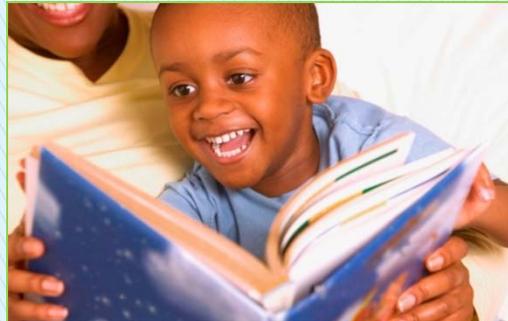
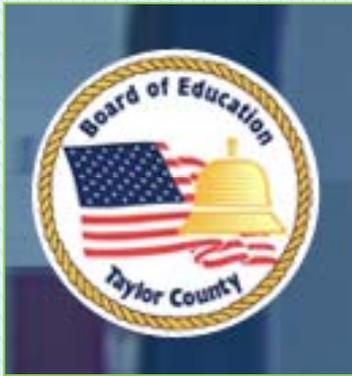


FINAL REPORT

Education Efficiency Review of Taylor County Schools, West Virginia



December 29, 2011

Submitted by:





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December 29, 2011

EDUCATION EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS, WEST VIRGINIA

FINAL REPORT

MGT thanks the many individuals who contributed to the education efficiency review of Taylor County Schools (TCS). Their efforts and commitment were critical to our ability to present the district with the best possible recommendations for increased effectiveness and reductions in expenditures without adversely affecting student academic performance, losing district productivity, or reducing the quality of services.

We thank the Board of Education and Superintendent Diane Watt for their willingness to conduct a study of this nature and for their openness to change and improvement.

We thank the members of the district staff who organized the consultant team's interviews and all the documents and data that were needed to do our work. Central office staff spent many hours coordinating focus groups, submitting documents, coordinating responses, and attending to the many details in conducting the review.

Employees throughout the district contributed throughout the study, participating in the survey, in interviews, in focus groups, and in reviewing the draft report. We thank them for the willingness to contribute time to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the district, and to improve services to students.

We thank the many parents, citizens, and representatives of civic organizations who participated in the focus groups and the open forum. These individuals support the district in serving students in the best possible manner.

Thank you.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Taylor County Schools Survey Results

Appendix B: Taylor County Schools Overview and Peer Comparisons

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, the State of West Virginia selected the team of Public Works and MGT of America, Inc. (MGT) to conduct a review of education in West Virginia. MGT was tasked with conducting efficiency and effectiveness reviews of three school districts and one Regional Education Service Agency (RESA). This report contains MGT's findings, commendations, and recommendations specific to Taylor County Schools (TCS). The purpose of the efficiency and effectiveness review was to provide an objective evaluation of the following administrative and operational areas, including processes and procedures, staffing, performance, controls, and spending:

- District Administration
- Human Resources Management
- Financial Management
- Child Nutrition
- Facility Use and Management
- Transportation
- Technology Management
- Educational Service Delivery

Conditions in TCS which were considered of importance in this review included:

- A superintendent newly appointed July 1, 2011, who supports improved communication throughout the district and community.
- A district in flux with the arrival of the new superintendent.
- A student enrollment pattern that has declined over a multi-year period.
- A recent history of negative board-superintendent relations that, in part, has created a lack of trust among some school personnel.
- A focus on compliance in meeting West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) mandates.

The superintendent provides leadership for the district with input from a leadership team that includes the assistant superintendent for administrative and support services, the treasurer/chief school business official (CSBO), the director of curriculum and instruction, the director of special education, the attendance coordinator, the technology coordinator, and the five school principals. As of September 1, 2011, TCS had five schools serving approximately 2,395 students.

Review Methodology

Overview

MGT studied the major work processes in TCS to identify inefficiencies and opportunities for cost savings, such as:

- Unnecessary work tasks being performed.

- Underutilization of technology.
- Inefficient work processes (bottlenecks, duplication).
- Missed opportunities to collaborate with other educational entities.
- Needed work processes that are not being performed.
- Productivity management practices and staff evaluation processes.
- Inefficient organization or staffing.

Our report identifies specific cost saving opportunities; however, we also note where additional financial investments may be warranted in order to achieve greater efficiencies.

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the TCS efficiency and effectiveness review is described in this section. To be successful, the methodology must:

- Be based upon a detailed work plan and time schedule.
- Take into account the unique environment within which the district operates.
- Obtain input from board members, administrators, and staff.
- Identify the existence, appropriateness, and use of specific educational objectives.
- Contain comparisons to similar educational organizations to provide a reference point.
- Provide for comparisons to best practices and other educational standards.
- Follow a common set of guidelines tailored specifically to the district.
- Include analyses of the efficiency of work practices.
- Identify exemplary programs and practices, as well as needed improvements.
- Document all findings.
- Present straightforward and practical recommendations for improvements.

Our methodology primarily involved a focused use of guidelines to analyze existing data and new information obtained through various means of TCS staff input. MGT's key strategies for conducting the studies are summarized below.

Review of Existing Records and Data Sources

During the period between project initiation and the onsite review, MGT simultaneously conducted many activities. Among these activities were identifying and collecting existing reports and data related to the administrative functions and operations that consultants would review. MGT requested numerous documents from the district, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Policies and administrative procedures

- Organizational charts
- Job descriptions
- Financial reports
- Operation handbooks and procedures
- Program and compliance reports
- Curriculum and instruction programs, data, and reports
- Student assessment data
- Technology plans
- Annual performance reports
- Annual budget and expenditure reports

Data from each of these sources were analyzed, and the information was used in preliminary analysis and as a starting point for collecting additional data during the onsite visit.

Stakeholder Input

We view stakeholder input as a valuable component of MGT's methodology, and use several techniques to obtain information from stakeholders on the issues and opportunities facing the school district.

MGT held a community open house in TCS to allow parents, community, and business members an opportunity to share their opinions about the district's strengths and areas in need of improvement. In addition to the community open house, MGT offered a web address to the public for additional comments.

MGT also conducted online surveys of central office administrators, principals, assistant principals, and teachers to solicit their opinions regarding the services and operations of the district. When the survey period closed, 11 percent of the central office administrators, 25 percent of the principals and assistant principals, and 16 percent of the teachers had completed the survey. MGT uses a statistical formula to establish the acceptable survey return rate in order to declare that the results are "representative" of the population surveyed. In the case of TCS, the response rate for all groups was below this standard. MGT includes the survey responses as indicators of the views of the stakeholders, but cautions the reader not to over-interpret or over-analyze these data. In addition, MGT does not base its recommendations on survey results, but uses the results as a gauge of general perceptions. **Appendix A** presents the results of the online surveys.

Comparison with Peer Districts

To successfully conduct an efficiency review it is important to fully understand the environment and the community in which the district operates. In addition to gauging the effectiveness and efficiency of the district against its own standards, we compare it to similar school districts. This comparison provides an objective basis for contrasting effectiveness and efficiency measures.

MGT used data reported in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) to prepare the comparisons. Our analyses compare budgeting, staffing, and expenditure data as well as student performance information. While MGT did not base our recommendations solely on comparison school district findings, we used these analyses

to provide insights on where the district stands among its peers. Where appropriate, peer district comparisons are included in each chapter of this report. **Exhibit E-1** identifies the peer districts used for the TCS efficiency and effectiveness review. The TCS overview and peer comparison chapter is located in **Appendix B**.

**EXHIBIT E-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
SELECTED WEST VIRGINIA COMPARISON PEER DISTRICTS**

| DISTRICT | ENROLLMENT | AMERICAN INDIAN/ ALASKAN NATIVE | ASIAN/ PACIFIC ISLANDER | BLACK | HISPANIC | WHITE | PUPIL/ TEACHER RATIO |
|----------------------|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Barbour County | 2,478 | 1.33% | 0.12% | 1.33% | 0.44% | 93.87% | 14.3 |
| Braxton County | 2,230 | 0.00% | 0.31% | 0.45% | 0.31% | 98.25% | 12.4 |
| Hardy County | 2,307 | 0.04% | 0.22% | 2.82% | 3.73% | 93.15% | 15.7 |
| Taylor County | 2,450 | 0.04% | 0.08% | 0.82% | 0.37% | 98.57% | 15.2 |
| Roane County | 2,554 | 0.12% | 0.39% | 0.90% | 0.43% | 98.04% | 14.4 |
| Average | 2,404 | 0.31% | 0.22% | 1.26% | 1.06% | 96.38% | 14.4 |

Onsite Review

MGT established onsite teams for the in-depth efficiency and effectiveness reviews. While onsite, team members studied district data, conducted interviews, held focus groups, visited schools, and participated in district meetings and events. Eight team members conducted the onsite visit to TCS during the week of September 6, 2011.

Project Reporting

MGT provided a series of reports throughout the review:

- Status Reports provided updates on progress throughout the duration of the project.
- A Draft Report with findings, commendations, and recommendations to improve effectiveness, operational efficiency, and address best practices. MGT also provided a feedback response form to ensure district and state staff had the means to challenge, inquire, and comment on the draft report. MGT consultants reviewed and responded to all feedback items.
- The Final Report prepared and delivered by MGT, based on the draft report and including any subsequent modifications, elaborations, or corrections arising from work subsequent to the draft report.

Overview of the Final Report

MGT’s final report is organized into eight chapters which present the findings, commendations, and recommendations for each operational area reviewed, including:

- A description of the current situation in the district.

- A summary of the findings.
- MGT's commendation and/or recommendation for each finding.
- Where it can be quantified for the recommendation, a five-year fiscal impact statement detailing costs or savings, stated in 2010-11 dollars.

Appendix A includes the results of the MGT surveys of TCS, and **Appendix B** presents a comparison of TCS with selected peer districts.

Commendations and Recommendations

Overall, MGT made 25 commendations and 80 recommendations as shown in **Exhibit E-2**. Of the 80 recommendations, 16 had an estimated quantifiable fiscal impact (costs or savings), while 64 did not. It is important to note that many of the recommendations MGT made without quantifying a fiscal impact are expected to result in a net savings to TCS, depending on how the district elects to implement them.

**EXHIBIT E-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY**

| DISTRICT | COMMENDATIONS | RECOMMENDATIONS WITH NO FISCAL IMPACT | RECOMMENDATIONS WITH FISCAL IMPACT | TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS |
|----------|---------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Taylor | 25 | 64 | 16 | 80 |

Fiscal Impact

Implementation of MGT's recommendations could save TCS nearly \$4 million over five years, as summarized in **Exhibit E-3**. The costs and savings presented in this report are in 2010-11 dollars and do not reflect increases due to salary or inflation adjustments.

**EXHIBIT E-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY**

| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| Total Net Savings (Costs) | \$692,015 | \$798,699 | \$798,699 | \$798,699 | \$797,835 | \$3,885,947 |

The recommendations for TCS with estimated fiscal impacts are detailed in **Exhibit E-4**.

**EXHIBIT E-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
FISCAL IMPACT BY CHAPTER**

| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| | | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 1-5 | Electronic Board Documents | (\$6,700) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$6,700) |
| CHAPTER 1 TOTAL | | (\$6,700) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$6,700) |
| CHAPTER 2: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | |
| | No Fiscal Impacts | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| CHAPTER 2 TOTAL | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 3-15 | Acquire eSchoolMall Warehouse System | (\$5,500) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$5,500) |
| Rec. 3-15 | Complete Initial Inventory | (\$720) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$720) |
| CHAPTER 3 TOTAL | | (\$6,220) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$6,220) |

**EXHIBIT E-4 (continued)
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
FISCAL IMPACT BY CHAPTER**

| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| CHAPTER 4: CHILD NUTRITION | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 4-1 | Reduce Site-Based 10 Work Days | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$144,320 |
| Rec. 4-1 | 8 Percent Reduction in School-Based Labor Hours | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$241,450 |
| Rec. 4-2 | Decrease Unpaid Student Meals by 50 Percent | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$282,380 |
| Rec. 4-2 | Eliminate Adult Charge Meals | \$4,913 | \$4,913 | \$4,913 | \$4,913 | \$4,913 | \$24,565 |
| Rec. 4-3 | Reduce Per Meal Costs | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$2,098,080 |
| Rec. 4-4 | Increase Breakfast Price \$0.25 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$28,125 |
| Rec. 4-4 | Increase Lunch Price \$0.25 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$206,305 |
| Rec. 4-5 | Increase Breakfast Program Participation | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$418,500 |
| Rec. 4-7 | Increase Free Lunch Sales 5 Percent | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$189,745 |
| Rec. 4-7 | Increased Reduced Price Lunch Sales 5 Percent | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$162,335 |
| CHAPTER 4 TOTAL | | \$759,161 | \$759,161 | \$759,161 | \$759,161 | \$759,161 | \$3,795,805 |

EXHIBIT E-4 (continued)
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
FISCAL IMPACT BY CHAPTER

| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
|---|--|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| CHAPTER 5: FACILITY USE AND MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 5-14 | Employee Supplement for Energy Management Coordination | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$30,000) |
| Rec. 5-14 | Travel Expenses for Coordinator | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$6,000) |
| CHAPTER 5 TOTAL | | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$36,000) |
| CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 6-3 | Decrease Curricular Field Trips by 10 Percent | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$72,640 |
| Rec. 6-4 | Purchase a Computer-Assisted Routing System | (\$41,000) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) | (\$60,200) |
| Rec. 6-4 | Create New Bus Routes | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$530,050 |
| Rec. 6-5 | ASE Certification for Four Mechanics | (\$864) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$864) | (\$1,728) |
| CHAPTER 6 TOTAL | | \$78,674 | \$115,738 | \$115,738 | \$115,738 | \$114,874 | \$540,762 |
| CHAPTER 7: TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 7-2 | Implement a Disaster Recovery Plan | (\$40,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$60,000) |
| Rec. 7-4 | Technology Coordinator/ Network Engineer | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$320,000) |
| Rec. 7-6 | Secure and Cool Server Environment | (\$21,000) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$21,000) |
| CHAPTER 7 TOTAL | | (\$125,000) | (\$69,000) | (\$69,000) | (\$69,000) | (\$69,000) | (\$401,000) |

**EXHIBIT E-4 (continued)
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
FISCAL IMPACT BY CHAPTER**

| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
|--|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| CHAPTER 8: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY | | | | | | | |
| Rec. 8-2 | Facilitator Services | (\$700) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$700) |
| CHAPTER 8 TOTAL | | (\$700) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$700) |
| TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS | | ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS) | | | | | TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS) |
| | | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 | |
| TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS) | | \$692,015 | \$798,699 | \$798,699 | \$798,699 | \$797,835 | \$3,885,947 |

1.0 DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

1.0 DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The findings, commendations, and recommendations for the overall organization of Taylor County Schools (TCS) are presented in this chapter. The sections in this chapter include:

- 1.1 Board of Education Governance
- 1.2 Policies and Procedures
- 1.3 Legal Services
- 1.4 Organization and Management

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In preparing this report, consultants reviewed documents and interviewed stakeholders, including Board of Education (BOE) members, community representatives, and TCS employees. Additionally, data were collected through teacher and administrator surveys, a web-based forum, and an open house public forum. In regards to the fiscal impact of recommendations, the consultants do not attempt to estimate the future costs or savings based on inflationary trends; therefore, consultants only forecast costs or savings based on current figures.

Commendations in this chapter include:

- Commendation 1-A** The BOE schedules board meetings at each of the district schools throughout the school year.
- Commendation 1-B** The BOE and administration use a well-developed board meeting agenda resulting in efficient and effective meetings lasting approximately one to two hours.
- Commendation 1-C** The TCS website provides information on board meetings, including agendas, minutes, and policies.
- Commendation 1-D** The superintendent consistently articulates a priority to improve communication throughout the district and within the community.

The following recommendations are included in this chapter:

- Recommendation 1-1** Develop a comprehensive local BOE orientation program for new members.
- Recommendation 1-2** Refine the current goal setting process for the superintendent to include individual goals as well as outcome measures and timelines for each goal.
- Recommendation 1-3** Ensure that board policies outline the duties and responsibilities of the BOE and the superintendent.
- Recommendation 1-4** Expand the current BOE self-assessment process to create a more transparent annual evaluation of performance.
- Recommendation 1-5** Develop a plan to implement and use an electronic board

- agenda for regular board meetings.
- Recommendation 1-6** Cross-train a staff member to the secretary/board clerk position.
- Recommendation 1-7** Establish a timeline for reviewing, revising, and updating the policy manual.
- Recommendation 1-8** Establish contracts with all firms or attorneys providing legal services.
- Recommendation 1-9** Develop and implement evaluation processes for legal services.
- Recommendation 1-10** Reassign selected functions and administrative roles within the central office.
- Recommendation 1-11** Assign a second, confidential e-mail address to selected key administrators and delegate a staff member to open and process the routine e-mail.
- Recommendation 1-12** Develop a district-wide strategic plan that coordinates all planning and is driven by the mission and core values of TCS.
- Recommendation 1-13** Develop and implement an effective communication plan that improves internal and external communications, and aligns with the state's Global 21 efforts.

Conditions in TCS of importance to this review include:

- A superintendent newly appointed July 1, 2011, who supports improved communication throughout the district and community.
- A district in flux with the arrival of the new superintendent.
- A student enrollment pattern that has declined over a multi-year period. .
- A recent history of negative board-superintendent relations that, in part, has created a lack of trust among some school personnel.
- A focus on compliance in meeting West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) mandates.

The superintendent provides leadership for the district with input from a leadership team which includes the assistant superintendent for administrative and support services, treasurer/ chief school business official (CSBO), director of curriculum and instruction, director of special education, attendance coordinator, technology coordinator, and the five school principals.

As of September 1, 2011, TCS has five schools serving approximately 2,395 students.

Exhibit 1-1 shows TCS enrollment for the last five years, from 2006-07 through 2010-11 school years. Overall, the enrollment decreased for a net loss of 55 students.

**EXHIBIT 1-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ENROLLMENT
2006-07 THROUGH 2010-11**

| SCHOOL YEAR | ENROLLMENT | DIFFERENCE |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| 2006-07 | 2,465 | NA |
| 2007-08 | 2,464 | -1 |
| 2008-09 | 2,426 | -38 |
| 2009-10 | 2,450 | 24 |
| 2010-11 | 2,395 | -55 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website and TCS September 2011 data, 2011.

Consultants conducted an open house to gather input on TCS from the community. Participants in the open house expressed a combination of supportive and concerned responses for many TCS areas. In addition, the consultant team conducted interviews with individual stakeholders including board members, central office staff, school principals, and other district personnel. An edited sampling of their comments includes the following:

- *Taylor County Schools has a lot going for it. But there is a veil over the district...the need for better communication*
- *I also think there is a danger of teaching to the test (WESTEST).*
- *People here WANT to be involved. But programs, conferences, etc. are never at convenient times for working parents.*
- *Technology is not stressed nearly enough in the classroom or at home. HS not capitalizing on availability of virtual (on-line) support for broadening instructional opportunities- lack of appropriate personnel to support this.*
- *Board members are constantly micromanaging!!*
- *Very low tax base so levy does not help us much*
- *Overall declining enrollment with a declining tax base.*
- *We have poor internal communications.*
- *The new superintendent is building community support.*
- *RTI- I think CO staff contributed to this problem by not providing comprehensive training to teachers.*
- *Public Relations- What public relations?*
- *We get excellent support from RESA 7.*
- *We have strong, committed people!*

1.1 Board of Education Governance

The TCS educational system is the result of West Virginia (WV) law establishing school districts. The five-member BOE is elected from Taylor County, with members serving four year terms that are staggered to maintain continuity.

The BOE members are compensated for attendance at meetings. A flat rate of \$160 plus travel per meeting is provided for each board member from local funds. The officers, including president and vice president, are elected by the BOE.

Exhibit 1-2 shows an overview of the TCS BOE membership.

**EXHIBIT 1-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS
SEPTEMBER 2011**

| NAME | TITLE | TERM EXPIRES | PROFESSION |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nancy Ludwick | President | 2014 | Retired teacher |
| Richard Teagarden | Vice President | 2012 | Retired Transportation Director |
| Melissa Knotts | Member | 2014 | Government Training Instructor |
| Julie Gregory | Member | 2012 | Deputy Assessor |
| Alan DePiano | Member | 2014 | Retired Teacher |

Source: TCS Office of the Superintendent, 2011.

Two members have served a total of five years on the board, two have served three years, and one is in the first year of service. The current board president has served on the BOE for five years and the vice president has served three years. Both are former district employees.

The board is in meetings approximately five hours per month. This includes regular board meetings and special meetings. Executive meeting agenda items may include:

- Student issues.
- Negotiations of material terms for purchase of property or a specific contract for employment and services.
- Attorney-client privilege relating to litigation preparation and execution.
- Other matters as permitted under WV state law.

The meeting agenda is well organized, clear, and concise, and provides input from board members, the public, and administration. The meeting dates are posted on the district's website. Board meeting agendas are delivered to each member by the maintenance department supervisor using a county vehicle

The BOE has members assigned to three community-wide committees. **Exhibit 1-3** shows the 2011-12 committee structure. There are currently no BOE district policy committees as they prefer to handle all policy issues with the full five-member board.

**EXHIBIT 1-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER ASSIGNMENT TO COMMITTEES
AUGUST 2011**

| COMMITTEE | BOARD MEMBER |
|---|---------------------|
| RESA Advisory Council | Richard Teagarden |
| United Technical Center | Alan DePiano |
| Extension Office/Camp Towles Advisory Council | Melissa Knotts |

Source: TCS Office of the Board of Education, 2011.

FINDING

The BOE alternates the locations of regularly scheduled meetings among all the schools.

The BOE meets twice monthly on the second and fourth Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., with the first meeting at the central office and the second in various locations in the county. Special work sessions and closed (executive) meetings are held as needed and currently average one meeting per month.

The board's second regular meeting locations are as follows:

- September, October, and November- meetings at individual elementary schools
- January - middle school
- February - high school
- March - technology center

The BOE meets with the Faculty Senate of each school and discusses the state-required accountability plan. This process allows the board to learn more about each school during each school year.

COMMENDATION 1-A:

The BOE schedules board meetings at each of the district schools throughout the school year.

FINDING

The BOE conducts meetings using a well-organized agenda which results in completing school district business in a time-efficient manner.

Meetings typically are completed in a one- to two-hour time period. The agenda, background information, and overall focus on completing board meetings in a timely manner relates directly to the quality of preparation and input by board members and the administration.

The agenda for each meeting is organized as follows:

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Invocation
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Approval of the Agenda and Agenda Adjustment
- Information
- Minutes-Policies-Contracts-Agreements
- Consent Calendar
- Request to Ride Buses and Use Facilities
- Financial
- Personnel-Student Matters-Legal Matters
- Future Meetings
- Adjournment

At the close of each BOE meeting, a self-assessment of the board meeting is completed by each of the board members.

COMMENDATION 1-B:

The BOE and administration use a well-developed board meeting agenda resulting in efficient and effective meetings lasting approximately one to two hours.

FINDING

New BOE members participate in the West Virginia School Board Association's (WVSBA) orientation meetings.

The WVSBA programs focus primarily on statewide issues, legal requirements, and the overall role of board membership.

The orientation program does not provide a comprehensive understanding of local board roles and responsibilities and the many local details of serving on the board.

New board members often do not understand two major aspects of their role on the board:

- The role of policy versus administration.
- Specific board duties and responsibilities related to personnel and day-to-day administration of the district.

Effective practice suggest that a local orientation program should focus on local issues, roles, and responsibilities of key district personnel, planning, and other matters, and

assist BOE members in effectively and efficiently assuming their roles and carrying out responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION 1-1:

Develop a comprehensive local BOE orientation program for new members.

By implementing this recommendation, new board members will become aware of local duties and responsibilities, including legal responsibilities as mandated by the state.

The local orientation program should be implemented on a trial basis during the 2011-12 school year. It should be field-tested among current board members and revised based on board input prior to the next election cycle. The program should be held in multiple sessions, with those board duties that would involve immediate decision-making held early in the orientation program.

The overall goal(s) of the orientation program should be determined before the program begins, with topics for each session based on the goals and expected outcomes.

Suggested topics for the orientation program include:

- Organization of the BOE: rules of order (including parliamentary procedures), procedures for obtaining information, establishment of the meeting agenda, and other operational matters.
- General duties of the BOE: the appropriate legal roles of board members related to policy making versus administration and micro-management of staff in the district.
- Central office orientation: district staffing, roles, and duties (including key administrative and staff personnel that can provide assistance to board members upon request).
- Facilities orientation: tour of schools and other facilities, including the central office.
- Support services orientation: tour of transportation and maintenance facilities and review of budget for each area.
- The role of the board member as reflected in WV state law, local policy, and other controlling regulations and best practices. Both The National School Boards Association (NSBA) and WVSBA can provide valuable information and speakers for this topic.
- Review of the TCS website and additional documents, including (but not limited to) the policy and procedures manual, employee handbook, student code of conduct, pupil promotion guidelines, and similar documents describing district and state requirements.
- Review of the district's planning documents and processes related to their development, including requirements for five and ten-year plans as mandated by the state.

- Review of the district's budget and associated development and adoption timelines, including the board's fiduciary responsibilities under WV law and regulations.
- Review of the calendar of important dates and deadlines for board actions, including the approval of employee contracts, the staffing plan for each year, review of the student code of conduct, and other required matters.
- Other important local items.

The orientation program should be designed for meetings occurring throughout the initial school year of new board member service. The orientation program should be sensitive to the ability of new board members to assimilate information in an orderly and systematic fashion. Avoiding information overload for new members is important.

The board president should appoint an orientation planning committee comprised of board members, the superintendent, principal(s), and other staff members. A minimum of four to six sessions throughout the year should be offered, with development of each session by the orientation planning committee. This could require two hours or less to create.

This recommendation should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and BOE prior to the next election and swearing-in of any new board member(s).

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for this recommendation should be minimal, with any costs being absorbed through the local district budget.

FINDING

Board Policy 1240 provides for the evaluation of the superintendent; however, it does not establish outcome measures or accomplishment timelines.

The 2011-12 goal setting process involving the board and superintendent establishes annual goals for superintendent evaluation purposes at the end of the fiscal year. A total of seven goals have been developed for the superintendent's first year:

1. Monitor and understand SPL.
2. Be a positive role model, inspiring and uniting staff toward a common goal to provide quality education and support to all students of Taylor County.
3. The superintendent will ensure a safe, secure and orderly environment for all.
4. The superintendent will provide leadership as CEO to the BOE and provide personnel management as well.
5. Show improvement in WESTEST scores.

6. Lower drop-out rate– increase graduation rate and attendance.
7. Provide a three-year plan for the football field at Taylor County Middle School.

RECOMMENDATION 1-2:

Refine the current goal setting process for the superintendent to include individual goals as well as outcome measures and timelines for each goal.

Outcome measures to determine whether the seven established goals have been achieved are missing in the current goal-setting process. The potential for disagreement between the BOE and superintendent is heightened by this lack of specificity.

In addition, goals are developed for end-of-the-year evaluation purposes, yet some of the goal results must be submitted to state officials in mid-year. Thus, some of the goals are completed in mid-year yet the evaluation of these goals likely does not occur until the end of the year.

The current goal setting and evaluation processes should be anchored in the Superintendent self-evaluation instrument that meets West Virginia’s legal requirements for annual superintendent evaluation.

This instrument should be incorporated into the current goal setting process to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the job performance of the superintendent on an annual basis.

The board president, upon approval of this report, should establish an ad hoc board committee to work with the superintendent to accomplish this recommendation

FISCAL IMPACT

There should be no cost for implementing this recommendation.

FINDING

Board of Education policies contain ambiguous statements linked to the duties and responsibilities of the BOE and superintendent.

Board Policy 0122 shown in **Exhibit 1-4** contains the statement:

“The Board shall have the management and control of all the public schools in the County and the employees, students, and all other persons entering upon its school grounds or premises. § 18-5-13, Code of West Virginia.”

**EXHIBIT 1-4
BOARD POLICY 0122
SCHOOL BOARD POWERS AND DUTIES**

Board Powers

The Board of Education shall be a corporation, and, as such, may prosecute and defend suits; plead and be impaled; enter into contracts with individuals or legal entities; acquire, hold, possess, and dispose of real and personal property; take and hold in trust for the use and benefit of the County, any grant or devise of land and any donation or bequest of money or other personal property. § 18-5-5, Code of West Virginia.

The power of this Board consists of those matters expressly granted by statute and those matters which may be necessarily implied from such powers specifically delegated as being necessary to carry them out.

The Board shall have the management and control of all the public schools in the County and the employees, students, and all other persons entering upon its school grounds or premises. § 18-5-13, Code of West Virginia.

Member Powers

Board members as individuals do not separately possess the powers that reside in the Board, except when and as expressly authorized by law or this Board, but no Board member shall be denied facts or materials required for the proper performance of his/her duties to which s/he is legally entitled.

Source: TCS website, September 2011.

However, Policy 1210 shown in **Exhibit 1-5**, states:

*“The Board of Education of the school system believes that, **in general**, it is the primary duty of the Board to establish policies and that of the superintendent to administer such policies.” (Emphasis added).*

**EXHIBIT 1-5
BOARD POLICY 1210
BOARD – SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONS**

Board Powers

The Board of Education of the school system believes that, in general, it is the primary duty of the Board to establish policies and that of the superintendent to administer such policies. Some of the Board's actions must be initiated and guided solely by the recommendation of the superintendent. The superintendent should be given the latitude to determine the best method of implementing the policies of the Board.

The superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the County School System, is the primary professional advisor to the Board. S/He is responsible for the development, supervision, and operation of the school program and facilities. His/Her methods should be made known to the staff through the administrative guidelines of the County Board of Education.

The Board shall retain oversight supervision of such procedures.

The Board is responsible for determining the success of the superintendent in meeting the goals or objectives jointly established by the Board and superintendent through annual evaluations of the superintendent's performance. The Board, in formulating its position with regard to the performance of the superintendent, shall rely, whenever possible, on the objective outcomes for its evaluations rather than on subjective opinions.

Source: TCS website, September 2011. 18-4-6 and 18-4-10, Code of West Virginia; State Board of Education Policy 5309, Revised 8/25/09

The ambiguity in these policies is highlighted by specific board members injecting themselves in management and administrative duties, including personnel, as outlined in Policy 0122, whereas interpretation of Policy 1210 gives administrative authority to the superintendent. This situation has resulted in confusion about board and superintendent duties. The strained relationship between the previous superintendent and the board was repeatedly mentioned in feedback received through interviews, staff surveys and community forums, such as:

- *Board members are constantly micromanaging.*
- *The school board's role in running the school system has increased because of a lack of trust with the previous superintendent. Hopefully things will change.*
- *Our board has good people who either don't understand or won't change the way they micromanage.*
- *One board member doesn't like central office staff and is too involved.*
- *The board's behavior is just odd at times.*

The policies as written are generated by NEOLA, Inc. for many districts in West Virginia, and other than making generic references to duties, do not provide clarity in TCS for understanding by all parties involved. This lack of clarity negatively impacts community and district personnel in terms of a clear understanding of the board and superintendent legal duties and responsibilities.

Exhibit 1-6 shows Board Policy 1230 Duties for the Superintendent. While consistent with West Virginia statutes and acceptable practices. It does not include duties for the “development, supervision, and operation of the school program and facilities called for” in Policy 1210.

**EXHIBIT 1-6
BOARD POLICY 1230
DUTIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

The Superintendent of Schools shall strive to achieve County goals for students by providing educational direction and supervision to the professional staff and supervision to the service personnel staff and by acting as a proper model for staff and students both within and without the school setting and the County.

The superintendent shall be directly responsible to the Board of Education for the performance of the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. ensure that all aspects of County operation comply with State laws and regulations as well as Board contracts and policies
- B. ensure proper implementation of the current County-wide instructional plan as it applies to each building
- C. strive to increase the efficient use of County resources in the daily operations of the schools
- D. assign staff to achieve the maximum benefit toward the attainment of educational goals
- E. evaluate the progress of the professional and service personnel staff toward the attainment of educational goals
- F. analyze the results of instructional program development as it applies to the Board's educational goals
- G. recommend changes in instructional or staffing patterns based on an analysis of staff and program progress
- H. work cooperatively with parents and community groups concerned with programs in the schools
- I. work cooperatively with the Board and administrative staff
- J. strive toward the highest standards of personal conduct
- K. act as the chief executive officer of the Board as may be delineated in his/her contract or other written agreement with the Board, and, under the direction of the State Board, and execute under the directions of the State Board all its educational policies
- L. nominate all personnel to be employed; in case the Board refuses to employ any or all of the persons nominated, the superintendent shall nominate others and submit to the Board
No person(s) shall be employed except on the nomination of the superintendent.
- M. assign, transfer, suspend or promote teachers and all other school employees of the County subject only to the approval of the Board, and to recommend to the Board their dismissal
- N. report promptly to the Board in such a manner as it directs whenever any school in the County appears to be failing to meet the standards for improving pursuant to WV Code 18-2E-5
- O. close a school temporarily when conditions are detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the students
- P. certify all expenditures and monthly payrolls of teachers and employees
- Q. serve as the secretary of the Board and attend all meetings of the Board or its committees, except when the tenure, salary, or administration of the superintendent is under consideration
- R. administer oaths and examine witnesses under oath in any proceedings pertaining to the schools of the County, and have the testimony reduced to writing
- S. keep the Board apprised continuously of any issues that affect the Board or its schools, programs and initiatives

Source: TCS website, September 2011.

Revising existing policies to simplify understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the BOE and superintendent will allow both to be held to standards of behavior and performance. This, in turn, will contribute to higher morale and respect for the board and for the superintendent.

RECOMMENDATION 1-3:

Ensure that board policies outlining the duties and responsibilities of the BOE and superintendent are clear and do not suggest that the BOE has district administrative duties.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in a policy that is clear and transparent. By analyzing and making revisions to policies related to school board and superintendent duties, clarification of roles should reduce the ambiguity that currently exists.

The president of the BOE should appoint one or two board members to work jointly with the superintendent in creating a revised policy on duties and responsibilities. This policy should take into account the legal requirements West Virginia, current documents and forms, and other pertinent information available. In addition, assistance from the WVSBA could be sought for advice and guidance.

This recommendation should be addressed and accomplished as soon as possible and go into effect during the 2011-12.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the district.

FINDING

There is no BOE self-assessment annual report for the 2010-11 school year as required by state statute.

Self-assessment is designed to serve as a key piece of board evaluation. In addition, the BOE goals for the 2011-12 school year are the same as the superintendent's goals.

West Virginia Code §18-5-1c requires each county BOE to assess its own performance using an instrument approved by the state board. The evaluation instrument shall focus on effectiveness of the county board in the following areas:

- (1) Dealing with its various constituency groups and with the general public;
- (2) Providing a proper framework and the governance strategies necessary to monitor and approve student achievement on a continuing basis.
- (3) Enhancing the effective utilization of the policy approach to governance.

At the conclusion of the evaluation, the county BOE shall make available to the public a summary of the evaluation, including areas in which the board concludes improvement is warranted.

Additionally, the state board may consult with the WVSBA or other appropriate organizations to advise on needed board training.

It is not clear, based on input from board members and the superintendent's office, how the board's annual evaluation process is completed. Based on board minutes from April through July, 2011, the board has not announced nor made public a performance assessment report.

RECOMMENDATION 1-4:

Expand the current BOE self-assessment process to create a more transparent annual evaluation of performance.

The BOE should consider revising and expanding the self-assessment process in a number of ways. As the board considers **Recommendation 1-2** to improve the superintendent evaluation process, so too should the board adopt similar evaluative procedures.

Best practice highlights the importance of board engagement through a serious and reflective self-assessment of their performance. This effort assists boards in improved performance and creates further credibility with stakeholders.

The WVSBA could be an important source of information about best practices in the area of board self-assessment. Seeking the advice and counsel of the WVSBA could assist board planning for this assessment. In addition the WVSBA could provide West Virginia statutory information to help guide this process.

Exhibit 1-7 provides a listing of WVSBA services, including training sessions related to board and superintendent evaluation.

**EXHIBIT 1-7
WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
SERVICES**

WVSBA provides a number of customized county board training sessions, dealing with topics such as policy development, meeting management, county board ethics, board/superintendent relations, board and superintendent evaluation, and other services.

WVSBA offers an extensive goal-setting program based primarily on the county board's completion of its required annual self-evaluation - §18-5-1c – as well as vision and mission development. One or more work sessions may be involved.

WVSBA has extensive experience in mediation when issues arise in terms of intra-board relations. These services often are set up in an informal workshop format.

WVSBA conducts an extensive review of procedures for the statutorily-required county superintendent evaluation - §18 -4-6. These sessions include a review of legislative and state Board of Education requirements relating to the superintendent evaluation process.

WVSBA has been conducting superintendent searches. This extensive experience allows the organization to customize each search to meet individual county board needs by utilizing highly specialized services, search-related documents and evaluative components. As determined by the county board and incoming county schools superintendent, the program includes local orientation components.

WVSBA has extensive experience in designing county board retreats with a special focus on board development, goal-setting and planning – all facets of retreat design. *Approved training credits.*

Source: WVSBA website, September 2011.

Additionally, the state is revising the self-assessment instrument which should be available during the 2011-12 school year.

The TCS self-assessment could include the following general topics:

- Policy and Procedures Review - Board Policy Manual
- Goals set each year
- Student achievement and other data related to district performance
- Board Meeting Review - locations, adequacy per month, organization of agendas, decision-making
- Annual Goal Review of the Board of Education
- Review of Superintendent Relationship - successes and challenges
- Review of District personnel Relations - successes and challenges
- Review of Board Member Relations - successes and challenges

- Review of Community and Communication - successes and challenges
- Other topics

The president of the BOE should appoint an ad hoc committee to review, plan, and propose appropriate revisions to the annual evaluation process. This committee can be composed of two board members, the superintendent, and other members as needed, and should proceed upon receipt of state revisions in the process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the district and could involve at least one BOE work session to review recommendations from the committee.

FINDING

The BOE does not fully use technology to streamline meeting and reporting processes, thereby creating more work for staff.

The district has not developed a plan to provide board members with a fully electronic document that could be electronically transmitted to board members and others who regularly receive board materials, or placed on the district website.

The BOE holds meetings twice monthly at both the central office and in schools throughout the county. In addition, the TCS website provides a section that outlines BOE information and news. This includes board agendas and minutes along with the policy manual, board member information, and other pertinent information.

These practices are to be commended, and as the district moves forward in the 21st century, the BOE and technology staff should plan for an expanded use of technological equipment and software to become even more effective and efficient.

Districts across the nation are using technology tools to improve sharing of information, receiving board materials, conserving of paper, and conducting virtual meetings to save money and improve effectiveness.

The district lacks the necessary board room hardware and software to fully implement a paperless agenda development, distribution, meeting proceedings, and subsequent minute preparation and distribution.

In addition board member use of e-mail is described as inconsistent, with some members using e-mail and other forms of electronic communication while other board members rarely use or participate in these forms of communication.

Currently the board clerk creates board agendas and materials in hardcopy format (paper) and distributes a packet to each member. This process is labor intensive and uses an excessive amount of paper. Storage space is also impacted by maintaining all documents in paper format.

RECOMMENDATION 1-5:

Develop a plan to implement and use an electronic board agenda for regular board meetings.

The lack of technology for streamlining BOE meeting preparations and proceedings continues to result in producing paper agendas and related documents, creating additional work for office staff, which reduces their efficiency.

The district should provide all board members with training in the use of computers and related technology. Topics to be included in board development of technology skills include:

- Use of an electronic version of meeting agendas and supporting materials without printing the entire document.
- Use of laptops for board members for viewing documents (current and previous) at each board meeting.
- Equipping the board meeting room with a projector and screen to permit the board and attendees to view the items under consideration.

TCS should equip the board with laptop computers, appropriate meeting room projector and screen, and other materials to fully implement a paperless meeting.

Using paperless mediums should result in more efficient and cost-effective methods for preparing for and conducting meetings once all participants are appropriately trained and practice using the system.

School districts that have partially or fully implemented such an economical best practice include:

- Granville County Public Schools, Oxford, North Carolina, a rural and high needs district.
- Marion County Public Schools, Ocala, Florida, a large, county-wide district encompassing an area of 1,600 square miles.

Technology staff, other staff members, and the board clerk should work cooperatively to acquire the necessary hardware, software, and training materials to be presented to the board for review and approval.

A timeline for implementation should be developed, taking into account financial and training requirements. This timeline should include deadlines for the submission of information and documents to ensure on-time development of meeting agendas and materials. Other departments should be required to scan and transmit documents to the board clerk with signed hardcopies produced as required.

Providing hardcopy information at the request of a member of the public can be accomplished by printing the requested documents from the electronic version.

Preferably, that information would be provided electronically. Agendas and meeting minutes should continue to be posted on the website.

The plan to be developed should include the use of technology for all board meetings, regardless of location within the county.

This recommendation should be implemented upon the training of all board members.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for implementing this recommendation could be a one-time expenditure of \$6,700. This amount is based on the following calculations:

- Technology equipment and support - six laptop computers, screen, and projection equipment at an estimated \$6,000.
- Software to implement this recommendation at an estimated \$700.

Training the BOE members can be provided by technology staff at no additional cost.

Some savings will be obtained by reducing the amount of paper consumed. Savings can be estimated by eliminating the use of paper (reams of paper per meeting) at a specific cost per member and for others who receive paper copies of the materials.

The amount of time eliminated from the staff preparation of meeting materials cannot be estimated without a time/motion study.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Electronic Board Documents | (\$6,700) | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ 0 |

FINDING

No one is cross-trained to carry out the responsibilities of the superintendent's secretary/board clerk.

This situation can lead to confusion in preparations for BOE meetings and carrying out responsibilities assigned by the superintendent. When the secretary/board clerk is absent, the superintendent does not have a knowledgeable person to handle routine business such as phone calls, e-mails, and staff/visitor requests.

During an extended absence, no one is able to provide some of the necessary details that only the clerk possesses. This creates extra work on the part of other staff or delays work until the individual returns.

The lack of cross-training raises concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of the central office in carrying out critical functions, impacts board members, and exposes the district to criticism, if not concern, for being non-responsive.

RECOMMENDATION 1-6:

Cross-train a staff member to the secretary/board clerk position.

Developing a cross-training program for this position and designating a staff member to be trained would ensure a smoother transition in the absence of the secretary/board clerk. This would also decrease the potential for confusion and uncertainty while carrying out the important tasks of this role, such as recording and writing the minutes of board meetings, maintaining confidentiality with both the board and the superintendent, and other sensitive responsibilities.

The secretary/board clerk duties include, but are not limited to:

- Handling routine administrative and clerical tasks for the BOE.
- Making conference and workshop arrangements.
- Maintaining accounting records for the office.
- Preparing agendas and minutes of meetings.
- Maintaining the superintendent's calendar of appointments.
- Handling the superintendent's regular mail and preparing responses when appropriate.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, and secretary/board clerk should identify a staff member to be trained.

FISCAL IMPACT

There should be no costs associated with this recommendation. The secretary/board clerk and the designated backup staff member could work together without incurring any additional costs.

1.2 Policies and Procedures

Policy and administrative regulation development constitutes the means by which an organization can communicate expectations to its constituents, ensure internal consistency of practice, and establish limits for executive authority as provided by law. Policy and procedures, therefore, reveal the philosophy and position of the BOE and should be stated clearly to provide for executive or staff direction.

FINDING

TCS provides BOE information on the district website.

The TCS BOE Policy and Procedures Manual is organized as shown in **Exhibit 1-8**. Board policies and regulations include dates of issue, revision, and current revision.

**EXHIBIT 1-8
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY HANDBOOK ORGANIZATION**

| SERIES (Chapters) | SECTION TITLES | POLICY CODES |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 0000 | Bylaws | 0100-0170 |
| 1000 | Administration | 1100-1540 |
| 2000 | Program | 2105-2624 |
| 3000 | Professional Staff | 3111-3531 |
| 4000 | Classified Staff | 4111-4531 |
| 5000 | Students | 5111-5895 |
| 6000 | Finances | 6105-6830 |
| 7000 | Property | 7100-7541 |
| 8000 | Operations | 8210-8800 |
| 9000 | Relations | 9120-9800 |

Source: TCS Board of Education Policy and Procedures Manual, BOE website, September, 2011.

COMMENDATION 1-C:

The TCS website provides information on board meetings, including agendas, minutes, and policies.

FINDING

The BOE Policy Manual is not systematically reviewed.

The policy manual is generally current and contains appropriate provisions; however, the board has not adopted a policy-driven procedure that proscribes the systematic review of policies.

The policy manual is available on the TCS website and is available in hard copy in the superintendent’s office. Interviews with central office staff indicated that the practice of seeking information for current policies is primarily through the use of the website.

The hard copy in the superintendent’s office is in a large notebook that contains a significant amount of information in a format that needs further organization of the numerous policies. For example:

- The policy manual contains all or most of the policies found in the website-based document.
- Revisions and/or updates to BOE policies are found in the policy manual.
- The notebook containing the policies includes documents that are in need of reorganization as the notebook’s contents are falling out and policies are not always in order.

TCS has contracted with NEOLA, Inc. to provide the majority of board policies in a format that is utilized by many other West Virginia school districts. Updates to the policy manual are provided on a timely basis with review, revision, and approval by the appropriate staff prior to BOE review and adoption.

An update of the TCS policy manual is tied to NEOLA distribution of updated policies. While regular revisions are completed for individual policies by the board's support person, the last substantive updating of the entire policy manual occurred in 2009.

Best practice suggests that boards adopt a revision schedule that permits staff to systematically review the various sections on a predetermined schedule to avoid having to overhaul the entire manual at once.

RECOMMENDATION 1-7:

Establish a timeline for reviewing, revising, and updating the policy manual.

Implementing this recommendation should result in establishing a schedule for cyclical review and revision of policy provisions. An example of a cycle schedule is shown in **Exhibit 1-9**.

**EXHIBIT 1-9
PROPOSED POLICY REVIEW CYCLE**

| SERIES (Chapters) | SECTION TITLES | REVIEW CYCLE |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 0000 | Bylaws | YEAR 1 |
| 1000 | Administration | YEAR 1 |
| 2000 | Program | YEAR 2 |
| 3000 | Professional Staff | YEAR 2 |
| 4000 | Classified Staff | YEAR 3 |
| 5000 | Students | YEAR 3 |
| 6000 | Finances | YEAR 4 |
| 7000 | Property | YEAR 4 |
| 8000 | Operations | YEAR 5 |
| 9000 | Relations | YEAR 5 |

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

Adoption of a similar schedule will ensure that the manual is systematically updated and that the work is spread out over the years rather than all in one year. This is a more efficient scheduling of workload.

The coordination and implementation of this recommendation should be done jointly by a BOE representative and the superintendent's office. Setting a timeline is critical as the amount of time it may take to review policies could be considerable.

The board and district personnel representatives should prioritize and review each of the Series Codes, and develop proposed revisions for each section. A regular report to the full board is recommended, with board action on those sections of the policy manual and other policies needing consideration occurring as necessary.

As the policy review process continues, key policy questions should be raised. **Exhibit 1-10** shows a series of important policy review questions.

**EXHIBIT 1-10
KEY POLICY QUESTIONS**

| Answer each question with a “Yes,” “No,” or “In Part” | |
|--|--|
| 1 | Are all of your policies written and maintained in such a manner that they are accessible, current, and understandable? |
| 2 | Do your policies define the roles and relationships of the Board and staff? |
| 3 | Are most routine matters covered in policy so the Board will not have to spend time on issues such as student travel, use of facilities, and student absences? |
| 4 | Are copies of the policy manual readily available to the staff and community and placed on the District’s website? |
| 5 | Do Board members confine themselves to policymaking and policy implementation? |
| 6 | Does the policy manual contain a mission statement that provides the philosophical cornerstone for every action of the district? |
| 7 | Do your policies provide for equal opportunity in education? |
| 8 | Do your policies provide for the timely and orderly handling of complaints and grievances? |
| 9 | Does the Board have rules that govern its own procedures? |
| 10 | Are all groups who will be affected by a new policy systematically approached for their opinions and contributions? |
| 11 | Is there a Board policy that requires the orderly and timely evaluation and review for all Board policies? |
| 12 | Do you, as a Board member, actively support all Board-adopted policies even though you may not personally agree with them? |
| 13 | Have you read and do you thoroughly understand all your policies? |
| 14 | Do you complete your homework as a Board member by keeping up with current trends and issues that may affect your polices? |

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2010.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished at no additional cost to the district; however, the amount of time for the process is considerable and cannot be estimated.

1.3 Legal Services

As the rise in litigation and related legal issues have occurred throughout the country, it has become important for all entities, public or private, to purchase and maintain legal representation. TCS is not immune to dealing with these legal issues. Accordingly, the district has acquired legal services from law firms and individual lawyers within those firms to provide services specifically tailored for public education needs.

The increase in legal service costs is in response to the following conditions:

- Due process activity associated with disciplinary proceedings.
- Special education issues, including identification of students, individual plans to meet special education student needs, and due process hearings.

- Facilities needs such as land acquisition, construction, maintenance, facility usage, and individual accident and negligence issues.

Legal services have been provided to TCS by three firms, including:

- Spatafore, Denise, Dinsmore & Shohl, Morgantown, WV
- Long, Jason, former legal counsel
- Caryle, Kim, Bowles & Rice, Morgantown, WV

Additional outside counsel may occasionally be required.

FINDING

There is no contract with one of the three firms the district uses for legal services.

The BOE contracts with two firms to provide legal counsel on a variety of district issues. In addition, the director of special education has recently sought legal counsel from a third lawyer not associated with the two contracted firms; and, no agreement has been executed for services.

The Thrun Law Firm, P.C., East Lansing (MI), provided the board and superintendent with a letter of fees and services. The January 4, 2010, correspondence noted that fees would remain unchanged, and included a \$1,100 retainer along with fee schedule for activity beyond the scope of the retainer.

Legal expenses have remained stable in recent history and the BOE and key personnel are pleased with the services rendered.

It is standard practice for boards to have contracts with all of their legal counsels.

RECOMMENDATION 1-8:

Establish contracts with all firms or attorneys providing legal services.

The contracts should address the following, as applicable:

- Retainer fees, if included and services provided.
- Scope of services, including specialties.
- Hourly fees for attorneys, differentiating among partners if fees differ.
- Hourly rates for paralegals and clerical services, if provided.
- Charges for travel, meals, lodging, supplies, and other expenses
- Availability of attorneys – via telephone, e-mail, etc.
- Duration and severable provision of contract – typically up to three years.
- Evaluation of services.
- Termination of services.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost to the district. Time involved will vary dependent upon the complexity of each contract.

FINDING

The BOE has not evaluated legal services to determine the feasibility of continuing agreements for services.

While district officials appear satisfied with the current agreements for legal services, best practice suggests a review of legal services, in terms of cost and performance, on a scheduled basis every one to three years.

RECOMMENDATION 1-9:

Develop and implement evaluation procedures for legal services.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the adoption of a policy and related procedures to govern the assessment of legal services. The policy should also address the procedures that should be used in the selection of legal counsel.

A review and evaluation of legal services should include a detailed examination of the type of legal work conducted, an assessment of the need for services, and an analysis of potential recommendations for reducing or controlling expenditures. Typically, a careful examination of the causes for special education hearings/litigation, personnel actions, and expenditures in the areas of risk management and labor relations are beneficial.

The evaluation of legal services should be scheduled every one to three years, as determined by the board; however, the policy development and initial assessment should occur concurrently with the revision of the policy and procedures manual.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the district.

1.4 Organization and Management

The organizational structure and management of a public school district, regardless of enrollment and geographic area, are key factors in determining the district's ability to meet its goals and to operate in an effective and efficient manner. An effective organizational structure systematically arranges the functional areas of the system in a manner that supports the district's mission and related goals. A successful school district has the capacity to alter its structure to meet the changing needs of its customers. The more the culture of an organization restricts this response, the less likely the organization will meet client requirements and experience success.

This section reviews the organization, decision-making, management, planning and accountability, public information, school organization, and management functions in TCS.

1.4.1 District Organization

The development and maintenance of an effective organizational structure for a school district is a formidable task. Fundamentally, an organizational structure is a support system designed to facilitate the primary mission of the district and sustain efforts to accomplish its goals. To the extent that the mission of the school district does not drive its organizational structure, the support system is weakened and, consequently, the organization's ability to accomplish its primary mission is compromised.

It is not uncommon for districts, regardless of size, to express frustration regarding the lack of funding to carry out the duties and responsibilities of national, state, and local mandates. This attitude is especially predictable with smaller organizations because of the perceived lack of flexibility for using allocated positions in central office. As an example, current staff members often are responsible for multiple duties with wide ranging roles (i.e. federal programs and technology).

Smaller school districts, like all organizations, can be bureaucratic and subject to inertia created by tradition. Little organizational analysis is performed and the school district continues, in large part, to resemble its predecessors. To maintain effectiveness, school districts must focus their energies on the needs of their students and constantly adapt the organization to serve student needs.

It is critical that small districts seek information on organizational best practices to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. Without a commitment to exploring alternative ways to organize administration, bureaucratic inertia will continue fueled by frustration about funding.

The executive and administrative functions of TCS are managed through a system that is organized into line and staff relationships that define official spans of authority and communication channels. However, because of the limited and currently declining enrollment trend, administration and staff are required to perform numerous unrelated functions that, in larger organizations, would be distributed among individually administered departments.

