts and Jerome Colonna is also a good contact.
- Most board member professional development is through the Oregon School Boards Association. If the District has not already done so, two of their programs are suggested for consideration: one is The Key Work of School Boards and the other is School Board Self-Evaluation. An excellent OSBA booklet for all board members to reference is: When You're in Charge.
- Board meeting agendas regularly have student academic achievement and/or teaching and learning topics but often there is not enough time to go into the depth the topics deserve. Periodic Board work sessions (a minimum of three per year is suggested) dedicated to academic achievement/teaching and learning is another way to increase Board involvement and knowledge in this area.

Organization, Staffing and Resource Allocation

School districts are organized in a variety of ways. GAPS has a traditional structure in which administrators basically report to the superintendent and the superintendent reports to the Board. Based on the Budget Manual, there are four FTE (full time equivalent) managerial positions and 33.25 FTE administrative positions. An administrative organizational chart is in place and lists the standard positions one would expect to find in a 9,000+ student district. One position that is not always found but that is highly effective is Assistant to the Superintendent. Some positions have responsibilities in more than one large operational area. Principals of small schools have a second school or an additional District-wide duty. Because of an escalation in student behavior issues, an increase in assistant principal/dean of students/behavior specialist positions should be considered for each secondary school. For a District with 1,100 employees, a .5 FTE Human Resources Director seems quite low (a full-time Director is highly recommended). Some interviewed for this section of the report voiced the necessity for a reorganization of administrative duties and the need to add positions for what was termed an “under-manned and under-resourced District Office.”

Because of the difficult financial times Oregon’s public schools have experienced, it is especially important that the Director of Business and Operations, Superintendent and Board exercise effective management of the District’s total resources. Generally speaking, the District is financially sound and District resources are concentrated in the schools. The District follows all state and federal financial reporting laws and the budget document is comprehensive and well written. The Board receives periodic revenue and expenditure updates and makes adjustments as necessary. School, program and department balances are kept current electronically and they cannot be overspent. Any variances must be discussed with the Business and Operations Director and if necessary the Superintendent before additional resources might be considered.

The Principal Evaluation Summative Rubric document is used for school administrator evaluations. It is based on the six Oregon Standards for Educational Leadership. The Superintendent is responsible for the evaluation of the high school principals. The Secondary Curriculum Director performs the middle and elementary principal evaluations.

Commendations

- The District is financially sound given Oregon's comparatively low level of funding for its public schools. This is a tribute to the Board and District leadership's effective management of the District's financial resources, policies and procedures.
- The Superintendent is highly visible in schools and throughout the community.
- The District Budget is presented to the Board and Budget Committee in a format that is complete and can be understood.
- The current school administrator evaluation process is a significant improvement over what was used previously.



Recommendations

- An administrative staffing (school and District Office) study should be conducted to add necessary positions, eliminate unnecessary positions, streamline operations and improve efficiency. Contacting and getting administrative staffing data from each of the District's ten comparator districts would be helpful. The OSBA is a good contact for this type of study and so are private sector personnel firms that offer these services.
- A number of the principals interviewed indicated that they would like to have more flexibility in the spending of their school budgets based on their schools' unique needs.
- Members of the District Budget Committee should receive training each year for Oregon public school budgeting and finances.

Planning and Budgeting

This part of the report examines the District's multi-year strategic plan to determine if it has specific goals and measurable objectives based on identified needs, projected enrollment and revenue. It looks at the system used to project enrollment. It also determines if the annual budget is linked to the strategic plan's goals and objectives. Finally, it considers the District's efforts to raise resources outside of what is allotted from Oregon's State School Fund.

The District Accountability Plan doubles as its strategic plan. It was initiated in 2008 and has been updated four times. The Plan is based on three goals with objectives, measures and activities to achieve them. It also has a Matrix Rubric that provides for systematic checks by the Board for accountability on the progress of the goals. The Plan is well written but some objectives lack prioritization, specific metrics, individuals responsible for implementation and time frames. Evidence was not found where the District's financial decisions and budgets were linked to the Plan. Some feel that the Plan is out of date and a new planning process should take place. Because a well-written strategic plan is important for the District's future success, as an extra part of this report, a transition plan from this report to a multi-year strategic plan is included in the appendix.

The District has not tried for a local option levy in the recent past. The last capital construction bond was approved in 2006. The District leadership will likely consider one or both of these sources of revenue as needed and when the time seems right. In addition to the 11 automatically renewable state and federal grants the District currently has, additionally there are seven grants it has received that range from \$35,000-\$286,000. Obtaining the services of a grant writer/resource acquisition specialist would enhance the amount of grant dollars significantly.

The District works hard to calculate an accurate annual enrollment forecast because it is essential for Oregon's school funding formula. The District bases its projections on statistical enrollment data such as annual births, number of students entering kindergarten, number of graduating seniors and students transferring in/out of the school system. An outside consultant and Portland State University Population Studies Department provide enrollment projection services to assist the District.

Commendations

- The District has an accurate and reliable student enrollment process in place.
- The District has a strategic plan it periodically reviews and adjusts as necessary.
- The District's Reporting Matrix process allows the Board to receive periodic progress updates on its Accountability Plan's 24 measures.

Recommendations

- In order to receive resources beyond what it receives from the State Department of Education, the District should expand its grant writing/resource acquisition efforts. It could be done through a cadre of trained volunteers, dedicated FTE and/or contracting out.
- The District should consider specifically linking District priorities with the annual budget building process.
- The District should consider starting the process to develop a new, multi-year strategic plan.

Community Involvement

This final part of the Management Structures report looks at the District's effort to involve parents in district decision-making and activities. It also measures the District's involvement with business partners and community organizations.

The District and its schools provide information for parents on the local radio stations, through school and District websites, through the distribution of school handbooks, in newsletters and formal parent conferences. The District Welcome Center assists District communication with non-English speaking parents. Most of the District's 20 schools have a school site council and/or a Parent Teacher Organization. There are over 3,000 parents, staff and community members on the District volunteer list.

Albany Schools are the heart of their individual neighborhood area in particular and the overall community in general. The Board, staff, students and parents are involved in various community service projects and the District makes its resources available to the community.

The District is actively involved with business partners and community organizations. There are 28 community organizations that have assigned District liaisons. Business leaders are members of the School Board, the Budget Committee and the school site councils.

The Greater Albany Public Schools Foundation has over \$1,000,000 in assets and it is led by former GAPS Superintendent, Bob Stalick.



Commendations:

- The District Welcome Center staff work with non-English speaking parents/guardians to assist with communication between them and their children's schools. The Center provides testing, local agency referrals, orientation for new families, migrant services and parenting classes.
- The District maintains a foundation that has over \$1,000,000 in assets.
- There are 3,000+ parents and community members who have received background checks and have been cleared to be on the District's volunteer list.
- The District actively participates with business and community service organizations. There are 28 members of the Board and staff who serve as liaisons to local businesses and service organizations.

Recommendations:

- In order to expand the District's overall communication effort, a greater use of various types of social media should be explored.
- The District should consider the development of a comprehensive communications plan.
- A full-time communications specialist should be considered. This position would include the responsibility for developing and implementing the plan referenced above.
- Periodic forums with the business community could be organized and hosted by the District to gain private sector ideas, receive more funding for specific programs and to obtain more internship and mentoring opportunities.

Prioritized Recommendations

- The District should consider the benefits of starting a process to develop a new, multi-year strategic plan.
- The recommendations from the appropriate parts of this overall Management Efficiency Review should be used to add necessary positions (i.e. assistant principal/behavior specialist at each secondary school and full-time human resource director), eliminate unnecessary positions, streamline operations and improve the efficiency of the school and District Office managerial and administrative positions.
- The District should devise a process to specifically link District priorities with the annual budget building process.
- The District needs to make greater use of social media, develop a comprehensive communications plan and dedicate FTE to a full-time communications specialist.
- Periodic school board work sessions dedicated to student academic achievement as well as teaching and learning will increase the Board's knowledge about their most important work.
- The Key Work of School Boards and School Board Self-Evaluation are two effective professional development programs offered by OSBA for the Board to consider.
- The District should expand its grant writing/resource acquisition efforts through the use of a trained cadre of volunteers, dedicated FTE and/or contracting out by the job or on an hourly basis.
- Based on the unique needs of each of the District's 20 schools, allow principals to have more flexibility and discretion with their school budgets.
- Members of the District Budget Committee should receive training each year for Oregon public school budgeting and finance. Some districts do this by teaching a one evening budgeting 101 workshop prior to the first budget meeting.
- The Board evaluation process for the superintendent could be improved by the incorporation of the 360-degree method of gathering performance data.



Nutrition Services Operations

Background

This chapter provides a review and overview of the Greater Albany School Districts Nutrition Service Operations. Nutrition Service programs are designed to deliver nutritional breakfast and lunch programs to students.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Planning, Organization and Staffing

Planning, Organization and Staffing for the Greater Albany's Nutrition Services program covers overall planning for the program, staffing and training for meet basic program needs.

The Greater Albany School District Nutrition Services program is split between contracting out of management (Sodexo, Inc.) while staffing is made up of district employees. This is not a typical arrangement as most districts either contract out all functions or deliver all nutrition services functions through in-house operations. A split structure can lead to unclear lines of authority and communications. This split structure does not currently seem to be a problem in the Greater- Albany School District, but could lead to issues in the future. It is suggested that the administration determine the rationale for this split structure decision.

The Nutrition Services program does work with the district to help meet overall district goals. Nutrition Services Administration is designed to have minimal layers of administration to ensure an effective and smooth operating program.

There are annual trainings, regular kitchen manager meetings and appropriate manuals to ensure safe and efficient operations.

Overall the program from a management perspective seems to be running well. We would recommend that the district look at the current split of contract management and district employees to ensure that it is the optimal structure.

Commendations:

- Dedicated nutrition services staff
- Professional nutrition services management

Recommendations:

- Complete more detailed review of current contract/in-house split in running program to see if additional efficiencies can be found.



Management

Management looks at how the program is run and designed to be successful for program delivery.

Management has developed and implemented a successful program. Each school has the appropriate operating, safety and recipe production manuals as required.

For the three of the last four years (through 2014), the program has been running at a financial deficit. State wide, Nutrition Services programs have been having difficulties in breaking even with the increase in the federal nutrition standards. However, the current financial makeup of the program should be reviewed. For example, Springfield School District, a similar sized district has had a positive impact on their bottom line for two of the last three years. We would recommend visiting with Districts such as Springfield or others that have different models, such as Bend, to review their programs for additional ideas to improve. A large part of the challenge in Greater Albany could possibly be attributed to the number of facilities that require program delivery.

Sodexo does have a series of financial benchmarks that they use to ensure they are meeting their corporate targets. That being said each year the district and Sodexo should agree to benchmarks (beyond budgeted revenue and expenditures), such as participation numbers, revenue per school or some other agreed upon measure, that are to be met, and if they are not met how to correct to ensure that the program will remain financially independent without additional general fund support. Talking to similar size (or other successful) Districts on how and why their program is successful or not can lead to more innovation on program delivery.

Commendations:

- Professional management staff
- Operations management seems to be running well

Recommendations:

- Develop financial benchmarks beyond budget to measure program success by.
- Visit with other school districts that currently run break even or positive revenue programs to find additional program ideas.



Performance and Accountability

Sodexo has a comprehensive set of financial goals and metrics that they use to ensure that their program is successful. As mentioned earlier though there is no agreement between the district and Sodexo if the measures are not met and the procedures for action steps to correct them.

The district also has no formal feedback systems with regard to program delivery. There is currently an informal process when a new product is tried, but there is no formal system to review if new products are successful or how they should be changed to improve to be more successful.

The district does have a comment section on the nutrition services website. However, without a formal program designed to elicit feedback in a statistically valid way then its impact on the design of the program will be limited.

The Center For Disease Control, has a program titled Make it Happen! which provides an example of a formal feedback program for new products.

Ongoing student participation is critical to gaining students' acceptance of changes. Ways to involve students include:

- Ask for their help in identifying foods that meet nutrition criteria.
- Involve them in tasting potential food and beverage items.
- Discuss their concerns openly and thoroughly.
- Get their feedback on the packaging, pricing, and placement of the new foods.



Using the data given by this type of program will help better determine options and their successful implementation. This type of program would take District wide support, but would potentially lead to a better and even more successful program.

Commendations:

- Comprehensive set of financial metrics at the Sodexo level.

Recommendations:

- Review current feedback systems and develop a more formalized approach.
- Convene a group of students, staff and community members to give input into the program and ways to encourage healthy eating.

Summarized Recommendations

- Complete more detailed review of current contract/in-house split in running program to see if additional efficiencies can be found.
- Develop financial benchmarks beyond budget to measure program success by.
- Review current feedback systems and develop a more formalized approach.
- Visit with other school districts that currently run break even or positive revenue programs to find additional program ideas.
- Convene a group of students, staff and community members to give input into the program and ways to encourage healthy eating.



Performance Accountability Systems

Background

The Performance Accountability Systems portion of this report represents an analysis of the District's ability to clearly identify what it wants to accomplish, the periodic measurement of its progress and the use of many types of data to make informed management decisions. The measurement data brought forward should allow the District to make educational and operational improvements and implement cost-effective measures. Best practice in Performance Accountability Systems implies a regular tracking of program and operational performance against agreed upon performance standards, goals, objectives, metrics and timelines. This data should be both formally and informally presented and made highly accessible to all interested constituents.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The District (GAPS) is applying all three of the best practice performance accountability standards (see below). The special effort to reach out to and involve parents through the District Welcome Center, Family Tree Relief Nursery, Kindergarten Readiness and Early Literacy programs are just a few examples to highlight. While the District does communicate about educational program data, there is also a need for performance information and cost effectiveness statistics for the various District systems to be evaluated and communicated. In order to meet more of the best practice indicators, the District leadership should carefully review the information in all 13 portions of the Management Efficiency Review and use it to create a new, multi-year strategic plan.

Goals and Measurable Objectives

The District has clearly stated goals and measurable objectives for major programs.

School districts must have effective accountability systems that provide performance expectations and ways to measure and monitor expected outcomes. In doing so, the board and all constituents are able to measure their district's progress, effectiveness and efficiency against planned priorities, available resources and comparable districts. Although the GAPS has District goals through policy AE and the District Accountability Plan, the goal indicators do not all have metrics with desired outcomes and timelines with which to base progress. In addition, neither goals nor indicators were found for some instructional and non-instructional programs. As a result, it is recommended that the District transition from the Management Efficiency Review to the development of a new, multi-year strategic plan. A comprehensive, six-page document is attached to this report to assist the District in the proposed transition.

Commendations:

- Although the District has adequate accountability practices in place, The Five Pillars for Becoming a Great Public School District is a good addition.
- The GAPS annual budget document is outstanding.

Recommendations:

- Update District program and operations goals and include more specific objectives, metrics and timelines where necessary.
- Use the information in this overall report to transition to a new, multi-year strategic plan.
- The District should make more use of data found in the annual state report card to measure its performance against the ten districts that are the most comparable.

The District evaluates the performance and cost of its major educational and operational programs and uses evaluation results to improve program performance and cost-efficiency.

All school districts need to regularly evaluate their programs and explore ways to improve program cost-effectiveness and efficiency. This is something the District does quite well for performance but there is a lack of evidence to show that it is as involved in cost effectiveness/efficiency. It is recommended that the District move to more formalized and systemic evaluations of its programs so it can determine which areas need the most improvement and closest monitoring. The process starts by gaining agreement on program measures and then focusing effort and allocating resources for programs in greatest need of improvement. The results should be easy to understand and distributed to those who can use them. Another benefit of a more formal evaluation of District programs is that the information can determine whether a specific program is providing its services in a cost-effective manner or not. The data should have implications for single and multiple year budget decisions. The Beaverton School District is a leader in Oregon in this area. Contact Chief Financial Officer, Claire Hertz, and request a copy of their Beaverton School District Multiyear Financial Plan 2014-2019. They have moved away from single year budgeting and instead make needed adjustments on a monthly basis.

Commendations:

- The Board receives formal, periodic reports for each program and District operation at least once, annually. These reports are scheduled on a monthly basis and are presented at regularly scheduled board meetings through the Report Matrix process.

Recommendations:

- A more results driven, systemic process to conduct program/department evaluation should be a major outcome of the Management Efficiency Review study.
- The District should consider developing a program evaluation system that can easily be linked to the budget development process so that budget decisions can be more associated with program performance. This can boost both instructional and non-instructional improvement and cost effectiveness.
- The District should consider establishing performance standards and determine the progress it wants from programs not meeting current expectations. Jeff Rose, Superintendent of the Beaverton School District, is an excellent resource to consider for this recommendation.

The District reports on the performance of its major educational and operational programs to ensure accountability to parents and others. Annual performance reporting through the use of accountability information is necessary to keep school board members and the public aware of how the District meets its priorities and how it compares to similar districts. This builds trust and develops support for public entities. It especially helps school districts when they want to pass local option levies and capital construction bonds.



The annual state report card emphasizes growth in student learning over time and it holds a wealth of district and individual school data. It is easy to look up district and school level data for any school or district in Oregon on the GAPS and Oregon Department of Education (DOE) websites. This makes it possible to compare the GAPS disaggregated student data with the other 197 Oregon districts in reading, mathematics, writing, science, college and career readiness, graduation rates, student behavior, attendance and a variety of other areas. The same is true for individual schools. Additionally, in most of the areas mentioned above, a measure is made comparing the individual district or individual school against its ten most similar schools and/or districts.

Commendations:

- The District works hard to provide information and receive input from parents and other interested community members. The District Welcome Center represents a special effort to accommodate the large percentage of non-English speaking parents. The Center conducts testing, gives referrals, provides migrant services, parenting programs and many other services.
- Parents receive a school handbook specific to each school and most schools have site councils.

Recommendations:

- More ways to respond to suggestions for improvement, especially to improve performance and cost effectiveness, should be developed. Listening and learning sessions; website, U.S. mail and telephone surveys; town hall meetings and focus group meetings are examples of a few of the ways to gain more performance and cost effectiveness data.
- Although annual progress reports are made to the Board for the District’s major programs, specific objectives with performance standards should be considered to make the reports more actionable. In other words, there can be a better balance for reports about how to improve performance as compared to sharing what a particular program is currently doing. Adding timelines and resources needed as important components of the progress reports will enable the desired District improvements to be more attainable.



Prioritized Recommendations

- Use the information gained from the Management Efficiency Review to transition to a new, multi-year strategic plan.
- Develop a program/operations evaluation and monitoring system that is linked to the annual budget development process so that budget decisions support desired District outcomes.
- Develop a more results driven, systematic way to conduct District program and operations evaluations and establish performance standards and progress desired for those not meeting expectations.
- More fully utilize information from the annual state report card, especially the information that measures GAPS and its individual schools against its ten comparator schools/districts.
- Although annual progress reports are made for the Board for the District’s major programs, specific objectives with performance standards should be considered to make the reports more actionable. In other words, there can be a better balance for reports about how to improve performance as compared to sharing what a particular program is currently doing.
- More ways to respond to suggestions for improvement, especially to improve performance and cost effectiveness, should be developed.
- Update District program and operations goals and include more specific objectives, metrics and timelines where necessary.



Personnel Systems

Human Resource Management covers eight areas:

- **Recruiting and hiring**
- **Stable work force**
- **Absenteeism and substitutes**
- **Personnel records**
- **Workers compensation n Employee benefits**
- **Effectiveness and efficiency of HR program**
- **Effective collective bargaining process**



Recruiting and Hiring

The District has a very dedicated Human Resource Staff. The staff has a very thorough process for new hires, including required background checks, reference checks and orientation. One area the District has problems with is in recruiting teachers who better reflect the area's current demographics as well as teachers in hard to fill areas such as special education, speech/language pathologists behavior specialists and ELL/Bilingual teachers. We would recommend working to develop a board supported long-term strategy to expand the recruitment pool. Reports similar to the Education of States, September 2005, "Eight Questions on Teacher Recruitment and Retention: What Does the Research Say?" will give the District a good guideline to follow to develop the strategy. The report can be located at <http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/teachingquality/trrreport/home/TeacherRecruitmentRetention.pdf>.