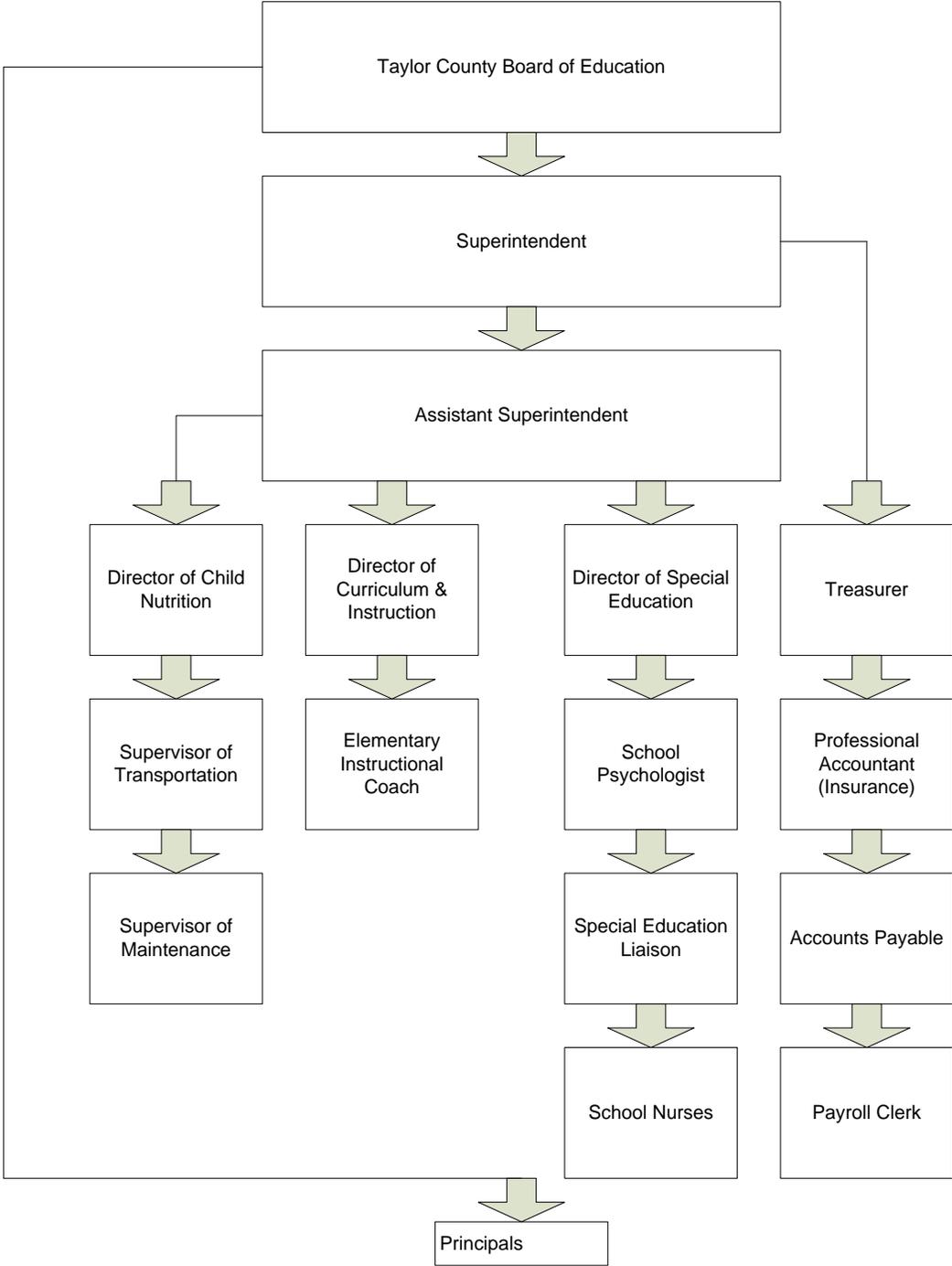
Exhibit 1-11 shows the current organization chart provided by the district administration; however, it does not depict all of the cross-departmental relationships that exist. An explanation of these variations is reported in other chapters of this report. Also, it does not show all direct reporting positions.

Exhibit 1-12, based on consultant interviews and observations, shows a more complete organizational scheme.

TCS has an organizational structure that is traditionally found across the nation. The organization includes 11 direct central office administrative reports to the superintendent, including the assistant superintendent support services and operations, treasurer/CSBO,

coordinator of attendance, director of curriculum and instruction, director of special education, and the five school principals.

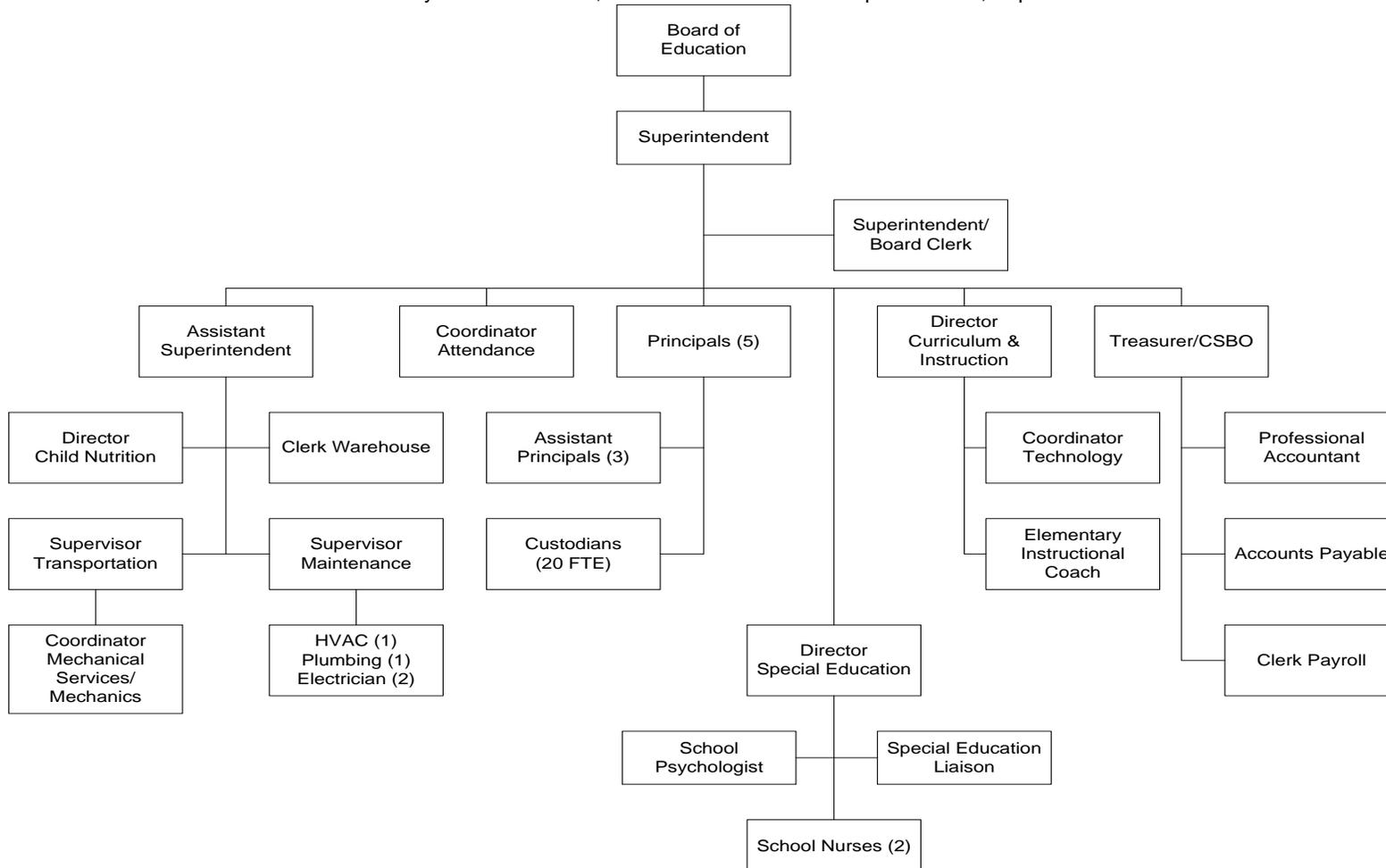
**EXHIBIT 1-11
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
CURRENT ORGANIZATION
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: TCS data, August 2011.

**EXHIBIT 1-12
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
CURRENT ORGANIZATION
SEPTEMBER 2011**

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc. from interviews and requested data, September 2011.



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc. from interviews and requested data, September 2011.

The practice of benchmarking is often used to make comparisons between and among school districts. Benchmarking refers to the use of commonly held characteristics in making concrete statistical or descriptive comparisons of operational systems and processes. It is also a performance measurement tool used in conjunction with improvement initiatives to measure comparative operating performance and identify best practices. Effective benchmarking has proven to be especially valuable to strategic planning initiatives within school districts.

With this in mind, consultants initiated a benchmarking comparison of TCS to provide a common foundation to compare systems and processes within the district with those of similar West Virginia school systems. It is important for readers to keep in mind that when comparisons are made across districts, the data self-reported by school districts can be subjective. Consultants have made every attempt to verify these data. Most data are extracted from the WVDE website to provide standardized data across school districts. Exhibit information is from the 2010-11 school year, whenever possible, or from the most current fully reported data year.

Consultants worked with the district to select the following three West Virginia school districts to compare with TCS:

- Barbour County Schools
- Braxton County Schools
- Hardy County Schools

Consultants could not obtain organizational charts for the comparison districts; however, the following briefly describes each district's executive organization relationships:

- Barbour County Schools has a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. The Board of Education has five members.
- Braxton County Schools superintendent executes all educational policies, is the personnel director, and serves as Secretary to the five-member Board of Education. The superintendent oversees the offices of Curriculum and Instruction, Child Nutrition, Special Education, Attendance. The assistant superintendent supervises Transportation, Maintenance, and School Improvement.
- Hardy County Schools superintendent and associate superintendent manage seven departments: Curriculum and Instruction; Finance; Maintenance; Office of School Nutrition; Personnel; Student Support Services; and Transportation. The Board of Education has five members.

Exhibit 1-13 displays TCS and peer total enrollment and attendance from 2008-09 through the 2010-11 academic years. From 2008-09 to 2010-11, TCS enrollment decreased by 31 students compared to the peer average decrease of 39 students. TCS lost far fewer students than Braxton and Hardy; only Barbour increased enrollment (three students). In each of the three years, TCS was the second largest district.

**EXHIBIT 1-13
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
ENROLLMENT 2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | DIFFERENCE 2008-09 to 2010-11 |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Taylor | 2,426 | 2,450 | 2,395 | -31 |
| Barbour | 2,496 | 2,478 | 2,499 | 3 |
| Braxton | 2,289 | 2,230 | 2,218 | -71 |
| Hardy | 2,353 | 2,307 | 2,297 | -56 |
| Average | 2,391 | 2,366 | 2,352 | -39 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit 1-14 displays pupil-to-staff ratios for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. The TCS pupil-to-teacher ratio was higher than the peer average by one student, and above the state by approximately 1.5 students. This indicates the “average” TCS teacher had slightly larger class sizes than the “average” teacher in the peer districts, as shown by the average class size. The TCS administrative staff supported more pupils (171.1) than the peer average (159.7) and the state (151.0), which may indicate that TCS dedicated fewer positions to professional support and administrative staff, relative to its size, than the peer districts.

**EXHIBIT 1-14
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PUPIL/STAFF RATIO 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PUPIL/ TEACHER RATIO | PUPIL/ ADMINISTRATOR RATIO | AVERAGE CLASS SIZE |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Taylor | 15.6 | 171.1 | 20.9 |
| Barbour | 14.0 | 150.2 | 20.8 |
| Braxton | 12.4 | 127.1 | 17.4 |
| Hardy | 15.8 | 190.4 | 21.2 |
| Average | 14.5 | 159.7 | 20.1 |
| State | 13.9 | 151.0 | 19.9 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2009-10 NCLB Report Card.

Exhibit 1-15 shows the number of professional personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. Each district had a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. TCS had a comparable number of administrators to the peers for instructional, support services, and business. TCS was the only district in the comparison group that did not employ a curriculum specialist. TCS employed significantly more remedial specialists (eight) than the comparison districts (between none and five).

**EXHIBIT 1-15
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERINTENDENT | ASSIST./ASSOC. SUPERINTENDENT | DIRECTOR/MANAGER (INSTRUCTIONAL) | DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR SUPPORT SERVICES | CHIEF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICER | CURRICULUM SPECIALIST | REMEDIAL SPECIALIST |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Taylor | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 8.5 |
| Barbour | 1.0 | 0.8 | 3.4 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Braxton | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Hardy | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 5.0 |
| Average | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 3.5 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit 1-16 displays the total number of school administrators for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. TCS had the appropriate number of principals and more assistant principals than the peer average.

**EXHIBIT 1-16
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PRINCIPALS | ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS |
|----------------|------------|----------------------|
| Taylor | 5.0 | 4.0 |
| Barbour | 7.5 | 2.5 |
| Braxton | 8.0 | 4.0 |
| Hardy | 6.0 | 0.0 |
| Average | 6.6 | 2.6 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

FINDING

Functional assignments are not aligned with the existing organization of departments.

The information cited in the peer comparison provides data supporting the current administrative staffing levels for TCS; however, adjustments in the assignment of functions is needed to support better alignment of operations with existing departments.

Examples of the current alignment issues illustrated in **Exhibit 1-12** include:

- The warehouse operation is assigned to the assistant superintendent rather than the department responsible for fiscal related matters, including accountability for purchasing and inventory (see **Chapter 3.0**).

- The coordinator of attendance reports to the superintendent but is more closely related to functions within the department of curriculum and instruction.
- The technology coordination function reports to the superintendent but in a very small school district it is more effectively aligned with the assistant superintendent (see **Chapter 7.0**).

The new superintendent will be assessing the structure of the central office and will determine any recommended changes in that structure to the BOE.

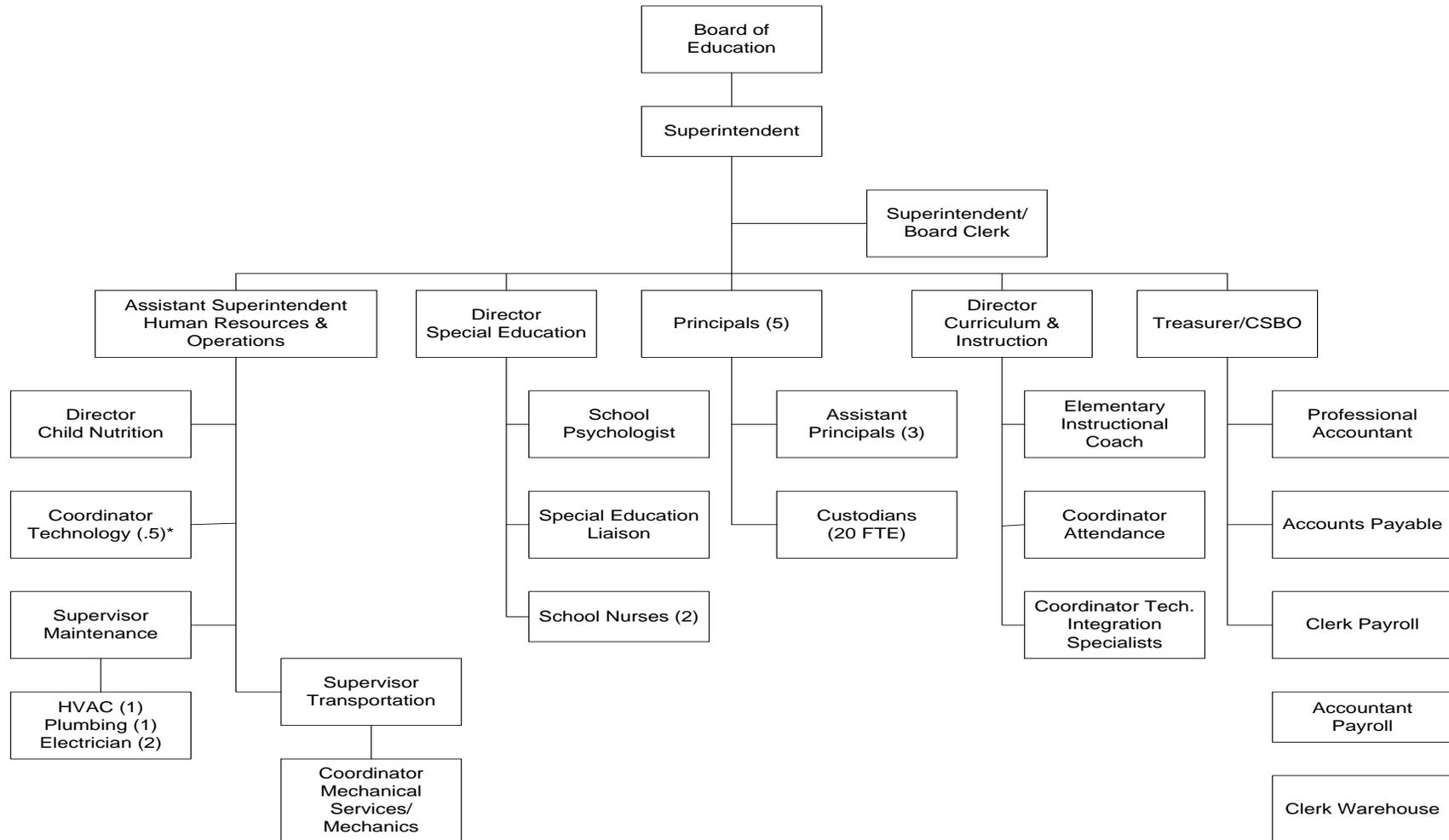
RECOMMENDATION 1-10:

Reassign selected functions and administrative roles within the central office.

Exhibit 1-17 shows the proposed organization for TCS central office administration. There are three specific recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the central office:

- Reassign the warehouse function from the assistant superintendent to the treasurer.
- Reassign the coordinator of attendance from the superintendent to the curriculum and instruction department, reporting to the director of curriculum and instruction.
- Create an additional part-time position in technology to report to the assistant superintendent for human resources and operations (see **Chapter 7.0**).

**EXHIBIT 1-17
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
PROPOSED ORGANIZATION
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.
* Recommended to be in collaboration with another district.

This recommendation should be accomplished upon approval of this report and by the superintendent and the leadership team.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendations would add a one half-time position in the area of technology. Funding and cost discussions are reported in **Chapter 7.0**.

The reassignment of functions as recommended should be accomplished at no additional cost to the district and with a minimum of planning and preparation time.

1.4.2 Decision-Making and Internal Communications

The recently appointed superintendent is employed through a contract that meets West Virginia legal requirements and TCS board policy. The superintendent leads and manages the district through a leadership team composed of one Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, treasurer, Directors of Curriculum & Instruction and Special Education, five school principals, and the attendance coordinator. Administrative meetings are scheduled monthly with additional interaction among the Leadership Team occurring on an as-needed basis.

FINDING

Central office administrative staff spend significant time processing e-mail.

Given the complex nature of administrative positions and the numerous responsibilities assigned, particularly to the superintendent and assistant superintendent, the importance of improved efficiency is necessary. The time devoted to routine e-mail results in lost efficiency and productivity.

Key administrative staff in other schools districts throughout the United States have established a secondary e-mail address to reduce the number of e-mails they must process daily.

RECOMMENDATION 1-11:

Assign a second, confidential e-mail address to selected key administrators and delegate a staff member to open and process the routine e-mail.

The delegate will be responsible for e-mail received through the public e-mail address.

The ability to communicate with board members will be enhanced through the use of e-mail by all board members. This is especially important for last minute information related to such items as board agenda revisions, issues, and incidents that have occurred needing board attention, and other emergency information useful to board members.

Each of the BOE members and key administrators should be provided with a formal training session(s) as to the purpose and use of this form of communication.

Implementing this recommendation creates an opportunity to improve staff efficiency and increase the amount of time devoted to duties and responsibilities.

The technology coordinator/integration specialist could be assigned to develop the training. The first session should be held as soon as possible, with additional sessions held based on further need by those involved.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation should not have a financial impact on the district.

1.4.3 Planning and Accountability

Among the characteristics that define effective organizations is the ability to not simply do things right, but to do the right things. Determining the right things is a product of effective planning. A good planning process needs to be embedded in the operation of the organization and understood by all employees.

Strategic planning is a proactive process for envisioning the future and developing the necessary strategic actions to bring that vision to fruition. In essence, a good strategic plan serves as a map for an organization's members to guide actions towards meeting organizational goals. In addition, planning moves organizations from reactionary to proactive modes by connecting goals, strategies, performance measures, and action plans to an overall resource allocation process. Organizations that link these elements through the planning process are more likely to achieve identified goals and enhance their overall organizational effectiveness.

Exhibit 1-18 references the work by Locke and Latham, two of the top researchers in the area of goal setting and the motivation of staff to accomplish goals.

**EXHIBIT 1-18
LOCKE AND LATHAM: GOAL SETTING**

Dr. Edwin Locke's pioneered research on goal setting and motivation in the late 1960s. In his 1968 article "Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives," he stated that employees were motivated by clear goals and appropriate feedback. Locke went on to say that working toward a goal provided a major source of motivation to actually reach the goal – which, in turn, improved performance. Locke's research showed that there was a relationship between how difficult and specific a goal was and people's performance of a task. He found that specific and difficult goals led to better task performance than vague or easy goals.

SMART Goals:

A useful way of making goals more powerful is to use the SMART mnemonic. While there are plenty of variants, SMART usually stands for:

S Specific, **M** Measurable, **A** Attainable, **R** Relevant, and **T** Time-bound **SMART**

Telling someone to "Try hard" or "Do your best" is less effective than "Try to get more than 80% correct" or "Concentrate on beating your best time." Likewise, having a goal that's too easy is not a motivating force. Hard goals are more motivating than easy goals, because it's much more of an accomplishment to achieve something that you have to work for. A few years after Locke published his article, another researcher, Dr Gary Latham, studied the effect of goal setting in the workplace. His results supported exactly what Locke had found, and the inseparable link between goal setting and workplace performance was formed.

In 1990, Locke and Latham published their seminal work, "A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance." In this book, they reinforced the need to set specific and difficult goals, and they outlined three other characteristics of successful goal setting.

Five Principles of Goal Setting

To motivate, goals must take into consideration the degree to which each of the following exists:

1. Clarity.
2. Challenge.
3. Commitment.
4. Feedback.
5. Task complexity.

Source: Mindtool.com website, Locke's Goal Setting Theory, 2008.

Organizational accountability is the means by which an organization assesses its performance. The accountability of a public school district is not defined by a single program, but should be embedded in the organization as a part of its culture. Typically, the accountability system for a school district is included as an integral part of the organization's strategic plan.

To be effective, an accountability system should not be simply imposed upon the organization. Staff must be knowledgeable about the goals of the organization and plans to achieve these goals. Staff should be informed that the objective of organizational accountability is to improve the performance of the school district and not to conduct individual performance appraisals.

An effective comprehensive accountability plan will assist the school district in determining who its customers are, how best to serve them, and how well these customers are satisfied with the school district's services.

FINDING

The TCS planning process is without a unified approach that provides clarity and vision for the district. The district's overall mission and core values are not driving improvement.

The planning process in TCS focuses on compliance to meet West Virginia requirements. The mission statement varies from one school to another—some are aligned with the district mission and core values while others are not.

The focus of planning is compliance with state requirements including the County Five-Year Plan, the 2011 PLC components, and a 10-Year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan. In addition, each school has a five-year plan related directly to the individual school. All plans, at both the school and district levels, are completed to comply with West Virginia requirements.

The focus of the superintendent's plan is a series of goals developed with the BOE for accountability purposes. The seven goals of the superintendent, also identified as the seven goals of the BOE, are:

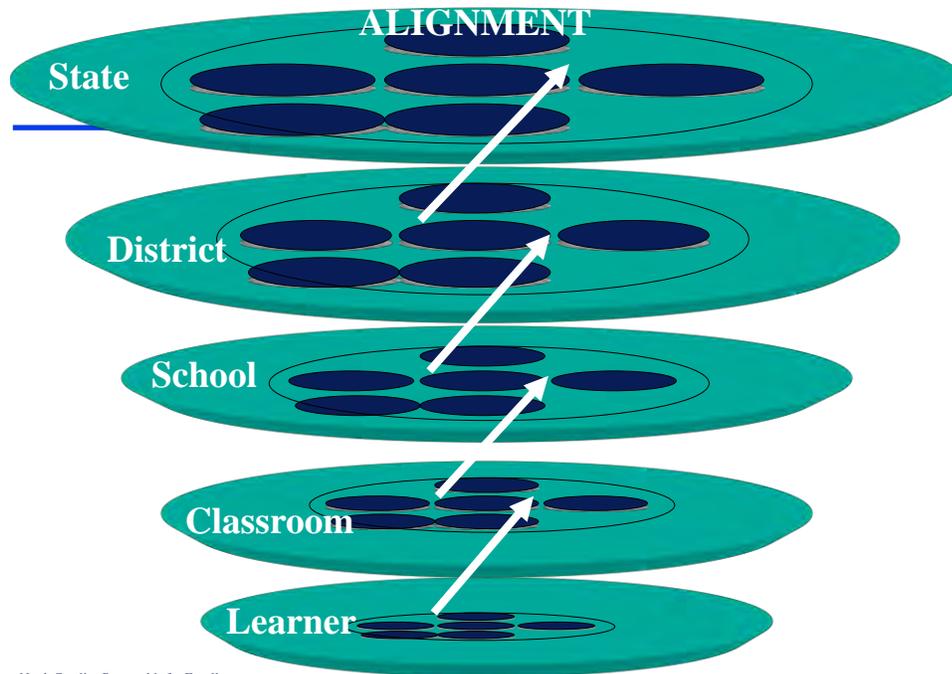
1. Monitor and understand SPL.
2. Be a positive role model, inspiring and uniting staff toward a common goal to provide quality education and support to all students of Taylor County.
3. The superintendent will ensure a safe, secure, and orderly environment for all.
4. The superintendent will provide leadership as CEO to the BOE and provide personnel management as well.
5. Show improvement in WESTEST scores.
6. Lower drop-out rate and increase graduation rate and attendance.
7. Provide a three-year plan for the football field at Taylor County Middle School.

The goals as approved are in some cases statements that are not goals. In some cases the goal is clearly a performance measure for the superintendent and not the BOE. Such incongruence directly impacts the overall planning effort of the district.

In order to achieve the highest levels of performance, a district needs a unified plan that is driven by the mission, vision, and core values of that organization. The strategic plan should be visionary and built around the concept of alignment at all levels of the district (state, district, school, and classroom).

This concept is visually presented in **Exhibit 1-19**.

**EXHIBIT 1-19
STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**



North Carolina Partnership for Excellence

Source: North Carolina Partnership for Excellence.

RECOMMENDATION 1-12:

Develop a district-wide strategic plan that coordinates all planning throughout the district and is driven by the mission and core values of TCS.

The coordination of the planning process should be undertaken by a three-member committee composed of the superintendent’s designee, a board member, and a principal. An advisory committee should be created to provide regular input to the work of the smaller committee. This advisory committee should include representatives at all levels of the school system and community.

The district should coordinate efforts with the WVSB or another organization that provides strategic planning professional development. The importance of training cannot be overstated. The strategic planning process is multi-faceted and requires important knowledge and skills by those coordinating the effort.

Exhibit 1-20 shows two examples of strategic planning models that are currently being used across the country.

**EXHIBIT 1-20
STRATEGIC PLANNING MODELS**

| MODEL 1 | MODEL 2 |
|---|---|
| <u>DISTRICT GOALS</u> | <u>DISTRICT GOALS</u> |
| 1. District Plan Developed ↓ | 1. School Improvement Plans Developed ↓ |
| 2. Cluster or School Plans Developed (Correlate to District Plan) ↓ | 2. District Plan Developed (Correlate to Board Goals and School Plans) |
| 3. School Improvement Plans Developed (Correlate to Board Goals Cluster &/or School Plans) | |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., August 2011.

Due to the size of TCS and limited internal resources, district leaders should seek advice from the WVSBA as to the appropriate planning model. Such characteristics as size and selection of committee members, coordinated leadership, time, and staffing are examples of the kinds of challenges that are unique to small districts.

Examples of best practices from similar sized districts will be important to demonstrate the obstacles faced can be overcome successfully. The WVSBA provides strategic planning services and should be able to provide best practice examples for consideration.

FISCAL IMPACT

There should be no additional costs other than the amount of time it will take to complete this recommendation. Since the district holds membership in WVSBA, the organization should be able to provide the necessary information to assist planning without any additional cost.

1.4.4 Public Information and Community Relations

Effective communication is a key aspect of developing and maintaining organizations that facilitate the realization of essential goals and objectives. Phillip Schlechty, in his publication, *Working on the Work — An Action Plan for Teachers, Principals, and Directors*, articulates 12 standards for school improvement. The underlying piece is fundamentally sound communication. The modern organization, having emerged in an age when results are expected to be tailored to the individual client, must engage in effective communication to all stakeholders and produce needed responses in a timely fashion.

Community involvement programs are essential for bringing financial resources and community support to schools and school districts. Involved schools and school districts strive to build and maintain effective partnerships with parents, area businesses, civic and faith-based organizations, and other concerned citizens, who provide valuable support for each student’s academic success. Members of the community, including parents and grandparents, can offer needed volunteer services to the schools. Creating

and maintaining open lines of communication with parents and community members will help build long-term public support for district efforts.

FINDING

The superintendent has initiated improving internal and external communications.

Principals report that organized meetings with the superintendent have permitted them to provide important information and become more informed on district activity. The superintendent has stated that improving internal and external communications is an important goal and has taken the first steps to build relationships.

The superintendent has begun active, personal community involvement by joining the Rotary organization.

COMMENDATION 1-D:

The superintendent consistently articulates a priority to improve communication throughout the district and within the community.

FINDING

TCS does not have a coordinated public information and community relations effort.

Communication, both internally and externally, has not previously been a priority of the district. Instead, public relations have often been driven by individuals focused primarily on negative behaviors and actions. As a result communication and positive public relations was a major concern throughout the district and community as stated in forums, interviews and surveys.

Comments in forums and other mediums included:

- *Need to develop strong working relations among the employees of the district and the school board.*
- *We have poor internal communications.*
- *CO employees do not communicate with community members.*
- *Public relations - what public relations?*
- *Public relations - one of the many hats carried by all of us.*

Internal and external communications have been deemed inadequate during the previous superintendent's service. A review of the agendas for the past five administrative meetings indicates a series of reports by team members with little formal time for discussion built into the agendas. These meetings tend to highlight the communications challenges in TCS. Communication between administrators in the district appears to have been top-down and silo-driven in recent years.

A lack of positive, productive communication between the BOE and superintendent has been previously documented. This factor has impacted communication throughout the district and community. Overcoming this legacy represents a major challenge to TCS.

RECOMMENDATION 1-13:

Develop and implement an effective communication plan that improves internal and external communications, and aligns with the state's Global 21 initiative.

The importance of a formal and transparent communication plan is important to meet the superintendent's desire to improve communications. Without a plan that includes goals/objectives, a timeline, and accountability measures, the likelihood of success will be reduced.

Communication is part of a multi-faceted approach to improving support, raising morale and involving large number of people in school system improvement. The current situation in TCS lacks the multi-faceted approach to garner greater public support.

This plan should include an overall public information plan for the district that at a minimum includes:

- The role of the BOE to improve public relations.
- The role of the central office and individual schools to improve public relations.
- Key personnel to serve as first responders around press questions, press releases, and other internal/external publications and news releases.

The plan should also recommend that a long-term strategic effort be designed to increase public support for the district. Examples of strategies to increase support:

- Develop a TCS Education Foundation.
- Develop a TCS Business/Industry/Government Council.
- Seek financial support for public relations support.

As a part of this recommendation, the superintendent should discuss with the BOE the possibility of including **Recommendation 1-13** in the current list of goals for 2011-12. Including this as a goal will send an important message to internal stakeholders regarding the level of support for improved communications.

The development of this plan should be completed as soon as reasonably possible, and the plan should include a two to three year goal for accomplishment. A team of both internal and external stakeholders should be created to:

- Review effective communications in other school districts.
- Create strategies tied to the goals/objectives, timelines, and outcome measures.
- Present to the BOE for review and input.

- Include in the district's five-year plan.

The superintendent or designee should have the responsibility of leading this planning effort and should create a cross-functional team to carry out the development of the full plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

There should be no cost initially associated with this recommendation. Volunteers and staff can form the committee and carry out the responsibility of crafting a plan for effective communications. However, full implementation over a multi-year period could result in additional costs, but this cannot be estimated at this time.

2.0 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2.0 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The findings, commendations, and recommendations for the human resources services of Taylor County Schools (TCS) are presented in this chapter. This chapter includes the following sections:

- 2.1 Organization and Service Delivery
- 2.2 Policies, Procedures, and Practices
- 2.3 Job Descriptions, Classifications, and Assignments
- 2.4 Recruitment and Employment Practices
- 2.5 Personnel Budget and Compensation
- 2.6 Professional and Service Staff Training and Development

CHAPTER SUMMARY

TCS experienced a slight decrease in student enrollment of approximately 31 students from 2008-09 through 2010-11 and the total number of employees decreased by two. Concurrently, the district was required to maintain approximately the same number and level of services to support employment and to provide services and programs to schools and students. Human resources is expected to maintain an adequate supply of new teachers as they work to recruit, employ, and retain administrative and support personnel.

This review examined critical human resource functions and service delivery areas within TCS, including organization, workflow processes, job posting and employment processing, staff development, personnel procedures, job descriptions, salaries, personnel forms and records' maintenance, use of technology, and departmental budget and cost concerns.

Commendations in this chapter include the following:

- Commendation 2-A** The Human Resources Department provides outstanding customer service, service delivery, and support for employees, schools, and departments.
- Commendation 2-B** Taylor County Schools provides a comprehensive employee handbook that outlines district policies, procedures, and practices that impact employees.
- Commendation 2-C** Taylor County Schools developed and implemented a five-year strategic plan used to guide school and employee staff development and training.

Recommendations provided in this chapter include the following:

- Recommendation 2-1** Develop human resources goals according to a continuous improvement model to include performance goals, objectives, action plans, results measures, and annual reporting.
- Recommendation 2-2** Simplify and consolidate paper-based forms, processes, and

procedures to facilitate the integration of application management software to improve applicant tracking, employment processing, and employee payroll data management.

- Recommendation 2-3** Implement human resources department performance measures and review annually.
- Recommendation 2-4** Investigate a document scanning and file management system for conversion of employee personnel files to an electronic format.
- Recommendation 2-5** Adhere to board policies and develop and implement a process for the systematic review, revision, and dissemination of standardized written job descriptions for all positions.
- Recommendation 2-6** Implement a recruitment and employment plan designed to increase the available pool of qualified candidates for employment.
- Recommendation 2-7** Determine the TCS comparable salary status annually with peer districts and make provisions in the annual budget to maintain competitive salaries.

Organizational, fiscal, and employment challenges that impact the operations of the delivery of human resources services in TCS reflected in this report include the following:

- A lack of sufficient tax base or local levy revenue that would enable supplements to district salary schedules and make them more competitive.
- An aging workforce that will allow significant numbers of employees to retire within the next few years.
- Declining student enrollment that results in reduced revenue from the state.
- Increased staff workloads due, primarily, to state and federal mandates with no provision for additional personnel or technology to support these requirements.
- Assistant superintendent is responsible for human resources services as well as child nutrition, facilities, warehousing, transportation, and other functions.

TCS student enrollment for the 2010-11 school year was 2,395 students. Students attended three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and one technical center, and were served by 198 professional and 120 service personnel, for a total of 318 employees.

2.1 Organization and Service Delivery

The human resources department of TCS consists of the assistant superintendent for administration and support services and one secretary/coordinator of personnel. These two positions provide service delivery for each school, department, and employee. Although the assistant superintendent also supervises a significant number of operational departments, the assistant superintendent personally administers human resources services for the district, accounting for approximately 70 percent of his time.

The assistant superintendent and the secretary/coordinator process and manage all personnel services and related activities for approximately 317 active full- and part-time employees and substitutes. The department is responsible for the following functions and services:

- Development and implementation of human resources policies and procedures.
- Planning for workforce needs and recruitment of employees.
- Job postings, job bid sheets, and processing of employment applications.
- Job assignments, staffing vacancies, and placing new hires.
- New hire processing, including orientation and completion of payroll and benefits enrollment forms.
- Employee promotions and/or job changes resulting from job postings, extracurricular job assignments, teacher certification, resignations, and retirements.
- Employment of substitutes for all job classifications.
- Processing and managing employee complaints and grievances.
- Investigation of employee misconduct allegations.
- Documentation of unsatisfactory performance.
- Maintaining employee seniority and preferred recall lists.
- Employee evaluation and document processing.
- Personnel records management.
- Development and revision of job descriptions.
- Monitoring attendance, leaves of absence, and substitute employment.

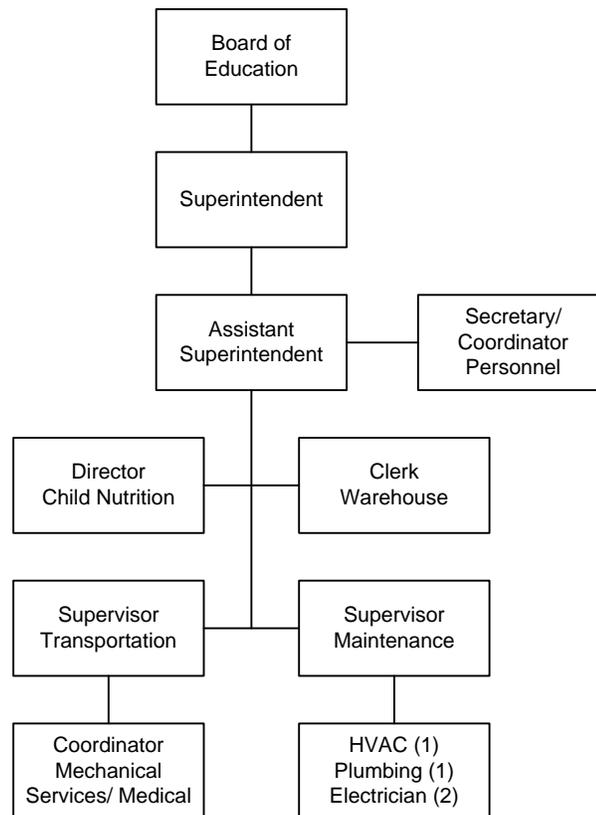
Employment of teachers who meet NCLB highly-qualified requirements has been a TCS priority and the human resources department has the responsibility of supporting

principals and department heads in recruiting and hiring highly-qualified teacher candidates.

Exhibit 2-1 shows the organizational structure of the administration and support services department. The assistant superintendent and secretary/coordinator of personnel provide direct services to support professional, service, extra-curricular, and substitute staff. In addition, the coordinator processes personnel records and completes forms for payroll data entry.

The assistant superintendent supervises and supports four units (departments) shown in the exhibit. This facilitates open communication between departments and ensures performance accountability.

**EXHIBIT 2-1
ORGANIZATION OF THE
ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: TCS Organization Chart, September 2011.

One of the most critical functions of human resources is to facilitate the employment of a high-quality workforce that has the training, experience, and expertise to enable the school district to accomplish its mission.

Forecasting expected budget revenues and related workforce employment requirements over the next few years is critical to the strategic accomplishment of district initiatives.

TCS student enrollment, as reported in the 2010-2020 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan, is forecasted to be relatively stable. However, the moderate level of decline will, nevertheless, continue to negatively impact state funding for TCS. Consequently, the Board of Education (BOE) and superintendent must continue to explore cost containment and alternative funding resources in order to address expectations related to student achievement improvements and to meet the requirements of the state mandated five-year plan the district has developed.

The expected continuation of the current budget challenges coupled with an annual replacement of employees due to retirement and resignation losses will continue to stress the resources of the department. At the same time the department must increasingly work to improve operational efficiency in service delivery and to meet annual employment and workforce replacement needs.

The continued local and national shortage of teachers in critical teaching areas has shown little sign of improving over the last few years. The current national unemployment picture has led to increased enrollments in teacher education programs; however, TCS expects shortages to continue in the difficult to staff areas such as special education and mathematics. The human resources department must strategically target employment goals in a focused effort to replace retirement losses and to meet the increasingly complex workforce needs of the district.

FINDING

The TCS Human Resources Department provides a high degree of customer service to principals, schools, and other departments.

Interviews conducted with both principals and department heads indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the services and support provided by human resources.

Principals and supervisors stated that the human resources two-person team provides commendable support, expertise, and service delivery. The human resources team must understand the individual needs of each school and department in order to provide customer focus and functional service delivery tailored to and meeting the specific needs of each. The focus on customer service enhances the professional image of the department throughout the district.

As part of its efficiency review, MGT consultants conducted an on-line survey (see **Appendix A**) and community forum designed to solicit public and employee input regarding various district operations, including human resources. In addition, interviews were conducted with principals and department heads to determine their perceptions and levels of satisfaction. Typical interview questions included the following, "What is your degree of satisfaction with the services provided by the Human Resources Department?"

Statements from interviews indicated satisfaction with human resources service delivery, though some respondents expressed concern that the department might be understaffed.

COMMENDATION 2-A:

The human resources department provides outstanding customer service, service delivery, and support for employees, schools, and departments.

FINDING

The human resources department does not have clearly defined goals, objectives, and performance targets focused on functions, service delivery, and expected results.

When a request was made for the department's goals and objectives, a listing of informal goals was provided. These informal goals should be used as the basis for developing more formal goals for the department.

Exhibit 2-2 shows a copy of the informal human resources goals.

**EXHIBIT 2-
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
HUMAN RESOURCES GOALS**

The goals are to minimize grievances, have no errors in the certified list, make no errors during the RIF/transfer process, stay within the state aid formula for professional personnel, minimize the overage in state aid formula for service personnel, employ the most highly qualified teachers and other professional staff from the pool of applicants when no regular employees bid on a vacancy, make no errors in determining the most highly qualified teachers and other professional staff when at least one regular employee bids on a vacancy by properly applying the criteria set forth in WV Code 18A-4-7a, and submit all reports to the WV State Department of Education within established timelines.

Source: TCS Human Resources Department, September 2011.

The human resources department should have clearly defined and integrated goals and objectives that provide functional focus for the department leader and staff. These goals should help communicate human resource priorities and service commitments to all district personnel as well as candidates for employment, customers, and stakeholders.

Sample best practice human resources goal and objective statements aligned according to a continuous improvement model are shown in **Exhibit 2-3**.

Goal statements such as these should be identified based on the district's five-year strategic plan. These goals should help strategically align all functions within the department toward a common standard of service delivery.

**EXHIBIT 2-3
SAMPLE STRATEGIC GOALS**

Human Resources Department Sample Strategic Goals

- Improve annual planning in coordination with school support and budget allocation requirements.
- Improve the process of recruitment and staffing of all jobs on a timely basis.
- Improve the annual review, revision, application and communication of human resources policies, practices and procedures.
- Improve human resources communication and service delivery.
- Improve interdepartmental payroll and benefits coordination and paperwork processes.
- Improve record keeping and data collection for all categories of employees.

Source: MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 2-1:

Develop human resources goals according to a continuous improvement model to include performance goals, objectives, action plans, results measures, and annual reporting.

The implementation of this recommendation should help align departmental functions, enhance staff performance, improve workflow, and provide for improved service delivery.

The assistant superintendent should work with central office staff and principals to implement this recommendation within six months of the approval of this report by the superintendent and BOE.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources and personnel and should result in no additional cost.

2.2 Policies, Procedures, and Practices

Employment of personnel, staffing allowances, assignments/reassignments, health, payroll, evaluations, absences, and leave are but a few of the subjects that should be addressed in policy and procedures.

The development of policies and procedures constitutes the means by which a school district can communicate expectations. Policies and procedures, therefore, reveal the philosophy and position of the BOE and should be stated clearly enough to provide for executive or staff direction.

FINDING

The human resources department processes are paper-driven.

The human resources department posts jobs, maintains bid lists, and maintains applications for employment using required forms and procedures that are almost completely dependent upon paper and paperwork processes that are time consuming and inefficient.

Job applicants must complete paper applications and multiple bid sheets for each job and/or school for which they wish to be considered for employment.

Current practice requires that a separate paper form be completed for most personnel management processes including each application job bid and new hire and/or current employee status change. The result of this practice is that duplicate personnel information must be written on a multiple forms, hand-delivered from office to office, and the data entered into the payroll system for all employment additions, changes, and transactions.

The collection and management of employment, workforce, and employee data is one of the most critical functions of the department. As is the case in many school districts, the TCS human resources secretary/coordinator produces paper forms with, for example, employee contact and/or status change information which is then manually hand-delivered to the payroll department for data entry and the execution of status changes in the data management system.

Implementation of a single personnel action form (PAF) with multiple data sections would greatly enhance efficiency, information management, and record keeping. In addition, this type of data collection form could easily be transformed from paper to an electronic format. As the volume and complexity of employee and employment information and record keeping continues to increase, the capability to successfully manage human resources information becomes increasingly important.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of information management and data collection, a plan to integrate all applicant and employee data into a common database should be considered. A common integrated database would also facilitate the management and reporting of data related to the status of human resource functions and services, as well as workforce statistics and information. The department should be able to produce various reports related to employment, workforce deployment, training records, and personnel costs.

RECOMMENDATION 2-2:

Simplify and consolidate paper-based forms, processes, and procedures to facilitate the integration of application management software to improve applicant tracking, employment processing, and employee payroll data management.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in improved human resources and payroll department operational efficiencies. The acquisition of a software system to manage major functions, such as the tracking of employment applications and the data entry of changes in employment assignments, should also reduce staff stress and workloads.

The assistant superintendent should work with district payroll and technology staff to develop a coordinated plan for mapping and revision of current workflow and data management improvement requirements during the current fiscal year.

Funding for purchase and implementation of this recommendation should be solicited from state or grant funds and then be considered along with other district automation needs during the development of the FY 2013 budget.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of application and employee data management technology systems can vary dramatically and cannot be adequately estimated until the district determines priority needs and the related integration requirements of the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

FINDING

The TCS Human Resources Department does not have formal performance measures in place.

The performance functions, workflow processes, and office procedures of the human resources department have evolved over a number of years with no evidence of having been formally evaluated or analyzed for functional efficiency, service delivery, or customer satisfaction.

During interviews, the statement that “we’ve always done it that way” was often the response to questions regarding assignments and practices.

The regular review of human resources functions, workflow processes, and office procedures is critical to the efficiency of operations and the maintenance of cost effective service delivery. In addition, the elimination or realignment of tasks and processes that can be combined with others or eliminated should be considered.

Annually, human resources staff should review assigned functions, processes, and services to determine those that might be revised, realigned, or eliminated.

Exhibit 2-4 shows human resources processes and functions that should be reviewed annually.

**EXHIBIT 2-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
HUMAN RESOURCES FUNCTIONS**

- Recruitment and employment of personnel
- Job descriptions and job posting
- Job interest bid sheet distribution and processing
- Application processing and tracking
- Maintenance of seniority lists
- Employment transactions and hiring assignments
- Teacher certification
- Substitute employee hiring and assignment
- Employee appraisal and evaluation processing and record keeping
- Retirement and termination processing
- Personnel records development and management
- Employee orientation and notice of job expectations
- Employee misconduct and discipline
- Employee complaints and grievances
- Payroll and benefits enrollment initiation forms and coordination

Source: Developed by MGT of America, Inc., 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 2-3:

Implement human resources department performance measures and review annually.

A formal review based on performance measures of human resource functions and processes for efficiency of operations, service delivery, and customer satisfaction should help maintain a focus on primary functional requirements and service delivery expectations. This should allow for maximum utilization of staff and workflow which should result in improved service to schools and to customer satisfaction.

Upon approval of this report by the superintendent and BOE, the assistant superintendent should immediately conduct meetings with staff to initiate implementation of this recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation should be accomplished by the department at no additional cost and could require six to nine hours of staff time.

FINDING

TCS employee personnel files are not available in an electronic format that allows for easy access and retrieval.

The human resources department maintains active employee records in paper personnel files. In addition, extensive quantities of information have been included in some files which often makes them difficult to manage. The secretary/coordinator for

personnel services must develop and maintain these files in addition to performing an extensive number of additional duties.

In addition, as the volume of information and paper forms continues to increase, the contents of file cabinets and the floor space required to secure them will increase. This will further diminish file management efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION 2-4:

Investigate a document scanning and file management system for conversion of employee personnel files to an electronic format.

Implementation of an electronic file and document management system would allow for the eventual elimination of paper files. This would reduce the need for expansion of file cabinet and file room storage space, eliminate the need for manual search of files, reduce the likelihood of document loss, improve information retrieval, and enhance file security.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will require an initial investment for scanning and computer equipment. Additionally, the district may opt to employ temporary personnel to assist with the scanning processes. Although scanning and file management equipment can be purchased for as little as a few thousand dollars, the district must determine the volume of documents to be scanned, the degree of automation preferred, and the reporting and retrieval requirements, in order to determine a defensible cost estimate.

Existing personnel in human resources and technology services should develop the requirements and investigate electronic document management/scanning solutions at no additional cost.

FINDING

TCS provides an employee handbook that outlines the district's policies, expectations, rules, and requirements.

Development and dissemination of an employee handbook enhances positive employee relations and workplace satisfaction. All employees need to know what is expected of them as they perform their duties and how to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a positive work environment.

The TCS handbook provides a synthesis of information and requirements on specific issues in a comprehensive format to reduce confusion and improve understanding. Employees and district leaders receive an updated employee handbook on an annual basis that includes information on the latest changes in state and federal legal requirements, board policy changes, and new or revised district services offered to employees. The handbook provides employees with workplace expectations and provides guidance regarding legal requirements, contract and employment status, leaves of absence, teacher certification, performance evaluation, salary administration,

and benefits. A listing of selected categorical headings in the TCS employee handbook is shown in **Exhibit 2-5**.

**EXHIBIT 2-5
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
TAYLOR COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES**

- EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT
- SECTION 504
- CURRENT ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE
- JOB OPPORTUNITIES
- BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
- CONTRACTS
- TESTS REQUIRED
- CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS
- PERSONAL LEAVE
- FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
- JURY DUTY
- LEAVES OF ABSENCE
- VACATION AND HOLIDAYS
- EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS
- DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE
- SENIORITY
- TRANSFER, SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL
- RESIGNATION AND RETIREMENT
- TEACHER CERTIFICATION
- STAFF DEVELOPMENT
- EVALUATION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL
- EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
- HARASSMENT
- OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES OF STAFF
- SALARY
- BENEFITS
- RETIREMENT

Source: Taylor County Board of Education Employee Handbook, Fall 2010.

COMMENDATION 2-B:

Taylor County Schools provides a comprehensive employee handbook that outlines district policies, procedures, and practices that impact employees.

2.3 Job Descriptions, Classifications, and Assignments

To clearly communicate job duties and responsibilities, up-to-date job descriptions are critical. Job descriptions provide the basis for the position and outline the requirements expected of the person or persons assigned to work in the position. Job descriptions provide the basis for ensuring accountability in the performance of the job.

FINDING

TCS does not systematically review, revise, and distribute standard written job descriptions.

In TCS, job descriptions are maintained in a large loose leaf notebook in the human resources department. A review of 50 or more job descriptions revealed that they have not been reviewed or revised on a regular and consistent basis.

Many job descriptions do not contain the essential elements represented by best practices. A variety of formats have been used over the past 20 years and revisions seem to occur only when job openings are posted. The following are examples of document format variations and out-dated job descriptions:

- The job description for *Principal – Grafton High School*, for example, provides an extensive listing of 19 qualifications and 51 responsibilities with no mention of essential job functions or duties.
- The job description for *Principal – Fleming Elementary School* lists 21 qualifications and 50 functions and duties.
- The assistant superintendent for personnel, transportation, maintenance and support services job description lists 22 performance responsibilities. It also provides job qualifications, job summary, and term of employment information which includes a job posting notice with a closing date of June 25, 1997. The major supervisory responsibilities reflected on the September 2011 district organization chart are not listed on the job description.

Job descriptions should include the job title, minimum qualifications, physical demands, salary basis, essential functions and duties, and date of adoption or revision.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) exempt or non-exempt status for overtime pay eligibility should also be included. This requirement for overtime eligibility status is not listed on any of the job descriptions reviewed.

Exhibit 2-6 shows the board policy outlining expectations for regular review and revision of job descriptions.

**EXHIBIT 2-6
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
POLICY 3115 – JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Bylaws & Policies

3115 - JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The Board of Education recognizes that it is essential for Board and employee accountability for each staff member to be fully aware of the duties and responsibilities of his/her position. Job descriptions document and describe the essential functions for professional staff positions and thereby promote organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, the superintendent shall maintain continuously a comprehensive, coordinated set of job descriptions for professional staff positions.

All job descriptions shall be defined as guidelines of the superintendent and will be originated and maintained in accordance with the provisions specified in the bylaws of the Board (See Bylaw 0131).

Job descriptions shall include State adopted responsibilities and performance criteria. The purpose of performance criteria is to clarify responsibilities and help provide guidance to the employee in understanding job expectations.

Job descriptions shall be brief, factual, and, wherever possible, generically descriptive of similar jobs.

From time-to-time, the Board further recognizes that the superintendent may find it necessary to revise job descriptions.

During the revision of a job description, the superintendent may seek input from individuals who hold that position; however, their input may or may not be reflected when the revision of said job description is completed.

In addition, the superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines necessary for the proper implementation of this policy.

West Virginia State Board of Education Policy **5310**

Revised 8/25/09

Source: TCS website, August 2011.

During interviews, respondents were asked questions regarding their job duties and whether or not copies of up-to-date job descriptions were available to them. Most replied that they did not have an up-to-date copy of their job description but added that they understood their job duties and performance expectations.

Exhibit 2-7 shows an example of a well written job description.

**EXHIBIT 2-7
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION**

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <u>Date:</u> | November 2, 2005 |
| <u>Job Title:</u> | Director of Personnel |
| <u>Grade Level:</u> | 44 |
| <u>Position Number:</u> | 04210 |
| <u>Work Location:</u> | Central Office - Human Resources |
| <u>Immediate Supervisor:</u> | Assistant Superintendent of HR and Administrative Services |
| <u>Terms of Employment:</u> | 12 month/8 hour days |
| <u>FLSA Status/Test:</u> | Exempt |

General Description:

Provides day to day supervision and direction for the personnel office in the areas of recruitment, equal opportunity/affirmative action programs, teacher licensure, policy development, employee relations, and training and human resource information systems. Performs work under broad departmental policies and established objectives and interprets policy on own initiative; decisions/actions impact the entire system and extends into the community. Position requires extensive professional judgment; contacts are regularly and frequently made at all organizational levels within and outside the school system to execute and explain programs and policies. Directs and evaluates work of highly technical or professional support staff.

Essential Job Functions:

- Directs the recruitment program for professional and support staff. Responsible for the recruitment and selection of administrative and supervisory positions. Recommends to the superintendent candidates for appointment and for presentation to the School Board. Maintains close contact with all departments and schools in planning and anticipating staffing needs. Works closely with Budget Office for staffing and position control.
- Prepares and monitors departmental human resources budget. Supervises Personnel Administrators and support staff.
- Oversees the coordination and scheduling of recruitment programs such as job fairs for instructional vacancies including: developing recruitment materials, coordinating mailings, scheduling on-site and off-site visits, follow-up and review of candidate credentials and compilation of recruitment data.
- Monitors compliance with Federal, State and local laws and regulations. Serves as contact person regarding Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity issues, Americans with Disabilities Act and other related legislation. Develops and implements equal opportunity and affirmative action programs. Prepares annual AA Plan. Interprets EEO/AA policies and procedures. Analyzes applicant and employment statistics for the purpose of monitoring EEO/AA status. Develops and delivers regular reports to the School Board.
- Oversees the student teaching program. Monitors and evaluates program; makes recommendations for modification and improvement.
- Directs the licensure process for professional personnel, ensuring that employees are properly licensed in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education.

**EXHIBIT 2-7 (Continued)
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION**

Works closely with principals and department administrators in addressing and/or resolving personnel issues, problems and grievances. Reviews and recommends disciplinary actions, including suspensions, demotions and terminations.

- Supervises the Performance Evaluation System for the division. Administers the contract schedule for all personnel.
- Oversees and directs the substitute program, related training and the sub operator system.
- Develops and maintains a records management system for personnel, including employment, transfer, tenure, retirement, leave, promotions, etc. Supervises and monitors statistical applicant and staff data collection and reporting.
- Directs new employee orientation program. Oversees the exit interview process for all personnel leaving the division.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Budgetary Responsibility:

Administers the personnel department budget, consisting of operating and grant funds (approximately \$295,000).

Report Preparation:

Develops and submits written reports regarding status of any of the aforementioned specific job functions.

Equipment Operation:

Computer, printer, copy machine, fax machine and other general office equipment.

Contacts:

Human resource staff, building administrators, instructional division administrators, teachers, applicants, college/university officials and personnel/HR officials from other school divisions.

Work Direction:

N/A

Supervision:

Provides leadership and supervision to all employees assigned to the personnel department including assistant director, personnel administrators, HR assistants, HR technicians and HR systems staff.

Decision Making:

Responsible for independent decision making based upon professional judgment. Decisions impact the entire system and extend into the community.

Formal Policy-Setting Responsibilities:

Responsible for developing, revising and interpreting HR policy.

**EXHIBIT 2-7 (Continued)
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION**

Physical Demands:

The physical demands described here represent those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to use hands to lift, support, handle or feel objects, tools, equipment and/or controls; reach with hands and arms; and talk and hear. The employee is occasionally required to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop or kneel and drive. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

Work Environment:

The employee regularly works in an office environment. The noise level is quiet to moderate.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities:

Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of all areas of human resource management; of related federal and state laws and related school board policies and procedures. Considerable knowledge of budget and project management principles and practices. Considerable knowledge of human resources automated systems. Demonstrated ability to forecast staffing needs. Demonstrated ability to plan, organize and direct a complex organizational component and to supervise and evaluate others performing professional work. Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively; to analyze, interpret and apply HR laws, regulations and guidelines and to analyze and resolve conflicts that may be confidential, sensitive and/or difficult in nature.

Requirements:

Education, training or experience sufficient to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees assigned to this position. It is not designed to be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties and responsibilities and qualifications required of employees assigned to this position. This job description is not an employment contract. The employer reserves the right to modify this job description at any time without prior notice.

Incumbent signature/Date

Supervisor signature/Date

Director signature/Date

Source: Chesterfield County, Virginia, job description, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 2-5:

Adhere to board policies and develop and implement a process for the systematic review, revision, and dissemination of standardized written job descriptions for all positions.

Updating job descriptions should result in accurate posting of job information as vacancies occur. This will eliminate the revision of the job descriptions at the time of the posting. Ultimately, job descriptions could be placed on the website for easy access by persons interested in employment.

Within six months of the approval of this report by the superintendent and BOE, the assistant superintendent should provide out-dated job descriptions to department heads and principals for updating, along with a standardized format to ensure new information is included.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation should be accomplished with existing staff and resources at no additional cost; however, the time of department heads and principals, as well as the assistant superintendent and secretary/coordinator of personnel, cannot be accurately estimated.

2.4 Recruitment and Employment Practices

Employment of teachers who meet NCLB highly-qualified requirements has been a TCS priority. Human resources personnel have worked with principals and department heads in both recruiting and hiring highly-qualified teacher candidates. In addition, as vacancies occur or district needs change, human resources must recruit and employ a high quality workforce to support the instructional program. In order to hire for new positions and to fill vacated positions, the assistant superintendent must regularly communicate and coordinate with the budget department, as well as principals and other supervisors, regarding their current and pending workforce needs.

Exhibit 2-8 shows the number of TCS employees by major job classification for the last three years. In 2010-11, there were 317 employees, of which 197 (62%) were professional employees and 120 (38%) were service personnel.

**EXHIBIT 2-9
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES BY CLASSIFICATION
2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| SCHOOL YEAR | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | DIFFERENCE 2008-09 to 2010-11 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Professional Personnel | 197 | 198 | 197 | 0 |
| Service Personnel | 122 | 120 | 120 | -2 |
| Total | 319 | 318 | 317 | -2 |

Source: Taylor County Schools EDA025P1 Report, September 2011.

The small decline in student enrollment (see **Chapter 5.0**, Facilities Use and Management for enrollment history and projected enrollment data), and the corresponding reductions in funding are factors that may have led to the reduction in the number of employees in the service personnel classification. The absence of decline in the number of professional employees is due primarily to meeting state and federal requirements for student-teacher ratios and special needs students.

West Virginia statutory requirements for employment decision making are highly specific and compliance requires extensive staff time. In most cases, however, human resources personnel have been able to successfully fill most vacancies. Shortages of highly-qualified and special needs teachers continue to be a challenge for the district.

The number of professional and service employees hired, transferred, retired, or resigned over the past two years is shown in **Exhibit 2-9**. As can be seen, the department has managed the employment or transfer of an average of 10 professional and seven service employees annually. In addition to new hires and transfers, the department annually processes an average of 13 professional and five service employee retirements and resignations. Although not shown in the exhibit, TCS also manages approximately 12 substitute employees annually.

**EXHIBIT 2-10
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT WORKLOAD
2009-2011**

| SCHOOL YEAR | PROFESSIONAL | | | SERVICE | | | TOTAL PERSONNEL ACTIONS |
|----------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| | New Hire | Transfer | Retired/ Resigned | New Hire | Transfer | Retired/ Resigned | |
| 2009-10 | 13 | 3 | 32 | 10 | 16 | 6 | 80 |
| 2010-11 | 7 | 19 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 65 |
| Total | 20 | 22 | 39 | 22 | 26 | 16 | 145 |
| Average | 10 | 11 | 19.5 | 11 | 13 | 8 | 72.5 |

Source: TCS Human Resources Department, September 2011.

West Virginia has specific statutory requirements that restrict local school district employment practices. West Virginia Code 18A-4-7a specifies hiring requirements for professional employment while code section 18A-4-8b specifies requirements for service employees.

Included among statutory provisions are the qualifications and testing requirements for both classifications of personnel as well as the provision that, once these are met, internal candidates must be hired first according to district seniority. In an essay by the former head of the Washington, D.C., school district in Time Magazine (September 12, 2011), more than six states have eliminated use of seniority as a basis for teacher layoffs.

Maintenance and tracking of seniority status and the requirement that seniority be the final basis for selection requires that local school districts complete and maintain extensive job postings and applicant bidding paperwork. In addition, districts that can afford to do so often resort to contracting with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) for their area to fill highly skilled or competitive positions.

Exhibit 2-10 is a copy of a selected section of the TCS Board Policy 3120 Employment of Professional Personnel, which includes the seniority requirements of state statute 18A-4-7a.

**EXHIBIT 2-10
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
POLICY 3120 EMPLOYMENT OF PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL**

If one (1) or more permanently employed instructional personnel apply for a classroom teaching position and meet the standards set forth in the job posting, the Board shall make decisions affecting the filling of the position on the basis of the following criteria with each criterion being given equal weight:

- A. appropriate certification, licensure, or both
- B. total amount of teaching experience
- C. the existence of teaching experience in the required certification area
- D. degree level in the required certification area
- E. specialized training directly related to the performance of the job as stated in the job description
- F. receiving an overall rating of satisfactory in the previous two (2) evaluations conducted pursuant to WV Code 18A-2-12, and
- G. seniority

If an applicant with the most seniority is not selected for the position, upon the request of the applicant, a written statement of reasons shall be given to the applicant with suggestions for improving the applicant's qualifications.

If two (2) or more permanently employed teachers are found to be equally qualified, the teacher with the most seniority will be considered the highest qualified. If a permanently employed teacher and one or more applicants who are not permanently employed teachers are found to be equally qualified, the permanently employed teacher will be considered the highest qualified. If two (2) or more applicants, none of whom are permanently employed teachers, are found to be equally qualified, the applicant with the most teaching experience in the required certification area will be considered the highest qualified.

Source: TCS website, August 2011.

FINDING

TCS does not have a formal recruitment and employment plan.

Although in most cases TCS has been able to hire sufficient numbers of employees in most employment categories, a formal recruitment plan is needed to address specific NCLB and special needs teacher shortages.

Exhibit 2-11 shows the percentage of TCS classes taught by NCLB highly qualified teachers in comparison with peer districts. As can be seen, the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in TCS increased from 2009-10 to 2010-11, but remained slightly below the peer district average.

**EXHIBIT 2-12
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2009-10 | | | 2010-11 | | |
|----------------|---------------|---|--------------|---------------|---|--------------|
| | TOTAL CLASSES | CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS | | TOTAL CLASSES | CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS | |
| | | NUMBER | PERCENT | | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| Taylor | 757 | 717 | 94.7% | 799 | 768 | 96.1% |
| Barbour | 818 | 790 | 96.6% | 918 | 857 | 93.3% |
| Braxton | 929 | 857 | 92.2% | 735 | 725 | 98.6% |
| Hardy | 764 | 750 | 98.2% | 651 | 645 | 99.1% |
| Average | 817 | 779 | 95.4% | 776 | 749 | 96.8% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Regardless of size, school districts nationwide should develop plans to meet the challenges presented by potential retirements over the next decade. In addition, as current economic conditions improve, a more competitive environment for hiring may provide potential employees with more options.

Recruitment and employment planning requires that the number of students and the anticipated revenue for the next employment year be estimated. Used in conjunction with resignation and retirement trend data to help determine the number of replacements needed, an annual forecast of workforce employment requirements should be developed in conjunction with budget.

This forecast of workforce needs should then be used in the development of an annual recruitment and employment plan. Included in this planning process should be a review of employment applications and district employment efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

A best practices recruitment plan includes the following elements:

- Review of hiring trend data from previous years.
- Forecast of workforce needs based, in part, on student enrollment and program requirements.
- Outline recruitment goals and strategies.
- Identify sources of potential applicants and methods of advertising vacancies.
- Plan recruitment trips, job fairs, or other marketing options.
- Review applications, conduct interviews, and offer jobs on a timely basis.
- Survey the recruitment satisfaction levels of both applicants and principals.

- Use current year results to guide development of next year's plan.

RECOMMENDATION 2-6:

Implement a recruitment and employment plan designed to increase the available pool of qualified candidates for employment in the district.

The implementation of this recommendation should result in increased numbers of candidates for all jobs posted. The plan should be updated annually and become part of the goals and objectives of the human resources department.

The assistant superintendent should, upon approval of this report, immediately meet with budget planners and school principals to initiate a job forecasting, recruitment, and employment plan in conjunction with the development of the FY 2013 budget. These data should guide the development of a recruitment plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recruitment and employment plan can be developed with existing resources and at no additional cost to the district; however, the cost of potential recruitment activity cannot be estimated until the plan is developed and vacancies are identified.

2.5 Personnel Budget and Compensation

Annual salary comparisons with peer school districts can be developed with data provided through the WVDE. TCS salaries are based on the state minimum salary schedules for both professional and service employee groups.

According to WVDE data, the average instructional employee salary in 2010-11 for TCS and its peer districts was \$44,096, as shown in **Exhibit 2-12**.

For the last two years, the average salaries for TCS instructional personnel were slightly higher than the peer district average.

TCS had the third-lowest number of instructional staff among the peer districts in both the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. However, TCS had the highest average salary in both years. In 2009-10, the TCS average salary was approximately \$1,000 higher than the peer average; in 2010-11, the TCS average salary was approximately \$900 higher. All comparison districts experienced a reduction in the number of instructional personnel, as well as the average teacher salary, compared to the previous year.

**EXHIBIT 2-12
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL AND AVERAGE
SALARY
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2009-10 | | 2010-11 | |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | FTE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF | | FTE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF | |
| | NUMBER | AVERAGE SALARY | NUMBER | AVERAGE SALARY |
| Taylor | 183.5 | \$46,354 | 173.5 | \$45,018 |
| Barbour | 195.8 | \$44,884 | 183.8 | \$43,342 |
| Braxton | 208.5 | \$45,327 | 190.5 | \$43,922 |
| Hardy | 170.5 | \$44,692 | 155.5 | \$44,102 |
| Average | 189.6 | \$45,314 | 175.8 | \$44,096 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

FINDING

While TCS salaries for teachers and principals are consistent with peer districts, assistant principal compensation is significantly lower.

Exhibit 2-13 shows the average salary for principals and assistant principals in TCS and peer districts in 2009-10. The TCS principal average salary was approximately \$600 higher than the peer average, though lower than Braxton by \$2,000 and Hardy by \$4,000. The TCS assistant principal average salary was significantly lower than the peer districts, being \$19,000 lower than Hardy, \$9,000 lower than Barbour, and \$8,000 lower than Braxton.

**EXHIBIT 2-13
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AVERAGE SALARIES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PRINCIPAL AVERAGE SALARY | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AVERAGE SALARY |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Taylor | \$63,159 | \$48,049 |
| Barbour | \$54,588 | \$56,914 |
| Braxton | \$65,344 | \$56,136 |
| Hardy | \$67,056 | \$67,056 |
| Average | \$62,537 | \$57,039 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Interviews revealed that both professional and service employees agreed their salary levels are competitive within the region and state. Even though most persons interviewed expressed a need for a higher salary, a majority of interviewees agreed their salary levels were adequate and competitive for the training and job duties required in their position in this region of the state. However, prior to the onsite visit by consultants, one assistant principal resigned and was employed by a neighboring school district for a significantly higher salary consistent with TCS peers.

To attract its share of qualified job candidates, to enhance employee morale, to retain employees, and to maintain relative salary competitiveness, the district should include a provision for comparable salary increases in the annual budget.

RECOMMENDATION 2-7:

Determine the TCS comparable salary status annually with peer districts and make provisions in the annual budget to maintain competitive salaries.

Maintaining competitive compensation is an essential part of reducing employee turnover. Information obtained through interviews strongly suggests that recent high turnover rates for the assistant principal position could have been reduced with a fair and competitive compensation system.

This recommendation should be phased in over several years and as budgeted funds become available.

FISCAL IMPACT

The actual cost of implementation of this recommendation cannot be determined at this time. The annual cost increases associated with salaries should be estimated as part of the annual budget development process for each fiscal and school year.

2.6 Professional and Service Staff Training and Development

All school district employees in West Virginia are required to complete 18 hours of training and development annually. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction and the Director of Child Nutrition plan annual training and development activities for professional and service personnel.

FINDING

The TCS five-year strategic plan includes professional development aligned with the district's mission and goals.

TCS developed and implemented a five-year strategic plan according to state requirements in February 2011. The Taylor County Five-Year Strategic Planning Committee, composed of 26 representatives from groups of employees, parents, and community members, developed the plan.

Prior to the introduction of this plan, the number and type of staff development and training offerings were determined in response to identified needs of each programmatic level, as well as addressing issues of concern on a fairly universal basis. The result of this practice was that, regardless of the quality of content, training lacked a strategic unifying focus for all schools and program departments. Under the umbrella of a district-wide strategic plan, all training is now aligned with the strategic mission and goals of the district.

The TCS strategic plan requires that each school develop plans consistent with guidelines provided according to 21st Century Learning concepts. The result has been a realignment of professional staff development offerings to support the local school plans.

Staff development and training activities for school based personnel are developed according to the instructional needs identified in each individual school plan.

Exhibit 2-14 shows the TCS mission, vision, and core beliefs that guide the development of the district plan.

**EXHIBIT 2-14
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
MISSION, VISION AND CORE BELIEFS**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Taylor County Board of Education will provide a high quality education which:

- prepares 21st Century Learners who are able to responsibly live, learn and thrive in a digital global society; and
- grows the seeds of greatness in every child, teaching them to achieve to their fullest potential, so that they may be globally intelligent and resilient in our 21st Century world.

VISION STATEMENT

To develop enlightened citizens, able to use project-based initiatives and be globally intelligent and resilient in our 21st Century world.

CORE BELIEFS:

We Believe....

1. students come first;
2. in maximizing each student's potential;
3. respect is essential;
4. high quality instruction with rigor and relevance yields high achievement;
5. education is a shared responsibility among home, school and community; and
6. a safe secure environment is crucial for student success;
7. student and staff attendance is paramount to educational success.

Source: TCS data, August 2012.

COMMENDATION 2-C:

Taylor County Schools developed and implemented a five-year strategic plan used to guide school and employee staff development and training

3.0 *FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT*

3.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the business and financial operations of Taylor County Schools (TCS). Financial management includes the functions of accounting, budgeting, purchasing, and warehouse management. This chapter is organized into five sections as follows:

- 3.1 Financial Services Overview
- 3.2 Financial Structure, Accounting, and Reporting
- 3.3 Budget Management
- 3.4 Purchasing
- 3.5 Warehouse Management

Although the education of students is the major responsibility of TCS, managing the resources that allow the district to provide an effective educational experience for students is critical. It is important to understand the basic responsibilities associated with the business and financial management of a school district. They include:

- An integrated mechanism to translate the district's goals into financial terms.
- Effective financial control and efficient processing of day-to-day financial activities.
- A financial and operational structure to support efficient management of assets.
- Useful financial information provided to the Board of Education (BOE) and district budget managers.
- A budget development process that results in a document that effectively communicates to the BOE and the community where resources are allocated and the value to be gained from the allocations.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The commendations in this chapter include:

- Commendation 3-A** The Finance Department maintains an effective process for managing the day-to-day accounting activities for TCS.
- Commendation 3-B** The Finance Department and school-based finance staff implemented and maintain an improved method of accounting for student activity funds.
- Commendation 3-C** The Finance Department prepares a comprehensive monthly financial report for the BOE.
- Commendation 3-D** The district is implementing the eSchoolMall online purchasing system.
- Commendation 3-E** The district has contracted with a single vendor for copiers.

The following recommendations are included in this chapter:

- Recommendation 3-1** Require in the contract with the TCS auditor that the audit be completed for presentation to the BOE during the month of December following the end of the current fiscal year.
- Recommendation 3-2** Ensure that the Annual Financial Report for the current year and the previous two years are available on the TCS website.
- Recommendation 3-3** Review the reports in the BOE monthly financial report packet to determine which are meaningful to the BOE, provide program reports consistent with the adopted budget and the Annual Financial Report, and include a written analysis with each report.
- Recommendation 3-4** Review the procedures used to develop the monthly financial reports for the BOE to determine why there are variances in the different reports, and make appropriate adjustments.
- Recommendation 3-5** Establish a monthly financial report for each budget manager (including school principals), meet with each manager to discuss the information included, and seek input on how the report can be modified to better meet the needs of schools and departments.
- Recommendation 3-6** Establish a budget development process that requires budget managers to prepare formal budget requests with appropriate justification.
- Recommendation 3-7** Implement a formal budget document that includes prior year actual revenue and expenditure information, an estimate of current year activities, the 2012-13 budget amounts, a description of the various programs, and discussion of program expectations on the individual program budget pages that includes the impact of any financial decisions on the program.
- Recommendation 3-8** Develop the budget, working with principals and central office budget managers, whether involving information regarding the budget or providing interim financial information.
- Recommendation 3-9** Ensure schools are aware of their financial position as the school year closes.
- Recommendation 3-10** Consolidate district purchasing activities into the finance department.
- Recommendation 3-11** Register as a member of U. S. Communities, determine product areas where it would be beneficial to participate in the program, and pursue other cooperative opportunities such as the National Contract Purchasing Program.
- Recommendation 3-12** Implement the use of Purchase-cards (P-cards).
- Recommendation 3-13** Establish a policy and related procedures to ensure that all contracts are coordinated by the finance department and assign responsibility for contract management to the

Treasurer/Chief School Business Official.

Recommendation 3-14 Transfer responsibility for the warehouse from the assistant superintendent for administration and support services to the finance department.

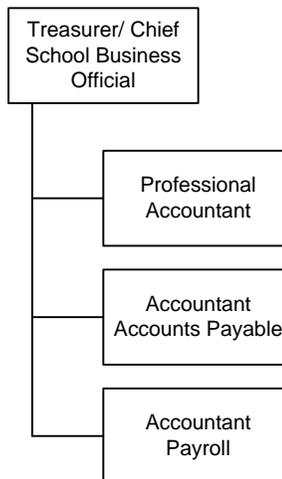
Recommendation 3-15 Acquire and implement the warehouse module associated with the eSchoolMall purchasing system to manage the warehouse.

3.1 Financial Services Overview

The financial operations of TCS are the responsibility of the Treasurer/Chief School Business Official (CSBO). These operations control the collection, disbursement, and accounting for federal, state, and local resources and purchasing services. An additional financial activity, warehouse management, is currently the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for administration and support services.

Exhibit 3-1 shows the current organizational structure associated with the financial management of TCS.

EXHIBIT 3-1 TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS OFFICE OF THE TREASURER/CHIEF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION CHART



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., from TCS information, September 2011.

The financial activities of TCS are required to be in compliance with rules promulgated by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) in compliance with West Virginia Code §18-9B-5 which provides for a uniform system of budgeting. These rules are incorporated in Policy 8100 which contains the *Handbook for School Finance in West Virginia*. Policy 8100 states:

An effective finance system is a significant management tool for planning and for accountability. Such a system insures that the resources will be safeguarded and used for the benefit of the children in each of the school districts. Financial records must be systematically developed and maintained to provide reliable financial information which forms a basis for program evaluation, compliance with legal provisions and developing public confidence in the school system.

The county board of education's budget translates educational needs into a financial plan. This plan should reflect the educational priorities set at the local and state levels. The budget should balance revenues and expenditures, and sound fiscal management should protect its integrity. Periodic audits provide assurance that financial statements are presented fairly and applicable laws are followed.

West Virginia Code 18-9B-5 and 18-9B-9 charges the West Virginia Foard of Education with formulating and prescribing a uniform system of school district budgeting and accounting for the use of all county districts. The regulations governing school district budgeting are contained in the Handbook for School Finance in West Virginia.

The *Handbook* provides very specific requirements for the accounting, management, and reporting of financial activities for the school districts in West Virginia. The *Handbook* was prepared in 1990 and is out of date.

3.2 Financial Structure, Accounting, and Reporting

The overall financial structure for a government organization provides the foundation upon which the programs provided by the entity can be organized and financed. This structure is based upon a fund structure and a set of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for governments that have evolved over a period of years and are currently promulgated by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

In fund accounting, accounts are organized within various funds with each being considered a separate accounting entity. Each fund contains a separate, self-balancing set of accounts used to account for resources that are segregated for specific purposes in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations. Resources are allocated to and accounted for in individual funds based upon the purpose for which they are to be spent.

The various funds used in governmental accounting are grouped into separate categories as follows:

- **Governmental Funds**

- **General Fund** – This fund typically accounts for the majority of the general operating activities of the school district. It is defined as the fund used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

- **Special Revenue Funds** – These funds are established *to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources (other than major capital projects) that are legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.*
- **Debt Service Funds** – Debt service funds are used *to account for the accumulation of resources for, and the payment of, general long-term debt principal and interest.*
- **Capital Projects Funds** – These funds are *utilized to account for financial resources to be used for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities (other than those financed by proprietary funds and trust funds).*
- **Proprietary Funds**
 - **Enterprise Funds** – An enterprise fund may be used *to report any activity for which a fee is charged to external users for goods or services. In an ideal environment, these funds should be designed to recover all of the costs associated with the provision of services.*
 - **Internal Service Funds** – Internal service funds are used *to report any activity that provides goods or services to other funds, departments, or agencies of the primary government and its component units, or to other governments, on a cost reimbursement basis.* The goal of an internal service fund should be to measure the full cost of providing services for the purpose of fully recovering that cost through fees and charges to the user schools or departments.
- **Fiduciary Funds**
 - **Private Purpose Trust Funds** – These funds may be used *to report any trust arrangement not properly reported in a pension trust fund or an investment trust fund under which principal and income benefit individuals, private organizations, or other governments.*
 - **Agency Funds** – Agency funds are used to account for situations where the government’s role is purely custodial. All assets in the fund are offset by a liability to the party on whose behalf they are held.

3.2.1 Fund Structure – West Virginia and Taylor County Schools

The fund structure, as well as the overall chart of accounts for school districts in West Virginia, is mandated by WVDE. The following is a list of the fund options for school districts in West Virginia. Those funds used by TCS are noted.

- **General Current Expense Fund** – Accounts for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund. The following are subsidiary funds in this category:
 - **County (Used by TCS)** – Accounts for the general operations of the county BOE.

- **Excess Levy (Optional, but required if identified in the levy call – Not used by TCS)** – Accounts for the proceeds and expenditure of excess levy monies if required in the levy call to be accounted for in a separate fund.
- **Multi-County Vocational Center (Not used by TCS)** – Accounts for the operations of the multi-county vocational centers.
- **Regional Education Service Center (Not used by TCS)** – Accounts for the operations of the regional education service centers.
- **Trust/Agency (Used by TCS, Student Activity Funds are treated as Agency funds)** – Accounts for operations of material trust funds or fiscal agent activity for another entity.
- **Debt Service Fund (Used by TCS)** – Accounts for the accumulation of resources for, and the payment of, general long-term debt, principal, and interest.
- **Bond Construction Fund (Not used by TCS, no current bond resources)** – Accounts for the financial resources used to acquire or construct major capital facilities.
- **Permanent Improvement Fund (Not used by TCS)** – Accounts for the accumulation of resources and subsequent expenditures for capital improvement activities. The proceeds of the fund must be used only for the support of building and capital improvement projects and cannot be transferred out.
- **Capital Projects Fund (Used by TCS in 2009-10, but not identified in the 2011-12 budget)** – This fund accounts for financial resources used to acquire or construct specific major capital facilities other than by the sale of bonds or the reservation of monies in a permanent improvement fund.
- **Special Revenue Fund (Used by TCS)** – Accounts for the financial resources of the district which are restricted either legally or by the grantor.
- **Special Revenue Fund – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 Funding (Used by TCS)** – Accounts for the financial resources received through the ARRA. Activities in this fund were completed in 2010-11.

3.2.2 Accounting Services

The basic accounting services provided by the finance department include accounts payable, payroll, general ledger, and school support.

FINDING

A review of the general ledger, payroll, accounts payable, and other basic financial/ accounting activities for TCS indicates these fundamental procedures are well-managed and provide the necessary support to the district.

All of the accounting activities for TCS and other school districts in West Virginia are maintained on the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). This system appears to be functioning well for TCS.

COMMENDATION 3-A:

The finance department maintains an effective process for managing the day-to-day accounting activities for TCS.

FINDING

TCS acquired the School Funds Online system during the 2010 fiscal year to upgrade the accounting support for the school-based student activity funds.

This system has resulted in improved management of the student activity funds and although feedback from the school-based staff responsible for maintaining these records has been somewhat mixed, overall this system is easier to use and provides improved information to the schools.

COMMENDATION 3-B:

The finance department and school-based finance staff implemented and maintain an improved method of accounting for student activity funds.

3.2.3 Financial Reporting

TCS and all other districts in West Virginia use the financial management component of the WVEIS for financial management and reporting. Financial reports provided by the TCS Finance Department include the following:

- **Annual Financial Report** – This report is required per West Virginia Code §18-9-3a and must be prepared within ninety days after the beginning of each fiscal year.
- **Audited Annual Financial Report** – This is the annual financial report required by West Virginia Code §6-9-1 which requires each school district to prepare an audited annual financial report that is prepared in compliance with GAAP as defined by GASB
- **Interim financial reports for the BOE** – The Handbook for School Finance in West Virginia requires the following:

Financial affairs of a county board of education should be on the board's agenda at least monthly. At these meetings, the board's chief

financial officer should provide a written financial report, containing full information on each account balance, year-to-date expenditures and receipts, the month's purchases and encumbrances, and any other fiscal matters of more than a routine interest.

- **Interim financial reports for budget managers** – These reports should include budget to actual information for schools and departments and provide the availability for the budget managers to review the monthly transactions.

Annual Financial Report

This report is submitted to the WVDE. It is presented in a format similar to the audited annual financial report, but has not been audited, thus, there is no report from the auditors indicating they present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the district. Also excluded from this report is the single audit which is a report relating to compliance requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement that are applicable to each of the major federal programs in which TCS participates.

This report provides the financial information required by TCS to begin preparation of the annual budget for the following year, however, although usually of immaterial amounts, the financial information contained in the audited annual financial report can vary from the financial information in the state annual financial report.

Audited Annual Financial Report

West Virginia Code §6-9-1 requires each school district to prepare an audited annual financial report that is prepared in compliance with GAAP as defined by GASB.

The audited annual financial report is the final event in the annual planning and budgeting process as the school system completes the financial cycle and lays the foundation for the next budgeting process. There can often be variances between the two reports, although usually of insignificant amounts.

FINDING

For the past three years, the TCS audited Annual Financial Report has not been completed in a timely manner.

The audited Annual Financial Reports for the years ended June 30, 2008, 2009, and 2010 were completed on March 27, 2009, June 3, 2010, and March 25, 2011 respectively. In two cases, the report became available nine months after the end of the fiscal year and just three months prior to adoption of the following year's budget. The June 30, 2009, report was not available for almost 12 months after the end of the fiscal year.

Part of this issue involves the procedures and expectations of the State Auditor's Office. Materials provided by the State Auditor's Office involving requirements for school districts preparing request for proposals for audit services are provided in the *Procedures Manual for Procuring and Conducting Audits and Reviews of Local Governments*, which was revised most recently in August 2007. The manual states:

*The CPA should provide you with the **Data Collection Form for Reporting on Audits of State, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations** upon the issuance of the audit. Depending on the specific instructions of the firm you will be responsible for ensuring the form is sent along with the applicable number of audit reports by the Circular A-133 deadline of nine months to the following address:*

This deadline has apparently become the standard date for completion of audits for school districts and other governmental jurisdictions in West Virginia. **Exhibit 3-2** identifies the release dates for Annual Financial Reports of the major local governmental entities in Taylor County.

**EXHIBIT 3-2
ANALYSIS OF AUDIT RELEASE DATES
GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES IN TAYLOR COUNTY
FISCAL YEARS ENDING JUNE 30, 2008, 2009, AND 2010**

| GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY | FISCAL YEAR END | RELEASE DATE OF ANNUAL AUDIT | | | AVERAGE MONTHS TO COMPLETE AUDIT | AUDITOR |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | | |
| Taylor County Board of Education (1) | 6/30 | 3/27/09 | 6/9/10 | 3/31/11 | 10 | See Note (1) |
| Town of Flemington (2) | 6/30 | 5/12/09 | 8/1/11 | 8/1/11 | 15 | See Note (2) |
| Taylor County Commission (3) | 6/30 | 11/2/09 | 11/4/10 | 7/14/11 | 15 | See Note (3) |
| Taylor County Solid Waste Authority | 6/30 | 8/8/08 | 8/12/09 | 10/7/10 | 2 | Tetrick & Bartlett |

Source: West Virginia State Auditor's Office: Audit Reports.

(1) The firm of Tetrick & Bartlett completed the 2009 report and the State Auditor has completed the reports for 6/30/2009 and 6/30/2010 for Taylor County Schools.

(2) State Auditor completed 6/30/2008 report; the 6/30/09 and 6/30/10 reports were completed by Associates for the Town of Flemington. The 6/30/2009 Report was issued together with the 6/30/2010 Report. The reasons for this are unknown.

(3) The 6/30/2008 report for the County Commission was completed by Lisa K. Thornburg, CPA. The 6/30/2009 and 6/30/2020 reports were completed by the State Auditor.

The GFOA Best Practice, Improving the Timeliness of Financial Reports states:

Financial reports are intended to meet the needs of decision makers. Accordingly, timeliness was identified as one of the characteristics of information in financial reporting in Concepts Statement No. 1 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), Objectives of Financial Reporting. To accomplish this objective, financial reports must be available in to inform decision making. Therefore, financial reports should be published as soon as possible after the end of the reporting period.

Financial reports are intended to meet the needs of decision makers. Accordingly, timeliness was identified as one of the characteristics of information in financial reporting in Concepts Statement No. 1 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), Objectives of Financial Reporting. To accomplish this objective, financial reports must be available to inform decision making. Therefore, financial reports should be published as soon as possible after the end of the reporting period.

Legislative deadlines for submitting financial statements should be viewed as a minimum standard rather than as an ideal objective. The same holds true for the submission deadlines used by various award programs such as the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

While the state annual financial report meets the GFOA timeliness requirements, the audited annual financial report, which is the document relied upon by financial institutions and represents the most reliable financial information, is not completed in a timely manner. The GFOA best practice is directed at both internal reporting and the audited annual financial reports.

RECOMMENDATION 3-1:

Require in the contract with the TCS auditor that the audit be completed for presentation to the BOE during the month of December following the end of the current fiscal year.

This requirement is not unusual as most school districts across the country complete the audited Annual Financial Reports within four to six months after the end of the fiscal year. This recommendation should be implemented by the Treasurer/CSBO beginning with the audit for the period ending June 30, 2012.

FISCAL IMPACT

Because implementation of this recommendation could cause a change in the accepted pattern for audits, there may be a slight increase in the fee for the audit. The fiscal impact for this recommendation cannot be estimated at this time.

FINDING

The Annual Financial Report (AFR) for TCS is not available on the district website.

Although the audited AFR can be obtained from the website of the State Auditor's Office, this does not provide easy access to the information for those interested in reviewing the audited financial activities of TCS.

The GFOA best practice Web Site Presentation of Official Financial Documents states:

The GFOA encourages every government to use its web site as a primary means of communicating financial information to citizens and other interested parties.

RECOMMENDATION 3-2:

Ensure that the audited Annual Financial Report for the current year and the previous two years are available on the TCS website.

Placement of the audited Annual Financial Report on the website will benefit TCS by providing:

- Heightened Awareness – Many potential users of the district’s financial information may only discover that it is available because they find it on the TCS website.
- Universal Accessibility – Information furnished on a website is readily available to a wide range of potential users, such as citizens, other governments, and the press, without charge.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be achieved with only a few hours of the time of the Treasurer/CSBO and the technology staff.

FINDING

The monthly financial reports provided to the BOE are comprehensive.

These reports meet the requirements identified in the West Virginia Handbook which states:

Financial affairs of a county board of education should be on the board’s agenda at least monthly. At these meetings, the board’s chief financial officer should provide a written financial report, containing full information on each account balance, year-to-date expenditures and receipts, the month’s purchases and encumbrances, and any other fiscal matters of more than routine interest.

One feature of the monthly report identifies estimated remaining payroll and payroll related expenses. This gives a clear picture of the anticipated year-end expenditures.

Also, the report identifying the relationship between the current year budget expenditures/revenues and the previous year provides an opportunity to gauge what the year-end expenditures will be.

COMMENDATION 3-C:

The finance department prepares a comprehensive monthly financial report for the BOE.

FINDING

Although the monthly financial report to the BOE is comprehensive and contains useful budgetary information, there are numerous issues involving these reports.

- The focus is on line item object accounts and not on the programs/activities identified in the budget materials provided to the state and in the Annual Financial Report. Thus, it looks at line item expenditures rather than at the expenditures relating to services provided by the district and the responsibilities of the various budget managers, resulting in no consistent flow of financial information from the budget materials to the monthly financial reporting and, ultimately, to the Annual Financial Report.
- In looking at reports for two months, April and May 2011, the written cover memos are the same (boilerplate) with only changes in the monthly totals.
- There are a number of reports included, yet the initial written materials do not reference which report is being discussed in the cover memo. The report being discussed appears to be the second document identified as Report T-2. The written materials are very detailed and hard to follow. For example the items a) through d) are noted on the cover memo as follows:
 - a) the 3rd and 4th lines of this report read:
 - b) Utility Services – about halfway down the page
 - c) energy – about 2/3rd down the page
 - d) Vehicle Supplies – 3 lines down after Energy
- There are descriptions of nine different reports included in the package; with the exception of the discussion related to Report T-2, there is no discussion of the contents of these reports. For example, the following is the information provided regarding Report R-1:
 - i) *This report is a trend analysis of REVENUES received at a specific time across a 7 year period.*
 - ii) *This is not a required report.*
 - There is no discussion relating to the meaning of this information and it is hard to determine how this seven year information is of any value on a month-to-month basis.
 - Each report in the package is referenced similarly to Report R-1, with a description of the report and an indication of whether it is a required report or not. All but two of the reports are identified as “not a required report.”
- Certain reports are identified as General Fund Reports, while the headings of the other reports fail to indicate the source of the financial information. It is noted in small print on the bottom of the second page of the non-general fund reports that “this report includes all funds.”

RECOMMENDATION 3-3:

Review the reports in the BOE monthly financial report packet to determine which are meaningful to the BOE, provide program reports consistent with the adopted budget and the Annual Financial Report, and include a written analysis with each report.

The magnitude of the current monthly reports gives the impression of in-depth financial reporting; however, the reports themselves are of limited value if there is no written analysis or discussion relating to the information contained in these reports.

Two reports, R-1, Revenue Trend Analysis, which provides seven years of revenue data, and Report E-3, which provides similar seven year information for expenditures, appear to be of little value on a monthly basis. This information would be more appropriate on an annual basis. In contrast, Reports R-2 and E-1, which provide comparisons with the prior fiscal year, can be very helpful. The BOE can be provided with effective financial information with fewer financial reports.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources and will require five to ten hours for the treasurer/CSBO to redesign or eliminate selected reports. As all but Report T-2 appear to be from spreadsheets and are, therefore, prepared manually, reducing the number of reports will result in less time spent preparing these documents on a monthly basis.

FINDING

There are inconsistencies in the information contained in the monthly reports.

For example, Reports T-2 and E-2, identified as providing general fund budget and expenditure data, contain different amounts for numerous budget and expenditure categories.

- Report T-2 – This report is described as *a printout of just the general fund expenditures in comparison to budget.*
- Report E-2 – *This report shows our current year general fund expenditures for just the General Fund in comparison to our current budget versus the prior year at the same date.*

Exhibit 3-3 provides a comparison of the budget information contained in these two reports. Of the 35 line items contained in these reports, there is a variance in the amounts on 24 of the accounts; this represents 69 percent of the total items. If the Transfers Out and Reserves amounts are excluded, the total dollar variance is \$1,540,400, which represents a 9 percent variance between the total budget amounts in the two reports.

**EXHIBIT 3-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ANALYSIS OF BUDGET AMOUNTS
MAY 31, 2011 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

| ACCOUNT TITLES | PER REPORT T-2 | PER REPORT E-2 | E-2 OVER (UNDER) T-2 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Professional Personnel | \$ 7,566,050 | \$ 7,981,050 | \$415,000 |
| Service Personnel | 2,515,738 | 2,556,723 | 40,985 |
| Professional Substitutes | 280,450 | 280,450 | - |
| Service Substitutes | 162,616 | 162,694 | 78 |
| Board Member Salary | 40,000 | 40,000 | - |
| Group Insurance | 2,216,990 | 2,216,990 | - |
| Social Security | 765,975 | 770,643 | 4,668 |
| Retirement Contributions | 1,053,209 | 1,058,861 | 5,652 |
| Unemployment Compensation | 3,073 | 3,073 | - |
| Workers' Compensation | 73,007 | 75,260 | 2,253 |
| Professional Education Services | 61,052 | 61,052 | - |
| Employee Training | 6,573 | 11,623 | 5,050 |
| Other Professional Services | 137,721 | 137,721 | - |
| Technical Services | 27,871 | 27,871 | - |
| Utility Services | 47,000 | 48,000 | 1,000 |
| Cleaning Services | 39,528 | 40,968 | 1,440 |
| Repair/Maintenance Services | 57,244 | 226,950 | 169,706 |
| Rentals | 3,332 | 6,232 | 2,900 |
| Construction Services | 37,582 | 219,373 | 181,791 |
| Regular Student Transportation Svcs | 1,000 | 1,000 | - |
| Insurance | 124,788 | 124,788 | - |
| Communications | 15,541 | 112,844 | 97,303 |
| Advertising | 12,949 | 12,949 | - |
| Printing/Binding | 7,838 | 8,591 | 753 |
| Staff Travel-General | 30,242 | 30,242 | - |
| Intereducational Purchased Services | - | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Supplies - General | 178,922 | 420,549 | 241,627 |
| Energy | 594,432 | 603,741 | 9,309 |
| Books, Periodicals | - | 83,053 | 83,053 |
| Supplies - Technology | 19,246 | 60,539 | 41,293 |
| Vehicle Supplies | 367,847 | 368,419 | 572 |
| Equipment | 34,184 | 76,657 | 42,473 |
| Dues and Fees | 6,962 | 7,038 | 76 |
| Debt Related Expenditures | - | 185,328 | 185,328 |
| Miscellaneous Expenditures | - | 90 | 90 |
| Total Excluding Transfers | 16,488,962 | 18,029,362 | 1,540,400 |
| Transfers Out | - | 1,850,042 | 1,850,042 |
| Sub Total | 16,488,962 | 19,879,404 | 3,390,442 |
| Reserves | - | 1,026,351 | 1,026,351 |
| TOTAL | \$ 16,488,962 | \$ 20,905,755 | \$ 4,416,793 |

Source: Taylor County Schools Financial Report for the Month Ended May 31, 2011.

Exhibit 3-4 provides information for the expenditures included on Reports T-2 and E-2. In this case, 72 percent of the line items contain variances between the two reports and excluding Reserves, there is a \$1,136,157, or 9 percent, variance in the total expenditures.

**EXHIBIT 3-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE AMOUNTS
MAY 31, 2011 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

| | PER REPORT T-2 | PER REPORT E-2 | E-2 OVER (UNDER) T-2 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Professional Personnel | \$ 5,930,828 | \$ 6,172,981 | \$ 242,153 |
| Service Personnel | 2,068,258 | 2,104,537 | 36,279 |
| Professional Substitutes | 222,686 | 222,388 | (298) |
| Service Substitutes | 129,122 | 129,165 | 43 |
| Board Member Salary | 40,500 | 40,500 | - |
| Group Insurance | 1,702,187 | 1,744,688 | 42,501 |
| Social Security | 612,706 | 633,232 | 20,526 |
| Retirement Contributions | 837,380 | 862,831 | 25,451 |
| Unemployment Compensation | 3,017 | 3,017 | - |
| Workers' Compensation | 55,233 | 58,291 | 3,058 |
| Professional Education Services | 44,231 | 44,231 | - |
| Employee Training | 3,837 | 5,011 | 1,174 |
| Other Professional Services | 87,470 | 87,470 | - |
| Technical Services | 22,086 | 22,086 | - |
| Utility Services | 40,914 | 41,689 | 775 |
| Cleaning Services | 32,445 | 33,552 | 1,107 |
| Repair/Maintenance Services | 17,857 | 175,935 | 158,078 |
| Rentals | 3,332 | 7,339 | 4,007 |
| Construction Services | 37,582 | 149,847 | 112,265 |
| Regular Student Transportation Svcs | 659 | 659 | - |
| Insurance | 94,010 | 94,010 | - |
| Communications | 9,956 | 31,650 | 21,694 |
| Advertising | 7,358 | 7,358 | - |
| Printing/Binding | 7,197 | 7,949 | 752 |
| Staff Travel-General | 11,400 | 11,400 | - |
| Intereducational Purchased Services | - | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Supplies - General | 97,917 | 259,231 | 161,314 |
| Energy | 518,523 | 526,534 | 8,011 |
| Books, Periodicals | - | 81,141 | 81,141 |
| Supplies - Technology | 14,110 | 49,759 | 35,649 |
| Vehicle Supplies | 271,604 | 272,099 | 495 |
| Equipment | 29,184 | 56,546 | 27,362 |
| Dues and Fees | 3,799 | 3,875 | 76 |
| Debt Related Expenditures | - | 144,454 | 144,454 |
| Miscellaneous Expenditures | - | 90 | 90 |
| Transfers Out | - | - | - |

**EXHIBIT 3-4 (Continued)
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE AMOUNTS
MAY 31, 2011 MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

| | PER REPORT T-2 | PER REPORT E-2 | E-2 OVER (UNDER) T-2 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Sub Total | 12,957,388 | 14,093,545 | 1,136,157 |
| Reserves | - | 1,512 | 1,512 |
| Instruction | | | |
| Supporting Services | | | |
| Community Services | | | |
| Capital Outlay | | | |
| Transfers & Other Financing Uses | | | |
| TOTAL | \$12,957,388 | \$14,095,057 | \$ 1,137,669 |

Source: Taylor County Schools Financial Report for the Month Ended May 31, 2011.

In addition, a brief review of the May 31, 2011, All Funds Revenue Reports, R-1 and R-2, indicate variances in the total revenues for May 31, 2011, and May 31, 2010. It appears these reports are not being reconciled on a monthly basis.

RECOMMENDATION 3-4:

Review the procedures used to develop the monthly financial reports for the BOE to determine why there are variances in the different reports, and make appropriate adjustments.

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with **Recommendation 3-3** which recommends a reduction in the number of reports provided; thus, only those reports to be retained will require updating.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. If done in conjunction with **Recommendation 3-3**, it should take the CSBO an additional five hours to make the appropriate corrections to the reports; however, this will reduce the time required to prepare these reports in the future.

FINDING

The TCS Finance Department does not provide financial reports to the schools on a monthly basis.

Schools request financial information from the director of curriculum and instruction. subsequently, the finance department generates the reports, and the curriculum and instruction department distributes them to the schools.

It is the responsibility of the finance department to issue interim financial reports, which should be monthly. The current process has created the situation where school

principals typically develop their own internal spreadsheets and update them manually to monitor the financial activities for their schools.

RECOMMENDATION 3-5:

Establish a monthly financial report for each budget manager (including school principals), meet with each manager to discuss the information included, and seek input on how the report can be modified to better meet the needs of schools and departments.

Although GFOA provides no guidance in the area of internal interim financial reporting, it is clearly important for the financial information to be reported monthly to those with budgetary responsibilities. This information should be provided by the finance department, and not an intermediary.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation should take minimal time as it will require the generation of standard budget reports from the WVEIS. The key will be for the recipients of the reports to understand them and be able to use them in the management of their budgetary responsibilities. Group meetings could be arranged for the principal group and their financial secretaries. Similar meetings could be set up for the central staff. This would require four to eight hours of the CSBO and two hours each for those being trained.

3.3 Budget Management

Effective school systems allocate scarce resources to programs and services using a structured budget process. This process is one of the most significant activities undertaken by TCS. The quality of the decisions resulting from the budget process and the level of acceptance of these decisions by all parties is directly related to the process utilized and the ability of the proposed and final budget documents to communicate the priorities of the school system in financial terms.

ASBO and seven other state and local government associations, including GFOA, created the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) and charged it with developing a set of recommended practices in the area of state and local budgeting. The NACSLB's definition, mission, and key characteristics of the budget process are as follows:

- **Definition of the Budget Process.** The budget process consists of activities that encompass the development, implementation, and evaluation of a plan for the provision of services and capital assets.
- **Mission of the Budget Process.** To help decision makers make informed choices about the provision of services and capital assets and to promote stakeholder participation in the process.
- Key characteristics of the budget process are identified as follows:

- Incorporates a long-term perspective.
- Establishes linkages to broad organizational goals.
- Focuses budget decisions on results and outcomes.
- Involves and promotes effective communication with stakeholders.
- Provides incentives to government management and employees.

The NACSLB also states:

The key characteristics of good budgeting make it clear that the budget process is not simply an exercise in balancing revenues and expenditures one year at a time, but is strategic in nature, encompassing a multi-year financial and operating plan that allocates resources on the basis of identified goals. A good budget process moves beyond the traditional concept of line item expenditure control, providing incentives and flexibility to managers that can lead to improved program efficiency and effectiveness.

The document identifies four fundamental principles:

- **Principle I – Establish Broad Goals**
 - Assess Community Needs, Priorities, Challenges, and Opportunities
 - Identify Opportunities and Challenges for Government Services
 - Develop and disseminate Broad Goals
- **Principle II – Develop Approaches**
 - Adopt Financial Policies
 - Develop Programmatic, Operating, and Capital Policies and Plans
 - Develop Programs and Services that are Consistent with Policies and Plans
 - Develop Management Strategies
- **Principle III – Develop Budget**
 - Develop a Process for Preparing and Adopting a Budget
 - Develop and Evaluate Financial Options
 - Make Choices Necessary to Adopt a Budget
- **Principle IV – Evaluate Performance**
 - Monitor, Measure, and Evaluate Performance
 - Make Adjustments as Needed

It should be noted that Principles I and II involve planning and goals and Principle IV addresses the need to evaluate performance. Only Principle III relates to the actual budget development process. From an NACSLB perspective, the most significant activities are those that provide the foundation for the budget decisions.

FINDING

The TCS budget request process is informal and justification for budget requests is not required.

The process used in development of the 2011-12 budget by TCS did not include a formal process for gathering information from the schools/departments. Consequently, the process does not provide an audit trail from the original budget requests by budget managers to the adopted budget. Consultants requested the following materials prior to the onsite visit:

Guidelines, instructions, and calendar for preparation of the annual budget, including budget and staffing formulas.

The purpose of this request was to see the process used by TCS to develop the annual budget. The materials received included the following:

- Board of Education Budget Calendar – This was not a calendar for TCS, but a calendar published by the WVDE. It is not unique to TCS.
- Instructions for Preparing and Submitting the Proposed Budget for the 2011-12 Year – This is also a document provided by WVDE and is the tool used by WVDE to communicate the responsibilities required of the school districts in preparing the budget materials for WVDE; it does not provide information regarding the preparation of the TCS budget.
- Final Computation (HB4588 with 60% Phase-In) Public Schools Support Program – This report provides the detailed calculation for the Public School Support Program for every district in West Virginia. It does not relate to the information requested.
- Taylor County Board of Education – Board Work Session materials for May 12, 2010, and May 16, 2011.
- Support materials provided with the Board Work Sessions.

Most school districts develop an instruction manual to support the participation of those in the organization in the budget development process. This includes a district specific budget calendar, instructions on how to complete manual or electronic forms for budget requests, and the desired documentation to support the budget requests.

The NACSLB Practice 8.2 states the following:

Practice:

A government should prepare general policy guidelines and budget preparation instructions for each budget cycle.

Outputs:

Guidelines and instructions should be prepared in a written format but may also be presented in an electronic format or through training and/or oral presentation.

The GFOA publication, *Preparing High Quality Budget Documents for School Districts*, contains examples of numerous best practices for various aspects of budgeting for school districts. The example addressing the budget preparation process provides information from Dallas Independent School District on page 156 of the publication.