The District has job descriptions for all of its positions and continues to review the job descriptions when positions open up.

Hiring practices are building based in this district. Principals manage the process from the posting of a position through the selection of candidates. Central office provides assistance only when requested. The District has developed standardized protocols for interview questions however it is the decision of the principal whether to use the protocols. Without standard protocols for screening candidates and for interview questions, hiring practices can be inconsistent and even discriminatory. Principals do not have high level training in legal requirements related to hiring and can make mistakes that could be a legal risk for the district. Human Resource professionals are trained to insure compliance with legal requirements and can provide consistency across the district throughout the entire hiring process .



Commendations:

- Dedicated and skilled HR staff
- The system ensures HR compliance
- Efficient and thorough in-processing of new employees
- Current and up to date job descriptions



Recommendations:

- Develop a long-term recruitment strategy to expand applicant pool to better match the demographics of the District as well as to attract candidates for hard to fill positions.
- Standardize hiring practices, including interviews. Consider screening applicants at the central office level.

Stable Work Force

The District maintains a stable workforce and has relatively little turnover particularly among licensed staff. We recommend adding an exit interview for all employees who leave the District. Using the data from the interviews would assist in areas that can impact overall employee morale and retention. Another area the District can benefit from is implementation of an annual employee satisfaction survey. We also recommend encouraging all teachers to participate in the TELL survey that is administered by the state. Data from this survey would assist in developing policies or processes that will inform district and school improvement efforts.

Commendations:

- Low turnover rate

Recommendations:

- Implement exit interviews for all employees leaving the District's employment
- Implement annual employee satisfaction survey.
- Encourage participation in the state TELL survey at all schools.



Absenteeism and Substitutes

The District utilizes the AESOP system to manage absences and substitutes. HR produces a monthly report that provides information related to absences and the fill rate for substitutes. The District is starting to experience a shortage of substitutes in all areas which is also true of neighboring districts who compete for the same substitute teachers. The District provides some incentives to improve teacher attendance such as paying for personal leave that is not used.

Substitutes are required to take the Safe Schools training, they are given the District's Substitute Handbook and encouraged to continue training with the District. These are very good requirements.

Commendations:

- Substitute program is very strong

Recommendations:

- Analyze teacher absences to determine if there is a pattern of reasons that teachers are not in the classroom and if there could be additional incentives to improve teacher attendance.

Personnel Records

The District maintains their personnel files in accordance with Oregon Revised Statutes and District Policies. However, the District creates and maintains the majority of their records via manual processes and NCR forms. Moving to an electronic platform for forms and the maintenance of records can improve the efficiency of processes throughout the district as well as improve access to information.

Commendations:

- District personnel records maintained according to District Policy and state statute.

Recommendations:

- Continue exploring the idea of maintaining electronic personnel files.



Workers Compensation

We did not perform a detailed review of the District's worker's compensation expenses. However, we recommend working with SAIF to review the claims to determine if there are any potential cost saving measures or potential safety measures that can be implemented or if there are any recurring issues.

Commendations:

- District maintains worker's compensation with SAIF

Recommendations:

- Ask SAIF to complete an annual claims review with the District individuals responsible for Personnel Employee Benefits



The District maintains a competitive benefits package. The State dictates the health insurance pool the District must participate in. This naturally lends itself to limited options and additional cost containment solutions.

Commendations:

- Competitive Employee Benefits package

Recommendations:

- None.



Effectiveness and Efficiency of HR program

The District has very dedicated and skilled employees who run the Human Resources Program. There are clear processes and procedures in place for all HR functions. Having a Director who is only .5 limits the strategic leadership role that Human Resources can play in the district. A full time HR Director could provide leadership in initiatives such as developing standardized processes to limit risk as well as exploring an electronic platform for personnel files and forms. A full time HR Director would also allow the District to be more strategic in Recruitment and Hiring efforts.

Commendations:

- Dedicated, Experienced and skilled staff in Human Resources
- Electronic PAFs and substitute/absence management
- Use of iVisions in HR processes

Recommendations:

- Increase the FTE of the HR Director to 1.0.



Effective Collective Bargaining Process

The District's Union currently has wall-to-wall representation which means that both licensed and non-licensed staff are represented within the same association. From all accounts, the District has a good working relationship with its Unions. The Licensed Contract is currently good for one more year with reopeners for salaries and benefits. The Classified Contract will be bargained this year. The District has clearly defined who will be at the bargaining table.

Prioritized Recommendations:

- Increase the FTE of the HR Director to 1.0.
- Develop long-term recruitment strategy to expand applicant pool to better match the demographics of the District as well as staff hard to fill positions.
- Standardize hiring practices, including interviews. Consider screening applicants at the central office level.
- Implement exit interviews for employees leaving the District's employment
- Implement annual employee satisfaction survey and encourage participation in the state TELL survey.
- Analyze teacher absences to determine if there is a pattern of reasons that teachers are not in the classroom and if there could be additional incentives to improve teacher attendance.
- Continue to review and update job descriptions to ensure they meet the current District and state standards. Also, update experience and education requirements where applicable.
- Develop data reports to determine if there are any noticeable trends that could be corrected with policy changes or other incentives.
- Complete a review with SAIF to determine if there any potential worker's compensation issues.





Safety and Security Systems

Background

This report provides a review regarding the safety of the schools in the Greater Albany School District and their building access controls. This report does not address teacher connectivity with students, supervision of students in transition, drug and alcohol abuse, bullying/harassment and consistency in rule enforcement. All of these 6 areas impact the safety of students and staff while attending school. A future, in-depth assessments including all of these focus areas for the school district is recommended. It is possible that your current SIS (Student Information System) provided by LBL ESD could provide the data needed to complete an in-depth assessment in these other areas.



Many K-12 schools in our country were constructed during a historical period when student safety was not necessarily viewed as a major priority. Most of the schools in the Albany School District were built between 1945 and 1970. Because of this fact, school facilities will require extensive investments in facility improvement in order for the district to meet any kind of modern safety standards. As a result, the district has many exterior school doors which are located in areas that are extremely difficult for school staff to consistently monitor. Oftentimes, the location of these doors allows visitors to walk directly into the building completely out of the front office workers line of sight. This allows them to avoid checking in at the main office or to be taken/directed to their destination within the school. Almost every school has this type of problem in the school district.

The schools in Greater Albany School District have developed practices to address access control but, there are still problems. In direct response to safety, there needs to be an on-going effort to keep all doors locked except those tied to a main or front entrance. Staff and students need to be trained to deny entrance to visitors who try to gain access via side or rear entrances to the school. As spoken to in the school district safety audit of 2013, only two schools have adequate controls in place at the main entrance to supervise the flow of people entering and exiting their schools.

Clearly, no school is immune to intruders. This has been a revealed truth in even the smallest of school districts located in the most remote areas. The admission of visitors and others to a school should be completely controlled. Renovated front entrances that force visitors to walk directly into the front office where there is a staff member to greet and properly check them in is advisable in all of the district's schools. The implementation of electromagnetic locks at the main entrance of a school that is controlled by office staff via a video system would go a long way in reducing access to the school at the elementary and middle school levels. The high school access issues are much different and complex and will need to be addressed via a bond issue or a major renovation.

However, regardless of the architectural design and age of the schools, the key to access control is to train the entire staff and all students on the objective of ensuring that all visitors follow the school's check-in procedure. Everyone must assume a role in this practice. That means that custodial personnel must ensure that all doors are locked during the school day and checked routinely throughout the day; staff members must make it a practice to check the doors closest to their work spaces periodically, all personnel and students must be trained not to admit anyone from a side or rear door, but rather direct them to the front entrance; administrators must ensure that a procedure is in place at the front entrance that is consistently staffed; and administrators must also make an effort to provide outreach to parents informing them of this school routine and practice. The need for convenience often must be sacrificed for safety. And, though it may take some time, parents will eventually become familiar and comfortable with the process if it is effectively communicated to them and they realize that it is being done for the safety of their children. Parent and community communication about school safety is extremely important and the use of the district newsletter can be a great vehicle to address these issues.

The following report is based on Greater Albany School District superintendent recommendations of 2013, the facility assessment of 2015, direct observations, tours and photos of all the schools and actual assessments completed by building principals of schools other than their own schools. This last type of activity allows the building principal to see school access and safety issues at a different school which produces better objectivity and accuracy. This abbreviated assessment did lead to some suggestions to enhance the safety of staff and students.



Conclusions and Recommendations

The district has a current total of 9600 students. The district spans from Kindergarten-12th grade and currently has 1100 employees. Many of the schools were built between 1945 and 1970 and all are in different state of wear. Several of the schools are headed towards the end of their useful life as a school. This fact will be part of the district discussion in regards to a future bond. Included in this dialogue will be examining whether several of these schools should have any future infrastructure work completed or not.

An official school security survey was completed by a district committee in 2013 which led to recommendations made by the superintendent to address school safety issues in the school district. This report was well done and addressed the general issues at each school. However it is missing any recommendations on traffic control at the schools in regards to student drop off and pick up zones. But it should be known that traffic control issues are addressed in the 2015 Facility Assessment and solutions are discussed as part of a possible facility bond. What is lacking from the report of 2013 report was a timetable for completion of the recommendations, the prioritization of work to be done and who was ultimately responsible to make sure this work was completed for the safety of staff and students.

Calculations have been made for work needed in the district in regards to safety and security and it's estimated it will cost at least \$5.6 million. Some initial work has been done but it seems like the district is waiting to address all of the safety issues until a decision can be made on a facility bond. Many of these safety issues could be addressed immediately by considering use of school district reserves particularly at the elementary and middle schools. This work could be directed by a new risk manager that was recommended in the 2013 report from the superintendent.

Traffic Control

The practices and procedures for safe, orderly and caring schools.

Several schools have problems with their bus and car loading and dropping off zones. This is largely due to either their location on a county highway in a rural area or being in an old neighborhood in the city or the original design of the school is not conducive to appropriate coming and going of buses and automobiles.

Commendations:

- During the visit of the campus and discussions with principals, it was very evident that each principal had general ideas about safety issues at their schools. This was particularly true at the elementary schools.
- That the principals took the time to complete a safe school assessment at a school other than their own school.
- For including a review of drop off areas for all schools in regards to buses and cars in the 2015 assessment report.

Recommendations:

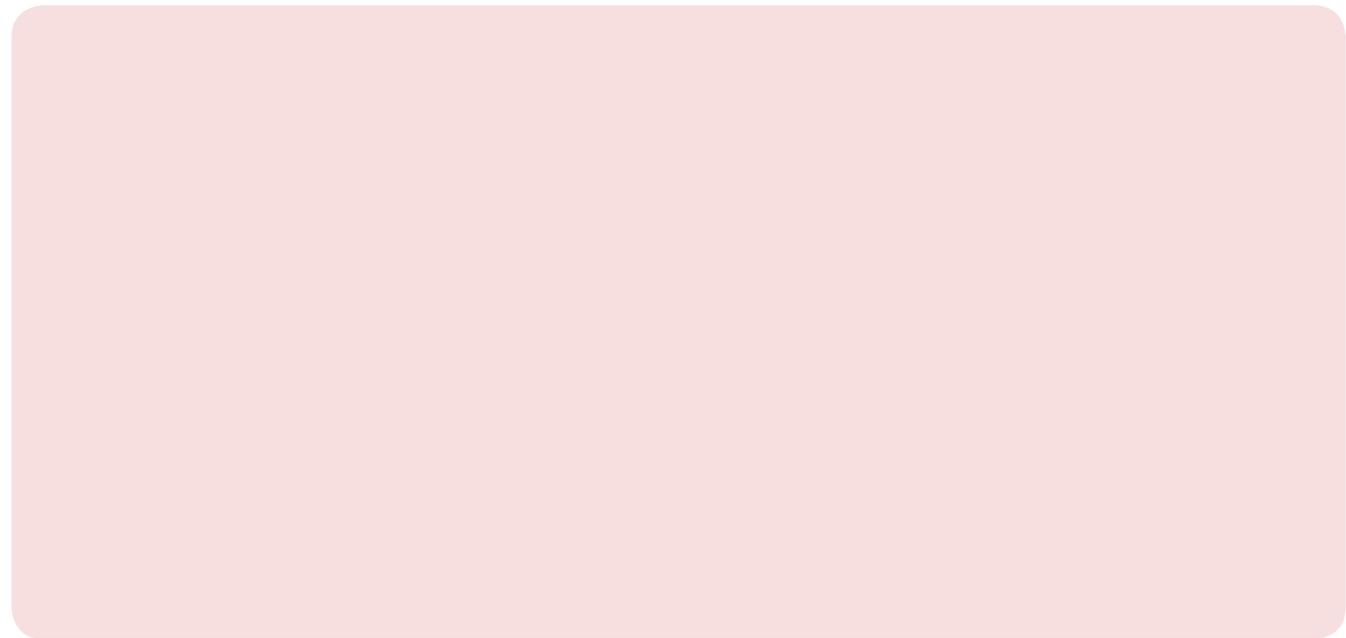
- Look for alternatives to current situations to avoid same zone being used by buses and cars until such time as drop off areas can be addressed by the passing of a successful school bond.
- Use multiple monitors on crossing/ bus and parent drop areas.
- Consider asking the county to install flashing lights in all four directions to notify drivers of a school zone at Clover Ridge due to the proximity to the county road.

Surveillance Outside

The review of the outside of the schools is key to the security of students and staff at the beginning, during and at the end of the school day. All the vehicle routes and parking areas cannot be monitored visually without the introduction of outside security cameras. Lighting needs to be vandal proofed at all schools. Very few schools have outside, let alone, inside security cameras. Almost every school has main entrance issues regarding access to the facility either due to poor access control, no or limited fencing on the campuses and a lack of security cameras.

All of the schools have places where there are blind spots, glare areas and shadows. This is due to the age and design of the existing structures. The introduction of additional lighting to address this problem at each school should be studied.

The district has spent some money over the last two years to install video cameras in some of their schools for security. Unfortunately, in some schools the only person that could monitor the cameras was the building principal because that is where the feed was sent to in that specific building.



Access control inside

The district has many challenges controlling access inside the schools due to the age and design of each of the schools. All the schools need a training program for staff and students to keep all outside doors locked and funnel students and visitors through one or two monitored entrances. The use of electromagnetic door locks controlled by voice and video cameras would reduce the amount of uncontrolled access in all the schools. Safe school protocols call for all classroom doors to be locked when rooms are vacant but this process can be also used as a security method when classes start each period. Currently most of the classrooms have their doors locked with a small sliding rubber stopper keeping the door ajar. The idea is that if you need to lock down you just pull the slider back and the door locks. This practice comes from our “I love you guys” protocol. This can be a great practice to implement, but any classrooms without these stoppers should probably keep their doors locked at all times.



At both the middle school and high school, restricted areas need better signage for safety reasons and communication. The high school has challenges with control points and lines of sight due to the design of the buildings.

Commendations:

- The cooperation with the local law enforcement agencies to create a school response major incident plan for each school.
- For the implementation of rubber door stoppers in many of your classrooms.

Recommendations:

- Staff and students need to be trained on locking outside doors, empty rooms and consider locking classrooms once class starts.
- Staff and students need to be trained to funnel all visitors through one entry point and each school should have some formal check in and check out procedure with visitor name tags or badges.
- Signage in all schools needs to be reviewed and updated not only for restricted areas but for flow of students, staff and visitors in each school.
- Complete installation of video systems for security reasons in all schools.

Safety Devices & Equipment inside

The district has other unique challenges due to the age and design of their buildings. Only two schools have an emergency backup power system. It was reported that there is a private cell phone that school administrators have access to in an emergency situation. Communication to all the classrooms in an emergency situation is dependent upon the systems installed in each school. The district needs to review emergency communication protocols so that calls are directed to appropriate sources.

Commendations:

- The district’s broadband Internet network is robust enough to allow additional security measures to be implemented in all of the schools.

Recommendations:

- Consider reviewing emergency communication plans and protocols for all schools. The district should review using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram as a resource for emergency communication to staff and parents.
- Backup generators should be considered at all schools as part of the district’s effort to update and maintain their schools.
- The implementation of a VOIP system district wide could be a great resource to the school staff when there is a need for an emergency response due to a threat or a natural disaster.



Prioritized Recommendations:

- Review drop off areas for all schools in regards to buses and cars. Look for alternatives to current situations to avoid same zones being used by busses and cars.
- Complete installation of video systems for security reasons in all schools.
- The district needs to review access in and out of each school. Staff and students needs to be trained on locking outside doors, empty rooms and consider locking classrooms from the outside once class starts.
- Make access to video camera feeds for security available to more than the principals. Administrative assistants in each school should also have access to those feeds so that at any time at least one person can be checking the video feeds for the safety of the students and staff.
- Look at illuminating all outside dark or blind spots at every school.
- Use multiple human monitors on crossing/ bus and parent drop areas.
- Consider asking the county to install flashing lights in all four directions to notify drivers of a school zone at Clover Ridge.
- Signage in all schools needs to be reviewed and updated not only for restricted areas but for flow of students, staff and visitors in each school.
- Consider reviewing emergency communication plans and protocols for all schools. The district should review using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram as a resource for emergency communication to staff and parents.
- Complete an extensive safe schools assessment that addresses teacher connectivity with students, supervision of students in transition, drug and alcohol abuse, bullying, harassment, consistency in rule enforcement and mandatory drills in addition to this review of building access controls.





Staffing Pattern

Background

Greater Albany School District has seen an increase in enrollment for the last several years, going from 9,115 in 2011 to over 9,600 in 2015. In the most recent staffing data collection from the Oregon Department of Education (see Appendix), Greater Albany was listed as having 406 teachers, 180 educational assistants, 258 other support staff and 29 administrators – including district office staff. Among the group of 11 comparable districts (listed in the Appendix), Greater Albany ranks 3rd in enrollment, tied with 6 others for 2nd in percentage of administrators, 5th in percentage of teachers, tied for 2nd in percentage of educational assistants and 9th in percentage of other support staff. The district ranks 3 highest in the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced meals according to the Oregon Department of Education Socio-Economic scale. The percentage of teachers on staff is similar to the comparator districts with Greater Albany in about the middle of the group. In contrast, the number of paraeducators is 2nd in the group of comparable districts. It is important to understand how the district utilizes these staff members in order to accomplish their mission.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- **Central Office Staffing**
- **Building Level Staffing**
- **Prioritized Recommendations**



Central Office Staffing

Currently, the central office has a Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent, a .5 Human Resources Director, a Director of Business and Operations, a Special Programs Director, a Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction and a part-time Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction who is also the director of Federal Programs. There is a perception from principals that the central office is not service oriented. This might be a result of a limited number of central office administrators, specifically in Human Resources and Curriculum and Instruction. Currently the Superintendent evaluates the high school principals while the middle and elementary principals are supervised by the secondary director of curriculum and instruction. The Superintendent understands that he needs to be focused on the next bond issue as well as be more accessible to the community. A .5 Human Resources Director does not have the capacity to oversee recruitment and hiring efforts, provide oversight for the evaluation process as well as strategically lead the District in improving processes in the Human Resources department. In addition, because of the limited capacity of the .5 HR Director, the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Group (CIA) has taken on responsibilities typically performed by Human Resources.

Commendations:

- The district has performed well with a limited administrators in the central office
- Central office administrators are perceived as solid and competent

Recommendations:

- Increase the Human Resources Director to 1.0 FTE
- Increase the Elementary Director of Curriculum and Instruction to 1.0 FTE.
- Reassign some of the HR responsibilities that are currently performed by the Instruction Department back to the HR Department. These could include Professional Development, oversight of hiring process (screen applications, monitoring interview process for consistency) and oversight of the evaluation process
- Assign Assessment Responsibilities to one of the directors of curriculum and instruction.
- Change the reporting structure for principal with the middle and high school principals reporting to the secondary director of curriculum and instruction and the elementary principals reporting to the elementary director of curriculum and instruction.