Each campus or central organization is provided with historical data related to the current year positions and expenditures. Electronic forms for central office and paper forms for campuses are provided to each organization for ease in identifying all funds. Organizations return the completed detail budget preparation forms outlining the mission and goals of the unit and budget change requests, including justification, to Budget Development and Control.

TCS does not have formal instructions for district staff with budgetary responsibility. Consultants were told that those with budget needs send memorandums to the CSBO. One example provided to consultants was a handwritten item entitled "2011-2012 Budget Wish List, Transportation" which contained the following:

- Steam Cleaner Pressure Washer - \$2,500
- Bus Lift System (Grey Model 1605) 2-Pod \$19,708 delivered, 4 Pod \$36,000 Delivered, Work height 74" 64,000 lbs. capacity, lifetime warranty on workmanship, one year on parts
- Bus Wash System - \$26,900
- Replace Concrete in Front of Garage - \$4,000
- Storage Building or Container - \$3,000
- Clean Floor Drains

Other items that appear to have been written on the sheet later, as they have different handwriting, include:

- Fire Alarm System
- Camera Upgrade - \$10,000
- Phase 2 of Radios - \$15,000

- Uniforms
 - Mechanics - \$2,000
 - Drivers - \$10,000
- Tool Box - \$5,000
- Tools - \$5,000
- 30 Days Summer/Assistant Mechanic-Temporary Position
- Half-Time
- 20 Working Days in July, 10 in August

Of these items, the \$5,000 for the tool box and \$5,000 for tools had been added to a detailed worksheet developed by the CSBO. There is an additional worksheet that indicates the following items have been funded:

- Bus Lift System, 4 pod - \$36,000
- New Repeater and 2nd phase of new radios - \$15,000
- Steam Cleaner - \$2500

These items do not appear to be included on the detailed worksheet.

RECOMMENDATION 3-6:

Establish a budget development process that requires budget managers to prepare formal budget requests with appropriate justification.

The budget instructions should be provided in a manual for those with budget management responsibilities. The manual will be used to prepare budget requests for individual areas of responsibility in a formal manner, including budget request forms and the appropriate justification to support those requests.

The CSBO has developed an excellent internal process for tracking the development of the budget for TCS. This includes detailed calculations for each position and identifies approved budget increases. These materials provide an excellent foundation for the recommended changes in the budget development process, and should be an integral part of the budget instruction manual.

Principals and department managers must be provided with clear direction regarding their role in developing the budget. A well-conceived manual that includes assigned account codes and the necessary documentation for any requested program improvements needs to be provided.

This is a standard practice in school districts and other local governmental entities across the country and would be the first step to enhance the roles of principals and department managers in the budgetary process.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources, but will require time on the part of the CSBO to develop the manual, design the forms, and train the staff in the use of these new procedures. This should take 10 to 15 hours of staff time over a period of months.

FINDING

TCS does not prepare a formal budget document.

The budget materials provided to the consultant team are consistent with the forms required by the WVDE and consisted of the following pages:

- General Current Expense Fund
- Special Revenue fund
- Debt Service Fund
- Signature page certifying the foregoing is a true copy of the proposed budget being considered for adoption by the BOE on the 25th day of May 2010

As noted in the NACSLB materials, the budget is a key decision making document and a formal document should be prepared that identifies the decisions that have led to the adoption of the document.

RECOMMENDATION 3-7:

Implement a formal budget document that includes prior year actual revenue and expenditure information, an estimate of current year activities, the 2012-13 budget amounts, a description of the various programs, and discussion of program expectations on the individual program budget pages that includes the impact of any financial decisions on the program.

A formal budget document will provide a means to aid in the analysis of the current year budget while providing an audit trail that will clearly allow the BOE and the public to see the overall relationships and changes in financial activity from year-to-year.

FISCAL IMPACT

Establishing a more formal budget process and document will require a significant amount of time on the part of the CSBO. Designing the document will take thought and a number of trial and error attempts to come up with the most appropriate format. This will require at least 50 hours of time for the CSBO.

FINDING

The budgets for the schools are communicated to the principals by the director of curriculum and instruction.

As noted in the finding related to **Recommendation 3-5**, it is the responsibility of the finance department to provide budget and financial information within the organization.

The current process places the director of curriculum and Instruction between the principals and the CSBO, which minimizes the ability of the CSBO to have direct contact with the principals. However, the current process also allows the director of curriculum

and instruction to review the school budgets in terms of alignment with district program goals.

RECOMMENDATION 3-8:

Develop the budget, working with principals and central office budget managers, whether involving information regarding the budget or providing interim financial information.

Each principal has the responsibility for managing their budget and they should be able to interact directly with the individual responsible for managing the budget development process. At the same time, the director of curriculum and instruction should review the school budget request to ensure purchases are aligned with district curriculum and instruction goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost to the district. Although it may require additional time to communicate the changes, this should be offset by improved efficiencies in the overall process.

FINDING

School principals are not aware of their year-end financial position.

When meeting with the schools, it was the understanding of representatives of the high school that they would be unable to carry forward resources provided by the excess tax levy for the 2011-12 fiscal year. MGT was told by the CSBO that this was not the case, and that part of the issue was the fact that the school had very few carryover resources due to additional field trip costs that had not been recorded by mid-June when school staff left for the summer.

This situation indicates a lack of effective communication between the school and the finance department, an indicator of the issues included with the findings associated with **Recommendations 3-3 and 3-5**.

RECOMMENDATION 3-9:

Ensure schools are aware of their financial position as the school year closes.

This is a significant issue as it is important for the school principal to be aware of the year-end financial position for the school prior to the summer break. All parties must be cognizant of how year-end activities will impact the budget for the following year. This situation can be easily resolved with ongoing communication during the year and establishing year-end procedures to assure those at the school are aware of their financial position.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources and should require very little time for both the CSBO and school-based staff. This would require no more than two hours of time for the five school principals and the financial secretaries, and a total of ten hours for the CSBO, or a staff member in the finance department.

3.4 Purchasing

The purchasing functions for TCS are overseen by the CSBO with support from the accountant/accounts payable staff.

FINDING

The district has acquired the eSchoolMall online purchasing system and plans to implement the system during the 2011-12 fiscal year.

eSchoolMall is an online purchasing system that provides users with catalogs and allows for the timely processing of purchase orders. This system has been successfully implemented in other districts in West Virginia and will enhance the purchasing function within TCS.

COMMENDATION 3-D:

The district is implementing the eSchoolMall purchasing system.

FINDING

The CSBO has recently entered into a contract with a single vendor for copier equipment, supplies, and services.

Prior to this agreement, TCS, like many other school districts, had agreements with a variety of vendors, resulting in inconsistent service, and increased expenses related to contract administration and accounts payable.

The new single vendor contract provides full services to include provision of toner and related supplies and equipment maintenance. Part of the agreement was for the vendor to buy back all of the existing copiers and settle all of the existing vendor agreements.

The specific savings to TCS is unknown because of the different previous agreements; however, the successful vendor was \$30,000 less than the next lowest bid. The use of a single vendor will provide TCS with more consistent service, and will provide the ability to effectively monitor the copier costs for the overall district.

COMMENDATION 3-E:

The district has contracted with a single vendor for copiers.

FINDING

The TCS purchasing functions are decentralized.

There are currently ten individuals within TCS who can establish purchase orders. They include the following:

- Superintendent's Secretary
- Assistant Superintendent's Secretary
- Federal Programs Secretaries (2)
- Transportation Secretary
- Special Services Secretary
- Child Nutrition – (2 - Director and Secretary)
- Grafton High School Secretary
- Accounts Payable Accountant

This situation has evolved because of the limited staffing capability for central purchasing activities at TCS and in response to the need “to get the job done” throughout the organization.

Policy 8200 of the WVDE states the following:

The governing body of each LEA is responsible for the purchasing, receiving, safeguarding, and disposing of all goods and services obtained for use by the LEA. This authority may be delegated to the superintendent, or director of a RESA or MCV, or to a designee(s).

This policy goes on to identify a number of specific responsibilities to include items such as:

- Ensuring that all purchases and contracts of the Lead Education Agency (LEA) are made in accordance with the provisions of applicable state statutes, this policy, and all local policies.
- Prescribing the manner in which commodities are purchased, delivered, stored, and distributed.

The purchasing function is an important point of internal control for any governmental entity as it must contain appropriate procedures to assure that all transactions are made at arm's length.

The current arrangement at TCS is working; however, consolidating purchasing functions to the finance department could result in potentially substantial savings and benefits to the district. For example:

- Internal controls would be improved
- Bulk or just-in-time purchases would be implemented

- The time the 10 individuals spend on purchasing would be reduced, possibly resulting in fewer issuing purchasing requests, and one full-time position assigned exclusively to purchasing functions.
- Purchases would be consolidated for efficiency delivery and warehousing.
- The purchasing and payment processes would be simplified, with reduced paperwork and time lapse between request and delivery.
- Contracts would be more accessible and more manageable.

RECOMMENDATION 3-10:

Consolidate district purchasing activities into the finance department.

The CSBO should review the specific job responsibilities of all positions currently involved with the purchasing process to determine if responsibilities can be consolidated. If necessary, one positions could be transferred to the finance department to support the overall purchasing activities for the district.

The key to this process would be to identify the percentage of time these individuals are spending on purchasing activities. Expanding the purchasing function in the finance department would result in a reduction in the time spent on purchasing within individual departments.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources, but will take a concentrated effort to effectively review the various job responsibilities, reassign the responsibilities, and to restructure the purchasing process for those departments involved. This would take 20 to 40 hours of the time of the CSBO and others within the central office.

FINDING

TCS does not participate in any purchasing cooperatives.

Purchasing cooperatives allow school districts and other governmental entities, regardless of size, to gain the benefits of economies of scale by being associated with other entities that can expand the overall volume of purchases.

One such cooperative, U.S. Communities, works with governmental entities whereby a single unit establishes a contract that can be used by all entities nationally. One example is the contract for school furniture with Virco, Inc., which was solicited for U.S. Communities by Wichita Public Schools. The U.S. Communities website contains all of the pertinent information regarding the contract including the original request for proposal (RFP) and the contract documents. This agreement is structured to provide differing discounts from the standard price based on the overall dollar volume of the order.

The U.S. Communities program was founded by the following entities:

- Association of School Business Officials (ASBO)
- National Association of Counties (NACO)
- National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NGIP)
- National League of Cities (NLC)
- United States Conference of Mayors (USCM)

Comments from other school systems that have accessed U.S. Communities are as follows:

- National Institute of Governmental Purchasing

U.S. Communities has already identified best practices within the public procurement industry that ensures fairness and integrity. I certainly would encourage any public agency that is looking to leverage any cooperative contract to look seriously at the U. S. Communities products and services.

- Royal Independent School District, Texas

We are a small school district and do not always have the manpower to process our own RFPs. We rely many times on cooperatives to be the extension of our purchasing department. Your web site is very user friendly.

- Pershing County School District, Nevada

The U.S. Communities contract saved our school over \$1,000 on a \$6,500 order. We could not be happier with the results.

There are numerous contracts currently in place that include office/school supplies, office furniture, technology products, janitorial supplies, and office machines. A key element of the U.S. Communities program is that vendors will not provide a lower price than that included in the U.S. Communities contract to any other entity.

RECOMMENDATION 3-11:

Register as a member of U. S. Communities, determine product areas where it would be beneficial to participate in the program, and pursue other cooperative opportunities such as the National Contract Purchasing Program.

A number of the RESAs in West Virginia provide cooperative purchasing services. Purchasing cooperatives are of significant value to smaller school districts that are provided the opportunity to “piggy back” with other districts to achieve economies of scale.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no cost to TCS. The U.S. Communities program has no registration fees. Most other cooperatives involve voluntary collaboration with other entities. Participation in the U.S. Communities or any other purchasing cooperative will result in both direct savings and a reduction of the administrative time required to process and manage the purchasing activities of TCS.

FINDING

TCS does not participate in the Purchase Card (P-card) program sponsored by the West Virginia State Auditor's Office.

This is a successful program that has been in place since 1996. The State Auditor's website states:

The Purchasing Card Program has achieved great success being recognized by VISA International in a 2004 nationwide study performed by Deloitte & Touche, which called WV's program "one of the nation's best", having implemented 12 of the nation's 26 best practices.

Of the 55 school districts in West Virginia, only 25 currently participate in this program. The use of P-Cards is identified as a recommended practice by GFOA. Benefits to the cardholder (school administrator or department manager), as identified by GFOA, include:

- Convenience of purchasing without a purchase order.
- Expedited delivery of goods.
- Expanded list of merchants from which to purchase.
- Reduced paperwork.

Benefits to the school district include:

- Simplified purchase and payment process.
- Lower overall transaction costs per purchase.
- Increased management information on purchasing histories.
- Reduced paperwork.
- Decentralized procurement function.
- Ability to set and control purchasing dollar limits.
- Control purchases to specific merchant categories.
- Receipt of rebates from the bank based upon dollar volume of total purchases.

Disadvantages of P-cards include:

- Potential for duplicate payments to vendors (payments no longer recorded by vendor).
- Perception in the public about issuing "credit cards" to employees may be negative.

- Potential for abuse despite the controls available.

The use of P-cards in school districts and other governmental entities can help to reduce the paper work associated with the purchase request/purchase order process.

RECOMMENDATION 3-12:

Implement the use of Purchase Cards (P-cards).

The use of P-Cards in TCS could help to alleviate some of the issues identified in **Recommendation 3-10**. It may be appropriate to start small, perhaps with the Transportation Department and Grafton High School.

The State Auditor's Office provides detailed procedures and offers training opportunities to support this program.

FISCAL IMPACT

Although no specific dollar amount can be identified for TCS, the P-Card program provided one district in West Virginia with over \$3,000 in revenue from rebates. The use of the P-card program will also allow for a simplified purchasing process that will reduce the time spent on purchasing activities.

FINDING

TCS has no centralized contract management capability.

The total contractual obligations of TCS are unknown. There is no central location that contains all of the district contracts or the documentation supporting the selection of the existing contractors.

RECOMMENDATION 3-13:

Establish a policy and related procedures to ensure that all contracts are coordinated by the finance department and assign responsibility for contract management to the Treasurer/Chief School Business Official.

The situation at TCS is not unusual as many districts become focused on achieving day-to-day responsibilities with little attention to a coordinated process for contractual obligations.

By establishing a policy on contract management, it will be possible to establish a single location within the district to identify and review various contracts. This will also provide the ability of TCS to effectively manage these contracts and renew them as appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACT

This will be a time consuming activity that can be accomplished with the existing staff. It will require 20 to 40 hours of staff time within the finance department over a period of months to complete.

3.5 Warehouse Management

TCS currently has a small warehouse that contains custodial supplies and freezers for the food services program. This program is staffed by two individuals, a bus driver and a bus aide, who each work approximately four hours per day on warehouse activities. The warehouse deliveries also include the U.S. Mail and in-house mail deliveries. In-house mail deliveries occur three days a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A regular delivery schedule has been established for the warehouse inventory items. Overall, the warehouse is well organized and is maintained in a professional manner. This activity takes place with very little oversight.

FINDING

The warehouse function is currently the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for administration and support services.

Managing a warehouse is typically a responsibility of the finance department as inventory management and control is a finance activity and it improves internal control to have a separation of duties between those who use the materials and those responsible for managing and accounting for them.

RECOMMENDATION 3-14:

Transfer responsibility for the warehouse from the assistant superintendent for administration and support services to the finance department.

*In the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) publication, *Warehousing and Inventory Control*, it is noted that in more than 90 percent of public jurisdictions, the centralized warehouse is placed in the procurement department. Alternative arrangements include placement in the finance department, which may also include the procurement department.*

TCS has no formal procurement department and the purchasing function is the responsibility of the Treasurer/CSBO.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost to TCS.

FINDING

The district lacks a structured warehouse inventory system.

A structured inventory system can track usage of materials, identify economic reorder points, and identify those products that may no longer be used and, thus, should be disposed of. Another key item is the need for accurate recordkeeping to assure accountability for the inventory. There is much greater potential for fraud in a warehouse system where there is a large number of items in inventory with no records to document

the accountability for these items. A structured inventory system will enable the district to determine if warehouse operations are efficient.

RECOMMENDATION 3-15:

Acquire and implement the warehouse module associated with the eSchoolMall purchasing system to manage the warehouse.

The eSchoolMall purchasing system is a proven tool that is used by other school districts in West Virginia that will enhance the ability of TCS to effectively manage the existing warehouse facility.

There are currently no issues with warehouse operation; however, prudent financial management requires an inventory system to document warehouse activities. This protects the staff responsible for the inventory as well as the district.

This system should be acquired and implemented as soon as fiscal resources become available.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated cost for the eSchoolMall inventory system is \$5,500. The warehouse employees will spend time entering inventory into the system and completing the initial formal inventory. For purposes of this calculation, a conservative estimate of 30 hours per employee is used, with each employee paid \$10 per hour plus an additional \$2.00 per hour for benefits. This would result in a one-time cost of \$720 in additional compensation for the employees. The total one-time cost should be \$6,220.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Acquire eSchoolMall Warehouse System | (\$5,500) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Complete Initial Inventory | (\$ 720) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| TOTAL | (\$6,220) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

4.0 CHILD NUTRITION

4.0 CHILD NUTRITION

This chapter presents findings, commendations, and recommendations regarding management and operations of Taylor County Schools' (TCS) Child Nutrition Program. The three major sections of this chapter are:

- 4.1 Staffing
- 4.2 Financial Management
- 4.3 Program Compliance

CHAPTER SUMMARY

TCS consists of five schools with an enrollment of approximately 2,395 students, serving 1,654 lunches per day. The child nutrition department participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program, the After-School Snack Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable programs sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In addition, the USDA provides commodity foods for use in these programs. At the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, 53.53 percent of TCS students were approved for free and reduced-price meals, an increase from 48.48 percent last year.

During the review, consultants examined a wide variety of documents including policy and procedure handbooks, personnel records, participation data, financial records, customer surveys, purchasing documents, organizational charts, and position descriptions. MGT conducted interviews with all central office personnel in the Child Nutrition Department, the Treasurer/Chief School Business Official (CSBO), and school-based administrators and staff. These activities allowed the consultants to gain insight into the operational routines of the department, make recommendations, and identify commendations.

The TCS Child Nutrition Department has historically operated with a deficit, requiring general revenue funds to be transferred to the program. The deficit is due to unpaid meal charges accumulated throughout the school year by both students and adults. In 2010-11, the department ended the year with a \$117,866 deficit: \$112,953 in student unpaid meal charges and \$4,913 from staff and/or adult unpaid meal charges. In 2011, the district transferred general revenue funds totaling \$503,431 to the food services program.

The following commendation is presented in this chapter:

Commendation 4-A Flemington Elementary has participated in the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program for two years.

The following recommendations are presented in this chapter:

Recommendation 4-1 Recalculate meal equivalents and reduce the amount of labor at schools to align meals per labor hour (MPLH) with recommended industry standards.

Recommendation 4-2 Establish procedures to collect funds for humanitarian meals

- provided to children and eliminate adult charged meals.
- Recommendation 4-3** Decrease the cost per meal to 35 percent of revenue as recommended by industry standards.
- Recommendation 4-4** Increase full paid breakfast and lunch prices by \$0.25 to comply with federal regulations.
- Recommendation 4-5** Increase student breakfast participation to 50 percent by introducing more convenient and successful programs like Breakfast in the Classroom or a Grab-N-Go Breakfast.
- Recommendation 4-6** Create monthly profit and loss statements for each site.
- Recommendation 4-7** Create a marketing plan to increase participation involving students, parents, teachers, department staff, and members of the community.
- Recommendation 4-8** Restructure district accounting methods to identify child nutrition with its own accounting fund.
- Recommendation 4-9** Conduct annual compliance training to all persons working with National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

4.1 Staffing

FINDING

The TCS food services labor and fringe benefits represent 48.1 percent of total revenue, which is 3.1 percent higher than recommended industry standards.

The Child Nutrition Department follows benchmarking standards described by state statute as opposed to industry standards, which are more stringent. According to industry standards, the method for calculating efficient labor practices is determined by the number of meal equivalents (ME) or meals produced per paid labor hour (MPLH). The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) at the University of Mississippi, a USDA partner in child nutrition protocol, recommends 45 percent as an optimal target for labor hours.

According to both state statute and industry standard, one lunch is the basic conversion factor for MPLH. Industry standards dictate that one lunch is equivalent to .67 breakfasts, .33 after school snacks, and 2.84 a la carte dollars. The district is currently using the state standard that one lunch is equivalent to .75 breakfasts and .75 after school snacks. There is minimal impact on ME generated by a la carte sales which are, therefore, not part of the ME equation.

The industry standard conversion factors to determine ME are identified in **Exhibit 4-1**.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
MEAL EQUIVALENT AND MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH) CALCULATIONS**

| MEAL TYPE | CONVERSION FACTOR | MEAL EQUIVALENTS (ME) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| # Lunches Per Day _____ | X 1 | = _____ |
| # Breakfasts Per Day _____ | X .67 | = _____ |
| # After-school Snacks Per Day _____ | X .33 | = _____ |
| A la carte \$ Per Day _____ | ÷ 2.84 | = _____ |
| Add Total Meal Equivalents by Category | Total | _____ Total ME |
| To Determine MPLH Per School: ME Per Day ÷ Total Labor Hours Per Day = _____ MPLH | | |

Source: <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20110623105632.pdf>, 2011.

MPLH are calculated once the correct number of MEs for each school has been determined. **Exhibit 4-2** shows a sample staffing guideline based on the industry standard that is used in this report. Other criteria to consider when assigning labor include number of meals or MEs served, number and type of services offered, amount of convenience foods used, skill level of employees, complexity of menu, and type of production system.

**EXHIBIT 4-2
SAMPLE STAFFING GUIDELINES**

| MEAL EQUIVALENTS | MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH) TOTAL HOURS | |
|------------------|---|-------------|
| | CONVENIENCE SYSTEM | |
| | MPLH | TOTAL HOURS |
| 10-100 | 12 | 8 |
| 101-150 | 13 | 7-12 |
| 151-200 | 14 | 11-14 |
| 201-250 | 15 | 13-17 |
| 251-300 | 16 | 16-19 |
| 301-400 | 18 | 18-22 |
| 401-500 | 19 | 21-26 |
| 501-600 | 19 | 26-32 |
| 601-700 | 20 | 30-35 |
| 701-800 | 22 | 31-36 |
| 801-900 | 23 | 35-39 |
| 901-1000 | 23 | 39-43 |

Source: <http://scn.ky.gov/costcontrol/costcontrol.pdf>.

MPLH calculations that do not reflect industry standards have contributed to overstaffing in the schools. In order to align with recognized standards, the department should reduce labor hours by the hours shown in **Exhibit 4-3**.

**EXHIBIT 4-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
MPLH AND REDUCTION IN LABOR HOURS**

| SCHOOL NAME | TOTAL ME | TOTAL LABOR HOURS | MPLH | TARGET MPLH | TARGET LABOR HOURS | DAILY MIN # HRS TO DECREASE |
|--|----------|-------------------|-------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Taylor County | | | | | | |
| Anne Jarvis Elementary School | 561 | 32 | 17.53 | 19 | 26-32 | |
| West Taylor Elementary School | 250 | 16 | 15.63 | 15 | 13-17 | |
| Flemington Elementary School | 189 | 11.5 | 16.43 | 14 | 11-14 | |
| Taylor County Middle School | 626 | 40 | 15.65 | 20 | 30-35 | 7.5 |
| Grafton High School | 539 | 32 | 16.84 | 19 | 26-32 | 3.5 |
| Total Hours Overstaffed Per Day | | | | | | 11 |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

During the 2010-11 school year, child nutrition staff worked 169 days even though salaries and benefits were paid for 31 non-work days. Another way to reduce general fund money transfers to child nutrition is to reduce the number of days staff work.

RECOMMENDATION 4-1:

Recalculate meal equivalents and reduce the amount of labor at schools to align MPLH with recommended industry standards.

NFSMI recommends maintaining appropriate staffing levels in order to ensure a balanced budget. If the district continues to overstaff its kitchens, the food service program will continue to operate at a deficit. Decreasing labor hours will reduce the amount of district general funds transferred into child nutrition programs to subsidize labor and benefit costs.

An alternative to reducing labor hours is increasing revenue. Viable options for increasing revenue are discussed in **Recommendations 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, and 4-5.**

FISCAL IMPACT

The calculations below reflect options eliminating the 11 overstaffed hours on a daily basis and reducing the number of site-based work days.

Implementing Option 1 will save the district \$77,154 annually or \$385,770 over five years.

Implementing Option 2 will save the district \$91,586 annually or \$457,930 over five years.

OPTION 1

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Reduce Site-Based 10 Work Days | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 | \$28,864 |
| 8 Percent Reduction in School-Based Labor Hours | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 |
| TOTAL | \$77,154 | \$77,154 | \$77,154 | \$77,154 | \$77,154 |

OPTION 2

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Reduce Site-Based 15 Work Days | \$43,296 | \$43,296 | \$43,296 | \$43,296 | \$43,296 |
| 8 Percent Reduction in School Based Labor Hours | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 | \$48,290 |
| TOTAL | \$91,586 | \$91,586 | \$91,586 | \$91,586 | \$91,586 |

4.2 Financial Management

FINDING

The district transfers funds from general revenue to cover lost food service revenue.

During the 2010-11 school year, the TCS Child Nutrition Department lost \$112,953 in revenue due to uncollected sales of humanitarian meals to students, and \$4,913 due to adult charged meals. This results in the district covering food services expenses from other revenue sources that could support instruction.

This amount represents 98 percent of the suggested cuts in paid labor dollars (**Recommendation 4-1**).

It is the district's policy to provide meals to all students even if they do not have money to pay for meals. However, there is no similar policy affecting adults.

RECOMMENDATION 4-2:

Establish procedures to collect funds for humanitarian meals provided to children and eliminate adult charged meals.

The challenges in collecting funds for charged meals is not unique to TCS; districts across the country struggle with this issue on a daily basis. The current practice in TCS is that food service programs provide meals to students and adults and charges their accounts. A monthly invoice is generated and given to each participant. Unfortunately,

many of the funds for the charged meals are never recovered by the district. Best practices to avoid the accumulation of charged meals include:

- Eliminate the method of invoicing for meals served. Require staff and households to pre-pay their child's account or pay on a daily basis. The district can then establish a charge limit. Many districts cap charges from elementary children at three meals. When a child receives his or her first charged meal, a note is sent home to inform the parent or guardian of the lack of funds in the account. The note also outlines the district's charge policy. When a child receives a second charged meal, the cashier/manager calls the household to notify a parent or guardian of a previously charged meal and the need for funds in the account. In addition to requesting payment for the charged meals, the cashier asks the parent or guardian if they would like to complete an Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals and notifies them of the district's charge policy. When the child receives a third charged meal, the principal is notified. If charges are not repaid and the child's account remains unfunded, the child receives a "less expensive" meal (i.e. cheese or peanut butter sandwich and milk) during subsequent meal services and the district cannot claim the meal for reimbursement. Many districts expand this policy to allow one charged meal for middle school students and zero charges for high school students.
- Currently, many schools have their point of sale (cash register) in the front of the line. The cashier will enter the child's name or personal identification number in the point of sale terminal. The cashier can then see that the child does not have adequate funds in his or her account. Rather than prepare a regular meal for the child, the student can be given an alternative meal, thereby reducing the child's embarrassment.
- Provide incentives such as pizza parties for each class that has a 100 percent return rate of Free and Reduced Price Meals applications.
- Utilize public television, radio stations, and newspapers to notify the community of the meal charging policy.
- Schools can create a "slush" fund or "angel" fund to pay for meals served to students with no money. This would eliminate the students from receiving a humanitarian meal while trying to collect money from the parent or guardian.
- Eliminate any adult charged meals.

Hillsborough County Public Schools, Florida, implemented a school board approved humanitarian meal policy that reduced the loss from \$600,000 in 2005 to \$36,000 in two years. It was made public to all families and school administration that elementary students were allowed five charged meals before an alternate meal was given. Secondary students were allowed three charged meals before an alternate meal was given. The alternate meal consisted of a cold sandwich and milk. The policy also established procedures for contacting parents prior to student accounts running out of money. Some schools required the students to call their parents before they were allowed to charge.

Staff members or adult guests of the school should not be allowed to charge a meal. When adults charge meals, their meals become subsidized by the reimbursement received for meals served to children. However, child nutrition program funds are designated for enrolled students only. Adults are required to pay for food served which has been purchased by these funds. Under Public Law 97-35, School Food Authorities (SFAs) must ensure the federal reimbursements, children’s payments, and other non-designated nonprofit food service revenues do not subsidize program meals served to adults. The district should be proactive and support the child nutrition department in eliminating adult meal charges. Adult meal charges are a direct violation of USDA Food and Nutrition NSLP rules and regulations.

This recommendation should be implemented when supporting policy is created by the state agency with TCS developing local policy and procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is a minor cost to implement this recommendation. Existing staff can be used to contact households. In addition, letters to households may be sent electronically via e-mail or reproduced at minimal cost through the district’s copiers.

Consultants cannot provide an exact amount of funds that can be recovered or the costs related to these recommended actions. However, implementation may conservatively save the district nearly \$62,000 in general revenue fund transfers to cover the debts of the child nutrition department.

Reducing unpaid student meals by only 50 percent would save \$56,476 annually (\$112,953 * 50%). Eliminating adult charge meals would save \$4,913 annually. The total potential savings is, conservatively, \$61,389 annually, or \$306,945 over five years.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Decrease Unpaid Student Meals by 50 Percent | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 | \$56,476 |
| Eliminate Adult Charge Meals | \$ 4,913 | \$ 4,913 | \$ 4,913 | \$ 4,913 | \$ 4,913 |
| TOTAL | \$61,389 | \$61,389 | \$61,389 | \$61,389 | \$61,389 |

FINDING

TCS food costs represent 42.5 percent of revenue in the 2010-11 school year, which is higher than the industry standard. According to NFSMI, the industry standard for food cost should be 35 percent of revenue.

The child nutrition department belongs to a state purchasing cooperative including 19 districts. The child nutrition director believes being a part of the cooperative has had a significant positive impact on the buying power for food and non-food items. Because the district is part of this cooperative, it makes no price decisions for major grocery items, paper goods, chemicals, and canned goods. The district is allowed to request bids for

milk and bread vendors. Although participating in the purchasing cooperative provides competitive prices, the child nutrition department's per meal cost is 7.5 percent higher than recommended industry standards.

Contributing factors to high meal costs include self-service lines, limited portion control, and minimal student supervision during meal services. For example, at Grafton High School all three serving lines are self-serve. While staff provided portioned utensils for some items (e.g., 4 ounce spoodle for canned fruit) there was no portion control for items such as lettuce, bread, or main entrees. Students were observed taking large portions of items from these self-service lines. In addition, there is limited adult supervision during the meal service. Students are allowed to select the items they want, in the portion sizes they want, which disregards USDA allowable meal patterns. These scenarios lead to negative financial impact on the child nutrition department.

In 2010, the department reported the cost to prepare a breakfast was \$2.69, the cost to prepare a lunch was \$3.58, and the cost to prepare a snack was \$1.00. However, the reimbursement for each free breakfast was only \$1.48 and for a full paid breakfast was \$.26. Free lunches were reimbursed \$2.72 and full paid lunches were reimbursed \$.26.

Exhibit 4-4 illustrates the loss per meal based on eligibility status. Combined with the low prices the district charge for meals, per plate revenue losses contributed \$421,063 toward the department deficit.

**EXHIBIT 4-4
COST PER MEAL REVENUE LOSS
2010-11**

| | COST PER MEAL | FEDERAL REIMB PER MEAL | DISTRICT PRICE PER MEAL | LOSS IN REVENUE PER MEAL | TOTAL MEALS PER DAY | DAILY REVENUE LOSS | YEARLY REVENUE LOSS-180 DAYS |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Breakfast-Free | \$2.69 | \$1.48 | \$0.00 | (\$1.21) | 292 | (\$353.32) | (\$63,597.60) |
| Breakfast-Reduced | \$2.69 | \$.92 | \$.30 | (\$1.47) | 188 | (\$276.36) | (\$49,744.80) |
| Breakfast-Paid | \$2.69 | \$.26 | \$1.15 | (\$1.28) | 125 | (\$160.00) | (\$28,800.00) |
| Lunch-Free | \$3.58 | \$2.72 | \$0.00 | (\$.86) | 519 | (\$446.34) | (\$80,341.20) |
| Lunch-Reduced | \$3.58 | \$2.32 | \$.40 | (\$.86) | 475 | (\$408.50) | (\$73,530.00) |
| Lunch-Paid | \$3.58 | \$.26 | \$1.65* | (\$1.67) | 416 | (\$694.72) | (\$125,049.60) |
| Annual Revenue Loss | | | | | | | (\$421,063.20) |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., and based on USDA Federal Reimbursement Rates 2010-11.

*Average full paid lunch price.

RECOMMENDATION 4-3:

Decrease the cost per meal to 35 percent of revenue as recommended by industry standards.

Since labor costs are determined by the school board, lowering food expenses is the responsibility of the Child Nutrition Department staff. Some areas requiring scrutiny are planned district menus, standardized recipes, portion control, vendor invoicing, and student meal waste.

Exhibit 4-5 shows how a small decrease in meal costs can create a significant addition to revenue.

**EXHIBIT 4-5
REDUCE COST PER MEAL TO 35 PERCENT OF REVENUE**

| | CURRENT COST PER MEAL | 35 PERCENT MEAL COST | SAVINGS PER DAY | TOTAL MEALS PER DAY | YEARLY SAVINGS |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Breakfast-Free | \$2.69 | \$1.75 | \$.94 | 292 | \$49,406 |
| Breakfast-Reduced | \$2.69 | \$1.75 | \$.94 | 188 | \$31,810 |
| Breakfast-Paid | \$2.69 | \$1.75 | \$.94 | 125 | \$21,150 |
| Lunch-Free | \$3.58 | \$2.33 | \$1.25 | 519 | \$116,775 |
| Lunch-Reduced | \$3.58 | \$2.33 | \$1.25 | 475 | \$106,875 |
| Lunch-Paid | \$3.58 | \$2.33 | \$1.25 | 416 | \$93,600 |
| Total Annual Savings | | | | | \$419,616 |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could have a positive fiscal impact, saving approximately \$419,616 annually and \$2,098,080 over five years.

Reducing the cost of a meal to 35 percent would contribute to a break even budget with the possibilities of obtaining a three month fund balance.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Reduce Per Meal Costs | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 | \$419,616 |

FINDING

Student meal pricing is below the federal recommended average.

Recent legislation requires NSLP sponsors to compare the average price for paid lunches to the difference between the per meal federal reimbursement for free and paid lunches. According to USDA, if a district's average price for a paid lunch is \$2.46, the district is in compliance. The non-weighted average price per paid lunch for TCS is \$1.65. As a result, the district is not only losing money on each paid meal that is served, it is out of compliance with federal regulations. The limited maximum required increase per meal is \$0.10; however, the district may decide to increase prices more than \$0.10. If the district does not increase meal prices, non-federal funds must be added to the food service account.

RECOMMENDATION 4-4:

Increase full paid breakfast and lunch price by \$0.25 to comply with federal regulations.

TCS should increase the price of full paid breakfast and lunch meals by \$0.25 not only to meet federal regulations, but to decrease the department deficit. This will assist in reducing the amount of district general funds transferred onto the Child Nutrition Department.

The limited maximum required increase is \$.10; however, the district may decide to increase prices more than \$.10. If the district does not increase meal prices to the average of \$2.46 per paid meal, non-federal funds must be added to the food service account.

To reiterate, SFAs are not required to raise prices more than 10 cents annually. SFAs may, at their discretion, increase prices for paid lunches by more than 10 cents. In lieu of increasing prices, a school food authority may reduce the average price of a paid lunch if an equivalent amount of financial support is added from non-Federal sources of funds (other than in-kind contributions). These provisions are found at § 7 CFR 210.14(e)(4) and (e)(5).

The recommendation is a 25 cent increase because TCS pricing for a full paid lunch is significantly lower than peer districts and \$1.19 below national recommendation.

This recommendation should be implemented when the district school board approves a price increase.

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on 125 paid breakfast meals and 416 paid lunch meals daily, implementing this recommendation could result in additional revenue of \$46,886 in the first year and \$234,430 over five years. No increase in participation was calculated due to potentially initially negative response to increasing prices.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Increase Breakfast Price \$0.25 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 | \$5,625 |
| Increase Lunch Price \$0.25 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 | \$41,261 |
| TOTAL | \$46,886 | \$46,886 | \$46,886 | \$46,886 | \$46,886 |

FINDING

The TCS breakfast program does not generate its potential revenue. In 2010-11, TCS recorded only 27 percent of students ate breakfast.

Increased participation results in greater funding through the USDA by means of reimbursement. In addition, payment for meals increases revenue to the department.

Two successful programs to generate increased participation are Breakfast in the Classroom and Grab-N-Go Breakfast. Either program may consist of juice or fruit, milk, and weekly selections of cereal, muffins, bagels, or French toast.

Exhibit 4-6 shows the potential revenues by increasing breakfast participation from an average of 27 percent to 50 percent.

**EXHIBIT 4-6
ADDITIONAL REVENUE RESULTING FROM
BREAKFAST INCREASE TO 50 PERCENT**

| SCHOOL NAME | ENROLLMENT | CURRENT DAILY BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION # / % | TARGET DAILY BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION # / % | INCREASE IN REVENUE (INCREASE IN PARTICIPATION x REIMBURSEMENT RATE) |
|---------------------------------------|------------|---|--|--|
| Anne Jarvis | 620 | 224/36% | 310/50% | \$86 |
| West Taylor | 278 | 105/37% | 139/50% | \$34 |
| Flemington | 121 | 105/70% | Maintain 70% | \$0.00 |
| Taylor MS | 709 | 175/25% | 355/50% | \$180 |
| Grafton HS | 650 | 159/26% | 325/50% | \$165 |
| Total Daily Revenue | | | | \$465 |
| Total Daily Revenue x 180 days | | | | \$83,700 |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc. 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 4-5:

Increase student breakfast participation to 50 percent by introducing more convenient and successful programs like Breakfast in the Classroom or a Grab-N-Go Breakfast.

Neither of the suggested programs will require more labor or different types of products than a traditional school breakfast. Each consists of individually wrapped breakfast products (such as, breakfast burrito, cereal, sausage muffin, milk, juice, or fruit) and placed in a type of sack.

This recommendation can be implemented this school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing this recommendation could have a positive financial impact of \$465 in potential additional daily revenue resulting in additional yearly revenue of \$83,700. In five years, the increased participation in the breakfast program could result in \$418,500 additional revenue. No additional staff would be needed.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Increase Breakfast Program Participation | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 | \$83,700 |

FINDING

Schools are not provided monthly profit and loss statements.

Without monthly reports, site managers and district child nutrition administrators are unable to monitor revenue and expenditures.

According to inTeam Associates, the most important requirement for effective cost control management is an accounting system that provides accurate and timely financial data. This information must be created and maintained by an employee who has enough basic accounting knowledge to understand the data and related reports. In addition, the employee must know how to use the information and how to take corrective action when needed.

School child nutrition financial reports are also called revenue and expenditure reports, or balance sheets, and should capture the financial position as of a recent point in time. These reports are generally presented in percentages. Each school should receive its own financial statement in a timely manner.

When site administrators are provided accurate financial information, they are better able to control costs. Cost control requires use of financial reports to monitor, evaluate, and correct performance of child nutrition programs.

RECOMMENDATION 4-6:

Create monthly profit and loss statements for each site.

Providing site managers with financial information about their programs will give them the tools needed to measure progress and track profit and loss.

The implementation of the new Primero software system will greatly improve the department's ability to account for the profitability of each school-based food service program. It is essential that the district utilizes these data to monitor the performance of **individual** programs, as well as the overall food service operation, to gain an appropriate understanding of actual performance. These data need to be compiled, analyzed and reported to district leadership to monitor and demonstrate the ongoing success of the department.

Orange County Public Schools in Florida provides accurate financial information in the context of monthly profit and loss statements for each of its 192 sites. Managers at each site take actions to self-correct when they know expenses are too high. For example, a site may decide not to request a substitute worker when a staff member is absent. By not incurring additional labor costs, sites are able to reduce their expenses.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing staff at no additional cost. The software required to create these documents is currently used in the form of Excel spreadsheets. NFSMI provides basic financial accounting forms through its website, www.nfsmi.org.

FINDING

TCS does not have an overall child nutrition marketing plan and, therefore, does not have a plan for increasing student participation.

Interviews with staff indicated that there has been minimal marketing of the child nutrition program. Marketing is limited to publishing the breakfast and lunch menus on the district's website and local newspaper. There is no overall marketing plan with goals to increase participation, target specific items, or showcase best practices.

There is little to no effort to reduce the look and feel of institutionalization in the cafeterias, such as signage or decoration. In order to persuade children to participate in the breakfast and lunch programs, the administration must actively market to the wants and needs of the children and make those options attractive.

Marketing can be an inexpensive way to increase participation and improve public perception of a school food service program. Without intentional marketing efforts, many parents and students are unaware of the benefits of eating healthy school meals, and participation suffers as a result.

Norfolk City Schools in Virginia has utilized effective marketing plans to sustain positive perceptions of its child nutrition program. For example, the district branded its products, developed a marketing strategy, and evaluated the results.

RECOMMENDATION 4-7:

Create a marketing plan to increase participation involving students, parents, teachers, department staff, and members of the community.

Marketing efforts can be as simple as training staff in the art of customer service or as elaborate as having district-wide participation contests. Marketing should be an ongoing effort that includes surveys to gather stakeholder input, advertising School Lunch Week, Nutrition Awareness Week, National School Breakfast Week, Child Nutrition Employee Appreciation Day, and various contests and promotions. Other marketing efforts may include:

- Present "School Child Nutrition Facts" to teachers and staff during meetings. Ensure that all school employees understand that federal law requires child nutrition programs to be self sufficient and that every dollar transferred from general revenue accounts to child nutrition is a dollar not available for classroom supplies and teacher salaries.
- Attend parent-teacher meetings to explain to parents that children's humanitarian meals (charged meals) are their financial responsibility.
- Attend open house meetings to encourage households to complete the Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals.
- Decorate cafeterias and serving lines to support curriculum. Ideas include:

- Student reports or pictures of United States presidents on bulletin boards in honor of Presidents' Day.
- Serve green eggs and ham for breakfast in celebration of Dr. Seuss month.
- Dress in costumes for Halloween.

- Include the daily menu in the morning announcements.

- Serve food in an appetizing manner by adding a garnish to plain fruits and vegetables. Ideas include:
 - Add a slice of cherry to a cup of pears.
 - Sprinkle brightly colored dry Jello on cut apples.
 - Add small amounts of shredded cheese to side salads and raw broccoli.
 - Top sweet potatoes with marshmallows.

- Create flyers to advertise the schools' accomplishments and send them home to parents. Potential items to highlight include:
 - New Grab-N-Go Breakfast and/or Breakfast in the Classroom program.
 - Healthy variety of fresh fruits and vegetables are available each day.
 - Whole grains are offered each day.

Local newspapers are often willing to write positive articles about area schools to improve public perception. Staff members usually write public service announcements (PSAs) in the form of informational interviews, which are then published in the newspaper to create positive reinforcement for child nutrition programs.

An integral part of marketing is determining what potential customers want. One way to gather such information is by conducting surveys. There are no records of written surveys to learn about TCS student preferences. Today's students are not a captive audience; they have food options beyond the school cafeteria. For example, children may bring lunches from home or have a family member bring lunch to them from local fast food restaurants. In order to increase participation in the child nutrition program, schools must serve the foods students want, and the only way to determine that is to ask them.

Formal surveys and routine monitoring of customer satisfaction is critical in the quest to increase participation. A survey can provide important information regarding perceptions of cleanliness, food quality, and customer service. NFSMI has published extensive research detailing the importance of satisfaction surveys as well as guidelines for conducting successful customer satisfaction surveys. NFSMI resources (such as the *School Child Nutrition Survey Guide*), sample surveys, tools for implementation, and resources for evaluation are available online at <http://www.nfsmi.org>.

Simple marketing techniques that increase participation by as little as 5 percent yield profitable financial results.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing staff. Existing resources can be used to form and implement a marketing plan. NFSMI, USDA, and the governing state

agency can provide guidance and promotional materials at no cost. Surveys may be conducted online so no printing costs are incurred.

FISCAL IMPACT

Increasing the approved free lunch participation by 5 percent will generate an additional \$37,949 the first year and \$189,745 in five years. Increasing students eligible for reduced priced meals participation by 5 percent will add \$32,467 yearly revenue and \$162,335 in five years. A 5 percent increase in revenue for free and reduced price lunch participation could total \$70,416 annually and \$352,080 in five years.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Increase Free Lunch Sales 5 Percent | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 | \$37,949 |
| Increased Reduced Price Lunch Sales 5 Percent | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 | \$32,467 |
| TOTAL | \$70,416 | \$70,416 | \$70,416 | \$70,416 | \$70,416 |

FINDING

Flemington Elementary School began participating in USDA’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program during the 2010-11 school year.

The program has been successful in introducing school children to a wide variety of healthy fruits and vegetables that they otherwise might not have the opportunity to sample. Because Flemington Elementary School has a small enrollment of 121, all classes are given time to visit the cafeteria and enjoy the produce. Since it was so well received by the students and the community last year, administrators decided to continue with the program this school year.

COMMENDATION 4-A:

Flemington Elementary School has participated in the USDA’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for two years.

4.3 Program Compliance

FINDING

Child nutrition funds are not tracked separately from other district funds.

The department’s revenue and expenses are accounted for through the district finance department. The CSBO is responsible for recording expenses, distributing federal funds, calculation of cash sales, and balancing the budget. USDA regulations outline the accounting practices for school food service expenses and revenues. It is required that the Child Nutrition Department operates a self-sufficient nonprofit program and maintains a break even profit/loss.

USDA identifies the nonprofit school food service account as the restricted account in which all revenue from school food service operations conducted by the school food authority principally for the benefit of school children is retained and used only for the operation or improvement of the nonprofit school food service program.

NFSMI developed a Financial Management Information System as a uniform reporting and analysis system to allow school food service administrators to compare financial positions and operational performance. It is a system based on national standards that allows comparison with other school districts similar in type, size, location, number of meals served, and other variables.

This program provides information to enable administrators to recognize sound financial principles as the primary foundation for the program. Food service administrators are encouraged to use this type of model as school nutrition programs move toward more national standardization.

RECOMMENDATION 4-8:

Restructure district accounting methods to identify child nutrition with its own accounting fund.

Set up USDA recommended accounting codes to identify revenues and expenditures associated with the child nutrition program. All federal reimbursement money, cash collected at the serving line, or other accounts receivables should be deposited into a separate food service account, not the district's general bank account.

The director should work cooperatively with the CSBO to set up recommended account codes, budgeting, accounts payable, and accounts receivable.

This recommendation should be implemented when the state agency develops supporting state regulation.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing staff at no additional cost. NFSMI provides all necessary instructions, forms, and training for food service financial accounting practices on its website, www.nfsmi.org.

FINDING

All meals are not properly accounted for and therefore are ineligible for reimbursement, reducing revenue.

During site visits to schools, non-food service staff were observed entering meals into the automated system. These staff members, not being familiar with program regulations, did not account for the meals correctly. For example, at the high school, students with only lettuce and milk on their tray were counted as a reimbursable meal. However, USDA requires meals be accounted for at the time of service where it can be observed a reimbursable meal was received.

In addition, non-food service staff members are not familiar with meal pattern requirements and allow children to select nonreimbursable meals. A reimbursable meal consists of a minimum of three components from four different food groups. However, during the site visits, many children were observed selecting meals with not enough food items or incorrect portions of food items.

For example, non measurable spoons were used to portion food items as opposed to portion control scoops and ladles. Since the automated accounting system is located at the beginning of the serving line, there is no one at the end of the line to monitor children's meals to ensure they select a reimbursable meal.

USDA regulations specify minimum requirements for meals claimed for reimbursement. To receive federal funds for meals served to children, it is imperative staff serving and counting meals know meal pattern requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 4-9:

Conduct annual compliance training to all persons working with National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

To ensure meals are correctly accounted for, child nutrition staff should provide training to anyone responsible for counting meals to be claimed for reimbursement. Meal counting and claiming guidance is available from the USDA at www.fns.usda.gov/fns/.

Additionally, cafeteria personnel should monitor servings in order to ensure proper accounting for foods.

This recommendation should be implemented this school year and scheduled on a regular basis.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with current staff at no additional cost and could result in additional revenue.

5.0 FACILITY USE AND MANAGEMENT

5.0 FACILITY USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews facility use and management in Taylor County Schools (TCS). The major sections in this chapter are:

- 5.1 Organizational Structure and Systems
- 5.2 Capital Planning and Improvement
- 5.3 Maintenance
- 5.4 Operations and Custodial Services
- 5.5 Energy Management

A comprehensive facilities management program should coordinate all the physical resources of a school district to ensure the most efficient, economical, and safe operation of facilities. The administration of the program must effectively integrate facilities planning with other aspects of institutional planning, including identified instructional priorities. To be effective, facility planners and managers should be involved in the school district's strategic planning activities and help inform decisions about facility usage.

Well-planned facilities are based on the educational program and accurate enrollment projections. The design process should include input from all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, security specialists, parents, students, and the maintenance and operations staff. The maintenance and operation of facilities must be accomplished in an efficient and effective manner to provide a safe and secure environment that supports educational programs.

Background

For the 2010-11 school year, TCS is composed of five active school sites and an alternative education program portable at the Camp Towles site. The district also has three administrative sites that include the main administrative building, formerly an elementary school, with maintenance offices in the basement, the transportation building, and the warehouse.

Exhibit 5-1 provides the current school building inventory for TCS. As shown, there are five schools including one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools with the total gross square footage of each facility.

**EXHIBIT 5-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS FACILITIES
SEPTEMBER 2011**

| SCHOOL | TYPE | GROSS SQUARE FEET (GSF) |
|--|----------|----------------------------------|
| Grafton High School & Technical Center | 9 - 12 | 201,274 |
| Taylor County Middle School | 5 - 8 | 112,659 |
| Anna Jarvis Elementary School | PreK - 4 | 67,099 |
| Flemington Elementary School | K - 4 | 42,037 |
| West Taylor Elementary School | PreK - 4 | 23,944 |
| Alternative School Portable | Alt | * |
| Total | | 447,013 |

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., compiled from TCS data, September 2011.

* No square footage assigned.

Exhibit 5-2 shows the enrollment trend from 2006-07 through 2010-11 and the September 1, 2011, enrollment figures. As can be seen, enrollment has remained relatively stable district-wide, with the exception of Grafton High School which has lost approximately 79 students since 2006-07.

**EXHIBIT 5-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT
2006-07 THROUGH 2010-11 AND SEPTEMBER 1, 2011**

| SCHOOL | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | SEPTEMBER 1, 2011 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Grafton High School | 729 | 733 | 685 | 695 | 652 | 650 |
| Taylor County Middle School | 707 | 676 | 673 | 711 | 722 | 709 |
| Anna Jarvis Elementary School | 642 | 648 | 647 | 623 | 599 | 620 |
| Flemington Elementary School | 147 | 159 | 157 | 149 | 143 | 140 |
| West Taylor Elementary School | 240 | 248 | 264 | 272 | 279 | 278 |
| Total | 2,465 | 2,464 | 2,426 | 2,450 | 2,395 | 2,397 |

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc. from TCS data, September 2011.

During the onsite visit, consultants also conducted a community open house public forum which allowed any member of the community to provide comments on a variety of district issues. Stakeholders' opinions and concerns, along with positive notes, addressed many TCS areas. A sampling of comments relative to facilities includes the following:

- *“Bathroom maintenance (working toilets, mirrors, etc, soap paper towels- high school and middle school) needs improvement.”*
- *“No soap in elementary bathrooms.”*

- *“Cleanliness of Taylor County Middle School and GHS – needs more deep cleaning!”*
- *“GHS needs to clean the hallways and display cases! We should get students involved.”*
- *“Using prison inmates is a great thing for the schools.”*
- *“Fleming Elementary School really needs to be replaced – it is old.”*

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The consultant team reviewed facility services issues, organizational structure, staffing, budgets, and relevant policies and procedures. The review included interviews, focus groups, and data provided by the district in advance of the site visit, as well as data gathered during the onsite visit.

Commendations reported in this chapter are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Commendation 5-A | The BOE and administration approved the 2010-2020 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to systematically guide improvements and upgrades for schools. |
| Commendation 5-B | Restoring the Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School represents a best practice in preserving important structures and ensuring continued utility. |
| Commendation 5-C | West Taylor Elementary School exterior signage is welcoming and shows visitors clearly where to enter the building. |
| Commendation 5-D | The maintenance department has a detailed preventative maintenance schedule checklist for each school which, when implemented, can result in prolonging the useful life of equipment. |
| Commendation 5-E | The district uses local prison inmates to assist with routine maintenance of school facilities. |

Recommendations in this chapter to assist in greater efficiencies are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Recommendation 5-1 | Prepare a succession plan for essential facilities personnel retiring within two years. |
| Recommendation 5-2 | Develop a plan that identifies facility needs for the BOE central office, transportation facility, and warehouse building and sites. |
| Recommendation 5-3 | Begin the process for placing the Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School on the national Registry of Historic Places. |
| Recommendation 5-4 | Renovate BOE office building restrooms to ensure wheelchair accessibility. |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Recommendation 5-5 | Develop plans for a maintenance shop to house personnel and necessary tools and equipment to ensure efficient deployment of maintenance resources. |
| Recommendation 5-6 | Create customer friendly signage to clearly identify entrances to Flemington Elementary, the Technical Center, and the BOE office building. |
| Recommendation 5-7 | Develop and implement a complete preventive maintenance plan. |
| Recommendation 5-8 | Implement an online system for maintenance work orders, activities, and expenses, and for scheduling and tracking preventive maintenance. |
| Recommendation 5-9 | Reassign custodial FTE staff to upgrade services at Taylor Middle School and Grafton High School/Central Office. |
| Recommendation 5-10 | Implement APPA cleanliness standards for custodial services. |
| Recommendation 5-11 | Conduct periodic custodial service quality inspections using forms reflecting STET custodial standards. |
| Recommendation 5-12 | Track expenditures for custodial supplies to each site and establish a budget for each facility. |
| Recommendation 5-13 | Remove accumulated trash and unusable equipment and supplies from all facilities. |
| Recommendation 5-14 | Develop a comprehensive energy management program. |

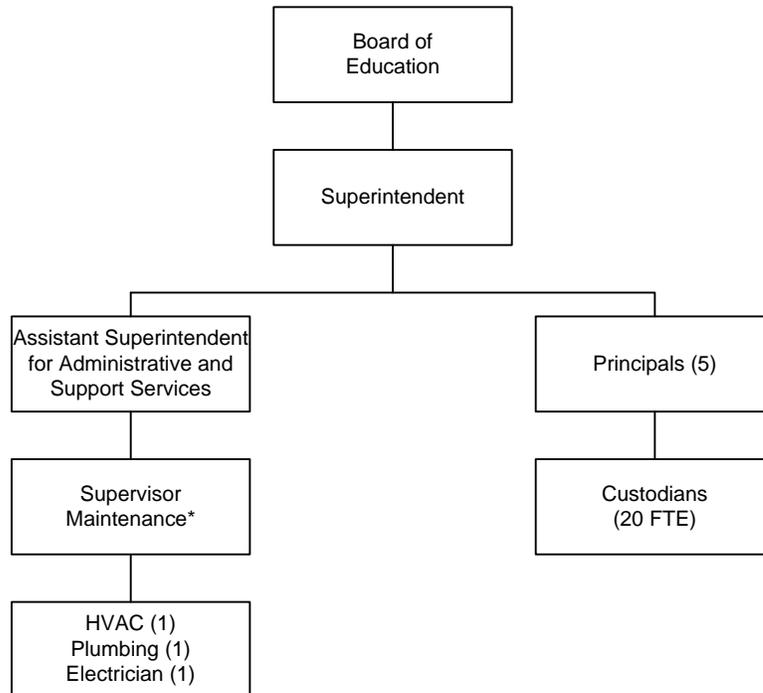
5.1 Organizational Structure and Systems

Facilities management is organized differently across districts due to size, the amount of new construction or remodeling, the impact of growth in the district, and decisions about outsourcing various activities. All districts benefit from clear organizational structures which define roles and responsibilities and provide clear lines of supervision and evaluation. They also benefit from having clear internal systems for handling routine issues, such as budgets, expenditures, staffing, and overtime.

In TCS, all facilities services except custodial supervision are located within the administrative and support services department under the supervision of the assistant superintendent. Custodial personnel are supervised and evaluated by their principals with training and supplies provided by the central office administration.

Exhibit 5-3 shows the administrative structure of the district for facility services as was noted during the September 2011 onsite visit. As can be seen, there are 20 custodians, four maintenance staff, and a maintenance supervisor who also does maintenance work.

**EXHIBIT 5-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
CURRENT FACILITIES ORGANIZATION
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., from interview information and data requested, September 2011.

* This position is also an electrician.

Following the onsite review TCS, through RESA 7, gained HVAC and electrician trainees.

Board of Education (BOE) policies, Sections 7000 Property and 8000 Operations, include provisions for facilities' management and related matters. All policy provisions are up-to-date with revisions having been completed in 2009 and more recently. Policies address topics including the following:

- Environmental Health and Safety Issues
- Indoor Air Quality
- Asbestos in Schools
- Bonding
- Facilities Planning
- Commemoration of School Facilities
- Disposition of Real Property
- Maintenance
- Hygienic Management of County Facilities
- Security
- Use of Facilities
- Lending of County-Owned Equipment

FINDING

Several essential facilities professional and service personnel are eligible for retirement, but the district does not have a comprehensive succession plan.

Four of the five employees in maintenance have indicated they are preparing for retirement and may leave the district prior to the beginning of the 2012-13 school year. Additionally, the assistant superintendent for administrative and support services, a long-time, veteran employee, is eligible and could retire soon.

The assistant superintendent for administrative and support services has prepared a plan and draft position posting for two essential positions: a general maintenance/HVAC trainee and a general maintenance/electrician trainee. The plan is to employ personnel, through RESA 7, to these positions in the fall of 2011. Upon employment, these persons would be assigned to the current employees to train for the remainder of the fiscal year.

For the plumbing position, the plan is to employ a current bus driver who has the necessary credentials; however, no means has been developed to provide needed cross-training in all of the current systems the plumber will be responsible for maintaining.

The succession issue is further complicated by the fact that the assistant superintendent for administrative and support services may retire soon. A plan for a replacement is needed.

RECOMMENDATION 5-1:

Prepare a succession plan for essential facilities personnel retiring within two years.

Implementation of this recommendation should include a survey of all facilities' administrative, operations, and maintenance service personnel to determine retirement eligibility and, if feasible, their expected retirement dates.

With this information, the assistant superintendent for administrative and support services should, with direction from the superintendent, set up a small committee with representatives from the principals, service personnel, and the district-level administration. They should be charged with developing a list of options for succession planning for consideration by the superintendent and the BOE.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The current draft plan has been budgeted for and will not incur further cost for the district unless it is expanded. The cost for developing an overall succession plan for essential facility positions should only involve the necessary time for development.

Consultants believe that administrative, clerical, and committee time could be in excess of 30 hours.

5.2 Capital Planning and Improvement

Capital planning and improvement typically includes long-range facility planning based on the needs of the district for programs or space as well as planning for expenditures to improve or maintain existing facilities. There are two important components of capital planning for school districts, which are:

- The assessment of existing facilities and future needs.
- The development of enrollment projections and the analysis of facility capacity and utilization.

Exhibit 5-4 shows enrollment projections developed and reported in the state-required 10-year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). As can be seen, the eight year overall district projections suggest that enrollment will remain generally static; with some declines primarily in the secondary school grades.

**EXHIBIT 5-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS**

| GRADES | STUDENT ENROLLMENT | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2011 - 2012 | 2012 - 2013 | 2013 - 2014 | 2014 - 2015 | 2015 - 2016 | 2016 - 2017 | 2017 - 2018 | 2018 -2019 |
| PreK | 194 | 188 | 188 | 189 | 190 | 191 | 191 | 191 |
| K | 171 | 177 | 168 | 168 | 169 | 169 | 170 | 171 |
| 1 | 154 | 156 | 172 | 165 | 164 | 164 | 165 | 166 |
| 2 | 155 | 147 | 159 | 165 | 158 | 156 | 157 | 158 |
| 3 | 175 | 157 | 149 | 161 | 167 | 160 | 159 | 160 |
| 4 | 176 | 181 | 163 | 155 | 167 | 173 | 166 | 164 |
| 5 | 164 | 168 | 173 | 156 | 148 | 160 | 166 | 159 |
| 6 | 190 | 171 | 175 | 180 | 163 | 155 | 166 | 173 |
| 7 | 179 | 186 | 168 | 172 | 177 | 160 | 152 | 163 |
| 8 | 179 | 182 | 189 | 171 | 175 | 180 | 163 | 155 |
| 9 | 180 | 185 | 187 | 195 | 177 | 181 | 185 | 169 |
| 10 | 190 | 182 | 186 | 189 | 197 | 179 | 182 | 187 |
| 11 | 184 | 178 | 170 | 174 | 177 | 184 | 168 | 170 |
| 12 | 201 | 194 | 187 | 179 | 183 | 186 | 195 | 176 |
| Total Enrollment | 2,570 | 2,462 | 2,437 | 2,419 | 2,411 | 2,399 | 2,386 | 2,362 |

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., from TCS CEFP 2010-20, 2011.

FINDING

TCS has developed a comprehensive long-range facilities master plan to ensure that, as funding becomes available, identified priorities for schools are addressed.

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) requires each school district to develop a 10-year CEFP. TCS's CEFP is comprehensive, up-to-date, and prepared by the Architectural Vision Group, LTD. of Vienna, West Virginia.

The CEFP contains the following sections:

- Background
- Goals and Objectives
- Community Analysis
- Population and Enrollment Study
- Educational Plan
- Evaluation of Inventory of Existing Facilities
- Major Improvement Plan
- Translating Educational Needs into Facility Needs
- Inter-County Feasibility Study
- Finance Plan
- Synopsis of Comments from Public Hearing(s)
- Objective Evaluation of Implementation & School Access Safety Data

The information and data is presented in a reader friendly format and is complete for each of the five schools.

A comprehensive 10-year facilities master plan is the corner stone to a well-managed educational facilities program and is considered a best practice.

COMMENDATION 5-A:

The BOE and administration approved the 2010-20 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan to systematically guide improvements and upgrades for schools.

FINDING

The 2010-20 CEFP is focused on school facilities and does not address the needs of auxiliary facilities including transportation, maintenance, or the central office.

The central office is located in a school facility that was constructed in 1938, with a cafeteria addition that was constructed in 1978, that has been converted to a BOE meeting room. The maintenance staff meets in a basement area of the central office building. **Chapter 6.0** addresses the condition of the transportation facility.

The district does not have a facilities development or maintenance plan for any of these service buildings.

RECOMMENDATION 5-2:

Develop a plan that identifies facility needs for the BOE central office, transportation facility, and warehouse building and sites.

Implementation of this recommendation will provide a master plan or road map for district facilities based on current condition and suitability assessments. The 2010-20 CEFP can be used as a guide for outlining the most significant needs of the transportation, maintenance, and central office facilities.

Minimally, the plan should address the following:

- Roofing conditions and estimated year for replacements.

- Restroom and plumbing conditions and significant maintenance needs.
- Electrical service conditions.
- Interior lighting.
- Flooring conditions and presence or absence of asbestos.
- Boiler condition of the central office facility.
- Review of foundation conditions.
- Exterior lighting.
- Site conditions including parking adequacy and drainage.
- Other conditions impacting the efficient and effect utilization of the facilities.

This recommendation should be carried out by the Supervisor of Maintenance upon approval of this report and completed prior to FY 2013.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost. It is estimated that the assistant superintendent and supervisor can create a plan along with cost estimates for approximately 20 hours of work, and that the BOE can review and approve this process over the span of two meetings.

FINDING

TCS preserves school building with historic significance.

Many school building throughout the United States have historical significance for their communities but have been destroyed or left to crumble through the ravages of time. Such is not the case in Taylor County with the Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School.

The consultant attended a local Rotary service organization meeting while in Grafton for the onsite visit. The Grafton High School athletic director, a life-time resident of Taylor County and graduate of the high school, presented a program that included details of the Clair Bee Filed House history and restoration.

The restoration has resulted in providing the high school students with an excellent additional facility to support physical education and athletic programs for both girls and boys.

COMMENDATION 5-B:

Restoring the Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School represents a best practice in preserving important structures and ensuring continued utility.

FINDING

The Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School should be considered for placement on the National Registry of Historic Places.

The facility has undergone restoration and is now utilized for various athletic and physical education activities for high school students and use by the community. The facility

The facility was constructed and named for Clair Francis Bee (March 2, 1896 – May 20, 1983), an American basketball coach, who led the team at Long Island University in Brooklyn, New York to two undefeated seasons as well as two National Invitation Tournament titles. He was born in Grafton, WV and was known as “The Innovator” because of his contributions to the game of basketball. His influence on the game also extended to strategy sports camps including Camp All-America, Kutcher’s Sports Academy, writing technical coaching books, and conducting coaching clinics around the world.

Bee was inducted into the Basketball hall of Fame in 1968. Along with other attributes of the facility, this warrants historic designation.

Exhibit 5-5 shows the current exterior of the front of the facility.

**EXHIBIT 5-5
CLAIR BEE FIELD HOUSE
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 5-3:

Begin the process for placing the Clair Bee Field House at Grafton High School on the National Registry of Historic Places.

The National Registry of Historic Places is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places is part of a program to

coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

To be considered eligible, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. This involves examining the property's age, integrity, and significance, with the following taken into consideration:

- **Age and Integrity.** Is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?
- **Significance.** Is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past? With the lives of people who were important in the past? With significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements? Does it have the potential to yield information through archeological investigation about our past?

The National Register listing process includes:

- Nominations submitted to the state preservation organization from property owners, historical societies, preservation organizations, governmental agencies, and other individuals or groups. Official National Register Nomination Forms are downloadable or from your State Historic Preservation Office. National Register Bulletins can also provide guidance on how to document and evaluate certain types of properties. Sample Nominations provide additional useful information.
- The state preservation organization notifies affected property owners and local governments and solicits public comment. If the owner (or a majority of owners for a district nomination) objects, the property cannot be listed but may be forwarded to the National Park Service for a Determination of Eligibility (DOE).
- Proposed nominations are reviewed by the state's historic preservation office and the state's National Register Review Board. The length of the state process varies but will take a minimum of 90 days.
- Complete nominations, with certifying recommendations, are submitted by the state to the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., for final review and listing by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. The National Park Service makes a listing decision within 45 days.

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides formal recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archeological significance based on national standards used by every state. Results include:

- Becoming part of the National Register Archives, a public, searchable database that provides a wealth of research information.
- Encouraging preservation of historic resources by documenting a property's historic significance.

- Providing opportunities for specific preservation incentives, such as:
 - Federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation
 - Federal investment tax credits
 - Preservation easements to nonprofit organizations
 - International Building Code fire and life safety code alternatives
- Involvement from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation when a federal agency project may affect historic property.
- Network with other historic property owners, tour historic areas, or chat with preservationists through Conferences, Workshops, and Preservation Organizations.
- Recognition by ordering a bronze plaque that distinguishes the property as listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- National Register listing places no obligations on private property owners. There are no restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of private property.
- National Register listing does not lead to public acquisition or require public access.
- A property will not be listed if, for individual properties, the owner objects, or for districts, a majority of property owners object.

Upon approval of this report, the high school administration, staff, and community representatives should approach the BOE for authorization to proceed with this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost. The amount of time necessary to complete the process cannot be estimated.

FINDING

The central office facility does not have ADA-compliant (wheelchair accessible) restrooms for staff or public use.

The central office was constructed as a school facility in 1938 when there were no requirements for providing handicapped accessibility to the building or its restrooms. Consequently, doorways to restrooms and related toileting facilities are not designed for the wheelchair-bound person.

The building is the location for BOE meetings often attended by the public and the issue of handicapped accessibility to restrooms is an important matter.

RECOMMENDATION 5-4:

Renovate BOE office building restrooms to ensure wheelchair accessibility.

Implementing this recommendation should result in at least one unisex restroom or the conversion of the two existing restrooms with multiple toilets for use by the handicapped. Completing this conversion will place the restroom facility in compliance with requirements that public buildings provide the necessary handicapped accessibility.

This recommendation should be implemented upon the receipt of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact for this recommendation cannot be estimated until the specifications are developed and quotes are received for the project.

FINDING

Maintenance staff are housed in basement rooms of the central office without sufficient space for services or materials. Maintenance materials and larger tools are kept at the Metal Trades building at the Grafton High School Campus.

Constructed in 1938, the central office is a 9,600 square foot former elementary school. The facility does not provide space for minor parts storage, work bench area, and other generally accepted facilities necessary to provide effective and efficient services. The shop area, a portion of the high school facility, must be secured to ensure that students and other non maintenance personnel do not have access.

Each maintenance journeyman is assigned a truck that is used for tools and minor parts storage. While this arrangement has sufficed for the majority of required work, it does not provide for an efficient location of personnel and the use of larger tools and equipment typically necessary for a complete maintenance program.

RECOMMENDATION 5-5:

Develop plans for a maintenance shop to house personnel and necessary tools and equipment to ensure efficient and effective deployment of maintenance resources.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in locating or constructing space for maintenance staff work and storage of necessary tools and equipment.

With the implementation of a succession plan for key maintenance positions (electrical and HVAC) as noted in the finding to **Recommendation 5-1**, additional space will be needed to ensure greater efficiencies in work and house additional staff and tools.

The assistant superintendent and maintenance supervisor should proceed with developing a plan for submission to the BOE for approval when this report is received and approved.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and an estimated six hours of administrative and clerical time and one BOE session.

FINDING

The brightly colored and visible exterior signage at West Taylor Elementary School is informative and welcoming.

Exhibit 5-6 shows a photograph of the welcome sign. As can be seen, the sign clearly shows visitors where they are and provides clear direction to the location of the main entrance to the school.

EXHIBIT 5-6 WEST TAYLOR ELEMENTARY SIGNAGE SEPTEMBER 2011



Source: MGT of America, Inc. September 2011.

This signage is in addition to an attractive sign at the entrance to the school's property and others that direct visitors to parking and student pick-up areas.

COMMENDATION 5-C:

West Taylor Elementary School exterior signage is welcoming and shows visitors clearly where to enter the building.

FINDING

Signage at Flemington Elementary, the Technical Center, and the BOE office building does not provide the casual visitor with clear information on locations of primary entrances and other information.

Small, difficult to read signs are affixed to various doorways of Flemington Elementary School, each directing visitors to another entrance. The secured entrance to the school is located on the side of the building and is not fully visible to persons entering the parking area. Sometimes the visitor must go from door-to-door until finally locating the main entrance.

The Technical Center, located to the rear of Grafton High School, does not have roadside signage to direct the visitor to parking and the front entrance.

The central office, formerly Pruntytown Elementary, has two small roadside signs directing visitors to the streets leading to the building; however, the original Pruntytown Elementary School sign is on the building and highly visible from a distance. No signage is provided at the facility to let the visitor know that they have arrived at the central office. **Exhibit 5-7** shows the central office.

**EXHIBIT 5-7
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS CENTRAL OFFICE SIGNAGE
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 5-6:

Create customer-friendly signage to clearly identify entrances to Flemington Elementary, the Technical Center, and the BOE office building.

Implementing this recommendation should result in providing improved directions to visitors of these facilities.

The district should consider having the Technical School staff and students build signs for each of the facilities. Signs should then be installed by the maintenance staff.

The maintenance staff could remove the existing Pruntytown Elementary School sign from the central office building and install a replacement.

The superintendent should request that the Technical Center administration and staff construct the requested signage upon approval of this report. Signs should be ready for installation in the summer of 2012.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing personnel and students and for the cost of materials. The cost of materials cannot be estimated until the specifications for each sign are developed and a materials list is developed by the Technical Center.

5.3 Maintenance

The proper maintenance of facilities is critical to ensuring support for an effective instructional program. Research has shown that appropriate heating and cooling levels, building and room appearances, the condition of restrooms and other facilities, and safety all impact how students and faculty/staff are able to carry out their respective responsibilities. Ineffective or inadequate maintenance provisions have proven to lead to increased costs of facility operations by shortening the useful life span of equipment and buildings. Many school districts have adopted rigorous preventive maintenance programs and maintain a record of the performance of equipment and the costs of regular maintenance against which they measure the effectiveness of programs.

The maintenance department is responsible for the preventive, routine, and emergency maintenance of school facilities. As shown previously in **Exhibit 5-3**, the staff in the maintenance area is supervised by a supervisor of maintenance reporting to the assistant superintendent for administration and support services. There are four staff, including two master electricians, one HVAC/general maintenance, and two electrician/general maintenance workers positions. Necessary clerical services are provided by the assistant superintendent's office.

TCS outsources numerous maintenance services, including:

- Sewage plant services.
- Filter changing services.
- Fire system inspections.

- Back Flow Prevention services and testing.
- Sprinkler system inspections.
- Telephone system maintenance.
- Elevator preventive maintenance.

FINDING

The district has a preventive maintenance schedule for each of the schools, including the Technical Center.

The schedule provides information for the type preventive maintenance to be performed; month to be done; date the task is done; time the task is done; specific month(s), if applicable; and the initials of the maintenance staff person completing the task. A typical checklist can have from 14 to 24 items requiring preventive maintenance services.

The checklists, minimally, include:

- Heating systems, pumps, boilers, and recovery units.
- Heat ducts.
- Portable pumps for oil changes.
- Hot water tanks.
- Water tanks.
- Exhaust fans.
- Freezers and coolers.
- Water coolers.
- RTU units.
- Compressors.
- Kitchen hoods.
- Other specified equipment and systems.

While the checklists are important to ensuring a systematically implemented preventive maintenance program, interviewees indicate they frequently are unable to implement all of the preventive maintenance scheduled procedures due to a lack of time and manpower. Furthermore, no checklist has been prepared for the central office facility.

COMMENDATION 5-D:

The maintenance department has a detailed preventative maintenance schedule checklist for each school which, when implemented, can result in prolonging the useful life of equipment.

RECOMMENDATION 5-7:

Develop and implement a complete preventive maintenance plan.

With the implementation of the planned succession program that will result in employing the HVAC and electrician trainees, the maintenance department should begin systematically conducting scheduled preventive maintenance activity. Additionally, the supervisor of maintenance should develop a preventive maintenance checklist and

schedule for the district office building. This can be accomplished upon receipt of the state's proposed preventive maintenance program.

This succession plan should provide the additional labor needed to begin this process and also will provide the trainees and orientation to the schools' equipment and systems valuable work experience. Upon the retirement of the veteran employees, the district will need to assess the need for additional maintenance personnel to ensure that preventive maintenance schedules are met.

This recommendation should be implemented upon the approval of this report and overseen by the supervisor of maintenance.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost to the district during the training period for the trainees.

FINDING

All work orders and related work papers are prepared manually, a time-consuming and inefficient process.

Work order requests are frequently received by e-mail and telephone calls. Sometimes a request is simply received verbally when a maintenance staff member is at a school. Consequently, not all requests are documented and tracking activity is not easily accomplished.

From July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011, 405 work orders were received through e-mail messages. Thirty of these work orders were not completed. These numbers do not include verbal requests, preventative maintenance, summer maintenance, Fire Marshall report requirements, Brimm Insurance (risk), and some other types of reports sent to maintenance.

Best practices suggests that automation of the work order processes, including tracking, costing out, and follow-up reporting, can save staff time and result in more efficient use of labor. One such best practice is a service offered by SchoolDude.com.

RECOMMENDATION 5-8:

Implement an online system for maintenance work orders, activities, and expenses, and for scheduling and tracking preventive maintenance.

Time spent on manually handling work order requests, follow-up reports, and other related activity detracts from time available to complete other necessary work orders.

SchoolDude.com offers a suite of services that can be tailored to the district's specified needs. These services can include those shown in **Exhibit 5-8**.

**EXHIBIT 5-8
SCHOOLDUDE SERVICES**

SchoolDude's comprehensive, integrated suite of solutions uses the power of the Internet to achieve your operational goals -- without the time, hassle and expense of managing local client/server systems. We help you save money, manage support services, and make a difference!

Administrative Operations

- Facility Event Scheduling
- Facility Use Calendaring
- Trip Planning & Management
- Utility Tracking & Analysis
- Capital Planning & Facility Renewal

Facility Operations

- Work Order Management
- Preventive Maintenance Scheduling
- Wireless Work Order Management
- Critical Alarm Automation (BAS Integration)
- Work Order & BAS Integration
- Inventory Management

Technology Operations

- IT Asset Management
- IT Help Desk Management
- Wireless IT Incident Management

Source: SchoolDude.com website, September 2011.

The assistant superintendent should, upon approval of this report, proceed with identifying needed services and begin planning for funding and implementing an automated system for TCS's maintenance program.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing personnel. The cost cannot be determined until the district identifies the types of services desired. However, SchoolDude.com and other similar service providers can provide quotes to the district.

FINDING

The district has an established relationship with the local state prison to have inmates provide services when schools are not in session and students are not attending school-based activities.

The inmates have assisted the district with painting projects, flooring projects, replacement of ceiling tiles, and other needed services.

The assistant superintendent and supervisor of maintenance develop lists of potential projects and this is forwarded to prison officials. When prison labor becomes available the prison provides the inmates along with proper supervision. The district provides necessary materials and supplies and support personnel.

In the summer of 2011, prisoners assisted in painting interior spaces of Flemington Elementary School. The work completed was professional and provided a renewed look for the opening of school.

COMMENDATION 5-E:

The district uses local prison inmates to assist with the routine maintenance of school facilities.

5.4 Operations and Custodial Services

Safe, clean, and sanitary facilities are essential elements in today's schooling environment. School districts vary in how these functions are delivered. Typically, school boards either contract out (outsource) custodial and other services, or organize a comprehensive in-house system of services. Personnel may be employed by either the BOE or the outsource company. Management responsibility, if the program is operational totally in-house, may reside either partially or wholly with the central office, the individual school, or cost center. The decision to determine the desired structure is usually based on a number of criteria, including minimizing costs to the school district, improving services to schools, and reducing the span of control of district or school-based administrators.

TCS custodial services are provided to the schools and central office building by 20 full-time equivalent (FTE) custodial positions. School-based positions report to the principals and the high school shares a position with the central office. The assistant superintendent oversees the provision of necessary training to support service personnel with assistance from the supervisor of maintenance.

Some custodial related services are outsourced and include:

- Integrated pest management services.
- Sprinkler inspections.
- Garbage services.
- Middle school football field grounds keeping and related maintenance

FINDING

TCS does not have written custodial standards as part of its School Board policy manual, nor does it utilize an allocation formula to determine the FTE assigned to each facility.

Without written standards and an allocation formula, the buildings may not be consistently cleaned at the level indicated by the staffing allocation.

According to the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA), one custodian can clean approximately 18,000 to 20,000 square feet in an eight-hour period and meet the industry standard of Level 2: "Ordinary Tidiness." Another organization, the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, suggests that 1 FTE for 20,000 to 25,000 square feet can result in an acceptable standard of cleanliness; however, that standard does not take into consideration the aging nature of many school facilities.

The TCS custodial staffing is presented in **Exhibit 5-9**. As shown:

- There is a range of custodial FTE per gross square feet (GSF) from a low of 16,744 GSF/FTE at West Taylor Elementary School to a high of 26,836 GSF/FTE at Grafton High School.
- The high school and middle school custodial FTE assignments provide that each FTE cleans approximately 6,000 more square feet than cited in APPA best practices.
- Flemington Elementary School, constructed in 1939 and 72 years old, is a two-story facility and the custodian is responsible for 23,944 GSF.

**EXHIBIT 5-9
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
CUSTODIAL STAFFING
2010-11**

| SCHOOL | GSF | ASSIGNED FTE | GSF/FTE | OPTIONS FOR RECOMMENDED FTE: HIGH TO LOW | RECOMMENDED CHANGE +/- |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|--|------------------------|
| Grafton High School | 201,274 | 7.5* | 26,836 | 10.0 – 8.0 | + .5 |
| Taylor County Middle School | 112,659 | 4.5 | 25,035 | 5.5 – 4.5 | + .5 |
| Anna Jarvis Elementary School | 67,099 | 4.0 | 16,774 | 3.5 – 2.7 | (- .5) |
| Flemington Elementary School | 23,944 | 1.0 | 23,944 | 1.2 – 1.0 | -0- |
| West Taylor Elementary School | 42,037 | 2.5 | 16,814 | 2.1 – 1.7 | (- .5) |
| Central Office | 9,600 | .5* | 19,200** | .5 - .4 | -0- |
| TOTAL | | 20 | | 22.8 – 18.3 | -0- |

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc. from TCS data, 2011.

* From high school

** Equivalent square footage if full time

RECOMMENDATION 5-9:

Reassign custodial FTE to upgrade services at Taylor Middle School and Grafton High School/Central Office.

Best practices would suggest that a ratio of 1 FTE for 20,000 GSF is justifiable; fiscal realities dictate that a ratio of 23,000 per FTE is more attainable. As can be seen in **Exhibit 5-9**, a ratio nearer that number could result in the reassignment of FTE to improve the services for the two secondary schools. Additionally, by implementing **Recommendations 5-11** and **12**, which follow, the standards of cleanliness can be maintained.

This recommendation should be implemented by the assistant superintendent subsequent to approval of the report and at the conclusion of the 2011 winter break.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the district and with existing personnel.

FINDING

TCS does not have written custodial inspection standards.

The principals do not have guidelines in determining acceptable standards of cleanliness. As a result, the buildings may not be consistently cleaned at the level indicated by the staffing allocation.

Two major components of the time and task standards are identified by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers or the APPA Standards:

- Appearance Levels must be defined and described in some detail. (The APPA handbooks provide descriptions for five levels of cleanliness as summarized in **Exhibit 5-10**.)
- Standard Spaces must be identified to ensure that the difference in the types of spaces and the cleaning effort required for those spaces is clearly distinguished. (The APPA handbooks identify 33 different types of spaces.)

**EXHIBIT 5-10
APPA CLEANLINESS SCALE**

| | |
|----------|--|
| Level 1: | Ordinary Spotlessness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings are kept bright and clean at all times. No dust accumulation on vertical surfaces, very little on horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are kept clean. Only small amounts of spots visible. |
| Level 2 | Ordinary Tidiness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dusting is maintained at a high level. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show evidence of spots and dust. |
| Level 3: | Casual Inattention - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dust accumulation on vents, vertical, and horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show accumulations of dust, spots, and prints. |
| Level 4: | Moderate dinginess - Waste containers are full and overflowing. Floor coverings are normally dull, marked, and spotted with infrequent peaks. Dusting is infrequent and dust balls accumulate. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are dirty and spotted. |
| Level 5: | Unkempt Neglect - No trash pickup. Occupants of building are responsible. Regular floor care is eliminated. Dusting is eliminated. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are very dirty. |

Source: APPA and the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, 1998.

RECOMMENDATION 5-10:

Implement APPA cleanliness standards for custodial services.

Custodial standards will create the same level of expectations and, thus, internal consistencies across the school district. This will improve the quality of cleaning and light maintenance activities.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report and involve all five school principals or their designees. It should be completed prior to the opening of the 2012-13 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost to the district. The principals can expect to meet two or more times to develop recommended standards for administration and BOE approval.

FINDING

There is no systematic method of assessing custodial service quality linked to APPA standards.

The direct custodial supervisors are building principals, who are not typically trained in the evaluation of facility cleanliness. Lack of quality control procedures often leads to poor performance and complaints about the appearance of schools.

MGT of America, Inc.'s Facilities Practice consultants are recognized as experts in the field of facilities work and have developed best practices processes as represented in **Exhibit 5-11**.

**EXHIBIT 5-11
SAMPLE CLEANING GUIDELINES
AS PER CLEANING STANDARDS**

| Custodial Evaluation | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|--------|---------|----------|-------|
| School: _____ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date: _____ | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Annually | Notes |
| Classrooms, labs, gyms, offices | | | | | | | | | | |
| Routine Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Project Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hallways, foyers | | | | | | | | | | |
| Routine Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Project Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Restrooms, lockers | | | | | | | | | | |
| Routine Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Project Activities | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: MGT of America, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 5-11:

Conduct periodic custodial service quality inspections using forms reflecting the newly adopted custodial standards.

Conducting periodic custodial service quality inspections will enable the school district to gather important information about how custodial services can be improved. The data can be analyzed and shared at the appropriate level of service. Some information may best be shared with custodians, while management personnel may use other information to make structural changes in how, where, or when services are delivered.

This recommendation should be implemented subsequent to implementation of **Recommendations 5-9 and 10.**

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and no additional cost.

FINDING

The district does not track expenditures for individual school's custodial supplies or equipment, resulting in no method for ensuring that controls over costs can be exercised.

However, floors were seen as clean and appeared in good condition.

When consultants requested individual school data on the expenditures for custodial supplies, including paper goods, staff reported that the information was not available.

Maintaining these records can result in determining if changes in purchasing and use of materials and supplies should be altered. Consultants have found in other districts a wide variation in costs per square foot. For example, in Harrison County Schools, the range is from a low of \$ 0.10 to \$ 0.33 per square foot. With this data, consultants were able to establish a recommended target of \$ 0.17 per square foot, which would result in cost savings for the district.

Without this data, a benchmark cannot be established against which to evaluate the costs.

RECOMMENDATION 5-12:

Track expenditures for custodial supplies to each site and establish a budget for each facility.

By adhering to a cleaning supply budget, costs could be contained and more consistent among the individual schools. In addition, the custodial coordinator can validate when additional supplies are warranted by unique or different circumstances.

The district should establish a target budget for cleaning supplies based on information and data that can be obtained by tracking custodial expenditures. This tracking should occur during FY 2012 and a budget should be developed for FY 2013. This can be implemented by the assistant superintendent and the treasurer.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and no additional cost. Establishment of a budgeted amount based on benchmark data may result in savings for the district.

FINDING

All district facilities have areas of debris that can be hazardous.

Based on walk-throughs of all five schools and the support facilities. Consultants observed areas that have accumulations of trash, unusable supplies and materials, and other debris that can be hazardous.

Exhibit 5-12 shows a series of photographs of spaces in the basement of the central office building, warehouse and transportation yards, and the stairwell and basement of Flemington Elementary. As can be seen these areas are cluttered with various debris and equipment.

**EXHIBIT 5-12
TRASH, DEBRIS, AND UNUSED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: Prepared by MGT of America, Inc., September 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 5-13:

Remove accumulated trash and unusable equipment and supplies from all facilities.

In particular, debris should be removed from the BOE building basement, warehouse, and transportation yards, and the Flemington Elementary School basement.

Implementing this recommendation should take place immediately and result in creating more storage space for usable supplies and equipment.

One option that the district may be able to exercise to accomplish this recommendation may be to secure inmate assistance from the local prison. If this is an available option, then the Flemington Elementary School clean-up work could be accomplished at the winter holiday break when students are not in attendance. The remaining areas could be addressed on other days.

FISCAL IMPACT

Other than the cost for trucking trash and supervisory time, there should be no cost to the district.

5.5 Energy Management

With the advent of increased costs for energy to provide fuels for HVAC systems, transportation vehicles, food service operations, and other related activities, school districts have established numerous and varied policies, procedures, and methods for increasing efficiencies in energy consumption and reducing operating costs. Policies typically describe the BOE's specific desire to ensure that maximum resources are available for instructional purposes and to charge the administration with developing related procedures.

Procedures generally prescribe a range of measures and activities to be implemented and a specific means for computing the results. Some school districts develop incentive systems to reward employees for actions or recommendations that have resulted in substantial savings or improvement in the performance of energy consuming equipment.

Energy management methods range from sophisticated, centralized, computer controls for HVAC systems and other energy consumption devices, to simple manual procedures for turning thermostats down and lights off during periods of minimal building or room use.

FINDING

The district administration and staff have discussed energy management contracts that could provide possible savings but have not taken any action to develop a plan.

The district has installed in some schools HVAC controls that are programmed to go into an unoccupied mode when buildings are not in use. These systems can be monitored by the supervisor and set remotely. However, no data regarding energy savings has been obtained nor have benchmarks been developed for the facilities having these controls.

No other proactive energy management strategies are employed. No evidence was identified that shows that each new employee is provided an orientation to an energy management program or provided training related to assigned responsibilities. The district has not conducted an energy audit. As a result, the district does not have base-line or other data for comparison purposes to use in planning and preparing energy management initiatives. Base-line data could easily be assembled from existing and historical utility records. Preliminary energy audits are typically a service rendered by public and cooperative utilities companies.

Resources to guide planning for energy conservation are available from a variety of sources. Some of these include the following:

- http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/TSPRP/Other/Energy_Efficient/Energy_Efficient.pdf provides ten ways to cut energy costs and a list of effective energy management programs used by Texas school districts can be obtained through this medium.
- Energy Education, Inc., an energy management consulting firm, has received significant testimonials from clients. Information related to this company and their client base can be obtained by going to their website at http://www.energyeducation.com/energy_education_conservation_school_funding_results.

An example of another resource is Ponca City School District in Ponca City, Oklahoma. Members of the review team conducted a review of Ponca City School District (PCSD). The PCSD, composed of 12 schools enrolling approximately 5,500 students, operates a two-part plan of energy management.

The first part includes controls from Trane and KMC (and could be procured from other manufacturers). These controls permit monitoring temperatures in rooms and walk-in freezers and coolers (some of these type controls are in place in TCS: West Taylor Elementary is fully equipped; Taylor County Middle School is partially equipped; air conditioner units at Flemington Elementary School and portions of Grafton High School are also equipped). The controls equipment permits the logging and charting of information, setting of start and stop times, temperature setbacks, temperature ranges, and an emergency stop system. The systems can deliver alarms if a machine fails or a temperature sensor is too high or low.

The second part of the energy management program involves a people-based program that was brought to PCSD by Energy Education, Inc. in 1996. The program is designed to conserve energy in the off-hours. To accomplish this, the program analyzes and monitors lighting, heating, cooling, humidity control, mechanical and appliance systems, and utility cost tracking, analysis, and reporting. Savings in energy are accrued through the use of a program that trains personnel to set thermostats back to 55 degrees during times that buildings are unoccupied, and then are returned to normal settings by personnel returning to buildings. Building inspections are routinely made to ensure compliance. The second part of the energy management program is managed by a teacher receiving a monthly stipend and reporting to the Director of Maintenance and Risk Management.

PCSD has saved approximately \$1.2 million in documented expenditures for energy from 1997 through 2002 through the energy management program. Information presented to their board of education by the energy manager shows savings as averaging approximately \$192,000 per year. The development of this effective energy management program with documented savings in a small school district is particularly noteworthy.

RECOMMENDATION 5-14:

Develop a comprehensive energy management program.

The superintendent, assistant superintendent, treasurer, and maintenance supervisor should develop a district-wide energy management program and present it to the BOE for review, revision, and approval and subsequent implementation.

The program should include the development of base-line data that should easily be assembled from existing and historical utility records. Preliminary energy audits are typically a service rendered by public and cooperative utilities companies. TCS should develop and incorporate in the employee orientation program energy management information including specific assigned responsibilities. These actions should result in reducing TCS expenditures for energy and permit the savings to be used to fund instructional and other priorities and focus employees' attention on energy management initiatives and their role in the process.

All of this information should be incorporated into a new employee orientation program. New substitute teachers should receive this information through orientation and training sessions. A video tape or CD of the regular orientation program should be prepared for new personnel employed but not involved in any regularly scheduled orientation programs so that whenever a new employee is placed on-the-job they can receive this information. Once the orientation information is developed, each principal and assistant principal should be provided a presentation and briefed on their respective responsibilities related to oversight.

The final approved energy management plan should be implemented by maintenance and custodial personnel with progress reports prepared and presented to the superintendent and BOE annually.

The overall cost and savings for implementing a prepared plan cannot be calculated since baseline data have not been established and the elements of a plan must be developed. However, the district may wish to supplement a teacher or other employee who has the interest and skills to oversee the plan's development and ultimate implementation. If so, then a supplement could be established.

Development of the plan should commence upon approval of this report and be ready for implementation in FY 2013.

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming an average commitment for an energy manager/coordinator of four hours per week times 50 weeks, an estimated 200 hours of time could be supplemented. At an hourly rate of \$30, the annual expenditure could be up to \$6,000 plus reimbursement for travel estimated at \$100 per month, or \$1,200 annually. The total expenses without calculations for equipment could be \$7,200 annually for a five-year total of \$36,000. Energy savings cannot be estimated but should more than offset costs.

Facility Use and Management

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Employee Supplement for Energy Management Coordination | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) | (\$6,000) |
| Travel Expenses for Coordinator | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) | (\$1,200) |
| Estimated Energy Management Savings | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown | Unknown |
| TOTAL | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) | (\$7,200) |

6.0 *TRANSPORTATION*

6.0 TRANSPORTATION

This chapter presents the major findings, commendations, and recommendations for the Taylor County Schools (TCS) transportation function. The major sections of this chapter are:

- 6.1 Organization and Management
- 6.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures
- 6.3 Routing and Scheduling
- 6.4 Training and Safety
- 6.5 Fleet Maintenance

Among the most important functions and responsibilities of any school district is transporting our nation's children. This major function is accomplished by thousands of school systems throughout the country and is a tribute to the leaders of our nation's school systems who ensure that they provide the safest mode of transport in comparison with any other form of transit (air, surface, water) in the world.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

TCS is in compliance with West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) transportation policies and procedures. The TCS Transportation Department has one primary mission: to safely transport students to and from school effectively and efficiently. The department provides students with competent and safe transportation services. During the evaluation, the consultant team found several areas that could be improved in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation operation.

The department provides home-to-school and school-to-home transportation daily for 2,198 of the 2,397 (92%) students enrolled in TCS.

The key commendations reported in this chapter are as follows:

- Commendation 6-A** TCS is working with RESA 7 in developing and supporting procedures in obtaining Medicaid reimbursement for school transportation services.
- Commendation 6-B** TCS is working with RESA 7 in developing and supporting an area-wide bus operators driving training program.
- Commendation 6-C** TCS and the transportation department are reducing the diesel exhaust emissions throughout the county and reducing the potential of harmful exhaust emissions in the vicinity of students.

Overall, the transportation department does a satisfactory job complying with and implementing WVDE transportation policies and procedures. However, consultants found areas of the transportation function that could be improved.

This chapter contains the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 6-1** Update and review all transportation department job descriptions to include job responsibilities and duties.

- Recommendation 6-2** Develop a formal process for evaluating cost and operational efficiencies in departmental operations and document all activities and findings.

- Recommendation 6-3** Review and evaluate the use of TCS school buses for extracurricular trips and reduce the number of curricular trips.

- Recommendation 6-4** Purchase bus routing software or related technology to support the development and maintenance of efficient and effective bus routes and schedules.

- Recommendation 6-5** Encourage mechanics to achieve ASE school bus certification and make ASE certification a condition for mechanics seeking employment.

- Recommendation 6-6** Develop a plan for or an appropriate vehicle maintenance facility.

TCS encompasses all of Taylor County, with approximately 2,397 students enrolled September 1, 2011. The department provides daily transportation to three elementary schools (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten through grade 4); one middle school (grades 5 through 8); and one high school (grades 9 through 12); and an alternative learning center. In addition, the department provides shuttle service and curricular and extracurricular trip (field and sport trips) activities transportation. Both regular education and special education students are transported to and from school throughout the county.

Exhibit 6-1 shows the total enrollment for TCS and peer districts for 2008-09 through 2010-11 school years. TCS student enrollment has decreased by 31 students, Raleigh and Hardy County school districts decreased by 71 students and 56 students, respectively, and Barbour County School District's enrollment increased by three students.

**EXHIBIT 6-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
STUDENT POPULATION
2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | DIFFERENCE OF ENROLLMENT |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Taylor County | 2,426 | 2,450 | 2,395 | (-31) |
| Barbour County | 2,496 | 2,478 | 2,499 | 3 |
| Braxton County | 2,289 | 2,230 | 2,218 | (-71) |
| Hardy County | 2,353 | 2,307 | 2,297 | (-56) |
| Peer Average | 2,391 | 2,366 | 2,352 | (-39) |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation, 2011.

Exhibit 6-2 compares the cost per mile and transportation cost per student for TCS and the peer districts. TCS's cost per mile is higher than the peer average for 2008-09 and 2009-10. While TCS's increase of the percentage for the cost per mile is the lowest of the peer districts, the actual cost per mile is the highest. TCS's cost per student was the highest in 2008-09, but was the lowest in 2009-10 school year, decreasing by 5.19 percent, the peer average cost per student increased by 19.50 percent.

**EXHIBIT 6-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TRANSPORTATION COST PER MILE AND COST PER STUDENT
2008-09 THROUGH 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | COST PER MILE | | PERCENTAGE CHANGE | COST PER STUDENT | | PERCENTAGE CHANGE |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | |
| Taylor County | \$5.57 | \$5.83 | 4.67% | \$1,014.89 | \$964.84 | (5.19%) |
| Barbour County | \$4.88 | \$5.61 | 14.96% | \$909.10 | \$1,164.18 | 28.06% |
| Braxton County | \$4.63 | \$5.80 | 20.17% | \$957.82 | \$1,391.69 | 45.30% |
| Hardy County | \$5.02 | \$5.48 | 25.27% | \$910.67 | \$990.08 | 8.72% |
| Peer Average | \$5.01 | \$5.68 | 13.37% | \$955.67 | \$1,142.00 | 19.50% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation, 2011.

The WVDE has established recommendations for the length of ride time for all students and the numbers of spare school buses maintained by districts. **Exhibit 6-3** shows that TCS had the lowest percentage of bus routes that exceed the state recommended times. Additionally, the exhibit shows that in 2009-10 TCS maintains the lowest number of spare buses exceeding the state recommended count, and the lowest cost to maintain these buses. TCS currently has 34 school buses assigned to daily route service and 6 school buses assigned as spare buses.

**EXHIBIT 6-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PERCENTAGE OF ROUTES EXCEEDING ROUTE TIMES
AND EXCEEDING SPARE BUSES AND COST TO MAINTAIN
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | % EXCEEDED RECOMMENDED ROUTE TIMES | SPARE BUSES OVER RECOMMENDED NUMBER | APPROXIMATE COST TO MAINTAIN ADDITIONAL SPARE BUSES |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Taylor County | 7.66 | 4.00 | \$60,000 |
| Barbour County | 11.90 | 6.90 | \$103,500 |
| Braxton County | 22.95 | 4.80 | \$72,000 |
| Hardy County | 13.14 | 14.40 | \$214,500 |
| Peer Average | 13.91 | 7.53 | \$112,500 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation, 2011.

Exhibit 6-4 shows the TCS and peer comparisons 2009-10 total transportation expenditures, students transported, and the annual school bus miles traveled. TCS total expenditures and total miles were below the peer average; however, TCS transported the highest number of students among the peers.

**EXHIBIT 6-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
EXPENDITURES, MILES TRAVELED AND
NUMBER OF STUDENTS TRANSPORTED DAILY
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | TOTAL EXPENDITURES | TOTAL MILES TRAVELED | STUDENTS TRANSPORTED |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Taylor County | \$2,120,727 | 363,727 | 2,198 |
| Barbour County | \$2,327,202 | 415,156 | 1,999 |
| Braxton County | \$2,435,455 | 420,004 | 1,750 |
| Hardy County | \$1,858,371 | 339,078 | 1,877 |
| Peer Average | \$2,185,439 | 384,491 | 1,956 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education reports provided by TCS Transportation Department, 2011.

Exhibit 6-5 and **Exhibit 6-6** show the transportation expenditures for TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. TCS exceeded the peer average in salaries (the highest cost), insurance (the highest cost), and vehicle supplies categories. TCS was below the peer average for all of the other categories, including total expenditures.

**EXHIBIT 6-5
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES BY PURPOSE OF EXPENDITURES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SALARIES | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS | MAINTENANCE | INSURANCE | UTILITIES | VEHICLE SUPPLIES |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Taylor County | \$965,584 | \$485,749 | \$9,441 | \$118,275 | \$7,778 | \$268,819 |
| Barbour County | \$904,029 | \$700,384 | \$9,301 | \$116,491 | \$16,386 | \$292,694 |
| Braxton County | \$925,378 | \$802,253 | \$7,743 | \$80,000 | \$13,623 | \$254,183 |
| Hardy County | \$795,846 | \$389,974 | \$39,031 | \$115,123 | NA | \$254,001 |
| Peer Average | \$897,709 | \$594,590 | \$16,379 | \$107,472 | \$12,596 | \$267,424 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education reports provided by TCS Transportation Department, 2011.

**EXHIBIT 6-6
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES BY PURPOSE OF EXPENDITURES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | BUS REPLACEMENT | EQUIPMENT | CONTRACT TRANSPORT | OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES | OTHER | TOTAL |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Taylor County | \$246,306 | \$6,100 | \$1,374 | \$9,496 | \$1,805 | \$2,120,727 |
| Barbour County | \$254,756 | \$20,528 | \$356 | \$9,227 | \$3,050 | \$2,327,202 |
| Braxton County | \$260,541 | -0- | \$76,921 | \$8,771 | \$6,042 | \$2,435,455 |
| Hardy County | \$245,334 | -0- | \$4,995 | \$12,935 | \$1,132 | \$1,858,371 |
| Peer Average | \$251,734 | \$6,657 | \$20,912 | \$10,107 | \$3,007 | \$2,185,439 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education reports provided by TCS Transportation Department, 2011.

Exhibit 6-7 shows the district, peer, and state average enrollment for students with disabilities in 2010-11. TCS had the second highest number and percentage of students with disabilities, and the TCS percentage is comparable to the state average (16 percent).

**EXHIBIT 6-7
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| | NUMBER | PERCENTAGE |
| Taylor County | 390 | 16.3% |
| Barbour County | 394 | 15.8% |
| Braxton County | 365 | 16.4% |
| Hardy County | 302 | 13.2% |
| Peer Average | 363 | 15.4% |
| State | 45,007 | 16.0% |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

The transportation department has five special education school buses, equipped with wheelchair lifts, to transport students requiring special transportation.

Exhibit 6-8 shows the number of transportation personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts in the listed categories for the 2009-10 school year. TCS and Barbour County Schools employed a supervisor of transportation. The number of TCS school bus operators was comparable to the peer districts.

**EXHIBIT 6-8
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL CATEGORIES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERVISOR OF TRANSPORTATION | BUS SUPERVISOR | SCHOOL BUS OPERATORS | CHIEF MECHANIC |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Taylor County | 1 | 0 | 31.0 | 1 |
| Barbour County | 1 | 0 | 30.9 | 1.9 |
| Braxton County | 0 | 0 | 32.5 | 1.0 |
| Hardy County | 0 | 0 | 30.0 | 0.0 |
| Peer Average | NA | NA | 31.1 | 1.0 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

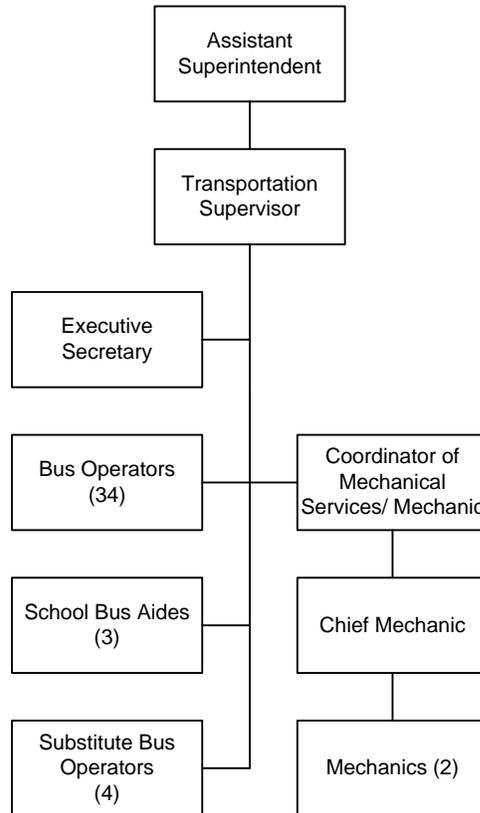
6.1 Organization and Management

The organizational structure and staffing of any school district student transportation operation is critical to maintaining effective and efficient operations in this essential area. Departments that are able to balance efficiency and quality are succeeding in one of the most challenging areas of school division operations.

Exhibit 6-9 shows how the TCS Transportation Department is structured to accomplish transportation planning, training, maintenance, and daily operations. The transportation supervisor reports to the assistant superintendent.

The transportation staff consists of one executive secretary (serves both the special education and transportation departments and is the receptionist for the central office), one coordinator of mechanical services/mechanic, one chief mechanic, two mechanics, 34 bus operators, three bus aides, and four substitute bus operators.

**EXHIBIT 6-9
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2010-11**



Source: TCS, Transportation Department, 2011.

FINDING

The TCS Transportation Department does not have updated job descriptions for the majority of their department employees; this can result in not communicating and identifying important job responsibilities that candidates for positions should possess.

Only two positions, the transportation supervisor and the executive secretary, have recently updated job descriptions, which listed:

- Job Title
- Qualifications
- To Whom Responsible
- Responsibilities

Three other positions had two sheets of responsibilities: one for the mechanic position with a list of 29 responsibilities and duties; one for the bus operator position with a list of 14 responsibilities and duties; and one for the bus supervisor position with a list of 22

responsibilities. (It is noted that the transportation department does not have a bus supervisor position within their complement of employees.)

Updated job descriptions for coordinator of mechanical services/mechanic, chief mechanic, mechanic, bus operator, and bus aide were missing.

RECOMMENDATION 6-1:

Update and review all transportation department job descriptions to include job responsibilities and duties.

Two sample job descriptions and responsibilities are shown in **Exhibit 6-10**. These were adopted by the 15th National Congress on School Transportation, in their *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures*, May 2010.