Building Level Staffing

The district has 22 schools – 14 elementary schools, four middle schools, two high schools and one options school that includes middle and high school students. There are 19 building principals (2 with responsibilities to oversee more than one building) and 7 assistant principals. Some of the principals of the smaller schools have been given additional responsibilities at the central office. Based on the most recent numbers available from the Oregon Department of Education, the 15 elementary schools serve numbers ranging from 114 students in a school that is only kindergarten and 2nd grade to 712 students in a school that serves 3rd through 8th grade students. Four elementary schools have fewer than 200 students. Three elementary schools serve between 236 and 278 students. Five elementary schools serve between 311 and 367 students and two elementary schools serve between 420 and 459 students. McMinnville, which is approximately the same size as Greater Albany has six elementary schools. The large number of elementary schools in Greater Albany makes it difficult to create equitable class sizes across district and does not efficiently utilize support staff or specialists who have to travel between schools. The middle schools range between 532 and 712 students, each with one principal and one assistant principal. The high schools have approximately 1400 students with one principal and two assistant principals at each school. The principals in all of the schools have the responsibility of being the educational leader, facility manager, disciplinarian, as well as provide meaningful staff development and effective evaluations for all staff members. The principals also do all of the screening, interviewing and hiring of building level staff. The District currently has four very small elementary schools. Two principals each oversee two of the small schools and one principal has a school of only 161 students. For the principals who are responsible for more than one building, it is difficult to travel between two different sites to provide the leadership, discipline oversight, staff development and facility management that is necessary as well as making them potentially unavailable in times of crisis.

Commendations:

- The District has committed and professional building principals who serve as important educational leaders in the district.
- The District has taken proper measures to staff its schools with talented and committed individuals who empower students to reach their full academic potential.
- The District has a well-developed evaluation system for evaluating teachers.

Recommendations:

- Combine these smaller schools into two sites rather than the current four sites to provide more efficiency and allow the school communities to be better served by the principals.
- Provide extensive training to all principals, making sure that they are all instructional leaders and have the skill sets necessary to effectively evaluate their staff and lead their building instructional improvement efforts.
- Engage in future efforts to more closely match the building staff with the demographic/ethnicity of the general population of the district.



Prioritized Recommendations:

- Reconfigure the elementary schools so that the enrollment is more even, eliminating at least two of the schools with fewer than 200 students.
- Increase the HR Director to 1.0
- Increase the Elementary Director of Curriculum and Instruction to 1.0 FTE.
- Reassign some of the HR responsibilities that are currently performed by the Instruction Department back to the HR Department.
- Assign Assessment Responsibilities to one of the directors of curriculum and instruction.
- Change the reporting structure of principals so that no principals report to the superintendent.
- Provide training in the teacher evaluation system to all principals.
- Provide more oversight of the hiring process by the HR department to ensure consistency.
- Engage in future efforts to more closely match the building staff with the demographic/ethnicity of the general population of the district.





Transportation

Background

This chapter provides a review and overview of the Greater Albany School District's Transportation Program. The District's transportation program is designed to provide students with safe and reliable transportation to and from school. The District runs its own transportation program including buying buses and hiring drivers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The transportation program covers three major areas:

- **Planning, Organization and Staffing**
- **Vehicle Acquisition and Maintenance**
- **Operations, Management and Accountability**



Planning, Organization and Staffing

The transportation program works closely with individual schools in helping map out transportation needs.

The transportation program presents to the School Board to review the program annually. This is a great way to ensure that the program stays in front to the board and any program issues can be dealt with appropriately.

In the staffing area, the District has the advantage of having little turnover in regular driving staff and a good amount of substitute drivers. This leads to continuity year to year in the program. However, the span of control of the transportation director appears to be too large and should be reviewed for maximum effectiveness. Similar size districts such as Springfield and Reynolds have a Supervisor and an Assistant. The position could possibly be part time but help with the large span of control that the Director currently has at this time. The issue with large spans of control is that it leads to spending large amounts of time on personnel matters and not having enough time to implement new initiatives and program improvements. One of those improvements may be a detailed review of busing and school starting schedules. As with many other districts, busing drives the school schedules. So, are the elementary, middle and high school schedules in alignment with the current research? Not really.



Staffing and workflow for the transportation front office staff should also be reviewed. As the program has increased in size and complexity, comp time has been used to compensate for the additional time necessary to run the program, particularly at the start of the school year. The workflow should be reviewed to see if there are ways to alleviate that issue.

Commendations:

- Little turnover with permanent driving staff
- Full use of transportation software packages
- Training program meets state requirements

Recommendations:

- Review current span of control for transportation director
- Review workflow process for current front office staff



Vehicle Acquisition and Maintenance:

The District is in fairly good shape with their bus acquisition and maintenance program. There is a schedule (and currently the funding) to continue to replace older vehicles in the fleet.

The District currently completes all maintenance in house. The director reviews all large purchases and the lead mechanic orders all parts. We would recommend ensuring that all parts inventories and ordering process systems are regularly reviewed by the director or others to ensure they are operating at maximum efficiency, cost and to insure parts do not disappear.

Commendations:

- District has a replacement plan
- Strong in-house maintenance program

Recommendations:

- Annually review parts ordering and inventories for maximum efficiency



Operations, Management and Accountability:

The District's transportation program looks to be running well, and has some formal goals and metrics for the program. The transportation director is a part of a national group to help develop national set of metrics for districts. We would recommend looking at reviewing the current district metrics and determining their effectiveness and if there are others that could help determine overall effectiveness and efficiency. One of the key elements of a benchmark is how to adjust programs when those benchmarks are not achieved. For example, bus utilization, if the goal is not met how do we change the program to meet that goal? Or is the goal unreasonable in the first place? A more detailed review of those metrics should be made to determine if they are successful in helping the transportation program improve.

One of the items that we found during our visit was the transportation facility was becoming too small for the District's needs. With the growth of the program and the size of newer buses, space is at a premium at the current facility. It is our understanding that the district is looking at a possible new location for the transportation department and bus barn and we recommend that that review continue. However, that being said we also recommend that the district does not forgo additional maintenance on the current facility until a new facility is built. We observed several areas that should be fixed currently, for example leaking gutters were leading to pavement spalling and could have long term negative impacts if a new facility is not procured in the near future.

Commendations:

- Overall Transportation program is running well
- Software implementation and program changes have led to operational efficiencies

Recommendations:

- Review current program metrics for effectiveness
- Continue investigating a new transportation facility
- Ensure that maintenance continues to be done on current facility.



Summarized Recommendations:

- Review current span of control for transportation director
- Review workflow process for current front office staff
- Annually review parts ordering and inventories for maximum efficiency
- Review current program metrics for effectiveness
- Continue investigating new transportation facility
- Ensure that maintenance continues to be done on current facility.





Transition from the District's Management/Efficiency Review to a Multi-year Strategic Plan

Background

As a part of the Albany School District's Management/Efficiency Review, we offer the transition information that follows as a possible next step in the District's continuing effort to become a more focused, efficient and highly effective organization. It is our opinion that the logical next step is to develop a new three to five year strategic plan. Three key areas to consider for the development of a strategic plan are listed below. This information is intended to help the Board and District leaders determine if they want to move forward with this suggested transition.

Strategic Plan Process Issues and Ideas

This segment briefly outlines background information regarding problems to avoid, ways to gain positive results and some tips from other organizations that have created successful strategic plans.

Key Elements in the Strategic Planning Process

Most successful strategic plans have the following 10 elements: communication methods, use of a planning team, identification of core values, new mission statement, new vision statement, overall goals, specific objectives, assigned tasks, implementation strategies and monitoring/accountability methods. Each of these elements is described within this part of the transition information.

Possible Timeline for the District's Strategic Plan

Since the Management/Efficiency Review will be completed by March 2016, the suggested timeline begins in May and could conclude on or before June 2017. It could be abbreviated or expanded. However, most highly effective plans take approximately one year to thoughtfully develop and gain the necessary ownership required for successful implementation.



Strategic Plan Process Issues and Considerations

Most Organizations Have Strategic Plans; However the Plans Often Fail Because:

- They tend not to be living/evolving documents
- They usually have little impact on daily operations
- 80% fail to meet their targets (goals)

The above three bullets are reasons for failure not because of poor strategies but rather because they result from lack of successful implementation and systematic review of individual strategic plan goals and objectives. As a result, strategic plan monitoring and execution need to be main factors in a school board's reason for the hiring and in the on-going evaluation of their superintendent.

Problems

- Leadership today is often forced to address short-term operational problems that continually emerge rather than being able to spend the majority of time on big-picture, strategic leadership.
- Very few plans have built in, significant accountability with positive and negative consequences.
- There is constant turnover at all levels of leadership in school districts.
- Most school districts have too many goals (three to five strategic goals over a three to five year timeline is recommended).
- A large number of district goals are not realistic, measurable, sustainable, time-bound or adequately funded.

Routes to Success

- Select proper metrics to measure the progress of strategic plan goals and objectives.
- Use leading indicators instead of lagging indicators. In other words, concentrate on all third grade students reading at grade level by the time they leave third grade as compared to increasing the number of advanced placement classes juniors and seniors pass.
- Build in opportunities for each employee to have input when new plans are developed.
- Make strategic plan implementation everyone's job.
- A key question for every employee is: how does my daily work/position/action in some way support our district's strategic plan?
- Align the district's overall budget with the strategic plan's resource needs.
- Plans need constant monitoring and adjusting (use balanced scorecard and data dashboard structures).
- Work on executing the long-term plan while delivering short-term results.
- A great sense of urgency is needed from the board of directors, superintendent and internal leadership team. Carrying out the overall strategic plan should be the most important thing a school district's leadership does.

Additional Points

- Create a strategy-focused organization that can drive system-wide, improved performance.
- Remember, strategic planning is the easy part; the difficulty is in strategy implementation.
- A simplified strategic plan development process is: identify goals, select targets for each goal, align each goal with adequate and sustainable resources and create a multi-year action plan to achieve the targets for each goal.
- Be aware that over the timeline of most strategic plans, boards and their organizational leaders tend to spend more time on the strategy development process rather than the actual achievement of the plan's selected goals. What compounds this problem systemically is the fact that many school district leaders do not stay with the same district long enough to shepherd the process to a successful conclusion.

Key Elements in the Strategic Planning Process

1. **Communication Strategy:** the creation of a communication strategy is essential for the effective development and implementation of a strategic plan. It must be determined who will be involved in the planning process, how they will be involved, what will be communicated and to whom it will be communicated.
2. **Strategic Planning Team:** the development of a core team of leaders/thinkers is necessary for the effective creation of a strategic plan. Each member should represent a key function and/or interest group of the district to ensure the plan has comprehensive input and buy-in. The team should meet regularly and have clearly defined tasks to accomplish.
3. **Mission Statement:** is a brief definition of what the district does, who it does it for and how it does what it does.
4. **Vision Statement:** is what the district wants to become in the next one to five years. The direction of the district should be broad enough to include all areas of impact but narrow enough to clearly define a path.
5. **Core Values:** are the district's fundamental beliefs in how it wants to operate. Values provide a guideline for the board and staff to demonstrate desired district behaviors that directly relate to the preferred district culture.
6. **Goals:** are broad-based strategies needed to achieve the district's vision for the future.
7. **Objectives:** are specific, measureable, action-oriented, realistic and time-bound targets that achieve the district's strategic goals.
8. **Tasks:** are specific actions tied to the objectives and assigned to individuals and/or departments to carry out.
9. **Implementation Strategy:** once the plan has been outlined, a tactical strategy is built that prioritizes the goals and aligns resources. Accountability measures are put in place to ensure implementation progress takes place.
10. **Monitoring of the Plan:** during implementation of the plan it is critical to monitor the success and challenges of goals, objectives and the accountability system. When evaluating the plan, it is necessary to periodically evaluate the metrics defined in the goals and objectives. It may be necessary from time to time to retool the plan and its assumptions if elements of the plan are off track.



Possible Timeline and Specific Tasks for a Greater Albany Public Schools Multi-year Strategic Plan

2016

MAY: meet with superintendent to review the possibility of developing a multi-year strategic plan. If yes then:

JUNE: meet with Board to review draft processes, timelines and answer questions

JULY: review key District documents

AUGUST: identify participants, develop a schedule of meetings and decide on questions for focus groups

SEPTEMBER: hold focus groups throughout the District and community

OCTOBER: compile focus group data into a draft report and start work on district core values

NOVEMBER: present the focus group report to the Board and planning group. Complete a draft of the District core values

DECEMBER: meet with planning team to develop a draft of the mission and vision statements

2017

JANUARY: meet with planning team to develop the overall District goals. Present core values, mission statement, and vision statement for Board modification and approval.

FEBRUARY: meet with Board to finalize District goals. Work with planning team to develop a draft of specific, measurable, realistic and time-bound objectives that will achieve the District goals.

MARCH: work with planning team to develop a draft of the metrics to be used to measure goal progress and present objectives and metrics to the Board

APRIL: meet with planning team to develop a plan for the tasks to be completed during the 2017-18 school year. Present a draft of the overall District strategic plan to a group of key, community members to gain the final input before it is presented to the Board.

MAY: present the proposed strategic plan document along with monitoring suggestions to the Board for their first reading. Based on Board input, consultants make suggested modifications. The Board adopts the District strategic plan at their second meeting in May.

JUNE: Board adopted plan is presented to the community by Board, superintendent and consultants

*(The consultants worked with the Silver Falls School District on a multi-year strategic plan that followed a similar timeline and overall plan that would serve as a good exemplar for the Greater Albany School District. The complete document can be viewed on the SFSD website).

Appendix

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

<i>Best Practices and Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Technology Planning				
1. The district has a comprehensive technology plan that provides direction for administrative and instructional technology decision making.		x		
a. The district has a board-approved technology plan that addresses both administrative and instructional technology.		x		The district has a Digital Education Plan but does not have a comprehensive district tech plan.
b. The district annually conducts an assessment to identify district and school-level technology needs.		x		An updated assessment on use of technology by staff and students is needed to guide future planning
c. The district has solicited and used broad stakeholder input in developing the technology plan.		x		Just starting this work based on recommendations from the Digital Learning Plan.
d. At a minimum, the district technology plan addresses the subjects below.) Individual school technology needs) Equitable resource allocation, anticipating growth and technology advances ¹) Funding for technology) Cost-effective acquisition) Professional development for technology users) Technical support needs of users) Infrastructure and network communication, including community access issues ²) Information management and delivery ³		x		The district has several TOSA's who addressed staff development for instructional technology. The district also has basically what I would call a CIO for the informational technology side of things.
e. The district technology plan is compatible with state reporting requirements and aligned with federal initiatives.		x		Need to measure staff and student use of technology based on performance indicators adopted in the district technology plan.
f. The objectives in the technology plan are measurable and reflect the desired outcomes for educational and operational programs. ⁴		x		Some of the recommendations in the Digital Learning plan are measurable but without a district tech plan there are things missing that need to be measured.

¹ Planning may include, for example, bandwidth needs and the rationale for these needs.

² Community access issues could include connectivity to community entities such as public libraries (connectivity can be through hardware, through the Internet, or both), and after-hours access to media centers by the public.

³ Data needs are well-defined and prioritized; delivery systems are designed to provide timely and accurate data.

⁴ For example, when establishing objectives related to incorporating instructional technology into the curriculum, the district should include outcomes based on the effect this technology is expected to have on student performance.

g. The district's annual budget provides funds for major technology initiatives as reflected in the plan.	x			Use of E-rate federal funding has built a robust network for the school district.
h. The district has taken advantage of opportunities to improve technology operations, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce costs.	x			
i. The district has identified an individual(s) responsible for implementing and updating the technology plan.		x		Director of Business and Operations oversee informational technology and asst. superintendent oversees instructional technology
j. The district investigates grant opportunities for technology funding and stays current with state and federal funding initiatives. ⁵	x			
k. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

Cost-Effective Technology Acquisition

2. The district acquires technology in a cost-effective manner that will best meet its instructional and administrative needs.⁶				
a. The district bases its technology acquisitions on identified needs and its technology plan.		x		
b. The district uses the results of research and evaluations of previous decisions to identify technology that will best meet instructional and administrative needs.		x		Most school districts do not generally use research per se in their analysis. The district does review past decisions to inform future decisions.
c. The district has established standards for acquiring digital instructional materials, software, and hardware for administrative and instructional use. ⁷	x			Some good work has been done with the Digital learning plan.
d. The district provides opportunities for district and school personnel to preview, evaluate, and recommend acquisition of technology strategies, instructional materials, and software.	x			
e. The district coordinates with the schools and uses different purchasing strategies to lower costs of acquiring technology and instructional learning systems. ⁸		x		Purchasing seems to be done at the school level and not on a districtwide basis.
f. The district assists schools in negotiating purchase prices for technology acquisitions.	x			

⁵ Federal funding includes programs such as E-rate.

⁶ Instructional needs include incorporating technology into the curriculum and needs of students learning how to use technology.

⁷ Standards for instructional materials should take into account and any other state instructional materials adoption standards.

⁸ Examples of such strategies are negotiating district-wide pricing on instructional learning systems as well as software, hardware, and coordinating orders to take advantage of bulk rate discounts.

g. The district considers future support, operating, maintenance, and disposal costs when it acquires technology.		x		Seems to be a disconnect here due to not having a tech plan in place.
h. The district equitably distributes technology resources to schools within the district.			x	Hard to determine without a tech plan in place.
i. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

Technology Professional Development

3. District and school-based staff receive professional development training for all technologies used in the district.				
a. The district verifies the availability of appropriate training before acquiring new equipment or software.	x			Depending on the equipment, training is considered in the process as per the Technology TOSA's.
b. The district provides appropriate professional development that is based on feedback from central office and school-based staff and is aligned with the district's strategic plan, technology plan, and the School Improvement Plans (SIPs).	x			Seems there are great plans for training but there is not a very organized plan because each school does their own thing when it comes to the purchasing of technology.
c. The district funds technology training.	x			
d. The district provides a variety of opportunities in terms of time, location, and delivery mode for educators and other district staff to obtain technology training. ⁹	x			
e. The district has established performance criteria that include technology skills for both administrators and teachers.		x		Technology performance indicators need to be included in the teacher evaluation framework.
f. The district provides professional development on integrating technology into the curriculum.	x			
g. The district provides appropriate professional development to administrators and non-instructional staff. ¹⁰			x	Hard to measure this without a tech plan in place.
h. The district provides specialized training for technology support personnel.	x			Interviews with staff seems to support that there is needed training for these specialized staff members.
i. District and school staff receives training to keep technology skills up-to-date.		x		

⁹ These opportunities may include traditional classroom and computer lab instruction, as well as web-based instruction, electronic bulletin boards, DVD's, and other self-directed, technology-based methods.

¹⁰ The type of professional development provided to this staff depends on their job duties and responsibilities. For example, data entry clerks at schools should be provided training on maintaining data integrity.

j. The district has a process to assess the effectiveness of professional development training provided to ensure competency in the skills targeted. ¹¹	x			
k. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

Technical Support

4. The district provides timely and cost-effective technical support that enables educators and district staff to successfully implement technology in the workplace.				
a. The district conducts a comprehensive assessment of the technical support needs of the schools and district offices.	x			Some assessment is done but it might make sense to do something with LBLED to get a comprehensive report.
b. The district budgets for all costs associated with the installation and support of its technology.	x			
c. The district provides comprehensive technical support to the schools and district offices. ¹²	x			There seems to be a good core of informational tech support folks.
d. Technical support responsibilities are appropriately assigned to specific personnel at both the district and the school level.	x			Support is distributed by specific IT staff
e. The district has procedures for a regular, systematic, and equitable prioritization of technical support services.	x			A system is in place for staff to ask for help and for it to be monitored.
f. The district effectively coordinates the delivery of support services, analyzing the technical support provided, and shares the resolution of support issues among technical support staff.	x			
g. The district provides timely technical support in accordance with its service priorities.		x		There seems to be a big disconnect here. The IT staff works hard and does a lot of work but the perception in the schools is that they don't get timely support.
h. The district evaluates the quality and timeliness of the technical support provided.	x			Director of Business and Operations meets with IT director on at least a monthly basis.

¹¹ Districts should strive to go beyond issues such as whether participants liked the professional development opportunity and focus on intended outcomes and skills to be mastered. Performance evaluations may be good indicators of improved skills as a result of professional development if there is something in the evaluation that addresses the issue.

¹² Providing technical support is accomplished in a variety of ways. For instance, it may include one or more of the following: providing a trained non-instructional technology support person or providing a technology facilitator in each school; training an individual with teaching duties as an application expert to assist their peers; managing a central help desk at the district; implementing a work-order tracking system; or contracting for regional or vendor support services. Areas of technical support may include email support, intranet/internet access, software application support, web development, or computer hardware installation and maintenance.

i. The district has an equipment replacement policy that specifies a time frame for technologies to be recycled or replaced to minimize the cost of supporting out-of-warranty computers.		x		This is greatly needed and should be part of the district technology plan.
j. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

Infrastructure and Network Communication

5. The district maintains a dependable, standards-based infrastructure employing strategies that cost-effectively maximize network and Internet access and performance.				
a. The district employs practices that provide a consistently available and fully operational network.	x			
b. The district has developed written speed and access standards for district network resources.		x		With the onset of more portable devices district needs to project with help of LBLED future bandwidth needs to the Internet. The district also does not meet the recommended bandwidth recommendations from the Erate program.
c. The district has virus protection software and procedures in place.	x			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		
6. The district uses technology to improve communication.				
a. The district uses web technologies, such as the Internet and intranet sites, and email to improve and enhance communication between groups such as schools, districts, the state, parents, and the community.	x			The district uses the WWW, Facebook and their Student Information System. Serious consideration needs to be given to updating communication systems with new VOIP system and remove old legacy phone systems and POTS lines.
b. The district administration uses email to supplement communications of policies and information to schools.	x			
c. The district uses email to circumvent costly meetings whenever feasible and to increase the frequency and speed of communications to parents and teachers.	x			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

7. The district has written policies that apply safe, ethical, and appropriate use practices that comply with legal and professional standards.				
a. Staff, teachers, students, and parents are provided written and verbal guidelines describing the appropriate and inappropriate uses of technology, such as school computers, the Internet, white boards, smart phones and other technologies.	x			
b. The district has implemented policies and procedures to prevent access to inappropriate Internet sites.	x			
c. The district provides staff, teachers, students, and parents with written and verbal guidelines describing legal uses of digital materials, both instructional and non-instructional. ¹³	x			District should consider implementing an annual online tool that verifies staff have read and know guidelines.
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

Information Management and Delivery

8. The district has established general controls in the areas of access, systems development and maintenance, documentation, operations, and physical security to promote the proper functioning of the information systems department.				
a. The district has written procedures and a standards manual. ¹⁴	x			
b. The district has had an audit within the last three years with no outstanding findings of material weaknesses.		x		
c. Appropriate segregation of duties based on district size exists within the data processing function. ¹⁵	x			Based on conversations with IT staff this seems to occur.
d. The district protects systems from unauthorized users by using room locks, passwords, firewalls, and other needed means as conditions warrant.	x			
e. Controls exist to limit access to and prevent release of confidential and sensitive data.	x			
f. The district ensures that independent databases are effectively managed to provide reliable and accurate data and ensure efficient operations. ¹⁶	x			

¹³ Guidelines may address copyright issues and legal responsibilities.

¹⁴ This manual should include procedures as they relate to systems operations, systems development and maintenance standards, documentation standards, operations policies, and access security policies.

¹⁵ In smaller districts with limited opportunities for segregation of duties, compensating controls exist such as managerial or user review of work performed.

¹⁶ Independent databases refer to systems that are not directly managed by the district. For example, districts may have contracts with vendors providing a student information system that includes the operation of independent databases.

g. If a school district engages a service organization to process transactions on its behalf, the district has executed appropriate agreements with the providers and appropriate control procedures have been established. ¹⁷	x			
h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		
9. The information needs of administrative and instructional personnel are met by applying appropriate project management techniques to define, schedule, track and evaluate purchasing, developing, and the timing of delivering IT products and services requested.				
a. The district analyzes alternatives to identify the most cost-effective method of delivering IT products and services. ¹⁸	x			Work with the ESD and the Internet provider seems to help in this area.
b. The district can demonstrate that its information systems deliver IT products and services in a timely manner.	x			
c. The district has a way to gauge user satisfaction with the delivery of IT products and services.		x		More feedback from IT customers would help greatly.
d. Users are satisfied with the information they receive from the IT department.		x		
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		x		

¹⁷ A school district that engages a service organization to process transactions on its behalf should assure itself that proper controls are followed. There are many ways school districts can do this.

¹⁸ Information products and services may include modifying existing programs, adding data elements to centralized computer systems, developing applications, writing interfaces, installing, configuring, and testing new technology, etc.

***Best Financial Management Practices With Their Associated Indicators
December 2015***

Identifying Information of Individual Completing Form

Name	Tim Collier	Telephone No.	503-330-6131
Position/Title		E-mail Address	
District	Albany School District		

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

<i>Best Practices and Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Financial Management				
1. The district periodically analyzes the structure and staffing of its financial services organization.				
a. The financial services department has an approved organizational structure.	X			
b. The position descriptions for critical financial service positions contain appropriate education and experience requirements.	X			
c. Financial services staff are cross-trained for critical accounting processes.	X			Cross training exists at the business office staff level. A more formal program should be developed for the Business Operations Director and Controller
d. Financial service staff receives appropriate training and professional development.	X			Business office staff does have adequate training but no formal training program for decentralized business staff.
e. The financial services units are appropriately staffed to ensure effective delivery of financial services to users.	X			At a base level, however it is extremely hard to run new initiatives due to the staffing levels
f. Decentralized accounting services positions are appropriately trained.		X		Base level training however, there is no formal program or manuals for decentralized staff.
g. The district staff analyzes potential cost savings of alternative financial services delivery, i.e., privatize vs. employees.	X			Staff has reviewed this.
h. Other information that demonstrates the district's			X	

use of this best practice and should be considered.				
2. Management has developed and distributed written procedures for critical accounting processes and promotes ethical financial management practices.				
a. These procedures address <ul style="list-style-type: none">) identification and description of principal accounting records;) standard accounting and journal entries including requirements for supporting documentation;) identification of positions that approve accounting and journal entries prior to entry; and) instructions for determining appropriate cut-off and closing of accounts for each accounting period. 	X			<p>Developed by staff Controller reviews and posts.</p> <p>Closing essentially happens at the end of the year. Would recommend a monthly closing schedule for better information.</p>
	X			
b. The board has approved written ethics policies for the district financial staff.	X			
c. The district has established written procedures that provide for confidential reporting of suspected improprieties.	X			
d. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	
3. The district has adequate financial information systems that provide useful, timely, and accurate information.				
a. The financial accounting system has appropriately integrated financial software components that minimize manual processes including <ul style="list-style-type: none">) efficient data entry (decentralized vs. centralized);) capital projects tracking by and across fiscal years;) reconciliations between control accounts and subsidiary records (receivables, payables, payroll, inventories, fixed assets, etc.) which are automated or are rendered unnecessary by integrated accounting controls that ensure that the records remain in balance;) direct-deposit program for payroll checks that is implemented to reduce workload for 	X			
	X			
	X			
	X			

<p>J accounting for payroll checks; and manual processes, including those using spreadsheet software, which are used to verify, track, or maintain accounting activities are minimized.</p>		X		District is still heavily manual processing accounting and pcard transactions.
<p>b. The district staff analyzes cost savings of automation or manual processes</p>	X			Yes, however, district is currently unable to lead automation initiatives due to limited staffing
<p>c. The district staff analyzes financial accounting and reporting procedures to minimize or eliminate duplication of efforts</p>		X		
<p>d. The district staff analyzes strategic plans for measurable objectives/results</p>	X			
<p>e. The accounting system facilitates accountability for restricted sources of funds through fund/grant/project accounting.</p>	X			
<p>f. District financial staff provides the board and district management with monthly and annual financial reports that effectively summarize financial operations and financial condition in an easy-to-understand format that assists the board in making financial decisions.</p>	X			This is currently done. By implementing specific closing above, the reporting and information would be improved
<p>g. District financial staff provides effective feedback to the board and management on funding sources, budget limitations, and financial condition impacts relating to major financial proposals.</p>	X			
<p>h. District managers receive periodic (at least monthly) reports or can electronically view data showing budget vs. expenditure comparisons for their responsibility areas.</p>	X			All administrators have access to financial information in infinite visions financial system
<p>i. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.</p>	X			District completes financial audit in a timely basis.
<p>4. District financial staff analyzes significant expenditure processes to ensure they are appropriately controlled.</p>				
<p>a. District financial staff analyzes significant contract methods and financial negotiations, especially large dollar amount or high volume contracts.</p>	X			Large RFP's ran by district office staff.
<p>b. District financial staff analyzes major expenditure categories to recognize and review unusual fluctuations in cost.</p>	X			
<p>c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.</p>			X	

Internal Controls

<p>5. The district has established adequate internal controls.</p>				
<p>a. The district has established effective controls over receipting processes to ensure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) timely depositing and recording of collections;) recording of collections to the correct accounting codes (fund, revenue source, object); and) compliance with federal, state, and district laws, rules, and policies as appropriate relating to accounting for moneys received. 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>			<p>External auditors review annually</p>
<p>b. The district has established effective controls over payroll processes to ensure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) appropriate and timely reporting and remitting of federal payroll taxes to appropriate agencies (review reports and determine reasons for any payroll tax penalties paid by district);) appropriate and timely reporting of other payroll deductions, such as health insurance premiums;) appropriate and timely reporting of payroll and attendance information to employees (both on a payroll and annual basis);) compliance with federal, state, and district laws, rules, and policies; and) salary costs are properly charged to the correct accounting codes, including but not limited to fund, function, project, location, and object. 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>			
<p>c. The district has established effective controls over disbursing processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) Payments are for authorized purposes, have sufficient budget authority, and prior verification of funds availability.) Payments are supported by evidence that the goods and services were received.) Payments are supported by appropriately canceled vendor invoices/bills.) Disbursements are properly charged to the correct accounting codes (fund, function, project, location, and object). 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>			
<p>d. Other information that demonstrated the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.</p>			<p>X</p>	
<p>6. Management proactively responds to identified internal control weaknesses and takes immediate</p>				

steps to correct the weaknesses.				
a. Internal control weaknesses are identified from external and internal audit reports, risk assessments, grantor monitoring reports, and other sources, such as communications from employees and the public.	X			
b. District management assigns responsibility for resolving internal control weaknesses to appropriate staff.	X			
c. Assigned staff must periodically report to management on progress towards resolving internal control weaknesses.	X			
d. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	
7. The district produces an annual budget that is tied to the strategic plan and provides useful and understandable information to users.				
a. Budgets are formed and adopted pursuant to applicable state law and rules.) Budget meets state-mandated and district required time deadlines.) Budget document summaries are in approved format and appropriate detail is included.	X X			Published budget calendar meets state requirements.
b. District staff use appropriate revenue-estimating practices when developing estimated budget sources for appropriation.) Includes prior year comparisons) Enrollment projections	X X			
c. The district has established a budget planning process and timeline that is clearly communicated to all of the involved stakeholders.	X			
d. The district has established a budget planning process to link strategic plan objectives to the development of the budget.	X			Budget currently tied to district accountability plan.
e. School principals include SAC/community input when developing school budgets.	X			
f. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	
8. Management analyzes strategic plans for measurable objectives or measurable results.				
a. Strategic plan objectives can be tied to specific departments or projects and provide guidance to determine appropriate expenditures to achieve plan objectives (note-overlaps with accountability chapter).	X			

b. Strategic plan or board policy includes a provision for maintaining adequate levels of unreserved fund balance and contingency.	X			
c. Management has developed a process that primarily commits funds for activities and projects that meet strategic plan objectives.	X			
d. The district has established appropriate procedures for reviewing, evaluating the financial impact of, and approving budget amendments.	X			
e. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	

External Auditing

9. The district ensures that it receives an annual external audit and uses the audit to improve its operations.				
a. Audit reports indicate that the audits were completed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards.	X			
b. The district responds to audit comments timely and appropriately.	X			
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	
10. The district ensures that audits of internal funds and discretely presented component units (foundations and charter schools) are performed timely.				
a. The district ensures that required reports are timely and received by the external auditor for consideration in the completion of the district's financial audit.) Annual school internal accounts financial audits are timely completed and presented to the board.) CPA audits of direct support organizations are timely completed and presented to the board.) CPA audits of charter schools are timely completed and presented to the board.	X		X X	
b. District management review financial reports of school internal accounts and discretely presented component units and use the information contained in the reports to make appropriate decisions involving these activities.	X			No component units, but internal school accounts
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	

Cash Management

11. The district periodically reviews cash management				
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activities, banking relationships, investment performance, and considers alternatives.				
a. The district has appropriate written policies and procedures for cash management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="233 296 808 369">) The district maintains its cash deposits in qualified public depositories. <li data-bbox="233 369 808 443">) Cash collections are timely deposited and invested. <li data-bbox="233 443 808 548">) District staff that do not have the ability to update accounting records timely perform bank reconciliations. <li data-bbox="233 548 808 653">) District staff that prepare bank reconciliations ensure that needed adjustments are timely made. <li data-bbox="233 653 808 758">) Appropriate management staff periodically review bank reconciliations and investigate unusual reconciling items. <li data-bbox="233 758 808 863">) The district has cash forecasting processes that ensure adequate liquidity throughout the year. <li data-bbox="233 863 808 968">) Banking contracts are periodically analyzed to ensure terms and fee schedules are appropriate. 	 X X X X X X			

c. The district maintains detailed subsidiary records of capital assets.	X			
d. The district physically safeguards and tags capital assets.	X			Mostly just tech items are tagged no formal program.
e. The district physically inventories capital assets annually using cost-effective methods.		X		No current inventory program
f. The district has established and carries out appropriate procedures to follow up on missing property items.	X			
g. The district appropriately accounts for capital assets acquired with restricted source funds.	X			
h. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
13. The district ensures significant capital outlay purchases meet strategic plan objectives.				
a. The district prepares separate capital projects budgets.	X			
b. The district does not charge maintenance and operations staff salaries to restricted capital outlay sources that do not permit such charges.	X			
c. The district has implemented effective procedures and periodically updates them to provide for effective management of assets.	X			
d. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
Debt Management				
14. The district has established written policies and procedures and periodically updates them to provide for effective debt management.				
a. The district tracks debt service requirements and ensures timely payment.	X			
b. The district is knowledgeable about debt service financial reporting requirements, e.g., continuing financial disclosures pursuant to Securities and Exchange Commission requirements, and has established procedures to ensure adequate and timely reporting.	X			
c. The district complies with federal arbitrage requirements.	X			
d. The district complies with bond covenants.	X			
e. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
15. The district ensures that significant debt financings meet strategic plan objectives.				
a. The district evaluates debt capacity prior to	X			

issuing debt.				
b. The district evaluates financing alternatives when acquiring major capital assets.	X			An example: capital plan for bus barn
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	

Risk Management

16. The district has established written policies and procedures and periodically updates them to provide for effective risk management				
a. The district's policies require clear and complete financial contract terms for all insurance contracts.	X			
b. District staff analyzes current insurance plans including deductible amounts, co-insurance levels, and types of coverage provided.	X			
c. The district periodically compares costs and a risk analysis with peer districts.	X			Through the proxy of the OSBA insurance plan.
d. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
17. District staff periodically monitors the district's compliance with various laws and regulations related to risk management.				
a. The district has established policies and procedures and periodically updates them to identify various risks and provide for a comprehensive approach to reducing the impact of losses.	X			
) The board has written risk management policies.	X			
) District management maintains written procedures that carry out board policy.	X			
b. The district has adequate insurance coverage.				Wilson Heirgood Insurance is brokerage of record. OSBA PACE program for property and liability insurance.
) Liability, property, casualty, umbrella, employee and public official bonds.	X			
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
18. The district prepares appropriate written cost and benefit analyses for insurance coverage.				
a. District staff analyzes alternatives for insurance coverage such as self-insurance and other current industry trends.	X			Currently self-insures first 100K of deductible.
b. Management reports to the board comparisons with local industry, other governmental entities, and comparable school districts.	X			Regular reports and discuss with board about PACE program
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's		X		

use of this best practice and should be considered.				
Purchasing				
19. The district has established written policies and procedures to take maximum advantage of competitive bidding, volume discounts, and special pricing agreements.				
a. The district periodically evaluates purchasing practices to maximize use of human resources assigned to the purchasing function.) Purchase cards are used for small dollar purchases.) Effective quotation procedures are used for purchases above small dollar purchases, but less than dollar limits requiring competitive bidding.) Competitive bidding processes are used for purchases above competitive bidding thresholds.) State contract bids, bids of other school districts, and other innovative purchasing processes are considered where appropriate.	X X X X			Current program manual, not used for meals on travel. Office manager up to \$200 Principal 201-999 Controller/ Business Operations Director over 999 Quotes/ RFP over 5,000
b. The purchasing function is organizationally separate from district departments that requisition goods and services.	X			District office responsible for more formal procurements. Decentralized for lower amounts.
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.		X		
Inventory Management				
20. The district has established written policies and procedures and periodically updates them to provide for effective management of inventories.				
a. The district monitors inventory turnover to ensure that it does not have significant balances of outdated inventory items.			X	Inventories de minimis
b. The district has established effective controls over inventory processes including effective receipt and issue procedures.			X	
c. Warehouse or inventory storage areas are reasonably safeguarded to) prevent unauthorized access; and) protect inventory items from physical deterioration.			X X	
d. The district conducts annual physical counts of inventories using cost-effective methods.			X	
e. Other information that demonstrates the district's			X	

use of this best practice and should be considered.				
21. The district periodically evaluates the warehousing function to determine its cost-effectiveness.				
a. The district periodically identifies and evaluates the costs to maintain inventories. These costs are allocated to the per-unit cost of inventory items to compare with other warehousing alternatives such as next-day or rapid response inventory services provided by vendors.			X	
b. The district evaluates warehousing services to ensure effectiveness and user satisfaction.) Inventory requisitions are delivered timely.) Users receive inventory items they ordered.) Items stored in warehouse are those that user most frequently ask for.) Effective reorder points are used for stock replenishment.			X X X	
c. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.			X	

Best Practices with Their Associated Indicators
January 2016

Identifying Information of Individual Completing Form

Name	Telephone No.
Position/Title	E-mail Address
County/Organization	

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

<i>Best Practices and Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Program Direction and Accountability				
1. The district’s maintenance and operations department has a mission statement and goals and objectives that are established in writing.	X			
a. The maintenance department has approved a mission statement that clearly defines the purpose and expected outcomes of the department. ¹	X			Feed into District objectives.
b. The maintenance and operations department has clearly stated goals and measurable objectives for each program that reflect the expected outcomes of the program and address the major aspects of the program’s purpose and expenditures.	X			
c. Goals and objectives include written comprehensive projections of the following needs:) manpower;) budget;) equipment; and) physical condition and repair/replacement needs of district facilities including, but not limited to, paint, roofs, HVAC equipment (tracking age and repair history), grounds (including paving), electrical service, and plumbing.	X			Gantt Charts and Smart Sheets are used.
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district’s use of this best practice that should be		X		

¹ The mission statement identifies the priority customer as the school centers, employee input was used in the development of the mission statement, and the mission statement is posted and shared with the public and all employees of the department.

considered?				
2. The district has established and implemented accountability mechanisms to ensure the performance and efficiency of the maintenance and operations program.				
a. The maintenance and operations department uses appropriate performance and cost-efficiency measures and interpretive benchmarks to evaluate each program and uses these in management decision making.	X			ROI cost spreadsheet based on 10-year ROI
b. The maintenance and operations department has established and implemented strategies to continually assess the reliability of program performance and cost data.	X			
c. The maintenance and operations department regularly evaluates the performance of all maintenance and operations work and can demonstrate that adjustments are made to maximize performance and efficiency. ²	X			
d. The district has taken advantage of significant opportunities to improve maintenance operations management, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce costs.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
3. The district obtains and uses customer feedback to identify and implement program improvements.				
a. Customer feedback is used to conduct a self-analysis to improve the performance and productivity of the maintenance department. ³	X			School Dude allows us to survey all staff as requestors.
b. Customers are surveyed at least annually using a written instrument to determine strengths and weaknesses of the maintenance department service and to identify major maintenance needs.	X			Use survey monkey Meet with building administrators annually with services, custodians face to face. Done it digitally
c. Customer survey results are shared with customers and staff.	X			Would share it with administrative staff.
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
4. The district has established procedures and staff performance standards to ensure efficient operations.				