**EXHIBIT 6-10
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

| POSITION | SPECIFIC DUTIES (A) & MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (B) |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Bus Driver <i>(Bus Operator)</i> | <p>A. SPECIFIC DUTIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Report defective school bus equipment and accessories, including but not limited to, fire extinguishers, highway warning kits, first aid and body fluid cleanup kits, snow chains, sanders, etc., and when necessary install, service or replace defective equipment; ■ Perform required operational and safety inspections of the school bus and all related equipment; ■ Ability to clean and service the school bus to include interior cleaning and exterior bus washing, installation of fuel, oil and other fluids, as directed; ■ Operate all hand and foot controls installed in a school bus, as required; ■ Perform basic first aid, as appropriate, which may include CPR; ■ Work effectively with a group of students of different grad levels, abilities or program placement; ■ Complete legibly and accurately forms, records, reports and other documentation/data-logging activities, as required by state or district policy; ■ Be punctual; ■ Dress appropriately and wear proper foot protection; ■ Manage passengers in the school bus; ■ Report unsafe acts or conditions that require the attention of any person other than the driver; and ■ Successfully complete school bus driver training programs and courses established by the state or school district. |

**EXHIBIT 6-10 (Continued)
SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

| POSITION | SPECIFIC DUTIES (A) & MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (B) |
|---|--|
| | <p>B. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High school graduate or equivalent. ■ Hold and maintain a class license with all applicable endorsements for the type of vehicle being driven; ■ Excellent driving record; ■ Physical ability to drive and perform all duties related to school bus operations; ■ Ability to relate effectively with parents, staff and public in a multicultural and multiracial community; ■ Possess sufficient command of local language so as to communicate with students, parents, district staff members and other concerned individuals regarding all aspects of their job-related activities; ■ Ability to pass a criminal history background check; ■ Ability to pass a state or DOT medical examination; and ■ Ability to pass a federally mandated drug/alcohol screen. |
| <p>Bus Attendant (Monitor or Attendant) (<i>Bus Aide</i>)</p> | <p>A. SPECIFIC DUTIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assist the school bus driver; ■ Assist students to safely embark and disembark from a school bus; ■ Ensure that students get off at the correct bus stop; ■ Help implement safety standards on board the bus; ■ When applicable, assist with loading/unloading and securing of assistive devices and safety restraints; and ■ Assist driver with student management. <p>B. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High School graduate or equivalent; ■ Ability to work with all students; ■ Ability to physically move wheelchairs onto wheelchair ramp and into the bus; ■ Ability to physically remove students from a disabled bus; ■ Ability to get along with co-workers, parents, students and other staff; ■ Ability to interact with students; ■ Ability to follow directions; and ■ Ability to communicate with staff. |

Source: National Congress on School Transportation May 2010.

Additional sample job descriptions are available on the website for the National Congress on School Transportation at www.ucmo.edu/safetycenter/nctonline.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Approximately 20 hours of staff time would be required to complete the recommendation.

6.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures

TCS Transportation Department staff work well as a team. TCS policies and administrative regulations, including the student code of conduct, are provided to each student and employee each year. The school board policies define a safe and reasonable walking distance which determines student eligibility for bus transportation and follows the WVDE regulations. All transportation employees receive a copy of the WVDE state school bus policies, regulations, and guidelines each year.

Some TCS bus operators are allowed to park their assigned school bus at home if they are closer to their first pickup point than they would be if they parked at the vehicle maintenance lot.

FINDING

The transportation department does not utilize any programs to monitor and report on key performance indicators and therefore lacks important information to support decisions on safety, cost efficiency, cost effectiveness, and customer service.

While the transportation staff is interested in maximizing the effectiveness of the transportation function, the department does not regularly track, compile, or publish its findings on performance indicators. The department does collect a portion of these statistics, as required by the state for funding reasons, but does not report them in an open forum, such as a school board meeting.

Many high-performing school districts use indicators to assess ongoing performance in key management areas. Performance indicators allow transportation departments to track service quality and make adjustments where required. Improvements in performance can be documented to demonstrate progress. Accurate and timely performance indicators help management allocate funds to the most critical needs. They also provide assurance to the central office, the school board, and the public that the department is using its resources in the best possible manner.

The transportation department staff completes an annual transportation report for WVDE. This document contains some data that would be useful in analyzing performance locally. However, this data is not sufficient to produce a comprehensive understanding of departmental effectiveness and efficiency.

Exhibit 6-11 shows sample transportation performance indicators typically used by school districts. Such indicators could assist the department in consistently tracking and monitoring performance. The district could compare these statistics to those of peer school districts and its own history. Ideally, TCS would select an annual target goal for each indicator and track progress towards that goal.

**EXHIBIT 6-11
SAMPLE STANDARD
TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

| PERFORMANCE AREA | PERFORMANCE INDICATOR |
|---------------------------|--|
| Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accidents per 100,000 miles ■ Incidents per 100,000 miles ■ Number of first, second, and third student discipline referrals |
| Cost Efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operational costs per route mile ■ Annual operational costs per route ■ Operational costs per student for regular education, special education, magnet, and diversity busing |
| Cost Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On time performance ■ Average rider trip time in minutes ■ Average bus occupancy |
| Customer Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of complaints by category ■ Statistics on contractor response to complaints |

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2011.

Throughout the onsite visit, the consultant team searched for evidence of effective cost analysis and evaluation, but was provided only a few isolated documents related to overall operational costs. There was no evidence found in departmental records or staff interviews to suggest that comprehensive cost analyses were conducted to evaluate transportation efficiency and no formal, centralized source of performance information for use in strategic planning and monitoring.

RECOMMENDATION 6-2:

Develop a formal process for evaluating cost and operational efficiencies in departmental operations and document all activities and findings.

A comprehensive internal analysis of ongoing transportation costs would serve as a source of benchmarking data that could be used to monitor performance throughout the year. Such information could also be used to prepare a report to build a stronger understanding of the department’s successes and challenges among parents, schools, and the school district.

Budgetary constraints, coupled with the increasing demands on transportation resources in TCS, necessitate precise fiscal monitoring and evaluation within the department. The current level of fiscal monitoring, evaluation, and planning within the department is insufficient to ensure a high level of efficiency. The transportation department must develop and implement a systematic approach to addressing these issues.

The transportation department should also use the report as a key planning benchmark and tool, allowing for the previous year’s performance to be evaluated and strategic planning for the upcoming year.

Exhibit 6-12 shows an example of a school district’s (Round Rock Independent School District, TX) performance evaluation that is posted on the district’s website.

**EXHIBIT 6-12
SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Mission Statement | The mission of the Transportation Department is to safely provide quality and reliable service for students, staff, and community through a well-trained and positive staff that satisfies customers. |
| Customer Requirement: | STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT |
| Goal: | The Transportation Department will provide superb student transportation services that meet or exceed local, state, national, and international standards in all areas. |
| Measures: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student, staff, and community perceptions of the Transportation Department ▪ Benchmarks for on-time arrivals based on district history and industry standards ▪ Benchmarks for telephone complaints based on district history ▪ Percent of employees receiving training in all areas of their job responsibility |
| Customer Requirement: | SAFE, ORDERLY & RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE |
| Goal: | Buses and facilities will be safe, secure, and nurturing places for students and staff. |
| Measures: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student, staff, and community perceptions of the safety of the Transportation Department ▪ Benchmarks for accident rate based on district history and industry standards ▪ Benchmarks for student misconduct based on district history and industry standards ▪ Benchmarks for on-time student arrivals based on district history and industry standards |
| Customer Requirement: | EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS |
| Goal: | The Transportation Department will use the Baldrige criteria to achieve performance excellence and improve customer satisfaction. |
| Measures: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percent of individuals using Baldrige Criteria to assess, plan, and improve individual performance ▪ Benchmarks for ridership efficiency based on district history. ▪ Benchmarks for field trips based on district history and industry standards ▪ Benchmarks for transportation efficiency measures based on district history and industry standards ▪ Benchmarks for breakdowns and mechanic efficiency based on district history and industry standards ▪ Employees dedication and satisfaction with department based on district history |

Source: Round Rock ISD, Texas, February 2011.

The assistant superintendent and transportation supervisor should, upon approval of this report, begin the implementation of this recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific fiscal impact associated with this recommendation; however, fiscal efficiency can only be promoted by increased precision in planning, monitoring, and evaluation. It would take staff approximately 40 work hours to discuss, plan, establish

thresholds and benchmarks, and develop a report form that would be easily accessed and distributed throughout the district, to the public, and posted on the website.

FINDING

TCS provides school bus transportation for extracurricular and curricular activities, with no process for evaluating and determining cost-effectiveness.

Curricular trips are classified as instructional field trips that occur during the school day and are taken within Taylor County or other locations close to the county.

Extracurricular trips are classified as non-instructional field trips that occur after the instructional day, on weekends, and/or during school holidays.

These types of trips require advance approval from central administrators, the Superintendent, or the school board, depending on the type, location, and length of the trip. Activities sanctioned by the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission exempts some of the previous approval requirements for specific activities.

Exhibit 6-13 shows the various categories of school bus mileage reported to the state for the 2008-09 school year (the last year available on the state website). TCS mileage was less than the peer average in the regular bus mileage and extracurricular mileage, but exceeded the peer average for the vocational and curricular mileages. TCS vocational and curricular trip mileages represented 4.2 percent and 3.5 percent of the total school bus mileage for the year; Barbour County’s vocational mileage represented 2.3 percent of their total bus mileage (and reported no curricular mileage); Braxton County’s vocational and curricular mileage represented .45 percent and 2.2 percent of their total bus mileage; and Hardy County’s vocational and curricular mileage represented 4.4 percent and 3.0 percent of their total bus mileage.

**EXHIBIT 6-13
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
MILES TRAVELED BY BUS
2008-09**

| DISTRICT | REGULAR | VOCATIONAL | EXTRACURRICULAR | CURRICULAR | TOTAL |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Taylor County | 341,499 | 16,218 | 11,430 | 13,490 | 382,637 |
| Barbour County | 422,585 | 10,228 | 18,691 | 0 | 451,504 |
| Braxton County | 379,660 | 1,873 | 23,529 | 9,050 | 414,112 |
| Hardy County | 296,067 | 15,019 | 23,600 | 10,058 | 344,744 |
| Peer Average | 359,953 | 10,835 | 19,313 | 8,150 | 398,249 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 6-3:

Review and evaluate the use of TCS school buses for extracurricular trips and reduce the number of curricular trips.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the development of a process for reviewing and evaluating the use of TCS school buses for extracurricular trips and reducing the number of curricular trips.

A committee composed of representatives from the transportation department; elementary, middle, and high schools; and the finance department should be established to review and evaluate the current process and prepare a report for the assistant superintendent. This report should include the following:

- Review existing procedures for the extracurricular and curricular trips.
- Compile a spreadsheet listing the number of each type of trips, with the mileage and time of each trip, and the cost charged back to each school in the past two school years.
- Restrict or eliminate all extracurricular trips traveling outside a determined mileage from Taylor County.
- Establish trip procedures and regulations, to include an approval process, financial considerations, and a pre-approved list of curricular trip locations with the estimated round trip mileage and estimated time.
- Establish a “Virtual Field Trip” program that would allow classrooms to visit and explore various educational learning field trips, visit other virtual field trips that are located across the web, or create their own virtual field trips. Numerous states are using virtual field trips, including Utah and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Their virtual field trip information is available at <http://www.uen.org/utahlink/tours> and <http://www.ket.org/trips> web sites.

The district may wish to empanel a group of teachers and school-level administrators to explore the development of a virtual field trip program. The History Channel on television and other broadcast media offer very sophisticated programming that might provide an economical solution to offering students field-type experiences.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Approximately 30 hours of staff time would be required to complete the recommendation.

Implementing ‘virtual’ field trips could decrease the cost of curricular field trips. TCS could save \$53,623 annually by reducing the curricular field trip costs by ten percent. In 2009-10, buses traveled 24,920 miles on these trips, with a cost per mile of \$5.83. TCS could save \$14,528 annually (10% of 24,920) X \$5.83) or \$72,640 over five years.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Decrease Curricular Field Trips by 10 Percent | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 | \$14,528 |

FINDING

TCS provides information to RESA 7 for Medicaid reimbursement for eligible special education student transportation services to and from school.

The transportation department collects the name of the eligible student and the dates the child is transported and forwards it to RESA 7, which processes the requests to Medicaid. Once the reimbursement is received from Medicaid and sent to the state, it is returned to TCS.

Exhibit 6-14 shows the totals for this reimbursement for three school years.

**EXHIBIT 6-14
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT
2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| YEAR | REIMBURSEMENT |
|--------------|------------------|
| 2008-09 | \$186,477 |
| 2009-10 | \$101,216 |
| 2010-11 | \$131,389 |
| TOTAL | \$419,082 |

Source: WVDE Reports Provided by TCS, 2011.

The process to gather the information was developed by RESA 7 and implemented by TCS:

- School bus aides are the initial data collectors – they monitor and complete a roll sheet for possible Medicaid eligible students. The bus aides also use this form to note the days the students are riding the school bus.
- The bus aide gathers the information and transfers it to a separate sheet for each individual student, and notes the bus number transporting the student and checks each date that the student rides the bus.
- The form is forwarded to the transportation department office and the executive secretary forwards the information to RESA 7.

COMMENDATION 6-A:

TCS is commended for working with the RESA 7 in developing and supporting procedures to obtain Medicaid reimbursement for school transportation services.

6.3 Routing and Scheduling

Some of the largest potential cost savings or losses in student transportation are realized due to the quality of routing functions within transportation services. Efficient and effective bus routing is critical to the success of any school transportation department. Optimized routes minimize student ride time and decrease the total number of buses needed to transport student populations.

Effective routing and scheduling can impact:

- Efficiencies pertaining to student start and end times in coordination with bell times.
- Bus route average ridership and miles driven.
- Ride times for regular and exclusive students.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of regular routes.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of exclusive routes.

FINDING

The TCS transportation department staff work closely with the bus operators to maintain the bus routes for the school district; however, the lack of a computer-assisted routing system creates additional work for staff and is inefficient.

TCS school buses transport prekindergarten through high school students on the same school buses each day. The county has a large rural area intertwined with towns with light suburban areas. Transporting primary and secondary students at the same time appears to be the most efficient method of providing countywide transportation services for the students. Over 90 percent of the students use district transportation services daily.

All school bus routes are manually created and are based on historical data – the routes are basically the same year after year and changes are made when a student moves to a residence close to an existing bus route, a new bus stop location was added, or a special education student requires special transportation routing.

State guidelines determine the length of bus runs (30 minutes for prekindergarten to elementary students; 45 minutes for middle school students; and one hour for high school students). In some cases elementary students are transported for close to an hour, due to the location of the school and/or program and the location of the student's residence. These constraints further complicate the scheduling processes involving considerable staff time.

The transportation supervisor does all of the routing for school buses, which is a manual process. The supervisor gives the information to the executive secretary in writing which is then entered in a computer. The routes are then copied and distributed to the schools and bus operators, and are maintained in notebooks in the transportation and central offices.

During interviews and discussions with department staff with the consultant team, administrators and transportation staff stated that computer routing would not make sense as the current manually-created bus routes are working well.

Best practices suggest that student transportation routing be developed using routing technology now readily available to school districts.

Computerized routing systems (for example, *VERSATRANS*) are designed to create the most efficient bus routes using student residence data. They accomplish this by analyzing student residence data—imported from school databases—to automatically create the most efficient bus routes. These systems interface with area mapping programs to maximize efficiency of bus routes by minimizing the number of buses need to transport students.

Using the software to automatically suggest the routes that maximize efficiency typically results in substantial changes to existing bus routes, such as having different buses and drivers for morning and afternoon routes.

RECOMMENDATION 6-4:

Purchase bus routing software or related technology to support the development and maintenance of efficient and effective bus routes and schedules.

The peer comparisons of transportation costs per mile in **Exhibit 6-2** showed that TCS had the highest cost per mile in 2008-09 and 2009-10. This suggests that TCS could improve its current process for providing regular transportation. Improving the bus route planning and management process through computer-aided routing is one way in which the district can reduce its cost per mile and realize cost savings.

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the procurement of a routing system to reduce the time staff must use to develop and alter bus routes. Such a system usually includes the following bus routing and management functions:

- Student's transportation eligibility.
- Finds students, stops, and schools on a map.
- Easily assign stops to a run and runs to a route.
- Comprehensive student and special needs information and warnings.
- Generates stop times and driver directions for runs.

The data that is captured with the routing program provides staff a method to quickly access data, which otherwise may take minutes or hours to be conducted manually as someone hunts through file cabinets and records. The program can also prepare reports that show a more efficient way for scheduling, typically a route or schedule that had not previously been examined.

This recommendation should be implemented upon approval of this report and the availability of budget funds.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are a number of routing systems that range in cost of from \$10,000 to \$100,000, depending on the type of modules and mapping.

A basic system that would allow TCS to implement automated routing would cost approximately \$40,000. Normally, the vendor requires an annual maintenance fee from 10 to 12 percent of the purchase cost after the first year. Also, vendors offer onsite training with the travel, food, and lodging costs borne by the client.

The initial purchase could cost \$41,000 including training costs. Beginning in the second year, the software maintenance cost would begin and cost an estimated \$4,800, which would continue for the next three years. The total cost for five years could be \$60,200.

Based on multiple industry case studies and hundreds of school district efficiency reviews, it is generally accepted that school systems can reduce overall transportation costs by using software to improve bus routing efficiency. TCS may expect to realize a minimum cost savings of five percent of its total expenditures by initiating this recommendation. In transportation, the reduction of bus routes can be directly related to overall cost savings on a percentage basis. With each route that is removed, all of the associated operating costs are also eliminated including salaries and equipment, fuel, insurance, and maintenance costs. The total cost of TCS transportation services in 2009-10 was \$2,120,207.

Five percent of the total transportation costs of \$2,120,207 equals \$106,010 annually. TCS could expect to realize similar savings on an annual basis for an estimated \$530,050 over five years.

The cost savings TCS could expect to experience with a minimum five percent improvement in efficiency would be \$65,010 in Year 1, and \$101,210 in the following years, for a five-year fiscal impact of \$469,850.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Purchase a Computer-Assisted Routing System | (\$41,000) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) | (\$4,800) |
| Create New Bus Routes | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 | \$106,010 |
| TOTAL | \$65,010 | \$101,210 | \$101,210 | \$101,210 | \$101,210 |

6.4 Training and Safety

The TCS Transportation Department training and safety programs are the responsibility of the transportation supervisor and staff and are carried out in compliance with WVDE requirements. This function involves monitoring all safety issues related to student transportation, investigating all accidents, and filing accident reports with the WVDE office of transportation.

Procedures for the training and safety program rely on the *West Virginia School Bus Operator Instructional Program*.

FINDING

TCS has an agreement with RESA 7 to provide the transportation department's training for all new school bus operators.

RESA 7 starts with the initial interview of a potential bus operator and when they are completed, TCS is notified that they have a qualified, WVDE-certified school bus operator.

All of the training requirements established by the WVDE are including with RESA 7 training, including:

- Background check.
- Commercial driver license training, with appropriate endorsements.
- Initial first aid and CPR training.
- Forty hours of classroom training.
- Twelve hours behind the wheel training with a certified trainer and no students on board.
- Successful drug testing.
- Successful operators' medical examination.

COMMENDATION 6-B:

TCS is working with RESA 7 in developing and supporting an area-wide bus operators driving training program.

6.5 Fleet Maintenance

The TCS Transportation Department maintains the entire vehicle fleet for the district. A coordinator for mechanical services/mechanic, a chief mechanic, and two additional mechanics provide service, maintenance, inspection, and repair for the 40 school buses and 20 white fleet (non-yellow school buses fleet) vehicles and equipment. The single maintenance facility includes the transportation department office, rest area, bus storage, and the only fueling site.

FINDING

TCS does not require National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification as a condition of employment of the fleet vehicle mechanics; therefore, lacking an important credential to assist in identifying properly trained personnel.

ASE certification is an important management tool that ensures mechanics are highly skilled and trained. These tests are administered at more than 300 locations nationwide (the closest is located at the West Virginia University, in Morgantown, WV), and they determine the level of proficiency a mechanic has in a particular area or on particular kinds of equipment. ASE initiated the School Bus Certification Tests series (S1-S7), at the request of the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), in order to

identify and recognize school bus technicians who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to diagnose, service, and repair the different subsystems of the school buses.

The tests offered are:

- S1 – Body Systems & Special Equipment (50 scored questions)
- S2 – Diesel Engines (55)
- S3 – Drive Train (45)
- S4 – Brakes (50)
- S5 – Suspension & Steering (50)
- S6 – Electrical/Electronic Systems (45)
- S7 – Air Conditioning Systems & Controls (45)

ASE certification represents a best practice. Mechanics who are ASE certified in tests S1-S6 are recognized as ASE-Certified Master School Bus Technicians (test S7 is not a requirement for Master School Bus Technician status). Mechanics must retest every five years to retain their certification.

RECOMMENDATION 6-5:

Encourage mechanics to achieve ASE school bus certification and make ASE certification a condition for mechanics seeking employment.

Qualified mechanics are needed to maintain school buses and other equipment. ASE certification is an excellent way of determining a mechanic's qualifications. The training of mechanics is one of the important cornerstones of an effective maintenance organization. It is recognized throughout the transportation vehicle maintenance community that ASE certified mechanics provide more accurate fault diagnosis which allows for more effective trouble-shooting and subsequent first-time correct repairs of defective equipment.

A well-trained ASE certified mechanic can have a significantly positive impact on the parts replacement and equipment repair program of any maintenance operation.

This recommended action should be implemented upon the revision of job descriptions and the budgeting of funds necessary for training and certification/recertification.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for implementing this recommendation could be \$864 for the first year with an additional cost the fifth year of \$864 for a total five-year cost of \$1,728.

The cost is calculated as follows: The registration fees for ASE tests are \$36 per mechanic. The cost of the school bus certification tests is \$30 each. The re-certification tests are \$30 each, up to a maximum cost of \$90 for three tests or more. There are six different ASE school bus series tests.

The cost for one mechanic (without ASE certification) for the six basic tests is \$216; and the cost for recertification tests (required every five years) is \$216. The total cost for the four TCS mechanics for certification and recertification testing would be \$1,728 over five years.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| ASE Certification for Four Mechanics | (\$864) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | (\$864) |

FINDING

The vehicle maintenance facility needs to be upgraded and expanded to increase the efficiency of providing vehicle maintenance services for the district’s fleet.

The vehicle maintenance facility was built prior to 1940, according to the transportation supervisor. The building houses the offices of the transportation supervisor and coordinator of mechanical services/mechanic, a lunch/break room, and restrooms. The only district fueling site and parking space for approximately one-third of the bus fleet are also included in the facility’s fenced yard.

An onsite visit revealed that:

- The building has only one large opening interior; there are no work bays or interior lifts.
- Due to the roof construction and the ceiling height, buses can only be lifted 30 inches to make repairs (a large concrete pad is located outside next to one wall that is used for above ground lifts to raise a bus).
- Parts inventory is located in a fenced area with additional parts inside the building and hung along the walls.
- The building has only one entrance/exit used for vehicles and can accommodate no more than three vehicles at one time.
- The building does not have a wash bay to improve reduce wash times and increase efficiency (WVDE regulations require all buses be washed and floors mopped weekly).

RECOMMENDATION 6-6:

Develop a plan for an appropriate vehicle maintenance facility.

A committee should be established to investigate a suitable vehicle maintenance facility.

Upon approval of the committee’s report the assistant superintendent should prepare estimated costs and rough plans for the Board of Education’s reiew and approval and the establishment of an expected timeline for providing an upgraded facility.

FISCAL IMPACT

Development of the plan can be accomplished at no additional cost to the district. The committee should include transportation staff, finance staff, and maintenance staff, and should take approximately 40 hours. The committee should consider alternatives that

include expanding the current facility, building a new facility, or acquiring such a facility. Cost estimates and comparisons should be presented and prepared for discussion by the assistant superintendent with the Board of Education (see Chapter 5.0, **Recommendation 5-2**).

FINDING

TCS and the transportation department are committed to reducing the exhaust emissions and the particulates held in diesel fuel exhaust.

The entire school bus fleet operates on an alternative fuel including Bio-Diesel B5, a blend of 95 percent clean diesel fuel and 5 percent plant derived oil, such as soybean.

In addition, all schools have mounted a non-idling zone sign at the bus ramps to remind operators not to idle the bus. Additionally, bus operators receive ongoing training on the importance of reducing exhaust fumes in the vicinity of students.

COMMENDATION 6-C:

TCS and the transportation department are reducing the diesel exhaust emissions throughout the county and reducing the potential of harmful exhaust emissions in the vicinity of students.

7.0 TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

7.0 TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides a summary of technology management in Taylor County Schools (TCS). The major sections of this chapter are:

- 7.1 Planning and Procedures
- 7.2 Organization and Staffing
- 7.3 Software and Hardware
- 7.4 Professional Development

When reviewing the technology resources of a school district, the consultant team examined the infrastructure, the centralized applications, and staff to support instructional and administrative software and corresponding hardware.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Consultants reviewed the policy and planning documents, organizational structure, funding, infrastructure, software and hardware, and staff development related to technology within the district.

TCS technology coordinators, with support from RESA 7, provide planning, infrastructure, support for hardware and software, and professional development for the district. TCS is comprised of three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and technical center, and central administration. These locations house nearly 2,400 students, 260 employees, and 1,200 servers and computers along with peripherals such as printers.

Over the last year, the district experienced issues with connectivity, especially at the middle school; however, due to improvements, these issues have been eliminated per interviews with district and school staff.

The consultant team has identified a commendable practice as well as recommendations to improve the delivery of technology-related services. Implementation of the recommended changes will improve the quality of service and effect a more efficient utilization of resources.

A key commendable practice noted in TCS:

Commendation 7-A TCS has addressed the importance of technology integration in early childhood and includes specifics related to the program in school board policy.

The following recommendations are included in this chapter:

Recommendation 7-1 Ensure technology is equitable among all schools in the district.

Recommendation 7-2 Request assistance from RESA 7 to implement and test a disaster recovery plan for the district.

- Recommendation 7-3** Create and routinely update a comprehensive manual for all technology-related duties and responsibilities in the district.
- Recommendation 7-4** Engage a technology coordinator technology position through RESA 7.
- Recommendation 7-5** Create a detailed inventory of technology-related assets throughout the district.
- Recommendation 7-6** Locate servers in secured and clear areas, ensure proper ventilation, and use air conditioners to keep the area cool.
- Recommendation 7-7** Determine the cooling requirements for computer labs in the schools.
- Recommendation 7-8** Establish technology-related professional development for all staff.

7.1 Planning and Procedures

The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requirements dictate that school districts make data-driven decisions which assist students in achieving technology literacy by the end of the eighth grade. West Virginia provides for a more robust plan to include more technology literacy in the early years and TCS follows this West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Plan, as shown in each school's long-term technology plan. Comprehensive technology planning and budgeting are essential for the district to successfully meet the WVDE and NCLB requirements and to successfully assist the district's students.

In conjunction with planning, formal procedures ensure that personnel are able to provide business continuity when staff changes occur or if staff are out unexpectedly. Procedures assist business and school districts with ensuring that all tasks can be accomplished in a routine and orderly manner.

As part of its spending plans, TCS uses Tools for Schools funding to assist with technology in the classroom. These funds are in addition to Step 7 funds totaling \$50,000 from the state.

Exhibit 7-1 shows the amount of TCS funding from Tools for Schools. **Exhibit 7-2** shows the e-Rate funding for TCS during 2009-11 school years, which includes county matching funds of approximately \$136,240. As shown:

- TCS divides funds for Tools for Schools evenly between elementary and secondary schools.
- Elementary school infrastructure benefited from the program while secondary school funds were used for hardware.
- e-Rate funding has been consistent over the past two years for the district.

**EXHIBIT 7-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS FUNDING
2010-11**

| SCHOOL LEVEL | HARDWARE | SOFTWARE | INFRASTRUCTURE | TOTALS |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | | \$28.10 | \$31,404.90 | \$31,433.00 |
| Secondary | \$31,205.00 | \$228.00 | | \$31,433.00 |
| Total | \$31,205.00 | \$256.10 | \$31,404.90 | \$62,866.00 |

Source: TCS Technology Coordinator, 2011.

**EXHIBIT 7-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS E-RATE FUNDING
2009-10 AND 2010-11 SCHOOL YEARS**

| YEAR | FUNDING |
|---------|-----------|
| 2010-11 | \$616,474 |
| 2009-10 | \$616,474 |

Source: TCS Technology Plan
2010-12.

These funds allow TCS to continually provide infrastructure improvements, hardware, and software throughout the district in accordance with pre-approved planning documents.

FINDING

TCS has incorporated technology needs for early childhood in the board policies.

As stated in *Policy 2230 – Program of Study Early Childhood*, Early Childhood Education (Grades PreK-4):

Skill building, technology utilization and learning for young children require teachers to be knowledgeable about child development and skilled in providing classrooms and instruction that meet children’s needs.

Further stated in the same policy for Pre-K in regards to technology:

Teachers shall utilize a variety of teaching strategies, including the integration of technology.

Stated in the same policy for K-2 – Primary Education in regards to technology:

Teachers shall utilize a variety of teaching strategies, including the integration of technology to assure that all children are mastering the 21st century content and knowledge skills.

The policy statements clearly address the need to incorporate technology at an early age for children within the district. These statements further show the importance of preparing these students for the 21st century. This acknowledgement of the need for

incorporating technology in early learning is clearly a practice that could be implemented in other school districts across the state and nation.

COMMENDATION 7-A:

TCS has addressed the importance of technology integration in early childhood and includes specifics related to the program in school board policy.

FINDING

The district has not approached disbursement of funds among schools in an equitable manner.

The district has taken the approach that one school per year receives funding from the Tools for Schools without considering the enrollment of students in the school. This is evidenced by observations within each school and how those with smaller enrollments, such as the elementary schools, are able to spread the funding in a way that allows for greater ratios of computers per student and more current classroom technology-related equipment. However, the secondary schools are lacking newer technology.

Exhibit 7-3 shows the TCS student to computer ratios by school. As shown:

- There is not an equitable distribution of computers among the schools.
- Secondary schools have more students per computer than elementary schools, with Taylor County Middle at more than 4 to one, and the vocational center at nearly six to one.
- Elementary schools range from more computers than students (Fleminton Elementary with .6 students per computer) to more than 3 students per computer (Anna Jarvis Elementary with 3.36 students to one computer).

EXHIBIT 7-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS COMPUTER TO STUDENT RATIOS BY SCHOOL
2010-11

| | STUDENT ENROLLMENT SOURCE | TOTAL STUDENTS | WINDOWS XP | WINDOWS VISTA | WINDOWS 7 | APPLE OSX | STUDENT/COMPUTER RATIO |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| West Virginia | | 282,808 | 108,173 | 8,971 | 10,623 | 1,540 | 2.19 |
| Taylor County | | 2,750 | 586 | 39 | 303 | 1 | 2.96 |
| Anna Jarvis Elementary School | Digital Divide | 538 | 100 | 0 | 60 | 0 | 3.36 |
| Flemington Elementary School | Digital Divide | 107 | 86 | 0 | 91 | 0 | .60 |
| Grafton High School | Digital Divide | 652 | 117 | 0 | 105 | 0 | 2.94 |
| Taylor County Middle School | Digital Divide | 722 | 130 | 39 | 2 | 1 | 4.20 |
| Taylor County Vocational Center | Digital Divide | 474 | 81 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5.85 |
| West Taylor Elementary School | Digital Divide | 257 | 72 | 0 | 45 | 0 | 2.20 |

Source: TCS Technology report, 2011.

School districts such as Wyoming County Schools (WCS) use a different approach to distribute Tools for Schools funds. They look at the oldest computers in the district and determine the best approach to either replace or enhance those assets. In fact, for the 2010-11 school year, was used the funds to upgrade two labs in the district so they could be used for professional development or other training, benefiting both students and teachers. They also ensure that all schools have similar student-to-computer ratios.

TCS should determine a better approach to a more equitable distribution of assets so that all schools have similar technology available. This lack of equity was commented on by many individuals within the district. Further, the West Virginia Board of Education Goals and Performance Evidence Report, Objective 4.2, states that students in secondary schools need a 3:1 student-to-computer ratio, which is clearly not found in TCS.

RECOMMENDATION 7-1:

Ensure technology is equitable among all schools in the district.

In preparing the distribution plan, TCS needs to take into consideration electrical needs in each school to accommodate the technology. The middle school uses multiple extension cords, which is not considered a safe or best practice. By implementing this recommendation, TCS will allow for all schools to improve their technology in a more equitable fashion with the appropriate power needed. This recommendation will also assist in improving morale among principals, teachers, and students, based on comments related to technology for administrative and instructional purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT

The district can implement this recommendation using the current coordinator's time to create a group of technology-savvy individuals from each school to develop a more equitable plan. Maintenance staff would need to be included to ensure that adequate power is available and eliminate the use of extension cords for daily operations. This process would take approximately 20 to 30 hours for the group to meet and provide a plan to present to the superintendent for approval.

FINDING

While the district meets the required information related to technology planning per the WVDE, they lack a disaster recovery plan.

Per documentation and interviews, all users are instructed to backup data to their respective server or external drive and tapes are stored using a simple rotation method. However, the backup tapes are stored at the same site as each server. This practice is not able to provide adequate business continuity should a server room become inaccessible. RESA 7 backs up West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) data for the district but all other district-owned software and data is backed up by TCS.

A best practice in many school systems, including Jackson Public Schools (MS), includes written and tested plans stored on the main server of a district that includes detailed instructions on how to reinstall each software package from scratch in the event of a total system failure. Plans are updated with patch and upgrade information as information becomes available.

Disaster recovery plans provide reassurance that if data are lost or destroyed due to a disaster, data can be recovered quickly and reduce a lapse in operation of a school district.

RECOMMENDATION 7-2:

Request assistance from RESA to implement and test a disaster recovery plan for the district.

Data should be backed up and stored offsite on a routine basis and tested annually. The district could request either a neighboring district or the RESA to assist in this effort. TCS could set up a reciprocal practice and house backup data from the district or RESA in exchange for this service. The requirement would be that each entity has similar

structures in order to run operations offsite in the case of a long-term outage or the destruction of servers.

The recovery plan should encompass all district data and provide for periodic testing. All backups should be full backups and require only one tape for full restoration of content to a user. Each evening servers could run opposite scripts that back up a different subset of servers. This can be accomplished using staff from RESA 7 to write the plan and assist the recommended technology coordinator in the periodic testing of backups; and with assistance and input from school-based technology staff to ensure teachers are adequately backing up work.

FISCAL IMPACT

The district could use eRate funding to assist with this effort and should also include disaster recovery in their state requests for funding to ensure data are protected. Costs would include servers, backup software, maintenance, and travel costs for annual testing. The estimated first year costs of \$40,000 include all hardware and software with subsequent years travel and test time. The five-year cost could be \$60,000.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Implement a Disaster Recovery Plan | (\$40,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) | (\$5,000) |

FINDING

TCS lacks written procedures for technology operations.

Interviewees stated that they knew what to do and had limited notes from when they first started in their current role. However, there are no formal procedures to assist should a person leave or be out of the office for a period of time.

Other school systems create and update comprehensive manuals containing the organizational chart, contact information for support, technology plan, general guidelines and procedures, and technical notes.

Manuals contain the following essential information for technology staff:

- Materials to be carried by computer and network technicians
- Work order procedures
- Parts ordering procedures
- Maintenance to be performed on computers
- Website guidelines and procedures to update sites
- School technology coordinator guidelines

Sections also can include building a server from scratch, backup procedures, using different keyboards and printers, and student record input.

RECOMMENDATION 7-3:

Create and routinely update a comprehensive manual for all technology-related duties and responsibilities in the district.

The manual should be well organized and include a table of contents with hot links to each section. The district should post the manual on a secured Intranet site for all technology staff. The manual should be reviewed and updated on an as-needed basis, but at least annually.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using all technology-related staff throughout the district. This manual may take up to 80 hours of the coordinator's time and each school coordinator may need 50 hours to complete this recommendation.

7.2 Organization and Staffing

Ideally, technology is one area of a school district that supports all administrative and instructional personnel in a positive manner. Organizing technology resources to effectively achieve this outcome can be challenging.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed a Technology Support Index rubric to assist school districts in determining their needs in a variety of technology support areas. The Technology Support Index identifies integrated school districts as having an organizational structure where the technical support functions and instructional technology functions may report differently, but each unit is cohesively organized, and there is communication between units. Higher-functioning school districts (such as those functioning at an exemplary level) instead have an organizational structure where all of the technology functions report through the same unit in the organization, providing for a logical chain of command and communication structures.

FINDING

The district lacks a position to direct and coordinate technology throughout the system.

The district has hired a county technology integrator specialist through RESA 7 and that person spends the majority of time working on trouble shooting, repairs, and maintenance; however, this person was hired to oversee the five school-based staff responsible for integration of technology in class instruction. Furthermore, the district does not employ any true technology support staff to assist with the maintenance and repair of equipment for administration and instruction.

These functions are covered by RESA 7 and the coordinators try to handle but all are overwhelmed by the amount of maintenance and repair issues and have limited time to help with integration support to teachers. They generally have one hour per day and use their lunch and after school time to handle as much as possible.

Many interview, teacher, and staff comments indicate a slow response from the RESA, which delays progress in the classrooms and deters efficiencies in the administrative offices.

The district has approximately 1,200 computers and servers for nearly 2,400 students and 260 staff, including teachers. If counting the RESA 7 personnel assigned at one day per week, this would equate to .20 of an FTE. Therefore, the ratio is 1.20:1,200 of technology support to computers and servers for the district, which equates to a low efficiency level according to ISTE's latest Technology Support Index.

Exhibit 7-4 shows the number of technology systems personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. As shown, none of the peers use technology systems specialists to assist their district.

**EXHIBIT 7-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TECHNOLOGY PERSONNEL 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS SPECIALIST |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Taylor | 0.0 |
| Barbour | 0.0 |
| Braxton | 0.0 |
| Hardy | 0.0 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

While the WVDE does not provide standards for ratios of technology-related staff, the *2011-2012 Global 21 West Virginia Board of Education Strategic Plan* clearly shows that "...students must have the knowledge and Global 21 skills necessary for living satisfying and productive lives." Therefore, it is the interpretation of those involved with the efficiency review that technology integration must be an avenue that will help West Virginia students have the necessary skills for satisfying and productive lives. This is further emphasized by the statements related to technology integration specialists as mentioned in Goal 6 for technology integration in the Global 21 Initiative. Therefore, it is important to effectively staff technology support.

The district has had a coordinator of technology position in the past that handled oversight of technology in the district; however, due to budget constraints, this particular position was not filled. The district hired a professional who oversees technology integration in the district and has been trying to fill both roles with assistance from the RESA; yet this practice is not successful as indicated by interviews along with staff and community comments.

While none of the peer districts have hired this type of position, TCS could greatly benefit from a position with a network engineering background that could also be responsible for organizing and moving the district along as it pertains to technology.

RECOMMENDATION 7-4:

Engage a technology coordinator position through RESA 7.

By implementing this recommendation, TCS will be increasing efficiencies and effectiveness for technology support for the staff and students of the district and allowing students to be better prepared for the 21st. The current structure is not working as indicated by survey responses, interviews, and the community comments received in conjunction with this project. Further, this recommendation would allow the current technology coordinator to focus on technology integration throughout the district.

According to interviews, the state has turned down technology grants presented for the past two years. Documentation was not available on reasons why nor were the grants available for the review team to analyze. This recommended position needs to adequately prepare grants that will be funded from the state to enhance technology for the district.

FISCAL IMPACT

The amount needed for this position is conservatively \$64,000, including benefits, that would be paid in monthly invoices to RESA 7.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Technology Coordinator/ Network Engineer | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) | (\$64,000) |

7.3 Software and Hardware

School districts must select and deploy software to meet both instructional and administrative objectives. While computers in the classroom are primarily an instructional resource, they serve an administrative function as well. Moreover, adequate administrative technology must be present to support schools in meeting instructional goals. One of the primary tenets of NCLB is that school districts will make data-driven decisions. Data needed to make those decisions can only come from sufficient software and hardware. Further, it is imperative that all software and hardware are adequately supported to ensure that they are utilized efficiently and effectively.

FINDING

TCS does not have a complete hardware and software inventory, making planning for replacement and acquisition of additional equipment time intensive and inefficient.

The district does have counts of computers for student, teacher, and staff use, along with the operating system used, but is missing the date of purchase to determine the age of the assets. There is also no list of all software used in the district.

Interviewees indicated that the majority of classroom computers, with the exception of West Taylor Elementary, are outdated and struggling to keep up with instruction. There had been an issue with Internet connectivity at Taylor Middle School; yet these have been addressed this school year.

Asset inventories that include the age and purchase cost are needed in any business entity, especially in schools systems where computers and associated peripherals can be easily moved.

Winchester Public Schools (VA) performs physical inventories for technology-related hardware on an annual basis. Reports include school, location within the school, the teacher's name where appropriate, serial number, manufacturer, model, year of installation, and comments.

RECOMMENDATION 7-5:

Create a detailed inventory of technology-related assets throughout the district.

By implementing this recommendation the district will be positioned to know which assets are in need of updating or replacing and protects the investment made by the Taylor County. Inventories are a basic process that entities conduct in order to assure taxpayers and other stakeholders that assets are being carefully monitored and reported. This implementation will also assist with risk management practices as noted in **Chapter 3.0** of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

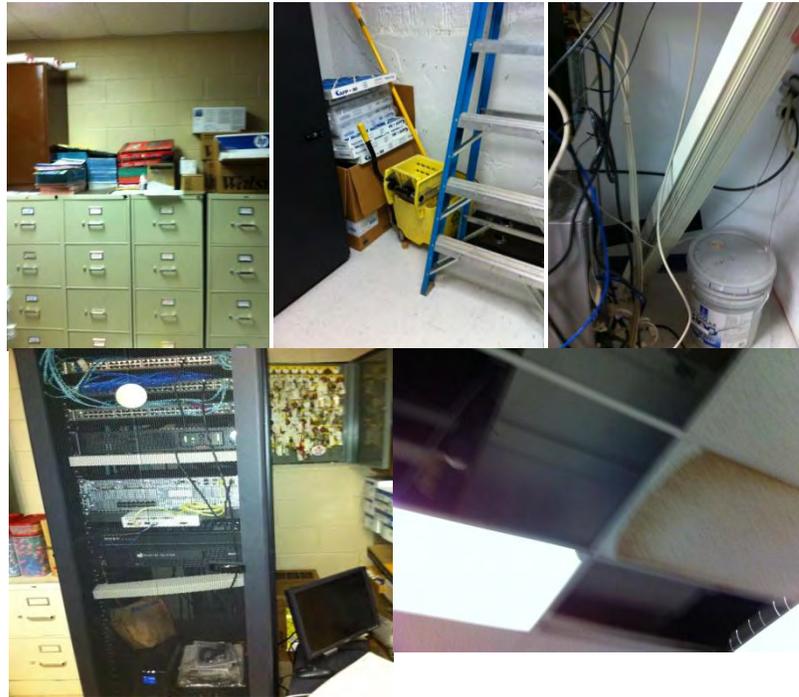
The implementation of this recommendation will take approximately 80 hours for the coordinator to organize and produce a report. Approximately 40 hours is needed by an individual per school to assist in the effort on an annual basis.

FINDING

The server areas in the district are not secure and need adequate temperature controls to ensure that equipment failures do not occur due to environmental fluctuations.

Observations by team members found servers to be in open areas and without cooling mechanisms to ensure proper operability and longevity. **Exhibit 7-5** shows photos of server rooms at the various schools. The photo of the ceiling shows leak was found in the ceiling, with incomplete repairs. It is dangerous to mix water or moisture with the electrical equipment needed to run a school server.

**EXHIBIT 7-5
PHOTOS OF SERVER ROOMS TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS**



Source: MGT photos of server rooms, 2011.

As observed by the review team, most server areas in the district were located in warm areas and clutter or storage was kept in the same area. By not having the area secure, clean, and cool, the assets are in jeopardy of a shorter life, which may have been the reason for Taylor Middle School's server to crash last year. As shown in the photos within **Exhibit 7-5**, server rooms are not protected adequately. These assets need protection from a cost perspective and from a secured storage of data perspective.

The Pittsburgh School District (PA) is considered a model district for technology and locates all servers in well-secured and well-ventilated areas throughout the school district. While this is a larger district than TCS, it shows the importance of protecting assets purchased for the school system no matter the size.

The district needs to locate servers and peripheral equipment in a secured and well-ventilated area according to industry standards, which should reduce the risk to servers and data, and provide for a longer asset life.

RECOMMENDATION 7-6:

Locate servers in secured and clear areas, ensure proper ventilation, and use air conditioners to keep the area cool.

Servers are the backbone of local and wide area networks and need to be protected to ensure connectivity of the school to the central office and Internet. The implementation of this recommendation will assist TCS in reducing the risk to servers and data stored on them.

This recommendation needs to be implemented as soon as possible by having the recommended technology coordinator position work with the facilities staff and school administration to secure the server areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact for this recommendation, aside from the time to move all non-server related materials out of these areas, add adequate power and purchase portable air conditioners for the central office and four schools, could be an estimated one-time cost of \$21,000.

The current maintenance staff may be able to provide the power needed in each location. Otherwise, a conservative estimated cost is \$500 per site to add power and hook up portable air conditioners.

The price of portable air conditioners is conservatively \$3,000 per unit. Therefore, the cost to implement is \$3,500 per site (\$500 for electrical and ventilation plus \$3,000 per air conditioner equals \$3,500 per site, or \$21,000 as a one-time cost).

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Secure and Cool Server Environment | (\$21,000) | (\$0) | (\$0) | (\$0) | (\$0) |

FINDING

Like the server rooms, some of the computer labs in the district do not have air conditioning or have inadequate cooling.

The students need to learn in a lab environment where they are comfortable. The current practice of using large fans around the room to cool the computers is insufficient for computers and for students. Labs need to be cooled in order to protect the assets purchased with state or local funds.

RECOMMENDATION 7-7:

Determine the cooling requirements for computer labs in the schools.

The implementation of this recommendation will assist TCS in reducing the risk to computers purchased for student use. This recommendation needs to be implemented as soon as possible.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of a plan to determine needs can be handled by the maintenance staff in the district by installing thermometers in each lab. If the temperature is above 72 degrees with all machines on and used by students, a supplemental cooling unit would be available. This portion of the recommendation could take up to 40 hours by maintenance staff. Once data has been collected, the amount necessary to purchase air conditioners would then be able to be calculated by maintenance staff.

7.4 Professional Development

Training in the use of technology is the most critical factor in determining whether technology is used effectively or even used at all. Administrative and instructional staff must be able to effectively use the technology available to them. Training must be ongoing as the technology environment is continuously evolving.

The ISTE Technology Support Index identifies exemplary districts as having these staff development practices:

- A comprehensive staff development program is in place that impacts all staff and is progressive in nature to balance incentive, accountability, and diverse learning opportunities.
- Online training opportunities are provided for staff both onsite and remotely that represents a diversity of skill sets.
- Expectations for all staff are clearly articulated and are broad in scope, with performance expectations built into work functions, and a part of the organizational culture.
- Technical staff receive ample training as a normal part of their employment, including training towards certification.
- Basic troubleshooting is built into the professional development program, and is used as a first line of defense in conjunction with technical support.

FINDING

There is no plan for technology training for administrative and instructional staff.

Technology staff were not able to provide technology-related professional development by technology coordinators or the integrator specialist (other than child nutrition point-of-sale training).

Training and subsequent documentation for administrative and instructional staff is essential in today's school systems. While documentation was available in the individual school plans for limited instructional staff training, there was no comprehensive plan to ensure all administrative and instructional staff receive the hands-on training needed to meet the West Virginia Board of Education initiatives and the Tech Steps Program, which tracks how schools are meeting technology-related needs for the 21st century.

Chesterfield County Public Schools (VA) hosts an annual Chesterfield Information Technology Expo (CITE) that provides employees the opportunity to enhance their knowledge on 21st century technology skill/instruction and promote healthy lifestyles. This expo is open to all staff, and they may attend seminars, workshops, and other activities on technology enrichment in their work environments, as well as wellness and health. The expo generally has over 1,300 participants each year and in 2009, nearly 55 vendors participated.

The district uses a tracking mechanism to ensure that all staff are exposed to and provided the opportunity for professional development in terms of technology. Training is further differentiated between curriculum and productivity, which assists in personal professional growth plans by employee. Training starts with the basics of how to use e-mail and desktop applications to more advanced courses on how to access the information data system for student, class, or school progression tracking.

Wyoming County Schools also uses mechanisms to track and schedule training for staff and holds an annual open house at each school. At this open house, parents, students, family, and the community are able to learn about the technology used in the specific school and even allows for hands on learning in the computer lab. The instructional technology coach is responsible for these activities and can also be a source for TCS.

RECOMMENDATION 7-8:

Establish technology-related professional development for all staff.

TCS could contact WCS to gain insight and details on their professional development tracking applications. It would be beneficial for a small cross-section team of professionals from administration and instruction (including a teacher) to visit the Chesterfield IT expo to gain first-hand experience to better incorporate ideas for TCS. With information from these initiatives, TCS needs to develop a more formalized plan to provide more enhanced technology training and tracking.

TCS could contact WCS to ask for advice on how to implement the annual open houses as well as the tracking mechanism used to ensure staff receive professional development and meet the objectives set forth by the WVDE and ensure that Tech Steps is meeting objectives as well.

In implementing this recommendation, TCS would be incorporating best practices that would assist the district in attaining the state's Global21 Initiative goals relating to professional development (Goal 3), Assessment/Evaluation (Goal 4), and Collaboration with Outside Partners (Goal 9).

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact for this recommendation cannot be determined until a plan has been drafted and courses determined. However, it will likely take 80 hours of planning by the integrator specialist and recommended technology coordinator to initiate communication with CCPS and WCS.

**8.0 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE
DELIVERY**

8.0 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

In this chapter the findings, commendations, and recommendations for the Taylor County Schools (TCS) educational service delivery are presented. This chapter contains the following four sections:

- 8.1 Organization and Management
- 8.2 Professional Development
- 8.3 Behavior Management and Drop-out Program
- 8.4 Curriculum and Instruction: Taylor County Middle School

In reviewing the functional operations of the curriculum and instruction and special education delivery in TCS, consultants conducted interviews and focus groups with central office and school-based administrators and teachers to allow staff to share information on the operational functions of their positions, organizational components of their offices or schools, and their means of communicating throughout the district.

To better understand TCS educational services delivery, MGT compared the district statistical information with peer school districts in West Virginia, which were jointly selected by TCS and MGT. The peer school districts were selected on the basis of enrollment, socioeconomic and demographic factors, and free and reduced lunch eligibility. The source data are from the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) and are from the 2009-10 school year whenever possible.

The West Virginia school districts selected for comparison to TCS are:

- Barbour County Schools
- Braxton County Schools
- Hardy County Schools

Consultants reviewed departmental personnel roles and responsibilities, instructional supports, state assessment reports, and survey/forum results regarding instruction, curriculum, communication, and district operations. Review of these operational routines and activities provided opportunities to cite commendations and to provide recommendations for improvement.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Taylor County Schools (TCS) had approximately 2,395 students enrolled in 2010-11 in three elementary schools (grades pre-kindergarten through 4), one middle school (grades 5 through 8), and one high school (grades 9-12). TCS also supports the Taylor County Vocational Center and an alternative school. The three elementary schools are Title I schools.

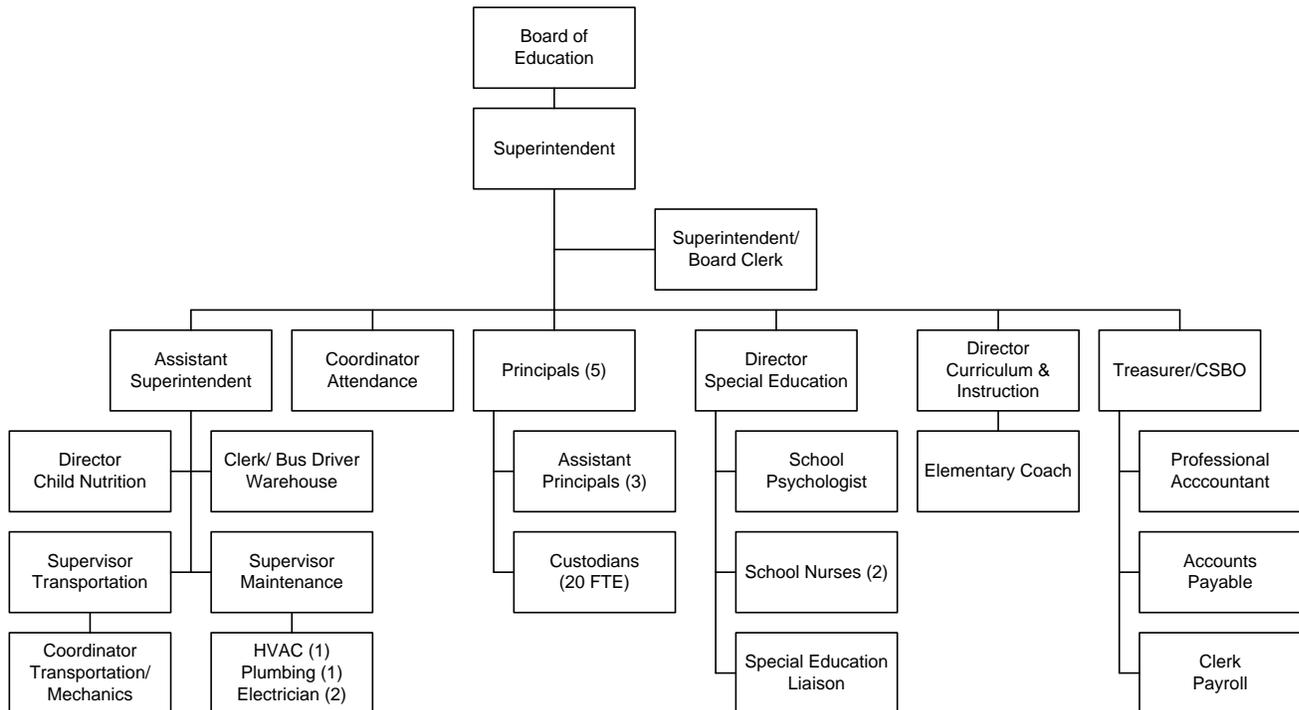
The district is comprised of 98.3 percent White students and approximately 1.7 percent minorities, with the lowest percentage of minorities compared with peer districts. Four of the five campuses met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on the 2009-10 NCLB Report Card. All three elementary schools met AYP, Grafton High School moved from “needs improvement” in the graduation category to meets AYP, and Taylor County Middle

School continued to miss AYP and need improvement in the category of students with disabilities in the areas of math and reading.