² Adjustments include, but are not limited to, reassignment of personnel, reallocation of resources, and implementation of new procedures.

³ The self-analysis includes, but is not limited to, the efficient assignment of work orders and scheduling, and the efficient and effective completion of work assignments.

a. The maintenance department has and follows written procedures that, at a minimum, provide for) replacement and selection of equipment;) purchase of equipment, supplies and materials;) maintenance and operations budget criteria;) facilities standards;) personnel staffing and hiring policies; and) use of facilities and equipment.	X			Time spent and life span. 7000 work orders in addition to work completed by sub-contractors.
b. Written operational procedures for the maintenance and custodial services departments are up to date and accessible to school personnel and the public. ⁴	X			
c. The maintenance and operations department has written performance standards for staff that is communicated to employees and is made readily available to other interested parties. ⁵) Performance standards for commonly repeated tasks have been established by the district on the basis of internal review or available benchmarks of industry practices and are used for assigning work and conducting performance appraisals. ⁶	X			
d. The school district performance standards ensure that all schools are maintained equitably.	X			
e. The district has a process for communicating failures to meet departmental and staff performance standards and can track responses to those failures.	X			Via email
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
5. The department maintains educational and district support facilities in a condition that enhances student learning and facilitates employee productivity.				
a. District educational facilities are effectively maintained and provide an appropriate teaching environment.	X			Very impressed with general cleanliness and physical facilities in the school district.
b. District educational facilities are effectively maintained and provide an environment	X			

⁴ Files and records of procedures and practices are maintained and readily available for review by district, and department staff. Procedures are updated on a regular schedule and employees are included in the process. The district has a written standard for cleanliness that is included in the custodial service standards.

⁵ Standards may be based upon industry benchmarks, comparisons with other districts, or internal reviews. All standards, however, must set performance goals.

⁶ Internally developed standards must include clear performance goals but may cover a variety of standards such as time open for a work order or drive time.

conducive to student learning.				
c. District support facilities are effectively maintained and provide appropriate working conditions for district employees.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
Organizational Structure and Staffing				
6. The district regularly reviews the organizational structure of the maintenance and operations program to minimize administrative layers and assure adequate supervision and staffing levels.				
a. The maintenance and operations department is administered in accordance with a published organizational chart that has been approved by the school board.) The district provides appropriate supervision of maintenance and operations staff.) Levels of authority and responsibility have been assigned to each position.) Supervisor/employee ratios have been established and are based on appropriate standards or benchmarks.	X			Seven years ago the district needed 6 more staff and at current time still need additional 5 staff members.
b. The maintenance and operations department regularly reviews the program's organizational structure and staffing levels and makes appropriate staffing adjustments based on these reviews. ⁷) The district has appropriate staffing levels based on applicable comparisons and/or benchmarks such as the number of custodial staff in relation to the size of the facilities and other relevant factors.) Staffing projections reflect the activities proposed in the five-year facilities work plan.) Staffing formulas provide for additional staff as new facilities are brought on-line and as existing facilities become older and require more maintenance and provide for deleting staff and closing facilities whenever indicated.) The district reports organizational staffing review findings in writing and distributes these findings to school board members and the public.	X			

⁷ In conducting reviews, the district uses feedback from staff and others. The review includes a comparison of the programs (or schools') staffing levels to programs in comparable districts using appropriate measures, which might include age of and distance between facilities.

c. The program structure includes reasonable lines of authority and spans of control given the responsibilities of each organizational unit. ⁸	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
7. Complete job descriptions and appropriate hiring and retention practices ensure that the maintenance and operations department has qualified staff.				
a. Job descriptions have been developed, properly reflect the needs of the department, and are reviewed and updated periodically to address changing requirements and actual practices.) Appropriate personnel participate in the writing and review of job descriptions.) Job descriptions are readily available for applicants and staff to review.	X			
b. Procedures are established for attracting qualified applicants based on district size, location, and needs.	X			Started apprentice program and cross training of staff.
c. Job vacancy notices adequately describe job responsibilities; job qualifications; educational/professional requirements; application and selection criteria; and salary and benefits.	X			
d. Personnel procedures ensure that adequate personal and professional references are obtained and contacted.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
8. The district provides a staff development program that includes appropriate training for maintenance and operations staff to enhance worker job satisfaction, efficiency, and safety.				
a. The district ensures that maintenance and custodial standards are regularly updated to implement new technology and procedures.		X		Nothing officially has been put into place at this time.

⁸ Reasonable lines of authority and spans of control should be in comparison to industry standards.

<p>b. The district provides professional development and training programs based on district size and capabilities, identified needs, and the relevant trades. Annual planned training programs are implemented for appropriate trades personnel, support and supervisory personnel, and administrators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) Written training goals and expected outcomes are established in the areas of safety, trades enhancement, cross trades utilization, interpersonal team skills, district policy awareness, and department procedures.⁹) The maintenance and operations director works closely with the curriculum development department to ensure a planned, sequential program for personnel skills development.) The programs include technical training as well as personnel interaction strategies. Training is individualized when possible to fit skills/trades/group needs and to assist employees in meeting work standards.) Instructors used for staff training are from appropriate trade/instructional areas. Outside professional trainers are used when possible.¹⁰) Training programs provide an opportunity for staff feedback and evaluation.) Where possible, there is a defined apprenticeship program. 			
<p>c. Participation in state and national organizations is supported in order to remain current with maintenance issues, new technology, equipment, materials, and procedures.</p>	X		OFSMA
<p>d. The maintenance and operations department subscribes to various trade publications and the publications are available to employees.</p>	X		Electricians keep their ears to the ground and attend meetings with control companies.
<p>e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?</p>		X	

⁹ This may be prohibited by union contracts.

¹⁰ This may include manufacturer's training representatives, technical experts, or Department of Education facilities support personnel.

Resource Allocation and Utilization				
9. The administration has developed an annual budget with spending limits that comply with the lawful funding for each category of facilities maintenance and operations.				
a. The budget does not rely on or permit unlawful use of taxpayer dollars. ¹¹ (<i>Basic Indicator</i>)	X			
b. The annual budget addresses long-term goals for maintaining and operating district facilities.		X		Sub-contractor vs. use of internal staff vs. turnaround time. With more staff could balance better.
c. The annual budget addresses ongoing and recurring maintenance tasks in order to avoid high repair or replacement costs in future years.	X			Keeping head above water barely.
d. Funds have been reasonably allocated to address deferred maintenance needs and these funds are used for their intended purpose.		X		
e. The budget process provides for routine evaluation of actual versus planned expenditures.	X			
f. The budgets for physical plant maintenance and custodial services are developed using appropriate professional standards. ¹²	X			
g. Allocations are included for the correction of deficiencies identified in the district's annual Safety, Casualty and Fire Safety Inspection report and the district can demonstrate that the monies are used as intended.	X			
h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
10. The district accurately projects cost estimates of major maintenance projects.				
a. Cost estimates are based on the district's experience with prior similar projects, current estimating cost standards, and market conditions.	X			
b. The cost of inflation for maintenance projects is projected for five years.		X		
c. The district regularly evaluates projected cost estimates for accuracy and utilizes this information to improve future estimates.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

¹¹ The goal is to have a budget based on a clear, rational basis. The goal should not simply be a function of what the last budget allocated.

11. The board maintains a maintenance reserve fund to handle one-time expenditures necessary to support maintenance and operations.				
a. The district and maintenance department do not use the reserve fund for recurring expenses. <i>(Basic Indicator)</i>	X			
b. The budgetary policy is flexible enough to ensure funding of unforeseen maintenance needs that could adversely affect the district's mission if not funded (e.g., emergency funds).	X			
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
12. The district minimizes equipment costs through purchasing practices.				
a. The district regularly conducts cost comparisons to determine whether purchasing practices have minimized costs.	X			Spend time doing this and regularly use state contracts to piggyback off of for purchases.
b. Volume purchases are made whenever cost-effective.	X			
c. The maintenance and operations department considers equipment operating and maintenance costs when buying new equipment.	X			
d. Refurbishing or repairing is considered along with new purchases and the most cost-effective method is selected.	X			
e. Inflationary costs for equipment are provided for a five-year period.		X		
f. Replacement projections have been developed for plant and maintenance equipment.	X			
g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
13. The district provides maintenance and operations department staff the tools and equipment required to accomplish their assigned tasks.				
a. The maintenance and operations department personnel are provided with the tools necessary to accomplish assigned duties.	X			
b. Seldom needed tools and equipment are readily available through other sources.	X			
c. A procedure exists for maintenance and operations staff to acquire parts, materials, and equipment that are not stocked on maintenance vehicles.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be		X		

considered?				
14. The district uses proactive maintenance practices to reduce maintenance costs.				
a. The maintenance and operations department evaluates the cost to maintain specific facility designs and implements strategies to reduce labor and long-term maintenance costs.	X			This information was garnered most recently through the facility study completed in 2015.
b. A preventative maintenance program has been implemented to reduce long-term maintenance costs and service outages.	X			
c. The administration has a process in place to ensure that policies and procedures are followed for disposal of surplus furniture and equipment. ¹³	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
15. The maintenance and operations department identifies and implements strategies to contain energy costs.				
a. The district collaborates with its utility providers, government agencies, uses available local industry experts and/or other organizations to identify energy efficiency benchmarks and implement actions to increase cost-efficiency.	X			Board policy and bench mark Energy report annually to the board.
b. The district has a written energy management plan.	X			
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
16. The district has an energy management system in place, and the system is maintained at original specifications for maximum effectiveness.				
a. The district has a written energy management plan in place.	X			
b. The maintenance and operations department regularly monitors energy management controls and generates routine reports to verify the energy management system is working.	X			
c. Plans have been developed to address corrective actions in facilities where the energy management system is less effective.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

¹³ This is equipment that is old, outdated, worn out, and/or otherwise unusable.

17. District personnel regularly review maintenance and operation's costs and services and evaluate the potential for outside contracting and privatization.				
a. District personnel regularly evaluate existing services and activities to explore the feasibility of alternative methods of providing services, such as outside contracting and privatization. ¹⁴	X			
b. District personnel regularly evaluate all contracted and/or privatized services to verify effectiveness and cost savings.	X			
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
Information Management				
18. A computerized control and tracking system is used to accurately track work orders and inventory.				
a. A work order tracking system is used to increase management capability.) The computerized work order system includes control of inventory as well as tracking of parts, materials, equipment, and associated costs to individual work orders.) The inventory control system accounts for commonly used parts, materials, and equipment, including those carried on maintenance vehicles.) The inventory control system includes a procedure to automatically re-order supplies when they are depleted.) The system provides a mechanism to charge back work order expenses to the appropriate entity.	X			School Dude Don't carry a lot of inventory. Do annual purchase Barcode scanning system??
b. The maintenance department analyzes information such as actual work hours (sometimes referred to as "wrench time"), hours scheduled versus hours worked, travel time, and total hours required to complete jobs.	X			
c. Work order reports are routinely produced and analyzed to improve performance.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
19. The maintenance and operations department has				

¹⁴ The maintenance and operations department should have written evaluations of the costs and benefits associated with alternative delivery methods.

a system for prioritizing maintenance needs uniformly throughout the district.				
a. The maintenance and operations department places highest priority on responding to life, health, and safety issues.	X			Drive everything.
b. The maintenance and operations department prioritizes maintenance needs based on its prioritization guidelines and completes regular and emergency maintenance repairs accordingly. ¹⁵	X			
c. The school district's process of prioritizing maintenance is designed to address every school's needs.	X			
d. District procedure determines when emergency maintenance is necessary and provides for effective emergency repairs.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				
Health and Safety				
20. District policies and procedures clearly address the health and safety conditions of facilities.				
a. The district has established written health and safety standards. (<i>Basic Indicator</i>)	X			Read through and passage of test via OSHA.
b. Evaluations are made and documented for the condition of buildings and of each school.	X			
c. The district has a written plan for healthy indoor air quality that requires monitoring of indoor air quality as appropriate and includes corrective action plans for indoor air quality problems.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
21. The school district complies with federal and state regulatory mandates regarding facility health and safety conditions.				
a. Procedures comply with all relevant federal and state requirements. ¹⁶	X			
b. The district participates in state and federal voluntary efforts regarding facility health and	X			

¹⁵ Guidelines may consider the educational program needs, changing enrollment projections, and long-range facility planning to determine priorities of maintenance needs.

¹⁶ Examples include EPA guidelines, Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Hazardous Communication Standards, federal and state regulations hazardous materials plan, Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act rules, other mandated environmental and safety issues (i.e., Refrigerant Use and Disposal, Oregon Department of Labor and Employment regulations).

safety conditions and has documented resulting cost savings and/or avoidance.				
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Management Structures

Best Practices and Indicators	yes	no	N / A	Explanation/Documentation
Board and Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities				
The roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent have been delineated, and the board and superintendent have policies to ensure that they have effective working relationships.				
The district has developed written policies that delineate the responsibilities of the board and superintendent.	X			(BBAA) Board Powers and Duties, (BBAA) Individual Board Member's Authority and Responsibilities and (BBF) Board Member Standards of Conduct are in District policy. The Board also has School Board Member Job Description and Board of Director Working Agreement documents in place.
New board members receive orientation training when they first come on the board.	X			Policy (BH/BHA) Orientation of New Board members is in place. Board member Micah Smith, the newest Board member, has been on the Board since 2012. So, there has not been a current need for this indicator. However, it is past practice that new board members meet with the superintendent, receive help from the executive assistant to the superintendent, are given reading materials and invited to attend the annual OSBA New Board Member Workshop.
Board members receive ongoing professional development.	X			Policy (BHBA) Board Member Development is in place. \$10,500 has been put in the 2015-16 budget for Board professional development. Every year a number of members attend the OSBA Fall Regional, Annual Convention, School Law Conference, Bonds and Ballots Workshop and the NSBA Conference. The Board also makes use of OSBA staff and other educational consultants for specific professional development topics.
The board and superintendent have policies for how board members are to access district staff and board members adhere to these procedures.	X			Policy (BG) and Administrative Regulation (BG-AR) Board-Staff Communications are in place. Board members follow the written procedures.
The board and superintendent advise each other when they become aware that an agenda item is likely to be controversial or that a controversial topic may arise at a board meeting and develop a plan to manage the issue.	X			This is a part of the Board and Superintendent working relationship and it is done as needed.
The board evaluates its and the superintendent's performance.	X			Policy (CBG) Evaluation of the Superintendent is in place and is followed. The policy has been updated to include the Educator Leadership-Administrator Standards adopted in 2012 by the Oregon State Board of Education. It is recommended that the Board and Superintendent consider the use of the 360 evaluation process to gain greater performance feedback for the evaluation process.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X			All the indicators under this goal are solidly backed up by past practice and clearly written policies and agreements.
The board and superintendent have procedures to ensure that board meetings are efficient and effective.				
a. The district prepares a master calendar showing dates of major events, and board actions needed to meet legal requirements and uses it to ensure that these matters are placed on board agendas in a timely matter.	X			Yes, there is a parent calendar, a District calendar and a Board meeting calendar. They are all on the District website.

School board meetings are scheduled at a time and place convenient to the public.	X		Regular meetings are held at 7:00pm on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests for an interpreter for the hearing impaired and other disability accommodations can be made. The Board should consider rotating its meetings to different District schools and other meeting places within the District boundaries to allow for greater access to those who do not reside near the District Office.
The school board pulls items from its consent agenda for discussion and public comment when requested to do so.	X		This takes place on an as needed basis.
The board receives agenda materials in sufficient time to review them thoroughly prior to board meetings.	X		The agendas are distributed and posted by Thursday for the following Monday's meeting.
The board's agendas allocate sufficient time for the board to discuss, develop, or evaluate district policies, goals, programs, and strategies for improving student achievement. The board addresses these issues.	X		Board meetings do comply with this indicator. Based on a review of four months of board agendas, the Assistant Superintendent and members of her department usually place one or more student academic achievement related items on each regularly scheduled Board meeting agenda. Periodic work sessions dedicated to student academic achievement is considered a best practice for this indicator. The NSBA <i>Key Work of School Boards</i> is a professional development program for school board members that emphasizes student academic achievement that could be considered.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		The long-term experience, work ethic and high skill level of the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent are evident in "a" through "f" above. The pre-board planning meetings that take place with the Superintendent, Board-chair and Vice-chair greatly improve the meetings.
The board and superintendent have established written policies and procedures that are periodically updated.			
The board has adopted written policies for the district that are updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in law and ensure relevancy.	X		The District subscribes to a service from OSBA that takes care of this. Every regularly scheduled board meeting reviewed has policy updates on the agenda.
The superintendent has developed procedures dealing with district-wide administrative matters, and these procedures are up to date and reflect changes in law and board actions.	X		The District is well covered in this area.
The district's policies and procedures are readily accessible to all district staff, and staff uses them to guide their activities.	X		They are all easily accessible on the District website and referred to as needed.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		Through OSBA services and the Assistant to the Superintendent, the District is following the indicators listed above.
The district obtains legal services as necessary to advise it about policy and reduce the risk of lawsuits.			
a. The district has an attorney with the primary responsibility of advising the school board, reviewing policy and reducing the risk of lawsuits.	X		Local attorney, Ed Schultz provides this service.
The district has procedures for the board, superintendent or other staff to confer with the district's attorney.	X		Contact with District legal counsel is initiated through the superintendent.

The district retains outside counsel (counsel other than the board attorney) when appropriate.	X			The Hungerford Law Group is used for special education and labor law matters. Jim Brewer is consulted for real estate matters.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X			The OSBA is occasionally used for legal consultation. The District's annual membership fee makes this service a no cost option.

Organization, Staffing and Resource Allocation

The district's organizational structure has clearly defined units and lines of authority.				
a. The district has organizational charts that clearly and accurately depict its organizational structure.	X			A general District organizational chart is in place. A more specific and detailed chart was recently created by the Curriculum and Instruction Department.
The district has clearly defined the responsibilities of each organizational unit.	X			Job descriptions for the superintendent, assistant superintendent and director of business and operations positions were found but not for other District-wide positions. By going to the department and services link on the District website, responsibilities can be found for some but not all general District organizational units.
The district's organizational structure eliminates unnecessary overlapping functions and excessive administrative layers.	X			The District has 4 FTE managerial and 33.25 FTE administrative positions. Based on several lean budget years, the District is not over staffed administratively.
The district's administrators have reasonable spans of control.	X			Some principals are responsible for two small schools and some small school principals have additional District-wide duties. Because of increased student behavior issues, safety concerns and the many special needs of today's students, an increase of assistant principals, dean of students and/or behavior specialists should be considered for the middle and high schools. .5 FTE for the Director of Human Resources is very low for a District the size of GAPS.
The district periodically reviews its business practices and organizational structure and makes changes to streamline operations and improve efficiency.	X			The District typically does this during the annual budget process.
The district periodically reviews its administrative staffing and makes changes to eliminate unnecessary positions and improve operating efficiency.				
a. The district comprehensively reviews its administrative staffing levels to improve operating efficiency and deal with funding realities.	X			This is a significant part of the annual budget process and careful decisions are made based on each year's available finances.
The district assesses the reasonableness of its administrative staffing levels to those of comparable districts.		X		The District assesses its administrative needs from year to year and makes necessary adjustments. Evidence was not found that indicated the use of comparable districts' data.
Administrative staffing is reasonable given the number of students served and services provided by the district.	X			See 5 "d" above.

Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		Generally speaking, District resources are concentrated in the schools and the District is financially sound. But, because of Oregon's inadequate public school funding formula over the past two decades, the District has had to make many difficult financial decisions in order to improve efficiency and save money.
The superintendent and school board exercise effective oversight of the district's financial resources.			
a. District school board members receive <u>training</u> in school district budgeting and finance.		X	They receive information about the state budget from the various OSBA meetings they attend and from the online information OSBA sends out daily. They receive District financial information at their regularly scheduled Board meetings. However, no evidence of District formal <u>training</u> for Board members regarding District budgeting and finance was found.
The proposed budget is presented to the board and budget committee in a format that is complete and can be understood.	X		Yes, this is done through the District Budget Committee meetings and with the use of the <i>Budget Manual</i> .
The budget document contains information about revenue and expenditures by major function over the past two to three fiscal years.	X		Yes, the District budget document complies with all state and federal public school financial reporting laws.
The district has a procedure for informing the board about the short and long-term fiscal implications of proposed budgets or budget amendments.	X		This is done by the Director of Business and Operations for the Board during his regularly scheduled revenue and expenditures reports and when necessary by the Superintendent.
Changes or concerns in financial condition are reported to the board in a timely manner, and the board takes necessary corrective actions.	X		Yes, the board receives a financial update at each of its regularly scheduled meetings and takes action if and when necessary.
The school board has established limits for how much various district staff can spend without approval.	X		A specific board policy regarding this indicator was not found. However, this is a function of the Business and Operations Department. School, program and department balances are kept current electronically and they cannot be overspent. Any variances must be discussed with the Director and if necessary the Superintendent before additional resources might be considered.
The district has taken advantage of opportunities to improve management structures, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce costs.	X		This has been a necessity for all Oregon school districts because of the extensive reductions in Oregon school financing the last several years.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		The District annual budget document is comprehensive and user friendly.
The district has clearly assigned school principals the authority they need to effectively manage their schools while adhering to district-wide policies and procedures.			
a. The district can demonstrate that it has clearly communicated the authority it has assigned to school administrators.	X		This can be found in Board policy noted in Goal 1 indicator "a" above.
The district has given school administrators staffing and budget flexibility.		X	School budgeting is mainly done at the District level based to a large degree on student enrollment. Some principals want more budget authority and flexibility based on their school's unique needs and the relatively small amount of discretionary spending authority they have. However, once principals get their staffing allocations they have considerable flexibility on how they use those resources.
The district has given school administrators sufficient authority over school operations to enable them to achieve school, district and state education goals.		X	Principals voiced concerns about technology, safety and maintenance issues. Not enough maintenance staff, lack of technology tools, inability for maintenance work orders to be filled in a timely manner and a number of security concerns were mentioned.

The superintendent holds school administrators accountable for their performance in achieving school, district and state educational goals.	X			The Superintendent does a formal evaluation of the high school principals each year. The Secondary Curriculum Director completes the middle and elementary principal evaluations annually. The <i>Principal Evaluation Summative Rubric</i> document is used. It is based on the six Oregon Standards for Educational Leadership. It also contains rating instruments for observations of principal led meetings and teacher observation feedback meetings.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X			The superintendent is very visible in the schools and is in constant communication with principals. One principal said, "we see him in our schools frequently and he knows about our performance." Although the <i>Principal Evaluation Summative Rubric</i> document takes a great deal of time for the evaluator to complete, it is comprehensive and a significant improvement over what was used prior.

Planning and Budgeting

The district has a multi-year strategic plan with annual goals and measurable objectives based on identified needs, projected enrollment and revenues.				
a. The school district maintains and publishes a clearly written, multi-year strategic plan to provide vision and direction for the district's effort. The plan addresses state and district education goals, including student performance goals.	X			The <i>District Accountability Plan</i> was initiated in 2008 and has been revised four times. Some feel that it is time to consider starting a new strategic planning process.
In developing the strategic plan the board identifies and formally adopts a limited number of district priorities to guide the district's strategies and major financial and program decisions.	X			The plan is based on three goals, with objectives, measures, activities and a reporting matrix.
The strategic plan clearly delineates the district's goals, and objectives and strategies for achieving them; the priorities the board assigns to the goals, objectives and strategies; the strategies the district intends to employ to reach desired objectives; the performance measures the district will use to judge its progress toward meeting its goals; and the entities responsible for implementing the strategies in the plan and the time frames for implementation.		X		The goals, objectives and activities to achieve them are in place. One cannot determine priorities in the plan. The strategies are in place. There is a lack of specific metrics for the achievement of some of the goal objectives. Entities responsible for implementation along with corresponding time frames were missing for most strategies.
The board annually assesses the progress the district has made toward achieving its objectives.	X			This is done through the Reporting Matrix process.
The board annually reviews and, if necessary, amends its strategic plan priorities to reflect changes in community standards, student needs or board direction.	X			The Board has revised the original plan four times since 2008.

Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		The Reporting Matrix process allows the Board to receive periodic updates on all 24 measures of the District Accountability Plan.
The district has a system to accurately project enrollment.			
a. The district strives to provide an accurate enrollment forecast.	X		The enrollment forecast is essential for state funding allocations. As a result, the District works very hard to be as accurate as possible.
The district bases its enrollment projections on statistical enrollment information.	X		Yes, typical statistics such as births, number of students entering kindergarten, graduating as seniors and students transferring in/out are used. In addition, the District uses outside consultant Wayne Goates and Portland State University's population studies services.
The district implements processes to ensure the accuracy of school FTE counts.	X		Yes, see "a" and "b" above and "d" below.
Enrollment projections for individual schools consider the existing school populations, mobility, and housing starts within the areas served by each school. School-based administrators review the reasonableness of these projections.	X		The Albany community and District student enrollment has stayed quite stable over the years. For example, based on the two year survival cohort, in 2007 the student population was 9,169 compared to 9,150 in 2015. So, through the use of knowledge of long-term trends, the District is able to make projections that are quite accurate from year to year.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this practice that should be considered?	X		The District budget manual has four pages of enrollment statistics that are very helpful including projected and actual enrollments from 2007-2024.
The district links its financial plans and budgets to its annual priorities in the strategic plan and its goals and objectives; and district resources are focused toward achieving those goals and objectives.			
a. The district links its financial plans and budgets to its priority goals and objectives.		X	Evidence could not be found where the District's financial plans and budgets were linked to the goals, measures and activities in the District Accountability Plan.
The district can demonstrate that it adjusts its financial plans and budgets to improve its ability to meet its priority goals and objectives.		X	The Board receives regularly scheduled budget updates and makes adjustments as necessary for the overall District. However, as in "a" above, evidence was not found regarding financial adjustments made for its priority goals and objectives.
District staff is aware of and direct their effort toward the achievement of the priority goals and objectives.	X		The District's strategic plan was completed in 2008 with four revisions since then. Many feel that it is time to go through the complete strategic planning process again. However, the three original goals are still valued by District staff.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		Activity (A2), Fiscal Transparency and Effective Stewardship of Resources and Activity (A3) Budget Practices, in the District Accountability Plan relate to Goal 11 and the three indicators above.
When necessary, the district considers options to increase revenue.			
a. When revenue is needed, the district considers pursuing various local options to increase revenues.	X		The District has not tried for a local option levy in the recent past. The last capital construction bond was approved in 2006. The District leadership will likely consider one or both of these sources of revenue as needed and when the timing seems right.

The district has taken actions to obtain private, state and federal grants and other alternative funding.	X		Not counting the 11 automatically renewable state and federal grants the District currently has, there are seven grants it has applied for and received that range from \$35,000-\$286,000. The District does not have FTE dedicated to grant writing. A partial FTE for staff, a volunteer system or contracting out and paying by the job or on a per hour basis for grant writing/resource acquisition, would be cost effective.
The district has taken advantage of opportunities to improve management structures, increase efficiency and effectiveness and reduce costs.	X		This has been necessary for all Oregon school districts the past several years because of Oregon's reduced state budgets for K-12 education. There are concerns about the cost effectiveness and the efficiency of the District's smallest elementary schools.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		The vast experience of the Board and District leadership is a positive for this goal.
Community Involvement			
The district actively involves parents and guardians in the district's decision making and activities.			
a. Schools provide timely information to parents/guardians such as: newsletters, flyers, websites, direct school-parent contact, etc.	X		All the items listed are used along with local radio. A greater use of social media, a part-time media specialist and a comprehensive District communication plan would be helpful.
The schools distribute information about school policies and programs.	X		All Albany schools do so. In addition, a school handbook is made available to all parents. Schools have their own websites.
District schools conduct parent/teacher conferences.	X		The conferences are held two times a year at every elementary school and once annually for secondary schools.
The district has effective methods to involve and encourage parent leadership and participation.	X		Most schools have a school site council and/or PTA. The Welcome Center helps to fulfill this role for non-English speaking parents.
Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X		The <i>Valley Parent</i> news-magazine is a handy guide for parents about Linn and Benton County Schools. At last count, GAPS had 3,075 individuals who received a background check and were cleared to volunteer in the District.
The district actively involves business partners and community organizations in the district's decision making and activities.			
a. District has developed forums for regular communication with local business entities.	X		There are many informal ways business leaders and organizations communicate with the District and the District communicates with them. However, this type of communication is not formally in place, i.e. regularly scheduled forums for local business entities. See "e" below.
District schools involve businesses in helping to fund educational programs.	X		Requests are made to area businesses and service organizations from each of the individual schools and from the District as a whole.
The district has an individual who is responsible for coordinating and monitoring programs and projects with its business partners.	X		Jim Haggart, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, fulfills this function.
Students, parents, teachers and administrators regularly participate in community service projects, including offering school resources when practical.	X		Albany Schools are the heart of their individual neighborhood areas in particular and the overall community in general. The staff, students and parents are involved in community service and the District makes its resources available to the community.

The district participates with business and service organizations.	X		There are 28 community organizations that have specifically assigned District liasions.
The district can demonstrate that business partners are involved in its school and district decision making.	X		There are business leaders on the School Board, the District Budget Committee and various school site councils and PTA organizations.
The district maintains its own or coordinates closely with a foundation.	X		The Albany Public Schools Foundation has over \$1,000,000 in assets and it is lead by former GAPS Superintendent, Bob Stalick.

***Nutrition Services With Their Associated Indicators
December 2015***

Identifying Information of Individual Completing Form

Name	Telephone No.
Tim Collier	
Position/Title	E-mail Address
County/Organization	
Greater Albany School District	

NUTRITION SERVICES OPERATIONS

<i>Best Practices and Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Planning, Organization and Staffing				
1. The program has developed strategic or operational plans that are consistent with district plans, the program budget, and approved by the district.				
a. The food services program has a broadly-approved plan that is consistent with the district's strategic plan.	X			
b. The district has an appropriate vision or mission statement so team member share a common, agreed-upon purpose.	X			
c. Program management has developed goals that support the mission statement and objectives to assist in the accomplishment of these goals. These objectives should be quantifiable so that progress toward goal accomplishment can be measured.	X			
d. Program management has prepared a budget that is based on its plan, goals and objectives, and not limited to historical, incremental increases.	X			
e. The district has integrated automation (data and equipment) opportunities and needs into its plans.	X			
f. The district has integrated kitchen renovations into its plans and budgets where needed.	X			
g. The district food program has reviewed, modified as needed and approved kitchen layouts and designs in plans for new schools.	X			Program continues to work in schools, types of equipment varies by school and age.
h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

2. The district and program are organized with clear lines of responsibility and in a manner that provides the food service program sufficient authority to succeed.				
a. Food service program management has developed an organizational chart that accurately reflects the food service program.	X			
b. The food service program has organizational units that minimize administrative layers.	X			
c. District management has appropriately positioned the food service program in the district organization to have sufficient authority to fulfill its responsibilities.	X			
d. Program management has developed organizational relationships designed to allow and promote the food service program to succeed.	X			
e. Span-of-control is appropriate within the program's organization.	X			
f. Food service staffing levels are appropriate considering such information as the number of meals served, serving periods, and student participation.	X			
g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
3. Program management has developed training designed to meet basic program needs as well as improve food services, both based on a needs assessment.				
a. Program management analyzes and develops training plans that are comprehensive and periodically includes essential functions of the program (food safety, portion control, production control, special diets, inventory, meal count procedures, receiving and storage of food and supplies, emergency procedures, customer service).	X			Annual training, kitchen manager meetings, etc.
b. Program management addresses in its training plan the needs of new employees and filling of future management positions, such as an intern development program.	X			Currently management responsibilities contracted with Sodexo.
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Management

4. Program management has developed comprehensive procedures manuals that are kept current.				
a. Food service management has developed program procedures that are consistent with overall district policy.	X			
b. Program management has developed a procedures manual for cafeteria managers that covers essential areas of responsibility and communicates management intent (key areas include, at a minimum, cash control, receipt of goods, inventory procedures, production record keeping, sanitation and food safety, employee safety, emergencies in case of injury, and ordering of food and supplies).	X			Each school has operating/safety/equipment and recipe/production manuals
c. If appropriate for the size of district, central staff procedure manuals have been developed to cover key areas of responsibility and communicate management intent (such areas as warehousing, procurement, technical assistants, area managers, dietitians, etc.).	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
5. The district performs sound cash and account management.				
a. The food service program's unreserved fund balance is sufficient to operate the program and is not dependent upon general fund transfers for operations.		X		4 of the last five years (through 2014) Food Service program has lost money.
b. The program has a five-year cash flow budget in-place that meets planned needs and will not require use of general fund monies.		X		
c. Program managers submit and receive federal reimbursements in a timely manner (requested within 30 days).	X			
d. The program directly, or through the district's indirect services rate pays for appropriate program-related expenses (e.g., trash removal, utilities, equipment, repairs, cafeteria renovation) to ensure general fund monies intended for the classroom are not diverted to support the food service program.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
6. District and program management optimizes its financial opportunities.				

a. The district analyzes and aggressively seeks to expand its food service operations as opportunities are developed or arise.	X			
b. Program management takes full advantage of USDA Donated Foods, by (1) ordering its full annual allocation, (2) considering purchased food prices when developing commodities allocation orders, (3) accepting additional allocations when offered and needed, and (4) using commodity processors when financially advantageous.	X			
c. The district board, district management, and food service management periodically reviews to ensure that pricing of meals and a la carte items are appropriate and at a level to meet budget needs.	X			
d. At least every 5 years, district and program management assess the efficiency and effectiveness of its core process functions (i.e., warehousing, delivery, procurement, and management).	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Performance and Accountability

7. Food service program management has developed comprehensive performance and cost-efficiency measures that provide management with information to evaluate program performance and better manage operations.				
a. Program management has developed <i>program-level</i> performance and cost-efficiency measures such as, net income margin, food cost margins, salary plus benefits margin, and participation rates (free and reduced as a percentage of eligible and overall participation).				
b. Program management has performance and cost-efficiency measures in-place to assist in managing <i>school-level</i> operations, such as meals per labor hour, salaries plus benefits margin (lunch and breakfast) and food cost margin (lunch and breakfast).				
c. Program management uses sound methodology to develop performance and cost-efficiency measure benchmarks, such as historical performance, comparison with peers, and then integrated planned program changes.				

d. Program and district management periodically review its performance and cost-efficiency measures and benchmarks to ensure reliability and relevance.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
8. At least annually, the program inspects and evaluates its operational components and the system as a whole, and then takes action to initiate needed change.				
a. Program management has an inspection system to ensure that policies and procedures are followed and at a minimum, address each of the following areas:) Program management protects and accounts for its assets (cash, equipment, food, and supplies).) Warehousing for the program is appropriate (what and where is it stored).) Program management protects its personnel by having safety procedures in-place as well as prepared for treatment or care in case of injury.) Program management ensures that food is prepared safely, staff is using the menu ingredients per instructions, and that proper portion control procedures are followed.	X X X X			
b. Program management has a viable preventive maintenance and long-range equipment replacement program in-place.				
c. Program management ensures that the district does its training plan, or appropriate alternative training.	X			
d. Program management has taken appropriate action to improve operations when indicators of the operational evaluation system warrant.	X			

a. Program and district management has developed an effective suggestions system that readily accepts and ensures complaints are considered.	X			Currently a formal comments section on the nutrition services website.
b. Program management periodically contacts stakeholders (students, parents, principals, and teachers) to solicit comments and ideas.				Would recommend a more formal program, current program is informal.
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Performance Accountability Systems

<i>Best Practices and</i>				
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Goals and Measurable Objectives				
<p>The district has clearly stated goals and measurable objectives for major programs. These major programs are</p> <p>) Basic Education (K-3, 4-8, 9-12), Talented and Gifted, Special Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Facilities, Transportation, Food Services and Safety and Security.</p>				
a. The district can demonstrate that it has stated goals and objectives for these programs.	X			Board policy AE (District Goals) enforces statement 1 above. The District makes use of state goals and performance standards for major programs. It also has a <i>Strategic Plan/District Accountability Plan</i> that was last revised on 04-27-15. The plan has three over-arching District goals with objectives and targets. The website allows one to easily find this information.
b. Program goals and objectives are consistent with the district's strategic plan.	X			This information is available in the District Accountability Plan.
c. For each program, the district has an accountability system for periodically measuring its progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	X			A Report Matrix is in place and each month the Board receives reports from program leaders. There are concerns about presenting more bottom line progress results in the reports for some programs.
d. The district establishes performance standards indicating the progress it would like to achieve in meeting its objectives during the <u>time frames</u> covered by its budget or strategic plan.		X		The District produces an outstanding budget document with specific annual financial goals. The District core purposes, values, goals and objectives are in place but most objectives do not have specific <u>time frames</u> attached to them.

<p>e. The district compares its performance to appropriate benchmarks, which may be its past performance or, when data is available, the performance of <u>comparable</u> districts.</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The district does compare itself to itself over the years. Statewide performance averages and information about the 10 school districts most similar to GAPS can be found in state report card data on the District website. The Oregon Department of Education (DOE) can make performance data for each school district in the state available. The District makes use of this type of information but it does not do so as extensively as it could.</p>
<p>f. The district regularly tracks and uses performance information to make management decisions. These could be decisions to maintain the status quo, make budget adjustments, adopt new strategies or streamline operations.</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The Board, superintendent and staff are committed to improvement for all District systems. This is shown in the types of goals and objectives found in the <i>District Accountability Plan</i> and the frequency of progress reporting done through the Reports Matrix process.</p>
<p>g. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.</p>				<p>The <i>Five Pillars for Becoming a Great Public School District</i> document produced by new Superintendent Golden is a great addition for the objectives listed above.</p>
<p>The district evaluates the performance and cost of its major educational and operational programs and uses evaluation results to improve program performance and cost-efficiency.</p>				
<p>a. The district periodically conducts evaluations of its educational and operational programs, functions, or activities using performance information and other reasonable criteria.</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>Evaluations are made at the school, department and District levels. The state report card provides comprehensive data and the Board receives periodic reports for each program/department at least once annually. A more results driven, systemic and comprehensive way to conduct program evaluation should be a major outcome of this <i>Management/Efficiency Review</i>.</p>

b. The district's evaluation processes examine whether the program or activity is meeting its goals and objectives in a <u>cost-effective</u> manner.		X		There are business practices in place, facility utilization reports and stated objectives in operation areas that address cost effectiveness. However, evidence was not found regarding specific goals, indicators or metrics for District-wide curriculum and instructional program evaluation processes that deal with <u>cost-effectiveness</u>.
c. The district issues evaluation reports that include findings and recommendations to improve the <u>effectiveness and/or efficiency</u> of the program or activity being evaluated.		X		The District's Leadership Team does report to the Board about all components of the District as mentioned in several of the indicators above. However, it was difficult to find evidence in most GAPS evaluation reports regarding <u>recommendations to improve effectiveness and efficiency</u> in the programs/activities being evaluated.
d. The district provides evaluation reports to school board members, administrators and others as necessary.	X			This is a strength of the GAPS leadership.
e. Other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice and should be considered.				The fact that the GAPS leadership decided to do this study is a positive statement in regard to the goal and indicators above.
The district reports on the performance of its major educational and operational programs to ensure accountability to parents and others.				
a. The district periodically reports its progress toward meeting the objectives of its major programs to the board and superintendent.	X			Annual progress reports are periodically made to the Board via the Reports Matrix process.
b. The district reports its progress toward meeting the goals of its major educational programs and, if considered necessary, its other programs, to school advisory councils, parents and others.	X			Information is mailed home to parents. Parents receive a school handbook specific to each school. The District website and state report card have much of this type of information.

<p>c. The district’s progress reports include disaggregated student performance information for special groups of students (e.g., TAG, ESOL, special education students).</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>Early each fall, the state report card lists this type of information for every school and school district. The report card emphasizes growth in student learning over time. It is available to access via the District website.</p>
<p>d. The district has established a mechanism to receive and respond to feedback from parents and others as an avenue of accountability to improve performance and efficiency.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>Anyone can contact the District and request information electronically, by phone or by asking for a meeting. The Welcome Center is helpful for non-English speaking parents. Specific blocks of time are set aside at each regular scheduled Board meeting for any person to address Board members regarding feedback about the District. Many of the District schools have school site councils that allow easy access for giving feedback to school parent leaders and administrators. However, more formal ways to receive and respond to feedback, especially to improve performance and accountability from District constituents, should be developed.</p>
<p>e. Other information that demonstrated the district’s use of this best practice and should be considered.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The District makes a strong effort to put as much information as possible in Spanish. The Welcome Center helps ELL families to have better communication between parents and their children’s schools through translation services. The Center also conducts testing, gives referrals, provides migrant services and parenting programs.</p>

**Best Personnel Management Practices With Their Associated Indicators
January 2014**

Identifying Information of Individual Completing Form

Name	Darcy Rourk	Telephone No.	360 735-7806
Position/Title	Executive Director of Human Resources	E-mail Address	Darcy.rourk@centurylink.net
District	Vancouver Public Schools, Vancouver, Washington		

PERSONNEL SYSTEMS AND BENEFITS

<i>Best Practices and Indicators</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Explanation/Documentation</i>
Human Resource Management				
1. The district efficiently and effectively recruits and hires qualified instructional and non-instructional personnel.				
a. The district <ul style="list-style-type: none">) can demonstrate that it verifies the qualifications of all of its instructional employees, and that all instructional employees are qualified for the positions that they hold;) by policy conducts its employment procedures in a manner that assures equal opportunity regardless of age, race, color, religion, sex, and national origin; and) completes at least preliminary background checks of all new employees prior to placing the employee in a position that involves contact with students. <i>(Basic Indicator)</i> 	X			There are clear processes for hiring classified and licensed staff and for ensuring that instructional staff are qualified and that background checks are completed on all employees.
	X			
	X			
b. The district maintains up-to-date, clear, concise, and readily accessible position descriptions that accurately identify the duties of each position and the education, experience, knowledge, skills, and competency levels required for each class of positions, and for each district-level administrative position.	X			Job descriptions are available through Recruit and Hire, the online application system used by the district.

<p>c. The district’s recruiting practices generate a sufficient number of qualified applicants to fill vacant positions in a timely manner. Factors that should be considered in reviewing the district’s recruiting practices include those below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) Are job vacancy announcements clear and readily accessible to potential employees?) Do out-of-state recruiting trips achieve measurable results over time that justify the costs of those trips?) Has the district developed/used other recruiting practices, such as job fairs, college partnerships, or local training programs? 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>		<p>The District utilizes the Portland Job Fair as their primary recruiting event.</p> <p>The District is considering traveling to Fresno State this year to recruit bilingual teachers.</p>
<p>d. The district uses a variety of methods, including the Internet, to increase the accessibility of information on job vacancies, the ease with which potential applicants can submit applications, and the efficiency with which applications can be processed and shared within the district.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The District uses Recruit and Hire as their online application system. All jobs are posted on the website through Recruit and Hire. The District will be piloting “Teacher Match” an assessment that identifies responses that correlate to student achievement.</p>
<p>e. In those areas in which the district experiences a shortage of qualified applicants, the district has developed and implemented short- and/or long-term strategies to remedy the situation.</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>f. If the district is not generating enough qualified recruits to fill its vacancies, then the district has compared its entry-level salaries and other recruitment factors with neighboring or competing districts to determine what steps are necessary to better compete for qualified applicants. Those steps have been identified, reported to the board, and addressed by the board to the extent feasible.</p>		<p>X</p>	
<p>g. The district can demonstrate that district employees generally reflect the population of the district, OR, if certain minorities are underrepresented, the district has implemented a long-term plan to remedy that situation.</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The District student enrollment includes 30% Hispanic students. Only 5% of staff represent this demographic.</p> <p>The District is considering recruiting out of state for Spanish speaking teachers. They are also working with Oregon State and Western Oregon on a “Grow Your Own” process.</p>
<p>h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district’s use of this best practice that should be considered?</p>			<p>The District utilizes teaching demonstrations for finalist teacher candidates</p> <p>The hiring process is building based and principal managed. Protocols exist for interviews, but using them is a principal decision.</p>

<p>2. To the extent possible given factors outside the district's control, the district works to maintain a reasonably stable work force and a satisfying work environment by addressing factors that contribute to increased turnover or low employee morale.</p>			
<p>a. The district can demonstrate through climate surveys, exit interview results, collective bargaining negotiations and/or other appropriate methods, that it has created a working environment for its employees that enhances worker satisfaction, and minimizes employee turnover. At a minimum</p> <p>) unless the results of surveys conducted by the employee unions are available to the district, the district should conduct climate surveys that measure employee satisfaction on such factors as work environment, quality of supervision, safety, district-wide support, and opportunities for professional development; and</p> <p>) the district should conduct exit interviews with employees who terminate employment, and compile the results of these interviews.</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>The District participated in the state 2014 TELL survey, a statewide effort by state leaders to assess teaching conditions to inform school improvement. 58% of the teachers participated in the survey. However, only 33% of teachers at West Albany High participated compared to over 70% at the other high school and the middle schools.</p> <p>An exit survey form is given to classified employees but is not required. Some teachers are surveyed but this is not a general practice.</p>
<p>b. The district maintains historical data on turnover rates for major classes of employees and monitors this data to identify unusual variations in the turnover rate. In lieu of historical data from the district, current turnover data from peer districts can be used.</p>			
<p>c. Districts monitor data related to portions of the workforce approaching retirement, with attempts to forecast any large numbers of retirements that are likely to create a need for an abnormally high number of qualified applicants in any given year.</p>			

<p>d. The administration and board have been informed of the results of efforts to evaluate the working environment of the district. Based upon analyses of the working environment, the district has taken steps to identify and remedy factors that adversely affect this working environment. These steps may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) comparison of salary and benefit packages with peer districts and with other public and private employers in the area;) internal equity studies (comparisons of pay grades and responsibilities for major classes of positions within the district);) linking pay increases to performance, including student achievement;) incentive pay policies to encourage and reward effective teachers, critical shortage teachers, and teachers in hard to place schools; or) basing the selection of personnel for positions that receive supplemental pay on performance criteria. 	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		<p>Teacher beginning salaries are 5th from the lowest of comparator districts. Top salaries are 3rd from the lowest.</p>
<p>e. The district maintains clear and effective channels of communication with its employees, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) providing readily accessible copies of a useful employee handbook, the collective bargaining agreement, and information on district personnel policies and benefit packages;) communicating district news and changes in policy to all employees; and) opportunities for employee feedback on district policies and practices that affect their areas of work or expertise, including employee membership on policy committees, and/or the solicitation of employee input on district policies and programs. 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?</p>				
<p>3. The district has efficient and cost-effective system for managing absenteeism and the use of substitute teachers and other substitute personnel.</p>				

a. The district monitors rates of absenteeism and the use of substitutes among teachers and other essential employees. The district has defined the rate of absenteeism that requires district review, and has developed policies/practices to deal effectively with the problems created by excessive absenteeism.	X			The HR department does a monthly analysis of absences and fill rate for substitutes
b. The district recruits and maintains a sufficient number of substitute teachers to cover most absenteeism peaks. The district has clearly defined procedures for teachers and essential non-instructional personnel to notify the appropriate school or district officials of an anticipated absence and for substitutes to be contacted.	X			Potential substitutes are invited to an orientation but there is not a formal interview. They are starting to see a shortage of substitutes and recognize that they are competing with other nearby districts.
c. The district provides ongoing training and orientation for substitute teachers.	X			The District provides a Substitute Handbook and Training for Substitute Teachers.
d. The district routinely provides special assistance (training and oversight) to those who must substitute for extended teacher absences.	X			
e. The district has implemented ways to decrease absenteeism, which may include an incentive program to reward good attendance.				
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				
4. The district maintains personnel records in an efficient and readily accessible manner.				
a. The district maintains personnel records, including confidential records, in accordance with <i>Oregon Statutes</i> and regulations. (<i>Basic Indicator</i>)	X			
b. The district uses automated record-keeping systems and minimizes the use of antiquated or time-consuming hardcopy record systems. The district has an efficient and effective record keeping system for both automated and hardcopy personnel records, including a system for the identifying and archiving of old records.		X		The District has considered electronic personnel files, but want to be careful and thoughtful about the process of changing.
c. The district has established procedures to allow officials at school sites to access automated personnel records. School administrators can amend personnel records without compromising the security of those records, thus diminishing the need for the transfer of paper from the school to the district office.		X		

d. The district can demonstrate that it updates personnel records in a timely manner, and, when dealing with a filing backlog, files hardcopy records in a prioritized fashion so that needed records can be found in the file.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				The District uses electronic Personnel Action Forms (PAF) through the iVisions system.
5. The district uses cost-containment practices for its Workers' Compensation Program.				
a. The district reviews its Workers' Compensation Program to evaluate workers' compensation claims and expenses. Included in this evaluation, at a minimum, are an examination of claims trends and a comparison with state and national statistics, peer and area school districts, and as appropriate for some positions, other government agencies and private industry.				
b. The district uses the results of these evaluations to be proactive in attempts to cost effectively reduce frequency and cost of Workers' Compensation claims.				
c. The district has procedures that are distributed to all employees concerning prompt reporting of all on-the-job injuries.	X			
d. The district has a safety inspection program that determines the corrective actions necessary based upon past workers' compensation claim experience and proactive inspection of known and probable high-risk areas and professions.	X			
e. The district practices strong cost-containment measures to limit the amount needed to be placed annually into the workers compensation reserve fund. These cost containment measures include) a light duty program to get injured employees back to work as soon as possible;) routine, cost-efficient monitoring and follow-up of claims (usually by a third party administrator) to ensure that workers are returned to work as soon as possible;) a training and safety program to reduce the likelihood of on-the-job accidents; and) a claims review function to identify and address situations, unsafe conditions, or training deficiencies that may have contributed to worker injuries or accidents.				

f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				
6. The district uses cost-containment practices for its employee benefits programs, including health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and retirement.				
a. The district reviews its employee benefits prior to each new contract with employee unions to ensure that the district is attaining appropriate value for its benefit costs.	X			
b. The district works cooperatively with employee unions to evaluate alternative delivery options for its employee benefits in order to contain costs, such as) self-insurance;) alternative approaches to benefit programs, such as cafeteria plans;) variable family benefit choices;) HMO and preferred provider plans;) variations in the levels of deductibles and co-payments;) the relative level of benefits provided to part time and full-time employees.			X	The District provides a broad range of benefit plans and options through OEBC, the Oregon Educators Benefit Board. Employees can select the plan that works best for their circumstances.
c. The district calculates the anticipated short term and long term fiscal impact of changes to its benefit packages prior to agreeing to those changes in negotiations with the employee unions.	X			
d. The school board is informed as to the short term and long term fiscal impact of changes to its benefit packages prior to approval of employee contracts.	X			
e. When considering early retirement offerings, the district calculates both the short term and long term fiscal impact of such proposals, including the effect on employee benefits and the effect on employee recruitment, before offering the options.				
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				
7. The district's human resource program is managed effectively and efficiently.				

a. The district has clearly stated goals and measurable objectives for the human resource program that reflect the intent (purpose) and expected outcomes of the program and address the major aspects of the program's expenditures.	X			The District has an organized and efficient HR staff. They have a comprehensive HR task calendar and clearly delineated responsibilities of each staff member.
b. The district conducts formal and/or informal reviews of the human resource program's organizational structure and staffing levels to minimize administrative layers and processes. The results of formal reviews are provided in writing to the school board.		X		
c. The district's human resource program staffing levels are reasonable, based on applicable comparisons and/or benchmarks, and that each position performs work that adds value to the district. Furthermore, the district can demonstrate that each administrative position has supervisory or management responsibilities that justify classification as an administrative position.		X		The District has a .5 HR Director, down from 1.5 HR administrators a few years ago. This level of staffing is not adequate to manage all labor management and discipline issues. In addition, several HR functions reside in the Instruction Department.
d. The district has considered the advantages, disadvantages, potential costs and potential cost savings of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering human resource services and benefits through increased use of automation and technology and the use of outsourcing.		X		
e. The district has taken advantage of significant opportunities to improve personnel management, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce costs.		X		The reduction in HR administration was a cost saving decision. However, with the improved economy, the District should reinvest in this department.
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?				
8. For classes of employees that are unionized, the district maintains an effective collective bargaining process.				
a. The district clearly designates which staff member(s) is (are) responsible for labor relations and contract negotiations, and these staff members receive annual training to enhance knowledge of the negotiations process, issues, and legislative mandates.	X			The HR Director is perceived as being very skilled in labor relations.

<p>b. The district has clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the negotiator, the superintendent and school board members during the negotiation process. The process includes steps to establish district priorities for the negotiation process while maintaining confidentiality.</p>	<p>X</p>			
<p>c. School and unit administrators are asked to identify potential issues of concern that could be raised in the collective bargaining process. District negotiators determine the costs or potential cost savings associated with these issues, and then meet with district level administrators to determine the feasibility of addressing the concerns raised and whether the district wishes to include these issues in the district's proposal(s) to the union(s).</p>				
<p>d. Upon receipt of union proposals other than salary, district officials determine the estimated costs, and the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal.</p>				
<p>e. The administrative negotiating team(s) has access to an attorney trained in collective bargaining law and procedure.</p>	<p>X</p>			
<p>f. Records of negotiations are updated and maintained for at least five years or some other time prescribed by the district.</p>				
<p>g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?</p>				<p>The District currently has very positive relations with the unions. The District experienced a teacher strike in 1987 and as a result, went to Interest Based Bargaining. They currently utilize a hybrid form of bargaining.</p>

SAFETY & SECURITY SYSTEMS

Traffic

Practices & Procedures For Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools	Implemented		N/A	Comments
	Yes	No		
1. Bus loading and drop-off zones are clearly defined, and are separated from parent/private transportation pick-up zones		x		
2. Car and bus zones are separated so that students do not have to walk through traffic to enter the school building.		x		
3. Other vehicles are prohibited from using bus loading and unloading zones during arrival and dismissal times.	x			
4. Staff are assigned and trained (e.g. conditions to be aware of) to supervise bus and private vehicle loading and unloading zones.	x			
5. Bus parking is located so that buses do not have to back up to turn or park.	x			
6. Traffic patterns for private vehicles are designed to reduce congestion of vehicles entering and exiting school grounds, and controls co-mingling of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.		x		Not at all sites
7. Drives that encircle a building are secured so students are not required to cross drives when moving between buildings, playgrounds or athletic fields. Gated access is recommended.	x			
8. Student access to parking areas is restricted to posted arrival and dismissal times, and students are not allowed to linger in their vehicles or loiter in the parking lot.	x			
9. Students and staff are required to register their vehicles, and are issued and required to display parking stickers.		x		
10. Parking lots are designed in such a way as to reduce vehicle speed and lower risk to pedestrians (e.g. long, straight rows are avoided; raised speed bumps are used.)	x			
11. Vehicular access to play areas is restricted.	x			
12. Adequate, clearly marked spaces are available for handicapped parking.	x			
13. Security personnel (e.g. crossing guards, staff, law enforcement) monitor student movement at crosswalks and areas involving bus and vehicular traffic.	x			
14. Sidewalk access and ramps are available to accommodate the needs of the handicapped.	x			At most schools that were visited.

15. Emergency service vehicles have adequate access to school buildings and facilities.			x	This is yet to be determined. Seems to be a problem at S. Albany HS.
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Surveillance Outside

Practices & Procedures For Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools	<i>Implemented</i>		N/A	Comments
	Yes	No		
1. Plantings are arranged to allow surveillance of open areas, roads, parking lots, walkways, and building accesses. Plantings are kept at a height that does not block surveillance of traffic (3 ft. for motorists and 4.5 ft. for pedestrians).	x			
2. Vehicular routes and parking areas are in visual proximity to strategic sections of buildings, and are adequately lit with vandal-proof lighting.		x		
3. Directional and informational signs have large lettering, bold graphics, simple and correct directions, and are well lit, especially as applies to the school entrance, parking, directions to the office, drug-free school zones, prohibition of firearms, weapons and no trespassing on school property, and fire escape routes.		x		This is hit and miss at different schools.
4. The main point of entry is well identified and provides a safe, well-lighted, and sheltered entry to the building. Sufficient windows facilitate visual surveillance from strategic vantage points.		x		
5. All sides of the building, exterior doors, fire escapes, roof entrances, gates and parking lots are clearly illuminated in such a way as to avoid creation of blind spots, glare areas and shadows.		x		
6. Video cameras are available to monitor activities outside the school building, and on school buses.		x		Not at all schools

Access Control Inside

Practices & Procedures For Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools	<i>Implemented</i>		N/A	Comments
	Yes	No		
1. A policy is in place that defines who may have keys, including master keys, to the building, classrooms, laboratories/science rooms, and other locations, and a list of key holders is kept in a secure place.	x			
2. Teachers and staff are required to turn in keys when transferred, terminated or retired.	x			
3. Doors to the exterior are kept closed and locked at all times, with the				Generally, this was what was observed at all the

exception of the front entrance that may remain unlocked as long as there is good visual surveillance and control from the office.	x			schools.
4. Chains with locks are not used at any time to secure doors including after school hours.	x			
5. Multiple entrances to the school building are controlled and supervised from the inside for property security.		x		
6. Classroom doors are kept locked when the rooms are vacant.		x		
7. Unused areas of the school can be closed/locked off during and after school hours.	x			Depends on the school.
8. Restricted areas within the school and on school property are properly identified.				
9. Roof access is kept locked at all times.		x		Not at all schools
10. Administrative areas are proximal to the main entry and visitor waiting areas, to the school, with easy visual access into and from these areas.		x		Not at all schools
11. Areas that accommodate a large congregation of students, such as auditoriums, or music or band rooms, allow for adequate visual supervision, clear sight lines, and easy traffic flow.		x		Some facilities are too small for the student body such as W. Albany HS
12. Designated control points with clear sight lines are positioned near the entrances and exits to cafeterias.	x			Generally speaking, this was seen to be true.
13. Toilet partitions are structurally sound and attached securely. Partition walls do not exceed 5'6" in height and have a 1'0" clearance above the floor.	x			
14. A closed circuit television system (CCTV) is installed to monitor activity in public and secluded locations, especially in middle and high schools.		x		
15. The CCTV (closed circuit TV) system has the capability to reproduce tapes for court, identification, prosecution, and liability purposes.		x		

Safety Devices & Equipment Inside

Practices & Procedures For Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools	Implemented		N/A	Comments
	Yes	No		
1. The school is connected to a backup emergency power system.		x		Only two schools have backup generators. Some have back up UPS systems for lights.