The superintendent has 10 direct reports including the assistant superintendent who has six direct reports, the coordinator of attendance, five campus principals who supervise the assistant principals and other campus staff, the director of curriculum who supervises one professional staff, the director of special services who supervises four professional positions, and the treasurer/chief school business officer (CSBO) who supervises the accountant and the accounts payable and payroll departments as shown in **Exhibit 8-1**. The district's organization as a whole is reviewed in **Chapter 1.0** of this report.

A review of the organizational structure of the peer districts Barbour County Schools, Braxton County Schools, and Hardy County Schools reveals a similar organizational structure led by a superintendent and assistant/associate superintendent. All four superintendents in the four county school districts report to the Board of Education in their respective districts.

**EXHIBIT 8-1
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ORGANIZATION CHART
2011-12**



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc. from interview information and data requested, September 2011.

Exhibit 8-2 shows enrollment changes in TCS for the five year school years, 2006-07 through 2010-11. Overall, enrollment decreased over the five-year period.

**EXHIBIT 8-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
ENROLLMENT
2006-07 THROUGH 2010-11**

| SCHOOL YEAR | ENROLLMENT | DIFFERENCE |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| 2006-07 | 2,465 | NA |
| 2007-08 | 2,464 | -1 |
| 2008-09 | 2,426 | -38 |
| 2009-10 | 2,450 | 24 |
| 2010-11 | 2,395 | -55 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

Exhibit 8-3 shows TCS and peer total enrollment and attendance from 2008-09 through the 2010-11 academic years. From 2008-09 to 2010-11, TCS enrollment decreased by 31 students compared to the peer average decrease of 39 students. TCS lost far fewer students than Braxton and Hardy; only Barbour increased enrollment (3 students). In each of the three years, TCS was the second largest district.

**EXHIBIT 8-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
ENROLLMENT
2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | DIFFERENCE 2008-09 to 2010-11 |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Taylor | 2,426 | 2,450 | 2,395 | -31 |
| Barbour | 2,496 | 2,478 | 2,499 | 3 |
| Braxton | 2,289 | 2,230 | 2,218 | -71 |
| Hardy | 2,353 | 2,307 | 2,297 | -56 |
| Average | 2,391 | 2,366 | 2,352 | -39 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit 8-4 displays the ethnicity of TCS and peer district students for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. TCS enrollment was primarily non-minority (over 98%). While the peer districts also had predominately non-minority enrollments, the TCS minority enrollment (less than 2%) was less than the average (over 5%).

**EXHIBIT 8-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
STUDENT ETHNICITY
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| | 2009-10 | | | | 2010-11 | | | |
| | WHITE | BLACK | OTHER | TOTAL MINORITY | WHITE | BLACK | OTHER | TOTAL MINORITY |
| Taylor | 98.6% | 0.8% | 0.6% | 1.4% | 98.3% | 1.0% | 0.7% | 1.7% |
| Barbour | 93.9% | 1.3% | 4.8% | 6.1% | 93.9% | 1.3% | 5.2% | 6.5% |
| Braxton | 98.3% | 0.5% | 1.3% | 1.8% | 98.4% | 0.5% | 1.2% | 1.7% |
| Hardy | 93.2% | 2.8% | 4.0% | 6.8% | 92.1% | 3.0% | 4.9% | 7.9% |
| Average | 96.0% | 1.4% | 2.7% | 4.0% | 95.7% | 1.5% | 3.0% | 4.5% |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

Note: In all exhibits with percentages, the percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Exhibit 8-5 displays pupil-to-staff ratios for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. The TCS pupil-to-teacher ratio was higher than the peer average by one student, and higher than the state average by approximately 1.5 students. This indicates the “average” TCS teacher had slightly larger class sizes than the “average” teacher in the peer districts, also indicated by the average class size. The TCS administrative staff supported more pupils (171.1) than the peer average (159.7) and the state (151.0), which may indicate that TCS dedicated fewer positions to professional support and administrative staff, relative to its size, than the peer districts.

**EXHIBIT 8-5
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PUPIL/STAFF RATIO
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO | PUPIL/ADMINISTRATOR RATIO | AVERAGE CLASS SIZE |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Taylor | 15.6 | 171.1 | 20.9 |
| Barbour | 14.0 | 150.2 | 20.8 |
| Braxton | 12.4 | 127.1 | 17.4 |
| Hardy | 15.8 | 190.4 | 21.2 |
| Average | 14.5 | 159.7 | 20.1 |
| State | 13.9 | 151.0 | 19.9 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2009-10 NCLB Report Card.

Exhibit 8-6 shows the number of professional personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. Each district had a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. TCS had a comparable number of administrators to the peers for Instructional, Support Services, and Business. TCS was the only district in the comparison group that did not employ a curriculum specialist. TCS employed significantly more remedial specialists (8) than the comparison districts (between none and 5).

**EXHIBIT 8-6
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERIN- TENDENT | ASSIST./ ASSOC. SUPERIN- TENDENT | DIRECTOR/ MANAGER (INSTRUCTIONAL) | DIRECTOR/ COORDINATOR SUPPORT SERVICES | CHIEF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICER | CURRICULUM SPECIALIST | REMEDIAL SPECIALIST |
|----------------|---------------------|---|---|---|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Taylor | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 8.5 |
| Barbour | 1.0 | 0.8 | 3.4 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Braxton | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Hardy | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 5.0 |
| Average | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 3.5 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit 8-7 displays the total number of school administrators for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. TCS had the typical number of principals, and more assistant principals than the peer average.

**EXHIBIT 8-7
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PRINCIPALS | ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS | SCHOOLS* |
|----------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Taylor | 5.0 | 4.0 | 6.0 |
| Barbour | 7.5 | 2.5 | 9.0 |
| Braxton | 8.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 |
| Hardy | 6.0 | 0.0 | 6.0 |
| Average | 6.6 | 2.6 | 7.25 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

*Includes the Alternative Learning Center.

Exhibit 8-8 displays the number and percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in 2009-10 and 2010-11. TCS had a comparable percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers to the peer district average. TCS increased the number and percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in 2010-11.

**EXHIBIT 8-8
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2009-10 | | | 2010-11 | | |
|----------------|---------------|---|--------------|---------------|---|--------------|
| | TOTAL CLASSES | CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS | | TOTAL CLASSES | CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS | |
| | | NUMBER | PERCENT | | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| Taylor | 757 | 717 | 94.7% | 799 | 768 | 96.1% |
| Barbour | 818 | 790 | 96.6% | 918 | 857 | 93.3% |
| Braxton | 929 | 857 | 92.2% | 735 | 725 | 98.6% |
| Hardy | 764 | 750 | 98.2% | 651 | 645 | 99.1% |
| Average | 817 | 779 | 95.4% | 776 | 749 | 96.8% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

The commendations in this chapter include:

- Commendation 8-A** TCS provides a Freshman Academy at Grafton High School that is supportive both socially and academically for identified students at-risk of dropping out of school.
- Commendation 8-B** The special education department developed and maintains an annual county-wide Individual Education Plan (IEP) calendar for re-evaluations (RE) and eligibility committee (EC) meetings.
- Commendation 8-C** TCS provides an alternative learning facility in a quiet, controlled setting at Camp Towles that is appropriate to the instructional design, attractive, and well-maintained.

The following recommendations are included in this chapter:

- Recommendation 8-1** Reorganize the curriculum and instruction department to include the coordinator of attendance and align alternative learning programs with the department.
- Recommendation 8-2** Design a leadership professional development academy to ensure all district and school administrators have the appropriate skills and strategies for implementing a district-wide program for improving student achievement.
- Recommendation 8-3** Implement professional development and accountability to ensure differentiation of instruction is put into practice to improve student performance.
- Recommendation 8-4** Provide a model for campus principals when conducting a data analysis/action meeting to ensure understanding and effective use of data for planning instructional strategies for groups and individual students.

- Recommendation 8-5** Require each campus to create and implement professional learning communities (PLCs) to ensure opportunities for teachers to collaboratively evaluate student performance and plan for individual student growth.
- Recommendation 8-6** Create a comprehensive district behavior management plan and evaluation design to measure the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning Center and use the results to modify the program for the 2012-13 school year.
- Recommendation 8-7** Evaluate all in-place and proposed drop-out/graduation rate efforts to ensure they include strategies that focus on increasing the graduation rate for special education students.
- Recommendation 8-8** Implement all recommendations outlined by the audit team from the Office of Education Performance Audits in the *Initial Education Performance Audit Report for Taylor County Middle School June 2011*, systemically and with a sense of urgency.

8.1 Organization and Management

A school district's educational organizational structure must be aligned and communicated to educators at all levels. The structure must clearly delineate reporting relationships that contribute to the success of district priorities. To the extent possible functions should be grouped for maximization of communication and resources and allow for continuous collaboration among like work groups.

The overall functions of education delivery include:

- The director of curriculum and instruction's primary responsibilities include content, instruction, curriculum development and monitoring, professional development, federal programs, textbooks, and all special grants, including Title I. Other responsibilities include the supervision of the instructional coach and the secretaries of Title I and staff development and school allocations.
- The director of special education is responsible for all section 504 and special education instructionally related programs and testing as well as district-wide responsibilities in testing, health care, safe and drug free schools.

While the coordinator of attendance does not appear on the educational delivery organization chart because the position reports directly to the superintendent, that position is involved in ensuring appropriate educational opportunities for homeless students, homebound students, and alternative programs

FINDING

The district researched, designed, and implemented a high school program to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for selected at-risk students.

In January of the 2010-11 school year the high school administration created a Freshman Academy steering committee composed of stakeholders to research and design a program with the mission of providing a nurturing and supportive environment where targeted students can develop skills to successfully transition to the next level of their education.

The program was based on the value statement that education is a shared responsibility requiring a strong partnership among student, teacher and parent and beliefs that all students can be successful and have value, including:

- Teachers must teach responsibility
- Attendance is critical for success
- A partnership between parents, students and staff should be forged
- Teachers need to teach to the diversity of the population and not just to content
- Teachers need to assist students in the development of their life goals

The committee identified at-risk students using the following criteria:

- Attendance
- Discipline record
- Family background/values
- Failure/grades/classroom performance
- Mobility

Approximately 150 students were identified to begin the program in the 2011-12 school year. The program is designed as a school within a school model and students are served by an identified faculty and counseling component prepared to embrace the identified beliefs.

This active research project will be evaluated throughout the school year and if considered successful modified for future implementation.

COMMENDATION 8-A:

TCS provides a Freshman Academy at Grafton High School that supportive both socially and academically for identified students at-risk of dropping out of school.

FINDING

The special education department maintains an annual county-wide calendar for legally required re-evaluation and eligibility committee meetings.

The staff of the special education department annually develop and distribute a calendar identifying the dates and persons required to attend the legally required re-evaluation (RE) and eligibility committee (EC) meetings. This helps to ensure meetings are

conducted as required by law and to ensure that all staff and student representatives have ample time to put the meeting on their calendar or reschedule if necessary.

The calendar is created and distributed to all campuses in the Fall and campuses collaborate with special education staff to modify the schedule as needed. Interviews with campus administrators and special education staff revealed a general sense that the calendar provided both planning structure for the calendar and accountability for ensuring that all legally required meetings are conducted.

COMMENDATION 8-B:

The TCS Special Education Department developed and maintains an annual county-wide Individual Education Plan (IEP) calendar for re-evaluations (RE) and eligibility committee (EC) meetings.

FINDING

The district's current organizational structure does not optimize opportunities for the director of curriculum and instruction to lead curriculum, professional development, or placements for alternative learning programs.

The current organizational structure for curriculum and instruction does not provide the director of curriculum and instruction maximum opportunity for leading curriculum and professional development for alternative learning programs to ensure instructional effectiveness for students assigned to those programs.

In discussions with central office leaders it was evident that there is no consistent district-wide behavior management program (PBIS) for the campuses. There is an alternative learning center committee that includes the high school principal, the assistant superintendent, the director of special education, and the coordinator of attendance who have, over time, designed a three-tier program for at-risk students, students needing credit recovery, and students with behavior problems requiring an alternative setting.

In discussions with the director of curriculum and instruction, the director of special education and the coordinator of attendance, it was explained that decisions related to alternative school programs and placements were determined by a campus representative, the assistant superintendent, the director of special education and the attendance coordinator. There was minimal involvement by the curriculum and instruction leader.

The National Alternative Education Association (NAEA) adopted indicators of quality programming in January 30, 2009. In the document providing those indicators it is stated that an "exemplary alternative education program maintains high academic expectations for students across all academic domains." Furthermore, the program must integrate creative and engaging curricula and instructional methods that are relevant to the individual student's need.

Exhibit 8-9 shows the structure of the educational service delivery function as it was described to consultants during the onsite review.

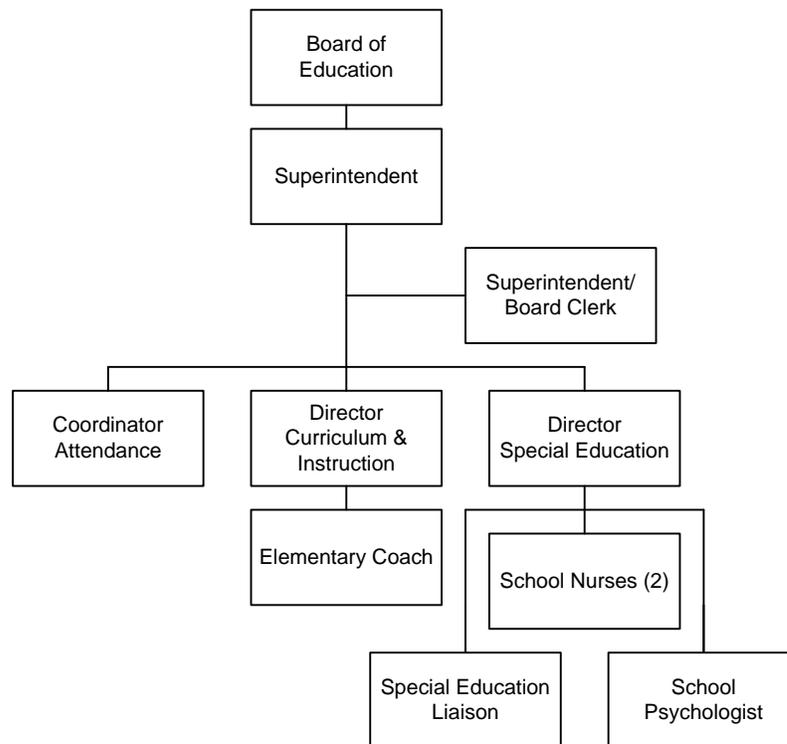
The director of curriculum and instruction is responsible for all general education including all curriculum functions, textbooks, the campus budget allocation process, professional development, federal programs, special grants, and Title I for the district with the assistance of an elementary coach.

The director of special education is responsible for testing, special education, section 504, safe and drug free schools, and health care and supervises the nurses, school psychologist, and the special education liaison. Both directors report to the superintendent.

The coordinator for attendance responsibilities include making attendance referrals and representing the district in court during truancy hearings, working with the homeless program, homebound instruction, home school families, the alternative learning center, and driver's permits.

The principals are responsible for all staff assigned to their individual campuses. Each campus has access to counseling, librarian, and nursing services although there is not a full-time staff member to provide these services at every campus.

**EXHIBIT 8-9
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY ORGANIZATION CHART
SEPTEMBER 2011**



Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc. from interview information and data requested, September 2011.

RECOMMENDATION 8-1:

Reorganize the curriculum and instruction department to include the coordinator of attendance and align alternative learning programs with the department.

Given the overlap in the scope of responsibilities for the director of curriculum and instruction and the coordinator of attendance, the coordinator of attendance should report to the director of curriculum and instruction to ensure maximum alignment of instructional services for the programs supervised by the attendance department.

The process of ensuring that each student receives instruction in West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) in all programs associated with general education is the responsibility of the director of curriculum and instruction of general education programs. That responsibility includes monitoring the instructional opportunities and progress of all non-special education programs including homeless, homebound, and alternative education.

The superintendent should modify the organization for educational delivery and assign the coordinator of attendance position to the director of curriculum and instruction. The superintendent should ensure that job descriptions are modified to reflect the change.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no cost to the district other than a few hours of staff time to modify the organization chart and job descriptions.

8.2 Professional Development

FINDING

The district and campus leadership lack systemic focus for improving student achievement.

Based on evidence from interviews, focus groups, and review of the district strategic plan and professional development documents, district and campus leadership do not have a systemic process for developing leadership skills for instructional focus.

Historically, the superintendent has scheduled a monthly meeting of principals during which district level administrators provide programmatic updates and answer questions. In addition, principals attend the annual Teacher Academy, and during the summer of 2011 attended the first annual Superintendent's Retreat for administrators.

A review of professional development sessions provided at TCS between June 2009 and August 2011 showed that there were 102 separate sessions offered during those two school years. Of those sessions, none were provided to address specific skills for leaders to address improving student achievement; 27 sessions were specific to content area courses and administrators attended sessions based on topics of interest

As shown in **Exhibit 8-10**, an analysis of the WESTEST 2 assessment results for 2010-11 show that, with few exceptions, students in TCS and in the peer districts in these grade levels achieved less than 50 percent proficiency in all but three grade levels.

Proficiency indicates students who achieved mastery or above on the testing. With a few exceptions, TCS scored higher than the peer districts. TCS 3rd and 11th graders ranked second in Average Proficiency All Areas, and TCS 5th and 8th graders ranked first in Average Proficiency All Areas, but those percentages were still below 50 percent. In other words, one out of every two students tested did not achieve proficiency in the areas tested. These results reveal a need for immediate and systemic academic interventions at every campus.

**EXHIBIT 8-10
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
WESTEST 2 RESULTS
2010-11**

| AVERAGE PROFICIENCY ALL AREAS | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| DISTRICT | THIRD | FIFTH | EIGHTH | ELEVENTH |
| Taylor | 39.23% | 42.95% | 42.47% | 46.00% |
| Barbour | 24.36% | 27.77% | 34.77% | 29.58% |
| Braxton | 40.23% | 36.43% | 40.97% | 37.41% |
| Hardy | 24.22% | 28.55% | 40.49% | 50.48% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

In a report by the University of Virginia's Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education and its School Turnaround Program, authors Lucy Steiner and Emily Ayscue Hassel explain that the two major factors affecting turnaround school success (schools that make fast and positive improvements in student performance), are: 1) the characteristics and actions of the turnaround leader; and 2) the support for dramatic change that the leader and staff receive from the district, state, and/or other governing authority. The first is a leader who engages and focuses the whole community on achieving dramatic improvement goals fast and the second are the elements of support that districts must provide these leaders to enable and sustain successful school improvement efforts.

RECOMMENDATION 8-2:

Design a professional development leadership academy to ensure all district and school administrators have the appropriate skills and strategies for implementing a district-wide program for improving student achievement.

District leaders should create a timeline for principals to collaborate to identify their strengths and challenges related to improving student achievement. The district should contract with a consultant to facilitate a conversation around research based competencies for successful instructional leadership. In the article *A Principal's Role in Improving Student Achievement* in School Improvement in Maryland, authors state that principals need to understand where their school is relative to the AYP target, how their teachers assess for learning and monitor student progress, and how they use the data to adjust instruction based on student needs. They further state that to accomplish these ends, principals need to:

- Understand and communicate their student achievement target.

- Engage staff in analyzing state assessment data to determine whether there were any gaps between the AYP targets and their performance.
- Evaluate school processes to ensure that teachers understand the target and have aligned their teaching and assessments to those standards they are responsible for teaching.
- Structure time to regularly examine student work to inform instruction.
- Have teachers collect and analyze formative assessment data to monitor student performance on the content standard indicators on a daily basis.
- Keep their school focused on their student achievement goals as the primary work of staff.

In the facilitated discussion administrators should identify the skills necessary to be successful with each of these competencies and then determine each administrator's level of expertise or strengths/challenges with the skills. Based on the level of expertise and identified needs a list of professional development topics can be created, along with a list of professional development delivery methodologies. A professional development calendar can then be developed using times and dates already identified for principal meetings and district training opportunities.

Richard DuFour (ASCD, May 2002) states that educators are gradually redefining the role of the principal from instructional leader with a focus on teaching to leader of a professional community with a focus on learning. One of the National Association of Elementary School Principals' six standards for what principals should know and be able to do calls on principals to put student and adult learning at the center of their leadership and to serve as the lead learner (2001). The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, has also identified six professional standards for principals, one of which calls for the principal to:

...be an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
(1996, p. 12)

DuFour further believes that by focusing on learning, today's school leaders shift both their own focus and that of the school community from inputs to outcomes and from intentions to results. Schools need principal leadership as much as ever, he says. But only those who understand that the essence of their job is promoting student and teacher learning will be able to provide that leadership.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of implementing this recommendation could be a one-time expenditure of \$600 plus travel expenditures (estimated \$100 or less if available from a neighboring university or college) for a facilitator for the one day planning session.

| RECOMMENDATION | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | YEAR 4 | YEAR 5 |
|----------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Facilitator Services | (\$700) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

FINDING

A significant number of teachers at TCS are not using differentiated instruction, a method that has proven effective, to increase student performance.

During interviews and focus groups, administrators and teaching staff stated that, in general, the TCS teachers are not using differentiation to improve student performance.

Through classroom observations and in meetings with administrators and teacher focus groups, there was no evidence of a consistent effort to differentiate instruction in the general education classroom. Teachers were aware that, in general, at least 50 percent of the students were not proficient in mastery of the WESTEST 2 as shown in **Exhibit 8-11** but they did not identify differentiation as a method for improving student achievement.

**EXHIBIT 8-11
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
WESTEST 2 RESULTS
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | MATH | | READING | | SCIENCE | | SOCIAL STUDIES | | AVERAGE PROFICIENCY ALL AREAS |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | # TESTED | PERCENTAGE PROFICIENT | # TESTED | PERCENTAGE PROFICIENT | # TESTED | PERCENTAGE PROFICIENT | # TESTED | PERCENTAGE PROFICIENT | |
| THIRD | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 170 | 37.05% | 170 | 41.76% | 169 | 40.23% | 169 | 37.86% | 39.23% |
| Barbour | 176 | 23.86% | 176 | 22.15% | 175 | 25.71% | 175 | 25.71% | 24.36% |
| Braxton | 180 | 37.22% | 180 | 35.00% | 177 | 49.15% | 177 | 39.54% | 40.23% |
| Hardy | 160 | 3.87% | 160 | 32.50% | 157 | 31.21% | 157 | 29.29% | 24.22% |
| FIFTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 171 | 46.19% | 170 | 40.58% | 167 | 46.10% | 167 | 38.92% | 42.95% |
| Barbour | 165 | 29.69% | 165 | 32.12% | 162 | 29.01% | 16 | 20.24% | 27.77% |
| Braxton | 153 | 41.17% | 153 | 38.56% | 147 | 36.05% | 147 | 29.93% | 36.43% |
| Hardy | 142 | 30.28% | 142 | 28.87% | 138 | 26.08% | 138 | 28.98% | 28.55% |
| EIGHTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 182 | 45.05% | 182 | 43.95% | 178 | 47.75% | 178 | 33.14% | 42.47% |
| Barbour | 168 | 31.54% | 168 | 41.66% | 167 | 35.92% | 167 | 29.94% | 34.77% |
| Braxton | 139 | 43.16% | 139 | 38.84% | 138 | 46.37% | 138 | 35.50% | 40.97% |
| Hardy | 179 | 45.25% | 179 | 50.83% | 173 | 33.52% | 173 | 32.36% | 40.49% |
| ELEVENTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 123 | 52.03% | 122 | 41.80% | | | 120 | 44.16% | 46.00% |
| Barbour | 158 | 36.07% | 158 | 27.84% | | | 157 | 24.84% | 29.58% |
| Braxton | 144 | 40.27% | 145 | 38.62% | | | 144 | 33.33% | 37.41% |
| Hardy | 138 | 67.39% | 139 | 41.00% | | | 137 | 43.06% | 50.48% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011

While TCS provides all teachers opportunities to disaggregate student performance data for the WESTEST 2 as well as the ACUITY benchmark tests, and to consider how the results impact knowledge of CSOs, there is no consistent support in providing training for understanding what the disaggregation means or how to differentiate instructional methodology based on the CSOs to create consistent differentiation of instruction for the purpose of increasing student performance. Interviews with principals revealed a lack of confidence in their own specific knowledge of differentiation techniques or of an in-depth knowledge of the CSOs.

A specific finding in the Office of Education Performance Audit, *Initial Education Performance Audit Report for Taylor County Middle School June 2011* reinforces this finding. A recommendation by the Improvement Team included:

Professional development needs to be provided in standards-based instruction, interventions and differentiating instruction strategies to meet the needs of the various subgroups.

Not all students are alike and no two learn the same way. Tracey Hall, Senior Research Scientist at the National Center on Accessing General Curriculum explains that we must differentiate instruction so that students have multiple options for taking information and making sense of ideas. We must be flexible in our methods of teaching and adjust the curriculum for learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum. Hall explains that differentiated instruction recognizes students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, and reacts responsively (Hall, retrieved 9-23-11, from http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html).

A fuller definition of differentiated instructions is that a teacher proactively plans varied approaches to what students need to learn, how they will learn, how they will learn it, and/or how they can express what they have learned in order to increase the likelihood that each student will learn as much as he or she can as efficiently as possible (Tomlinson, 2003, p 151).

Hall further provides five guidelines for teachers to ensure the success of differentiation in the classroom:

1. Clarify key concepts and generalizations to ensure that all learners gain powerful understandings that serve as foundation for future learning.
2. Use assessment as a teaching tool to extend versus merely measure instruction which occurs before, during, and following the instructional episode, and helps to pose questions regarding student needs and optimal learning.
3. Emphasis critical and creative thinking as a goal in lesson design. The tasks, activities, and procedures for students should require that students understand and apply meaning—this may require supports, additional motivation, varied tasks, materials, or equipment for different students in the classroom.
4. Engage all learners by varying tasks within instruction as well as across students. In other words, the lesson should not consist of any single structure or activity.

5. Provide a balance between teacher-assigned and student-selected tasks by providing students choices in their learning.

RECOMMENDATION 8-3:

Implement professional development and accountability to ensure differentiation of instruction is put into practice to improve student performance.

The design for differentiation of instruction professional development should begin immediately and be developed by the director of curriculum and instruction. The process should be embedded into the current professional development model for teachers via the Summer Teacher Academy and the supplemental sessions planned and provided during the school year. Opportunities for discussion of differentiated instruction, currently not available for teachers, can be included in professional development opportunities.

The process should focus on training for differentiation techniques and the identification and implementation of group interventions for students before school, during school, after school, on Saturdays and extended year.

FISCAL IMPACT

There should be no direct fiscal impact. Monies currently being used for required professional development can be redirected to this effort.

FINDING

TCS does not consistently and systemically provide teachers with leadership or tools for data analysis and instructional planning to ensure implementation of a data driven instructional model.

A review of the district strategic plan, district staff development schedules, and interviews with district and campus administrators and staff reveal that there is a focus on reviewing student performance data based on periodic benchmarks, a combination of the state provided ACUITY and district developed benchmarks, and review of WESTEST 2 results. In addition district leaders provide four approximately 2.5-hour early release days for students to provide teachers time to look at student test data.

While these strategies are in place, there is no evidence of specific expectations for campus leaders to lead the data discussions or specific tools for campus leaders to provide teachers to ensure that teachers understand the data and have the tools to have productive conversations about what the data means to informing data driven instructional strategies. Interviews with principals revealed that they did not feel that they had the skills to lead teachers in deep data analysis related to CSOs. The Office of Education Performance Audit, *Initial Education Performance Audit Report for Taylor County Middle School June 2011* recommends in its Summary of Findings that the:

TCS superintendent must actively and aggressively pursue remedies to the deficiencies found at the school and ensure that all students receive a high quality education based on the West Virginia 21st Century content

standards and objectives (CSOs), the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan, and analyses of student data.

Data driven instruction is the philosophy that schools should constantly focus on one simple question: Are our students learning? Paul Banbrick-Santoyo, in a presentation for Texas Turnaround Campus Leadership Teams at the partnership seminar between the Texas Education Agency's August 2011 Turnaround Campus Leadership Teams and the University of Virginia's Darden Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education (PLE), stated that when schools use data based methods, they break from the traditional emphasis on what teachers ostensibly teach in favor of a clear-eyed, fact-based focus on what students actually learn. In doing so, they create a powerful paradigm to drive academic excellence. Banbrick-Santoyo believes that there are four principles fundamental to effective data-driven instruction:

1. Assessment: create rigorous interim assessments that provide meaningful data
2. Analysis: examine the results of assessments to identify the causes of both strengths and shortcomings
3. Action: teach effectively what students most need to learn (based on the results of the assessments)
4. Culture: create an environment in which data-driven instruction can survive and thrive

While the assessment and analysis steps recommended by Banbrick-Santoyo seem to be in place in TCS there is no evidence of a mechanism to use the data from the assessment and analysis to move effectively to the action step of the process. It is the effective use of the data to inform instructional plans that have the impact to improve student performance. In his book, *Driven By Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction*, Bambrick-Santoyo states that while based on gathering information, data-driven instruction is worthless unless the information is actually employed in the classroom.

RECOMMENDATION 8-4:

Provide a model for campus principals when conducting a data analysis/action meeting to ensure understanding and effective use of data for planning instructional strategies for groups and individual students.

The director of curriculum and instruction, responsible for professional development, and the director of special education, responsible for data analysis, should identify staff to assist in the creation of a model for principals to utilize as they guide campus data analysis meetings. The data analysis/action meeting guide should provide a formal agenda for the analysis/action meeting and sample dialogue prompts for campus principals to employ to guide the instruction. While it would be helpful to provide key data concerns, the principal should be responsible for reviewing the data and being knowledgeable about strengths and challenges of the campus and individual students. The model might also include sample forms for teachers to utilize in their planning process.

In the August 2011 Texas Turnaround Campus Leadership Team/University of Virginia Seminar, Bambrick-Santoyo provided key principles for campus principals for leading data analysis meetings:

- Let the data do the talking.
- Let the teacher do the talking (or push them to!).
- Always go back to the test to specific questions.
- Don't fight the battles on ideological lines.
- Know the data yourself to lead an analysis meeting effectively.
- Make explicit, detailed action steps & ensure that they happen in the classroom.
- Do follow-up and walk-through's to ensure implementation.

He also provided some conversation starters and re-directors for principals to utilize during analysis meetings, including:

Starters

- "Congratulations on the improvement on ____ from last time!"
- "So. . . what's the data telling you?"

Re-Directors for Resistant Comments

- "Let's look at question _____. Why did the students get it wrong?"
- "What did the students need to be able to do to get that question right? How was this more than what they are able to do in your class?"
- What's so interesting is that they did really well on question #___but struggled on question #___ on the same standard. Why do you think that is?"

Synthesizer for Quality Analysis

- "So what you're saying is ... [paraphrase and improve good responses]."

Incorporating these types of techniques in the design of a module for leading analysis meetings would provide for what Dufour describes as the creation of structures to promote a collaborative culture. He believes that such a design provide for a systematic process of working together to analyze and improve classroom practice by promoting:

- Teachers working in teams.
- Examination of assessments and student work.

- The identification of student strengths/weaknesses.
- Discussions about how teachers can build on those strengths and address weaknesses.
- Discussions about teaching strategies that promote student success.

Exhibit 8-12 shows an example of a rubric to assess the present state of data-driven instruction and assessment in a school. The rubric specifically targets interim assessments and the key drivers leading to increased student achievement.

**EXHIBIT 8-12
IMPLEMENTATION RUBRIC
DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT**

**IMPLEMENTATION RUBRIC
DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT**

Paul Bambrick-Santoyo & New Leaders for New Schools

The rubric is intended to be used to assess the present state of data-driven instruction and assessment in a school. The rubric specifically targets interim assessments and the key drivers leading to increased student achievement.

4 = Exemplary Implementation 3 = Proficient Impementation 2 = Beginning Implementation 1 = No Implementation

| DATA-DRIVEN CULTURE | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Highly active Leadership Team: facilitate teacher-leader data analysis meetings after each interim assessment and maintain focus on the process throughout the year | | /4 |
| 2. Introductory Professional Development: teachers and leaders are effectively introduced to data-driven instruction—they understand how interim assessments define rigor and experience the process of analyzing results and adapting instruction | | /4 |
| 3. Implementation Calendar: Begin school year with a detailed calendar that includes time for assessment creation/adaptation, implementation, analysis, planning meetings, and re-teaching (flexible enough to accommodate district changes/mandates) | | /4 |
| 4. Ongoing Professional Development: PD calendar is aligned with data-driven instructional plan: includes modeling assessment analysis/action planning and is flexible to adapt to student learning needs | | /4 |
| 5. Build by Borrowing: Identify and implement best practices from high-achieving teacher & schools: visit schools/classrooms, share & disseminate resources/strategies | | /4 |
| ASSESSMENTS | | <u>Lit.</u> <u>Math</u> |
| 1. Common Interim Assessments 4-6 times/year | | /4 /4 |
| 2. Transparent Starting Point: teachers see the assessments at the beginning of each cycle; they define the roadmap for teaching | | /4 /4 |
| 3. Aligned to state tests and college readiness | | /4 /4 |
| 4. Aligned to instructional sequence of clearly defined grade level/content expectations | | /4 /4 |
| 5. Re-Assess previously taught standards | | /4 /4 |
| ANALYSIS | | |
| 1. Immediate turnaround of assessment results (ideally 48hrs) | | /4 |
| 2. User-friendly, succinct data reports include: item-level analysis, standards-level analysis & bottom line results | | /4 |
| 3. Teacher-owned analysis facilitated by effective leadership preparation | | /4 |
| 4. Test-in-hand analysis between teacher(s) & instructional leader | | /4 |
| 5. Deep: moves beyond “what” students got wrong and answers “why” they got it wrong | | /4 |
| ACTION | | |
| 1. Plan new lessons collaboratively to develop new strategies based on data analysis | | /4 |
| 2. Implement explicit teacher action plans in whole-class instruction, small groups, tutorials, and before/after-school supports | | /4 |
| 3. Ongoing assessment: utilize in-the-moment checks for understanding and in-class assessment to ensure student progress between interim assessments | | /4 |
| 4. Accountability: instructional leaders review lesson/unit plans and give observation feedback driven by the action plan and student learning needs | | /4 |
| 5. Engaged Students know the end goal, how they did, and what actions they are taking to improve | | /4 |
| TOTAL: | | <u>100</u> |

Source: *Driven by Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction*, 2011.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific financial investment for this recommendation; however, a commitment of staff time would be required to meet, design, and communicate results.

FINDING

TCS lacks a structure for campus teachers to meet and discuss progress for individual student performance or to collaboratively plan lessons/instructional interventions for individual student improvement.

The district provides four early dismissals during the school year for teachers to meet to discuss student benchmarking and WESTEST 2 data. However, interviews with central office staff, principals, and teacher focus groups and a review of district planning and professional development documents revealed that there is no consistent district-wide structure for teachers to meet in groups to discuss individual student performance and develop intervention strategies for individual students or student groups.

Based on discussions during interviews there was some focus on structures similar to professional learning groups, and some campuses currently have modified structures for professional learning communities (PLCs). The district does not provide professional development or consistent support for each campus to implement PLCs at each campus.

Astuto, et al. (1993) define PLCs as a community of learners, in which the teachers in a school and its administrators continuously seek and share learning, and act on that learning. Shirley Hord, *Professional Learning Communities: Communities of Continuous Inquiry and Improvement (SEDL, 1997)* believes that the goal of the actions of PLCs is to enhance the effectiveness of teachers as professionals for the benefit of improving student performance. Richard DuFour says to create a PLC, teachers and administrators must focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold themselves accountable for results. He goes on to say that there are three core principles, or big ideas, that guide and sustain a PLC effort: ensuring that students learn; focusing on results; and embracing a culture of collaboration.

DuFour offers two sets of driving questions to explore PLCs that are based on the assumption that "...the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn," a simple shift from focus on teaching to a focus on learning. DuFour's initial driving questions are:

- What school characteristics and practices have been most successful in helping all students achieve at high levels?
- How could we adopt those characteristics and practices in our own school?
- What commitments would we have to make to one another to create such a school?
- What commitments would we have to make to each other?
- What indicators could we monitor to assess our progress?

The second level of driving questions include:

- What do we want each student to learn?
- How will we know when each student has learned it?
- How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

RECOMMENDATION 8-5:

Require each campus to create and implement professional learning communities (PLCs) to ensure opportunities for teachers to collaboratively evaluate student performance and plan for individual student growth.

The curriculum and instruction staff should research best practices and provide campuses a PLC model and professional development designed around the model to ensure systemic implementation across TCS. In some campuses it may be a new effort and in others a review of the current model to ensure that current practice matches the best practice model provided by the district. DuFour believes that an effective model should provide a systematic process of working together to analyze and improve classroom practice which includes teachers:

- Working in teams
- Examining assessments and student work
- Identifying student strengths/weaknesses
- Discussing how they can build on strengths and address weaknesses
- Discussing teaching strategies

These collaborative conversations center around the questions relating to which students learned what was intended, and which students did not?

Implementing a PLC model in each school will provide a process to ensure the success of **Recommendations 8-3** and **8-4** related to effective data analysis and differentiation of instruction.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific financial investment for this recommendation; however, a commitment of staff time would be required to meet, design, and communicate actions and results.

8.3 Behavior Management and Drop-out Program

FINDING

Alternative education services are provided in a standalone building in a healthy and controlled environment.

The location for the Alternative Learning Center (Camp Towles campus) is quiet, scenic, well-kept and provides a controlled environment for the program. Morning students are bused to the location for classes and returned to their home campus at lunch, while a

second student cohort is bused to the alternative center for afternoon classes and then back to the home campus after school.

The National Association of State Boards of Education 1996 noted that regardless of the location, successful alternative programs provide healthy physical environments that foster education, emotional well-being, a sense of pride, and safety.

COMMENDATION 8-C:

TCS provides an alternative learning facility in a quiet, controlled setting at Camp Towles that is appropriate to the instructional design, attractive, and well-maintained.

FINDING

There is no formal description or evaluation of the components of the secondary TCS discipline (behavior) management system; therefore, there is no data to provide guidance for ensuring that all components are effective and meeting the needs of the program.

While TCS is commended for providing an outstanding physical setting for the Alternative Learning Center, interviews with administrators and a review of documents reveals that there is no formal description or evaluation of the components of the secondary discipline (behavior) management system.

A review of the Taylor County Middle School Discipline Policy outlined in the Student Agenda provided students at the beginning of the school year, which requires a parent signature to verify having seen the rules, shows that it provides both the levels of misconduct and the consequences for committing the infraction.

Reviews of the TCS Alternative Learning Center Handbook for 2011-12 and the Grafton High School Student Handbook, and interviews with district and campus administrators did not provide a description of the district disciplinary behavior management program or a method for measuring the success of the program.

The TCS Alternative Learning Center Handbook for 2011-12 speaks to eligibility requirements but does not define the levels of eligibility or the exact consequences of the violations. Eligibility includes student demonstration of:

- Moderate to severe difficulty in social functioning.
- Moderate to severe need for frequent monitoring to manage school environment.
- Mild to moderate risk of behaviors endangering self or others.
- Moderate to severe academic difficulty with loss of credits and/or retentions.
- Moderate to severe school disengagement.

However, there is no definition or quantification of the terms moderate, mild, or severe.

The following are disciplinary options stated in the Grafton High School Student Handbook that may be used depending on code infraction (being placed in an alternative setting is not listed as an option):

- Lunch detention
- After school detention
- Saturday detention
- ISS (in school suspension)
- OSS (out of school suspension)
- Expulsion

In addition, as shown in **Exhibit 8-13**, the Grafton High School Student Handbook includes the four levels of violations of the discipline policy but does not outline the consequences for the violations:

**EXHIBIT 8-13
LEVELS AND DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS**

| Level of Violation | Definition of Violation |
|---------------------------|--|
| Level I | Minor, frequent, continued or aggravated instances of misconduct that disrupt or could disrupt the orderly conduct of the educational process. |
| Level II | Misconduct that involves the violation of the personal or property rights of others or other conduct deemed inappropriate |
| Level III | Misconduct and/or violations that may involve criminal acts or are so serious that they present a direct and immediate threat to the welfare of self or others or have the potential to cause substantial interference with a positive learning environment. |
| Level IV | Violations include any offense pertaining to or in any way involved with the sale or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, or inhalants; repeat offense of drug, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia possession, or repeat offense of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol as used herein shall mean any alcoholic beverage as defined by the laws of the State of West Virginia, including but not limited to liquor, wine, or beer or beverages of reduced alcohol content but which have characteristics similar to liquor, wine, or beer. Drugs as used herein shall mean any substance, which requires a prescription to obtain, or any substance as defined by the law of the State of West Virginia as a controlled substance. Level IV also includes any offense pertaining to the use of or possession of a deadly weapon or battery on a school employee. |

Source: Grafton High School Student Handbook, 2011-12.

RECOMMENDATION 8-6:

Create a comprehensive district behavior management plan and evaluation design to measure the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning Center and use the results to modify the program for the 2012-13 school year.

The NAEA Center for Best Practices (2001) reports that the two practices of effective alternative programs include collecting and evaluating data and developing data-driven accountability measures.

NAEA reports that exemplary alternative education programs systematically conduct program evaluations for continuous program improvement. Data collection includes the following items:

- Program implementation ratings
- Student outcome data
- Student, parent/guardian, and staff surveys

All sources of data are gathered and used to assess quality, provide a course for improvement, and direct future activities of the program.

The following are indicators provided by the NAEA for alternative education program evaluation:

- The alternative education program routinely conducts program evaluations to determine progress toward meeting the mission and purpose of the program and plans for continuous program improvement.
- Evaluation measures include a review of program implementation ratings based on observable data.
- Student outcome data for core content, non-core content areas, and non-academic areas are gathered as a means to evaluate the success of the alternative program. This includes collecting data on the following: absences, disciplinary actions, credits earned, dropout statistics, grades, graduation rates, student achievement, and recidivism rates
- Student, parent/guardian, and community surveys are administered by the alternative education program to assess attitudes and opinions about discipline, program culture and climate, the learning environment, staff student and staff-parent/guardian and program community relations, perceptions of program effectiveness, and success relative to students' academic, behavioral, and social progress.
- Staff surveys are administered by the program to assess attitudes and opinions about discipline, program culture and climate, the learning environment, staff administrator/staff-staff relations, perceptions of program effectiveness and success relative to students' academic, behavioral, and social progress.
- Transition services are routinely evaluated to determine the program's effectiveness in transitioning the student to the next educational setting or into the workforce. Evaluation of transitional services includes follow-up visits with past students of the program.

Because TCS is in initial stages of implementing an on-going program in discipline behavior management, key district and campus Alternative Learning Center planners

should meet and identify which of the above indicators would provide the most meaningful feedback for TCS and identify the methods for collecting the data during the 2011-12 school year. Data should be used to modify the program and describe a clear description of the program and the process for entering and leaving the program.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific financial investment for this recommendation other than a determination of staff time needed implement the review.

FINDING

TCS does not have a system for providing maximum opportunities for special education students to achieve high school graduation.

TCS special education population has a significantly lower graduation rate than the district all-students population and even lower when compared to the peer districts. **Exhibit 8-14** shows graduation rates for TCS and peer districts for three school years. While TCS graduation rates for all-students were comparable to peer districts in 2007-08, the graduation rate for special education students was significantly lower. The graduation rate for TCS all-students population fell approximately 6 percent during the 2008-09 year, which made it lower than the peer districts. The special education student population graduation rate also fell, continuing to make it significantly lower than the peer districts. In 2009-10 the TCS graduation rates for all-students and for special education students were the lowest among the peers.

The special education graduation rate was more than 20 percentage points below than the lowest performing peer district in each of the years shown, and between 20-40 percentage points lower than the highest performing peer group. Although the TCS all-students graduation rate was generally comparable to the state in two of the three years shown, the special education graduation rate averaged approximately 30 percentage points lower than the state.

Overall, TCS special education student graduation rates are shown as significantly lower than peer districts, the state, and TCS all-students.

**EXHIBIT 8-14
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
GRADUATION RATES
207-08 THROUGH 2009-10**

| DISTRICT | 2007-08 | | 2008-09 | | 2009-10 | |
|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| | ALL STUDENTS | SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS | ALL STUDENTS | SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS | ALL STUDENTS | SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS |
| Taylor | 81.7% | 45.2% | 75.7% | 41.9% | 76.4% | 41.9% |
| Barbour | 80.0% | 73.9% | 80.1% | 73.0% | 79.9% | 74.4% |
| Braxton | 78.0% | 67.9% | 79.8% | 66.7% | 86.1% | 76.9% |
| Hardy | 82.0% | 77.8% | 84.7% | 86.2% | 80.2% | 68.0% |
| State | 84.0 | 77.4 | 83.8% | 75.7% | 76.5% | |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Interviews with district and campus administrators and focus groups with teachers indicate an awareness that the TCS graduation rate is about the same as the state, but lower than all of the peers. When asked in focus groups about the success of special education students, there appeared to be general awareness that special education students were not graduating at the same level as state and peer districts. There was no evidence of staff awareness or of a guiding document for a program which focused specifically on the special education graduation rate.

There is a district-wide goal addressing drop-out rates stated in the Strategic Goal/Drop-out Prevention Plan as follows:

The Taylor County Board of Education will establish a Drop-Out Prevention Campaign that works toward a 100% graduation rate.

The district Core Plan submitted February 8, 2011 does not specifically address graduation rates; however, it does include the following awareness opportunities and support programs that are focused on drop-out prevention:

- Maintain any records including academic, medical, birth certificates, etc. of children identified as being “homeless”.
- Review WVEIS-based attendance reports monthly.
- Update and review WVEIS-based discipline reports on a frequent basis.
- Utilize WVEIS reports to monitor “drop-out-rate” for the county, and primarily the High School.
- Provide school-based student groups for areas such as peer mediation and anger management with 90% of the student participants reporting benefit from these programs in the middle and high school.
- Provide a mentoring program for students in grades 9-12 who are at risk of dropping out of school.
- Provide before, after, and mid-day tutoring opportunities for students.
- Provide “credit recovery” program opportunities for eligible “at-risk” students.
- Provide opportunities for summer school, offering courses in the core subjects.
- Provide counseling for identified “at-risk” students grades K-12.
- Continue an at-risk coach position to work with staff and parents for the purpose of identifying students at-risk for drop out, as well as their families, to be tracked and provided support/resources as appropriate as they transition to advanced grade levels.
- Initiate a variety of events to reach out to parents to provide traditional information to parents.

These activities do not specifically address all-students or special education student graduation rates; however, they are identified for drop-out prevention, which ultimately impacts graduation rates for all students.

There are no specific implementation guidelines or timelines for the activities nor is there specific mention of inclusion of or modification of strategies to insure appropriateness of strategies for the TCS special education population in this document.

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities advocates having a single long-term plan for dropout prevention for all students which includes students with disabilities. Mindee O’Cummings, special education coordinator and technical assistance liaison for the National High School Center (NHSC) states that while research provides a strong foundation for defining 9th grade warning signs the key to success is local adaptation of the research. O’Cummings offers three key indicators as warning signs:

- Engagement
 - Attendance/absenteeism
- Course Performance
 - Course grades
 - Number of credits earned
- CCSR End of Year Indicator
 - Core course performance and accumulated credits

NHSC further offers that in combination with using a tracking system, preferably electronic, that helps identify individual students at high risk of dropping out based on the above indicators, districts should:

- Assign adult advocates to students at risk of dropping out.
- Provide academic support and enrichment to improve performance.
- Implement programs to improve students’ classroom behavior and social skills.
- Personalize the learning environment and instructional process.
- Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning and provide the skills needed to graduate and to serve them after they leave school.

RECOMMENDATION 8-7:

Evaluate all in-place and proposed drop-out/graduation rate efforts to ensure they include strategies that focus on increasing the graduation rate for special education students.

An important tool to implement this recommendation is to create a single document describing the strategies, timelines, responsible parties, resources needed, and evaluation of all current and proposed drop-out/graduation rate efforts.

During the Spring 2012 semester the director of curriculum and instruction, director of special education, and the coordinator of attendance should lead a collaborative effort to review and evaluate the drop-out/graduation rate strategies for their ability to guide efforts to decrease drop-out rates and increase graduation rates of all students, especially special education students.

NDPC-SD, in a presentation for IDEAs that WORK: U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, emphasizes the need to document drop-out and high school completion programs with policies and procedures. It is recommended that a district review its district and board policies, school-wide initiatives, and district and school procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific financial investment for this recommendation other than a determination of staff time needed to create and implement the review.

8.4 Curriculum and Instruction: Taylor County Middle School

FINDING

Some Taylor County Middle School staff do not acknowledge the importance of the recommendations provided in the *Initial Education Performance Audit Report for Taylor County Middle School June 2011*.

A review of documents prior to the site visit provided information on the results of a West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audit (OEPA) for Taylor County Middle School (TCMS).

TCMS failed to achieve adequate yearly progress for the past five years and failed to meet AYP in the special education subgroup for the past two consecutive years as shown in **Exhibit 8-15**.

The OEPA report stated that the audit concentrated on declining student achievement and focused on the subgroups that failed to achieve AYP. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

In addition to not achieving AYP in two subgroups, the team identified 11 high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress:

**EXHIBIT 8-15
QUALITY STANDARDS TO IMPROVE
PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS
AT TAYLOR COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

| Standard # | Standard |
|------------|---|
| 7.1.1 | Curriculum based on content standards and objectives (textbooks were driving the curriculum) |
| 7.1.2 | High expectations (students off task in four classes) |
| 7.1.4 | Instruction (science was less than 50 percent experimentation) |
| 7.1.5 | Instructional strategies (many teachers did not vary instruction) |
| 7.1.6 | Instruction in writing (nine teachers not doing weekly writing) |
| 7.1.8 | Instructional materials (required materials list sent home to parents) |
| 7.1.13 | Instructional day (the length of the instruction day was less than 330 minutes) |
| 7.2.1 | County and School electronic strategic improvement plans (many teachers unfamiliar with strategic plan) |
| 7.2.3 | Lesson plans and principal feedback (several irregularities and plans not checked by the principal) |
| 7.6.4 | Teacher and principal internship (one teacher lacked a mentor) |
| 7.8.1 | Leadership (the principal needed assistance) |

Source: *Initial Education Performance Audit Report: West Virginia Board of Education, June 2011.*

The OEPA accepted the district's response to addressing the recommendations outlined in the TCMS Required Revisions to the County Electronic Strategic Plan.

Interviews with district and campus staff revealed that several of the recommendations have been addressed; however, other standards are systemic in nature and require collaborative and long term focus. Interviews with staff and discussions in a focus group revealed inconsistent perceptions about the importance of implementing the recommendations with fidelity and immediacy. Comments revealed a perception by staff that the report focused on quality standards and recommendations that were easily addressed and revealed a lack of staff commitment to the recommendations that were systemic in nature, that is, the need to address lack of focus on content standards and objectives, high expectations, and differentiated instructional strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 8-8:

Implement all recommendations outlined by the audit team from the Office of Education Performance Audits in the *Initial Education Performance Audit Report for Taylor County Middle School June 2011*, systemically and with a sense of urgency.

The recommendations and strategies designed to address the recommendations should be studied by the TCMS professional learning communities. The PLC should identify its specific role in the implementation and monitoring of the strategies as appropriate to the PLC and have an on-going conversation about the progress of the strategies.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific financial investment for this recommendation other than a determination of staff time needed implement the review.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
SURVEY RESULTS**

APPENDIX A TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS SURVEY RESULTS

Total responses for Central Office Administrators = 11 (11%)
Total responses for Principal/Assistant Principals = 2 (25%)
Total responses for Teachers = 41 (16%)

MGT uses a statistical formula to set an acceptable return rate in order to declare that the survey results are “representative” of the population surveyed. In the case of Taylor County Schools, the response rates for administrators, principals, and teachers were below this standard. This appendix displays the combined results of the three surveys.