2. The principal or other designated contact person has a single, private telephone line to which only he/she has access, and by which he/she can be reached by emergency management workers (e.g. police, fire) in case of suspicious emergency situations.	x			Supposedly every school plus key administrative staff have access to a private single use cell phone for this purpose.
3. There is a two-way communication system between classrooms, duty stations, re-locatable classrooms and the main office.	x	x		Not at all schools.
4. The school has developed a plan with the local communications companies to divert mass inquiries to designated communication centers in the LEA in order to free up school lines during an emergency.	x			
5. Walls in graffiti-prone locations are made of a material and finish that can repel graffiti or tolerate repeated cleanings.	x			Might not be material that repels graffiti but very little was seen in any school.
6. Classroom and office doors are constructed of solid material (e.g. wood, metal).	x			
7. Classroom doors are equipped with heavy-duty, vandal-resistant, locks that are operable from the inside by turning the handle.	x			
8. Door wells in lavatories allow doors to open outward from the room.	x			
9. Mirrors, windows, and light covers in lavatories and locker rooms are impact resistant.	x			

***Best Transportation Management Practices With Their Associated Indicators
December 2015***

Identifying Information of Individual Completing Form

Name	Telephone No.
Tim Collier	
Position/Title	E-mail Address
District	
Greater Albany SD	

TRANSPORTATION

Best Practices and Indicators	Yes	No	N/A	Explanation/Documentation
Planning, Organization and Staffing				
1. The district coordinates long-term planning and budgeting for student transportation within the context of district and community planning.				
a. Transportation staff conduct a systematic assessment of transportation needs to identify priorities and basic needs. The process includes consideration of all current and anticipated budget categories and potential areas of transportation cost savings such as reducing the number of courtesy riders service, reducing the number of spare buses, realigning routes, purchasing larger buses, etc. As part of the budget process, transportation administrators present cost-savings options to the school board and public.	X			
b. Transportation planning staff consults regularly with district planning staff to ensure that transportation needs, concerns, and costs are considered when planning for future schools or physical plant needs.	X			
c. Transportation planning staff consults regularly with community planners to identify areas in the district where community growth and development will have an impact on the need for student transportation services in the future.		X		Not currently.

d. Transportation planning staff consult regularly with district planning and budgeting staff to develop and present factual information for the school board and public on the student transportation cost implications of district educational program decisions, such as school choice and magnet schools, charter schools, opportunity scholarships, transportation to higher-performing schools, community busing, exceptional student education programs, and staggered school start times.	X			Two reports to the board annually
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
2. The district provides regular, accurate, and timely transportation reports to the Oregon Department of Education.				
a. Transportation administrators regularly review the student count information to identify trends and issues that may require managerial or budgetary responses and that may result in cost savings within the present time frame or in the future.	X			
b. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
3. The transportation office plans, reviews, and establishes bus routes and stops to provide cost-efficient student transportation services for all students who qualify for transportation.				
a. Route planning staff annually uses a systematic approach to create and update bus routes (including computer routing if appropriate for the size and complexity of the district) and bus stops that are effective and cost-efficient without compromising safety. Existing bus routes and stops are reviewed on an annual basis for effectiveness, cost-efficiency, and safety.	X			
b. Route planning staff responds promptly to complaints or suggestions received from school site staff, parents, or the general public about current or proposed bus routes or a driver's performance on an official assignment.	X			

c. Route planning staff (or their designees) regularly reviews areas within two miles of the school with the responsible local or state agency having road jurisdiction to identify and document where hazardous walking conditions exist. The district works cooperatively with the local or state agency whenever possible to eliminate hazardous walking conditions. Walking conditions that cannot be made safe are reported to the Department of Education and students are claimed for transportation funding under the provisions of law.	X			
d. The school board has adopted staggered school start times to help ensure that the district's buses can serve as many students as possible (i.e., maximize the district's average bus occupancy). Alternatively, the district can demonstrate through a financial analysis that staggered school start times would not make student transportation more cost-efficient	X			However, individual bell schedules can be adjusted at the school to some degree. Impacting transportation planning.
e. The district's routing practices result in reasonably high average bus occupancy, and low cost per mile and student, compared to districts with similar demographics and educational programs and exemplar districts.	X			
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
4. The organizational structure and staffing levels of the district's transportation program minimizes administrative layers and processes.				
a. The district periodically reviews the transportation program's organizational structure and staffing levels to ensure that administrative layers and processes are minimized. Input for the review includes staff feedback and structure/ staffing levels comparisons with selected peer districts.	X			
b. The district can demonstrate the program has an appropriate structure (including reasonable lines of authority and spans of control) and staffing levels based on applicable comparisons and/or benchmarks.	X			Currently staffing appears to be thin. Would recommend doing a more detailed analysis on management spans of control and on administrative support.
c. The district reports organizational structure and administrative staffing review findings in writing and distributes these findings to school board members and the public.		X		
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

5. The district maintains an effective staffing level in the vehicle maintenance area and provides support for vehicle maintenance staff to develop its skills.				
a. District staff periodically evaluates the level of vehicle maintenance staffing and make adjustments as necessary to operate a cost-efficient operation.	X			
b. The district sends all vehicle maintenance staff to courses and training sessions to improve current skills, develop special expertise not currently represented in the vehicle maintenance shop, and become familiar with emerging technology and techniques.	X			
c. The district provides regular in-service training opportunities for vehicle maintenance staff to receive instruction on district maintenance policies and procedures, including topics of current interest and concern.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
6. The district effectively and efficiently recruits and retains the bus drivers and attendants it needs.				
a. The district notifies the public of job opportunities for bus drivers, substitute bus drivers, and bus attendants. The district uses a variety of approaches and activities to reach individuals likely to be interested in such employment options, and takes advantage of effective low-cost venues whenever possible.	X			
b. The district assesses its turnover rate for drivers and attendants and makes changes to practices as necessary to retain drivers and effectively recruit replacements.	X			Current turnover rate extremely low.
c. Transportation staff collects information on wages and benefits offered by adjacent school districts and by local employers that are likely to be competing for the pool of applicants for positions as bus drivers, substitute bus drivers, and bus attendants in the district. Staff regularly use this information to compare the district's relative competitiveness for these positions when recruiting replacement drivers and attendants and setting salaries and benefits.	X			
d. The district provides bus drivers and attendants with incentives, financial or otherwise, for good performance as demonstrated by their safety records, timeliness, attendance, and ability to maintain discipline on the bus.	X			An incentive is available for perfect attendance.

e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
7. The district trains, supervises, and assists bus drivers to enable them to meet bus-driving standards and maintain acceptable student discipline on the bus.				
a. Transportation staff provides or contracts for the initial training required for prospective bus drivers to receive a commercial driver's license.	X			
b. The transportation office provides periodic in-service training (including the required annual training) for bus drivers, substitute bus drivers, and bus attendants that include topics needed to keep licenses current along with other district transportation needs and concerns.	X			
c. Training meets the concerns and needs expressed by drivers and attendants in periodic meetings with transportation management. ¹	X			
d. The transportation office provides regular direct oversight, at least annually, of basic bus handling skills, safe driving practices, and pupil management techniques of all school bus drivers.	X			Yearly back to school reviews
e. The district ensures that all bus drivers receive annual physical examinations as required by statute and maintains records of these examinations.	X			
f. The school board has adopted and enforces a safe driver policy that establishes when or if school bus drivers with traffic violations charged against them are able to continue driving.	X			
g. The district has considered implementing a policy for recouping training costs for bus drivers who terminate their employment within one year from being hired.		X		
h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Vehicle Acquisition and Maintenance

8. The school district has a process to ensure that sufficient vehicles are acquired economically and will be available to meet the district's current and future transportation needs.				
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a. The school board has adopted a policy addressing the cost-effective replacement of school buses and other district vehicles. The replacement policy should include criteria such as age of the vehicle, vehicle mileage, and maintenance costs vs. vehicle value. The school board periodically reviews this policy for any revisions that may be needed.	X			
b. District staff maintains records of district vehicle purchases over a multi-year period to document that the district's vehicle replacement standards are being met and that sufficient allowance has been made for both projected growth and accommodation of school board program decisions that have an impact on the need for district vehicles.	X			Regularly reported in two annual board reports
c. District staff minimizes the number of spare vehicles but ensures that enough spare vehicles are available when needed to cover special situations that may reasonably be expected to occur. Staff evaluates past situations when spare buses were needed but were not available and make adjustments as necessary.	X			
d. Transportation staff maintains regularly updated records on the numbers and types of vehicles in the district.	X			
e. District staff receives and inspects new vehicles. New school buses are phased into service so that new buses are assigned to routes with the greatest need, while older buses are rotated to shorter or smaller routes, used as spare buses, or removed from service.	X			
f. The district regularly conducts and documents its reviews of costs related to older vehicles to determine whether they should be maintained in service or not.	X			
g. When the district removes vehicles from service it recovers as much value as possible.	X			
h. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?	X	X		
9. The district provides timely routine servicing for buses and other district vehicles, as well as prompt response for breakdowns and other unforeseen contingencies.				
a. The transportation office ensures that all bus drivers inspect their buses prior to each bus run and maintain records of such inspections.	X			

b. The district documents quality control reviews of the servicing and repair work done on vehicles.	X			
c. The district has a preventive maintenance program for vehicles to provide timely routine servicing that may be on a schedule that differs from calendar-based servicing such as mileage-based servicing.	X			Regular rotating bus maintenance and per manufacturer specifications.
d. District staff has established guidelines to assist in making cost-effective decisions about whether to make complex or expensive repairs on older vehicles.	X			
e. District staff ensures that all district vehicles are serviced in a timely and cost-effective manner. Charges/credit for services is made to the appropriate department(s).	X			
f. District staff maintains a vehicle maintenance management system to provide data on the maintenance costs, performance, and operations of school buses and other vehicles.	X			
g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
10. The district ensures that fuel purchases are cost-effective and that school buses and other vehicles are efficiently supplied with fuel.				
a. District departments cooperate with purchasing office staff to develop purchasing arrangements with vendors to ensure that the district receives the most favorable rates available.	X			Current co-op programs with County and City for fuel contract
b. District staff has established procedures to determine when orders to replenish the district's fueling stations should be placed. Also, if exceptions occur, staff should have a specific justification or otherwise analyze the circumstances to ensure that exceptions will not recur.			X	Run by Co-Op
c. The district has secure fueling stations for buses and other vehicles that are convenient and accessible. District staff periodically reviews whether there are enough locations and whether they are efficiently sited. If not, they make recommendations for change to district administrators.	X			
d. District staff has implemented controls over the fueling system to ensure its security and the accuracy of its records. If the district does not use an automated fueling system, staff should be able to justify why that would not be cost-effective for the district.	X			

e. The district ensures that departments using the fueling stations are appropriately billed/credited.	X			
f. District staff cooperates with governmental environmental agencies charged with conducting environmental inspections of fueling stations. Staff maintains records of all such inspections, and if deficiencies are encountered, they take prompt action to correct them.	X			
g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
11. The district maintains facilities that are conveniently situated to provide sufficient and secure support for vehicle maintenance and other transportation functions.				
a. All district vehicle service centers have a shop layout that allows technicians to work most of the time in covered areas, and technicians have ready access to the specialized tools and support they need to do their job.	X			However, room is limited and should be reviewed.
b. District staff has established procedures to control and minimize the generation of any hazardous wastes from district vehicle service centers, and any hazardous wastes that are generated are safely and securely stored in accordance with state and federal requirements.	X			
c. All district vehicle service centers include needed storage space for parts, tires, supplies, and related equipment, and access to them is controlled. All district vehicle service centers include areas for supporting functions such as computer data entry, paperwork processing, and records storage. All district vehicle service centers are securely fenced and lighted, and vehicle routing and parking options are clearly marked.	X			
d. The district ensures that district vehicles are securely parked when not in use.	X			
e. District staff periodically reviews the sufficiency and efficiency of transportation physical facilities and evaluate the feasibility and desirability of satellite vehicle servicing areas.	X			Current site has been reviewed and steps have been taken to begin developing potential alternative.
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

12. The district maintains an inventory of parts, supplies, and equipment needed to support transportation functions that balances the concerns of immediate need and inventory costs.				
a. The district maintains a “just in time” inventory of all parts and supplies to minimize the size and cost of inventory while providing needed support to district transportation functions.	X			
b. The district obtains on a continuing basis those parts, supplies, and services that are needed to support district transportation functions in a cost-effective manner. Such items and services can be obtained using methods such as competitive bids, local pool purchases, pre-negotiated state contracts, and discounted blanket purchase orders.	X			
c. Transportation-related parts room staff review all parts, supplies, and services when they are received to ensure that the correct items were delivered, the billing price is correct, and services were satisfactory. All transportation-related parts and supplies are inventoried and tracked via a computer system.	X			
d. The district ensures that transportation-related warranty claims are made against manufacturers or vendors whenever possible. Warranty repairs will be performed in-house if shown to be a cost-effective method to make such repairs.	X			
e. The district has controls to prevent the inappropriate use of facilities and supplies, and it maintains the security of parts and supplies in the transportation area.	X			
f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district’s use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

Operations, Management and Accountability

13. The district ensures that all regular school bus routes and activity trips operate in accordance with established routines, and any unexpected contingencies affecting vehicle operations are handled safely and promptly.				
a. The district has an effective process for responding to vehicle breakdowns and it is clear who should be notified and when. District procedures address the roles and responsibilities of bus drivers, operations staff, vehicle maintenance staff, and school site staff.	X			

b. The district has an effective process for bus drivers to report their own intention to miss work as soon as possible and for operations staff to respond to those absences with substitute drivers or other solutions.	X			Direct reporting to director if sick. Substitutes regularly on site.
c. The district effectively responds to bus overcrowding situations. Responses address the immediate situation, and, when appropriate, also provide for longer-term solutions, such as a redesign of affected bus routes.	X			
d. Transportation operations staff maintains records of the number of students who ride longer than the state recommended ride time standard (or the local ride time standard if the school board has adopted a more stringent standard) and take actions to minimize this number when possible.	X			
e. The school board has adopted and implemented a policy on the circumstances under which a bus driver may discharge a student at any stop other than the one the student usually uses.	X			
f. The district has written a process for school site staff to request and pay all transportation costs (including operational and administrative costs) for all educational, extracurricular, and athletic activity trips. Implementation of these procedures is demonstrated in activity trip records.	X			
g. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
14. The district provides efficient transportation services for exceptional students in a coordinated fashion that minimizes hardships to students.				
a. Transportation staff and exceptional student education staff communicate and consult regularly about student transportation services for exceptional students.	X			
b. The district policy, along with district exceptional student education guidelines, ensures that exceptional students ride a regular school bus whenever possible and appropriate.	X			
c. Exceptional student education staff and transportation staff identify exceptional students who qualify for Medicaid funding for certain approved bus runs. The district makes claims for Medicaid reimbursement for transporting those students.	X			

d. For any exceptional education students who cannot be accommodated on district school buses, suitable alternative arrangements are made such as specialized medical transport or parental transportation.	X			
e. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
15. The district ensures that staff acts promptly and appropriately in response to any accidents or breakdowns.				
a. The transportation office equips all school buses with two-way communications devices, and staff monitor communications at all times when school buses are in service.	X			
b. The district has an effective process for responding to vehicle breakdowns and it is clear who should be notified and when. District procedures address the roles and responsibilities of district staff including bus drivers, operations staff, vehicle maintenance staff, and school site staff. These procedures are periodically reviewed in training sessions with copies of the procedures carried on each district vehicle.	X			
c. The district maintains complete records of all accidents that occur and promptly reports all qualifying accidents to the school board and the Oregon Department of Education.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
16. The district ensures that appropriate student behavior is maintained on the bus with students being held accountable for financial consequences of misbehavior related to transportation.				
a. Bus drivers report disciplinary infractions directly to school site staff. School staff report to drivers what disciplinary actions were taken.	X			
b. District policy and procedures require that parents of students damaging buses be assessed repair costs.	X			
c. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
17. The district provides appropriate technological and computer support for transportation functions and operations.				

a. The transportation office has a computerized management information system that administrators use to produce reliable and timely budgeting and expenditure information on student transportation functions, as well as basic performance data for the office. This system is coordinated with other district systems.	X			
b. The district maintains computerized data that enables it to record and track information on transportation staff training and certifications, driver's license data, substance abuse testing, and personnel performance.	X			
c. Transportation administrators, with the assistance of district information systems staff, periodically review their current level of technological and computer support to identify issues needs for the future, and coordination with other district systems.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
18. The district monitors the fiscal condition of transportation functions by regularly analyzing expenditures and reviewing them against the budget.				
a. The approved budget for transportation includes appropriate categories by which expenditures may be usefully tracked. Transportation staff systematically reviews expenditures against the budget for these categories. Administrators respond promptly to cost control issues raised during such reviews and identify what actions must be taken, by whom, and when.	X			
b. Vehicle maintenance staff in the transportation office maintains current records of all maintenance and repairs conducted on all vehicles, and the costs associated with those repairs. They review those records regularly to identify maintenance cost concerns, such as unexpected patterns of maintenance activity, excessive costs, or high costs associated with particular types or ages of buses.	X			
c. The district has taken advantage of significant opportunities to improve transportation management, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce costs.	X			
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		

19. The district has reviewed the prospect for privatizing transportation functions, as a whole or in part.				
a. Transportation staff has developed key unit cost information for student transportation functions and tasks to enable them to make comparisons with those of private providers.		X		Currently all transportation provided in house. Financial metrics development should be considered in current set of metrics
b. Transportation staff periodically reviews the costs associated with transportation functions and tasks that could be conducted by private vendors. When the results of such reviews indicate savings to the district, staff arranges for such functions and tasks to be performed by private vendors.		X		
c. Transportation staff conducts quality assurance checks for any transportation function or task performed by private vendors to ensure that work was conducted in accordance with the original agreement.			X	
d. Is there other information that demonstrates the district's use of this best practice that should be considered?		X		
20. The district has established an accountability system for transportation, and it regularly tracks and makes public reports on its performance in comparison with established benchmarks.				
a. The district has clearly stated goals and measurable outcome-oriented objectives for the student transportation program that reflect the intent (purpose) of the program and address the major aspects of the program's purpose and expenditures.	X			
b. The district has identified other Oregon school districts it considers to be peers and exemplars against which it can compare its performance, and it can identify reasons for selecting those districts. The district makes regular comparisons of its own performance with those of the peers and exemplars.	X			This is mostly on a staffing level. No key set of comparable metrics has been set by districts to determine other comparable metrics.
c. Transportation administrators have established appropriate performance and cost-efficiency measures and benchmarks (i.e., measurable targets for future performance) for key indicators of student transportation performance.	X			Most of these metrics are regarding time and are not cost efficiency measures.

<p>d. Transportation administrators provide district administrators and the school board an annual “report card” that shows actual performance for all selected performance and cost-efficiency measures in comparison with the selected benchmark for that indicator, the performance of peer districts, and actual performance during the previous year. The district uses this information to assess performance and make management decisions.</p>	<p>X</p>			
<p>e. In addition to “big picture” performance reporting, transportation administrators have established a system of regular management reports throughout the transportation office to track daily and weekly performance for key functions.</p>		<p>X</p>		
<p>f. Is there other information that demonstrates the district’s use of this best practice that should be considered?</p>		<p>X</p>		