EXHIBIT A-1 COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES PART A: OVERALL QUALITY

| STATEMENT | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. How long have you worked in the district? Five years or less 6-10 years 11-20 years 21 years or more | 36% 27% 18% 18% | 50% 0% 0% 50% | 27% 15% 17% 41% |
| 2. How long have you been in your current position? Five years or less 6-10 years 11-20 years 21 years or more | 55% 36% 9% 0% | 100% 0% 0% 0% | 39% 20% 22% 20% |
| 3. What grade or grades are you teaching this year? PK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Adult <i>*Percentages are greater than 100% because teachers can teach more than one grade.</i> | N/A | N/A | 2% 22% 17% 24% 22% 15% 20% 32% 22% 17% 20% 22% 20% 22% 7% * |

**EXHIBIT A-1 (Continued)
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
PART A: OVERALL QUALITY**

| STATEMENT | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 4. Overall quality of public education in our school district is: Good or Excellent Fair or Poor | 64% 36% | 100% 0% | 80% 20% |
| 5. Overall quality of education in our school district is: Improving Staying the Same Getting Worse Don't Know | 82% 0% 18% 0% | 100% 0% 0% 0% | 54% 41% 5% 0% |
| 6. Grade given to our school district teachers: Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F) | 45% 9% | 100% 0% | 76% 0% |
| 7. Grade given to our school district school level administrators: Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F) | 55% 9% | 100% 0% | 78% 7% |
| 8. Grade given to our school district central office administrators: Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F) | 64% 9% | 50% 0% | 51% 20% |

Percentages may equal over 100 percent due to rounding.

**EXHIBIT A-2
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART B: SCHOOL/DISTRICT CLIMATE**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities. | 82/9 | 100/0 | 93/7 |
| 2. I am actively looking for a job outside of this school district. | 0/82 | 0/100 | 2/80 |
| 3. I am very satisfied with my job in this school district. | 91/0 | 100/0 | 83/5 |
| 4. The work standards and expectations in this school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts. | 55/18 | 100/0 | 66/20 |
| 5. This school district's officials enforce high work standards. | 64/18 | 100/0 | 71/22 |
| 6. Workload is evenly distributed. | 27/64 | 50/50 | 41/46 |
| 7. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s). | 100/0 | 100/0 | 73/15 |
| 8. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined. | 27/36 | 100/0 | 24/41 |
| 9. Staff (excluding teachers) who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined. | 36/27 | 100/0 | 12/37 |
| 10. I feel that I am an integral part of this school district team. | 82/9 | 100/0 | 68/12 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-3
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART C1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Teachers and administrators in our district have excellent working relationships. | 36/18 | 100/0 | 63/17 |
| 2. Most administrative practices in our school district are highly effective and efficient. | 27/18 | 100/0 | 59/20 |
| 3. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively. | 36/18 | 100/0 | 56/20 |
| 4. Central Office Administrators are easily accessible and open to input. | 55/0 | 100/0 | 29/41 |
| 5. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level. | 27/18 | 100/0 | 27/22 |
| 6. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to perform their responsibilities effectively. | 73/9 | 100/0 | 66/15 |
| 7. The extensive committee structure in our school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions. | 27/9 | 100/0 | 49/32 |
| 8. Our school district has too many committees. | 0/27 | 50/50 | 7/63 |
| 9. Our school district has too many layers of administrators. | 9/27 | 0/100 | 10/56 |
| 10. Most of district administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient. | 45/18 | 100/0 | 51/32 |
| 11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs. | 64/9 | 100/0 | 34/27 |
| 12. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in our school district. | 55/9 | 100/0 | 39/29 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/ Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-4
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART C2: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P) ¹ | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in this school district. | 36/64 | 100/0 | 41/49 |
| 2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in this school district. | 36/64 | 100/0 | 41/49 |
| 3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for this school district. | 45/36 | 100/0 | 41/46 |
| 4. The School district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of this school district. | 64/27 | 100/0 | 61/12 |
| 5. The School district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of this school district. | 73/18 | 100/0 | 59/12 |
| 6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools. | 73/27 | 100/0 | 78/20 |
| 7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers. | 55/45 | 100/0 | 80/20 |

¹Percentage responding *good* or *excellent*/Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-5
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART D1: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. The emphasis on learning in this school district has increased in recent years. | 64/18 | 100/0 | 66/10 |
| 2. Sufficient student services are provided in this school district (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health). | 55/27 | 0/100 | 44/44 |
| 3. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics. | 73/9 | 50/50 | 61/20 |
| 4. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with curriculum and instruction matters. | 82/0 | 100/0 | 80/12 |
| 5. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs. | 27/18 | 50/50 | 80/2 |
| 6. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students. | 45/18 | 50/50 | 66/15 |
| 7. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach. | 36/36 | 100/0 | 95/2 |
| 8. Teachers and staff are given opportunities to participate in the textbook and material adoption processes. | 64/0 | 100/0 | 80/2 |
| 9. Teachers have adequate supplies and equipment needed to perform their jobs effectively. | 64/0 | 50/50 | 46/37 |
| 10. Our district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subject areas. | 64/0 | 100/0 | 76/5 |
| 11. Our district uses the results of benchmark tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps. | 55/9 | 100/0 | 78/2 |
| 12. Our district has effective educational programs for the following: | | | |
| a) Reading and Language Arts | 55/18 | 100/0 | 80/7 |
| b) Writing | 55/18 | 100/0 | 68/10 |
| c) Mathematics | 45/27 | 100/0 | 83/7 |
| d) Science | 45/9 | 50/0 | 78/5 |
| e) Social Studies (history or geography) | 45/9 | 50/0 | 59/22 |
| f) Foreign Language | 36/9 | 50/0 | 51/12 |
| g) Basic Computer Instruction | 55/18 | 50/50 | 54/20 |
| h) Advanced Computer Instruction | 27/18 | 50/50 | 27/32 |
| i) Music, Art, Drama, and other Fine Arts | 55/9 | 50/50 | 63/20 |
| j) Physical Education | 36/27 | 0/100 | 68/22 |
| k) Career and Technical (Vocational) Education | 27/18 | 0/50 | 41/10 |
| l) Business Education | 36/9 | 0/50 | 34/7 |
| 13. The district has effective programs for the following: | | | |
| a) Special Education | 73/0 | 100/0 | 63/20 |
| b) Literacy Program | 64/0 | 100/0 | 61/7 |
| c) Advanced Placement Program | 27/9 | 0/100 | 39/22 |
| d) Drop-out Prevention Program | 45/9 | 50/50 | 37/37 |
| e) Summer School Programs | 45/9 | 50/50 | 41/20 |
| f) Honors and Gifted Education | 27/9 | 50/50 | 37/29 |
| g) Alternative Education Programs | 27/9 | 0/50 | 27/27 |
| h) Career Counseling Program | 18/9 | 0/50 | 20/22 |
| i) College Counseling Program | 18/9 | 0/0 | 22/17 |
| j) Student Services (nursing, social work, truant officers, etc.) | 9/27 | 0/100 | 27/32 |
| 14. The students-to-teacher ratio is reasonable. | 64/0 | 100/0 | 71/20 |

**EXHIBIT A-5 (Continued)
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART D1: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 15. Our district provides a high quality education that meets or exceeds state and federal mandates. | 45/18 | 100/0 | 68/10 |
| 16. The school district adequately implements policies and procedures for the administration and coordination of special education. | 73/0 | 100/0 | 76/7 |
| 17. There is generally cooperation and collaboration regarding special education issues in our school district. | 27/36 | 50/0 | 41/29 |
| 18. The evaluation and eligibility determination process for special education is timely and comprehensive. | 36/0 | 0/100 | 49/24 |
| 19. Special education teachers receive adequate staff development in cooperative planning and instruction. | 64/0 | 50/50 | 41/22 |
| 20. The school district adequately implements policies and procedures for the administration and coordination of the English Language Learner Program. | 27/9 | 50/0 | 17/5 |
| 21. The school district adequately identifies students who are English language learners. | 27/9 | 50/0 | 27/2 |
| 22. The school district provides appropriate and mandated assessments for English language learners. | 9/9 | 50/0 | 17/7 |
| 23. The school district provides documents to parents in their native language. | 9/9 | 50/0 | 10/5 |
| 24. The school district provides adequate translation services. | 9/9 | 0/0 | 5/5 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-6
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART D2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P) ¹ | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs. | 45/45 | 100/0 | 85/12 |
| 2. Teachers' work in communicating with parents/guardians. | 45/36 | 50/50 | 88/10 |
| 3. How well students' test results are explained to parents/guardians. | 36/36 | 50/50 | 61/32 |
| 4. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom. | 36/45 | 100/0 | 76/20 |

¹Percentage responding *good* or *excellent*/Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-7
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E1: HUMAN RESOURCES**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Salary levels in this school district are competitive. | 18/64 | 0/100 | 27/63 |
| 2. Our district has an effective employee recognition program. | 9/55 | 0/50 | 10/71 |
| 3. Our district has an effective process for staffing critical shortage areas of teachers. | 18/27 | 0/50 | 17/44 |
| 4. My supervisor evaluates my job performance annually. | 82/9 | 100/0 | 71/15 |
| 5. Our district offers incentives for professional advancement. | 0/36 | 50/50 | 24/56 |
| 6. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with professional development. | 91/0 | 100/0 | 73/17 |
| 7. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with human resources matters such as licensure, promotion opportunities, employee benefits, etc | 82/0 | 100/0 | 68/20 |
| 8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience. | 18/64 | 0/100 | 27/51 |
| 9. Our district has an effective teacher recruitment plan. | 18/18 | 50/50 | 7/39 |
| 10. I have a professional growth plan that addresses areas identified for my professional growth. | 27/36 | 100/0 | 29/37 |
| 11. Quality professional development is available throughout the state. | 45/9 | 100/0 | 54/20 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-8
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E2: HUMAN RESOURCES**

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P) ¹ | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Staff development opportunities provided by this school district for teachers. | 73/9 | 100/0 | 63/34 |
| 2. Staff development opportunities provided by this school district for school administrators. | 36/36 | 50/50 | 15/10 |
| 3. Staff development opportunities provided by this school district for support staff. | 45/36 | 100/0 | 15/20 |
| 4. The quality of pre-service professional development provided by this school district | 18/55 | 50/0 | 32/24 |
| 5. The quality of teacher mentoring in this school district | 36/27 | 100/0 | 39/37 |

¹Percentage responding *good* or *excellent*/Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-9
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART F: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Our school buildings provide a healthy environment in which to teach. | 82/18 | 100/0 | 59/22 |
| 2. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs. | 36/27 | 100/0 | 59/27 |
| 3. Our facilities are clean. | 64/9 | 100/0 | 49/34 |
| 4. Our facilities are well maintained. | 55/18 | 50/0 | 41/37 |
| 5. Our district plans facilities in advance to support growing enrollment. | 18/45 | 50/0 | 17/37 |
| 6. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, and staff have opportunities to provide input into facility planning. | 27/18 | 50/0 | 54/15 |
| 7. Our school buildings and grounds are free of hazards that can cause accidental injury. | 64/9 | 100/0 | 76/15 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-10
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART G: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT/PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school district. | 36/9 | 100/0 | 29/27 |
| 2. The budgeting process effectively involves administrators and staff. | 36/9 | 100/0 | 29/32 |
| 3. School administrators are adequately trained in fiscal management techniques. | 27/27 | 50/50 | 20/10 |
| 4. My school allocates financial resources equitably and fairly. | 18/9 | 100/0 | 44/15 |
| 5. The purchasing district provides me with what I need. | 73/9 | 100/0 | 37/32 |
| 6. The purchasing process is easy. | 55/9 | 50/50 | 22/46 |
| 7. Textbooks are distributed to students in a timely manner. | 36/0 | 100/0 | 78/5 |
| 8. The books and resources in the school library adequately meet the needs of students. | 55/9 | 0/100 | 24/41 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-11
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART H: TRANSPORTATION**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Students are often late arriving at or departing from school because the buses do not arrive at school on time. | 0/82 | 0/100 | 7/83 |
| 2. The district has a simple method of requesting buses for special events and trips. | 55/0 | 100/0 | 49/5 |
| 3. Bus drivers maintain adequate discipline on the buses. | 36/9 | 100/0 | 34/5 |
| 4. Buses are clean. | 45/0 | 100/0 | 39/0 |
| 5. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school. | 73/0 | 100/0 | 66/7 |
| 6. Buses are safe. | 64/0 | 100/0 | 49/2 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-12
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART I1: TECHNOLOGY**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Our school district provides adequate technology-related staff development. | 27/9 | 0/50 | 41/37 |
| 2. Our school district requests input on the long-range technology plan. | 36/18 | 100/0 | 49/20 |
| 3. Our school district provides adequate technical support. | 27/27 | 0/50 | 39/39 |
| 4. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work. | 73/18 | 100/0 | 39/44 |
| 5. Administrative computer systems are easy to use. | 64/18 | 50/50 | 51/5 |
| 6. Technology is effectively integrated into the curriculum in our district. | 55/18 | 50/50 | 56/27 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-13
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART I2: TECHNOLOGY**

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P) ¹ | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 100/0 |
| 2. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 100/0 |

¹Percentage responding *good* or *excellent*/Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-14
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART J: FOOD SERVICES**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. The food services district provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks. | 64/27 | 100/0 | 37/29 |
| 2. The food services district encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys. | 36/18 | 50/50 | 17/29 |
| 3. Cafeteria staff are helpful and friendly. | 64/9 | 100/0 | 63/10 |
| 4. Cafeteria facilities are clean and neat. | 82/0 | 100/0 | 68/5 |
| 5. Parents/guardians are informed about the menus. | 82/0 | 100/0 | 93/0 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-15
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART K: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Our schools are safe and secure from crime. | 82/0 | 100/0 | 85/7 |
| 2. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems. | 55/9 | 100/0 | 73/20 |
| 3. There is administrative support for managing student behavior in our schools. | 55/9 | 100/0 | 80/10 |
| 4. If there were an emergency in my school/office, I would know how to respond appropriately. | 91/0 | 100/0 | 93/2 |
| 5. Our district has a problem with gangs. | 0/82 | 0/50 | 2/76 |
| 6. Our district has a problem with drugs, including alcohol. | 27/27 | 50/50 | 59/15 |
| 7. Our district has a problem with vandalism. | 18/45 | 0/50 | 20/41 |
| 8. Our school enforces a strict campus access policy. | 82/0 | 50/0 | 80/10 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-16
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART L1: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. In general, parents/guardians take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools. | 18/27 | 100/0 | 32/46 |
| 2. Parents/guardians in this school district are satisfied with the education their children are receiving. | 27/27 | 100/0 | 46/2 |
| 3. Most parents/guardians seem to know what goes on in our schools. | 27/27 | 50/50 | 46/15 |
| 4. Parents/guardians play an active role in decision making in our schools. | 18/36 | 0/100 | 32/27 |
| 5. This community really cares about its children's education. | 55/18 | 0/50 | 49/27 |
| 6. Our district works with local businesses and groups in the community to help improve education. | 55/18 | 100/0 | 41/22 |
| 7. Parents/guardians receive regular communications from the district. | 55/18 | 100/0 | 76/5 |
| 8. Our school facilities are available for community use. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 85/0 |
| 9. Our school district frequently communicates with state education leaders at the Department of Education. | 36/9 | 50/0 | 37/0 |

EXHIBIT A-16 (Continued)
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART L1: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 10. Our school district frequently communicates with state education leaders at the Center for Professional Development. | 18/9 | 0/0 | 24/0 |

¹Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-17
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART L2: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P) ¹ | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Parent/Guardians/guardians' efforts in helping their children to do better in school. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 100/0 |
| 2. Parent/Guardians/guardians' participation in school activities and organizations. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 100/0 |
| 3. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community. | 100/0 | 100/0 | 100/0 |

¹Percentage responding *good* or *excellent*/Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-18
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART M: SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

| SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND FUNCTIONS | %(NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT) ¹ | / | %(ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING) ¹ |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| a. Budgeting | 45/45 | 50/50 | 51/22 |
| b. Strategic planning | 27/27 | 50/50 | 32/46 |
| c. Curriculum planning | 18/36 | 0/100 | 37/59 |
| d. Financial management and accounting | 36/45 | 50/50 | 44/27 |
| e. Grants administration | 18/36 | 50/50 | 29/20 |
| f. Community relations | 18/55 | 50/50 | 41/41 |
| g. Program evaluation, research, and assessment | 27/18 | 50/50 | 34/37 |
| h. Instructional technology | 27/36 | 50/50 | 61/32 |
| i. Administrative technology | 27/45 | 50/50 | 15/44 |
| j. Internal Communication | 36/45 | 0/100 | 44/46 |
| k. Instructional support | 9/55 | 50/50 | 46/49 |

EXHIBIT A-18 (Continued)
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART M: SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

| SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND FUNCTIONS | %(NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT) ¹ | / | %(ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING) ¹ |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| l. Coordination of Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) | 27/45 | 100/0 | 37/32 |
| m. Personnel recruitment | 36/18 | 50/50 | 39/17 |
| n. Personnel selection | 45/27 | 0/100 | 39/34 |
| o. Personnel evaluation | 18/64 | 50/50 | 24/54 |
| p. Staff development | 36/45 | 50/50 | 41/56 |
| q. Data processing | 9/55 | 50/50 | 17/29 |
| r. Purchasing | 9/82 | 0/100 | 37/34 |
| s. Safety and security | 9/82 | 0/100 | 20/71 |
| t. Plant maintenance | 36/36 | 100/0 | 34/32 |
| u. Facilities planning | 27/27 | 50/50 | 29/41 |
| v. Transportation | 9/64 | 0/100 | 24/59 |
| w. Food service | 18/73 | 50/50 | 46/46 |
| x. Custodial services | 27/64 | 50/50 | 56/37 |
| y. Risk management | 18/55 | 0/100 | 20/34 |

¹Percentage responding *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement* / Percentage responding *adequate* or *outstanding*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-19
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART N: RESA PERCEPTIONS

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. Our school district frequently utilizes services provided by our RESA. | 64/9 | 50/50 | 68/10 |
| 2. The services provided by our RESA are critical to the success of our district's programs and operations. | 73/9 | 50/50 | 49/10 |
| 3. Many of the current RESA services to school districts could be more efficiently and/or effectively provided by WVDE. | 18/9 | 0/0 | 17/20 |
| 4. Many of the current RESA services could be more efficiently and/or effectively provided by other sources such as universities or private vendors. | 27/9 | 0/50 | 12/20 |
| 5. Sources other than RESAs could more efficiently and economically provide many of the school district's services. | 9/18 | 0/0 | 22/15 |
| 6. Many of the current RESA services to school districts duplicate services provided by WVDE. | 0/18 | 0/50 | 10/15 |

EXHIBIT A-19 (Continued)
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART N: RESA PERCEPTIONS

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 7. Many of the services offered by RESAs around the state are critical to the success of many school districts. | 45/0 | 50/50 | 34/5 |
| 8. The RESA in our region is highly efficient and effective. | 45/18 | 50/0 | 32/12 |
| 9. The RESA role in providing services to school districts should be expanded. | 55/9 | 0/0 | 41/5 |
| 10. The RESA in our region is highly responsive to the service needs of our school district. | 36/27 | 50/0 | 37/7 |
| 11. The RESA in our region provides quality services. | 55/9 | 50/0 | 39/7 |
| 12. There are adequate channels of communication with the RESA in our region. | 45/9 | 100/0 | 27/10 |
| 13. The RESA in our region is responsive to complaints. | 45/18 | 50/0 | 22/2 |
| 14. The RESA in our region is responsive to requests for services. | 45/9 | 100/0 | 29/10 |
| 15. The RESA in our region listens and tries to meet the needs of the school district. | 45/9 | 100/0 | 29/5 |
| 16. When compared to other RESAs in the state, I believe our RESA's services are of better quality | 36/0 | 0/0 | 15/0 |

¹ Percentage responding *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement* / Percentage responding *adequate* or *outstanding*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-20
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART O: RESA GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING**

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD) ¹ | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL | TEACHER |
| 1. The current method of funding the RESAs to provide services to school districts and allowing each RESA to charge the districts for other services is highly effective in meeting the needs of the districts. | 27/0 | 0/0 | 7/5 |
| 2. All funds for services to school districts should be allocated to the districts and allow each district to purchase those services it needs from an RESA or other sources. | 27/0 | 50/0 | 15/5 |
| 3. We understand the governance and oversight structure of the RESA in our region. | 9/9 | 0/0 | 7/12 |
| 4. There are appropriate levels of oversight for the RESA in our region. | 9/0 | 0/0 | 7/2 |
| 5. RESAs should continue to be funded by the state. | 55/0 | 50/50 | 27/0 |
| 6. The amount charged to our school district by the RESAs is appropriate for the quality and amount of services provided. | 27/9 | 0/0 | 10/2 |
| 7. Our school district has the funding to purchase the services it needs from an RESA. | 27/9 | 0/50 | 5/2 |

¹Percentage responding *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement* / Percentage responding *adequate* or *outstanding*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**APPENDIX B:
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS
OVERVIEW AND PEER
COMPARISONS**

APPENDIX B TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS OVERVIEW AND PEER COMPARISONS

Taylor County, West Virginia, was established in 1844. The county was named in honor of Senator John Taylor, a distinguished soldier-statesman from Carolina County, Virginia who served in the Continental Army and represented Virginia in the United States Senate over a period of 32 years. The county seat is Grafton, incorporated in 1856. The county became part of West Virginia in 1863.

Taylor County comprises 177 square miles in northern West Virginia on the Allegheny Plateau. The economy is primarily agricultural (livestock, fruit, and tobacco) and mining (coal, natural gas, and timber). The shops and yards of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad form the primary industrial base of the town, as Grafton houses the headquarters for four divisions of the railroad. The Tygart River Dam is located near Grafton, which is famous as the birthplace of Ann Jarvis, the founder of Mother's Day. As of the 2010 census, the county population was 16,895.

Taylor County Schools (TCS) had approximately 2,395 students enrolled in 2010-11 in three elementary schools (grades pre-kindergarten through 4), one middle school (grades 5 through 8), and one high school (grades 9-12). TCS also supports the Taylor County Vocational Center. The school district encompasses the entire county.

TCS has a five-member Board of Education. The Board's primary duty is to establish policies and the primary duty of the Superintendent is to administer such policies. The Superintendent is directly responsible to the Board. As the chief executive officer of the county school system, the Superintendent is the primary advisor to the Board, responsible for the development, supervision, and operation of the school program and facilities. The Board meets at 6:00 PM on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month.

Exhibit B-1 shows TCS enrollment for the last five years, from 2006-07 through 2010-11 school years. Overall, the enrollment decreased over the five-year period, for a net loss of 70 students.

EXHIBIT B-1 TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT 2006-07 THROUGH 2010-11

| SCHOOL YEAR | ENROLLMENT | DIFFERENCE |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2006-07 | 2,465 | NA |
| 2007-08 | 2,464 | -1 |
| 2008-09 | 2,426 | -38 |
| 2009-10 | 2,450 | 24 |
| 2010-11 | 2,395 | -55 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

Peer Comparisons

The practice of benchmarking is often used to make comparisons between and among school districts. Benchmarking refers to the use of commonly held characteristics in making concrete statistical or descriptive comparisons of operational systems and processes. It is also a performance measurement tool used in conjunction with improvement initiatives to measure comparative operating performance and identify best practices. Effective benchmarking has proven to be especially valuable to strategic planning initiatives within school districts.

With this in mind, MGT initiated a benchmarking comparison of TCS to provide a common foundation to compare systems and processes within the district with those of similar West Virginia school systems. It is important for readers to keep in mind that when comparisons are made across districts, the data self-reported by school districts can be subjective. MGT has made every attempt to verify these data. Most data are extracted from the West Virginia Department of Education's website to provide standardized data across school districts. Exhibit information is from the 2010-11 school year whenever possible, or from the most current fully reported data year.

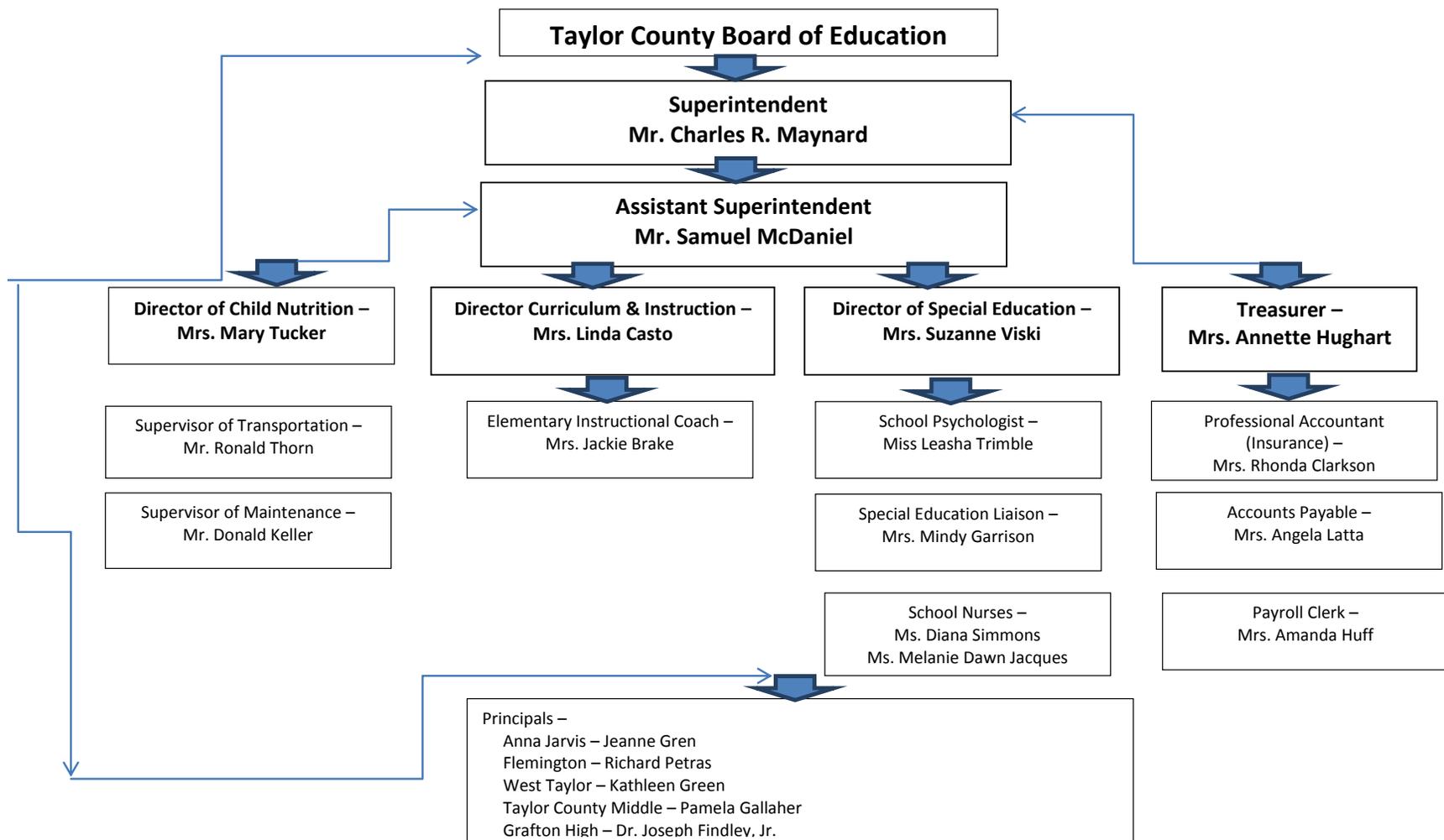
MGT worked with the district to select the following three West Virginia school districts to compare with TCS:

- Barbour County Schools
- Braxton County Schools
- Hardy County Schools

1.0 Organization

Each school district has a unique organizational structure. The TCS 2010-11 organization is shown in **Exhibit B-2**. The Superintendent has two direct reports, the Assistant Superintendent and the Treasurer. The Assistant Superintendent has three direct reports: the Director of Child Nutrition; the Director of Curriculum and Instruction; and the Director of Special Education. The reporting structure for school principals and the Supervisor of Transportation and the Supervisor of Maintenance is unclear in the exhibit.

**EXHIBIT B-2
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS DISTRICT ORGANIZATION
2010-11**



Source: Taylor County Department of Education, 2011.

Barbour County Schools. Barbour County Schools has a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. The Board of Education has five members.

Braxton County Schools. The superintendent executes all educational policies, is the personnel director, and serves as Secretary to the five-member Board of Education. The superintendent oversees six offices: Office of Assistant Superintendent; Office of Finance and Business Administration; Office of Head Start, Elementary Supervision and Food Services; Office of Reading, Curriculum & Title I; Office of Special Education, Special Services and School Health Services; and the Office of Technology Services. The assistant superintendent supervises Transportation, Maintenance, and School Improvement.

Hardy County Schools. The superintendent and associate superintendent manage seven departments: Curriculum and Instruction; Finance; Maintenance; Office of School Nutrition; Personnel; Student Support Services; and Transportation. The Board of Education has five members.

2.0 Enrollment and Attendance

Exhibit B-3 displays TCS and peer total enrollment and attendance from 2008-09 through the 2010-11 academic years. From 2008-09 to 2010-11, TCS enrollment decreased by 31 students compared to the peer average decrease of 39 students. TCS lost far fewer students than Braxton and Hardy; only Barbour increased enrollment (3 students). In each of the three years, TCS was the second largest district.

**EXHIBIT B-3
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
ENROLLMENT
2008-09 THROUGH 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | DIFFERENCE 2008-09 to 2010-11 |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Taylor | 2,426 | 2,450 | 2,395 | -31 |
| Barbour | 2,496 | 2,478 | 2,499 | 3 |
| Braxton | 2,289 | 2,230 | 2,218 | -71 |
| Hardy | 2,353 | 2,307 | 2,297 | -56 |
| Average | 2,391 | 2,366 | 2,352 | -39 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit B-4 displays the ethnicity of TCS and peer district students for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. TCS enrollment was primarily non-minority (over 98%). While the peer districts also had predominately non-minority enrollments, the TCS minority enrollment (less than 2%) was less than the average (over 5%).

**EXHIBIT B-4
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
STUDENT ETHNICITY
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| | 2009-10 | | | | 2010-11 | | | |
| | WHITE | BLACK | OTHER | TOTAL MINORITY | WHITE | BLACK | OTHER | TOTAL MINORITY |
| Taylor | 98.6% | 0.8% | 0.6% | 1.4% | 98.3% | 1.0% | 0.7% | 1.7% |
| Barbour | 93.9% | 1.3% | 4.8% | 6.1% | 93.9% | 1.3% | 5.2% | 6.5% |
| Braxton | 98.3% | 0.5% | 1.3% | 1.8% | 98.4% | 0.5% | 1.2% | 1.7% |
| Hardy | 93.2% | 2.8% | 4.0% | 6.8% | 92.1% | 3.0% | 4.9% | 7.9% |
| Average | 96.0% | 1.4% | 2.7% | 4.0% | 95.7% | 1.5% | 3.0% | 4.5% |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

Note: In all exhibits with percentages, the percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

According to the West Virginia Department of Education website, Supplemental Education Services (SES) consists of academic instruction outside of the regular school day that is designed to increase the academic achievement of low-income students. These services may include academic services such as tutoring, remediation, and other educational interventions provided that the approaches are consistent with the state's academic content standards. The main purposes of SES are to: (1) increase student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics; and (2) enable children to attain proficiency in meeting the state academic achievement standards.

As shown in **Exhibit B-5**, compared to the peer district average, TCS enrolled a lower percentage of students in SES and a comparable percentage in special education. TCS had the lowest percentage of students in SES. The limited English proficiency (LEP) percentages indicate the students in all districts are English-speaking.

**EXHIBIT B-5
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
ENROLLMENT IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | LEP | SPECIAL EDUCATION | LOW SES |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Taylor | 0.0% | 15.7% | 48.5% |
| Barbour | 0.0% | 15.9% | 57.9% |
| Braxton | 0.0% | 17.1% | 61.2% |
| Hardy | 3.0% | 12.8% | 51.4% |
| Average | NA | 15.4% | 54.8% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit B-6 displays the TCS and peer district enrollments in 2010-11 for students with disabilities. TCS had the second highest number and percentage of students with disabilities, comparable to the state percentage.

**EXHIBIT B-6
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | NUMBER | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Taylor | 390 | 16.3% |
| Barbour | 394 | 15.8% |
| Braxton | 365 | 16.4% |
| Hardy | 302 | 13.2% |
| Average | 363 | 15.4% |
| State | 45,007 | 16.0% |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System website, 2011.

Exhibit B-7 shows the percentage of needy students for TCS and the peer districts in 2010-11. TCS had the lowest number and percentage of needy students among the peers. At slightly over 48 percent, TCS and the other districts identify nearly half or more of their enrollment as needy.

**EXHIBIT B-7
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
NEEDY STUDENTS
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | NUMBER | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Taylor | 1,072 | 48.1% |
| Barbour | 1,323 | 57.6% |
| Braxton | 1,241 | 60.4% |
| Hardy | 1,082 | 50.4% |
| Average | 1,180 | 55.4% |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit B-8 displays participation in the National School Nutrition Program for TCS and the peer districts in 2010-11. Among the peer districts, TCS had the lowest percentage of total participation in the breakfast program, although comparable to the state. TCS had a lower percentage of total participation in the lunch program than the peer average, although higher than the state.

**EXHIBIT B-8
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION
2010-11**

| DISTRICT | BREAKFAST | | | | LUNCH | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| | % Free | % Reduced | % Paid | % Total Participation | % Free | % Reduced | % Paid | % Total Participation |
| Taylor | 42.20 | 27.20 | 18.09 | 29.80 | 75.10 | 68.80 | 60.24 | 67.82 |
| Barbour | 40.05 | 31.94 | 22.85 | 33.18 | 67.38 | 63.77 | 53.18 | 62.15 |
| Braxton | 40.20 | 28.52 | 18.09 | 30.90 | 77.79 | 69.35 | 56.86 | 69.27 |
| Hardy | 42.23 | 36.89 | 25.17 | 33.89 | 78.50 | 77.32 | 70.31 | 74.75 |
| Average | 41.17 | 31.14 | 21.05 | 31.94 | 74.69 | 69.81 | 60.15 | 68.50 |
| State | 41.22 | 30.32 | 17.45 | 29.32 | 73.12 | 70.00 | 58.78 | 66.36 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

2.1 Graduation Rates

Exhibit B-9 displays graduation rates for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. The TCS graduation rates for all students, for special education, and for SES were the lowest among the peers, and lower than the peer average. The TCS all students graduation rate was comparable to the state. The TCS special education graduation rate was more than 20 percentage points less than the peer average, and the district's graduation rate for SES was 10 percentage points less than the peer average.

**EXHIBIT B-9
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
GRADUATION RATES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | ALL STUDENTS | SPECIAL EDUCATION | LOW SES |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Taylor | 76.4% | 41.9% | 64.6% |
| Barbour | 79.9% | 74.4% | 78.5% |
| Braxton | 86.1% | 76.9% | 82.3% |
| Hardy | 80.2% | 68.0% | 77.4% |
| Average | 80.7% | 65.3% | 75.7% |
| State | 76.5% | | |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

2.2 Dropout Rates

Exhibit B-10 displays dropout rates for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. TCS had the second highest enrollment in grades 7-12, the highest number of dropouts, and the highest dropout rate, higher than both the peer average and the state.

**EXHIBIT B-10
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
DROPOUT RATES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | ENROLLMENT Grades 7-12 | DROPOUTS Grade 7-12 | DROPOUT RATE |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Taylor | 1,043 | 45 | 4.3% |
| Barbour | 1,148 | 37 | 3.2% |
| Braxton | 967 | 31 | 3.2% |
| Hardy | 1,004 | 25 | 2.5% |
| Average | 1,041 | 35 | 3.3% |
| State | | | 2.7% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

3.0 Staffing

Exhibit B-11 displays pupil-to-staff ratios for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. The TCS pupil-to-teacher ratio was higher than the peer average by one student, and above the state by approximately 1.5 students. This indicates the “average” TCS teacher had slightly larger class sizes than the “average” teacher in the peer districts, as shown by the average class size. The TCS administrative staff supported more pupils (171.1) than the peer average (159.7) and the state (151.0), which may indicate that TCS dedicated fewer positions to professional support and administrative staff, relative to its size, than the peer districts.

**EXHIBIT B-11
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PUPIL/STAFF RATIO
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PUPIL/ TEACHER RATIO | PUPIL/ ADMINISTRATOR RATIO | AVERAGE CLASS SIZE |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Taylor | 15.6 | 171.1 | 20.9 |
| Barbour | 14.0 | 150.2 | 20.8 |
| Braxton | 12.4 | 127.1 | 17.4 |
| Hardy | 15.8 | 190.4 | 21.2 |
| Average | 14.5 | 159.7 | 20.1 |
| State | 13.9 | 151.0 | 19.9 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2009-10 NCLB Report Card.

Exhibit B-12 shows the number of professional personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. Each district had a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. TCS had a comparable number of administrators to the peers for Instructional, Support Services, and Business. TCS was the only district in the comparison group that did not employ a curriculum specialist. TCS employed significantly more remedial specialists (8) than the comparison districts (between none and 5).

**EXHIBIT B-12
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERIN- TENDENT | ASSIST./ ASSOC. SUPERIN- TENDENT | DIRECTOR/ MANAGER (INSTRUCTIONAL) | DIRECTOR/ COORDINATOR SUPPORT SERVICES | CHIEF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICER | CURRICULUM SPECIALIS T | REMEDIAL SPECIALIS T |
|----------------|---------------------|---|---|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Taylor | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 8.5 |
| Barbour | 1.0 | 0.8 | 3.4 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Braxton | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Hardy | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 5.0 |
| Average | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 3.5 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit B-13 displays the total number of school administrators for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. TCS had the fewest number of principals among the peers, and more assistant principals than the peer average.

**EXHIBIT B-13
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PRINCIPALS | ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS |
|----------------|------------|----------------------|
| Taylor | 5.0 | 4.0 |
| Barbour | 7.5 | 2.5 |
| Braxton | 8.0 | 4.0 |
| Hardy | 6.0 | 0.0 |
| Average | 6.6 | 2.6 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit B-14 displays the total number of classroom teachers and special education teachers for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 school year. TCS had fewer teachers in both categories than the peer districts, which, however, corresponds to the lower TCS enrollment and pupil/teacher ratio shown previously.

**EXHIBIT B-14
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TOTAL CLASSROOM AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | CLASSROOM TEACHERS | SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Taylor | 158.5 | 25.0 |
| Barbour | 177.0 | 27.1 |
| Braxton | 185.0 | 36.5 |
| Hardy | 148.0 | 17.9 |
| Average | 167.1 | 26.6 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information System, 2011.

Exhibit B-15 displays the number and percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in 2009-10 and 2010-11. TCS had a comparable percentage of classes taught

by highly qualified teachers to the peer district average. TCS increased the number and percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers from 2009-10 to 2010-11.

**EXHIBIT B-15
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2009-10 | | | 2010-11 | | |
|----------------|---------------|---|--------------|---------------|---|--------------|
| | Total Classes | Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers | | Total Classes | Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers | |
| | | Number | Percent | | Number | Percent |
| Taylor | 757 | 717 | 94.7% | 799 | 768 | 96.1% |
| Barbour | 818 | 790 | 96.6% | 918 | 857 | 93.3% |
| Braxton | 929 | 857 | 92.2% | 735 | 725 | 98.6% |
| Hardy | 764 | 750 | 98.2% | 651 | 645 | 99.1% |
| Average | 817 | 779 | 95.4% | 776 | 749 | 96.8% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit B-16 displays the number of service personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. TCS employed more classroom aides, fewer para-professionals, and slight more directors/coordinators of services than the peer district average.

**EXHIBIT B-16
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
SERVICE PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | AIDE | PARAPROFESSIONAL | DIRECTOR/ COORDINATOR OF SERVICES |
|----------------|-------------|------------------|---|
| Taylor | 19.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 |
| Barbour | 18.5 | 2.0 | 1.5 |
| Braxton | 19.0 | 5.0 | 2.0 |
| Hardy | 10.0 | 13.5 | 3.5 |
| Average | 16.6 | 6.1 | 2.5 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

Exhibit B-17 shows the number of facilities personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. TCS employed a supervisor of maintenance, a chief mechanic, no general maintenance staff, and no groundsman. TCS employed the highest number of custodians (20) compared to the peer district average (12.7).

**EXHIBIT B-17
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
FACILITIES PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERVISOR OF MAINTENANCE | CHIEF MECHANIC | GENERAL MAINTENANCE | CUSTODIAN | GROUNDSMAN |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Taylor | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 |
| Barbour | 0.5 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 0.7 |
| Braxton | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 15.3 | 0.0 |
| Hardy | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 13.8 | 0.3 |
| Average | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 12.7 | 0.2 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

Exhibit B-18 shows the number of transportation personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts in 2009-10. TCS and Barbour both employed a supervisor of transportation. None of the districts employed a school bus supervisor. TCS employed a comparable number of school bus operators to the peers.

**EXHIBIT B-18
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | SUPERVISOR OF TRANSPORTATION | SCHOOL BUS SUPERVISOR | SCHOOL BUS OPERATOR |
|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Taylor | 1.0 | 0.0 | 31.0 |
| Barbour | 1.0 | 0.0 | 30.9 |
| Braxton | 0.0 | 0.0 | 32.5 |
| Hardy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| Average | NA | NA | 31.1 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

Exhibit B-19 displays the number of food services personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. TCS and Braxton did not employ a food services supervisor. TCS employed fewer cafeteria managers and cooks than the peer district average.

**EXHIBIT B-19
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
FOOD SERVICES PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | FOOD SERVICE SUPERVISOR | CAFETERIA MANAGER | COOK |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Taylor | 0.0 | 5.0 | 11.5 |
| Barbour | 0.5 | 9.0 | 8.5 |
| Braxton | 0.0 | 8.0 | 13.0 |
| Hardy | 1.0 | 3.5 | 17.5 |
| Average | NA | 6.4 | 12.6 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

Exhibit B-20 shows the number of technology personnel employed by TCS and the peer districts during the 2009-10 school year. Barbour was the only district in the peer group that employed technology specialists.

**EXHIBIT B-20
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TECHNOLOGY PERSONNEL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION SPECIALIST | TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS SPECIALIST |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Taylor | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Barbour | 2.5 | 0.0 |
| Braxton | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Hardy | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Source: West Virginia Education Information Systems, 2011.

4.0 Salary Information

Exhibit B-21 displays the number and average salary of instructional personnel for TCS and the peer districts for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. TCS had the third-lowest number of instructional staff among the peer districts in both school years. However, TCS also had the highest average salary in both years. In 2009-10, the TCS average salary was approximately \$1,000 higher than the peer average; in 2010-11, the TCS average salary was approximately \$900 higher. All comparison districts experienced a reduction in the number of instructional personnel, as well as the average teacher salary, compared to the previous year.

**EXHIBIT B-21
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL AND AVERAGE SALARY
2009-10 AND 2010-11**

| DISTRICT | 2009-10 | | 2010-11 | |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | FTE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF | | FTE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF | |
| | NUMBER | AVERAGE SALARY | NUMBER | AVERAGE SALARY |
| Taylor | 183.5 | \$46,354 | 173.5 | \$45,018 |
| Barbour | 195.8 | \$44,884 | 183.8 | \$43,342 |
| Braxton | 208.5 | \$45,327 | 190.5 | \$43,922 |
| Hardy | 170.5 | \$44,692 | 155.5 | \$44,102 |
| Average | 189.6 | \$45,314 | 175.8 | \$44,096 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit B-22 shows the average salary for school administrators in TCS and peer districts in 2009-10. Although the average salary for TCS principals was approximately \$600 higher than the peer average, it was also lower than Braxton and Hardy by \$2,000 - \$4,000. The TCS assistant principal average salary was significantly lower than the peer districts (\$19,000 lower than Hardy, \$9,000 lower than Barbour, and \$8,000 lower than Braxton)

**EXHIBIT B-22
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR AVERAGE SALARIES
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | PRINCIPAL AVERAGE SALARY | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AVERAGE SALARY |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Taylor | \$63,159 | \$48,049 |
| Barbour | \$54,588 | \$56,914 |
| Braxton | \$65,344 | \$56,136 |
| Hardy | \$67,056 | \$67,056 |
| Average | \$62,537 | \$57,039 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

5.0 Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues for West Virginia school districts are from three main sources: 1) the local area, through property taxes; 2) the state, through the general state aid funding formula; and 3) the federal government. The West Virginia funding formula provides aid to local school districts based on the per-pupil wealth of the district.

5.1 Budget

Exhibit B-23 displays revenues in TCS and the comparison districts for the 2009-10 budget. The TCS local revenue was the highest among the peers, and approximately \$1.3 million more than the average. However, the TCS state revenue was \$0.6 million lower than the average, and the TCS federal revenue was \$0.4 million lower than the average. The TCS total 2009-10 revenue was \$0.3 million higher than the average, and the second-highest total revenue in the group. In all districts, the state provided the bulk of the district's revenue.

**EXHIBIT B-23
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
REVENUE
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | LOCAL | STATE | FEDERAL | TOTAL |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Taylor | \$ 6,107,498 | \$ 14,031,548 | \$ 4,407,309 | \$ 24,546,355 |
| Barbour | \$ 2,930,277 | \$ 16,258,743 | \$ 5,194,289 | \$ 24,383,309 |
| Braxton | \$ 4,886,925 | \$ 16,556,996 | \$ 5,916,414 | \$ 27,360,335 |
| Hardy | \$ 5,128,695 | \$ 11,684,973 | \$ 3,804,904 | \$ 20,618,572 |
| Average | \$ 4,763,349 | \$ 14,633,065 | \$ 4,830,729 | \$ 24,227,143 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

Exhibit B-24 displays expenditure per student in TCS and the comparison districts for the 2009-10 budget. The district's per-pupil expenditure was the lowest among the peers, and was approximately \$900 lower than the average. It is worthy of additional research to reconcile the TCS higher-than-average revenue (and the second-highest

revenue in the peer group) to its low per-pupil expenditure (lowest in the peer group and lower than the average).

**EXHIBIT B-24
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Taylor | \$ 9,107 |
| Barbour | \$ 10,094 |
| Braxton | \$ 11,462 |
| Hardy | \$ 9,435 |
| Average | \$ 10,025 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

5.2 Transportation Costs

Exhibit B-25 displays TCS and peer district transportation services costs and other information for the 2009-10 school year. Although TCS had the highest transportation cost per mile, the district had the lowest transportation cost per student. Among the peers, TCS exceeded recommended route times the least, indicating bus routes are completed on-time the majority of the time. TCS had the fewest spare buses over the recommended number, and the least approximate cost to maintain the additional buses. In every category except cost per mile, TCS was significantly less than the peer average.

**EXHIBIT B-25
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
TRANSPORTATION DATA
2009-10**

| DISTRICT | COST PER MILE | COST PER STUDENT | % EXCEEDED RECOMMENDED ROUTE TIMES | SPARE BUSES OVER RECOMMENDED NUMBER | APPROXIMATE COST TO MAINTAIN ADDITIONAL SPARE BUSES |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Taylor | \$5.83 | \$ 964.84 | 7.7% | 4.0 | \$ 60,000 |
| Barbour | \$5.61 | \$ 1,164.18 | 11.9% | 6.9 | \$ 103,500 |
| Braxton | \$5.80 | \$ 1,391.69 | 23.0% | 4.8 | \$ 72,000 |
| Hardy | \$5.48 | \$ 990.08 | 13.1% | 14.3 | \$ 214,500 |
| Average | \$5.68 | \$ 1,127.70 | 13.9% | 7.50 | \$ 112,500 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation, 2011.

Exhibit B-26 shows the miles traveled for TCS and the peer districts during the 2008-09 school year. TCS buses traveled fewer total miles than the peer average. TCS traveled many more miles for vocational and curricular activities, and fewer regular and extracurricular miles than the peer district average.

**EXHIBIT B-26
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
MILES TRAVELED BY REGULAR BUSES
2008-09**

| DISTRICT | REGULAR | VOCATIONAL | EXTRACURRICULAR | CURRICULAR | TOTAL |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Taylor | 341,499 | 16,218 | 11,430 | 13,490 | 382,637 |
| Barbour | 422,585 | 10,228 | 18,691 | 0 | 451,504 |
| Braxton | 379,660 | 1,873 | 23,529 | 9,050 | 414,112 |
| Hardy | 296,067 | 15,019 | 23,600 | 10,058 | 344,744 |
| Average | 359,953 | 10,835 | 19,313 | 8,150 | 398,249 |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation, 2011.

6.0 Student Achievement

Students in West Virginia are required to take the WESTEST2 assessment once a year in grades 3 through 11. **Exhibit B-27** displays grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 results of the 2010-11 WESTEST2 for TCS and the peer districts. The percentage proficient indicates students who achieved *mastery or above* on the testing. With few exceptions, students in TCS and in the peers in these grade levels achieved less than 50 percent proficiency on all tests (Hardy students exceeded 50 percent proficiency in 8th grade Reading and 11th grade Math, and TCS students exceeded 50 percent proficiency in 11th grade Reading). Although TCS 3rd and 11th graders ranked second in Average Proficiency All Areas, and TCS 5th and 8th graders ranked first in Average Proficiency All Areas, those percentages were still below 50 percent. TCS students in 5th, 8th, and 11th grades exceeded 40 percent in Average Proficiency All Areas, with the TCS 3rd graders slightly under 40 percent. TCS students in grades 3, 5, and 8 showed consistently less proficiency in Social Studies (between 33% and 38%), compared to their achievements in Math, Reading, and Science.

**EXHIBIT B-27
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS AND PEER DISTRICTS
WESTEST2 RESULTS
2010-11**

| District | Math | | Reading | | Science | | Social Studies | | Average Proficiency All Areas |
|-----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| | # Tested | Percentage Proficient | # Tested | Percentage Proficient | # Tested | Percentage Proficient | # Tested | Percentage Proficient | |
| THIRD | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 170 | 37.05% | 170 | 41.76% | 169 | 40.23% | 169 | 37.86% | 39.23% |
| Barbour | 176 | 23.86% | 176 | 22.15% | 175 | 25.71% | 175 | 25.71% | 24.36% |
| Braxton | 180 | 37.22% | 180 | 35.00% | 177 | 49.15% | 177 | 39.54% | 40.23% |
| Hardy | 160 | 3.87% | 160 | 32.50% | 157 | 31.21% | 157 | 29.29% | 24.22% |
| FIFTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 171 | 46.19% | 170 | 40.58% | 167 | 46.10% | 167 | 38.92% | 42.95% |
| Barbour | 165 | 29.69% | 165 | 32.12% | 162 | 29.01% | 16 | 20.24% | 27.77% |
| Braxton | 153 | 41.17% | 153 | 38.56% | 147 | 36.05% | 147 | 29.93% | 36.43% |
| Hardy | 142 | 30.28% | 142 | 28.87% | 138 | 26.08% | 138 | 28.98% | 28.55% |
| EIGHTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 182 | 45.05% | 182 | 43.95% | 178 | 47.75% | 178 | 33.14% | 42.47% |
| Barbour | 168 | 31.54% | 168 | 41.66% | 167 | 35.92% | 167 | 29.94% | 34.77% |
| Braxton | 139 | 43.16% | 139 | 38.84% | 138 | 46.37% | 138 | 35.50% | 40.97% |
| Hardy | 179 | 45.25% | 179 | 50.83% | 173 | 33.52% | 173 | 32.36% | 40.49% |
| ELEVENTH | | | | | | | | | |
| Taylor | 123 | 52.03% | 122 | 41.80% | | | 120 | 44.16% | 46.00% |
| Barbour | 158 | 36.07% | 158 | 27.84% | | | 157 | 24.84% | 29.58% |
| Braxton | 144 | 40.27% | 145 | 38.62% | | | 144 | 33.33% | 37.41% |
| Hardy | 138 | 67.39% | 139 | 41.00% | | | 137 | 43.06% | 50.48% |

Source: West Virginia Department of Education website, 2011.

7.0 Summary

Overall, TCS is experiencing decreased enrollment. The majority of students are white, nearly one-half of the students receive SES services, nearly one-half of the students are needy, and the majority of students participate in the free/reduced lunch program. Students with disabilities represent an average percentage of the enrollment.

Although TCS has a higher dropout rate than the peers or the state, the district graduates more than 75 percent of all students (but fewer special education and SES students).

TCS class sizes are average, with one or two more pupils per teacher than the average. There are many more students per administrator than the average.

The TCS central office, school administrator, and instructional staffing is fairly average. The average salary for instructional staff is higher than the peers, while the school administrator average salary is somewhat lower than the peers. More than 90 percent of classes are taught by highly qualified teachers. TCS operational staffing (facilities, transportation, food, and technology) also appears to be fairly typical.

The TCS revenue from local sources is somewhat higher, state sources somewhat lower, and federal sources comparable, to the peers. The TCS total revenue is higher than the average. However, the district's per-pupil expenditure is the lowest. Although more than 90 percent of the students use the district transportation (bus) services, the district contains transportation costs well compared to the peers, and uses more of the miles traveled for vocational and curricular activities than the peers.

Fewer than half of TCS students in grades 3, 6, 8, and 11 demonstrate proficiency on the WESTEST2 achievement tests in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.